

Gains to Marriage, Relative Resources, and Divorce Initiation

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Abstract

In most divorces, one person initiates the breakup when the other still prefers that the couple remain together. Yet, after decades of extensive demographic research on determinants of divorce, we know of no research separately modeling the determinants of wives leaving husbands and husbands leaving wives. The innovation of our study is classifying divorces according to whether the wife or husband initiates it, as revealed by ex-spouses' reports on who wanted the divorce more, and determining whether a spouse who assesses the marriage in a more negative light is more likely to initiate the divorce. To explore this, we examine whether wives' (husbands) reports of the extent to which they would be better or worse off in the hypothetical event of a divorce and the marriage being "unhappy" are associated with the wife (husband) initiating the end of the relationship. We also examine whether the associations between marital utility and dissolution differ by which spouses' report of initiation is used. Using a competing hazards framework, we find that spouse A's dim view of the utility of the marriage predicts whether A (but not B) initiates divorce. Our findings suggest that the story of how subjective assessments of marital satisfaction predict who leaves whom is similar, regardless of whether we use the wife's report or the husband's report.

Introduction

In the United States, it takes only one person's decision to end a marriage. In most divorces, one person initiates the breakup when the other still prefers that the couple remain together. When we say that one person initiates a divorce, we are not referring to who files the legal papers (although this may be correlated), and we make no attribution of which person was "at fault" or which person's behavior was the ultimate cause of the breakup. Rather we are referring to who wanted the divorce enough to initiate the process in some way—usually by telling the spouse of the intent to divorce. While some cases are ambiguous, generally spouses and external observers agree that one person "left the other." Thus, in any given period, a marriage may stay together, a breakup may be initiated by the wife, or a breakup may be initiated by the husband (or, rarely, a breakup may be simultaneously initiated by both spouses).

Many theories contain, at least implicitly, ideas about which spouse will initiate divorce under what conditions. Yet research on determinants of divorce has been conducted without measurement of who initiated the breakup. Thus, important theoretical predictions have not been tested. The innovation of our study is classifying divorces according to whether the wife or husband initiates it, as revealed by ex-spouses' reports on who wanted the divorce more, and determining whether a spouse who assesses the marriage in a more negative light is more likely to initiate the divorce. To explore this, we examine whether wives' (husbands) reports of the extent to which they would be better or worse off in the hypothetical event of a divorce, and the marriage being "unhappy," are associated with the wife (husband) initiating the end of the relationship. This approach allows us to test theoretical predictions in a way not possible in past

research where the outcome has been any divorce and to assess whether the story of who leaves whom is the same when we use either spouses' report of divorce initiation.

Drawing upon demographers' theorizing about divorce, exchange theory in sociology, and bargaining theories from economics, we hypothesize that the wife's negative perceptions of the marriage should be associated with her ending the marriage, while husbands' perceptions should be associated with him ending the relationship. According to the bargaining and exchange perspective, each partner decides about staying in or leaving the relationship by comparing the utility they experience in marriage to the anticipated utility they would experience if they exited the relationship. People will be more likely to initiate divorce if they perceive the marriage less favorably and if they have more personal resources which create better alternatives outside the current marriage. Having a spouse who offers more resources and positive characteristics makes one less likely to be motivated to initiate a breakup. If both spouses consider alternatives inside as well as outside the marriage in this way, the result is that A's resources or desirable characteristics encourage A but discourage B from initiating divorce.

Who Initiates Divorce?

Prior qualitative research based on separate in-depth interviews of ex-spouses yield narratives that generally feature one partner initiating the breakup. Couples usually agree on who this was and characterize this person as wanting the marriage to end more than the other partner (Hopper 1993; 2001; Vaughan 1986). Given this, it is odd that despite many articles on determinants of divorce using the NSFH, and the fact that NSFH2 and NSFH3 contain an item asking ex-spouses who wanted the breakup more, we

could locate no research predicting women's and men's initiation of divorce. This item and items like it *have* been used in past research, but to answer questions about consequences rather than determinants of a partner's initiation of divorce (see Amato and Previti 2003; Sweeney 2002; Sweeney and Horwitz 2001).

NSFH data indicate that women initiate the majority of divorces, as we show below. Studies based on other data have also shown this, whether they used qualitative interviews or fixed-response survey questions (Hobcroft 2000; Kitson 1992; Spanier and Thompson 1987; Svedin 1994; Wallerstein and Kelly 1980). While the spouse filing the legal papers is not always the spouse most wanting the divorce, data on filings agree with the survey data in the conclusion that most initiations are by women. Brinig and Allen (2000) review evidence that 60-70% of U.S. filings have been by women throughout most of the last century. Although filings by men went up a bit when no-fault divorce laws were passed, in recent decades about two-thirds of U.S. filings are by women. There is variation by state, but women predominate in every state. About 70% of filings in the U.K. are by women (Hobcroft 2000:171).

Knowing that women initiate most divorces points out a methodological limitation of prior research. Because of the sex composition of initiators, whatever variables predict women's initiation are more likely to show up as significant in studies that predict divorce as a single hazard without distinguishing who initiates. One possible example of how the preponderance of women's initiation may have affected findings is research on perceived marital quality as a determinant of divorce. Studies find that wives' unfavorable assessment of marital quality predicts subsequent divorce, while husbands' analogous assessments have no predictive power (Heaton and Blake 1999; Nock 2001;

Sayer and Bianchi 2000). It seems odd that women would leave in response to unhappiness but men would not. Nock (2001) speculates that this is because husbands benefit from even an unsatisfactory marriage in that the social status of “husband” carries a certain social recognition that “wife” does not. Another possibility is that wives are more in tune to unsatisfactory relationship dynamics than husbands so that they are simply better predictors of a future decision by either spouse to terminate the marriage, and these predictions affect how positively they characterize the marriage (Thompson and Walker 1989). Yet another possibility is that wives are less able to translate resources into power within marriage to change unsatisfactory aspects of the relationship, because of some social or cultural barrier. This could be because social norms discourage women from wielding power or men from yielding to women’s power. Or men may especially resist women’s attempts to get them to do housework, child rearing, or emotion work, because to comply puts men in the stigmatized position of taking on what is socially defined as a “female” role. It is more socially acceptable for women to take on men’s roles than for men to take on women’s. For any of these reasons, when women are dissatisfied and have good alternatives outside marriage, they may be more likely to exit the marriage because they are less able than men to translate resources into better marital bargains (England and Kilbourne 1990; Sweeney 2002).

These are plausible speculations. However, it is possible that if men’s assessment of marital utility affects their initiation of divorce but has little effect on women’s initiation, then analyses that lump all divorces together as the risk of interest may well miss finding significant effects of men’s satisfaction simply because coefficients are, in effect, a weighted average of effects on husband-initiated and the much more numerous

wife-initiated divorces. Modeling women's and men's initiation of divorce as competing risks will make it possible to uncover what leads to men's as well as women's initiation of divorce.

Gains From Marriage and Divorce Initiation

One theoretical perspective on what increases the likelihood of marital dissolution comes from exchange or bargaining models (England and Farkas 1986; England and Kilbourne 1990; Lundberg and Pollak 1994; 1996; 2000; Lundberg, Pollak, and Wales 1997; Manser and Brown 1980; McElroy 1990). Economists' bargaining models based on game theory focus on effects of opportunities outside the marriage (which affect "threat points") on the bargains couples strike within marriage. Similar ideas come from sociological exchange theory (Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Cherlin 2000; England and Farkas 1986; England and Kilbourne 1990; Heer 1963; Molm and Cook 1995). A spouse's ability to strike a favorable bargain within the marriage (e.g. getting one's way in a disagreement) flow from resources that one shares with one's partner if the marriage persists but that are portable if one leaves. But portable resources also make it more likely that the optimizing choice is to leave if one is unhappy but unable to bargain for the wanted change. This view has distinct predictions about who is likely to initiate divorce. Earnings are an example of a resource shared with a spouse within marriage but portable out of the marriage if it ends. Thus, the prediction is that men's earnings increase men's bargaining power within marriage as well as men's propensity to initiate divorce if unhappy, and women's earnings increase women's bargaining power within marriage as well as women's propensity to initiate divorce if unhappy. The latter has been called the

“women’s independence” effect (Cherlin 2000; Ruggles 1997; Schoen et al. 2002). But the basic logic suggests that higher relative earnings of either spouse make that spouse more likely to leave.

