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Same-sex unions: Do theories of marriage apply?

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University of Iowa

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SAME-SEX UNIONS: DO THEORIES OF MARRIAGE APPLY?

by

Nicole Hagan Wolensky Civettini

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in Sociology
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2009

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Jennifer Glass

ABSTRACT

This dissertation addressed whether and how theories of marriage apply to same-sex relationships. These theories correspond to two main research questions. First, does the legal recognition of same-sex relationships provide the same benefits for members of same-sex couples that it does for different-sex spouses? Second, how do same-sex couples divide household labor, and, should inequalities emerge, what factors explain the division of labor? Marriage provides numerous benefits to husband/wife couples who wed, including better mental and physical health, greater financial security, and higher levels of sexual satisfaction. Using results from a web-based survey of members of same-sex couples and same-sex-attracted singles (N=429), I tested the applicability of the “marriage benefits model” to same-sex marriages, civil unions, domestic partnerships, and cohabiting couples. Although the focus of the same-sex marriage debate has been on the positive attributes of marriage, marriage for different-sex couples is also associated with great inequity in the division of household labor. Explanations for the housework gap point to gender or are tied up in correlates of gender, such as income and work hours. I also explored variations in the division of household labor in same-sex marriages and partnerships and tested extant theories of housework inequality. Results indicated that legal recognition (marriages and civil unions) does provide some benefits to financial well-being and physical health. Defining one’s own relationship as a marriage (regardless of legal recognition) was more strongly associated with “marriage” benefits, including greater financial well-being, an improved sexual relationship, and fewer health-risk behaviors. Femininity was positively related to proportional housework contributions, and proportional work hours were inversely related, to proportional housework, supporting both the gender and time availability explanations of housework inequalities. Interactions between gender and relationship characteristics and between time availability and relationship characteristics were also explored.

Abstract Approved: _____
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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To Andy, Lilia, Ruthie, and Kieran

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation addressed whether and how theories of marriage apply to same-sex relationships. These theories correspond to two main research questions. First, does the legal recognition of same-sex relationships provide the same benefits for members of same-sex couples that it does for different-sex spouses? Second, how do same-sex couples divide household labor, and, should inequalities emerge, what factors explain the division of labor? Marriage provides numerous benefits to husband/wife couples who wed, including better mental and physical health, greater financial security, and higher levels of sexual satisfaction. Using results from a web-based survey of members of same-sex couples and same-sex-attracted singles (N=429), I tested the applicability of the “marriage benefits model” to same-sex marriages, civil unions, domestic partnerships, and cohabiting couples. Although the focus of the same-sex marriage debate has been on the positive attributes of marriage, marriage for different-sex couples is also associated with great inequity in the division of household labor. Explanations for the housework gap point to gender or are tied up in correlates of gender, such as income and work hours. I also explored variations in the division of household labor in same-sex marriages and partnerships and tested extant theories of housework inequality. Results indicated that legal recognition (marriages and civil unions) does provide some benefits to financial well-being and physical health. Defining one’s own relationship as a marriage (regardless of legal recognition) was more strongly associated with “marriage” benefits, including greater financial well-being, an improved sexual relationship, and fewer health-risk behaviors. Femininity was positively related to proportional housework contributions, and proportional work hours were inversely related, to proportional housework, supporting both the gender and time availability explanations of housework inequalities. Interactions between gender and relationship characteristics and between time availability and relationship characteristics were also explored.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Project Summary

This dissertation addressed whether and how theories of marriage apply to same-sex relationships. These theories correspond to two main research questions. First, does the legal recognition of same-sex relationships provide the same benefits for members of same-sex couples that it does for different-sex spouses? Marriage provides numerous benefits to husband/wife couples who wed, including better mental and physical health, greater financial security, and higher levels of sexual satisfaction. The denial of these benefits to same-sex couples through exclusion from marriage is often cited by proponents of same-sex marriage as a violation of equal rights (Badgett and Goldfoot 1996; King and Bartlett 2006; Portelli 2004; Sullivan 1989; Wilson 1991). Studies on this “marriage benefits model,” however, have investigated the effects of marriage only for people with a different-sex spouse. I tested the applicability of the marriage benefits model to same-sex marriages, civil unions, domestic partnerships, and cohabiting couples.

Second, how do same-sex couples divide household labor, and, should inequalities emerge, what factors explain the division of labor? Although the focus of the same-sex marriage debate has been on the positive attributes of marriage, marriage for different-sex couples is also associated with great inequity in the division of household labor (Blair and Lichter 1991; Gupta 1999; Presser 1994; Hersch and Stratton 1997). Three main theories have been shown, with varying degrees of support, to explain the division of household labor among different-sex couples, which is strongly in men’s favor (see Greenstein 2000). Explanations for the housework gap point to gender or are tied up in correlates of gender, such as income and work hours. Two studies of gay and

lesbian couples (Carrington 1999; Giddings et al. 1998) have demonstrated that they also do not divide housework in an egalitarian manner,¹ eliminating biological sex as an explanatory factor but introducing the intricacies of gender identity and housework performance. I explored variations in the division of household labor in same-sex marriages and partnerships and tested extant theories of housework inequality.

In addressing these questions, I administered a web-based survey to 429 respondents. Results from the survey (1) established whether the benefits experienced by different-sex married couples exist for same-sex married couples, (2) provided various control measures to ensure that emergent differences were due to the legal status of the relationships and not caused by spurious factors, and, (3) elucidated which relationship characteristics were correlated with the health, financial security, sexual satisfaction, and household labor contributions of people in same-sex relationships.

These questions are timely ones, as legal marriage is available for same-sex couples in Massachusetts (since 2004), and enough time has passed to gauge the early effects this relationship status has had for those who have married a same-sex partner. More recently (November, 2008), Connecticut joined Massachusetts in performing legal marriages for couples of the same sex. Civil unions are currently available to same-sex couples in four states: Vermont (since 2000), Connecticut (2005), New Jersey (2007), and New Hampshire (January, 2008). Same-sex couples can opt to register domestic partnerships, similar to civil unions, in three states and the District of Columbia: Washington, DC (1992), California (1999), Washington (2007), and Oregon (2008). Lastly, Hawaii enacted a “reciprocal beneficiary relationships” law in 1997, which affords same-sex couples about a quarter of the rights granted to married couples.

¹ However, Balsam et al. 2008 found that same-sex couples divided housework more or less evenly.

The Same-Sex Marriage Debate

Perhaps one of the most contentious domestic policy issues of our times is whether same-sex couples should be permitted to enter into legally recognized marriages. This question is hotly debated by political pundits, religious leaders, proponents of the conservative “family values” movement, and gay rights activists. Members of the three former groups often present anti-gay marriage arguments based on religious or “moral” teachings or speculation about the negative impact same-sex marriage would have on “the traditional family,” (Smith and Windes 2000) rarely or selectively acknowledging social science research on the topic. Gay rights activists tend to focus on legal-logical arguments of civil rights and human rights-based pleas for non-discrimination (see Clarke 2003; Goldberg-Hiller 2004; Louw 2005; Rimmerman 2008), but do have available to them limited, empirical evidence to support or refute their theoretical claims.

Despite these tendencies, however, the debate does not follow a strict divide between liberals and conservatives, between lesbians, gay men, and allies and anti-lesbian/gay commentators, or even, perhaps, between those who are pro-same-sex marriage and those who are anti-same sex marriage (see Peel and Harding 2004). Sullivan (1989) presents a conservative pro-same-sex marriage piece, arguing that *domestic partnership* would contribute to the breakdown of marriage because of its ambiguous status in society, but that same-sex *marriage* would actually strengthen the institution by furthering its legitimacy.² Likewise, Hausknecht (2003) points out that conservatives often focus on promiscuity as a main source of the “immorality” of

² Sullivan makes salient an important distinction between full legal marriage and other forms of legal relationship recognition, such as civil unions or domestic partnerships. This distinction is sometimes not made in the literature, especially with reference to registered partnerships in Norway and Sweden, which are often referred to as same-sex marriage. I do my best to ensure that, regardless of the terminology used by the authors I cite, I only use the term “same-sex marriage” to refer to the full participation of same-sex couples in legal marriage as it is available to different-sex couples.

homosexuality, and marriage would conceivably regulate (to some degree) homosexual sex as it does (to some degree) heterosexual sex. In a similar turn, Shell's (2004) piece claims to provide a liberal argument against same-sex marriage, wherein lesbian and gay couples should be denied marriage rights because of their natural inability to procreate. She contends that generation is the natural and universally recognized "essence" of marriage, and that marriage should be defined in terms of parental duties. The liberal solution, according to Shell, is to expand civil unions to include all willing couples and to grant same-sex couples full rights to adopt children. Besides taking what amounts to the "new" natural law approach to same-sex marriage (see Skerrett 2007), a view that is widely considered to be anything but liberal, Shell's scenario also falls prey to Kitzinger and Wilkinson's (2004) and Thomas's (2005) criticism of Vermont's civil union law as being akin to "separate but equal" – a step that gives the appearance of improving the condition of an oppressed group while denying equal rights and appeasing those who fear a threat to the institution of marriage.

Lesbian and gay activists and activist-researchers also vary in whether they believe partaking in marriage would advance the rights of gay men and lesbians. Some believe that securing the legal right to marry would be a victory for gay and lesbian civil rights. Others claim that, by participating in marriage, same-sex couples strive to assimilate into a heteronormative culture, to become "normal," and this striving gives credence to claims that same-sex relationships are in some way presently abnormal and that the model of heterosexual marriage is an ideal state for all relationships (Rimmerman 2008; Yep et al 2003). Lewin (2004) correctly points out, however, that it makes little sense for lesbians and gay men to refuse to participate in something in which their participation is precluded. A defiant stance of this type would only translate into a strong political statement once same-sex marriage is even an option, so perhaps the debate over whether same-sex couples should get married is best saved for the point in time when it is a more universal possibility.

The goal of this project is to explore the empirical reality of same-sex marriage, to investigate its effects for people as individuals and members of a couple, and to provide a social scientific evaluation of speculative claims made by both (or perhaps multiple) camps of the gay marriage debate. It is difficult to argue that exclusion from marriage denies various benefits to lesbians and gay men without evidence that married gay and lesbian couples actually experience those benefits.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Same-Sex Couples in Sociological Research

Few sociological studies have delved into the impact of romantic relationships on same-sex couples' lives,³ and none have tested for potential benefits of married or partnered life (as opposed to cohabitation). The majority of literature related to gay and lesbian relationships has focused on presenting and critiquing arguments for and against same-sex marriage. An electronic search on same-sex relationships yielded just seven articles not centered on the debate, the five most recent of which were authored by the same researcher (Kurdek). The two earlier studies critiqued the study of gay and lesbian intimacy (Risman and Schwartz 1988) and relationship quality among lesbian couples (Koepeke et al. 1992). Kurdek's studies have focused on conflict resolution (1994a), conflict and relationship satisfaction (1994b), relationship commitment (1995), relationship outcome/success (1998), and relationship quality (2004) among gay, lesbian, and heterosexual couples. A main critique of Kurdek's work has targeted his insistence on comparing same-sex couples to different-sex couples when the two groups may not be comparable (Lewin 2004) because relationship statuses may have entirely different meanings for same-sex and different-sex couples. Lewin argues that this research implies that the same-sex marriage debate boils down to whether same-sex couples are different from different-sex couples, and that reassuring the public that they are similar will put the debate to rest. The source of the debate, however, is multifaceted and more difficult to resolve than this implies. Not all arguments against same-sex marriage can be nullified by demonstrating that same-sex and different-sex couples are the same, and some

³ See Allen and Demo (1995) for a content analysis of over 8,000 articles demonstrating the relative absence of lesbian and gay families from the family literature up to that point.

proponents of same-sex marriage argue that diversity and difference in intimate relationships is a quality to be celebrated.

In the current study, I do not directly compare a sample of gay and lesbian couples to a sample of heterosexual couples on the outcome measures. Rather, I compare married lesbian and gay couples to other lesbian and gay couples. I investigate the effects different types of relationships (e.g., marriages, civil unions, cohabitation) have on individuals' mental health, economic well-being, and sexual satisfaction and on couples' division of household labor. Because there is no existing research on these outcomes, I begin with the heterosexual model and explore its validity in the context of same-sex relationships.

Benefits of Different-Sex Marriage

The large literature on the benefits of heterosexual marriage generally suffers from one main handicap – most studies have compared married people to all non-married people. That is, with some important exceptions highlighted below, research does not distinguish between non-married people who are cohabiting with a romantic partner and those who are not cohabiting. This limitation opens up the possibility that the positive effect of marriage on mental health, wealth, and sexual satisfaction is truly driven by the benefits of partnering rather than marriage per se; people cohabiting outside of marriage may actually be more similar to husbands and wives in terms of physical, mental, financial, and sexual well-being than suggested by studies that compare married people to all unmarried people (e.g., Kalil and Kunz 2002; Larson et al. 1998; Laumann et al. 1994; Nock 1998; Schmidt and Sevak 2006; Waite 1995; Waite and Gallagher 2000).

Acknowledging this limitation of past research, I provide a summary of this work because it is the most extensive and well-established body of literature on the topic. I then discuss some evidence justifying the grouping of cohabitators with non-cohabitators, and summarize the few studies that do directly compare spouses to cohabitators on the

outcomes of interest. In the next section, I discuss reasons why same-sex couples may not experience the same pattern of outcomes previously found among different-sex couples.

Married people are less likely to engage in unhealthy behavior than unmarried people. The married have lower rates of alcoholism and problem drinking, are less likely to abuse illegal substances, and are more likely to live an orderly life than the non-married (Horwitz et al. 1996; Umberson 1987; Wu and Hart 2002). Ross (1995), Umberson (1992), and Waite and Gallagher (2000) argue that participating in marriage provides an individual with a personal monitor, someone to whom they are held accountable for their own health and behavior. Further, a spouse can provide support during stressful periods, making substance abuse a less likely coping mechanism.

Married people experience less depression, anxiety, and psychological distress than those who are single, cohabiting, divorced, or widowed (Brown 2000; Kim and McKenry 2002; Lamb et al. 2003; Stroschein et al. 2005; Williams and Umberson 2004; Wu and Hart 2002). In fact, the act of getting married itself seems to make people happier (Marks and Lambert 1998). Simon and Marcussen (1999) found that people who married between the first and second waves of the National Survey of Families and Households reported fewer depressive symptoms at the second wave than they had at the first wave. Horwitz et al. (1996) found that, controlling for premarital depression, married men who become married during the course of a longitudinal study reported less depressive symptoms than men who remained unmarried, and, Marks and Lambert provided the complementary finding that people who remained single manifested an increase in depression and a decrease in general happiness, whereas people who remained married over the course of the study did not demonstrate the same trend. The difference can also be seen in the most severe measure of depression – suicide rates are lower for the married than the never married (Mastekaasa 1995).

Sexual satisfaction is also greater among married people. Married people have sex more frequently than single people (about twice as often) and about the same amount of sex as cohabiting people.⁴ Despite the possible equivalence in frequency of sexual activity between married and cohabiting people, married people report higher levels of physical and emotional satisfaction associated with sex compared to both singles and cohabitators (Laumann et al. 1994; Waite 1995; Waite and Gallagher 2000). Single people may have less incentive to invest in the development of “partner-specific” sexual knowledge and skills (Laumann 1994) and are less likely to find their partners inherently rewarding because they are less emotionally committed. Also, cohabitators may bring different levels of commitment to the relationship, and this misalignment affects sexual satisfaction. The commitment of marriage may bring with it added meaning to sex and may create an inextricable tie between sex and love for married people (Waite 1995).

Married people on average have more money than single people, and the difference remains even after accounting for other characteristics that affect savings (Smith 1994). It is partially a matter of economies of scale: two people who share expenses can live more cheaply than two people each paying separate expenses. The same may be true for people who cohabit, however, as they share many household expenses, but Waite and Gallagher (2000) argue that cohabitators are less likely to provide financial help to their partners.

Some financial gains from marriage are less direct, both for individuals and for the economy. For example, spouses are often eligible for employee discounts, employer-sponsored health insurance plans, and retirement benefits should the retired spouse die. Although employers are increasingly offering some of these benefits to same-sex partners

⁴ Note, however, that Laumann et al. (1994) found that cohabitators had more frequent sex than married people.

voluntarily, most same-sex couples in the United States have no fundamental legal right to them (Badgett and Goldfoot; Barrett 1996). Same-sex partners are also not eligible to receive social security survivor benefits in the instance when a partner is widowed. Marriage is also beneficial to the nation's economy more generally, and some argue same-sex marriage could only serve to further the country's economic health by increasing state and federal tax revenues and decreasing the dependence of families and children of state-funded support programs (Alm et al. 2000; Badgett and Goldfoot 1996; Portelli 2004).

Married people are also better off financially as a couple because black and white men and black women experience an intangible "wage premium" upon marriage, though it is proportionately greatest for white men, net of other characteristics that affect wages and taking into account selection into marriage. White women have been found by some to experience a wage penalty for marriage (Daniel 1995), but it was not great enough to outweigh the boost in their husband's incomes; that is, women's household incomes increased when they married. Glass and Jacobs (2005) found no significant effect of marriage on women's wages when controlling for a conservative religious upbringing. Men's wages are particularly augmented because their wives' assistance, support, and contributions to household responsibilities allow them to spend more time and be more productive at work. Further, having a family gives men greater incentive to perform well and obtain promotions, compared to men who do not have families (Daniel 1995).

When a couple marries, other aspects of their lives change besides finances and/or living arrangements. Marriage is generally a public act; if not performed in the presence of many others, the union is at least publicly recognized. The couple enters into a social contract, a social institution, and they are viewed and treated differently by other individuals and by society than unmarried people (Waite and Gallagher 2000). Married people may be regarded as higher status in society than unmarried people, but this boost may or may not apply to lesbian and gay spouses. Same-sex relationships are stigmatized

in American society, and a same-sex marriage would solidify and to some degree publicize a person's membership in a same-sex marriage to people around her/him. For example, coworkers and acquaintances who have homophobic tendencies and/or do not support gay marriage may take a "none of my business" approach to the individual's personal relationships, but may feel that the individual is "flaunting" his or her sexuality by obtaining legal marriage. A prominent example of this mindset is the U.S. Military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Same-sex marriage makes a homosexual relationship public knowledge; not asking and not telling is no longer possible.

In the absence of extensive research on the similarity of cohabitators to married people on the outcomes of interest in the current study, it is instructive to explore broader similarities and differences between the two groups as well as the motivation behind the decision to cohabit. First, different-sex cohabitators appear to differ from different-sex spouses on important demographic and personal characteristics. Cohabitators tend to be of lower socioeconomic status (Nock 1995), are more liberal (Thornton et al. 1992), and are less religious (Stanley et al. 2004; Thornton et al. 1992) than married people. Cohabitators are more similar to single people than to married people in terms of education, employment, and homeownership (Rindfuss and Vandenhuevel 1990). Compared to married people, cohabitators express less commitment to their relationship (Nock 1995; Stanley et al. 2004). Further, cohabitators to whom a child is born experience less relationship stability than do spouses to whom a child is born (Manning et al. 2004).

Second, Brown and Booth (1996) found that the poorer relationship quality among cohabitators compared to married people was largely explained by marriage plans, such that cohabitators with plans to marry had similar relationship quality to people in marriages. The question then remains: do most cohabitators live with their partners as a precursor to marriage and do they then go on to marry their partners? If so, cohabitators and married people can be viewed as essentially the same group of people at different stages of the family life cycle. If not, there may be real differences between the two

groups. Recent research shows that, although most cohabitators describe an expectation to marry their current partners, in the decade of the 1990s, only one-third resulted in marriage within three years. This is a substantial decline from the 60% estimated to have married in the 1970s (Bumpass 1998). In her qualitative study of cohabiting couples, only one-third had discussed plans for the future of the relationship before moving in together, and only half of these couples wanted to marry (Sassler 2004). As cohabitation has become more socially acceptable over the past 50 years (Le Bourdais and Lapierre-Adamcyk 2004), and marriage is less of a financially viable option for many Americans, cohabitation is increasingly a purposeful choice among different-sex couples. Several studies have found that cohabitation serves more as an alternative to marriage than a precursor to marriage, at least among racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. (Bumpass and Lu, 1999; Landale and Forste, 1991; Manning and Landale, 1996; Manning and Smock, 1995; Raley, 1996), and one study illustrates the hesitance of low-income people to get married because they are not financially stable and do not want to risk failing at marriage (Edin and Kefalas 2005).

There is sparse research on the relative similarity of cohabitators and married people in terms of mental health, financial security, sexual satisfaction, and the division of household labor. Compared to married people, cohabitators report lower levels of general happiness (Nock 1995; Stanley et al. 2004), perhaps indicating poorer mental health. Because cohabitation is somewhat more selective of people of lower socioeconomic status (Nock 1995), cohabitators may have less financially secure futures than married people. The gender gap in housework contributions that is well established within marriages couples is also found in cohabitation, but the gap is somewhat smaller (Gupta 1999; Shelton and John 1996; South and Spitze 1994).

Selection and Causation

To argue that differences in the health and psychological well-being between married and non-married people can be entirely attributed to a causal effect of marital status would be to vastly oversimplify the association. Certainly, people who are mentally healthy make better marriage partners, generally speaking, than people who suffer from some degree of mental illness (Fu and Goldman 1996; Mastekaasa 1992; Wade and Pevalin 2004; see Hall 1999). Social scientists seem to have consensus about the dual influence of social selection and social causation, insofar as both explanations have some non-zero effect, but there is wide variation in the relative importance attributed to each.

Even Waite and Gallagher (2000), who tout the nearly magical ability of marriage to bolster and protect health and happiness, acknowledge that mental health and physical virility play some role in determining who gets married (51-52, see 70-71). However, they argue that the benefits of marriage cannot be fully explained by selection into marriage. They draw on four studies (Horwitz et al. 1996; Marks and Lambert 1998; Umberson 1987; Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1995) to form the basis of their argument against selection effects, indeed, an argument upon which the entire book rests, and make only brief mention of one study (Lillard and Panis 1996) in reference to evidence of selection. The studies by Horwitz et al. and Marks and Lambert, although favoring a causation explanation overall, show mixed results. Marks and Lambert found no differences in well-being between people who were continuously married and those who were continuously unmarried throughout both waves of the study (672). Horwitz et al. found that, among those who were unmarried at the first wave of data collection, depressed women were less likely to get married than women who were less depressed (904). In addition, whereas they found that marriage lowered the incidence of depression among men, marriage did not have the same beneficial effect for women. Likewise,

although marriage reduced problem drinking in women, it did not provide the same benefit to men.

Further, although Waite and Gallagher (2000) use excerpts from Wallerstein and Blakeslee's (1995) ethnography to support the positive, causal effects of marriage on happiness to the exclusion of selection effects, the ethnographers themselves make no such claim. In fact the title of their book, "The Good Marriage," accurately sums up their sample; that is, only people in happy, successful marriages were invited to take part in the ethnography, clearly indicating the inability of this particular study to tease apart causation and selection. Finally, Waite and Gallagher cite Umberson (1987) to support their claim that "Prospective studies that follow the lifestyles of individuals as they move in and out of marriage show that upon marrying, people typically adopt a healthier way of living. Marriage seems to confer the strongest health advantage in avoiding those causes of death that are strongly influenced by a person's behavior (such as suicide or cirrhosis of the liver)" (52). However, Umberson's sample is a simple cross-sectional survey, not a prospective study. In fact, the only mention of prospective studies in Umberson's article explicitly states that her research may in fact reflect selection effects: "Because of the cross-sectional nature of data used for this study, the health behaviors of individuals before marriage and parenting cannot be determined. The selection explanation cannot be disproved, but evidence from prospective studies diminish its probability" (312). Indeed, neither Umberson nor Waite and Gallagher inform their readers where such prospective studies can be found.

In sum, it appears that there is not strong evidence for selection effects; however, there is also no strong evidence against selection effects. Additionally, selection and causation need not be mutually exclusive. People who are happier, healthier, and wealthier are likely more attractive marriage partners; having a committed (at least semi-) permanent, relationship likely makes people happier, helps them to take better care of their health, and motivates them to be higher wage earners. In the current project, it was

not within my financial and temporal constraints to conduct a prospective study that followed people across one or more relationship status transitions. Thus, I look at the solid, albeit not overwhelming, evidence that marriage is beneficial for those who partake. I test the “marriage benefits” model among same-sex couples and same-sex interested singles, tailoring the measures of relationship status to the unique aspects of same-sex unions. Should I find that “marriage” benefits are experienced by members of same-sex couples, I recognize that some proportion of such effects could in fact be due to selection.

