Intimate Relationship Dynamics and their Dissolution during the Transition to Adulthood

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Abstract

Intimate relationships during the transition to adulthood are ubiquitous, conflictual, and consequential. We use the Relationship Dynamics and Social Life dataset to estimate within-between (hybrid) linear probability models of the dissolution of 2,623 intimate relationships experienced by 910 women over a 2.5-year period. We find that serious relationships – those that involve spending time together, commitment to be monogamous, sleeping in the same bed, sharing an address, and/or being engaged or married – dissolve at lower rates overall than less serious relationships, and their probability of dissolution changes accordingly as they become more or less serious. However, in relationships that have dissolved and reconciled, seriousness is actually associated higher dissolution rates; however, apart from that higher baseline dissolution rate, any specific relationship's probability of dissolution decreases as it becomes more serious over time. Conflictual, violent, and/or power imbalanced relationships dissolve at lower rates than other relationships, but within a specific relationship, those experiences increase the probability of dissolution after they occur. In reconciled relationships, with the exception of relationships with a non-monogamous partner, conflict, violence, and power imbalance are largely unrelated to overall dissolution rates, and the experiences do not increase or decrease the probability of dissolution with a relationship. Relationships involving a pregnancy that didn't lead to a birth, but not those involving a birth, have lower dissolution rates, but the occurrence of a pregnancy does not change a specific relationship's probability of dissolution. Individual characteristics are mainly unrelated to intimate relationship dissolution rates, with the exception of public assistance, which is associated with higher dissolution rates, and success in high school, which is associated with lower dissolution rates. We conclude that [to be developed].

Introduction

Intimate relationship quality and longevity is strongly associated with individual health and well-being, as well as the health and well-being of children born into the relationship, net of socioeconomic factors (Carr and Springer 2010; Johnson et al. 2000; Livingston 2018; McLanahan 2011; McLanahan and Sandefur 2009; Waite and Gallagher 2002). Birth rates are high during the transition to adulthood – in 2014, women ages 18 through 24 registered 38% of all first births (Hamilton et al. 2015). Further, even among couples who do not have children at these ages, young adult intimate relationships create the foundation for subsequent intimate relationships in adulthood (Furman and Collibee 2014; Longmore et al. 2009; Meier and Allen 2009; Raley et al. 2007). In addition to learning how to *form* intimate relationships, young people must also learn how and when to *end* intimate relationships that do not meet their needs (Halpern-Meekin et al. 2013a; Lantagne et al. 2017).

Many datasets are available to study young people's intimate relationships – e.g., the Toledo Area Relationship Study (TARS), the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), the Fragile Families & Child Wellbeing Study, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), and many others (e.g., based on samples of college students). Analyses of these datasets have provided a wealth of knowledge about young adolescent and young adult intimate relationships. For example, that relationship "churning" (breaking-up followed by reconciliation) is common (Halpern-Meekin et al. 2013a), infidelity ("extra-dyadic sex") is a strong predictor of subsequent relationship dissolution (Frisco et al. 2017), same-sex couples dissolve more quickly than different-sex couples (Joyner et al. 2017), lower levels of support and higher levels of conflict predict dissolution (Lantagne et al. 2017), and violent relationships do *not* dissolve more quickly than non-violent relationships (Copp et al. 2015). We build on this existing research using the Relationship Dynamics and Social Life (RDSL) study – a newly available dataset with two and a half years of weekly interviews with a large, population-based random sample of young women. These women reported on multiple intimate relationships of many types throughout the study period. This dataset permits us to make new contributions to knowledge in three key ways.

First, we focus on the rapidly changing micro-level processes ("micro-dynamics") that predict the dissolution (or persistence) of a relationship. Most studies have lacked the information to analyze how changes within an intimate relationship are associated with its changing risk of dissolution over time. Multiple observations of the same relationship permit us to estimate fixed-effects models that hold constant all stable individual- and relationship-level characteristics and focus on those changes, by comparing the varying probability of dissolution across different time periods (with differing characteristics) within the same relationship. The intensive longitudinal nature of the RDSL also permits us to disentangle duration from other aspects of the seriousness of the relationship. Most studies use relationship characteristics at one point in time to predict dissolution by another point in time, but lack information on changes in-between those time points. Thus in those studies, duration, commitment to monogamy, coresidence, etc. are measured simultaneously and their association with dissolution cannot be disaggregated. By analyzing how the probability of dissolution changes over time as a relationship endures, holding constant its other characteristics, we can estimate their independent contributions to the risk of dissolution.