There is a wealth of empirical research on how men’s and women’s earnings affect divorce. Divorce is more likely when men’s earnings are lower (Hoffman and Duncan 1995; South and Lloyd 1995) or declining (Weiss and Willis 1997). Findings on the effects of women’s earnings are less consistent, with some studies finding a positive effect ((Cherlin 1979; Heckert, Nowak, and Snyder 1998; Hiedemann, Suhomlinova, and O’Rand 1998; Moore and Waite 1981; Ono 1998; Spitze and South 1985), especially when men’s earnings are lower ((Heckert et al. 1998; Ono 1998), but others find no effect (Greenstein 1995; Hoffman and Duncan 1995; Sayer and Bianchi 2000; South and Lloyd 1995; Tzeng and Mare 1995), and a few suggest that women’s earnings stabilize marriage (Greenstein 1990; Hoffman and Duncan 1995; Weiss and Willis 1997). Thus, no clear conclusion can be drawn regarding the effects of women’s earnings on divorce (Rogers 2004). We could locate no studies that examined the effect of either spouse’s earnings on men’s and women’s likelihood of initiating divorce.

Earnings are not the only resources that individuals share with their spouses but also retain if they leave a marriage. Noneconomic measures of husbands’ and wives’ gains from marriage, such as Spouse A’s attractiveness, good health, and the absence of “problem behaviors,” all should increase A’s desirability to B, but also increase A’s alternatives outside the marriage. Therefore A’s desirable characteristics should increase A’s but decrease B’s propensity to divorce. Not surprisingly, spouses who report being happier in their marriage, or who say their life would be worse if they divorced, are less

likely to divorce (Booth et al. 1985; Sanchez and Gager 2000; Sayer and Bianchi 2000). Unaddressed in these studies, but key to our proposed research, is clarification of which partner's initiation of divorce is affected by which partner's assessment of marital gains or utility.

Measures of an individual's perceived gains from being in the marriage may also interact with resources, such that resources make initiating divorce more likely, but this effect is much stronger (or perhaps only present) when the person with resources is dissatisfied with the marriage. Even those with exceptionally good alternatives outside their current marriage are unlikely to leave a wonderfully satisfying marriage. This is consistent with the finding by Schoen et al. (2002) that women's employment encouraged divorce among couples where the wife expressed substantial unhappiness with the marriage, but had no effect on other couples' likelihood of divorce. Of course, it is possible that women who wanted to divorce sought jobs to ready themselves for making do without the man's income; Johnson and Skinner (1986) found a pattern of homemakers entering employment the years before a divorce.

Data & Methods

We use Waves 1, 2, and 3 of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH). The NSFH is a national probability sample survey of 13,007 adults age 19 and older interviewed in 1987-88. The sample includes a main cross-section of 9,643 households, plus an oversample of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, single-parent families and families with stepchildren, cohabiting couples, and recently married persons. One adult per household was randomly selected as the primary respondent. In

married couple and cohabiting households (57 percent of the total sample), the spouse or partner also completed a self-administered questionnaire (Sweet, Bumpass, and Call 1988).

The overall response rate for NSFH1 was 74%; 83% of spouses of respondents completed questionnaires. NSFH2 follow-up interviews were conducted in 1992-1994 and the overall response rate was 82% (86% of the 6,875 NSFH1 married couples were reinterviewed at NSFH2, with both spouses reinterviewed in 65% of couples and one spouse reinterviewed in 20% of couples). NSFH3 follow-up interviews were conducted in 2001-2003 and the overall response rate was 57% (63% of primary respondents and 56% of spouses were reinterviewed). Note that because of budget constraints, NSFH3 did not include follow-up interviews with primary respondents under age 45 at NSFH3 unless a child was present in the primary respondent's household at NSFH1.

The NSFH covers many aspects of family life, including detailed questions on social background, individual characteristics, marital experiences, employment histories, earnings, income, and respondents' assessments of their marital relationship. The NSFH is the only data set on a national probability sample that tracks marital dissolution over time and includes a measure of which spouse wanted the relationship to end.

Our analysis sample (N=3622) includes couples married at NSFH1 in which the spouse completed the questionnaire at NSFH1; at least one spouse was reinterviewed at NSFH2 or NSFH3; and neither spouse was age 55 or older at NSFH1. We exclude couples in which one or both are older than age 56 because of low risk of divorce among this group.

Divorce Initiation Measure

Our dependent variable is whether a breakup had occurred and, if so, who initiated it. For couples separating or divorcing after NSFH1, NSFH2 and NSFH3 ascertain the month the breakup occurred and ask each ex-spouse which person wanted the breakup more. In NSFH2, husbands and wives who had experienced a marital separation or divorce between NSFH1 and NSFH2 completed a self-administered module on the experience of relationship dissolution. This module included a question that ascertained which spouse most wanted the divorce. Specific question wording was as follows: “Sometimes both partners equally want a marriage to end, other times one partner wants it to end much more than the other. Circle the number of the answer that best describes how it was in your case.” Response categories included 1) I wanted the marriage to end BUT my husband/wife did not; 2) I wanted it to end MORE THAN my husband/wife did; 3) We both wanted it to end; 4) My husband/wife wanted the relationship to end MORE THAN I did; or 5) My husband/wife wanted the marriage to end BUT I did not.

NSFH3 asked about divorce initiation as well for those who separated or divorced between NSFH2 and NSFH3. Whereas in NSFH2 the question was part of a self-administered paper module, in NSFH3 the module was administered verbally by the interviewer and the question wording was changed slightly to collapse and simplify response categories. The NSFH3 question was: “Some partners disagree about how much they want their marriage to end. In your case, who MOST wanted your marriage to end? Would you say that you wanted it most, you both wanted it equally, or that your (husband/wife) wanted it to end most?” Respondents were then queried as to whether or

not either partner had not wanted the marriage to end *at all*, and if so, which spouse this was.

We use these questions to construct three four-category measures of marital dissolution, with separate measures created using the wife's report, the husband's report and a "couple" report of initiation. The four categories are: 1) the wife ended the relationship; 2) the husband ended the relationship; 3) a residual "other" category that includes couples in which a) both partners equally ended the relationship and b) responses to the divorce initiation question are missing (but valid data are present on month of divorce or separation) and, for the couple measure only, those cases where the couple disagrees; and 4) continued marriage (neither partner ended the relationship). Consistent with most past research, we consider marriages dissolved at the point of separation, even if there is no legal divorce. There are virtually no cases of spouses disagreeing on whether they broke up and most spouses agree on who wanted the divorce.

Table 1 cross-tabulates the wife's report of who wanted the divorce with the husband's report of who wanted the divorce. In NSFH2, we collapsed response categories 1 and 2 to include all cases in which the respondent wanted the relationship to end and response categories 4 and 5 to include all cases in which the respondent's ex-spouse wanted the relationship to end.

[Table 1 about here]

The first important message from the table is that many more women than men wanted their divorce, whether we use the wife's or husband's report. By women's report, she wanted the divorce more in 59% of (non-missing) cases, he wanted it more in 25% of

cases, and both wanted it equally in 16%. By men's report, she wanted the divorce more in 46% of cases, he wanted it more in 30% of cases, and both wanted it equally in 25%.

The second key point from Table 1 is that couples agree more often than they disagree on which partner wanted the divorce. When the wife reports that she wanted the divorce, 67% of husbands agree and an additional 24% report that both wanted the relationship to end (column 1). Similarly, when the wife reports that the husband wanted the divorce, 79% of husbands either agree that they were the initiators and 12% say both wanted the divorce. More cases of disagreement occur where one partner says it was equal while the other claims to have wanted it more than cases where one partner says he wanted and the other partner says she wanted it.

Extreme disagreement over which partner initiated the dissolution is uncommon: When the wife says she wanted the relationship to end only 8% of husbands report being the ones who wanted the divorce; when the wife says the husband wanted the relationship to end more, only 9% of husbands report that she wanted the relationship to end more. The considerable agreement between ex-spouses who answered the question on who wanted the divorce suggests that the item is a meaningful indicator of who initiated the divorce. The agreement also suggests that the story of who left whom is the same regardless of which spouses' report of initiation is used.

At the same time, Table 1 indicates an important problem of missing data for the divorce initiation question: 35% of ex-husbands and 22% of ex-wives either were not interviewed at NSFH2 or NSFH3 or did not respond to the question about which spouse wanted the divorce. Item nonresponse declined at NSFH3, perhaps because respondents were more reluctant to refuse to answer the question when asked by an interviewer.

Attrition of one spouse is a concern at NSFH2 and NSFH3: 26% of divorced men whose ex-wives were interviewed were lost to follow-up and 14% of divorced women whose ex-husbands were interviewed were lost to follow-up.