Household Labor

I also explore the division of household labor among gay and lesbian couples. It is a well-evidenced finding that, in heterosexual married and cohabiting couples, women perform the majority of household labor (Blair and Lichter 1991; Presser 1994; Hersch and Stratton 1997) including both housework and child care. There is little research on what happens to the division of labor in the home when both members of the couple are women or neither is a woman. Will an issue that is at the heart of gender inequality in different-sex relationships also be problematic in same-sex relationships? Here, I briefly summarize each of the three explanations presented in the literature on heterosexual couples and what they may tell us about inequalities in lesbian and gay couples.

Three main explanations have emerged for the housework inequity in heterosexual relationships: “doing gender” and gender ideology, relative resources, and time-availability (Greenstein 2000). In terms of “doing gender” (Berk 1985; West and Zimmerman 1987), housework is a process by which husbands and wives define their gender identities (Bianchi et al. 2000; Gupta 1999). As a means of enacting the roles of “husband” or “wife” and demonstrating competence as a man or woman in society, men generally avoid housework, a stereotypically feminine activity, and women put in the extra hours. This perspective is supported by research demonstrating that men who earn

as much as or less than their wives actually do less housework than other men, ostensibly in an effort to reassert their masculinity in the face of their failure as good providers (Brines 1994), and women who out-earn their husbands refrain from using their economic superiority to gain power in the relationship (Tichenor 2005), perhaps in an effort to reject the masculinity of breadwinning. In the terms of gender ideology (Huber and Spitze 1983; Spitze 1986), couples with more egalitarian gender ideologies will share the housework more evenly than more traditional couples, because traditional gender ideologies dictate that married women should be responsible for the home.

The relative resources explanation (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Presser 1994) states that whoever has the most resources in the relationship will spend his or her energy in paid work, and whoever has the least resources will expend energy in unpaid labor; that is, the person with the least money does the most housework. Some claim that the difference is an effort to increase the couple's efficiency as a unit of production (Becker 1981), but others argue that it is more a matter of the relative power conferred upon each individual by his or her resources and his or her ability to use that power to avoid housework (Greenstein 1996; Spitze 1986). The relative resources approach finds empirical support in work by Presser (1994), which shows that the smaller the earnings gap between wife and husband, the more equal the division of housework. Contradictory evidence, however, finds that men who make less than their wives perform the same amount of housework as other men (Tichenor 1999) or less than other men (Brines 1994).

The time-availability explanation (Bianchi 2000; Coverman 1985; England and Farkas 1986) describes the division of household labor as a function of the amount of time each member of the couples has available to spend in unpaid labor after paid labor is completed. Thus, women do more housework because they spend fewer hours in the workplace (Bianchi et al. 2000). Presser (1994) found that men who stay at home do more housework than men who work the same hours as their wives, but Brines (1994), again, found the opposite. Criticisms of this perspective include questionable causation;

that is, perhaps the greater housework responsibility foisted upon women results in cutbacks in work hours. Also, this explanation doesn't account for the way in which work time differentially impacts men's and women's housework; research compares men's contributions to the contributions of other men, not men's contributions to women's contributions.

Applying the Theories to Same-Sex Partnerships and Marriages

Is it reasonable to expect gay and lesbian couples who marry or enter a legal civil union to experience the same benefits heterosexual couples derive from marriage? It is unclear whether the advantages experienced by married people are due to the presence of a legal bond, the ritual of a wedding ceremony, public recognition, and/or higher levels of commitment. There is also no basis for judging the extent to which any or all of these effects are tied to a particular sex or gender arrangement. There may be an interaction effect, whereby the effects of being married on various outcome variables depends upon the biological sex makeup of the couple.

There are certain ways in which it is clear that the heterosexual model of marriage benefits cannot be directly applicable to same-sex couples because of an inherent link to gender. For example, the wage premium afforded married men, but not married women, is intertwined with the numerous advantages men experience in education and the workplace, occupational sex segregation, and societal expectations about the division of household labor (in which men are expected to perform less housework and childcare than women). Similarly, the different experiences of men and women in marriage, questioned by Waite and Gallagher (2000), cannot exist when there is not a male and a female in the relationship. However, there may still be variation in the degree to which partners benefit from a relationship; the variation may, for example, be tied to gender

identity, financial independence (income relative to partner's income), or commitment to the relationship rather than biological sex.

In same-sex couples, gender-based differences would not be an issue if gender could be equated with biological sex; but this equation is fundamentally flawed. Gender may still be an important factor, as numerous studies show that biological sex and gender do not always align among gay men and lesbians (Hockenberry and Billingham 1987; Levitt et al 2003; Levitt and Hiestand 2004; Lippa 2000; Moore 2006)⁵. There is evidence that Swedish partners in same-sex unions maintain an egalitarianism that does not hinge on a 50/50 split of housework, and that gender is an important factor in determining who does the greater share (Khor 2007).

Other benefits of marriage seem more readily applicable in the context of same-sex unions. Mental health improvements, increased wealth (Barrett 1996; Badgett and Goldfoot 1996), and greater sexual satisfaction (Deenan et al. 1994; Green 2006; Kurdek 1991) could be tied more generally to the formation of a formal union rather than to the union of a woman and a man. Some elucidation is provided by Solomon et al's (2005) study of lesbians (N = 378) and gay men (N = 195) who were either in a civil union or were members of a couple not in a civil union.⁶ Among the comparisons they made were differences in income and frequency of sex. For both lesbians and gay men, those in civil unions had sex more frequently than those who were not in civil unions. Among lesbians, those in civil unions had slightly higher incomes on average than those not in civil unions, but for gay men, this trend was reversed, and those in civil unions actually

⁵ See Mock (2003) and Zita (1992) for interesting pieces on male lesbians and heteroqueer ladies – individuals who are attracted to members of the opposite sex, but *feel* as though they “should” be members of the opposite sex with same-sex sexual desires.

⁶ Solomon et al. (2005) also collected data from heterosexually married men and women (N = 412), but those comparisons were not pertinent here.

had lower incomes. This finding must be viewed cautiously, however, as the measure consisted only of individual income, not household income. Those in civil unions may have been more likely to opt for lower paying jobs or non-employment because of the stability and financial security offered by the partner's income. This would manifest as deflated incomes for members of civil unions, despite the possibility that their household incomes are higher than those not in civil unions.

Though McDermott (2006) did not include members of legally recognized relationships, the study did speak to effects of income on mental health. She found that working-class lesbians were more likely to work in environments of compulsory heterosexuality than lesbians with higher incomes, and such environments were detrimental to their mental health. Thus, if participation in a legally sanctioned relationship does lead to greater income attainment, this could translate into positive effects on mental health as well. A second study looked at the physical health of lesbians, citing high rates of sedentary lifestyles (Brittain et al. 2006). This focus group study of 21 lesbians ages 22-61 explored reasons why the women were not more physically active. Although the study did not compare women based on their relationship status, the authors identified common and consistent barriers that pointed to possible benefits of a committed relationship and/or legal marriage. Many women did not exercise because they either did not have someone with whom to exercise, a situation which could be remedied by a supportive partner, legally recognized or not. Among those with partners, however, the cost of two gym memberships versus one family membership proved prohibitive. Legal marriage would allow the couples, and their children when applicable, to pay for a single family membership.

Explanations for several marital gains among different-sex couples invoke the importance of a deep commitment to another person, feeling accountable to one's partner, support from social networks formed upon marriage, and societal expectations placed on the couple. Although these factors are stronger among married, rather than cohabiting,

different-sex couples, they may or may not distinguish lesbian and gay couples who have a legal union from those who simply cohabit. Married and cohabiting same-sex couples may be more similar to each other than are married and cohabiting different-sex couples in terms of commitment to the relationship, feelings of accountability, and other factors that could be responsible for part of the effect that marriage has for different-sex couples. The lack of institutionalization of same-sex relationships may in fact have a strong impact on variation in levels of commitment by relationships status between same-sex and different-sex couples. Because domestic partnerships, civil unions, and same-sex marriage are all fairly recent developments, a much greater proportion of highly committed same-sex couples may remain cohabiting compared to the proportion of equally committed different-sex couples. Different-sex couples with that level of commitment are likely to have selected into marriage, as it is currently a far more institutionalized, normative step in the life course of heterosexual romantic relationships than for same-sex relationships.

Some circumstantial evidence exists that people in committed same-sex relationships, though not married, may experience health benefits. First, Wells et al.'s (2006) study of lesbians and bisexual women found that respondents who were more likely to be in a partnered relationship were also more likely to have recently performed a breast self-examination. Although they indicate that the relationship could be spurious, resulting from an effect of age, it may be that the presence of a committed partner to which one is accountable encourages preventive health behavior. Second, Young et al.'s (2004) longitudinal study of HIV patients undergoing antiretroviral treatment found that patients in a stable, long-term (six months or more) relationship, whether same-sex or different-sex, progressed to AIDS more slowly and lived longer than single patients. Third, in an in-depth study of the social behavior and personal lives of 35 lesbians, a theme emerged around the effect of a partner on the consumption of alcoholic beverages (Gruskin et al. 2006). Women reported that they frequented bars less often when they

had a partner and were more likely to go out drinking when they were single. Fourth, having a steady male partner was related to a significantly lower prevalence of multiple drug use among gay men in a survey of over 2000 men who have sex with men (Stall et al. 2001).

In addition, a health-related legal benefit of same-sex marriage is that spouses of ill lesbians and gay men would be considered next of kin for purposes of medical decision making. Though it is not my intention here to summarize the legal privileges granted to married couples, the legal status of a partner as a spouse can have concrete health and “quality of life” outcomes (Riggle et al. 2006). For example a patient who is no longer capable of making her or his own medical decisions would be decidedly in the hands of a same-sex spouse were same-sex marriage universally recognized. As it now stands, the rights of a same-sex partner are virtually nonexistent. Especially in cases where the patient has been ostracized from his or her family of origin, the legal next of kin may not be aware of the patient’s wishes with regard to life-saving and life-supporting measures.

Two studies address the role of relationship commitment in sexual satisfaction and the effect of relationship satisfaction on financial wellbeing, respectively. First, Smith and Horne (2008) reported that, among their sample of lesbians and bisexual women, living with a committed partner has a positive effect on sexual satisfaction. Second, relationship satisfaction was predictive of financial planning among a sample of both different-sex and lesbian couples (Mock and Cornelius 2007). Specifically, a higher level of relationship satisfaction was related to whether a couple had discussed and engaged in retirement planning, and this effect was stronger for lesbian couples than for both married and cohabiting different-sex couples.

In a different approach, Kurdek (2006) compared same-sex couples to different-sex couples on numerous relationship characteristics, including income, frequency of sexual contact, and equality in the division of household labor. Although he did not

compare different types of same-sex relationships to each other, his results indicated that unmarried same-sex couples and married different-sex couples were similar on these characteristics. This provides some circumstantial evidence that same-sex relationships without legal status may function similarly to relationships (whether same- or different-sex) that are legally recognized.

Perhaps the strongest argument against the application of the heterosexual marriage benefit model to gay and lesbian couples is that same-sex couples may marry and cohabit for different reasons than different-sex couples (Lewin 1998). Research shows that men and women cohabit with one another for many reasons, several of which involve some reference to marriage. For example, some cohabit because they do not yet feel ready or cannot yet afford to marry, some cohabit in protest against marriage, and some cohabit as a way to “test out” a possible marriage, (Heuveline and Timberlake 2004; Manning and Smock 2002; Sassler 2004; Smock 2000). Until very recently, same-sex couples could not make cohabitation decisions with reference to marriage, and in 49 U.S. states, they still cannot. A same-sex couple’s cohabitation decision comes from a smaller array of possibilities, which may not include marriage or domestic partnership. This may cause same-sex couples who cohabit and those who have a legal marriage to be more similar to each other in terms of mental health, economic well-being, and sexual satisfaction than are different-sex cohabiting and married people. In other words, the motivations that sort heterosexuals into (or out of) marriage and singlehood may not be the same processes that affect which same-sex couples will take part in legal marriage. The first place to look to discern different motivational processes is the variety of reasons people choose to marry.

The reasons behind a decision to marry are surely rooted in the meaning one ascribes to marriage, and different-sex and same-sex couples may define marriage differently. What determines whether a couple is “married?” Certainly, the vast majority of heterosexuals would assume the presence of a legal marriage certificate when

answering this question. Lesbians and gay men, however, may have a broader definition of what it means to be married as the result of their past or present inability to obtain a marriage certificate.⁷ Lewin (1998; 2001) describes the self-declaration of marriage among same-sex couples, ranging from making a claim on marital terminology to holding elaborate public ceremonies (see also Sherman 1992). Hull (2003) recounts the various ways in which couples enact marriage in the absence of legal recognition. Perhaps same-sex couples who enact marriage are just as likely to remain cohabiting as they are to participate in legal marriage when the option is available. If so, committed cohabitators and legal spouses are, in essence, the same group and will be very similar on dimensions of health, wealth, and sexual satisfaction. In this instance the most instructive comparison groups would be those who are or are not enacting a marriage-like relationship, rather than those who are or are not married.

A few studies have addressed the division of household labor in gay and lesbian households. Carrington's (1999) book on cohabiting lesbian and gay couples in the San Francisco Bay area examines their division of domestic labor. Carrington illustrates that in same-sex households one or both partners must perform housework typically delegated to members of the opposite sex. This gives rise to the need to manage gender identity and a need for creative solutions to gender identity inconsonance. Despite the couples' identical biological sex, the relationship is not gender-neutral. Similar to findings among different-sex couples, the author learned that gay and lesbian couples find ways to construe their housework division as fair despite glaring inequities. Carrington also touches on the effect that occupational sex-segregation and the accompanying gap in pay and work schedule inflexibility have on the division of labor among his sample.

⁷ Evidence that same-sex couples enter into registered partnerships for similar reasons to different-sex couples comes from Norway (Halvorsen 1998).

Similarly, in her pilot studies of lesbian couples, Giddings (1998) found that couples had a wide range of household labor divisions, which, like those of different-sex couples, were tied to income and gender-role ideology.

In contrast to these conclusions of substantial housework inequities, Balsam et al. (2008) found that lesbian and gay couples with children shared housework more or less equally, with both people doing about 6-10 hours of housework per week. Their reported hours align with those of heterosexually married fathers; it was only heterosexually married mothers who deviated, reporting 11-20 hours of housework per week. Solomon et al. (2005) concluded that same-sex couples were more egalitarian in their division of household labor than different-sex couples because sexual orientation was a better predictor of the division of labor than income, but, within the sample of lesbians and gay men, the authors found no significant difference between people in a civil union and those not in a civil union on any of 19 measures of household labor.

Although none of these studies addresses Becker's ideas on specialization and economic efficiency, same-sex couples provide interesting cases for teasing out sex and gender in his theory. Becker (1981) posits that the most efficient arrangement for couples is for the nurturing member of the couple to tend to the home and children and for the instrumental member to engage in paid employment. In heterosexual couples, this generally translates into women working within the home and men participating in the paid workforce, as women tend to enact nurturing roles and men tend to enact instrumental roles (that is, sex and gender usually align). In same-sex couples, both paid labor and household labor must still be accomplished, but, because both people are the same sex, some of the required work will fall into what Becker would describe as the gendered category that aligns with the opposite sex.

Same-sex relationships are the ideal place to test the relative resources and time-availability explanations, which are gender-neutral. Past research by Carrington (1999) touches on the applicability of these explanations to the division of household labor

among same-sex cohabitators. If either or both of the relative resources and time-availability explanations holds among same-sex couples, whereby the person with the most money performs the least housework, or the person who works the fewest hours performs the most housework, it would be strong evidence that the effects are not tied up in gender per se, but in structural locations within family and workplace. Because gay men and lesbians are more liberal on social issues than the U.S. population on average (Egan and Sherril 2006; Hertzog 1996), I would expect their division of household labor to be decided on a more rational basis, such as time availability, than on the power-based relative resources explanation.

A sample of same-sex couples is also an interesting venue to explore the way that gender operates in same-sex relationships by applying the “doing gender” explanations. Because sex and gender are conflated in studies of different-sex couples, measuring the gender identity of same-sex couples will help isolate the effect of gender, rather than sex, on household labor. In the analyses in Chapter 6, I conducted a test of test of the three competing theories, employing an innovative test of the “doing gender” explanation. Rather than testing whether men or women did more housework, I looked at the effect of two independent aspects of gender – femininity and masculinity – on housework contributions. This allowed for the possibility that an individual could express high (or low) levels of both femininity and masculinity, rather than treating the two as polar opposites on a single continuum. My analyses help uncover the real “doing” of personal gender, not just the enactment of gender-typed behavior foisted upon the sexes. Past tests of “doing gender” through housework may actually be testing role theory, in which people behave in ways that help confirm the roles they have taken on (or into which they have been placed). In role theory, gender categories exist independently of human behavior, and people tailor their behavior to suit their desired category (e.g., “I do laundry because I am feminine.”). At the heart of “doing gender,” however, is the idea that gender categories exist *because of* human behavior (e.g., “I am feminine because I do

laundry.”). By testing for effects of masculinity and femininity, rather than sex, I am better able to discern the ways in which people create their gender identities through gender-typed housework behavior.

CHAPTER III. METHODS

To test whether same-sex marriage and/or civil unions provide their participants with the same benefits experienced by heterosexually married spouses, I conducted a survey that included people of all sexual orientations and relationship statuses and applied the marriage benefits model specifically to people in same-sex romantic relationships and single people who report same-sex attraction. I also tested whether gender-based explanations of the division of household labor lend their explanatory power to same-sex couples.

Survey Overview

When respondents reached the survey webpage, they were greeted with a welcome and several paragraphs of consent information. They read a description of the types of questions the survey would include and were informed of their rights and relevant privacy information. They were instructed that they were free to quit the survey at any time, and their completion of the survey indicated their willingness to participate in the study (as a written, signed consent form was not plausible with online participation). The internet-based survey consisted of seven question sets. The first set (“Background”) included basic demographic questions, and questions about the respondent’s children and employment. The second set (“Relationship”) focused on the respondent’s relationship, covering relationship status, sex of partner, relationship duration, commitment, general and sexual satisfaction, past marriages, and sexual attraction. The third set (“Household Labor”), was only asked of certain respondents. Those currently living with a romantic partner (cohabiting, civil unions, and marriages) received questions about the division of housework, and those with coresidential children received questions about the division of childcare between the respondent and the partner. The fourth set (“Family”) obtained background information on the respondent’s family of orientation, the composition of the household during the respondent’s

childhood, and the current partner's employment. The fifth set ("Feelings") consisted of scales measuring depression, anxiety, and general stress. The sixth set ("Attitudes") included gender ideology and gender identity scales. Finally, the seventh set ("Health") inquired about the respondent's general health as well as substance use.

Sampling Procedures

I recruited participants through a variety of methods, including mailings to a random sample of Boston-area residents, announcements on public posting boards in the Boston area, email newsletter announcements to Massachusetts LGB e-news subscribers, and snowball samples both through academic (faculty and graduate student) contacts across the United States and through Boston LGB organizations.

First, I obtained a random sample of 2000 residents in four target zip codes⁸, chosen for being known as gay- and lesbian-friendly neighborhoods, from the 2006 Boston and Somerville municipal censuses. I initiated contact with potential respondents via postal mail, explaining the purpose of the study and providing instructions on how to participate. I also indicated in the letter that the survey could also be completed over the phone or on paper; I provided my phone number and mailing address for those who wished to participate but did not want to do so via the internet. The mailing contained a business card with the survey website, my contact information, and a unique access code. I had hoped this card would increase my response rate, as respondents could pocket the card and refer to it when they reached their computers. During the four days in which residents received the postal mailings, I also visited the four neighborhoods. I posted announcements in shops, bookstores, coffee houses, libraries, community centers, and on public posting boards and spoke with local merchants and residents at these places. The

⁸ Zip codes represented the neighborhoods of Back Bay, South End, and Jamaica Plain and the City of Somerville.

postings provided a brief version of the information contained in the mailing, along with a pocket containing business cards printed with the survey website and my contact information.

The original strategies of postal mail announcements and local postings yielded just 147 responses⁹, only 20 of which were members of same-sex couples. Because I did not obtain data from a sufficient number of people in same-sex relationships, I employed additional techniques to oversample this group.¹⁰

My next strategy was aimed at making survey access and quick and direct as possible. Because the previous strategies required participants to obtain the survey information and then take the information to a computer, I believed that they would be more likely to respond if they received the information while at their computers. I began searching for online outlets for the survey information, and found Edge publications. Edge is an online news sources that publishes “news, entertainment, business, style, health, fitness, sports, travel and weather information... to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) community” (Edge Publications 2008). They maintain several lists of email addresses of people who wish to receive e-newsletters. Individuals and companies can pay to have an announcement sent to one of these lists about an event or product. I commissioned two such announcements – one to the Provincetown list and

⁹ Postal mailings yielded 131 respondents, a response rate of just over 6.5%. The local postings provided 16 additional respondents.

¹⁰ I began locating additional respondents through 13 organizations and groups (PrideSports Boston, Boston Gay Men’s Chorus, Gay Fathers of Greater Boston, Am Tikva, Beantown Softball, Bisexual Resource Center, Fenway Community Health, Boston Strikers, Metropolitan Community Church, First Church Unitarian, First Congregational Church, Gays for Patsy, and Swingtime Boston) focused on the needs and interests of lesbians, bisexuals, and gay men. I sent emails to those organizations that provided an email address online and left phone messages for those that gave phone numbers. I followed up one week later with additional emails and phone messages. One organization responded to my emails, and one returned my phone calls; neither was willing to distribute the survey information.

one to the Boston list. People can add their email addresses to any list they wish, not just the list corresponding to their area of residence. As a result, the announcement was sent to people across the United States who have interest in events taking place in Provincetown and Boston. This method yielded 258 responses, 217 of which were in a same-sex couple and/or reported same-sex sexual attraction.

The final sampling strategy utilized academic channels. I emailed 78 researchers in sociology and related fields who had recently published research related to same-sex couples, and I sent an email to the listserv of the Sociologists for Women in Society, which reaches thousands of faculty members and students. In the email message, I introduced myself and the reason for my contact, and I asked them to pass on a follow-up email (designed to be forwarded directly to potential respondents without requiring the sender to write an introduction or explanation) to any colleagues, organizations, friends, or family who might be willing to respond. An additional 298 responses came in through these channels, 161 of which were in same-sex couples and/or reported same-sex attraction.

Although the purpose of the study was to compare individuals in same-sex couples and same-sex attracted single people, I encouraged all people to participate. A broader sample would allow me to test the applicability of the marriage benefits model to members of different-sex couples and serve as a litmus test of whether the results could be an artifact of the unique characteristics of people in this particular sample. Further, by including single people in the sample, I would be able to test whether people in relationships, broadly defined, had any advantages over single people. This comparison would help me avoid a common pitfall of past studies, in which cohabiting and single people are grouped together in a comparison to married people.

Key Variables

Independent Variables

The main independent variables were relationship status designations.

Delineating a clear picture of relationship status has proven difficult in past surveys (see Andersson et al. 2006), most notably the U.S. Census. The result has been chronic and significant miscategorization of same-sex couples. I believe the confusion has stemmed from the particular combination of multiple variables used to arrive at what is really a single, couple-level characteristic: relationship status. In the past the U.S. Census viewed all same-sex relationships, as well as different-sex unmarried couples, as types of household arrangements akin to roommates or boarders rather than as relationships. In the household composition questions, partners were classified as “secondary individuals,” who are “people of any age who reside in a household, but are not related to the householder” (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). The Census used measures of marital status, household composition, respondent’s sex, and the sex of all household members to measure relationship status. Problems arose when the person labeled “householder’s spouse” was the same sex as the householder. In 1990, the Census Bureau used a data “cleaning” scheme to change either the spouse’s sex or the label of “spouse” so that no same-sex spouses remained; changes were allocated according to values on other variables (age, sex, and marital status) in an effort to mirror distributions by geographic area. This sometimes resulted in an “unmarried partner” demarcation, but also sometimes produced classifications as adult siblings or even parent-child relationships if the age difference was greater than 15 years. In 2000, the allocation scheme was changed so that same-sex spouses were simply recategorized as unmarried couples, partially in an effort to correct miscategorization of same-sex couples and partially because marital status was no longer included on the short form in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau), an allocation

scheme that the Census Bureau believes produced a more valid measure than the complex scheme from 1990.