Second, RDSL prospectively followed a large number of intimate relationships from their inception, including many casual relationships (i.e., infrequent contact and no monogamy agreement), which

permits an analysis of which of those relationships dissolve quickly versus go on to become more serious relationships. In RDSL, 18% of cohabitations began as casual relationships, as well as 20% of "stayovers" (maintain separate addresses but often sleeping in the same bed) and 14% of engagements/marriages. Overall, 17% of casual relationships persist and become more serious (e.g., more frequent contact, commitment to monogamy, frequently sleeping in the same bed, etc.) Cross-sectional datasets with retrospective information about relationships and longitudinal datasets with relatively long periods between waves likely exclude relationships on the less serious end of the spectrum.

Third, the RDSL project also includes 75 semi-structured interviews with a subset of respondents to the survey portion of the project. We use these data in three ways in this analysis. First, we use these data to test hypotheses about concepts that were not measured, or not measured well, in the surveys. Second, we use respondents' own words to illustrate the results in the statistical models. And third, the data point toward new hypotheses, which should spur our own and others' further research on this topic.

Theoretical Framework [to be further developed before ASA]

We conceptualize the persistence or dissolution of an intimate relationship as a series of decisions – each week, both partners decide whether to remain in the relationship or leave the relationship. This is similar to Mare's Logistic Response Model for Educational Attainment (Mare 1979, 1980, 1981) and Life Course Theory's consideration of time as a sequence of agentic transitions (Elder 1995). If the relationship persists, the weekly experiences continue to accumulate. If the relationship dissolves, those become experiences with a prior relationship, which in turn predict current relationship experiences.

The investment model (Rusbult 1980) is the most frequently used framework to understand why intimate relationships persist or dissolve. The model posits that perceiving the relationship as beneficial, seeing fewer high-quality alternatives, and having invested in the relationship predict persistence. Below, we draw from research on intimate relationship quality to develop hypotheses about relationship dissolution in terms of benefits, alternatives, and investments.

Benefits and Costs

The most obvious hypotheses are that positive experiences (spending time together, commitment to monogamy, sex) provide benefits and thereby increase relationship satisfaction and reduce the risk of dissolution, while negative experiences (e.g., conflict/dominance) incur costs and thereby decrease relationship satisfaction and increase the risk of dissolution. However, we are focused on young relationships during the transition to adulthood. Other research has shown that very serious relationships at these young ages can be problematic – for example, on average, women expect to have less control over their bodies in cohabiting, engaged or married relationships at these ages, compared to casual sexual, uncommitted dating, long-distance dating, committed dating, and stayover relationships (Kusunoki and Barber 2019). And, previous research has not always found that negative experiences lead to dissolution – for example, violence does not appear to increase the overall risk of dissolution (Copp et al. 2015). However, infidelity is one of the most common reasons adolescents give for why their relationships dissolve (Bravo et al. 2017). When partners have mutually agreed to be monogamous, non-monogamy is a breach of that agreement (Allen and Atkins 2012; Amato and Previti 2003), and is likely to be perceived in a very negative way.

The direct benefits of having partner are likely to be particularly important for women who are raising children. Childrearing is much easier with some pooling of effort, and is thus easier with a good partner. Of course, a partner who does not benefits and in fact costs the young mother may have be particularly strongly associated with dissolution of the relationship.

Finally, the costs of the dissolution itself – regardless of whether the relationship is beneficial or not – vary across types of relationships. It is more work to dissolve a marriage than a less formal relationship because of the administrative effort required to file for divorce. Dissolving a cohabitation involves a new residence for at least one partner. And couples who are frequently sleeping in the same bed would experience more disruption in their daily routines than couples who spend less time together.