Our initial strategy for dealing with missing data and disagreement was to include missing responses and answers of both wanted (which accounts for the majority of spousal disagreement) in the residual category “other,” in the wife’s and husband’s report of who left. We then compare findings about distinct determinants of women leaving men and men leaving women from regressions of initiation that use the wife’s report versus regressions that use the husband’s report of who left whom. We also compare results from the analyses that use husband’s and wife’s reports with a constructed “couple report” four-category measure of marital dissolution: 1) the wife ended the relationship, which includes cases where both spouses agree that she left, or one says she left and the other says they both wanted the divorce equally, or one says she left and the other didn’t answer the question or was not reinterviewed; 2) the husband left, which includes cases where both spouses agree that he left, or one says he left and the other says both wanted the divorce equally, or one says he left and the other didn’t answer the question or was not reinterviewed; 3) a residual “other” category, which includes cases where both say they wanted the divorce equally, or both spouses did not answer the question (but the outcome of the marriage is known because at least one spouse was reinterviewed), or the spouses disagree on which spouse wanted the divorce; and 4) continued marriage. Fortunately, as discussed above, most couples answering the question agreed on who initiated the divorce. We discuss below in next steps additional steps we plan to take to

deal with measurement error resulting from missing data and disagreement over who left whom.

Table 2 shows the distribution of marital dissolution and the means of the independent variables used in the analysis by divorce initiation. By NSFH3, 21% of couples had experienced marital dissolution (either separation or divorce). According to the wife's report, the wife initiated divorce in 45% of all cases, the husband in 19% of cases, and responses of both or missing (the residual "other" category) account for 36% of cases; comparable estimates based on the husband's report are wives initiate in 30% of cases, husbands in 19% of cases, and responses of both or missing account for 52% of cases (with 67% of the other category coming from missing ex-husband responses). (Note that the distribution of initiation is different in Tables 1 and 2 because Table 1 percentages use only non-missing cases as the denominator whereas those in Table 2 use all cases.) Based on the couple report, the wife initiated divorce in 52% of these cases, the husband in 24%, and the remaining 23% of cases fall into the residual "other" category.

[Table 2 about here]

Independent Variables

The effects of wives' and husbands' subjective assessments of marital utility and happiness on divorce initiation — and whether findings are the same regardless of which spouses' report of who left whom are examined — are the main foci of our analysis. We construct a "Better off Divorced" (BOD) scale from five questions that ask respondents to think about how getting a divorce would affect their standard of living, social life, job opportunities, overall happiness, and sex life. Responses range from 1 = much worse, to

5 = much better. These questions tap perceptions of the costs and benefits of remaining in the relationship, compared to the alternative life respondents think they could have outside of this marriage. For ease of interpretation, we rescaled this measure to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1. Wife's and husband's scores on the Better off Divorced scale were measured at NSFH1 and NSFH2 (for couples who did not divorce prior to NSFH2). Among all couples, those who remained married had scores below the z-scored mean (-.10 for wives and -.07 for husbands) whereas those who divorced had scores above the mean (.38 for wives and .28 for husbands), indicating that wives and husbands who divorced were more likely to rate their hypothetical alternatives outside marriage more favorably than remaining in the marriage.

We also include a measure that taps wives' and husbands' subjective assessments of marital happiness. Spouses were asked, "Taking all things together, how would you describe your marriage?" Responses were on a 7 item Likert scale, ranging from 1, very unhappy, to 7, very happy. We construct a dummy variable coded 1 for responses of 6 and 7, and 0 otherwise. Wife's and husband's responses were measured at NSFH1 and NSFH2 (for couples who did not divorce prior to NSFH2). About three quarters of wives and husbands who remained married rated their marriage as happy; among those that divorced, only 57% of wives and 61% of husbands rated their marriages as happy.

Our belief in the validity of the initiation question as an indicator of who left whom would be strengthened if we see that a spouse who perceives the marriage in a more negative light is more likely to initiate a divorce, relative to the marriage persisting or the other spouse initiating a divorce. Examination of mean differences among couples who divorce shown in Table 2 indicates that spouses who claimed to be the one who

wanted the breakup more have higher scores on the Better off Divorced (BOD) scale, regardless of whether we use the wife's, the husband's, or the couple's report. Differences in wife's and husband's assessments of marital happiness by which spouse initiated divorce are small, however, although somewhat larger when the husband's report is used compared to when the wife's report is used. There is some ambiguity in predictions for the measures of marital happiness, because the item (at least as asked in NSFH) seems to call for a report of either one's own or the spouse's satisfaction with the marriage. In contrast, the index of items asking how much better or worse off one would be in the hypothetical event of a divorce is an excellent match to the concept relevant to a rational choice theoretical perspective—how one assesses their hypothetical prospective well-being inside versus outside the current marriage.

To assess the effect of economic resources on which spouse initiates divorce, we use a version of the measure proposed by Sorensen and McLanahan (1987) in which the wife's annual earnings are divided by the total of the wife's and husband's earnings, leading to a scale score of 1 where the wife provides all the income, .5 when each contributes equal shares, and 0 when the wife provides none of the couple's income. A measure of the husband's earnings (logged) is included as a control because the interpretation of wife's relative earnings can vary depending on the absolute level of the husband's earnings (Oppenheimer 1997). Wife's relative earnings and husband's earnings were measured at NSFH1 and NSFH2 (for couples who did not divorce prior to NSFH2). Wives contribute slightly more earnings in couples that divorce (31% at NSFH1 and 32% at NSFH2) compared with couples that remain married (27% at NSFH1 and 30% at NSFH2). Wives who initiated divorce also contributed more earnings

compared with wives married to husbands who initiated divorce, regardless of which spouses' report of initiation is used.

Measures of an individual's perceived gains from being in the marriage may also interact with resources, such that resources make initiating divorce more likely, but this effect is much stronger (or perhaps only present) when the person with resources is dissatisfied with the marriage. To assess this, we include interactions of the wife's and husband's Better off Divorced scale with the wife's relative earnings and interactions of the wife's and husband's assessments of marital happiness with the wife's relative earnings.

Control Variables

Demographic and life course controls include "selection" factors associated with the risk of marital dissolution. Characteristics that decrease the risk of divorce include being in a marriage of long duration and having higher education (Bumpass, Martin, and Sweet 1991). Marriage duration is a time-varying continuous measure of the length of the marriage in months. Measures of wife's and husband's education are coded into four categories: less than high school education (the reference group in the regressions), high school graduate, some college, and college graduate. Children are a key source of marital-specific capital, but the effect of children on risk of divorce varies by number, age, and biological parentage (Martin and Bumpass 1989; Waite and Lillard 1991). Hence, we include time varying measures of the number and ages of children at NSFH1 and NSFH2 grouped into 4 measures: the number of children ages 0 to 1, the number ages 2 to 5, the number ages 6 to 12, and the number ages 13 to 18. We also include two dummy variables indicating whether children are present who are not the biological

children of the husband and whether children are present who are not the biological children of the wife.

Characteristics that increase the risk of divorce include early age at marriage, a premarital birth or conception, whether either spouse is Black, experience of a previous divorce, growing up in a disrupted household, or cohabiting before marriage (Bumpass, Martin, and Sweet 1999; Martin and Bumpass 1989). Early age at marriage is measured with a continuous variable indicating the wife's age at marriage. We also include a dummy variable indicating whether the wife is 3 or more years older than the husband. Wife's and husband's measures of growing up in an intact family are dummy variables, coded 1 if the wife (husband) did not live with both their biological mother and biological father until age 19. The measure of previous cohabitation is a dummy variable coded 1 if either spouse had ever cohabited. The measure of a premarital birth prior to the NSFH1 marriage is a dummy variable coded 1 if a birth occurred in the window of 6 months prior to 7 months after the date of the NSFH1 marriage. Wife's and husband's measures of a previous divorce are dummy variables coded 1 if the wife (husband) had ever been previously divorced. The measure of race is a dummy variable coded 1 when either the husband or the wife is Black.

Analytic Strategy

We estimate competing risk Cox proportional hazard models, with four competing outcomes: wife initiates, husband initiates, "other" initiates, and a reference of continued marriage. Proportional hazard models avoid assumptions about the shape of the hazard and permit the use of both time-constant and time-varying variables (Allison 1984). Person-months are the unit of analysis. Risk of separation or divorce begins the

first month after the NSFH1 interview. Couples whose marriage remains intact are treated as censored observations. Couples who remain married between NSFH1 and NSFH2 but neither partner is interviewed at NSFH3 are treated as censored at Wave 2.