I categorized relationships (same-sex and different-sex) using a single variable. This method recognizes that same-sex relationships can vary as much as different-sex relationships, and precludes the problems associated with classifying all same-sex relationships as “unmarried partnerships.” The response categories I provided are (a) single, not dating; (b) single, dating casually; (c) in a steady dating relationships; (d) living with a romantic partner; (e) in a legally registered civil union / partnership; and (f) in a marriage legally recognized by a U.S. state. The question was carefully designed to distinguish romantic partners who are not cohabiting from those who are cohabiting, and to distinguish couples who are cohabiting without a legal designation from those who have some type of legally binding relationship. I also avoid the confusion of non-romantic roommates and boarders with romantic partners by focusing the question on the respondent’s romantic relationship rather than asking about the entire household. Finally, the question was designed to discourage people who are not legally married but consider themselves married from self-categorizing into the “married” group. To capture the meaningful self-identification as “spouses” among people who are not in a legal marriage, I included the question: “Regardless of whether the State recognizes your relationship, do you and your partner/spouse think of yourselves as married?”

I separated same-sex and different-sex couples by comparing the sex of the respondent to the sex of the romantic partner. I used clearly worded questions to obtain information on sex (“What is your biological sex?” and “What is the biological sex of your romantic partner[spouse]?”) to reduce confusion of sex and gender. Transgendered people may have been more likely to respond according to their chromosomal sex if the question refers to “biological sex” rather than “sex” or “gender.”

Rather than include a question on sexual orientation that relies on labels of “heterosexual,” “homosexual,” and “bisexual,” I included an item for sexual attraction:

“People are different in their sexual attraction to other people. Which best describes your feelings?” Respondents chose from the options: (a) only attracted to males, (b) mostly attracted to males, (c) equally attracted to males and females, (d) mostly attracted to females, and (e) only attracted to females.¹¹ Respondents might have been hesitant to choose a label for themselves that is laden with social, emotional, and political meaning but may have felt more at liberty to provide an accurate response to a question on sexual attraction. If a respondent was not in a same-sex romantic relationship, but responded that s/he was only or mostly attracted to people of the same sex or was equally attracted to both males and females, I included them in my analyses as same-sex attracted singles.

In the exploratory portions of the study, I went beyond existing theories based on relationship status to test the importance of alternative relationship measures in predicting health, wealth, sexual satisfaction, and household labor. Alternative relationship characteristics included relationship commitment¹², relationship duration (measured in years since the couple’s relationship began), and the question “Regardless of whether the State recognizes your relationship, do you and your partner/spouse think of yourselves as married?¹³”

To test the three competing theories of the division of household labor, I included measures of gender, proportional work hours, and proportional income. The gender measures utilized a short form of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem 1974) derived

¹¹ The survey item on sexual attraction is from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth, conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

¹² Response set: Highly committed, committed, somewhat committed, not committed, undecided. Responses of “Undecided” (n = 5) were categorized as “Not Committed” for analytical purposes, as this response indicated a, well, lack of commitment. The undecided response was intended to capture the feelings people who were not committed to their relationship, but were uncomfortable giving a socially undesirable response.

¹³ Response set: Yes, No.

by Zhang et al. (2001). The short form lists 16 items, eight of which indicate a masculine orientation and eight of which indicate a feminine orientation. Respondents used a seven-point Likert-type scale to indicate how much they feel each item applied to them in general. Appendix A provides a description of the response categories and the list of items. I averaged each respondent's scores on the eight items in each subscale to capture femininity and masculinity as independent characteristics. The Cronbach's alphas were .92 for the femininity scale and .84 for the masculinity scale.

Proportional work hours and income were appropriate given the proportional measure of housework. I computed proportional work hours by summing the average (over the course of a year) weekly work hours of the respondent and his/her spouse/partner, and dividing the respondent's work hours by the sum. Similarly, proportional income was the respondent's income divided by the total household income. Proportional measures are useful for interpretation because they control for the level of cleanliness in a household, the amount of work the children create, and the outsourcing of household labor.

Dependent Variables

The main relationship benefits I tested for were wealth, sexual satisfaction, and health. I measured wealth in terms of respondent's income, savings and investments (in dollar value), and household income. Household income was the sum of the respondent's income and the income of his/her romantic partner if the respondent was in a co-residential relationship (cohabiting, in a civil union, or legally married). Two measures were useful in capturing the sexual quality of a relationship – frequency of sexual contact and sexual satisfaction. Although people are generally more satisfied with having more sexual contact with their partners, this is not always the case. Some couples may have frequent, unsatisfying sex, and others may be well satisfied without any sexual contact. Thus, I included two questions: (1) "In general, how satisfied would you say you are with

the sexual aspects of your romantic relationship?”¹⁴ and (2) “How often do you and your current romantic partner have sexual contact?”¹⁵ I chose to use the phrase “sexual contact” rather than “sex” or “intercourse,” as different couples define sex differently. Because I was interested in the individual’s experience of her/his sexual interactions, I chose to use the broader term and allow each respondent to respond according to her/his own definition of “sexual contact.” Scores on the sexual satisfaction scale were reversed, so that a higher number indicated greater sexual satisfaction, and responses to the frequency of sexual contact question were converted into the number of sexual interludes per month.

Because people in different-sex marriages experience both physical and mental health benefits, I measure both in the survey. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (Lovibond and Lovibond 1995a) short form (DASS₂₁) includes a seven-item scale addressing each of these three aspects of mental health. Respondents rate 21 statements on a four-point Likert-type scale according to how much each statement applied to them over the past week. The instrument yields three scores, one each for depression, anxiety, and stress. The score for each subscale is the mean of the seven items corresponding to that subscale; scores range from one to four. Appendix C provides the 21 statements and a description of the response set.

The 21 items in the shortened version of the DASS were chosen for meeting three criteria: (1) good factor loadings, (2) complete coverage of symptom sets within each of the three subscales, and (3) mean scores that were very close to half the value of mean scores on the original, 42-item version (PFA 2006). The DASS₂₁ is a particularly good

¹⁴ Response set includes: extremely satisfied, very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat satisfied, unsatisfied, very unsatisfied.

¹⁵ Response set includes: most days, a few times per week, about once per week, a few times per month, about once per month, less than once per month, never.

measure for this type of survey, as it is concise and retains the properties of good validity and reliability. Whereas the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI; Beck and Steer 1990) includes items that mostly address symptoms of panic disorder, the DASS₂₁ allows for the assessment of more general features of anxiety, including worry and tension (Antony et al. 1998). In Antony et al.'s study, Cronbach's alphas for the DASS₂₁ were .94, .87, and .91 for depression, anxiety, and stress, respectively. Comparing the DASS and DASS₂₁ to three other major scales, the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck et al. 1979), the BAI, and the Trait version of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger 1983), yielded high correlations between the three DASS scales and their corresponding analogs, demonstrating good concurrent validity. Also, a community-based sample scored lower on all three scales than clinical samples, and within the clinical samples, those who were being treated for a particular problem (depression, anxiety, or stress) scored higher on the DASS scale corresponding to their problem than on the other two DASS scales. Although the three scales are moderately intercorrelated (PFA 2006), factor analysis shows that a three-scale model improves the model fit to the data compared to one- and two-scale models (Crawford and Henry 2003; Lovibond and Lovibond 1995b). In addition, compared to the 42-item version, the 21-item version shows less intercorrelation among scales and a more precise factor structure (Antony et al. 1998). Among the sample in the current study, the Cronbach's alphas for the DASS₂₁ were .89, .79, and .85 for depression, anxiety, and stress, respectively. This is a similar pattern of results to that found by Antony et al., but slightly lower for each subscale.

Marriage has been shown to be associated with better general health as well as a decrease in health-risk behavior. I included a measure of self-rated health from the National Health Interview Survey (NCSH 2005): "In general, would you say your health

is?”¹⁶ This measure has demonstrated a test-retest reliability of .92 (Lorig et al. 1996). The question is non-comparative in nature; that is, it does not ask respondents to rate their health relative to others of their age, and the Likert-type response set provides five labeled choices rather than a continuum with labels only at the poles. These characteristics increase validity and reliability compared to other methods of measuring self-rated health (Eriksson et al. 2001). I also asked respondents whether they smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, and/or use other recreational drugs. Follow ups to these questions inquired about the extent of substance use, including the number of cigarettes per day, the number of drinks in an average week, and the frequency of recreational drug use.

Household labor was divided into two matrix questions in the survey, one on housework and one on child care, both derived from items in the National Survey of Families and Households (Sweet, Bumpass, and Call 1988). The two matrix questions appear in Appendix D. I measured the division of housework by asking respondents to indicate how they divide the work associated with each of nine tasks involved in maintaining a household, using the response set: (1) I do all the work, (2) I do most of the work (3) We divide the work equally, (4) My spouse/partner does most of the work, and (5) My spouse/partner does all of the work. I reversed the numerical values of the responses, so that a higher score indicated that the respondent does a greater proportion of the housework. I then averaged the respondent’s scores on the nine items. The Cronbach’s alpha for the total housework scale was .40. This is quite low, demonstrating high levels of diversity within subjects in the proportion of each task they performed.

I also divided the household tasks into “female-typed” (cooking, dishes, cleaning, shopping, laundry, driving) and “male-typed” (outdoor tasks, auto maintenance)

¹⁶ Response set: excellent, very good, good, fair, poor.

housework measures. Cronbach's alphas for these subscales were much higher than for the total housework measure: .60 for female-typed tasks and .55 for male-typed tasks, demonstrating that the gender-type of the tasks explains a good portion of the variability in the total housework scale. Female-typed chores differ from male-typed in that they occur on a more regular, often daily, basis and must be completed in a timely matter when the need arises (Barnett and Shen 1997). These tasks are sometimes referred to as "routine" housework (Coltrane 2000). Male-typed tasks, on the contrary, are performed sporadically and can often be put off for days or even weeks at one's convenience (Barnett and Shen 1997). Research suggests that bill paying is gender-neutral (see Coltrane 2000) and so was not included in either the female-typed or male-typed housework subscales. Male- and female-typed housework scores were calculated in the same way as the total housework score described above; scores were reversed and averaged within each type.

I measured the division of child care by asking respondents to indicate how they and their partner/spouse divide the work associated with each of nine tasks involved in raising children, using the same response set as the housework matrix. The tasks included helping with homework/educational play, playing with the child(ren), disciplining, having one-on-one talks, feeding the child(ren), dressing/diapering, putting the child(ren) to bed, bathing the child(ren), comforting the child(ren) when upset. I added a final option to the response set: "All children do this alone." The matrix is designed so that parents with children of all ages can respond to the same list. For example, parents with older children could simply respond that all children dress and bathe themselves. As with the housework measures, I reversed and averaged the scores on each item, assigning a value of 3 when the children performed a task on their own (indicating that neither spouse/partner did a greater share of the task). This yielded a single value ranging from one to five with a higher value indicating that the respondent does a larger proportion of the child care than her/his spouse or partner.

Control Variables

Control variable included age, race-ethnicity, education, family background, non-employment, gender progressivism, religion, job-related stress, work schedule, and family background. Age was included in its fully continuous form in models where the main independent or dependent variable was related to age in a fundamental way, such as in relationship duration models and models predicting financial wellbeing. In other models, where age was not expected to impact the main effect in a continuous manner, I included two dummy variables to control for adolescence (under age 25) and mature age (over age 60). Race-ethnicity was modeled as three dummy variables: black, Hispanic, and other race, with white, non-Hispanic as the excluded category. Although I allowed respondents to select as many racial-ethnic categories as they wished, I categorized people as non-Hispanic whites only if they selected that option to the exclusion of all others. This decision is based on research demonstrating that multi-racial people have social experiences, racism in particular, that are more similar to racial and ethnic minorities than to non-Hispanic whites (Aranda and Rebollo-Gill 2004; Brackett et al. 2006). If a respondent selected Hispanic, I categorized that person as Hispanic regardless of whether s/he selected other options¹⁷; I did the same if a respondent selected Black¹⁸ (none of the respondents selected both the Hispanic and Black options). I made this decision because Black and Hispanic are the next largest and most recognizable racial-ethnic categories in American society. People who did not self identify as non-Hispanic white, Hispanic, or Black were grouped as “other”¹⁹. In this sample, the racial-ethnic identities of

¹⁷ Twenty-seven people who selected Hispanic selected one or more additional options.

¹⁸ Thirteen people who selected Black selected one or more additional options.

¹⁹ One person who selected Other selected one or more additional options.

respondents in the “other” category included Asian, Indian, Native American, Middle Eastern, and Pacific Islander.

To represent family background, I asked respondents to report the education levels of the woman and man with whom they lived for most of their childhood. For many respondents, this was their biological or adoptive mothers and fathers, but for others one or more of the parent-figures was a stepparent, foster parent, or grandparent. One respondent had been raised in a children’s home (conceivably similar to an orphanage), and so did not have a male or female parent-like adult. Also, because their parents’ work-family arrangement could influence respondents’ division of household labor, I asked whether their mother [or stepmother, grandmother, etc...] worked when they were a child (under age 12) and, if so, whether she worked part- or full-time. I then created a dummy variable indicating whether each respondent’s mother worked at least part time.

I included a dummy variable for non-employment in models predicting the respondent’s savings and investments as well as household income. I also included this variable in models predicting mental health, as people who are not employed are at greater risk for mental illnesses (Anderson et al. 2005; Dooley 2003; Scutella and Wooden 2008). The five-item gender ideology scale appears in Appendix B and was taken from the General Social Survey (Davis et al. 2005). I created a single measure of gender progressiveness by reversing scores on all but the egalitarian statement (Statement 1) and then averaging scores on the five items. The result was a measure ranging from one to five, with higher scores indicating gender progressiveness and lower scores indicating what is commonly called “gender traditionalism.” The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .76.

Religion, though not a main predictor, could conceivably affect both relationship status and the dependent variables. People’s religion could dictate what types of relationship arrangements are acceptable and can also be related to mental health,

economic success, and sexual behavior. I include two dummy variables to control for religion when appropriate. The first represented membership in a conservative religion, which included conservative Protestants, Muslims, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The second represented respondents with no religion, which included atheists and respondents who filled in the box for “other” with a response such as “none” or “no religion.” Job stress, measured with the question “How stressful do you feel your job is?” was useful in controlling for the effect of a stressful job on mental health. Finally, I controlled for non-standard work schedules with a dummy variable representing respondents who work rotating shifts, nights and/or weekends, split shifts, or irregular hours. People with regular hours or flexible schedules were the contrast group. In models predicting sexual satisfaction and frequency of sexual contact, the work schedule dummy variable represented membership in a couple in which one or both people work non-standard schedules.

Limitations of the Sample and Data

I must emphasize that my survey respondents are a non-representative sample. The sample is not representative of same-sex attracted individuals on any geographic level, and I do not have sufficient information to make statements about whether the sample is representative of same-sex attracted internet users, urban residents, or academicians. Although the sample is most likely more representative than the criticized samples in past research that used magazine-readerships or an exclusive snowball sampling approach that “snowballed” from one individual or group (see Patterson 2000), is it still important to emphasize the exploratory nature of the project and highlight the importance of accumulating research with nonprobability samples when better recruitment strategies are not feasible (see Christopher and Sprecher 2000). This project made great strides in improving representativeness by using multiple sampling techniques

and aiming snowball strategies at thousands of potential contacts through which subsequent respondents could be recruited.

The sampling methods used here introduce some potential biases. Because the vast majority of the sample was recruited through e-newsletters and academics-based snowball sampling, the sample is above average on internet literacy, education, and income. Although I did control for education and income, I cannot correct for the fact that I am missing data points at the lower ends of these variables. In addition, the data I do have from people without college degrees and people with low incomes are disproportionately from students, and it is likely that they are more similar to people in the well-educated, well-paid group, since they are more likely to become well-paid professionals than are other people within their current education and income groups. I attempted to address the oversampling of people in or related to academia by including a control variable for “academic recruitment” in any model for which it was significant (I then also used it consistently in any similar models, regardless of significance). Usually, the effect was small, but, people who are in academia or are friends with people in academia may have unique characteristics that change their experience of marriage benefits. Much of this was likely tied to effects of education, but the academic group was, on average, the most highly educated but not in the highest income group. They were also more likely to be in the legal recognition group than other people. This unique combination, present in a disproportionately large subset of the sample, could have affected the findings, especially for financial well-being.

Three measures that are unfortunately lacking from the dataset are (1) a measure of “outness,” the degree to which others are aware of the respondent’s same-sex sexual interest; (2) whether a same-sex couple has an advance directive (see Riggle et al. 2006), such as a will or powers of attorney, that provides their partner with some legal rights in the absence of legal marriage; and (3) a self-reported measure of whether the respondent was transgendered. Each of these would have been of great utility in furthering my

analytical capabilities, including the ability to assess the social reality in which the respondent experiences his/her relationship, to gauge the legal rights of a particular couple, and to capture the role of gender.

Analysis Overview

The plan of analysis included three steps. First, I began by examining descriptive statistics for the full sample. Second, I conducted the statistical models to assess the controlled association between relationship status, including legal recognition and cohabitation, and the dependent variables. Third, I repeated the analyses in step two using alternative relationship measures, including self-definition of marriage, relationship commitment, and relationship duration.²⁰

I employed the computer data analysis program SPSS for most statistical analyses. I analyzed wealth by conducting OLS regressions on respondent's logged income, respondent's savings and investments, and logged household income. Frequency of sexual contact and sexual satisfaction were modeled using OLS regression and ordered probit, respectively. To analyze mental health, I conducted OLS regressions on each of the three scales in the DASS (depression, anxiety, and stress). For physical health I used ordered probit for self-rated health, logit for whether the respondent smoked cigarettes, and zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) models for alcoholic beverage consumption. A ZINB model is a type of event count regression model that allows for the possibility that the factors that influence whether a person drinks, for example, are different from the factors that influence the number a drinks that a drinker has in a week (or that the factors

²⁰ Originally, the fourth step was to conduct selection models using endogenous switching regressions to explore whether any effects I found could be due to differential selection into marriage. However, because I did not find that legal relationship status was a good predictor of the outcome variables, it made little sense to conduct selection models.

can have different effects on the likelihood that one drinks than they have on the number of drinks a drinker has in a week). This statistical method estimates the two processes simultaneously. First, a binomial logit model predicts the likelihood of being in the group that will never experience the event (e.g., non-drinkers). Second, it estimates a count model in which predicted values are partially a factor of the predicted probabilities estimated in the logit model. This interactive process repeats in numerous iterations until the models converge.

To analyze the division of household labor, I conducted separate models not only for the three dependent measures (total, female-typed, and male-typed housework), but also for the three competing theories – gender, time-availability, and relative resources. Also, because past research with different-sex couples has shown differences in the distribution of housework between married and cohabiting couples, I created interactions of the various relationship status variables and alternative relationship measures with the variable representing the three theories. Thus, in step two of the housework analysis, I conducted four models in which total housework was predicted by femininity, masculinity, proportional work hours, and proportional income (the four “theory variables,” as I will refer to them here), respectively. In each of these four models, I also created interactions of legal relationship status with the respective theory variable. The interaction answers the question, for example, of whether the effect of femininity on one’s proportion of housework is stronger for married couples than for cohabiting couples. Also in step two, I repeated these four models for female-typed and male-typed housework. Then, in step three of the analysis, I conducted four models, including one each of the four “theory variables” for four alternative relationship measures: self-definition of marriage, commitment ceremony, relationship commitment, and relationship duration. I ran a separate model for each relationship measure so that I could interact the relationship measure with the theory variable in the given model.

Unfortunately, I was not able to analyze differences in child care, as only 34 respondents (8%) had children living in their household. Thus, the household labor portion of this project is limited to housework contributions.

Table 1 summarizes the list of relationship status and relationship characteristic variables, outcome measures of “marriage” benefits, “theory” variables representing the three theories that potentially explain household labor, the outcome measures of housework, and control variables.

Sample Characteristics

The number of respondents totaled 761 people from across the United States, with an oversampling of Massachusetts residents. Of these, 429 were in a same-sex relationship and/or expressed same-sex attraction. Relationships included steady dating relationships (n = 55), cohabiting relationships (n = 175), civil unions and domestic partnerships (n = 29), and marriages (n = 40). Same-sex attracted singles were those who identified as single and responded that they were only attracted to people of their same sex, mostly attracted to people of their same sex, or were equally attracted to men and women (n = 130).

Demographic Information

Table 2 contains descriptive information on all variables for the total sample and for each of the four relationship status groups described above. Women made up over half of the married/civil union subsample, but were just over 1/3 of the sample overall. The large majority (85%) were white, non-Hispanics. Hispanics were the second largest racial-ethnic group (7%), followed by Blacks (3%). The mean age was about 41 years, with respondents ranging from 18 to 77 years of age. People in the sample were much better off than the nation at large, with the mean annual income nearing \$60,000 and a mean household income of \$90,000. This is partially explained by the greater-than-average educational level of the sample. On average, respondents had about 16.5 years

Table 1: Summary of Variables in Analyses

Variable Type	Variable	Chapter(s) in Which Variable is Analyzed
Independent Variables	Legal Recognition	Chapter 4
	Cohabitation	
	Self-Defined Marriage	Chapter 5
	Commitment Ceremony	
	Femininity	Chapter 6
	Masculinity	
	Proportional Work Hours	
Proportional Income		
Dependent Variables	Logged Income	Chapters 4 and 5
	Savings and Investments	
	Per Capita Household Income	
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	
	Sexual Satisfaction	
	General Health	
	Cigarette Smoking	
	Alcohol Consumption	
	Depression	
	Anxiety	
	Stress	
	Total Housework	Chapter 6
	Female-Typed Housework	
Male-Typed Housework		
Control Variables	Biological Sex	Chapters 4 and 5
	Mother's Education	
	Father's Education	
	R Not Employed	
	Job Stress	
	Non-Standard Work Schedule	
	Gender Progressivism	
	Conservative Religion	Chapters 4, 5, and 6
	No Religion	
	Race	
	Age	
	Education	
	Work Hours	
	Household Size	
	Preschooler in Household	
	Legal Recognition Available in R's State	
R's Mother Worked	Chapter 6	

of education, or, about half a year of schooling past college graduation. In part, the higher income can also be attributed to the fact that over 2/3 of sample resided in urban areas (as defined by the US Census Bureau) with populations greater than 300,000. The higher costs of living in urban areas translate into higher salaries, relative to people performing the same job in suburban and rural areas. One final characteristic of interest for this sample was the relative lack of religious identification. Nearly a quarter of respondents in a marriage/civil union and 11% of cohabitators self-identified as being atheist or responded “none” or “no religion.”

Alternative Relationship Measures

Although only 40 respondents were members of same-sex marriages and 29 were in civil unions or domestic partnerships, nearly 200 people responded “Yes” to the question, “Regardless of whether the State recognizes your relationship, do you and your partner/spouse think of yourselves as married?” In addition, not all of the people who were married or had obtained a civil union had celebrated some kind of commitment ceremony: 87% of those who were married or in a civil union had had a commitment ceremony. Of those who were cohabiting without some form of legal recognition, 15% had had a commitment ceremony. Commitment ceremonies appear to be common, though not universal, among those with legal recognition, but were only chosen by a small percentage of cohabiting couples.