Alternatives

Partner characteristics are a key aspect of evaluating whether one has better alternatives to the current relationship, because appealing partners necessarily result in fewer *more* appealing alternatives. In addition to physical attractiveness, women tend to prefer partners who are older and have a range of traits related to status, including good financial prospects, education, and general status (Conroy-Beam et al. 2015). Relationships with these types of partners should have lower dissolution rates because it is more difficult to find a higher status partner when one's partner is already high status. This is consistent with research demonstrating that partner status was one of five key reasons for relationship dissolution among adolescents and emerging adults (Bravo et al. 2017).

Having sex with an extra-dyadic partner is the most direct indication that there is another appealing potential partner. In this way, having a non-monogamous partner, in addition to being unpleasant for the other partner, is likely to increase dissolution rates by providing alternatives. Thus, women's own non-monogamous behavior *and* their partner's non-monogamous behavior are both likely to increase dissolution rates. Even in relationships where there is no agreement to be monogamous, extra-dyadic sexual partners may be a signal that one or both partners is planning to move on.

Investments

Joint financial investments are a strong predictor of marital persistence – couples who own a house together have lower divorce rates (cites). Other types of investments are important as well, such as time spent together, emotional resources, and children. This is consistent with the "sunk cost fallacy" – where, rationally, having already invested in something should not affect the decision to continue to invest in it, but it does, because people do not want to fail (Arkes and Blumer 1985). Investments of time and attention (i.e., duration) to a relationship, as well as shared births, are "sunk costs" – investments already made. Although young people are unlikely to own a home, sharing a residence (i.e., cohabiting) may similarly decrease dissolution rates because of the extra effort that would be involved in finding a new residence.

Other Factors

We hypothesize that two additional factors not explored in previous research may be an important determinant of relationship dissolution. First, young men control their young women partners at an alarming rate, for example through reproductive coercion (Alexander et al. 2016; Barber et al. 2018; Clark et al. 2014). Thus, from a young woman's perspective, all of the factors described may be less important than her partner's experience, if he controls whether the relationship dissolves. This could be

observed, for example, in lower dissolution rates in violent relationships. Second, life course theory and social learning theory suggest that dissolving an intimate relationship provides skills for young adults to navigate ending future relationships (Bandura 1977; Lefkowitz and Vasilenko 2014). For this reason, reconciled or churning (multiple break-ups and reconciliations) relationships may dissolve at higher rates.

Hypotheses

First, we hypothesize that spending time together, committing to be monogamous, and/or sharing a bed or residence are important benefits of intimate relationships and will reduce dissolution rates. Relatedly, partner non-monogamy, fighting, and intimate partner violence are negative experiences and will increase dissolution rates.

Second, an intimate relationship's duration represents the investments that have already been made in it, and shared childbearing represents a very large shared investment. These investments will reduce dissolution rates.

Third, younger and less educated partners are likely to be unappealing to young women, and thus increase the set of potential partners who are *more* appealing. Women's own non-monogamy is an indication that there are alternative partners that they find appealing. The presence of these alternatives will increase dissolution rates.

We further distinguish between the events that occur within an intimate relationship – for example, being threatened or physically assaulted, learning of a partner's non-monogamous behavior – versus the types of relationships that include these behaviors. The hypotheses described above relate to how the probability of dissolution changes over time alongside women's experiences in their intimate relationships. These hypotheses do not necessarily hold true when comparing across relationships. For example, experiencing violence within a relationship may increase its probability of dissolution relative to that same relationship's probability of dissolution before the violence occurred, but violent relationships may still dissolve more slowly on average than other relationships because of male partner control.

Methods

Data

The RDSL study began with a representative, random, population-based sample of 1,003 young women residing in a Michigan county who were ages 18-19 at the time of the baseline interview and followed for 2.5 years such that the full range of ages represented in these data are 18 through 22.5 years old. The sampling frame was the Michigan Department of State driver's license and Personal Identification Card (PID) database.[1] Other demographic research has compared the RDSL sample to the NSFG's

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[1] When choosing the RDSL sample, the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center's sampling statisticians calculated that 95% of 18-19-year-old women in the Census were included in the sampling frame. We do not know the differences between women who were included in the sampling frame and those who were not, but we suspect that the excluded women are poorer and less stably housed than the included women. A driver's license costs $25 in Michigan. However, one must have a driver's license or personal ID card to receive public assistance in Michigan, and a personal ID card only costs $10 (the fee is waived for those who receive public assistance or for other "good cause"). Thus, the financial barrier is fairly low for obtaining an ID card.