Findings

Better off Divorced and Happiness. Table 3 shows hazard ratios from main effects and interaction models that regress initiation on the BOD scale and happiness measures, wife's relative earnings, and the interactions of marital assessments with relative earnings, net of controls. The competing hazards shown are a divorce that the wife wanted more and a divorce that the husband wanted more, relative to couples staying together. Hazards are estimated separately in three models, one using the wife's report, one using the husband's report, and one using the couple's report. Hazard ratios for the residual "other" category, which includes divorces where spouses agreed they both wanted the divorce, neither answered the question about who left whom (although we know there was a divorce because at least one spouse was re-interviewed and date of separation is provided) and, for the couple report, those cases where they disagreed on who wanted it more, are shown in Appendix Tables 1, 2, and 3 (models estimated using the wife's report, the husband's report, and the couple's report, respectively). This residual category is of less theoretical interest and present just as a control; we do not discuss results predicting this hazard.

[Table 3 about here]

Table 3 shows that each point increase on the Better off Divorced (BOD) scale raises the hazard of wives initiating divorce, by about 40%, regardless of which report of initiation is used. The effects of men seeing themselves as better off outside the marriage

on their initiating divorce are of slightly lower magnitude than effects for women: each point increase in the BOD scale raises the hazard of husband's leaving by about 30% when husband's report or the couple report is used (results are not significant when the wife's report is used but are positive and marginally significant in the interaction model). It is notable that a wife's assessment of marital utility has no significant effect on a husband's leaving (see wife's BOD scale coefficients in Columns 3, 7, and 11), and a husband's assessments of marital utility has no significant effect on wife's leaving (see husband's BOD scale coefficients in Columns 1, 5, and 9). The positive association between a wife's BOD scale and divorce initiation is found regardless of whether we use the wife's, husband's or couple's report of who left whom.

Perceptions of marital happiness are also associated with divorce initiation. Wives who assess their marriage as happy have about 50% lower odds of divorce initiation compared with wives who feel their marriage is unhappy, regardless of which report of who left whom is used. A similar pattern exists for the husband's assessment of marital happiness: according to all reports, husbands who rate their marriage as happy have lower odds of divorce initiation compared with husbands who feel their marriage is unhappy.

In contrast to the effects of the BOD score on initiation, both the wife's and the husband's subjective assessments of marital happiness are associated with wives *and* husbands leaving. Recall that the BOD scale measure is an excellent match to the concept relevant to a rational choice theoretical perspective—how one assesses their hypothetical prospective well-being inside versus outside the current marriage—whereas the happiness item appears to measure either spouses' subjective perceptions of the relationship. Hence, the findings overall offer substantial support for our prediction that

wife's assessment that gains from the marriage are low leads to her but not his initiation of divorce—and likewise the husband feeling that his marital utility is low leads to his, but not her, leaving.

Relative Earnings: The effects of wife's relative earnings on divorce initiation are positive but not significant in models that use the wife's report, for either the wife's or the husband's initiation. Effects are significant, however, for wives' but not husbands' initiation when we use the husband's or couple report: a wife who contributes more earnings has a likelihood of initiating divorce about twice as high compared with a wife who contributes less earnings.

Relative earnings do not affect husband's divorce initiation, regardless of which report of who left whom we use. Additionally, in results not shown we entered relative earnings dummies (wife contributes 0, wife contributes between 1% and 39%, wife contributes between 40 and 60%, and wife contributes more than 60%), and none of the dummies were significant. We have also entered relative earnings as continuous linear and quadratic terms. And we have removed the subjective assessment by both parties of the marriage from the models. In no case do we find significant effects of relative earnings on men's initiation. Nor do men's absolute earnings affect their initiation (either controlling for subjective assessments and relative earnings, as in Table 3, or not controlling for either).

Do Unhappy Spouses with More Money Leave more Often? It is hard to imagine leaving a marriage one is extremely happy just because one can support oneself, as pointed out by Schoen et al. (2002) and Sayer and Bianchi (Sayer and Bianchi 2000). This suggests an interaction between assessments of marital utility and happiness, relative

earnings and divorce initiation. Model 2 in Table 3 adds interactions between our measures of subjective gain from the marriage – the wife’s and husband’s score on the “better off divorced” (BOD) scale — and relative earnings, and interactions between assessments of happiness and relative earnings. The story of how relative earnings affects initiation when a wife or husband has a negative appraisal of the marriage differs, depending on whose report of initiation we use. None of the interactions are significant when we use the wife’s report. But, having more earnings appear to encourage wives to leave more when the wife feels she would better off divorced, according to the husband’s report of initiation. And, according to the couple report, husbands who feel they would be better off divorced have higher hazards of initiation when their wives contribute relatively more earnings (the interaction between husband’s BOD and relative earnings on his initiation is of similar magnitude and significant at .10 using the wife’s report). The only significant interaction for happiness and relative earnings is for husband’s initiation in the couple report and the direction of the effect does not make sense.

Conclusions & Next Steps:

Thus, overall, we find substantial evidence that the wife having a dim view of gains from marriage is associated with the wife, and not the husband, being the one to initiate divorce and the husband’s negative appraisal of marital utility is associated with his, but not her, initiation of divorce. Since initiator status is measured retrospectively, it is possible that reports of which spouse most wanted the divorce are influenced by post-divorce constructions or events (Hopper and Phua 2000). Our results suggest, however, that this is not the case. The relatively high level of agreement between ex-spouses on who wanted the divorce, combined with the fact that spouse A’s report of the utility of

the marriage predicts whether A (but not B) initiates divorce, suggests to us that the measure is picking up who initiated the divorce reasonably well. Moreover, the story of how Spouse A's subjective assessments of marital utility or gain affect divorce initiation by Spouse A but not Spouse B is basically the same regardless of whether we use the wife's report, the husband's report or our constructed "couple" report. The evidence is clearer for wives than husbands, however, given that the positive effect of husband's BOD scale on his initiation is only marginally significant in M2 using the wife's report.

We also find some limited evidence that the effect of higher earnings increases the hazard of initiation among wives, and perhaps more so among wives who feel they would be better off divorced. But, we find the latter effect only when using the husband's report of initiation. Hence, we plan to explore possible interactions between assessments of marital utility and alternative measures of "economic independence." It is possible that the mechanism through which the "independence" effect operates is noneconomic—perhaps through meeting potential partners on a job, or through the effect of earnings on one's sense of independence.

Limitations and Next Steps. One next step is to improve our measurement of the dependent variable in a way that deals with disagreement between spouses as to who initiated and missing information on this question. Our analysis is limited by the relatively large number of divorced couples who failed to answer the question about who wanted the divorce more at Waves 2 and 3 (higher numbers of divorced men did not answer or were lost to follow-up compared with divorced women) and by some couples who disagreed. Here, we have compared results using the wife's report, the husband's report, and an ad hoc, common-sense strategy for creating a "couple report" of "who left"

— calling it “she left” if they agree that she left, one says she left and the other says both wanted it equally, or one says she left and the other didn’t answer the question (and analogously for “he left”). Our next step is to use a combination of latent class models and missing value imputation to deal with these issues. We will assume that there is a single objective underlying reality that we can estimate with multinomial logit latent-class models that postulate a single, unobserved outcome variable (Yamaguchi 2000). In our models, there will be a single latent outcome variable C with four categories, wife left, husband left, both left, and neither left. Wife’s and husband’s reports will be regarded as fallible indicators of these latent classes. In addition, we will utilize two recently-developed methods for handling missing data, maximum likelihood and multiple imputation. Both methods produce estimates that have optimal properties under the assumption that the data are missing at random (Allison 2001). With maximum likelihood, estimation of the model and adjustment for missing data occur simultaneously.

We also plan to explore whether a measure of employment in the prior year produces similar results to those found by Schoen et al (2002) using the first two NSFH waves, in that employment interacts with our subjective measures of marital satisfaction. One advantage of employment over earnings is that Waves 2 and 3 contain complete employment histories to the month for periods in between waves that distinguish between full and part-time employment. In contrast, earnings are only measured at each wave for the prior year.