Other Characteristics of Interest

A few other descriptive comparisons proved interesting. First, people who were single (not dating) were significantly older and better off financially than people who were in a steady dating relationship. Second, people in marriages and civil unions had significantly more progressive gender role attitudes than single people. This contradicts the usual trend found among heterosexual samples, in which marriage has a

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Variables in Analyses for LGB Sample

	Total LGB Sample	Married/ Civil Union	Cohabiting	Dating	Single
	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>
Commitment Ceremony	.20*** (.40)	.87 _{abc} (.34)	.15 _{ade} (.36)	.00 _{bd} (.00)	.00 _{ce} (.00)
Consider Self Married	.46*** (.49)	.97 _{abc} (.17)	.73 _{ade} (.44)	.07 _{bd} (.26)	.00 _{ce} (.00)
Female	.38*** (.49)	.57 _{ab} (.50)	.44 _c (.50)	.31 _a (.47)	.23 _{bc} (.42)
Age	40.57*** (12.82)	43.51 _a (11.42)	42.46 _b (12.44)	33.55 _{abc} (11.64)	39.42 _c (13.38)
Over age 60	.07 (.26)	.07 (.26)	.10 (.30)	.04 (.19)	.06 (.24)
Under age 25	.10*** (.31)	.00 _{ab} (.00)	.05 _{cd} (.21)	.29 _{ace} (.46)	.16 _{bde} (.37)
White	.85** (.36)	.88 (.32)	.90 _a (.30)	.85 (.36)	.75 _a (.43)
Black	.03** (.17)	.03 (.17)	.006 _a (.08)	.02 (.13)	.07 _a (.25)
Hispanic	.07 (.25)	.04 (.21)	.05 (.22)	.07 (.26)	.10 (.30)
Other race	.05 (.22)	.03 (.17)	.04 (.20)	.05 (.23)	.08 (.27)
Education (years)	16.57*** (2.44)	17.46 _{ab} (2.43)	16.74 (2.48)	16.13 _a (2.37)	16.06 _b (2.30)
Mother's Education	13.31 (2.92)	13.56 _a (3.15)	13.11 (3.02)	13.45 (2.96)	13.38 _a (2.63)
Father's Education	13.68 (3.41)	14.03 (4.27)	13.53 (3.48)	13.28 (2.78)	13.88 (3.01)
Non-employed	.16 ⁺ (.37)	.14 (.35)	.11 _a (.32)	.20 (.40)	.22 _a (.42)
Household Income [†]	90100.50*** (83164.15)	122615.54 _{ab} (74771.17)	117950.92 _{cd} (96001.86)	47995.45 _{ac} (38312.91)	50464.55 _{bd} (43829.89)
Savings and Investments	56371.79*** (76779.24)	86384.06 _{abc} (86944.41)	63512.86 _c (78993.79)	34068.18 _a (62130.75)	40265.38 _{bc} (67882.11)
Gender Progressiveness	3.64** (.47)	3.78 _a (.30)	3.65 (.45)	3.64 (.53)	3.55 _a (.52)

Table 2 continued

	Total	Mar./Civ.U.	Cohabiting	Dating	Single
Household Size	1.69*** (.72)	2.12 _{a b} (.37)	2.20 _{c d} (.60)	1.00 _{a c} (.00)	1.06 _{b d} (.27)
Presence of Children Age 1- 5	.04 (.18)	.06 (.24)	.05 (.22)	.00 (.00)	.02 (.12)
Conservative Religion	.01* (.10)	.00 (.00)	.00 _a (.00)	.00 (.00)	.03 _a (.17)
No Religion	.12** (.33)	.23 _{a b} (.43)	.11 _a (.31)	.04 _b (.19)	.12 (.32)
Depression (1- 7)	1.44*** (.55)	1.34 _a (.48)	1.34 _b (.46)	1.46 (.54)	1.63 _{a b} (.66)
Anxiety (1-7)	1.28** (.40)	1.19 _a (.28)	1.23 _b (.37)	1.33 (.45)	1.38 _{a b} (.45)
Stress (1-7)	1.71* (.60)	1.58 (.51)	1.66 (.58)	1.79 (.68)	1.80 (.63)
General Health (1-5)	3.90 ⁺ (.96)	4.04 (.91)	3.89 (.97)	4.11 (.79)	3.76 (1.03)
Drinks Alcoholic Beverages	.83 (.38)	.83 (.38)	.82 (.39)	.87 (.34)	.82 (.38)
Number of Drinks per Month	3.90 (5.23)	3.46 (4.22)	3.79 (5.39)	5.20 (5.68)	3.75 (5.29)
Smokes Cigarettes	.12 ⁺ (.33)	.06 _a (.24)	.11 (.32)	.11 (.31)	.18 _a (.38)
Weekly Work Hours [•]	39.75 ⁺ (12.88)	43.93 (10.92)	38.98 (14.24)	38.48 (11.42)	39.04 (11.98)
Annual Income [•]	59949.13* (55959.72)	65001.86 (34477.42)	67599.39 (70754.47)	47995.45 _{a c} (38312.91)	50464.55 _{b d} (43829.89)
Non-Standard Work Schedule [•]	.05 (.22)	.05 (.22)	.05 (.21)	.07 (.25)	.05 (.22)
Job Stress [•] (1- 5)	2.96 (1.08)	3.05 (1.04)	2.93 (1.09)	3.00 (1.03)	2.95 (1.13)
Relationship Duration [∞] (years)	9.49*** (9.34)	12.61 _a (9.28)	10.21 _b (9.46)	3.26 _{a b} (5.54)	—
Sexual Satisfaction [∞] (1-5)	3.35 (1.27)	3.23 (1.21)	3.32 (1.30)	3.60 (1.24)	—
Frequency of Sex [∞] (times per month)	6.10*** (6.74)	4.06 _a (4.88)	6.03 _b (6.68)	8.85 _{a b} (8.00)	—
Feminine (1-7)	5.39 (.89)	5.51 (.72)	5.35 (.94)	—	—

Table 2 continued

	Total	Mar./Civ.U.	Cohabiting	Dating	Single
Masculine (1-7)	4.68 (.88)	4.70 (.95)	4.67 (.85)	—	—
Relative Housework [‡] (range 1-5; 3 = 50%)	3.18 (.46)	3.13 (.41)	3.20 (.47)	—	—
Relative Female-Typed Housework [‡]	3.20 (.61)	3.17 (.54)	3.21 (.63)	—	—
Relative Male- Typed Housework [‡]	3.14 (.74)	3.07 (.64)	3.16 (.77)	—	—
Work Hours Proportion [‡] (%)	52.10 (25.64)	54.59 (26.31)	51.11 (25.38)	—	—
Income Proportion [‡]	46.47 (30.22)	39.95 (31.57)	43.46 (29.70)	—	—
Mother Worked When R Was Child [‡]	.67 (.47)	.70 (.46)	.67 (.47)	—	—
N	429	69	175	55	130

Notes:

[†] For Rs in whose households at least one person works for pay (Total Sample N = 391; Married/Civil Union Subsample N = 65; Cohabiting Subsample N = 170; Dating Subsample N = 44; Single Subsample N = 101)

• For employed respondents only (Total Sample N = 359; Married/Civil Union Subsample N = 59; Cohabiting Subsample N = 155; Dating Subsample N = 44; Single Subsample N = 101)

[∞] For Rs with a romantic partner (Total Sample N = 299)

[‡] For Rs in a co-residential relationship (Total Sample N = 244)

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

a, *b*, *c*, and *d* indicate a significant difference between the two means with matching subscripts in a given row at (alpha level of .05 or smaller).

“traditionalizing” effect, and married people express more conservative views and gender role attitudes than non-married people. Third, people in marriages and civil unions were significantly less depressed and anxious compared to single people, but not compared to cohabitators or people who were dating. Unlike studies of different-sex couples, in which married people exhibited better mental health than cohabitators, this preliminary comparison suggests that perhaps a legal designation is less predictive of mental health for same-sex couples than it is for different-sex couples. Fourth, sexual satisfaction trends from studies of heterosexuals were reversed. In the current sample, people who were dating were the most satisfied, followed by cohabitators, followed by those in marriages and civil unions.

CHAPTER IV. BENEFITS OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS

Theoretical Claims

In Chapter 2, I described the “marriage benefits theory” posited by Waite and Gallagher (2000) and others. In this chapter, I tested the original model’s applicability to same-sex couples by comparing individuals in legally recognized same-sex relationships (marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships) to other individuals (cohabitators, daters, singles) on financial wellbeing, sexual satisfaction, and physical and mental wellbeing. Although the theory, when applied to different-sex couples, calls for a comparison of legally married people to all others, I chose to group married people and those in civil unions/partnerships together for my LGB sample²¹. In response to critiques of the original theory, I separated the remaining respondents into cohabitators and single people. Criticisms of earlier tests of the theory argued that the aggregation of cohabitators and singles was a misspecification. When married people were found to experience benefits not found among the comparison group, critics argued that difference was driven by single people and that, in fact, cohabitators may receive some of these advantages from their relationships. I assessed the theoretical model’s applicability to legally recognized relationships while controlling for cohabiting relationships, and I also assessed whether the theory applied to cohabitators. The theoretical claims for the benefits of same-sex marriage and civil unions are:

Claim 1: People in legally recognized relationships will be wealthier than people not in legally recognized relationships.

²¹ I repeated all analyses with two separate variables representing married respondents and respondents in civil unions/partnerships. Results were identical; I chose to stay with my original grouping of all legally recognized relationships to maintain greater cell size and boost statistical power.

Claim 2: People in cohabiting relationships will be wealthier than people who are single or dating.

Claim 3: People in legally recognized relationships will have better sexual relationships than people not in legally recognized relationships.

Claim 4: People in cohabiting relationships will have better sexual relationships than people who are single or dating.

Claim 5: People in legally recognized relationships will be physically healthier than people not in legally recognized relationships.

Claim 6: People in cohabiting relationships will be physically healthier than people who are single or dating.

Claim 7: People in legally recognized relationships will be mentally healthier than people not in legally recognized relationships.

Claim 8: People in cohabiting relationships will be mentally healthier than people who are single or dating.

A summary of the claims appears in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Claims in Chapter 4

Claim	Effect of	On
1	Legal Recognition	Wealth
2	Cohabitation	
3	Legal Recognition	Sexual Relationship
4	Cohabitation	
5	Legal Recognition	Physical Health
6	Cohabitation	
7	Legal Recognition	Mental Health
8	Cohabitation	

Hypotheses and Results

To test these claims, I began by analyzing wealth. These analyses tested Claims 1 and 2: that legal recognition and cohabitation, respectively, will be associated with greater

financial well being. I used OLS regression to analyze the effect of relationship status variables on three dependent measures of wealth: respondent's logged income, savings and investments (in dollar value), and logged per capita household income. Included in the logged income regressions were respondents who were working for pay; this was approximately 84% of the total LGB sample. I used logged annual income rather than computing a logged hourly wage, as I was more concerned with absolute financial wellbeing than with predicting wages specifically scaled to work hours. The savings and investments models included the full LGB sample. Household income models included respondents who were employed and/or were living with a romantic partner who was employed; this was approximately 91% of the total LGB sample. The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 1A: People in legally recognized relationships will have greater personal incomes, greater savings and investments, and greater per capita incomes than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

Hypothesis 1B: People in legally recognized relationships will have greater personal incomes, greater savings and investments, and greater per capita incomes than people who are cohabiting.

Hypothesis 2: People who are cohabiting will have greater personal incomes, greater savings and investments, and greater per capita incomes than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

Table 4 displays abbreviated results from the three models. Full models with coefficients for control variables appear in Appendix E. Results indicated that legal recognition was associated with greater savings and investments; those in marriages and civil unions had about \$26,000 more in savings and investments, on average, than those who were single or dating. I also conducted a test for the difference between coefficients in the same model to compare those in legally recognized relationships to cohabitators. Married people and those in civil unions/partnerships did not demonstrate greater financial wellbeing than cohabitators on any measure. In sum, the results provided some support for Hypothesis 1A; those in legally recognized relationships demonstrated greater

Table 4: OLS Regressions of Legal Recognition and Cohabitation on Financial Well-Being

	Model A	Model B	Model C
<i>Independent Variable</i>	Respondent's Logged Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Savings and Investments (in dollars) <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Per Capita Household Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	6.76*** (.43)	-202783.66*** (30130.50)	7.27*** (.46)
Legally Recognized	-.04 (.15)	25992.40* (14339.66)	.08 (.13)
Cohabiting	.05 (.13)	15458.94 (12584.59)	.26** (.09)
Not Employed	—	810.80 (14597.88)	—
Female	-.25** (.08)	-13251.54* (7442.68)	-.18* (.09)
N	359	429	380
R2	.53***	.32***	.42***

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Age, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Work Hours, Non-Standard Work Schedule, Presence of Preschool Child in Household, Conservative Religion, No Religion, Academic Recruitment, and Legal Recognition Available in R's State of Residence. Models A and C also control for gender progressivism; Models A and B also control for Household Size. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

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

financial well being when measured in terms of savings and investments, compared to people who were single or dating. Results did not, however, support Hypotheses 1B; married people and those in civil unions were not significantly better off than cohabitators. Cohabitators did not have greater personal incomes or savings and investments than singles/daters, but they did have significantly higher per capita household incomes. All else equal, cohabitators' per capita household incomes were about 30% higher than those of people who were single or just dating.

The second group of analyses addressed sexual aspects of the respondents' relationships. These analyses tested Claims 3 and 4: that legal recognition and cohabitation, respectively, would be associated with more frequent sexual contact and greater sexual satisfaction. I utilized OLS regression to analyze self-reported frequency of sexual contact and ordered probit methods to analyze sexual satisfaction (based on five-point Likert-type responses). All respondents who had a romantic partner were included in the analyses, including those in marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships, and steady dating relationships; this was approximately 70% of the total LGB sample (N=299). The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 3A: People in legally recognized relationships will have more frequent and more satisfying sexual contact than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

Hypothesis 3B: People in legally recognized relationships will have more frequent and more satisfying sexual contact than cohabitators.

Hypothesis 4: Cohabitators will have more frequent and more satisfying sexual contact than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

These three hypotheses were tested in one OLS regression and one ordered probit analysis. The results from the analyses appear in Table 5. Analyses indicated that people in a legally recognized relationship did not have a better sexual experience than people who were single or dating, in terms of both the frequency of sexual contact and satisfaction with sexual interactions, lending no support to Hypothesis 3A. I conducted a

Table 5: Effects of Legal Relationship Status and Cohabitation on Sexual Relationship (N = 299)

	Model A	Model B
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	9.72** (4.17)	—
Legally Recognized	-.17 (1.70)	.25 (.29)
Cohabiting	.56 (1.53)	.25 (.26)
Frequency of Sexual Contact	—	.11*** (.01)
Female	-2.06** (.83)	.51*** (.15)
R2	.17***	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)		810.39(17)***

Notes:

Both models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Under Age 25, Over Age 60; Education, Work Hours, Non-Standard Work Schedule or R or R's Spouse/Partner, Gender Progressivism, Household Size Presence of Preschool Child in Household, No Religion, and Legal Recognition Available in R's State of Residence. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

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

test for the difference between two coefficients in the same model to compare those in legally recognized relationships to cohabitators. Married people and those in civil unions/partnerships were no different from cohabitators in either frequency of sexual contact or sexual satisfaction. Thus, Hypothesis 3B was not supported. Similarly, cohabitators' sexual relationships were not significantly different from those of singles/daters on either measure, lending no support for Hypothesis 4.

The third group of analyses addressed the physical health of the respondents. These analyses tested the Claims 5 and 6: that legal recognition and cohabitation, respectively, would be associated with greater health compared to being single or just dating. I used ordered probit methods to analyze self-rated general health (based on five-point Likert-type scale responses), logit methods to assess whether the respondent smoked cigarettes, and zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) models to predict alcoholic beverage consumption. All respondents in the LGB sample were included.

The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 5A: People in legally recognized relationships will have better general health and engage in less health-risk behavior than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

Hypothesis 5B: People in legally recognized relationships will have better general health and engage in less health-risk behavior than people who are cohabiting.

Hypothesis 6: Cohabitators will have better general health and engage in less health-risk behavior than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

These three hypotheses were tested in one ordered probit analyses, one logit analyses, and one ZINB models. The results from the three models appear in Table 6. No differences in general health emerged between people in legally recognized relationships and singles/daters. The test for the difference between the coefficients for marriages/civil unions and cohabitators was also non-significant. In addition, cohabitators were not generally healthier than singles/daters. Thus, Hypotheses 5A, 5B, and 6 were not supported by the results for self-rated general health.

Relationship status did play a significant role in whether respondents smoked cigarettes. Spouses and those in civil unions were significantly less likely to be smokers than single people and those who were just dating. By computing the change in predicted probabilities by legal recognition ($1 - \exp[B]$), I found that spouses and legal partners were 68% less likely to smoke than singles/daters, but cohabitators were no more or less likely to smoke than singles/daters. Thus, the results provided support for Hypothesis 5A but not 5B. The test for the difference between the coefficients for legal recognition and cohabitation was not significant; Hypothesis 6 was not supported in the analysis of cigarette smoking.

For the ZINB analyses of alcoholic beverage consumption²², I first looked at whether relationship status affected the likelihood that a respondent was a non-drinker vs. a drinker (a person who consumes alcoholic beverages once per month or more, on average). The main difference between an inflation model and a common logit model is that inflation models estimate the likelihood of being in the category of people who will not experience the given event (in this case drinking), that is, the likelihood of having a zero for the continuous dependent variable. Thus, rather than a positive coefficient indicating increased drinking, a positive coefficient would indicate an increased likelihood of being a non-drinker. Being married or in a civil union did not affect the likelihood of being a non-drinker; cohabitators, however, were 4.3 times more likely to be non-drinkers than were singles and daters. In addition, cohabitators were more likely to be

²² I first looked at whether ZINB proved to be the correct statistical method of estimation. In all three models the LN alpha was non-zero, and in one of the three models it was significantly different. These tests indicate that the mean of the dependent variable in the model was significantly greater than its variance; that is, the dependent variable, drinking, was overdispersed. Because the poisson distribution assumes that the mean is less than the variance, zero-inflated poisson (ZIP) models would not have been appropriate, despite being more mathematically elegant. Although two of the LN alphas were not significant, ZINB estimates should equal ZIP estimates absent overdispersion. Thus, for the sake of consistency, it was best to use ZINB models throughout.

Table 6: OLS Regressions of Legal Recognition and Cohabitation on Physical Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
	General Health	Cigarette Smoker	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption	
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>	<i>Logit</i>	<i>Inflation (binomial)_a</i>	<i>Count</i>
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	—	2.29 ⁺ (1.65)	8.57** (3.48)	1.93*** (.63)
Legally Recognized	-.08 (.23)	-1.15* (.66)	-1.52 _b (1.96)	-.23 _c (.20)
Cohabiting	-.09 (.14)	-.45 (.39)	1.67** _b (.71)	.15 _c (.15)
Age	-.01*** (.004)	-.02 (.01)	.06 (.02)	.007 (.005)
Female	-.09 (.12)	-.37 (.35)	.21 (.48)	-.50*** (.13)
LNalpha (<i>ZINB only</i>)	—	—	-.18 ⁺ (.13)	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)	-530.94(15)***	-145.28(13)**	-1009.69(15)***	

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Age, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Work Hours, Logged Household Income, Not Employed, No Religion, and Legal Recognition Available in R's State of Residence. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

_a The inflation model estimates whether a respondent is a *non-drinker*. Thus, a positive coefficient indicates a greater likelihood of being a non-drinker, not greater drinking.

_b The coefficients were significantly different at p < .05, one tailed.

_c The coefficients were significantly different at p < .05, one tailed.

non-drinkers than those in legally recognized relationships, as indicated by the significant difference between their respective coefficients in Model C. In sum, cohabitators were significantly less likely to drink than people in marriages/civil unions as well as singles/daters.

Finally, the count portion of the ZINB model indicates at first glance that relationship status did not predict the number of drinks respondents had per month. However, the coefficient for people in legally recognized relationships was significantly different from the coefficient for cohabitators in Model D, indicating that respondents who were married or in a civil union drank significantly fewer alcoholic beverages (1.44 fewer, all else equal) than respondents who were cohabiting. In sum, although married people were significantly more likely to be of the type to drink than were cohabitators, if they did drink, they drank significantly less than cohabitators who drank.

Hypothesis 5A, that legal recognition would have a protective effect on health compared to being single or dating, received some support, in that married/civilly united people were less likely to be smokers than singles/daters. Hypothesis 5B, that legal recognition would have a protective effect on health compared to cohabiting, was somewhat supported. Among people who drank, legal recognition was associated with less alcohol consumption than was cohabitation; however, legal recognition made people more likely to be in the group that drinks. Hypothesis 6, that cohabitation would have a protective effect on health compared to being single or dating, was also somewhat supported; cohabiting made people less likely to be drinkers.

The fourth group of analyses analyzed the mental health of the respondents. These analyses tested the fourth Claims 7 and 8, regarding the protective effects of legal recognition and cohabitation, respectively, on mental health. I utilized OLS regression to analyze three aspects of mental health from the DASS₂₁: depression, anxiety, and stress. All respondents in the LGB sample were included. The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 7A: People in legally recognized relationships will have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

Hypothesis 7B: People in legally recognized relationships will have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than people who are cohabiting.

Hypothesis 8: Cohabitators will have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than people who are single or in a steady dating relationship.

These three hypotheses were tested in three OLS regression analyses. The results from the analyses appear in Table 7. Results showed no differences between people in legally recognized relationships and people who were single/dating on levels of depression, anxiety, or stress. There were also no significant differences between legal recognition and cohabitation or between singles/daters. Thus, Hypotheses 7A, 7B, and 8 were not supported.

Discussion

This chapter began with a single question: does the marriage benefits model apply to legally recognized same-sex relationships? To both address the criticisms of past research on different-sex couples and preclude potential criticisms based on the unique attributes and circumstances surrounding same-sex couples, I also testing for potential benefits of cohabitation above and beyond being single or dating. The eight main claims under investigation stemmed from the four main benefits experienced by different-sex spouses: greater wealth, better sex lives, better physical health, and improved mental health. I used multiple indicators for each of the four benefits. To facilitate the discussion of the results, I will focus on the summary of findings presented in Table 8.

With some notable exceptions, being married or in a civil union does not confer the same benefits upon same-sex spouses/partners as marriage confers upon different-sex spouses. There were no differences between people in legally recognized relationships and others in terms of the sexual aspects of their relationships or their mental health. In the analyses of physical health, general health and alcohol consumption did not vary by

Table 7: OLS Regressions of Legal Recognition and Cohabitation on Mental Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C
<i>Independent Variable</i>	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	2.47 (.27)***	2.02*** (.20)	2.67*** (.30)
Legally Recognized	.04 (.12)	-.02 (.09)	.07 (.13)
Cohabiting	.04 (.11)	-.005 (.08)	.12 (.12)
Female	-.01** (.05)	-.002 (.04)	.04 (.06)
R2	.25***	.23***	.21***

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Under Age 25, Over Age 60; Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Not Employed, Logged Household Income, Non-Standard Work Schedule, Job-Related Stress, Household Size Presence of Preschool Child in Household, Conservative Religion, No Religion, Self-Rated Health, Sexual Satisfaction, and Legal Recognition Available in R's State of Residence. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

+ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

marital/civil union status, but being married/civil partners was associated with a lower likelihood of cigarette smoking. Cohabitation did not affect general health or smoking, but cohabitators were more likely to be non-drinkers than singles and daters. Being married, in a civil union, or cohabiting did seem to have some, though varying, regulatory effects on health-risk behaviors.

Table 8: Summary of Findings in Chapter 4

Claim	Effect of	On	Supported/Not Supported
1	Legal Recognition	Wealth	Partially Supported
2	Cohabitation		Partially Supported
3	Legal Recognition	Sexual Relationship	Not Supported
4	Cohabitation		Not Supported
5	Legal Recognition	Physical Health	Partially Supported
6	Cohabitation		Partially Supported
7	Legal Recognition	Mental Health	Not Supported
8	Cohabitation		Not Supported

With respect to wealth, personal income and per capita household income did not vary by legal recognition; however, savings and investments were significantly greater for spouses and civil partners than for singles/daters. Bringing cohabitation into the analysis was especially important for this sample, as legal recognition was only available to approximately 43% of the sample. Surprisingly, cohabitators had greater per capita household incomes than singles/daters, but spouses/civil partners did not. There is no apparent theoretical reason why cohabitators, but not spouses/civil partners, would be better off financially. Perhaps it is an idiosyncrasy of this particular sample.

I expected that people in legally recognized relationships would have had more shared assets with their partners, and the intuitive conclusion would have been that married/partnered respondents would have greater savings and investments in their own names than both cohabitators and singles/daters, in part because of joint assets. Although the coefficients show married and civilly united people to have about \$26,000 more in savings and investments than singles/daters and cohabitators to have only about \$15,000 more than single/daters, the difference between these two coefficients was not statistically significant. Additionally, the difference between cohabitators and single/daters was not significant. Thus, cohabitators fall somewhere in the middle between spouses/civil partners and singles/daters, who are significantly different from one another, but are significantly different from neither. This suggests that relationship status may not be the best way to explain who experiences “marriage benefits.” There may be an underlying continuum to same-sex relationships that cannot be captured by discrete relationship categories. Perhaps it is the commitment to the relationship that leads members of co-residential relationships to plan for their financial future, even though they do not have greater personal incomes than people who are single or just dating. Perhaps it is a stronger sense of being financially accountable to another person that results in putting a greater proportion of one’s income into savings and investments.

The results for legal recognition parallel those from previous tests of the “marriage benefits” model, which were conducted with heterosexual samples, however, once cohabitation was considered, a different pattern emerged. Recall that different-sex marriage brought greater financial stability to spouses than different-sex cohabitation did to cohabitators (Waite and Gallagher 2000). For different-sex couples, the gap in wealth between married people and cohabitators is generally attributed to differential characteristics of the people of which each group is comprised. People who cohabit tend to be younger, have lower incomes, and have lower levels of education (Cohan and Kleinbaum 2002; Smock 2000). These factors, combined with less commitment to the

relationship and a sense of the relationship as non-permanent (see Bumpass and Lu 1999), could stymie longer term financial planning. In the current same-sex oriented sample, however, there were not substantial differences between people in legally recognized relationships and cohabitators in terms of age (means of 43.5 years versus 42.5 years), income (\$65,000 versus \$67,500), or education (17.5 years versus 16.7 years). Different-sex cohabitators tend to be younger and less occupationally established in large part because they are using cohabitation as a step in relationship development that precedes marriage (Manning 1993), and just as not all dating relationships will end in marriage, not all cohabitations will end in marriage either. Thus, cohabitation is an extension of dating, a phase to which the more successful dating relationships will progress, another tool used to assess a relationship's viability. Just as the end goal of dating and courtship has traditionally been to find a marriage partner, many different-sex couples view cohabitation as part of courtship, with the end goal being marriage (though not necessarily with the current cohabitation partner). Thus, like dating, cohabitation is seen as something one does when one is young and not yet "settled."