nationally representative sample of 18- and 19-year-old women (Ela and Budnick 2017), demonstrating that the RDSL sample is similar to the corresponding NSFG sample, with a few exceptions.[2]

The first component of data collection was a baseline face-to-face survey interview assessing sociodemographic characteristics, attitudes, relationship characteristics and history, contraceptive use, and pregnancy history. At the conclusion of the baseline interview, respondents were invited to participate in weekly surveys for a two-and-a-half year follow-up period. The five-minute weekly phone or web surveys collected one-week retrospective assessments of relationship characteristics, as well as pregnancy and contraceptive use. This is one of the only data sets that has multiple observations of the same relationships as they change over time. Although RDSL is geographically constrained, existing research on relationship dissolution using national samples has not hypothesized (or modeled) different effects by region, so it is consistent with other research to think that the processes we investigate here are likely generalizable across geographic contexts.

Respondents were paid $1 per weekly survey with $5 bonuses for on-time completion of five weekly surveys in a row. Of the 1,003 women who completed the baseline interview, 95% (953) participated in the weekly surveys. Although we refer to the period between surveys as one week, time between interviews varied from five days to nearly one year, with a mode of 8 days. The questionnaire adjusted for longer intervals by referring to the period since the prior interview (by referencing "in the past <x> days" or "since <specific date>") if the prior interview was within two weeks, or to the prior week if it was more than two weeks ago. Only 9% of weekly interviews were completed two or more weeks after the prior weekly interview, which resulted in missing data.

The follow-up component resulted in 57,602 weekly interviews. 84% of baseline survey respondents participated in the weekly surveys for at least 6 months, 79% for at least 12 months, and 75% for at least 18 months. (See Barber et al. {2016} for a fuller description of attrition in the RDSL study.)

Measures

Intimate Relationship Dynamics
Each week, a series of questions ascertained whether the respondent had a partner of any kind during the prior week. For a new (not discussed in a prior interview) partner, they provided initials or a nickname for use in the interview.[3] If the partner was different from the most recent interview, but had been discussed in a prior interview, they chose from their list of initials/nicknames to link interviews about the same partner across time, regardless of breaks. The questions were designed to elicit the widest possible range of relationships that was meaningful to the respondent.

We code the independent variable, *relationship dissolution*, as 1 during the final consecutive week the partner was identified. If the same partner was reported again in a subsequent week (which was the case for 25% of partners), the relationship encompasses more than one spell, and dissolution is coded 1

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[2] The RDSL women are slightly more religious, more likely to have a mother who gave birth as a teen, and more likely to have experienced a teen pregnancy themselves. However, the proportion of the sample that is Black in RDSL is nearly double the proportion of Black respondents in NSFG's sample, which likely at least partially explains these discrepancies. Also, a slightly smaller proportion of the RDSL young women had first sexual intercourse at or before age 16, relative to the NSFG respondents.

[3] In the 1% of weeks when a respondent had more than one partner, only the "most important or most serious" (primary) one was discussed in detail.

during each final week of each consecutive spell.[4] We model the dissolution of the first spell and higher-order spells separately (see Analytic Strategy, below).

To measure *intimacy and commitment,* RDSL did not ask respondents to label their relationships, but rather asked a series of questions. Respondents were first asked whether they were engaged to be married or married to their partner, whether they lived in a place "separate from where your partner lives," or how many nights they spent "all night sleeping in the same bed" during the prior week. Answers to these questions define the three most intimate/committed relationships: engaged/married, cohabiting (shared address), and "stayovers" (slept in the same bed at least three nights out of the prior seven; (Jamison and Ganong 2011). We combine engaged with married, and cohabiting with stayover, because these categories are conceptually similar and had similar associations with the dependent variables in our analyses. Two additional questions – whether they "spent a lot of time" with their partner during the prior week (intimacy; Kusunoki and Upchurch 2011), and whether they had "agreed to only have a special romantic relationship with each other, and no one else" (commitment to monogamy; Carter et al. 2013; Higgins et al. 2012; Hock-Long et al. 2012) – describe the remaining relationships. We use four categories combining these measures. Two categories summarize the committed relationships: (a) committed dating – spent a lot of time together and committed to monogamy, and (b) infrequent committed dating – did not spend a lot of time together and not committed; and two additional categories summarize the uncommitted relationships: (c) uncommitted dating – spent a lot of time together but not committed, and (d) casual – did not spend a lot of time together and not committed (reference category). The final measure includes seven mutually exclusive categories.