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Table 1. Cross-Tabulation of Wife's Report of Who Wanted Divorce with Husband's Report of Who Wanted Divorce

Husband's Report	Wife's Report						Row Total		No Answer / No Interview
	She Wanted		He Wanted		Both Wanted				
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N
She Wanted	67%	143	9%	8	25%	14	46%	165	57
He Wanted	8%	18	79%	73	29%	16	30%	107	32
Both Wanted	24%	52	12%	11	46%	26	25%	89	37
Column Total	100%	213	100%	92	100%	56	100%	361	
		59%		25%		16%		100%	
No Answer / No Interview		126		50		42			42
									168

N = 747

Source: Authors' Calculations from NSFH1-NSFH3

Table 2. Means of Independent Variables by Marriage Outcome and Wife's and Husband's Report of Who Initiated Divorce

	Entire Sample	Still Married	Divorced	Who Initiated Divorce								
				Wife's Report			Husband's Report			"Couple" Report		
				Wife	Husband	Other	Wife	Husband	Other	Wife	Husband	Other
Divorces Initiation	0.21			0.45	0.19	0.36	0.30	0.19	0.52	0.52	0.24	0.23
<i>Time Varying Variables at Wave 1</i>												
Wife's better off divorced scale	0.00	-0.10	0.38	0.45	0.18	0.39	0.45	0.25	0.38	0.45	0.22	0.38
Husband's better off divorced scale	0.00	-0.07	0.28	0.20	0.30	0.38	0.17	0.39	0.31	0.20	0.39	0.36
Wife says relationship happy	0.73	0.77	0.57	0.57	0.59	0.56	0.59	0.61	0.55	0.58	0.60	0.53
Husband says relationship happy	0.75	0.78	0.61	0.63	0.65	0.57	0.64	0.62	0.59	0.63	0.61	0.57
Relative earnings (0 to 1)	0.28	0.27	0.31	0.32	0.30	0.31	0.32	0.29	0.31	0.33	0.30	0.30
Husband earnings (logged)	4.17	4.20	4.06	4.03	4.16	4.05	4.13	4.17	3.98	4.02	4.15	4.05
Number of children 0 to 1	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.18	0.22	0.24	0.18	0.21	0.19	0.20
Number of children 2 to 5	0.37	0.36	0.42	0.42	0.37	0.44	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.41
Number of children 6 to 12	0.55	0.54	0.56	0.53	0.58	0.59	0.55	0.53	0.59	0.55	0.58	0.57
Number of children 12 to 18	0.37	0.38	0.32	0.27	0.36	0.37	0.32	0.27	0.34	0.28	0.32	0.42
<i>Time Varying Variables at Wave 2^a</i>												
Wife's better off divorced scale	0.05	0.01	0.61	0.03	-0.12	-0.06	-0.02	-0.09	-0.01	0.81	0.37	0.37
Husband's better off divorced scale	0.01	-0.02	0.38	0.05	0.03	0.11	0.00	0.21	0.06	0.33	0.34	0.62
Wife says relationship happy	0.71	0.73	0.42	0.55	0.54	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.53	0.43	0.46	0.30
Husband says relationship happy	0.72	0.73	0.51	0.61	0.63	0.57	0.66	0.58	0.57	0.52	0.53	0.42
Relative earnings (0 to 1)	0.30	0.30	0.32	0.38	0.32	0.38	0.39	0.34	0.37	0.34	0.28	0.36
Husband earnings (logged)	4.22	4.21	4.31	4.04	4.21	4.05	4.02	4.23	4.05	4.38	4.27	4.15
Number of children 0 to 1	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.11	0.06	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.11	0.02	0.06
Number of children 2 to 5	0.32	0.32	0.28	0.30	0.28	0.19	0.24	0.27	0.26	0.31	0.25	0.21
Number of children 6 to 12	0.60	0.60	0.64	0.70	0.62	0.37	0.57	0.66	0.53	0.65	0.64	0.61
Number of children 12 to 18	0.42	0.42	0.44	0.33	0.38	0.28	0.30	0.32	0.34	0.37	0.56	0.42
<i>Time Constant Variables</i>												
Wife 3 or more years older than husband	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.05	0.12	0.07	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.10	0.06
Wife's age at marriage in years	23.33	23.19	23.86	23.31	24.80	24.04	23.98	23.96	23.74	23.63	24.62	23.56
Marriage duration at NSFH1 (in months)	123.76	132.92	88.47	83.63	97.08	90.04	89.15	94.06	86.06	84.59	94.83	90.56
Marriage duration at divorce or censor (in months)	277.66	310.13	152.67	146.63	174.11	148.92	153.09	162.12	149.02	147.15	168.73	148.29
Children present that are not husband's	0.12	0.11	0.19	0.18	0.16	0.22	0.23	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.18	0.18
Children present that are not wife's	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.11	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.09	0.06	0.10	0.11
Premarital birth	0.15	0.14	0.18	0.18	0.10	0.23	0.18	0.16	0.19	0.18	0.14	0.23
Wife less than high school	0.12	0.11	0.16	0.15	0.11	0.18	0.17	0.10	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.22
Wife high school graduate	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.42	0.39	0.38	0.37	0.40	0.41	0.40	0.41	0.39
Wife has some college	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.22	0.24	0.27	0.23	0.23	0.26	0.21	0.24
Wife has college degree	0.23	0.24	0.19	0.17	0.27	0.18	0.19	0.26	0.17	0.19	0.26	0.14
Husband less than high school	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.12	0.12	0.17	0.14	0.14	0.16
Husband high school graduate	0.34	0.33	0.40	0.40	0.37	0.41	0.39	0.38	0.41	0.40	0.37	0.43
Husband has some college	0.24	0.24	0.25	0.26	0.22	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.24	0.26	0.24	0.24
Husband has college degree	0.28	0.29	0.20	0.19	0.27	0.18	0.23	0.26	0.17	0.19	0.25	0.17
Either wife or husband Black	0.10	0.09	0.14	0.13	0.07	0.18	0.16	0.10	0.14	0.15	0.09	0.17
Wife raised in disrupted household	0.20	0.18	0.29	0.30	0.20	0.31	0.30	0.27	0.28	0.30	0.25	0.30
Husband raised in disrupted household	0.20	0.18	0.25	0.27	0.19	0.26	0.23	0.24	0.26	0.25	0.23	0.27
Wife previously divorced	0.19	0.17	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.29	0.31	0.23	0.29	0.30	0.24	0.31
Husband previously divorced	0.21	0.18	0.32	0.31	0.32	0.34	0.34	0.29	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.32
Wife ever cohabited	0.30	0.26	0.45	0.48	0.39	0.44	0.44	0.42	0.46	0.47	0.41	0.44
Husband ever cohabited	0.33	0.29	0.47	0.46	0.41	0.51	0.47	0.40	0.49	0.47	0.42	0.51
N	3622	2875	747	339	142	266	222	139	386	392	182	173

^a N is couples who remained married at Wave 2

Table 3. Comparison of Hazard Ratios from Proportional Hazard Models Predicting Probability of Divorce and Probability of Husband or Wife Initiating Divorce versus Still Married by Wife's, Husband's, and Couple's Report