The question then becomes, is cohabitation more like marriage for same-sex couples, while it is more an extension of dating for different-sex couples? Their characteristics as a group are, on average, very similar to same-sex couples who marry, obtain a civil union, or register a domestic partnership, so it is likely that the relationships are more similar to each other than are the relationships of their different-sex counterparts. This is likely due to the fact that, until very recently, legal recognition was not an option for same-sex couples. Although I control for whether the respondent's state offers some type of legal recognition for same-sex couples, a control variable cannot capture the full impact that a lack of legal recognition, which some might view as akin to legal prohibition, has on the way people view and experience their relationships. When a relationship is prevented from progressing to marriage, cohabitation may become the final destination for the couple. Perhaps cohabitation is then more revered as a

relationship status, more often reserved only for partners for which one feels very strongly and to which one is highly committed. This would suggest that relationship commitment may be a better predictor of “marriage benefits” than relationship status.

To explore respondents’ view of their relationship status, I asked corresponding questions of cohabitators, civil partners, and spouses about why they chose their relationship status (why cohabitators chose to move in together, why civil partners obtained a civil union or registered their domestic partnership, and why spouses chose to marry). In fact, the percentages of people in each category who cited a practical issue as a reason they chose their relationship status were quite similar across groups: 45% of cohabitators (N = 171), 43% of civil partners (N = 28), and 48% of spouses (N = 40) wrote that they chose their current arrangement for practical reasons, including convenience, to save money, to gain insurance benefits, or to gain legal protections/rights.

“We thought it ridiculous to maintain two homes when we were ‘always’ together. One factor that played in our decision to live together was that I was renting a house and my partner owned his condo: it was a waste of money for me to continue renting.” – Male Cohabitor

“I stayed at her place to often that it economically made sense to move in together. Also, once we got a puppy together and had been dating for a year, we figured it was time.” – Female Cohabitor

“Legal rights, some rights like hospital, funeral, but no tax benefits.” – Male Civil Partner

“Benefits, rights, validation of relationship by state.” – Female Civil Partner

“Legal recognition and recognition from our families and friends. Especially important to use were property rights and the legal right to make decisions for one another in case of emergencies.” – Male Spouse

“As of 2004, we had been partners for 24 years – and we wanted the legal and social recognition as a married couples – and to better ensure status as spouses (at least in our state... federal is another matter).” – Female Spouse

Differences did emerge in the percentages of people who wrote about emotion as a reason: 72% of cohabitators, 25% of civil partners, and 52% of spouse cited an aspect of emotion such as love, commitment, closeness, or the desire to take the relationship to the

next level. I suspect that much of the difference here is due to the fact that many couples gained legal recognition long after becoming a loving, committed couple. Thus, their reasons for choosing to superimpose a legal designation upon their relationship had less to do with emotional aspects of their relationship, which had been constant for quite a while.

“Love, a deep sense of commitment, and a shared life.” – Female Cohabitor

“We were ready to take our relationship to a level that implied permanence and greater reliability with each other. Love does that to you after a while.” - Male Cohabitor

“Make a commitment to one another” – Female Civil Partner

“Permanence, commitment” – Male Civil Partner

“After seven years, we decided to take steps to better define Our Family.”
- Female Spouse

“Marriage legalized in MA – after 27 years together, we thought it was time – also for the legal protections.” – Male Spouse

Although none of the cohabitators reported moving in together for symbolic reasons, similar proportions of civil partners and spouses (21% and 25%, respectively) did so, citing recognition by public/self, making a political statement, a desire to be counted, or feeling that it was important for them to unite/marry for a bigger, social reason.

“To show numbers.” – Female Civil Partner

“Make a statement to ourselves, our family and friends, and to society.” – Female Civil Partner

“NJ finally passed the civil union legislation so we felt it important to do it.” – Male Civil Partner

“To be part of this civil rights movement.” – Female Spouse

“I wanted my relationship with my partner to have the same recognition as heterosexual couples, the same social acceptance and understanding of what we are to each other.” – Female Spouse

“As we had been together for 20 years, we felt it was extremely important to make our relationship “official” in the eyes of the state and society.” – Male Spouse

The rise in commitment ceremonies (see Oswald et al. 2008) for same-sex couples, however, suggests that cohabitation, civil partnership, or even marriage without a commitment ceremony may not be viewed as the pinnacle of relationship statuses. Perhaps legal status is little more than just that – legal documentation – in the absence of a more symbolic gesture. True, many same-sex couples are not able to obtain legal marriage, but this does not mean that they live in a world where the idea of marriage is devoid of meaning. The advent of a marriage is usually signified by a wedding or a celebration of some form. Same-sex couples have found a way to signify to friends, family, the public, and perhaps most importantly, themselves, that their relationship is “something more,” even if they do not wish to invoke the concept of marriage. Perhaps same-sex couples who have had a commitment ceremony are more likely to exhibit “marriage benefits” than couples who are both able to and choose to obtain legal recognition.

In an effort to test the marriage benefits model as thoroughly as possible, I must ask whether there is in fact something about the spirit of marriage that confers such wonderful advantages, rather than marriage as a legal institution. Some same-sex couples who have a commitment ceremony specifically eschew the idea of marriage. Marriage may in fact be such an ideological institution that celebrating a wedding-like event may not be enough, especially when the couple selects a commitment ceremony to the exclusion of self-definition as marriage partners. Perhaps the marriage benefits model rests less on legal status and more on participation in the social scripts associated with marriage. It may be that couples who define their own relationship as a marriage are more likely to experience the benefits of marriage. In the current sample, nearly three-quarters of cohabiting couples responded that they and their partner think of themselves

as married. These couples may be driving the similarity between legally recognized and cohabiting couples in the previous analyses.

Absent many of the benefits commonly found to be conferred by marriage, the question becomes broader: what *does* explain variation in the frequency of sexual contact, sexual satisfaction, general health, depression, anxiety, and stress among people in same-sex relationships and same-sex attracted singles? Additionally, are there other factors that would better, and/or more consistently, explain variation in wealth, smoking, and alcohol consumption than relationship status? These are questions I hope to answer in the following chapter by proposing additional relationship characteristics that may elucidate who does experience “marriage” benefits. In the next chapter, I explored the utility of alternative relationship measures, including self-definition of marriage, commitment ceremonies, self-reported relationship commitment, and relationship duration in parsing out who is happier, healthier, and wealthier among same-sex couples and same-sex attracted singles. I replicated the analyses in the current chapter using relationship characteristics, rather than relationship status, as the main independent variables.

CHAPTER V. BENEFITS OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AND PARTNERSHIP: ALTERNATIVE RELATIONSHIP MEASURES

Theoretical Claims

In the previous chapter, I tested the applicability of the “marriage benefits theory,” posited by Waite and Gallagher (2000) and others, to same-sex couples. I began by testing the theory in its original form, using relationship status measures. This approach proved to be less than fruitful, with only one measure of wealth (savings and investments), and two measures of physical health yielding significant and meaningful findings. In this chapter, to ensure a robust test of the theory in multiple forms, I explore whether other aspects of same-sex relationships predict the experience of “marriage benefits.” Based on the possibility that the beneficial effects of marriage are rooted in the ideological aspects of the institution, rather than the legal definition, I test whether the theory applies to the self-definition of marriage. As I did in chapter four, I also considered whether it is appropriate to group cohabitators with single people when comparing people who self-define as married to people who do not. Thus, I separated out cohabitators who do not think of themselves as married from people who are single or just dating. In addition, I tested whether the marriage benefits theory is actually driven by the commitment to the relationship. It may be that legal status and relationship commitment are highly correlated for different-sex couples, so it appears that marriage bestows wealth, health, and sexual satisfaction, when in fact being in a highly committed relationship is the key. Perhaps among same-sex couples, commitment does not correlate highly with legal status, so commitment should be used as a predictor of “marriage benefits.” As an indicator of commitment, I looked at whether the couple had celebrated a commitment ceremony. I assessed four pairs of claims – one pair for each of the “benefits” of marriage. The theoretical claims are:

Claim 1: People who think of themselves as married will be wealthier than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Claim 2: People who have had a commitment ceremony will be wealthier than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Claim 3: People who think of themselves as married will have better sexual relationships than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Claim 4: People who have had a commitment ceremony will have better sexual relationships than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Claim 5: People who think of themselves as married will be physically healthier than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Claim 6: People who have had a commitment ceremony will be physically healthier than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Claim 7: People who think of themselves as married will have better mental health than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Claim 8: People who have had a commitment ceremony will have better mental health than people who do not have had a commitment ceremony.

A summary of the all claims in this chapter appears in Table 9.

Table 9: Summary of Claims in Chapter 5

Claim	Effect of	On
1	Self-Defined Marriage	Wealth
2	Commitment Ceremony	
3	Self-Defined Marriage	Sexual Relationship
4	Commitment Ceremony	
5	Self-Defined Marriage	Physical Health
6	Commitment Ceremony	
7	Self-Defined Marriage	Mental Health
8	Commitment Ceremony	

Hypotheses and Results

To test the claims regarding alternative relationship measures, I began by analyzing financial well being, testing Claims 1 and 2. I used OLS regression to analyze the effects of self defined marriage and commitment ceremonies on the three dependent measures of wealth: respondent's logged income, savings and investments (in dollar value), and logged per capita household income. As in the wealth analyses in Chapter 4, the logged income analyses included only those who were working for pay (84% of the total LGB sample; N=359). The savings and investments models included the full LGB sample (N=429). Per capita household income models included respondents in whose household at least one person (respondent or respondent's co-residential romantic partner) was employed (about 91% of the total LGB sample). The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 1: People who think of themselves as married will have greater personal incomes, greater savings and investments, and greater per capita incomes than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Hypothesis 2: People who have had a commitment ceremony will have greater personal incomes, greater savings and investments, and greater per capita incomes than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

These two hypotheses were tested in two sets of three OLS regression analyses – one set with self-definition of marriage as the main predictor and one set with commitment ceremony as the main predictor. Table 10 presents results for the regression analyses of wealth on the self-definition of marriage. Table 11 presents results for the regression analyses of wealth on whether the respondent had a commitment ceremony with their current spouse/partner.

As in Chapter 4, I was unable to successfully predict respondent's income with these measures of relationship characteristics. However, results indicated that defining oneself as married was significantly related to both the value of the respondent's savings and investments and the respondent's per capita household income. People in self-

Table 10: OLS Regressions of Self-Definition of Marriage and Cohabitation on Financial Well-Being

	Model A	Model B	Model C
<i>Independent Variable</i>	Respondent's Logged Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Savings and Investments (in dollars) <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Logged Per Capita Household Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	6.89*** (.43)	-195732.94*** (29679.27)	7.40*** (.47)
Consider Self Married	.09 (.13)	28792.13** _a (11856.15)	.26** (.09)
Cohabiting	.04 (.15)	7488.37 _a (14216.03)	.23* (.13)
Not Employed	—	630.18 (14553.30)	-.14 (.22)
Female	-.23** (.09)	-10591.77 ⁺ (7405.21)	-.17* (.09)
N	359	429	380
R2	.52***	.32***	.41***

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Age, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Work Hours, Non-Standard Work Schedule, Presence of Preschool Child in Household, Conservative Religion, No Religion, and Academic Recruitment. Models A and C also control for gender progressivism; Models A and B also control for Household Size. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

⁺ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .10$

*** $p < .001$

_a The coefficients for self-defined marriage and cohabitation were significantly different at $p < .05$

Table 11: OLS Regressions of Commitment Ceremony on Financial Well-Being

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Respondent's Logged Income	Savings and Investments (in dollars)	Logged Per capita Household Income
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	6.80*** (.44)	-210156.42*** (29574.12)	7.31*** (.48)
Commitment Ceremony	-.02 (.10)	8016.17 (8772.30)	.06 (.10)
Not Employed	—	943.00 (14642.01)	-.07 (.22)
Female	-.24** (.09)	-12773.36 ⁺ (7485.68)	-.15 (.09)
N	359	429	380
R2	.52***	.31***	.39***

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Age, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Work Hours, Non-Standard Work Schedule, Presence of Preschool Child in Household, Conservative Religion, No Religion, and Academic Recruitment. Models A and C also control for gender progressivism; Models A and B also control for Household Size. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .10

*** p < .001

defined marriages had, all else equal, about \$29,000 more in assets and per capita household incomes about 30% higher than people who were single or dating. Further, the test for the difference between the coefficients for self-defined marriage and cohabitation in Model B was marginally significant, indicating that the subjective definition of marriage had a positive effect on savings and investments above and beyond living together. Overall, Hypothesis 1, that self-defined marriage boosts financial well-being, was partially supported. However, Hypothesis 2, that having a commitment ceremony would be associated with greater wealth, was not supported in any of the three models (see Table 11).

The second group of analyses assessed the sexual aspects of the respondents' relationships. These analyses tested Claims 3 and 4. I utilized OLS regression to evaluate self-reported frequency of sexual contact and ordered probit methods to analyze sexual satisfaction (based on five-point Likert-type responses). As in Chapter 4, only respondents who had a romantic partner (spouse, partner, cohabitor, or steady dating partner) were included in the analyses. The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 3: People who think of themselves as married will have more frequent and more satisfying sexual contact than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Hypothesis 4: People who have had a commitment ceremony will have more frequent and more satisfying sexual contact than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Each of these two hypotheses was tested in one OLS regression and one ordered probit analysis. The results for self-definition of marriage appear in Table 12; results for the effects of commitment ceremonies appear in Table 13.

Results showed that if the couple considered themselves to be married, they did not have sex any more or less frequently than couples who were just dating. However, when compared to cohabitators who did not view their relationship as a marriage, they had significantly *less* frequent sexual contact with their partner (about 1.7 fewer sexual

Table 12: Effects of Self-Definition of Marriage and Cohabitation on Sexual Relationship (N = 299)

	Model A	Model B
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	9.46* (4.10)	—
Consider Self Married	.85 _a (1.51)	.41 ⁺ _b (.26)
Cohabitation	2.54 ⁺ _a (1.65)	.12 _b (.29)
Frequency of Sexual Contact	—	.11*** (.01)
Female	-2.24** (.83)	.54*** (.15)
R2	.16***	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)		809.07(16)***

Notes:

Both models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Under Age 25, Over Age 60, Education, Work Hours, Non-Standard Work Schedule for R or R's Spouse/Partner, Gender Progressivism, Household Size Presence of Preschool Child in Household, and No Religion. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

_a The coefficients for self-definition of marriage and cohabitation in the model predicting frequency of sexual contact were significantly different at p < .10.

_b The coefficients for self-definition of marriage and cohabitation in the model predicting sexual satisfaction were significantly different at p < .10.

Table 13: Effects of Commitment Ceremony on Sexual Relationship (N = 299)

	Model 1	Model 2
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	8.34* (4.12)	—
Had Commitment Ceremony	-1.73* (.87)	.25* (.15)
Frequency of Sexual Contact	—	.11*** (.01)
Female	-2.00** (.83)	.48*** (.15)
R2	.16***	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)		807.61(15)***

Notes:

Both models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Under Age 25, Over Age 60, Education, Work Hours, Non-Standard Work Schedule for R or R's Spouse/Partner, Gender Progressivism, Household Size Presence of Preschool Child in Household, and No Religion. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

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

interactions per month, all else equal), a finding that was in the opposite direction of the hypothesis. People in self-defined marriages did reported greater sexual satisfaction than people who were just dating; all else equal, they scored about a half point higher on a five-point scale of sexual satisfaction. They all reported greater sexual satisfaction than people who were living with their partner, but not view the relationship as a marriage; those in self-defined marriages scored about one third point higher on the five-point scale. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was not supported by results for the frequency of sexual contact, but was supported in the analyses of sexual satisfaction.

If the couple had a commitment ceremony, they had on average about 1.7 *fewer* sexual interactions per month than couple who had not had a commitment ceremony. This finding was in the opposite direction of the hypothesis. Respondents who had celebrated a commitment ceremony reported levels of sexual satisfaction that were a quarter point higher than people who had not had a commitment ceremony. Thus, parallel to the results for self-defined marriage, Hypothesis 4 was not supported by results for the frequency of sexual contact, but was supported in the analyses of sexual satisfaction.

The third group of analyses evaluated the physical health of the respondents. These analyses tested the third claim in each set (SM 3; SM/C 3A and 3B; CC 3; and RC 3). I employed ordered probit methods in the analysis of self-rated general health (based on five-point Likert-type scale responses) and zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) models to predict cigarette smoking and alcoholic beverage consumption. All respondents in the LGB sample were included. The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 5: People who think of themselves as married will have better general health and engage in less health-risk behavior than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Hypothesis 6: People who have had a commitment ceremony will have better general health and engage in less health-risk behavior than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Each of these two hypotheses was tested in one ordered probit analysis, one logit analysis, and one zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) model. The results are presented in Tables 14 and 15 for self-defined marriage and commitment ceremonies, respectively. Looking at both tables, results showed that neither relationship characteristic was successful in predicting general health or alcoholic beverage consumption. Results for cigarette smoking, however, were significant and in the hypothesized direction. Self-defined spouses were 47% less likely to be smokers than those who were single or just dating. The largest impact on smoking was attributed to having had a commitment ceremony. People who had celebrated a commitment ceremony with their spouse/partner were 66% less likely to be smokers. Overall, Hypotheses 5 and 6, that self-defined marriage and having a commitment ceremony, respectively, would be associated with greater physical health, were partially supported. Results from the analyses of cigarette smoking showed that these two relationship characteristics served to decrease the risky, unhealthy behavior of smoking cigarettes.

The fourth and final group of analyses looked at the mental health of the respondents. The analyses tested Claims 7 and 8. I utilized the three subscales from the DASS₂₁: depression, anxiety, and stress from respondents in the LGB sample. The hypotheses derived from the corresponding claims were:

Hypothesis 7: People who think of themselves as married will have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than people who do not think of themselves as married.

Hypothesis 8: People who have had a commitment ceremony will have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Each of the two mental health hypotheses was tested in three OLS regression analyses – one for each subscale of the DASS₂₁. The results from the analyses are presented in Tables 16 and 17. The regressions showed no significant effects of either relationship characteristic on depression, anxiety, or stress. Thus, Hypotheses 7 and 8 were not supported.

Table 14: Effects of Self-Defined Marriage and Cohabitation on Physical Health (N = 429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
	General Health	Cigarette Smoker	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption	
	<i>Ordered Probit</i>	<i>Logit</i>	<i>Inflation</i>	<i>Count</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	—	2.43 ⁺ (1.64)	13.05** (4.90)	1.66** (.57)
Consider Self Married	.03 (.14)	-.64 ⁺ (.40)	-.69 (1.11)	-.08 (.15)
Cohabiting	-.03 (.19)	-.73 (.61)	-1.14 (1.49)	.06 (.21)
Female	-.09 (.11)	-.39 (.35)	-4.02* (2.12)	-.69*** (.13)
LNalpha (<i>ZINB only</i>)	—	—	.11*** (.04)	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)	-531.41(14)***	-145.63(12)**	-1016.93(8)***	

Notes:

All models control for Age, Education, Logged Household Income, and Not Employed. Model A also controls for Other Race. Models A and B also control for Black, Hispanic, Mother's Education, Father's Education, and No Religion. Models A, C, and D also control for Work Hours. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

Table 15: Effects of Commitment Ceremony on Physical Health (N = 429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
	General Health	Cigarette Smoker	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption	
	<i>Ordered Probit</i>	<i>Logit</i>	<i>Inflation</i>	<i>Count</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	—	2.42 ⁺ (1.62)	22.87** (9.03)	2.00*** (.63)
Commitment Ceremony	.08 (.14)	-1.08* (.58)	-1.78 (1.61)	-.21 (.16)
Female	-.10 (.12)	-.39 (.35)	-1.21 (1.23)	-.61*** (.13)
LNalpha (<i>ZINB only</i>)	—	—	.04 (.11)	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)	-531.31(13)***	-145.08(11)***	-1009.48(13)***	

Notes:

All models control for Age, Black, Hispanic, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Logged Household Income, Not Employed, and No Religion. Models A, C, and D also control for Other Race and Work Hours. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

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

Table 16: OLS Regressions of Self-Defined Marriage and Cohabitation on Mental Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	2.50*** (.26)	2.03*** (.19)	2.66*** (.29)
Consider Self Married	.08 (.11)	-.004 (.08)	.08 (.12)
Cohabiting	.07 (.12)	-.02 (.09)	.15 (.13)
Female	-.01 (.05)	-.002 (.04)	.03 (.06)
R2	.25***	.23***	.21***

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Under Age 25, Over Age 60, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Not Employed, Logged Household Income, Non-Standard Work Schedule, Job-Related Stress, Household Size Presence of Preschool Child in Household, Conservative Religion, No Religion, Self-Rated Health, and Sexual Satisfaction. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in Appendix E.

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

Table 17: OLS Regressions of Commitment Ceremony on Mental Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	2.46*** (.26)	2.03** (.19)	2.61*** (.29)
Had a Commitment Ceremony	-.002 (.07)	.00 (.05)	-.01 (.07)
Female	-.01 (.05)	-.002 (.04)	.03 (.06)
R2	.25***	.23***	.21***

Notes:

All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other Race, Under Age 25, Over Age 60, Education, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Not Employed, Logged Household Income, Non-Standard Work Schedule, Job-Related Stress, Household Size Presence of Preschool Child in Household, Conservative Religion, No Religion, Self-Rated Health, and Sexual Satisfaction. Full results with coefficients for all variables appear in

Appendix E.

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

Discussion

This chapter began with a question raised by findings in the previous chapter: do health, wealth, and sexual satisfaction vary by characteristics of same-sex relationships other than relationship status? Again, I examined variations in wealth, sexual relationship, physical health, and mental health, and again I used multiple indicators for each. Rather than grouping the respondents by relationship status, however, I measured other, more subjective, aspects of their relationships, including self-definition as a married couple and the celebration of commitment ceremonies. In this discussion, I focus on the summary of findings presented in Table 18.

A self-defined marriage proved to be a better predictor of wealth than actual legal recognition, with significant effects on savings and investments as well as per capita household income. However, the finding that cohabitators did not have significantly greater savings compared to singles and daters, shows a meaningfully different pattern for wealth from the results in Chapter 4. As far as economic stability is concerned, the self-definition of marriage had somewhat greater explanatory power than legal recognition, not only because it conferred greater financial benefits, but because it set a couple off from other cohabiting couples in a way that legal recognition did not. Once self-defined marriages were teased apart from other cohabiting relationships, the cohabitators that remained were financially very similar to singles and people in steady dating relationships. This mirrors the substantive differences found between marriages and others in the different-sex-oriented samples on which the marriage benefits theory has been previously tested.

Commitment ceremonies, though clearly meaningful for the two parties involved, and relationship commitment were not a better indicator of wealth, by any of the three measures.

Table 18: Summary of Findings in Chapter 5

Claim	Effect of	On	Supported/Not Supported
1	Self-Defined Marriage	Wealth	Well Supported
2	Commitment Ceremony		Not Supported
3	Self-Defined Marriage	Sexual Relationship	Partially Supported
4	Commitment Ceremony		Partially Supported
5	Self-Defined Marriage	Physical Health	Partially Supported
6	Commitment Ceremony		Partially Supported
7	Self-Defined Marriage	Mental Health	Not Supported
8	Commitment Ceremony		Not Supported

The significant effects of self-defined marriage on savings and investments are theoretically interesting, especially since people who were cohabiting, but did not view their relationship as a marriage did not have greater savings and investments than single and daters. Considering that only 2% of people in steady dating relationships (not co-residing with their partner) consider themselves to be married, the difference in the pattern of results between actual legal recognition and self-defined marriage is likely due to the movement of the most “marriage-like” relationships from the cohabitation category in Chapter 4 into the self-defined marriage category in the present chapter. About 27% of cohabitators do not think of themselves as married; it is likely that these relationships are less similar to legal marriages than the cohabitators who do consider themselves married.