Relationship duration indicates the total of all weeks together – including, in the case of breakup followed by reconciliation, any time spent together before and after breakups – with the current partner. Duration is coded in exact years (days divided by 365). We also include a squared term in the models. For reconciled relationships, we also include a time-varying indicator of

Because age and duration are positively correlated in the study's relatively short period of observation, we control for respondent's time-varying *age*. Age is from the state-level driver's license and PID records used for sample selection. (Although only 18- and 19-year-old women were chosen from these records, a small number turned 20 before they were located for the baseline interview.) Mean age was 19.17 years.

The RDSL dataset includes six weekly-varying indicators of conflict and power dynamics. We constructed a measure coded 1 for churning if the couple ever broke up and reconciled (Halpern-Meekin et al. 2013b, 2013a). Partner-dominated decision making – "Who decides what to do or where to go when you go out?" – is coded 1 for the partner, and 0 for respondent or both (Manning et al. 2009; Wildsmith et al. 2015). Four questions directly assessed conflict during the prior week; each is coded 1 for yes and 0 for no: "Did you and ___ fight or have any arguments?" (fighting), "Did ____ swear at you, call you names, insult you, or treat you disrespectfully?" (disrespect), "Did ____ threaten you with violence?"

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[4] Note that in the rare weeks where the respondent reported more than one partner in a given week, and the primary partner was different from the prior week's partner, the prior week's relationship is coded as "dissolved," but the prior week's partner may continue to be the secondary partner. In these rare cases, dissolution indicates the transition from one primary partner to another, rather than the end of the intimate relationship.

and "Did _____ push you, hit you, or throw something at you that could hurt?" (threats of physical assault or physical assault) (Manning et al. 2009; Wildsmith et al. 2015). If a respondent was non-monogamous (i.e., had sex with someone outside the dyad), or thought her partner was non-monogamous, non-monogamous is coded 1 (Hock-Long et al. 2012).

We use two additional measures of power imbalance that do not vary over time within relationships, based on questions asked at the beginning of each relationship. First, age difference between the partners is coded in exact years by subtracting the respondent's exact age from the partner's reported age (Kusunoki and Upchurch 2011; Manlove et al. 2011, 2014; Manning et al. 2009). Second, we compare women's educational attainment to their partner's education at the beginning of their relationships to create a three category measure of educational asymmetry: respondent had more education, equal education, or partner had more education (Manlove et al. 2011; Manning et al. 2009; Wildsmith et al. 2015). Partner's education was reported categorically, but we converted the categories to years: dropped out of high school (11), graduated from high school but not enrolled in post-secondary education (12), enrolled in post-secondary education (14), and graduated from a 4-year university (16).

Finally, we control for the couple's childbearing history. The measure of shared childbearing experiences varies over time within a relationship and is comprised of three categories: shared birth, shared pregnancy that did not result in a birth, or none (reference). Two dichotomous measures of unshared childbearing do not vary over time within relationships and indicate whether (a) the woman had a child with a prior partner and (b) the partner had a child with a prior partner.

Control Variables
We control for multiple aspects of sociodemographic characteristics because these characteristics structure the types of partners and intimate relationships young woman can access, and because they may also influence the dissolution rates of those intimate relationships.

Demographic characteristics. Race was measured with the following question: "Which of the following groups describe your racial background? Please select one or more groups: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Black or African American, or White." If a respondent reported more than one race, then she was asked which race best describes her and that response is used to code race. The RDSL sample is predominantly White or African American, therefore race was dichotomized into Black versus nonblack. For the question, "How important if at all is your religious faith to you?" response choices ranged from 1 (not at all important) to 4 (more important than anything else), which were reduced to two categories: not at all or somewhat important versus very important or more important than anything else (i.e., highly religious).

Family Background. We use four dichotomous measures of experiences during childhood: family received public assistance; biological mother had her first birth before age 20; mother did not graduate from high school; and grew up without two parents (i.e., with one biological parent only or with extended family members).[5]

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[5] A sensitivity analysis replacing this with an indicator of growing up in a non-two-biological parent family (i.e., including a step-parent) is described in the Results section.