	Wife's Report				Husband's Report				Couple's Report			
	Wife		Husband		Wife		Husband		Wife		Husband	
	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2
Wife's Better off Divorced Scale	1.422 ***	1.495 ***	1.014	0.852	1.397 ***	1.396 ***	1.101	0.944	1.400 ***	1.416 ***	1.048	0.894
Husband's Better off Divorced Scale	1.000	1.021	1.167	1.254	0.976	1.023	1.336 ***	1.469 **	1.010	1.070	1.250 **	1.294 *
Wife Says Marriage Happy	0.471 ***	0.583 **	0.406 ***	0.329 ***	0.547 ***	0.743	0.486 ***	0.358 ***	0.534 ***	0.645 *	0.460 ***	0.303 ***
Husband Says Marriage Happy	0.638 ***	0.522 ***	0.686 *	0.608	0.663 **	0.593 *	0.553 **	0.554 *	0.612 ***	0.578 **	0.581 ***	0.598 *
Wife's Relative Earnings (0 to 1)	1.648	1.809	0.902	0.430	2.235 *	3.052	0.988	0.532	1.869 *	2.430 *	0.864	0.368
Wife's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings		1.081		1.031		1.197 *		1.053		1.086		1.010
Husband's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings		0.858		1.800 +		0.993		1.684 +		0.964		1.726 *
Wife Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings		0.940		0.773		0.877		0.713		0.844		0.880
Husband Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings		0.507		2.055		0.388		2.857		0.563		4.285 *
Husband Log Earnings	1.076	1.900	0.987	1.511	1.186	1.419	1.024	0.982	1.081	1.201	0.980	0.892
Wife Older than Husband	0.958	0.937	2.199 *	2.240 *	1.080	1.063	1.474	1.519	1.076	1.064	1.764 *	1.819 *
Wife's Age at Marriage in years	0.905 ***	0.904 ***	0.955 *	0.953 *	0.936 ***	0.935 ***	0.948 *	0.946 *	0.915 ***	0.914 ***	0.969	0.968
Marriage Duration from T1	0.992 ***	0.992 ***	0.993 ***	0.993 ***	0.994 ***	0.994 ***	0.994 ***	0.994 ***	0.992 ***	0.992 ***	0.994 ***	0.994 ***
Number and Age of Children												
Number of Children 0 to 1	0.866	0.868	0.747	0.758	0.939	0.937	0.906	0.915	0.850	0.852	0.684	0.694
Number of Children 2 to 5	1.012	1.010	0.902	0.899	1.122	1.115	0.904	0.904	1.068	1.065	0.980	0.983
Number of Children 6 to 12	0.998	1.002	0.971	0.972	1.040	1.040	1.008	1.005	1.021	1.025	1.009	1.007
Number of Children 13 to 18	0.938	0.940	1.077	1.071	0.877	0.876	0.861	0.862	0.900	0.901	0.941	0.942
Children present that are not husband's	0.880	0.867	0.707	0.727	1.175	1.167	1.136	1.162	0.994	0.987	1.005	1.027
Children present that are not wife's	0.647	0.656	1.506	1.499	0.784	0.788	0.959	0.946	0.607 *	0.609 *	1.302	1.287
Premarital birth	0.935	0.931	0.632	0.637	0.994	0.997	0.982	0.985	0.990	0.990	0.920	0.928
Wife's Education (< high school omitted)												
High School Graduate	0.928	0.933	1.188	1.188	0.610 *	0.609 *	1.232	1.236	0.881	0.882	1.225	1.227
Some College	0.883	0.882	1.064	1.064	0.658	0.652	1.145	1.160	0.910	0.905	1.013	1.028
College Degree	0.844	0.837	1.463	1.470	0.558 *	0.555 *	1.516	1.545	0.882	0.880	1.458	1.481
Husband's Education (< high school omitted)												
High School Graduate	1.059	1.063	0.803	0.796	1.276	1.280	1.156	1.121	1.004	1.003	0.895	0.871
Some College	1.003	1.010	0.623	0.620	1.281	1.291	1.017	0.995	0.954	0.958	0.763	0.746
College Degree	0.922	0.931	0.672	0.668	1.349	1.359	1.066	1.038	0.865	0.870	0.737	0.717
Either Wife or Husband Black	0.896	0.898	0.588	0.608	1.164	1.161	0.665	0.684	1.036	1.037	0.660	0.674
Wife raised in disrupted household	1.416 **	1.417 **	1.062	1.058	1.443 *	1.432 *	1.491 *	1.487 *	1.381 **	1.374 **	1.310	1.308
Husband raised in disrupted household	1.307 *	1.301 *	0.965	0.987	1.068	1.065	1.276	1.292	1.174	1.170	1.139	1.166
Wife previously divorced	1.880 ***	1.923 ***	1.091	1.078	1.552 *	1.571 *	0.929	0.914	1.728 ***	1.749 ***	0.763	0.747
Husband previously divorced	1.536 **	1.523 **	1.480	1.497	1.659 **	1.658 **	1.474	1.499	1.683 ***	1.682 ***	1.458	1.481 *
Wife ever cohabited	1.521 **	1.532 **	1.216	1.216	1.107	1.103	1.460	1.461	1.372 *	1.373 *	1.229	1.230
Husband ever cohabited	0.853	0.844	0.876	0.869	1.047	1.043	0.742	0.737	0.919	0.915	0.897	0.892
Event	339		142		222		139		392		182	
-2 Log Likelihood	4980.28	4976.29	2119.62	2114.94	3304.99	3301.92	2071.02	2066.51	5790.52	5787.91	2714.83	2707.90

Note: * p <= .05; ** p <= .01, *** <= .001. Author's Calculations from NSFH1-NSFH3.

Appendix Table 1. Proportional Hazard Models Predicting Probability of Husband, Wife, or Other Initiating Divorce versus Still Married based on Wife's Report of Initiation

	Wife's Report of Who Initiated																	
	She Wanted						He Wanted						Other ^a					
	M1			M2			M1			M2			M1			M2		
	Hazard			Hazard			Hazard			Hazard			Hazard			Hazard		
	Beta	Ratio	P Value	Beta	Ratio	P Value	Beta	Ratio	P Value	Beta	Ratio	P Value	Beta	Ratio	Value	Beta	Ratio	Value
Wife's Better off Divorced Scale	0.352	1.422	<.0001	0.402	1.495	<.0001	0.014	1.014	0.882	-0.161	0.852	0.219	0.108	1.114	0.075	-0.033	0.967	0.712
Husband's Better off Divorced Scale	0.000	1.000	0.999	0.021	1.021	0.806	0.154	1.167	0.072	0.226	1.254	0.076	0.208	1.231	0.001	0.338	1.402	0.000
Wife Says Marriage Happy	-0.754	0.471	<.0001	-0.540	0.583	0.005	-0.903	0.406	<.0001	-1.111	0.329	0.000	-0.588	0.556	<.0001	-0.628	0.534	0.003
Husband Says Marriage Happy	-0.450	0.638	0.000	-0.649	0.522	0.001	-0.378	0.686	0.045	-0.498	0.608	0.080	-0.681	0.506	<.0001	-0.378	0.685	0.068
Wife's Relative Earnings (0 to 1)	0.500	1.648	0.065	0.593	1.809	0.207	-0.103	0.902	0.812	-0.843	0.430	0.233	0.310	1.363	0.309	0.652	1.919	0.190
Wife's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings				0.078	1.081	0.246				0.031	1.031	0.782				0.004	1.004	0.957
Husband's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings				-0.153	0.858	0.413				0.588	1.800	0.053				0.435	1.545	0.031
Wife Says Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings				-0.061	0.940	0.763				-0.258	0.773	0.429				-0.415	0.660	0.048
Husband Says Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings				-0.680	0.507	0.144				0.720	2.055	0.329				0.165	1.179	0.746
Husband Log Earnings	0.073	1.076	0.271	0.642	1.900	0.163	-0.013	0.987	0.901	0.413	1.511	0.580	-0.013	0.987	0.854	-0.963	0.382	0.050
Wife Older than Husband	-0.043	0.958	0.878	-0.065	0.937	0.816	0.788	2.199	0.012	0.807	2.240	0.010	0.061	1.063	0.824	0.077	1.080	0.779
Wife's Age at Marriage in years	-0.100	0.905	<.0001	-0.101	0.904	<.0001	-0.046	0.955	0.029	-0.048	0.953	0.024	-0.045	0.956	0.005	-0.046	0.955	0.004
Marriage Duration from T1	-0.008	0.992	<.0001	-0.008	0.992	<.0001	-0.007	0.993	<.0001	-0.007	0.993	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001
Number of Children 0 to 1	-0.144	0.866	0.302	-0.142	0.868	0.310	-0.292	0.747	0.238	-0.277	0.758	0.262	-0.304	0.738	0.073	-0.302	0.739	0.074
Number of Children 2 to 5	0.012	1.012	0.898	0.010	1.010	0.917	-0.104	0.902	0.512	-0.106	0.899	0.501	0.057	1.059	0.582	0.057	1.059	0.583
Number of Children 6 to 12	-0.002	0.998	0.977	0.002	1.002	0.982	-0.029	0.971	0.793	-0.029	0.972	0.799	0.063	1.065	0.404	0.059	1.061	0.439
Number of Children 13 to 18	-0.064	0.938	0.514	-0.061	0.940	0.533	0.074	1.077	0.558	0.069	1.071	0.587	-0.091	0.913	0.338	-0.087	0.916	0.363
Children present that are not husband's	-0.128	0.880	0.475	-0.143	0.867	0.426	-0.347	0.707	0.228	-0.319	0.727	0.267	-0.014	0.986	0.940	0.016	1.016	0.933
Children present that are not wife's	-0.435	0.647	0.078	-0.421	0.656	0.088	0.410	1.506	0.167	0.405	1.499	0.175	0.112	1.119	0.631	0.089	1.093	0.705
Premarital birth	-0.067	0.935	0.660	-0.072	0.931	0.636	-0.460	0.632	0.116	-0.451	0.637	0.124	0.311	1.364	0.047	0.322	1.380	0.040
Wife High School Graduate	-0.074	0.928	0.672	-0.070	0.933	0.692	0.172	1.188	0.570	0.173	1.188	0.570	-0.454	0.635	0.013	-0.455	0.634	0.013
Wife has some college	-0.124	0.883	0.528	-0.125	0.882	0.525	0.062	1.064	0.853	0.062	1.064	0.854	-0.397	0.673	0.055	-0.394	0.674	0.057
Wife has college degree	-0.169	0.844	0.474	-0.178	0.837	0.453	0.381	1.463	0.294	0.385	1.470	0.290	-0.451	0.637	0.071	-0.434	0.648	0.084
Husband High School Graduate	0.057	1.059	0.741	0.061	1.063	0.725	-0.220	0.803	0.424	-0.228	0.796	0.407	0.084	1.088	0.661	0.069	1.071	0.720
Husband has some college	0.003	1.003	0.986	0.010	1.010	0.959	-0.473	0.623	0.123	-0.477	0.620	0.120	0.004	1.004	0.984	0.005	1.005	0.982
Husband has college degree	-0.081	0.922	0.716	-0.072	0.931	0.747	-0.397	0.672	0.228	-0.403	0.668	0.220	-0.123	0.884	0.621	-0.124	0.883	0.619
Either Wife or Husband Black	-0.110	0.896	0.536	-0.107	0.898	0.545	-0.530	0.588	0.126	-0.498	0.608	0.152	0.296	1.345	0.094	0.300	1.350	0.091
Wife raised in disrupted household	0.348	1.416	0.005	0.349	1.417	0.005	0.060	1.062	0.782	0.056	1.058	0.795	0.372	1.450	0.007	0.359	1.432	0.010
Husband raised in disrupted household	0.268	1.307	0.036	0.263	1.301	0.040	-0.036	0.965	0.871	-0.013	0.987	0.952	0.054	1.055	0.717	0.061	1.063	0.679
Wife previously divorced	0.631	1.880	0.000	0.654	1.923	0.000	0.088	1.091	0.746	0.075	1.078	0.780	0.247	1.280	0.186	0.207	1.230	0.269
Husband previously divorced	0.429	1.536	0.003	0.420	1.523	0.003	0.392	1.480	0.082	0.403	1.497	0.073	0.441	1.554	0.005	0.457	1.580	0.004
Wife ever cohabited	0.419	1.521	0.004	0.427	1.532	0.004	0.195	1.216	0.387	0.195	1.216	0.386	-0.045	0.956	0.780	-0.057	0.945	0.726
Husband ever cohabited	-0.159	0.853	0.273	-0.170	0.844	0.246	-0.132	0.876	0.560	-0.141	0.869	0.536	0.345	1.412	0.034	0.358	1.430	0.028
Event	339						142						266					
-2 Log Likelihood	4980.28			4976.29			2119.62			2114.94			3944.98			3934.58		