Recall that, in the previous chapter, relationship status did not successfully predict the frequency of sexual contact or sexual satisfaction. The alternative relationship characteristics were much better at accounting for variation in the sexual aspects of the respondents’ relationships. First, those who considered themselves to be married had significantly less frequent sex than people who were cohabiting but did not consider themselves to be married. Second, if the couple had celebrated a commitment ceremony,

the respondent reported less frequent sex than if the couple did not have a commitment ceremony. In both of the findings, the symbolic indicator of greater commitment (self-defined marriage, commitment ceremony) was accompanied by a decrease in sexual activity. Third, both self-defined spouses and those who shared a commitment ceremony with their partner reported greater sexual satisfaction than other people.

The sparse findings for physical health and mental health in the previous chapter and the current chapter demonstrate the relative inability of relationship characteristics to predict health among the respondents in this sample. The lone notable exception to this was the consistent finding that indicators of the seriousness of the relationship (marriage, civil union, self-defined marriage, commitment ceremony, and self-reported commitment) all reduced the likelihood of being a smoker. Beyond this and the rather tenuous finding that legal recognition makes one more likely to be a drinker, but, if one is a drinker, to drink fewer drinks per month, relationship status and characteristics were not otherwise useful in predicting physical health. In Table 1, I reported the results of ANOVAS, which indicated only marginally significant variation in self-rated health to begin with, and most of that seems to be explained by age and education (see Tables 6, 14, and 15). The ANOVA in Table 1 indicated significant variation in both depression and anxiety by relationship status, with those in legally recognized relationships and cohabitators reporting significantly less depression and anxiety than single people. Although it appeared on the surface that being in a co-residential relationship improved mental health over having no romantic relationship at all, the effects seem to have been accounted for mainly by factors such as sex, age, black race, religion and general health and to some degree by income, education, Hispanic race, and other race (see Tables 7, 16, and 17).

CHAPTER VI. HOUSEHOLD LABOR

Theoretical Claims: Explaining the Division of Household

Labor

In the previous two chapters, I rigorously tested the applicability of the marriage benefits theory to same-sex couples, using multiple and various relationship comparisons. The findings demonstrated the superior explanatory power of both co-residing with a partner and expressing a higher level of commitment to the partner over other relationship characteristics. In this chapter, I looked at another aspect of same-sex unions that has been consistently divisive among different-sex couples, the division of household labor. Because of the small number of people in my sample with children in their households, I limited the analysis to housework tasks, including cooking, cleaning, washing dishes, doing laundry, household-related shopping, driving family members, outdoor chores, auto maintenance, and bill paying.

The three main theories used to explain the division of household labor in different-sex couples point to gender, time availability, and relative resources as key factors in explain who does more housework and why. Although past studies have relied on biological sex as an indicator of gender, I used the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) to measure the respondents' feminine-typed and masculine-typed characteristics separately and allow each to have an independent effect on housework. Because female-typed housework is different in nature from male-typed housework and comprises the vast majority of total housework, I make one set of claims about the performance of total and female-typed housework and one set of claims about male-typed housework. The performance of male-typed housework can serve as a perceptual "equalizer," a token responsibility, utilized by the lesser-contributing party to tally a disproportionately large number of points in his/her "column." A partner who works more hours or provides more income to the household may be assigned responsibility for auto maintenance, for

example, and the couple may perceive this as *quid pro quo* for the other partner's cleaning responsibilities, even though cleaning is done for several hours weekly whereas auto maintenance is done sporadically and it usually outsourced. The three theoretical explanations for the distribution of total and female-typed housework are captured in the four claims below. A summary of the claims appears in Table 19.

Table 19: Summary of Housework Theory Claims

Claim	Effect of	on
HW 1	Femininity (Gender)	Total and Female-Typed Housework
HW 2	Masculinity (Gender)	Total and Female-Typed Housework
HW 3	Time Availability	Total and Female-Typed Housework
HW 4	Relative Resources	Total and Female-Typed Housework
HW 5	Femininity (Gender)	Male-typed Housework
HW 6	Masculinity (Gender)	Male-typed Housework
HW 7	Time Availability	Male-typed Housework
HW 8	Relative Resources	Male-typed Housework

Housework Claim 1: People who express greater femininity will perform a greater proportion of total housework and female-typed housework than people who express less femininity.

Housework Claim 2: People who express greater masculinity will perform a smaller proportion of total housework and female-typed housework than people who express less masculinity.

Housework Claim 3: People who work more hours, relative to spouse/partner, will perform a smaller proportion of total housework and female-typed housework than people who work a smaller proportion of hours.

Housework Claim 4: People who make more money, relative to spouse/partner, will perform a smaller proportion of total housework and female-typed housework than people who make a smaller proportion of the household income.

The following four claims correspond to the same theoretical explanations, but predict male-typed housework:

Housework Claim 5: People who express greater femininity will perform a smaller proportion of male-typed housework than people who express less femininity.

Housework Claim 6: People who express greater masculinity will perform a greater proportion of male-typed housework than people who express less masculinity.

Housework Claim 7: People who work more hours, relative to spouse/partner, will perform a greater proportion of male-typed housework than people who work a smaller proportion of hours.

Housework Claim 8: People who make more money, relative to spouse/partner, will perform a greater proportion of male-typed housework than people who make a smaller proportion of the household income.

Hypotheses and Results: Explaining the Division of Household Labor

Recall that cooking, cleaning, dishes, laundry, and shopping were included in the female-typed housework subscale. Driving, outdoor chores, and auto maintenance were included in the male-typed housework subscale. I began the housework analyses by deriving hypotheses that correspond to the housework claims above, testing for effects of femininity and masculinity on total, female-typed, and male-typed housework:

Hypothesis 1: People who express greater femininity will perform greater proportions of total and female-typed housework than people who express less femininity.

Hypothesis 2: People who express greater femininity will perform a smaller proportion of male-typed housework than people who express less femininity.

Hypothesis 3: People who express greater masculinity will perform smaller proportions of total and female-typed housework than people who express less masculinity.

Hypothesis 4: People who express greater masculinity will perform a greater proportion of male-typed housework than people who express less masculinity.

Next, I derived hypotheses that correspond to the claims regarding the effects of time availability on total, female-typed, and male-typed housework:

Hypothesis 5: People who work more hours, relative to spouse/partner, will perform a greater proportion of total and female-typed housework than people who work fewer hours.

Hypothesis 6: People who work more hours, relative to spouse/partner, will perform a smaller proportion of male-typed housework than people who work fewer hours.

Finally, I derived hypotheses that correspond to the claims regarding the effects of relative resources on total, female-typed, and male-typed housework, net of the effect of work hour proportion. Although some might argue that an effect of proportional income is meaningful in itself, I believe it is important to consider the effect of income net of work hours. This is because at the root of the relative resources theory is the idea that an individual can “buy” her/his way out of performing housework. However, this idea implies that, even when one member of the couple is working full time and the other is non-employed (and therefore one person makes 100% of the household income), it is in some way unfair if they do not share the housework equally. In fact, whereas the person who makes more money may be buying her way out of housework, the person who makes less money, if employed fewer hours, may in fact be “buying” her way out of working for pay by performing housework. Thus, I tested for whether proportional income affected housework contributions, controlling for work hours. This test accounts for mere practicality that people who spend less time at work will have more time available to spend in household labor to see if, with all else equal, people who made more per hour than their spouse/partner translated that income differential into show of power by performing a smaller proportion of the total and female-typed housework. It may also be that these people perform a greater proportion of the male-typed housework, perhaps in an effort to maintain an illusion of fairness.

Hypothesis 7: People who make a greater proportion of the household income will perform a smaller proportion of total and female-typed housework than people who make a smaller proportion of the household income.

Hypothesis 8: People who make a greater proportion of the household income will perform a greater proportion of male-typed housework than people who make a smaller proportion of the household income.

The results are presented in Table 20. The analyses yielded mixed support for the gender explanation. The validity of gender as predictive of housework was found solely in the effects of femininity. Femininity was associated with greater proportions of total and female-typed housework, supporting Hypothesis 1; however, femininity was not related to male-typed housework, lending no support to Hypothesis 2. Masculinity was not related to any of the housework measures; Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not supported.

The strongest support was for the time availability explanation. Proportional work hours had a significant effect on both total housework and female-typed housework, supporting Hypothesis 5. However, the effect on total housework was modest. For each percent increase in the respondent's proportion of the couples' work hours, that respondent's relative housework contribution decreased by 0.003 points on a five-point scale. For example, consider a hypothetical respondent who reported performing 30% of couple's work hours and a score of 3.5 points on the five-point total housework scale (between "I do most" and "We share equally"). If that respondent increased his work hour proportion to 70%, his total housework contribution would be expected to drop to 3.38 points (closer to "Spouse/partner does most" than to "We share equally"). The effect on female-typed housework was twice as large. Consider a similar example. For a respondent who contributed 30% of the couple's work hours and had a female-type housework score of 3.5 points, a 40% increase in work hour proportion would result in a predicted female-typed housework score of 3.16 (nearly equal sharing). Time availability did not affect male-typed housework; Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

There was no support for the effect of relative resources. The respondent's proportion of the household income was not a predictor of his/her relative contributions to total, female-typed, or male-typed housework. Hypotheses 7 and 8 were not supported.

Table 20: OLS Regression of Gender, Time Availability, and Relative Resources on Housework Measures (N=243)

		Total Housework OLS Regression	Female- Typed OLS Regression	Male-Typed OLS Regression
<i>Theory Tested</i>	<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b (s.e.)</i>	<i>b (s.e.)</i>	<i>b (s.e.)</i>
Gender	Femininity	.06 ⁺ (.03)	.09* (.04)	.003 (.06)
Gender	Masculinity	-.03 (.03)	-.02 (.04)	-.04 (.06)
Time Availability	Work Hour Proportion	-.002* (.001)	-.005** (.002)	.002 (.002)
Relative Resources	Income Proportion	.00 (.001)	-.002 (.002)	.002 (.002)
	Black	.20 (.27)	.32 (.35)	.02 (.44)
	Hispanic	.16 (.14)	.04 (.18)	.36 ⁺ (.22)
	Other Race	-.09 (.16)	.14 (.20)	-.48* (.26)
	Over Age 60	-.24* (.11)	-.44*** (.14)	.09 (.18)
	Education	-.01 (.01)	.003 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
	Mother Worked When R Was Child	.09 ⁺ (.06)	.04 (.08)	.18* (.10)
	Household Size	.01 (.07)	-.03 (.09)	.07 (.12)
	Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.15 (.17)	-.09 (.22)	-.25 (.28)
	Legal Recognition Available to R	-.002 (.06)	.02 (.08)	-.03 (.10)
	R ²	.08	.13***	.05

Notes:

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

Discussion of Competing Explanations for the Division of
Household Labor

Three competing explanations for the division of household labor have been tested and supported with varying success among different-sex couples. Here, I tested the applicability of these theories to same-sex couples, the results of which are summarized in Table 21. Overall, the analyses indicated that same-sex couples approach household labor in a quite pragmatic manner, with time availability proving to be the strongest predictor. For both total and female-typed household labor, people who had more time to do housework, relative to their spouse/partner, did a greater share. Same-sex couples' housework distributions, though not equal, seem to be decided in a rather logical, practical way. Interestingly, though, people with less time to devote to housework did a somewhat greater share of the male-typed housework. To explain this apparently illogical pattern, I turn to attitudes and psychological factors. Same-sex interested people, in general, tend to be more liberal on social issues than the population as a whole (Egan and Sherril 2006; Hertzog 1996). It is among this liberal group that inequalities in the division of household labor are considered more problematic, and greater attention is likely paid to who is contributing how much to the maintenance of the household. Perhaps, even if a couple were contributing equal hours of productive work (paid labor and unpaid labor combined), the person who did less of the unpaid household labor would feel a need to contribute more housework than her work hours would warrant. To do this, the couple may delegate more of the male-typed tasks to her, in an effort to make her feel as though she is contributing more the household. This would also somewhat lighten the load of her spouse/partner, but perhaps more significantly would lighten the psychological load of her spouse/partner and would make the spouse/partner feel less burdened. Although male-typed tasks don't require as much time as female-typed tasks, having fewer tasks to worry about can lift a disproportionately large

psychological burden. Also, it shows the spouse/partner that her housework contributions are not unnoticed or unappreciated and that the totality of the unpaid work does not fall on her alone.

Table 21: Summary of Findings on Housework Theories

Claim	Effect of	on	Supported/ Not supported
1	Femininity (Gender)	Total and Female-Typed Housework	Fully Supported
2	Masculinity (Gender)		Not Supported
3	Time Availability		Fully Supported
4	Relative Resources		Not Supported
5	Femininity (Gender)	Male-Typed Housework	Not Supported
6	Masculinity (Gender)		Not Supported
7	Time Availability		Not Supported
8	Relative Resources		Not Supported

Housework is usually thankless work, with few rewards (Hochschild 1987, 1997) other than the feeling of a clean house; there is no pay, no “employee of the month” award, no performance-based bonuses, and no coworkers offering thanks or congratulations on a job well done. Members of same-sex couples are likely more aware of this than most couples. Also, they would likely not consider paying the household laborer in currency, as the implication of such an arrangement would be akin to reducing the unpaid spouse/partner to the status of a domestic employee. Perhaps the person who contributes more paid labor isn’t “buying” his or her way out of unpaid labor, as the theory of relative resources would suggest, but in fact contributes enough housework to

tip the balance of total productive hours in his or her favor (that is, so that his/her total productive hours are greater than the spouse/partner's) as a way to "pay" the spouse/partner in kind. The person who works more receives extrinsic rewards for those work hours, such as income and social reinforcement. By reducing the number of domestic labor hours and the number of tasks that his spouse/partner is responsible for, he may be insuring that his spouse/partner, who does more of the unpaid labor, receives something more than the intrinsic reward of providing the couple with a clean and organized living space.

Although proportional work hours was the strongest predictor of housework, it was not the only explanation to which the data lent support. I also investigated the effects of femininity and masculinity as two independent aspects of gender, finding that masculinity was not significantly related to any type of housework. Femininity, net of the effect of proportional work hours, did have a marginally significant effect on total housework, an effect driven by a significant impact on female-typed housework. This finding suggests that gender does have some role in divvying up household tasks, with more feminine individuals taking on a greater share of female-typed tasks. However, when looking at the size of the effect of femininity on female-typed housework, it becomes apparent that a large change in femininity is associated with only a small change in female-typed housework. For example, if we were to double the femininity score of a person with a femininity score of 3 (on a seven-point scale), his female-typed housework contribution would increase by only 0.27 (on a five-point scale), or, for example, from 4 ("I do most") to 4.27 (still closer to "I do most" than to "I do all").

Contrarily, masculinity did not explain the division of household labor by any of the three measures. This finding directs me to explore the real, relative significance of femininity and masculinity in determining gendered behaviors and perhaps even gender roles. The crudest division, the most purely stereotypical assignment of gendered behavior places masculinity in the labor force and femininity in the domestic sphere. As

we know, women have successfully moved into the labor force in greater and greater proportions, especially since the 1970s (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008). The converse, however, has really not happened; men participate in domestic labor to a much lesser extent than women participate in paid labor. Perhaps this unilateral shift has impacted the relative degree to which masculinity and femininity are useful concepts for discerning “who does what.” As women are substantially represented in the paid labor force, it may be that the prescriptive nature of masculinity in determining what a masculine person does has been blurred. However, because men as yet have not moved into the domestic sphere to such a substantial degree, femininity is still a decent indicator of who does how much in the home. Masculinity may, in the past, have meant one thing: paid labor. Today, however, both masculinity and femininity translate into paid labor. Thus, the prescriptive nature of masculinity is greatly reduced. Both in the past and today, femininity meant household labor, and today it also means paid labor; the prescriptive nature of femininity is increased. In other words, being masculine doesn’t result in the performance of any activity that is not prescribed by femininity; masculinity may have become less meaningful and may therefore be less real in its consequences.

Relative resources, net of work hour proportion, had no effect on total housework contributions, female-typed housework, or male-typed housework. These findings suggest that same-sex couples do not use their control of financial resources to buy their way out of performing housework. Whereas the relative resources theory portrays high-earning spouses as engaging in virtual extortion, translating their income into power and wielding the power to push a larger share of household labor onto their spouse/partner, there was no evidence of this among the same-sex couples in the current sample. In fact, imagine a respondent who was non-employed and therefore earning 0% of the household income and reported performing half of the female-typed housework (score of 3 out of seven). Even if this respondent starting working for pay when his spouse/partner lost his job, thereby earning 100% of the household income, his female-typed housework score

would be expected to decrease by only 0.3: from a score of 3 to a score of 2.7 on a seven-points scale.

Theoretical Claims: Interaction Effects

I also included several claims about the varying strength of the theoretical effects by relationship status and other relationship characteristics. Among different-sex couples, different theories are better at explaining the division of household labor in different types of couples. Gender and relative resources are more predictive of housework for married couples than they are for cohabiting couples. Time availability is more predictive for cohabiting couples than for married couples. It seems that marriage has a “traditionalizing” effect on different-sex couples, such that wives shoulder a greater proportion of housework, and the person earning more money (usually the husband) is able to buy his/her way out of some housework. Likewise, the explanatory strength of different theories may vary by relationship status or by alternative relationship measures. Cohabiters seem to take a more logical approach to housework, delegating a greater share of the housework to the party who works fewer hours. However, a couple may demonstrate a more gendered division of household labor or if they obtain a marriage or civil union, if they consider themselves married, or if they express greater commitment. Likewise, couples with these characteristics may be more likely to allow the person who earns more to shirk household responsibilities. The claims below specify interactions between theory variables and relationship characteristics. I exclude interactions with independent variables that did not have significant main effects in the previous analysis.

A summary of the claims appears in Table 22:

Claim 1 (Femininity * Legal Recognition): Legal recognition will have a traditionalizing effect, such that the effects of femininity on housework will be stronger.

Claim 2 (Femininity * Self Married): Self-defined marriage will have a traditionalizing effect, such that the effects of femininity on housework will be stronger.

Claim 3 (Femininity * Ceremony): Commitment ceremonies will have a traditionalizing effect, such that the effects of femininity on housework will be stronger.

Claim 4 (Time Availability * Legal Recognition): Legal recognition will have a traditionalizing effect, such that the effects of time availability on housework will be weaker.

Claim 5 (Time Availability * Self Married): Self-defined marriage will have a traditionalizing effect, such that the effects of time availability on housework will be weaker.

Claim 6 (Time Availability * Ceremony): Commitment ceremonies will have a traditionalizing effect, such that the effects of time availability on housework will be weaker.

Table 22: Summary of Housework Interaction Claims

Claim	Effect of	on
1	Femininity*Legal Recognition	Total and Female-Typed Housework
2	Femininity*Self Married	Total and Female-Typed Housework
3	Femininity*Commitment Ceremony	Total and Female-Typed Housework
5	Time*Legal Recognition	Total and Female-Typed Housework
6	Time*Self Married	Total and Female-Typed Housework
7	Time*Commitment Ceremony	Total and Female-Typed Housework

Hypotheses and Results: Interaction Effects

The claims about interaction effects are predicated on significant findings for the main effect of each theoretical explanation for the division of household labor. For this reason, I only looked for interaction effects for femininity and time availability and only for the dependent variables upon which their effects were significant. The interaction hypotheses for the effects of femininity appear below:

Hypothesis 1: The effect of femininity on total and female-typed housework will be stronger for people who are in a legally recognized relationship than for people who are not in a legally recognized relationship.

Hypothesis 2: The effect of femininity on total and female-typed housework will be stronger for people who define themselves as married than for people who do not define themselves as married.

Hypothesis 3: The effect of femininity on total and female-typed housework will be stronger for people who have had a commitment ceremony than for people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

Time availability was the strongest predictor of housework. The following are the interaction hypotheses for the effects of time availability:

Hypothesis 4: The effect of proportional work hours on total and female-typed housework will be weaker for people who are in a legally recognized relationship than for people who are not in a legally recognized relationship.

Hypothesis 5: The effect of proportional work hours on total and female-typed housework will be weaker for people who define themselves as married than for people who do not define themselves as married.

Hypothesis 6: The effect of proportional work hours on total and female-typed housework will be weaker for people who have had a commitment ceremony than for people who have not had a commitment ceremony.

The results for the interaction effects of competing theories and relationship characteristics on various types of housework appear in Tables 23 and 24. Because of the complexity of the tables, I refrained from including coefficients for the control variables in the in-text tables. When regressions included the same independent variables, these were grouped together in a numbered “Set” of models. Full results showing all coefficients appear in Appendix E, Tables E13-E15 and Tables E16-E18.

I begin by reporting on the results from Table 23, which addresses femininity and its interaction with various relationship measures. As expected from the analysis of the competing theories, femininity had a significant, positive effect on both total housework and female-typed housework across all relationship characteristics. The key values, however, were the second coefficients in each of the models – the interaction coefficients. Although I had expected the interaction effects to be positive, the opposite effect was borne out when significant results were found. The positive effect of

Table 23: OLS Regressions of Gender (Femininity) and Relationship Characteristic Interactions on Total and Female-Typed Housework (N=243)

Dependent Variable		A	B
		Total Housework <i>OLS Regression</i>	Female-Typed Housework <i>OLS Regression</i>
<i>Relationship Characteristic</i>	<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Set A: Legally Recognized	Femininity	.06** (.02)	.10* (.04)
	Femininity * Legally Recognized	-.03 ⁺ (.02)	-.03 ⁺ (.02)
	R ²	.09*	.13***
Set B: Consider Self Married	Femininity	.05 ⁺ (.04)	.09* (.05)
	Femininity * Consider Self Married	.00 (.01)	-.003 (.02)
	R ²	.08 ⁺	.12***
Set C: Commitment Ceremony	Femininity	.06* (.04)	.10** (.05)
	Femininity * Commitment Ceremony	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
	R ²	.08*	.13***

Notes: All models control for Black, Hispanic, other race/ethnicity, over age 60, education, mother worked at least part time when R was a child (under 12), household size, presence of a child under age 6, whether legal recognition is available in R's state of residence, and work hour proportion.

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

femininity on total housework was tempered, rather than amplified, by two of the four relationship characteristics. Although femininity boosted housework contributions on average, among people who were in a legally recognized relationship and people who reported higher levels of relationship commitment, this was less true. The sizes of the interaction effects were not large enough to cancel out the positive effect of femininity; however, the effect was dampened. Hypothesis 1 was therefore not supported, and in fact the results were significant in the opposite direction of the predictions.

The interaction of femininity with self-defined marriage did not have a significant effect on either total or female-typed housework, meaning that the effect of femininity on total and female-typed housework was the same, regardless of the self-definition of marriage. Similarly, the interaction of femininity with commitment ceremony was not significant for either total or female-typed housework. The effect of femininity was the same regardless of whether the couple had celebrated a commitment ceremony. Thus, Hypotheses 2 and 3 were not supported.

The second set of interaction results are found in Table 24. Again, the results for the main effects of work hour proportion were significant and negative for both total and female-typed housework across the models for all three interactions. These were as expected from the analysis of the competing theories.

Focusing on the second coefficients in the models for total and female-typed housework, I found that, for respondents who were married or in a civil union, the negative effect of work hour proportion was cancelled out. However, the interaction of legal recognition and work hours was not a significant predictor of female-typed housework. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported. Self-defined marriage was not a significant moderator of the effect of time availability on either total housework or female-typed housework; Hypothesis 5 was not supported. For respondents who had had a commitment ceremony, the negative effect of work hour proportion on total housework

Table 24: OLS Regressions of Time Availability (Work Hour Proportion) and Relationship Characteristic Interactions on Total and Female-Typed Housework (N=243)

		Total Housework <i>OLS Regression</i>	Female-Typed Housework <i>OLS Regression</i>
<i>Relationship Characteristic</i>	<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> <i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>b</i> <i>(s.e.)</i>
Set A: Legally Recognized	Work Hour Proportion	-.004** (.001)	-.007*** (.002)
	Work Hour Proportion* Legally Recognized	.004* (.002)	.003 (.003)
	R ²	.09*	.11**
Set B: Consider Self Married	Work Hour Proportion	-.003 ⁺ (.002)	-.005* (.003)
	Work Hour Proportion* Consider Self Married	.001 (.003)	.00 (.004)
	R ²	.07	.11**
Set C: Commitment Ceremony	Work Hour Proportion	-.005*** (.001)	-.008*** (.002)
	Work Hour Proportion* Commitment Ceremony	.005** (.002)	.006* (.003)
	R ²	.09*	.12***

Notes: All models control for Black, Hispanic, Other race/ethnicity, over age 60, education, mother worked at least part time when R was a child (under 12), household size, presence of a child under age 6, and whether legal recognition is available in R's state of residence. Model Set 1 controls for legal recognition; Model Set 2 controls for self-definition of marriage; and Model Set 3 controls for commitment ceremony.