Current Socioeconomic Position. In the baseline interview, women were asked whether they were currently receiving public assistance from any of the following sources: Women, Infants and Children Program, Family Independence Program (Michigan's Temporary Aid to Needy Families program), cash welfare, or food stamps. If they answered yes to any source, they are coded 1 for "receiving public assistance." Many respondents were still enrolled in high school and few had completed any post-secondary education at the time of the baseline interview. Therefore, we use high school GPA as an indicator of educational success and future potential.

Adolescent experiences related to sex and pregnancy. Finally, we include four measures of adolescent experiences with sex, based on questions in the baseline interviews: first sexual intercourse before age 17; two or more sexual partners; ever had sex without contraception; and one or more pregnancies.

One additional variable – *total number of weekly interviews* – controls for repeated assessments and attrition.

Analytic Strategy

We first use proportions/means for the control variables to describe the RDSL sample (Table 1), and proportions/means for the measures referring to the intimate relationships that occurred during the study period (Table 2). We present proportions at three levels: weeks (the proportion of the weekly interviews coded 1), relationships (the proportion of the relationships with any week coded 1), and women (the proportion of women coded 1 during any week in any of their relationships).

Next, we estimate generalized linear regression models for our dichotomous outcome, pregnancy desire – i.e., linear probability models. We use the within-between specification for clustered data (using the command *xthybrid* in Stata), because weekly interviews are clustered within relationships (Allison 2009; Dieleman and Templin 2014; Schunck and Perales 2017). The method is called "within-between" because it estimates separate coefficients for *within*-cluster differences (i.e., each week's deviation from its relationship-level mean) and *between*-cluster differences (i.e., differences across the relationship-level means).

The within-relationship coefficients test hypotheses about change within a relationship, such as whether the risk of dissolution is higher during intimate/committed weeks than during less intimate/committed weeks. Equivalent to fixed-effects models, these within-relationship coefficients are net of the effect of any unmeasured stable characteristics of a woman, her partner, or the relationship itself that affect its characteristics and its probability of dissolution.

The between-relationship coefficients test hypotheses about differences across relationships, net of the specific character of each relationship at any specific time point.[6] For example whether, all else equal,

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[6] Most versions of the within-between model express level one (in our case, weeks) variables as deviations from their overall mean at the second level. For a dichotomous weekly-varying level one variable like engaged/married, for example, the overall level two mean is the proportion of all of a relationship's weeks that are coded 1 for being engaged/married). However, we modified the *xthybrid* routine in Stata to instead represent the weekly-varying level one variables as zeroes and ones instead of their deviation from the overall level two mean (e.g., 25%). because entering those variables as a deviation from their corresponding woman-level mean forces them to be uncorrelated with the woman-level mean; in such a model, In this way, we control for the weekly-varying level one variable when estimating the coefficient for the level-two variable. Coefficients for the week-level variables are the same regardless of whether we use the *xthybrid* command or our modified version of the command. See

relationships that eventually include conflict tend to dissolve more quickly than relationships that do not include conflict, regardless of whether they have yet become conflictual. In some sense, this is an indicator of the selectivity of these relationships in regards to dissolution.

Unlike fixed-effects models, the within-between specification combines aspects of fixed-effects models with random-effects models, and allows the inclusion of random intercepts for stable cluster-level variables. (This is why it is sometimes called a "hybrid" approach.) We include random effects for all of the control variables described above. Although the within-relationship coefficients are not biased due to stable characteristics not measured in our models, these random effects are subject to the same omitted variable bias as other random-effects regression models.

In these discrete time (weekly) linear probability models, each relationship contributes one observation to the data file for each week during the study period it is ongoing, up until it dissolves. The week of dissolution is coded 1 for the dependent variable. All other weeks are coded 0. If the relationship is ongoing at the end of the study period, the dependent variable is coded 0 in all weeks. Variables from the prior week are used to predict dissolution in the current week – i.e., variables are lagged by one week. Because the probability of dissolution is small in any specific week, the linear probability of dissolution is similar to the dissolution rate.