^a "Other" category includes couples in which the husband and wife wanted the divorce equally and couples in which at least one spouse was interviewed at NSFH2 or NSFH3 but neither spouse answered the "who wanted" divorce question

Appendix Table 2. Proportional Hazard Models Predicting Probability of Husband, Wife, or Other Initiating Divorce versus Still Married from Husband's Report of Initiation

	Husband's Report of Who Initiated																				
	She Wanted						He Wanted						Other ^a								
	M1		M2				M1		M2				M1		M2						
	Beta	Ratio	Hazard	P Value	Beta	Ratio	Hazard	P Value	Beta	Ratio	Hazard	P Value	Beta	Ratio	Hazard	P Value	Beta	Ratio	Hazard	P Value	
Wife's Better off Divorced Scale	0.334	1.397	<.0001	0.334	1.396	0.001	0.097	1.101	0.281	-0.057	0.944	0.655	0.162	1.176	0.002	0.097	1.102	0.195			
Husband's Better off Divorced Scale	-0.024	0.976	0.725	0.023	1.023	0.834	0.290	1.336	0.000	0.384	1.469	0.002	0.108	1.114	0.033	0.178	1.195	0.018			
Wife Says Marriage Happy	-0.604	0.547	<.0001	-0.297	0.743	0.227	-0.722	0.486	0.000	-1.026	0.358	0.001	-0.792	0.453	<.0001	-0.793	0.453	<.0001			
Husband Says Marriage Happy	-0.412	0.663	0.007	-0.523	0.593	0.029	-0.593	0.553	0.002	-0.590	0.554	0.037	-0.569	0.566	<.0001	-0.495	0.610	0.004			
Wife's Relative Earnings (0 to 1)	0.804	2.235	0.017	1.116	3.052	0.062	-0.012	0.988	0.978	-0.632	0.532	0.388	0.139	1.149	0.583	0.220	1.246	0.590			
Wife's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings				0.180	1.197	0.050				0.051	1.053	0.653				-0.045	0.956	0.438			
Husband's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings				-0.007	0.993	0.978				0.521	1.684	0.088				0.199	1.221	0.234			
Wife Says Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings				-0.131	0.877	0.611				-0.338	0.713	0.300				-0.227	0.797	0.207			
Husband Says Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings				-0.946	0.388	0.114				1.050	2.857	0.162				0.015	1.015	0.972			
Husband Log Earnings	0.171	1.186	0.057	0.350	1.419	0.547	0.023	1.024	0.833	-0.018	0.982	0.980	-0.053	0.948	0.346	-0.237	0.789	0.564			
Wife Older than Husband	0.077	1.080	0.802	0.061	1.063	0.844	0.388	1.474	0.284	0.418	1.519	0.249	0.189	1.208	0.408	0.197	1.217	0.389			
Wife's Age at Marriage in years	-0.066	0.936	0.000	-0.067	0.935	0.000	-0.054	0.948	0.022	-0.055	0.946	0.019	-0.075	0.928	<.0001	-0.076	0.927	<.0001			
Marriage Duration from T1	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.008	0.992	<.0001	-0.008	0.992	<.0001			
Number of Children 0 to 1	-0.063	0.939	0.721	-0.065	0.937	0.714	-0.099	0.906	0.649	-0.089	0.915	0.681	-0.375	0.687	0.008	-0.369	0.692	0.010			
Number of Children 2 to 5	0.115	1.122	0.308	0.109	1.115	0.334	-0.101	0.904	0.509	-0.101	0.904	0.511	-0.012	0.988	0.891	-0.012	0.988	0.887			
Number of Children 6 to 12	0.039	1.040	0.654	0.040	1.040	0.651	0.008	1.008	0.946	0.005	1.005	0.966	0.009	1.009	0.893	0.010	1.010	0.879			
Number of Children 13 to 18	-0.131	0.877	0.264	0.132	0.876	0.264	-0.149	0.861	0.311	-0.148	0.862	0.319	0.040	1.041	0.616	0.043	1.044	0.591			
Children present that are not husband's	0.161	1.175	0.439	0.154	1.167	0.459	0.127	1.136	0.657	0.150	1.162	0.601	-0.391	0.676	0.020	-0.381	0.683	0.024			
Children present that are not wife's	-0.243	0.784	0.374	0.238	0.788	0.382	-0.042	0.959	0.906	-0.056	0.946	0.877	0.046	1.047	0.818	0.040	1.041	0.840			
Premarital birth	-0.006	0.994	0.976	0.003	0.997	0.986	-0.018	0.982	0.942	-0.015	0.985	0.953	0.058	1.059	0.674	0.059	1.061	0.666			
Wife High School Graduate	-0.494	0.610	0.020	0.496	0.609	0.019	0.209	1.232	0.496	0.212	1.236	0.492	-0.146	0.864	0.348	-0.146	0.864	0.351			
Wife has some college	-0.419	0.658	0.074	0.428	0.652	0.068	0.136	1.145	0.689	0.149	1.160	0.663	-0.213	0.808	0.231	-0.212	0.809	0.234			
Wife has college degree	-0.584	0.558	0.037	0.589	0.555	0.035	0.416	1.516	0.263	0.435	1.545	0.245	-0.174	0.840	0.415	-0.167	0.846	0.435			
Husband High School Graduate	0.244	1.276	0.287	0.247	1.280	0.283	0.145	1.156	0.626	0.115	1.121	0.701	-0.111	0.895	0.466	-0.122	0.885	0.426			
Husband has some college	0.248	1.281	0.323	0.255	1.291	0.308	0.017	1.017	0.959	-0.005	0.995	0.987	-0.267	0.765	0.121	-0.272	0.762	0.116			
Husband has college degree	0.299	1.349	0.281	0.307	1.359	0.270	0.064	1.066	0.856	0.037	1.038	0.916	-0.467	0.627	0.023	-0.470	0.625	0.022			
Either Wife or Husband Black	0.151	1.164	0.461	0.149	1.161	0.469	-0.407	0.665	0.183	-0.380	0.684	0.215	0.026	1.026	0.872	0.036	1.036	0.825			
Wife raised in disrupted household	0.367	1.443	0.017	0.359	1.432	0.020	0.400	1.491	0.044	0.397	1.487	0.046	0.233	1.262	0.048	0.228	1.256	0.053			
Husband raised in disrupted household	0.065	1.068	0.693	0.063	1.065	0.703	0.243	1.276	0.236	0.257	1.292	0.213	0.142	1.153	0.242	0.147	1.158	0.228			
Wife previously divorced	0.439	1.552	0.034	0.452	1.571	0.030	-0.073	0.929	0.796	-0.090	0.914	0.751	0.509	1.663	0.001	0.496	1.643	0.002			
Husband previously divorced	0.506	1.659	0.003	0.506	1.658	0.004	0.388	1.474	0.088	0.405	1.499	0.075	0.381	1.464	0.004	0.391	1.478	0.004			
Wife ever cohabited	0.102	1.107	0.572	0.098	1.103	0.588	0.378	1.460	0.095	0.379	1.461	0.095	0.203	1.225	0.131	0.199	1.220	0.140			
Husband ever cohabited	0.046	1.047	0.799	0.042	1.043	0.819	-0.299	0.742	0.189	-0.305	0.737	0.181	0.142	1.152	0.297	0.145	1.156	0.286			
Event	222			139			386														
-2 Log Likelihood	3304.99			3301.92			2071.02			2066.51			5705.78			5702.99					

^a "Other" category includes couples in which the husband and wife wanted the divorce equally and couples in which at least one spouse was interviewed at NSFH2 or NSFH3 but neither spouse answered the "who wanted" divorce question.