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

was completely cancelled out, and the negative effect on female-typed housework was cut by about 75%, supporting Hypotheses 6.

Discussion of Interaction Effects

In the second half of this chapter, I have explored whether the explanatory value of three potential housework theories varied according to several relationship characteristics, including legal status, self-defined marriage, and commitment ceremonies. The results are summarized in Table 25. The two theories were each supported in the first half of this chapter. The strongest support was for the time availability explanation, in which the member of the couple who works fewer hours for pay works contributes more hours of unpaid household labor. Time availability, measured as the respondent's weekly work hours as a proportion of the household's weekly work hours (respondent's hours + spouse/partner's hours) was a significant predictor of total housework and female-typed housework. In this main effect, the larger the respondent's proportion of the household's work hours, the smaller the respondent's relative contribution to housework. I investigated potential interaction effects of proportional work hours with relationship characteristics in their effect on the three measures of housework. In looking at the effects on total housework, the impact of proportional work hours on housework was actually cancelled out by the interaction of work hours with legal recognition and by the interaction of commitment ceremony with work hours. That is, for people in a legally recognized marriage or civil union/domestic partnership, there was no effect of proportional work hours on relative housework contribution. Likewise, for people who had celebrated a commitment ceremony, there was no relationship between work hours and total housework. This indicates that work hours are not a useful explanatory factor when it comes to the distribution of total housework among same-sex couples who have obtained some sort of formal recognition, such as a legally binding document or a ceremony marking their relationship. Taken

together, the results here are quite unexpected. It seems that the most pragmatic, logical way of dividing housework is utilized by some same-sex couples, but not by those who are married, are in a civil union, or have celebrated a commitment ceremony. In fact, it is the couples who are cohabiting without some type of formal recognition who divide household responsibilities so that the partner with more available time does more housework.

Table 25: Summary of Findings for Interaction Effects on Housework Contributions

Claim	Effect of	on	Supported/Not Supported
1	Femininity* Legal Recognition	Total and Female-Typed	Not Supported
2	Femininity* Self-Defined Marriage	Total and Female-Typed	Not Supported
3	Femininity* Commitment Ceremony	Total and Female-Typed	Not Supported
5	Time* Legal Recognition	Total and Female-Typed	Partially Supported
6	Time* Self-Defined Marriage	Total and Female-Typed	Not Supported
7	Time* Commitment Ceremony	Total and Female-Typed	Well Supported

The findings beg the question of what factors do explain the division of household labor among couples whose relationships are formally recognized in some way. The relative resources explanation did not produce any significant effects in the first half of this chapter. This leaves the gender explanation: are married couples, those in civil unions, and couples who have had a commitment ceremony more gendered in their division of household labor than other couples? In the analysis of the main effects, femininity (but not masculinity) was a good predictor of both total housework and female-typed housework. Among those who had had a commitment ceremony, the

interaction was non-significant, indicating that femininity remained an important factor in determining household labor. However, among people in legally recognized relationships, the size of the effect of femininity on total housework was reduced by about half. That is, married people and those in civil unions were less likely to let gendered traits dictate the division of household labor. Although research on different-sex marriages suggests that legal recognition would have a “traditionalizing” effect on a couple, in which housework became more gendered, the reverse was true for same-sex couples. One problem with these data is that the gender measure is not proportional; that is, I have no information on the feminine or masculine characteristics of the spouse/partner. Thus, I cannot tell, for example, if the “more feminine” member of a given couple does a greater share of the housework. This will be an important avenue for future research on the role gender plays in organizing the lives and relationships of same-sex couples.

Self-reported commitment to the relationship proved to be a moderating factor in the various effects on total and female-typed housework. The interaction effects were quite unlike those found for legal recognition and commitment ceremonies. In assessing the time availability explanation, in fact, the main and interaction effects were opposite of those discussed above. The negative effects of work hour proportion on both total housework and female-typed housework were reversed, once the interaction effect of work hours and relationship commitment was added to the models. In these models, the more the respondent worked, relative to spouse/partner, the greater his/her contribution to household labor. However, this positive effect was offset by the interaction of work hour proportion and relationship commitment, such that the more committed one was to the relationship, the weaker the positive effect of work hours on housework. The coefficient for the interaction in the total housework model was -0.003, compared to the coefficient for the main effect, which was 0.009. This means that an increase of three points in relationship commitment (on a four-point scale) would be sufficient to reverse the effect

of work hours on total housework. In the female-typed housework model, and two-point increase in relationship commitment would nearly cancel out the main effect, and a three point increase would reverse the effect. Because relationship commitment was measured on a four-point scale, the comparison is really one between people who are “Not committed” to their relationship (score of 1) and people who are “Highly committed” (score of 4). It seems that the original, negative effect of work hour proportion on housework contributions was driven by people who are concentrated in the “Highly committed category” and some people in the “Committed” category, indicating that highly committed couples take a more pragmatic approach when divvying up household tasks.

The interaction of femininity with relationship commitment mirrored the interactions of femininity with legal recognition and commitment ceremony. The original main effect, in which femininity was linked to greater shares of household labor, was tempered among respondents with higher levels of commitment to their relationship. For people who reported being “Highly committed,” the positive effects of femininity on both total housework and female-typed housework were reduced by about half. This again indicates that the more committed the relationship, the less gendered the division of household labor.

Overall, time availability lost nearly all of its explanatory power among people in legally recognized relationships, those who had a commitment ceremony, and people who were highly committed to their relationships. Gender was perhaps a better explanation, with femininity predicting greater housework contributions. Femininity did lose about half of its impact among people in marriages and civil unions and for couples who had a high degree of commitment to their relationship, but some effect remained. Among people who considered themselves to be married and people who had had a commitment ceremony, the effect of femininity on total and female-type housework was not reduced. In sum, the results for the interaction analyses suggest that in relationships

that are more committed, as indicated by obtaining legal recognition, having a commitment ceremony, or simply a self-report, the housework distribution is decided more on gender (femininity) than on practicality (proportional work hours). These findings contradict those from the first half of this chapter, in which proportional work hours was the strongest predictor of housework among same-sex couples generally. It appears that there may, in fact, be a “traditionalizing” effect among couples who get married, obtain a civil union, or have a commitment ceremony, in which femininity determines household labor, even net of time availability (work hours).

CHAPTER VII. CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

Are same-sex unions good for people's health, wealth, and sexual satisfaction? Are there inequalities and/or inequities in the division of household labor in lesbian and gay couples? The results from my research suggest some provocative answers. In Chapter 4, results showed that same-sex marriages and civil unions do confer some, but not all, of the benefits associated with heterosexual marriage. Same-sex spouses and civil partners exhibited greater financial stability as measured by savings and investments than people who were dating or single. Likewise, they were less likely to smoke and, among those who did drink alcohol, drank less than cohabitators, daters, and singles. With respect to wealth and physical health, the greatest differences between the findings for the current sample and the findings from past heterosexual samples were found among cohabitators. In past studies, cohabitators have been shown not to experience "marriage benefits;" in the present study, cohabitators had a similar pattern of results. Cohabitators had greater per capita household incomes, and were less likely to be drinkers than people who were single or dating. For both the legal recognition group and the cohabitation group, there was no evidence of benefits to their sexual relationships or their mental health.

In an expansion of the "marriage benefits" theory presented in Chapter 5, I tested the utility of more subjective relationship measures in discerning who experiences these positive outcomes and who does not. I explored whether viewing one's own relationship as a marriage, regardless of State recognition, would produce improvements in health, wealth, and sexual relations. Similarly, I tested whether the trend of celebrating a commitment ceremony to declare the committed status of one's relationship to oneself, and often to others, would serve as a marker for who experiences "marriage" benefits. These more subjective relationship characteristics proved to be more successful than

legal recognition in predicting improvements in wealth and sexual satisfaction, and equally successful in predicting a reduced likelihood of smoking.

In sum, subjective aspects of same-sex relationships are better predictors of who experiences “marriage benefits” than are relationship status measures. There are a few interpretations for why this is the case. Legal recognition may simply not have the impact on same-sex couples that marriage does on different-sex couples. It may not have the same meaning for the couple; the couple may view legal recognition, above and beyond a commitment ceremony, more as a formality than a deep and meaningful change in the relationship. Additionally, legal recognition of same-sex couples certainly does not have the same public standing as different-sex marriage, which likely leads to less public and community support of same-sex married couples and civil partners. The relative lack of public support serves to suppress the potential benefits of legal recognition. Also, legal recognition may not have the same impact on the couple because of our current place in social history. Although all same-sex married couples and civil partners are relative “newlyweds,” many of these couples began their courtship long before they gained legal recognition. The pent-up demand for same-sex marriage and unions means that couples who have been together for 20 years or more are just now able to marry. For such couples, even if the symbolic significance of their new relationship status is great, they may be less likely to experience a deeper shift in their relationship. Similarly, many of the cohabiting couples have been together for many years in a marriage-like situation, unlike the majority of different-sex cohabitators.

The availability of same-sex marriage, or specifically, the lack thereof, does cast a shadow over these findings. While I have provided a valid test of the theory of marriage benefits, because same-sex marriage or civil unions were not available to everyone in the study, this is not an ideal test. Would the results be different if everyone in the sample who wished to marry were allowed to do so? It is likely so. However, the theory says that there is something special about marriage that boosts many aspects of people’s lives.

Perhaps an unstated scope condition of the theory is that it only applies among people for whom marriage is possible. Even so, or perhaps especially so, it is important to test whether the theory applies. Doing so not only tells us whether and how marriage affects people in same-sex relationships, but we glean new information about the nature of marriage and the (perhaps disparate) roles it plays in the lives of different people. When marriage is a scarce resource, it seems to operate differently. Rather than an expected step in the process of relationship development, it may be a choice that is more metered, more political, more personally vulnerable, more symbolic, and more conscious, but maybe less concretely transformative.

Findings from Chapter 6 revealed that, in fact, inequities exist in the division of housework in same-sex couples. Greater femininity was associated with performing a greater share of total housework and female-typed housework, demonstrating an inequity, supporting a “doing gender” explanation in which people perform more housework to enact a feminine identity. Working more hours at a paid job, relative to one’s partner, was associated with performing a smaller share of total housework and female-typed housework, supporting a time availability explanation. It seems that although the more practical, logical division of time availability has a role in the distribution of housework, gender is still an important factor.

Also in Chapter 6, I tested for the “traditionalizing” effect of marriage on housework distribution, though in an expanded form better suited to studying same-sex relationships. A “traditionalizing” hypothesis would predict that the effect of femininity on housework would be amplified in more committed relationships, including those with legal recognition, self-defined marriages, and those who had a commitment ceremony. In fact, the opposite effect was borne out: legal recognition was associated with a mitigation of the effect of femininity. In essence, marriages and civil unions (though not self-defined marriages or commitment ceremonies) made couples less likely to divide the housework based on femininity. A “traditionalizing” effect was evident, however, in

further analyses of time availability. Legal recognition and commitment ceremonies both reduced the explanatory power of proportional work hours. The most practical, logical means of dividing household labor was less predictive of housework among spouses, civil partners, and the ceremonially committed than among other couples.

Significance of the Study

Gates and Badgett (2006) outline several priorities for research on lesbian and gay families. They recommend (1) using several methodological strategies to collect better data on sexual minorities, (2) conducting “natural experiments” on the roles of marriage and relationship formalization, (3) reanalyzing existing data more fully, and (4) developing more inclusive theories of gay and lesbian families. My research addressed their first recommendation, as well as critiques of past research outlined by Christopher and Sprecher (2000) and Andersson et al. (2006), by employing sampling strategies that improved upon past snowball samples that began with a single point of contact. I also took into consideration the intricacies and likely pitfalls of writing a survey on sexual orientation and romantic relationships by learning from the wisdom of experienced researchers and the difficulties they have encountered with ambiguities in extant datasets. The study also addressed Gates and Badgett’s second recommendation by using various relationship statuses as comparison groups to conduct a natural experiment. Gates and Badgett specifically refer to the need to understand how legal status affects physical and mental health and economic well being, and I addressed these issues directly.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of this project corresponds to Gates and Badgett’s fourth recommendation: to develop more inclusive theories of gay and lesbian families. The starting point of the research was to test the inclusivity of extant theories of marriage to same-sex couples. From there, I developed alternative hypotheses of the potential positive outcomes of same-sex unions. These alternative hypotheses build on the basic premise that relationships are generally good for people. I have taken this

premise, applied it more inclusively to a new group, and tested it systematically.

Likewise, I have taken the claim that, when it comes to housework, relationships are not always good for people, expanded it, and applied it systematically among a rarer sample.

With concern over the “decline” of the American family in recent decades (Bumpass 1990; Popenoe 1992), researchers have pointed to the “retreat” from marriage as the main symptom (Lewin 2004; Smock 2004; Waite 1995). Arguing the benefits of heterosexual marriage has been the main research-grounded strategy of the conservative “family values” movement (Jackson et al. 2001; Waite and Gallagher 2000). Supporters of same-sex marriage policy often cite the benefits of marriage as evidence of the discriminatory nature of current marriage laws that exclude same-sex couples, asserting the right of all Americans to have an equal opportunity to reap the advantages of marriage. No empirical evidence existed, however, to demonstrate that same-sex spouses in fact experience the same positive effects as different-sex spouses. A full articulation of the benefits (or lack thereof) of same-sex marriage was a necessary and clear next step for the sociological study of marriage and cohabitation, lesbian and gay studies, and the current public debate over same-sex marriage. I have addressed this research gap, concluding that legal recognition (marriages and civil unions) does provide some benefits to financial well-being and physical health. Defining one’s own relationship as a marriage (regardless of legal recognition), however, was more strongly associated with “marriage” benefits, including greater financial well-being, an improved sexual relationship, and fewer health-risk behaviors.

In addition, I provide in this research the first full test of three competing theories for the division of household labor among same-sex couples: gender, time availability, and relative resources. Femininity (as an indicator of gender) was positively related to proportional housework contributions, and proportional work hours (as an indicator of time availability) were inversely related, to proportional housework, supporting both the gender and time availability explanations of housework inequality. Further, I explored

interactions between femininity and relationship characteristics and between proportional work hours and relationship characteristics. I found that being married or in a civil union mitigated the predictive power of femininity, but that legal recognition and commitment ceremonies had a “traditionalizing” effect, reduced the explanatory power of proportional work hours. This is the first study to not only simultaneously test the three theories among same-sex couples, but to explore whether the theories operate differently according to different relationship statuses or characteristics.

Future Considerations

I foresee five avenues of future research flowing from the findings and unanswered questions in this study. First, it would be instructive to assess the degree to which the significant, though minimal, findings for the experience of “marriage” benefits among same-sex couples are due to selection. Although this would ideally involve a longitudinal assessment of transitions into and out of relationships and corresponding changes in health, wealth, and sexual relations, a less direct assessment is possible through statistical methods, such as endogenous switching regressions.

Second, further study should be devoted to perceptions of the division of household labor. Although I did collect information on whether individuals feel that the division of household labor is fair (fair or unfair to both the respondent and to the spouse/partner), it was outside the scope of this report to analyze data on housework perceptions. Studies on heterosexual couples illuminate the disparity between the actual fairness of the division of household labor and perceived fairness (see Greenstein 1996). An interesting study could assess how closely actual and perceived fairness align among same-sex couples, and could test whether actual or perceived fairness is a better predictor of relationship satisfaction (also measured in my dataset).

A third suggestion for future study, also related to perceptions of fairness, stems from the claim that male-typed tasks are sometimes used to make it seem as though one is

performing a greater share of household labor than one is actually performing. This claim leads me ask: Do male-typed tasks carry greater weight in perceptions of fairness than is warranted by their requisite time investment?

The fourth aspect of my data I would like to explore makes further use of the open-ended responses I collected on two questions. The first is actually a set of questions – I asked married respondents why they chose to marry, civil partners why they chose to get a civil union, and cohabitators why they chose to live together. The second question was, “What does the word ‘marriage’ mean to you?” It would be illustrative to know why same-sex couples make the choices they do with respect to relationship status and the meaning they associated with marriage could help in this determination.

Fifth, I found several consistent, significant effects of biological sex on “marriage” benefits. Women were worse off financially than men on all three measures of financial well-being, had less frequent sex but were more sexually satisfied, and, when they did drink, they drank fewer alcoholic beverages per week than men. Although I did control for biological sex, I did not conduct analyses of interaction effects of sex and relationship status. Perhaps marriage benefits are experienced (or not experienced) differently by male and female couples; such interaction analyses would elucidate the sex-specific effects of legal recognition and cohabitation on wealth, health, and sexual relationships.

Additional future research that would not be possible with the current sample should include a longitudinal component, repeating the analyses in this study at various points in time. Because legal recognition was available fairly recently for the spouses and civil partners in this study, they may not have had sufficient time together as a legally recognized couple to reap the full benefits of their legal status. Future research with couples who have greater diversity in the duration of their marriages and civil unions would certainly add something that the current study could not. The characteristics of people within relationship statuses will likely change dramatically as time passes.

Eventually, newlyweds will be more like “newlyweds” as pent-up demand for same-sex marriages and civil union ebbs and fewer long-time partners get married. As same-sex marriage become widely available, it is likely that the group of people choosing to marry in a given year will look more and more like the group of different-sex couples who choose to marry in that year. As the two become more similar, they are likely to experience similar benefits from marriage.

Finally, it would be instructive in future research to include a measure of “outness,” especially in analyses of selection effects. Conceivably, people who “out” are more likely to select into legal recognition, as such recognition has a public component that other relationship statuses do not have. It may also be that those who are open about their same-sex relationship have systematically different levels of health, wealth, and/or sexual satisfaction than people who are more private about their same-sex attraction. For example, there may be a wage penalty for employees who are “out,” or there may be a negative impact on mental health among people who feel they much hide an aspect of themselves. “Outness” is one factor that is unfortunately lacking from the current study, but which could be quite important in sorting out who experiences the “marriage” boost and why.

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APPENDIX A. BEM SEX ROLE INVENTORY (BSRI) SHORT-FORM

For each of the following characteristics, indicate how much the statement applies to you in general. Please use the follow set of responses for each statement:

- 1 = Never or almost never true
- 2 = Rarely true
- 3 = Seldom true
- 4 = Sometimes true
- 5 = Often true
- 6 = Mostly true
- 7 = Always or almost always true

Items indicating masculine orientation:

- 1. Independent
- 2. Assertive
- 3. Strong personality
- 4. Forceful
- 5. Has leader abilities
- 6. Willing to take risks
- 7. Willing to take a stand
- 8. Aggressive

Items indicating feminine orientation:

- 1. Affectionate
- 2. Sympathetic
- 3. Sensitive to other's needs
- 4. Understanding
- 5. Compassionate
- 6. Warm
- 7. Tender
- 8. Gentle

APPENDIX B. GENDER IDEOLOGY SCALE

For each of the following statements, indicate how much you agree or disagree.
Please use the following set of responses:

- 1 = Strongly agree
- 2 = Agree
- 3 = Disagree
- 4 = Strongly disagree

1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.
2. It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have one herself
3. A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.
4. It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family.
5. Women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country up to men.

APPENDIX C. DASS₂₁

For each of the following statements, indicate how much the statement applied to you over the past week. Please use the follow set of responses for each statement:

- 1 = Did not apply to me at all
- 2 = Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time
- 3 = Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time
- 4 = Applied to me very much, or most of the time

1. I found it hard to wind down.
2. I was aware of dryness of my mouth.
3. I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all.
4. I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion).
5. I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things.
6. I tended to over-react to situations.
7. I experienced trembling (e.g., in the hands).
8. I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy.
9. I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself.
10. I felt that I had nothing to look forward to.
11. I found myself getting agitated.
12. I found it difficult to relax.
13. I felt down-hearted and blue.
14. I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing.
15. I felt I was close to panic.
16. I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything.
17. I felt I wasn't worth much as a person.
18. I felt that I was rather touchy.
19. I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g., sense of heart rate increase, heart missing a beat).
20. I felt scared without any good reason.
21. I felt that life was meaningless.

APPENDIX D. HOUSEHOLD LABOR MEASURES

Housework

For each of the following items, indicate how you and your partner/spouse divide the work associated with the particular task. Please use the following response set:

- 1 = I do all of the work
- 2 = I do most of the work
- 3 = We divide the work equally
- 4 = My spouse/partner does most of the work
- 5 = My spouse/partner does all of the work

- 1. Cooking
- 2. Dishes
- 3. Cleaning house
- 4. Shopping (for necessary items)
- 5. Laundry
- 6. Driving family members
- 7. Outdoor chores
- 8. Auto maintenance
- 9. Paying bills

Child Care:

For each of the following items, indicate how you and your partner/spouse divide the work associated with the particular task. If all children in the household perform a task alone, please select a value of zero. Please use the following response set:

- 1 = I do all of the work
- 2 = I do most of the work
- 3 = We divide the work equally
- 4 = My spouse/partner does most of the work
- 5 = My spouse/partner does all of the work
- 0 = All children do this alone

- 1. Helping with homework/educational play
- 2. Playing with child(ren)
- 3. Disciplining
- 4. Having one-on-one talks
- 5. Feeding the child(ren)
- 6. Dressing and diapering
- 7. Putting the child(ren) to bed
- 8. Bathing the child(ren)
- 9. Comforting the child(ren) when upset

APPENDIX E. COMPLETE TABLES

Table E1: OLS Regressions of Legal Recognition and Cohabitation on Financial Well-Being

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Respondent's Logged Income	Savings and Investments (in dollars)	Per Capita Household Income
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	6.76*** (.43)	-202783.66*** (30130.50)	7.27*** (.46)
Legally Recognized	-.04 (.15)	25992.40* (14339.66)	.08 (.13)
Cohabiting	.05 (.13)	15458.94 (12584.59)	.26** (.09)
Not Employed	—	810.80 (14597.88)	—
Female	-.25** (.08)	-13251.54* (7442.68)	-.18* (.09)
Black	.09 (.21)	-8560.46 (19508.46)	.08 (.23)
Hispanic	.02 (.14)	-19759.75 ⁺ (12892.14)	-.01 (.15)
Other Race	-.12 (.16)	-2066.72 (14525.71)	-.14 (.17)
Age	.02*** (.003)	2239.30*** (295.06)	.01*** (.004)
Education	.07*** (.02)	8772.03*** (1469.96)	.07*** (.02)
Mother's Education	.01 (.01)	898.65 (1125.30)	.02 ⁺ (.01)
Father's Education	.007 (.01)	972.66 (990.21)	.005 (.01)
Work Hours	.03*** (.003)	-24.19 (297.59)	.03*** (.003)
Non-Standard Work Schedule	-.05 (.16)	-23265.25 ⁺ (16211.40)	.02 (.18)
Gender Progressivism	.07 (.08)	—	.08 (.09)
Household Size	.15+ (.10)	3252.85 (5597.72)	—
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	.05 (.23)	30269.62 ⁺ (22690.70)	.22 (.20)

Table E1 continued

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Respondent's Logged Income	Savings and Investments (in dollars)	Logged Household Income
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Conservative Religion	-.25 (.42)	38474.68 (35798.53)	-.11 (.45)
No Religion	-.09 (.11)	90.04 (9897.77)	-.16 ⁺ (.12)
Academic Recruitment	-.13 ⁺ (.09)	-7355.13 (7885.85)	-.12 ⁺ (.09)
Legal Recognition Available to R	.22** (.08)	5804.97 (7561.51)	.26** (.09)
N	359	429	380
R2	.53***	.32***	.42***

Notes:

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

Table E2: Effects of Legal Relationship Status and Cohabitation on Sexual Relationship (N = 299)

	Model A	Model B
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	9.72** (4.17)	—
Legally Recognized	-.17 (1.70)	.25 (.29)
Cohabiting	.56 (1.53)	.25 (.26)
Frequency of Sexual Contact	—	.11*** (.01)
Female	-2.06** (.83)	.51*** (.15)
Black	1.17 (3.23)	.40 (.56)
Hispanic	1.93 (1.66)	-.08 (.29)
Other Race	2.65 ⁺ (1.90)	-.24 (.34)
Under Age 25	5.66*** (1.55)	.14 (.29)
Over Age 60	-3.77** (1.51)	-.21 (.26)
Education	.20 (.17)	.03 (.03)
Work Hours	-.01 (.02)	-.002 (.004)
Non-Standard Work Schedule (R or R's spouse/partner)	.45 (.80)	-.32** (.14)
Gender Progressivism	-.86 (.94)	-.22 ⁺ (.17)
Household Size	-1.47 ⁺ (1.00)	-.23 ⁺ (.17)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	1.12 (2.40)	.68* (.41)
No Religion	.56 (1.16)	-.44* (.20)

Table E2 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Legal Recognition Available to R	-1.29 ⁺ (.98)	.08 (.17)
R2	.17***	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)		810.39(17)***

Notes:

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

Table E3: OLS Regressions of Legal Recognition and Cohabitation on Physical Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
	General Health	Cigarette Smoker	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption	
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>	<i>Logit</i>	<i>Inflation (binomial)_a</i>	<i>Count</i>
	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>
	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>
Constant	—	2.29 ⁺ (1.65)	8.57** (3.48)	1.93*** (.63)
Legally Recognized	-.08 (.23)	-1.15* (.66)	-1.52 _b (1.96)	-.23 _c (.20)
Cohabiting	-.09 (.14)	-.45 (.39)	1.67** _b (.71)	.15 _c (.15)
Age	-.01*** (.004)	-.02 (.01)	.06 (.02)	.007 (.005)
Female	-.09 (.12)	-.37 (.35)	.21 (.48)	-.50*** (.13)
Black	.31 (.32)	-.15 (.82)	-17.99 (121.09)	-.25 (.31)
Hispanic	-.20 (.21)	.24 (.55)	-.38 (1.26)	-.18 (.24)
Other Race	.35 ⁺ (.25)	—	-.14 ⁺ (1.01)	-.24 (.29)
Education	.13*** (.02)	-.25*** (.08)	-.29** (.11)	.02 (.03)
Mother's Education	.01 (.02)	.03 (.06)	.07 (.10)	.01 (.02)
Father's Education	-.002 (.02)	-.10* (.05)	-.13 ⁺ (.09)	-.02 (.02)
Work Hours	-.005 (.005)	—	.04* (.21)	-.003 (.006)
Logged Household Income	.04 ⁺ (.03)	.16* (.08)	-.87** (.34)	-.06* (.03)
Not Employed	-.22 (.30)	.81 (.65)	-6.41* (3.15)	-.89** (.34)
No Religion	.06 (.17)	-.27 (.34)	-24.41 (897.56)	-.10 (.16)
Legal Recognition Available to R	-.03 (.13)	.33 (.33)	-.78 ⁺ (.56)	.18 ⁺ (.14)
LNalpha (<i>ZINB only</i>)	—	—	-.18 ⁺ (.13)	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)	- 530.94(15)***	-145.28(13)**	-1009.69(15)***	

Table E3 continued

Notes:

⁺ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

^a The inflation model estimates whether a respondent is a *non-drinker*. Thus, a positive coefficient indicates a greater likelihood of being a non-drinker, not greater drinking.

^b The coefficients were significantly different at $p < .05$, one tailed.

^c The coefficients were significantly different at $p < .05$, one tailed.

Table E4: OLS Regressions of Legal Recognition and Cohabitation on Mental Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	2.47 (.27)***	2.02*** (.20)	2.67*** (.30)
Legally Recognized	.04 (.12)	-.02 (.09)	.07 (.13)
Cohabiting	.04 (.11)	-.005 (.08)	.12 (.12)
Female	-.01** (.05)	-.002 (.04)	.04 (.06)
Black	.33* (.15)	.20* (.11)	.12 (.17)
Hispanic	-.08 (.10)	.11 ⁺ (.07)	-.03 (.11)
Other Race	.18 ⁺ (.11)	.07 (.08)	.11 (.12)
Under Age 25	.12 ⁺ (.09)	.22*** (.06)	.35*** (.10)
Over Age 60	-.29** (.10)	-.14* (.07)	-.17 ⁺ (.11)
Education	-.02 ⁺ (.01)	-.01 ⁺ (.008)	-.03* (.01)
Mother's Education	.007 (.008)	.003 (.006)	.02* (.01)
Father's Education	.01* (.007)	.004 (.005)	.00 (.008)
Not Employed	-.12 (.14)	-.04 (.10)	-.07 (.15)
Logged Household Income	-.02 ⁺ (.01)	-.02* (.01)	-.03* (.02)
Non-Standard Work Schedule	.02 (.12)	.10 (.09)	.003 (.14)
Job-Related Stress	.02 (.03)	.02 (.02)	.09** (.03)
Household Size	-.05 (.07)	.02 (.05)	.01 (.08)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.01 (.17)	-.13 (.13)	.01 (.20)
Conservative Religion	-.65** (.27)	-.07 (.20)	-.22* (.31)

Table E4 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
No Religion	.03 (.08)	-.01 (.06)	.11 ⁺ (.09)
Self-Rated Health	-.18*** (.03)	-.13*** (.02)	-.15*** (.03)
Sexual Satisfaction	-.06*** (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.06** (.02)
Legal Recognition Available to R	.02 (.06)	.01 (.04)	-.01 (.07)
R2	.25***	.23***	.21***

Notes:

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

Table E5: OLS Regressions of Self-Definition of Marriage and Cohabitation on Financial Well-Being

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Respondent's Logged Income	Savings and Investments (in dollars)	Logged Per capita Household Income
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	6.89*** (.43)	-195732.94*** (29679.27)	7.40*** (.47)
Consider Self Married	.09 (.13)	28792.13** _a (11856.15)	.26** (.09)
Cohabiting	.04 (.15)	7488.37 _a (14216.03)	.23* (.13)
Not Employed	—	630.18 (14553.30)	-.14 (.22)
Female	-.23** (.09)	-10591.77 ⁺ (7405.21)	-.17* (.09)
Black	.13 (.21)	-6643.53 (19383.28)	.14 (.23)
Hispanic	.03 (.14)	-18614.56 ⁺ (12852.53)	-.002 (.15)
Other Race	-.11 (.16)	-1407.80 (14471.87)	-.12 (.18)
Age	.02*** (.004)	2107.22*** (301.80)	.01*** (.004)
Education	.07*** (.02)	8809.63*** (1462.52)	.06*** (.02)
Mother's Education	.01 (.01)	835.13 (1118.25)	.02 ⁺ (.01)
Father's Education	.01 (.01)	1195.65 (989.70)	.01 (.01)
Work Hours	.03*** (.003)	-53.77 (298.32)	.03*** (.003)
Non-Standard Work Schedule	-.05 (.16)	-22546.16 ⁺ (16158.04)	.02 (.18)
Gender Progressivism	.07 (.08)	—	.09 (.09)
Household Size	.12 (.10)	-6920.96 (9111.14)	—
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	.04 (.23)	31579.97 ⁺ (22233.13)	.18 (.20)

Table E5 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Respondent's Logged Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Savings and Investments (in dollars) <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Logged Per Capita Household Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Conservative Religion	-.11 (.42)	44435.26 (35561.76)	.02 (.46)
No Religion	-.06 (.11)	4623.81 (9856.41)	-.14 (.12)
Academic Recruitment	-.15* (.09)	-8425.23 (7847.25)	-.15 ⁺ (.09)
N	359	429	380
R2	.52***	.32***	.41***

Notes:

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .10

*** p < .001

^a The coefficients for self-defined marriage and cohabitation were significantly different at p < .05

Table E6: OLS Regressions of Commitment Ceremony on Financial Well-Being

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Respondent's Logged Income	Savings and Investments (in dollars)	Logged Per capita Household Income
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	6.80*** (.44)	-210156.42*** (29574.12)	7.31*** (.48)
Commitment Ceremony	-.02 (.10)	8016.17 (8772.30)	.06 (.10)
Not Employed	—	943.00 (14642.01)	-.07 (.22)
Female	-.24** (.09)	-12773.36 ⁺ (7485.68)	-.15 (.09)
Black	.13 (.21)	7081.99 (19521.41)	.06 (.23)
Hispanic	.02 (.14)	-20832.71 ⁺ (12908.73)	-.03 (.16)
Other Race	-.12 (.16)	-2216.92 (14585.51)	-.14 (.18)
Age	.02*** (.003)	2271.70*** (296.98)	.02*** (.004)
Education	.07*** (.02)	8724.46*** (1474.49)	.07*** (.02)
Mother's Education	.01 ⁺ (.01)	889.12* (1125.40)	.02 (.01)
Father's Education	.01 (.01)	1054.21 (993.13)	.01 (.01)
Work Hours	.03*** (.003)	1.55 (298.56)	.03*** (.003)
Non-Standard Work Schedule	-.06 (.16)	-23940.92 (16257.81)	.02 (.18)
Gender Progressivism	.07 (.08)	—	.10 (.09)
Household Size	.18** (.06)	6640.90 (5774.82)	—
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.02 (.21)	11410.59 (19958.16)	.20 (.20)
Conservative Religion	-.17 (.41)	30227.49 (35181.55)	-.04 (.46)
No Religion	-.06 (.10)	4143.88 (9794.66)	-.13 (.12)

Table E6 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Respondent's Logged Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Savings and Investments (in dollars) <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Logged Per capita Household Income <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Academic Recruitment	-.15* (.09)	-8263.71 (7864.96)	-.11* (.09)
N	359	429	380
R2	.52***	.31***	.39***

Notes:

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

Table E7: Effects of Self-Definition of Marriage and Cohabitation on Sexual Relationship (N = 299)

	Model A	Model B
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> <i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>b</i> <i>(s.e.)</i>
Constant	9.46* (4.10)	—
Consider Self Married	.85 _a (1.51)	.41 ⁺ _b (.26)
Cohabitation	2.54 ⁺ _a (1.65)	.12 _b (.29)
Frequency of Sexual Contact	—	.11*** (.01)
Female	-2.24** (.83)	.54*** (.15)
Black	.69 (3.21)	.41 (.56)
Hispanic	1.82 (1.66)	-.04 (.29)
Other Race	2.38 (1.90)	-.20 (.34)
Under Age 25	6.19*** (1.54)	.21 (.29)
Over Age 60	-3.54** (1.51)	-.26 (.26)
Education	.20 (.17)	.02 (.03)
Work Hours	-.01 (.02)	-.003 (.004)
Non-Standard Work Schedule (R or R's spouse/partner)	.49 (.80)	-.31* (.14)
Gender Progressivism	-1.03 (.94)	-.23 ⁺ (.17)
Household Size	-1.65* (.95)	-.27* (.16)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	1.80 (2.35)	.68* (.40)

Table E7 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
No Religion	-.25 (1.17)	-.37* (.20)
R2	.16***	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)		809.07(16)***

Notes:

+ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

^a The coefficients for self-definition of marriage and cohabitation in the model predicting frequency of sexual contact were significantly different at p < .10.

^b The coefficients for self-definition of marriage and cohabitation in the model predicting sexual satisfaction were significantly different at p < .10.

Table E8: Effects of Commitment Ceremony on Sexual Relationship (N = 299)

	Model 1	Model 2
	Frequency of Sexual Contact	Sexual Satisfaction
	<i>OLS Regression</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	8.34* (4.12)	—
Had Commitment Ceremony	-1.73* (.87)	.25* (.15)
Frequency of Sexual Contact	—	.11*** (.01)
Female	-2.00** (.83)	.48*** (.15)
Black	.76 (3.21)	.38 (.56)
Hispanic	1.73 (1.65)	-.06 (.29)
Other Race	2.35 (1.89)	-.20 (.34)
Under Age 25	5.83*** (1.49)	.10 (.28)
Over Age 60	-3.36* (1.49)	-.21 (.26)
Education	.22 (.17)	.02 (.03)
Work Hours	-.01 (.02)	-.002 (.004)
Non-Standard Work Schedule (R or R's spouse/partner)	.38 (.80)	-.31* (.14)
Gender Progressivism	-.77 (.94)	-.23 ⁺ (.17)
Household Size	-.92 ⁺ (.70)	-.15 (.12)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	.85 (2.17)	.51 ⁺ (.37)
No Religion	.13 (1.14)	-.39* (.19)
R2	.16***	

Table E8 continued

	Frequency of Sexual Contact <i>OLS Regression</i>	Sexual Satisfaction <i>Ordered Probit</i>
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)		807.61(15)***

Notes:

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

Table E9: Effects of Self-Defined Marriage and Cohabitation on Physical Health (N = 429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
	General Health	Cigarette Smoker	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption	
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>	<i>Logit</i>	<i>Inflation</i>	<i>Count</i>
	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>
	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>
Constant	—	2.43 ⁺ (1.64)	13.05** (4.90)	1.66** (.57)
Consider Self Married	.03 (.14)	-.64 ⁺ (.40)	-.69 (1.11)	-.08 (.15)
Cohabiting	-.03 (.19)	-.73 (.61)	-1.14 (1.49)	.06 (.21)
Age	-.02*** (.004)	-.02 (.01)	.11** (.04)	.007 (.005)
Female	-.09 (.11)	-.39 (.35)	-4.02* (2.12)	-.69*** (.13)
Black	.33 (.32)	-.14 (.81)	—	—
Hispanic	-.21 (.21)	.27 (.55)	—	—
Other Race	.35 ⁺ (.25)	—	—	—
Education	.13*** (.02)	-.26*** (.08)	-.94** (.31)	.03 (.03)
Mother's Education	.01 (.02)	.02 (.06)	—	—
Father's Education	-.002 (.02)	-.10* (.05)	—	—
Work Hours	-.005 (.005)	—	-.04 (.05)	-.007 (.006)
Logged Household Income	.04 ⁺ (.03)	.17* (.08)	-.40* (.21)	-.03 (.03)
Not Employed	-.25 (.30)	.84 ⁺ (.65)	-3.40 ⁺ (2.35)	-.70* (.36)
No Religion	.08 (.17)	-.28 (.57)	—	—
LNalpha (ZINB only)	—	—	.11*** (.04)	—
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)	-531.41(14)***	-145.63(12)**	-1016.93(8)***	

Table E9 continued

Notes:

+ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table E10: Effects of Commitment Ceremony on Physical Health (N = 429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
	General Health	Cigarette Smoker	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption	
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Ordered Probit</i>	<i>Logit</i>	<i>Inflation</i>	<i>Count</i>
	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>
	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>	<i>(s.e.)</i>
Constant	—	2.42 ⁺ (1.62)	22.87** (9.03)	2.00*** (.63)
Commitment Ceremony	.08 (.14)	-1.08* (.58)	-1.78 (1.61)	-.21 (.16)
Age	-.02* (.004)	-.02 ⁺ (.01)	.11** (.04)	.006 (.005)
Female	-.10 (.12)	-.39 (.35)	-1.21 (1.23)	-.61*** (.13)
Black	.33 (.32)	.06 (.81)	-22.83 (614.49)	-.18 (.33)
Hispanic	-.20 (.21)	.30 (.54)	-24.42 (92.98)	-.19 (.23)
Other Race	.36 (.25)	—	2.25* (1.30)	-.08 (.31)
Education	.13*** (.02)	-.25** (.08)	-.93** (.33)	.02 (.03)
Mother's Education	.01 (.02)	.03 (.06)	-.68 (.37)	-.01 (.02)
Father's Education	-.002 (.02)	-.10* (.05)	-.23 (.21)	-.01 (.02)
Work Hours	-.005 (.005)	—	.04 (.04)	-.002 (.006)
Logged Household Income	.04 (.03)	.14* (.07)	-.62* (.31)	-.04 (.03)
Not Employed	-.26 (.30)	.76 (.64)	-1.77 (2.40)	-.51 ⁺ (.35)
No Religion	.07 (.17)	-.34 (.56)	-.90 (1.74)	.05 (.18)
LNalpha (<i>ZINB only</i>)	—	—	.04 (.11)	
Log Likelihood (χ^2 df)	- 531.31(13)***	- 145.08(11)***	-1009.48(13)***	

Table E10 continued

Notes:

⁺ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table E11: OLS Regressions of Self-Defined Marriage and Cohabitation on Mental Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	2.50*** (.26)	2.03*** (.19)	2.66*** (.29)
Consider Self Married	.08 (.11)	-.004 (.08)	.08 (.12)
Cohabiting	.07 (.12)	-.02 (.09)	.15 (.13)
Female	-.01 (.05)	-.002 (.04)	.03 (.06)
Black	.39* (.15)	.20* (.11)	.12 (.17)
Hispanic	-.08 (.10)	.11 ⁺ (.07)	-.03 (.11)
Other Race	.18* (.11)	.07 (.08)	.11 (.12)
Under Age 25	.12 ⁺ (.09)	.22*** (.06)	.35*** (.10)
Over Age 60	-.30*** (.10)	-.15* (.07)	-.16 ⁺ (.11)
Education	-.02 ⁺ (.01)	-.01* (.008)	-.03* (.01)
Mother's Education	.007 (.008)	.003 (.006)	.02* (.01)
Father's Education	.01* (.007)	.004 (.005)	.00 (.008)
Not Employed	-.13 (.13)	-.04 (.10)	-.07 (.15)
Logged Household Income	-.02 ⁺ (.01)	-.02* (.01)	-.03* (.02)
Non-Standard Work Schedule	.03 (.12)	.10 (.09)	.002 (.14)
Job-Related Stress	.02 (.03)	.02 (.02)	.09** (.03)
Household Size	-.07 (.07)	.01 (.05)	.03 (.08)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	.01 (.17)	-.13 (.13)	.002 (.19)

Table E11 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Conservative Religion	-.64** (.27)	-.07 (.20)	-.23 (.30)
No Religion	.03 (.08)	-.01 (.06)	.10 (.09)
Self-Rated Health	-.18*** (.03)	-.13*** (.02)	-.16*** (.03)
Sexual Satisfaction	-.06*** (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.06** (.02)
R2	.25***	.23***	.21***

Notes:

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

Table E12: OLS Regressions of Commitment Ceremony on Mental Well-Being (N=429)

	Model A	Model B	Model C
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	2.46*** (.26)	2.03** (.19)	2.61*** (.29)
Had a Commitment Ceremony	-.002 (.07)	.00 (.05)	-.01 (.07)
Female	-.01 (.05)	-.002 (.04)	.03 (.06)
Black	.34* (.15)	.20* (.11)	.12 (.17)
Hispanic	-.08 (.10)	.11 ⁺ (.07)	-.04 (.11)
Other Race	.18 ⁺ (.11)	.07 (.08)	.11 (.12)
Under Age 25	.11 ⁺ (.09)	.22*** (.06)	.34*** (.10)
Over Age 60	-.29** (.10)	-.15* (.07)	-.16 ⁺ (.11)
Education	-.02 ⁺ (.01)	-.01* (.008)	-.03* (.01)
Mother's Education	.007 (.008)	.003 (.006)	.02* (.01)
Father's Education	.01* (.007)	.004 (.005)	.001 (.008)
Not Employed	-.12 (.13)	-.04 (.10)	-.06 (.15)
Logged Household Income	-.02 (.01)	-.02* (.01)	-.03* (.01)
Non-Standard Work Schedule	.02 (.12)	.10 (.09)	-.009 (.14)
Job-Related Stress	.02 (.03)	.02 (.02)	.09** (.03)
Household Size	-.03 (.05)	.01 (.04)	.07 (.06)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.04 (.15)	-.12 (.11)	-.07 (.17)
Conservative Religion	-.66** (.27)	-.07 (.20)	-.26 (.30)

Table E12 continued

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
No Religion	.03 (.07)	-.01 (.06)	.12 (.08)
Self-Rated Health	-.18*** (.03)	-.13*** (.02)	-.16*** (.03)
Sexual Satisfaction	-.06*** (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.05** (.02)
R2	.25***	.23***	.21***

Notes:

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

Table E13: OLS Regressions of Interaction of Femininity and Legal Recognition on Housework Measures (N=243)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Total Housework	Female-Typed
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	3.02*** (.34)	2.98*** (.44)
Femininity	.06** (.02)	.10* (.04)
Femininity * Legal Recognition	-.03 ⁺ (.02)	-.03 ⁺ (.02)
Black	.24* (.27)	.37 (.35)
Hispanic	.15 (.16)	.01 (.18)
Other Race	-.12 (.16)	.10 (.20)
Over Age 60	-.24** (.10)	-.41*** (.13)
Education	-.006 (.01)	.003 (.02)
Mother Worked When R Was Child	.10 ⁺ (.06)	.05 (.08)
Household Size	.001 (.07)	-.02 (.09)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.14 (.17)	-.10 (.22)
Legal Recognition Available to R	.09 (.08)	.11 (.10)
Work Hour Proportion	-.003* (.001)	-.006*** (.002)
R2	.09*	.13***

Notes:

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

Table E14: OLS Regressions of Interaction of Femininity and Self-Definition of Marriage on Housework Measures (N=243)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Total Housework	Female-Typed
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	3.10 (.33)	3.06*** (.43)
Femininity	.05 ⁺ (.04)	.09* (.05)
Femininity * Consider Self Married	.00 (.01)	-.003 (.02)
Black	.22 (.27)	.37 (.34)
Hispanic	.16 (.14)	.02 (.18)
Other Race	-.10 (.16)	.12 (.20)
Over Age 60	-.25** (.10)	-.42*** (.13)
Education	-.008 (.01)	.002 (.02)
Mother Worked When R Was Child	.09 ⁺ (.06)	.05 (.08)
Household Size	.01 (.07)	-.02 (.09)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.16 (.17)	-.13 (.22)
Work Hour Proportion	-.003* (.001)	-.006*** (.002)
R2	.08 ⁺	.12***

Notes:

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

Table E15: OLS Regressions of Interaction of Femininity and Commitment Ceremony on Housework Measures (N=243)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Total Housework	Female-Typed
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	3.02*** (.34)	2.97*** (.44)
Femininity	.06* (.04)	.10* (.05)
Femininity * Commitment Ceremony	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Black	.24 (.27)	.39 (.34)
Hispanic	.15 (.13)	.02 (.18)
Other Race	-.11 (.16)	.11 (.20)
Over Age 60	-.25** (.10)	-.42*** (.13)
Education	-.006 (.01)	.004 (.02)
Mother Worked When R Was Child	.10 ⁺ (.06)	.05 (.08)
Household Size	.02 (.07)	-.02 (.09)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.15 (.17)	-.12 (.22)
Work Hour Proportion	-.003* (.001)	-.006*** (.002)
R2	.08*	.13***

Notes:

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

Table E16: OLS Regressions of Interaction of Work Hour Proportion and Legal Recognition on Housework Measures (N=243)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Total Housework	Female-Typed
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	3.48*** (.25)	3.65*** (.33)
Work Hour Proportion	-.004** (.001)	-.007*** (.002)
Legal Recognition	-.34* (.16)	-.26 (.21)
Work Hour Proportion * Legal Recognition	.004* (.002)	.003 (.003)
Black	.22 (.27)	.39 (.35)
Hispanic	.16 (.14)	.04 (.18)
Other Race	-.07 (.16)	.16 (.20)
Over Age 60	-.22* (.10)	-.38*** (.13)
Education	-.009 (.01)	-.002 (.02)
Mother Worked When R Was Child	.09 ⁺ (.06)	.04 (.08)
Household Size	.006 (.07)	-.03 (.09)
Legal Recognition Available to R	.08 (.08)	-.10 (.11)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.12 (.17)	-.07 (.22)
R2	.09*	.11**

Notes:

⁺ p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

Table E17: OLS Regressions of Interaction of Work Hour Proportion and Self-Definition of Marriage on Housework Measures (N=243)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Total Housework	Female-Typed
	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	<i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	3.46*** (.28)	3.59*** (.36)
Work Hour Proportion	-.003 ⁺ (.002)	-.005* (.003)
Consider Self Married	-.02 (.16)	.06 (.21)
Work Hour Proportion * Consider Self Married	.001 (.003)	.00 (.004)
Black	.25 (.27)	.43 (.35)
Hispanic	.17 (.14)	.04 (.18)
Other Race	-.06 (.16)	.16 (.20)
Over Age 60	-.22* (.10)	-.39*** (.13)
Education	-.01 (.01)	-.002 (.02)
Mother Worked When R Was Child	.09 ⁺ (.06)	.03 (.08)
Household Size	.003 (.07)	-.04 (.09)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.14 (.17)	-.09 (.22)
R2	.07	.11**

Notes:

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

Table E18: OLS Regressions of Interaction of Work Hour Proportion and Commitment Ceremony on Housework Measures (N=243)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	Total Housework <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)	Female-Typed <i>b</i> (<i>s.e.</i>)
Constant	3.55*** (.25)	3.75*** (.33)
Work Hour Proportion	-.005*** (.001)	-.008*** (.002)
Commitment Ceremony	-.33** (.14)	-.37* (.18)
Work Hour Proportion * Commitment Ceremony	.005** (.002)	.006* (.003)
Black	.23 (.26)	.39 (.34)
Hispanic	.17 ⁺ (.13)	.05 (.18)
Other Race	-.06 (.15)	.17 (.20)
Over Age 60	-.21* (.10)	-.37** (.13)
Education	-.01 (.01)	-.004 (.02)
Mother Worked When R Was Child	.09 ⁺ (.06)	.04 (.08)
Household Size	.02 (.07)	-.02 (.09)
Presence of Preschool Child in Household	-.14 (.17)	-.09 (.22)
R2	.09*	.12***

Notes:

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