Appendix Table 3. Proportional Hazard Models Predicting Probability of Husband, Wife, or Other Initiating Divorce versus Still Married based on Couple Measure of Who Initiated

	Couple Measure of Initiation																	
	She Wanted					He Wanted					Other ^a							
	M1		M2			M1		M2			M1		M2					
	Beta	Hazard Ratio	P Value	Beta	Hazard Ratio	P Value	Beta	Hazard Ratio	P Value	Beta	Hazard Ratio	P Value	Beta	Hazard Ratio	P Value			
Wife's Better off Divorced Scale	0.336	1.400	<.0001	0.348	1.416	<.0001	0.047	1.048	0.554	-0.112	0.894	0.321	0.059	1.061	0.432	-0.037	0.964	0.739
Husband's Better off Divorced Scale	0.010	1.010	0.842	0.067	1.070	0.401	0.223	1.250	0.002	0.258	1.294	0.019	0.181	1.199	0.015	0.291	1.338	0.006
Wife Says Marriage Happy	-0.627	0.534	<.0001	-0.438	0.645	0.016	-0.776	0.460	<.0001	-1.194	0.303	<.0001	-0.886	0.412	<.0001	-0.693	0.500	0.008
Husband Says Marriage Happy	-0.491	0.612	<.0001	-0.549	0.578	0.002	-0.544	0.581	0.001	-0.514	0.598	0.037	-0.563	0.570	0.001	-0.430	0.651	0.088
Wife's Relative Earnings (0 to 1)	0.625	1.869	0.013	0.888	2.430	0.041	-0.146	0.864	0.701	-1.001	0.368	0.109	0.102	1.108	0.788	0.605	1.831	0.316
Wife's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings				0.082	1.086	0.184				0.010	1.010	0.914				-0.040	0.960	0.645
Husband's BOD Scale x Relative Earnings				-0.037	0.964	0.831				0.546	1.726	0.039				0.303	1.354	0.236
Wife Says Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings				-0.169	0.844	0.370				-0.128	0.880	0.651				-0.357	0.700	0.164
Husband Says Marriage Happy x Relative Earnings				-0.575	0.563	0.183				1.455	4.285	0.025				-0.618	0.539	0.343
Husband Log Earnings	0.078	1.081	0.203	0.183	1.201	0.664	-0.021	0.980	0.824	-0.114	0.892	0.858	-0.056	0.945	0.510	-0.432	0.649	0.479
Wife Older than Husband	0.074	1.076	0.761	0.062	1.064	0.798	0.568	1.764	0.048	0.598	1.819	0.037	-0.022	0.978	0.951	-0.027	0.974	0.941
Wife's Age at Marriage in years	-0.089	0.915	<.0001	-0.089	0.914	<.0001	-0.031	0.969	0.101	-0.032	0.968	0.091	-0.071	0.931	0.001	-0.071	0.931	0.000
Marriage Duration from T1	-0.008	0.992	<.0001	-0.008	0.992	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.006	0.994	<.0001	-0.007	0.993	<.0001	-0.007	0.993	<.0001
Number of Children 0 to 1	-0.162	0.850	0.219	-0.160	0.852	0.225	-0.380	0.684	0.080	-0.365	0.694	0.092	-0.233	0.792	0.253	-0.235	0.791	0.250
Number of Children 2 to 5	0.066	1.068	0.440	0.063	1.065	0.459	-0.020	0.980	0.878	-0.018	0.983	0.895	-0.092	0.913	0.495	-0.090	0.914	0.502
Number of Children 6 to 12	0.021	1.021	0.753	0.025	1.025	0.710	0.009	1.009	0.926	0.007	1.007	0.943	0.016	1.016	0.873	0.015	1.015	0.882
Number of Children 13 to 18	-0.105	0.900	0.246	-0.104	0.901	0.253	-0.060	0.941	0.604	-0.060	0.942	0.610	0.084	1.087	0.451	0.086	1.090	0.441
Children present that are not husband's	-0.006	0.994	0.969	-0.013	0.987	0.936	0.005	1.005	0.985	0.027	1.027	0.913	-0.484	0.616	0.049	-0.473	0.623	0.056
Children present that are not wife's	-0.500	0.607	0.029	-0.495	0.609	0.031	0.264	1.302	0.337	0.252	1.287	0.360	0.436	1.546	0.108	0.427	1.533	0.115
Premarital birth	-0.010	0.990	0.943	-0.010	0.990	0.942	-0.083	0.920	0.711	-0.075	0.928	0.739	0.194	1.214	0.318	0.196	1.216	0.314
Wife High School Graduate	-0.127	0.881	0.440	-0.126	0.882	0.442	0.203	1.225	0.440	0.204	1.227	0.438	-0.591	0.554	0.006	-0.601	0.548	0.005
Wife has some college	-0.095	0.910	0.604	-0.100	0.905	0.584	0.013	1.013	0.965	0.027	1.028	0.927	-0.578	0.561	0.020	-0.592	0.553	0.017
Wife has college degree	-0.125	0.882	0.564	-0.127	0.880	0.558	0.377	1.458	0.238	0.392	1.481	0.221	-0.837	0.433	0.009	-0.848	0.428	0.008
Husband High School Graduate	0.004	1.004	0.980	0.003	1.003	0.984	-0.111	0.895	0.651	-0.138	0.871	0.572	0.171	1.187	0.465	0.167	1.181	0.480
Husband has some college	-0.048	0.954	0.789	-0.043	0.958	0.810	-0.271	0.763	0.313	-0.292	0.746	0.277	0.022	1.022	0.934	0.029	1.029	0.915
Husband has college degree	-0.145	0.865	0.477	-0.139	0.870	0.495	-0.305	0.737	0.301	-0.332	0.717	0.261	-0.012	0.988	0.969	0.004	1.004	0.991
Either Wife or Husband Black	0.035	1.036	0.826	0.037	1.037	0.817	-0.415	0.660	0.130	-0.394	0.674	0.153	0.261	1.299	0.246	0.252	1.287	0.264
Wife raised in disrupted household	0.322	1.381	0.005	0.317	1.374	0.006	0.270	1.310	0.132	0.268	1.308	0.134	0.279	1.321	0.105	0.263	1.301	0.127
Husband raised in disrupted household	0.161	1.174	0.185	0.157	1.170	0.197	0.130	1.139	0.482	0.153	1.166	0.406	0.103	1.108	0.570	0.111	1.117	0.542
Wife previously divorced	0.547	1.728	0.001	0.559	1.749	0.000	-0.271	0.763	0.269	-0.291	0.747	0.234	0.664	1.943	0.004	0.650	1.916	0.005
Husband previously divorced	0.520	1.683	<.0001	0.520	1.682	<.0001	0.377	1.458	0.056	0.392	1.481	0.047	0.270	1.310	0.180	0.277	1.319	0.171
Wife ever cohabited	0.316	1.372	0.019	0.317	1.373	0.019	0.206	1.229	0.298	0.207	1.230	0.296	-0.036	0.965	0.858	-0.056	0.946	0.780
Husband ever cohabited	-0.084	0.919	0.531	-0.089	0.915	0.510	-0.108	0.897	0.586	-0.114	0.892	0.566	0.427	1.532	0.034	0.439	1.552	0.030
Event	392						182						173					
-2 Log Likelihood	5790.52			5787.91			2714.83			2707.90			2551.97			2546.67		

^a "Other" category includes couples who disagreed over which spouse initiated divorce, couples in which the husband and wife wanted the divorce equally, and couples in which at least one spouse was interviewed at NSFH2 or NSFH3 but neither spouse answered the "who wanted" divorce question