We present coefficients, which represent the additive effect on the conditional probability of an intimate relationship's dissolution this week, given that it did not dissolve in a prior week. Like a discrete-time hazard model, the unit of analysis is the person-week, and all partnered weeks during the study period are included in the models. We exclude the longest 5% of relationships (all relationships that were already ongoing at the beginning of the study and lasted 3.99 years or longer including the period during the study), because so few relationships were observed at such long durations and including them would heavily influence coefficients for duration. (We report the results of a sensitivity analysis including these relationships in the Results section, below.) This resulted in a final analytic sample of 28,427 weekly interviews with 895 ever-partnered women during their 2,585 relationships.

Results

Descriptive Results

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the RDSL sample of women who ever reported an intimate relationship during the study period. Mean age is 19.19 years, 34% of the women are Black, and 57% are highly religious. More than a third received public assistance during their childhood, more than a third have a mother whose first birth was before age 20, 9% have a mother who did not graduate from high school, and nearly one-half grew up without two parents. Half had a grade point average in high school that was above the mean and 27% were receiving some form of public assistance at the time of the baseline interview. Slightly over half had sex before age 17, nearly two-thirds had two or more sexual partners before the study began, half had sex without contraception at some point prior to the study, and about one-quarter had a pregnancy before the study began. On average, women completed 61.18 weekly interviews.

Abdelhadi and England (2018) for an intuitive discussion of this modification for data on individuals clustered at the country level, where overall country-level effects of living in a religious society are net of whether an individual is him/herself religious. Also see Allison (2017); Bell and Jones (2015: 141).

Table 2 describes the characteristics of the young women's intimate relationships reported during the study period. At the woman level, 72% ever experienced the dissolution of an intimate relationship during the study period, which corresponds to 80% of relationships dissolving.

Most women experienced most types of relationship intimacy/commitment during the study period – 53% had a casual relationship at some point, 49% had an uncommitted dating relationship, 62% had an infrequent dating relationship, 67% had a committed dating relationship, 51% had a stayover relationship, 44% cohabited, and 30% got engaged and/or married. At the relationship level, a smaller fraction was ever coded into each of these categories. The most common type was casual (46% of relationships were ever casual) and the last common was engaged/married (12% of relationships were ever engaged/married). This is because most women reported more than one relationship during the study period (not shown in tables), so while a woman may have cohabited, if she had two relationships and only one was ever a cohabitation, the fraction of her relationships that were ever cohabitations is only 50%. Because there were multiple weeks within the vast majority of relationships, the fraction of weeks in each relationship type is even smaller, with the exception of engaged/married relationships, which were exceptionally long-lasting and thus while only 12% of relationships were ever engaged/married, the largest fraction of weekly interviews were during engaged/married relationships. Uncommitted dating relationships and casual relationships tended to be short-lived, and only 5% and 8% of weekly interviews were in those relationship types, respectively. The mean length of the relationships was .74 years, but this is an underestimate because some relationships were ongoing when the study ended (and relationships that began at least 1.49 years before the study began are not included in our analyses).

One-third of women ever reported that a partner was non-monogamous and 21% reported partner-dominated decision-making. These experiences occurred in 21% and 11% of relationships, respectively. And women spent 12% of their partnered weeks with a partner who had been non-monogamous, and 13% of their partnered weeks with a partner who had dominated decision-making at some point.

Nearly a quarter of women were themselves non-monogamous, and nearly one-third of them dominated decision-making at some point during one or more relationships. These experiences occurred in 13% and 19% of relationships, respectively. Women spent 10% of their partnered weeks in relationships after they had been non-monogamous and 17% of their weeks in relationships in which they had dominated the decision-making.

Fighting was common – 84% of women experienced fighting, it occurred in nearly half of the relationships, and 74% of partnered weeks were spent in relationships where fighting had already occurred. Being disrespected by a partner was less common – 47% of women, 21% of relationships, and 35% of weeks. And threats of violence and actual physical assault were less common, but given their severity, common – 14% of women were threatened and 17% were physically assaulted. Each of these types of intimate partner violence happened in 6% of intimate relationships, and women spent 8% of weeks with partners who had threatened them and 11% of weeks with partners who had physically assaulted them.

In terms of education, 37% of partners were less educated, 46% were more educated, and 19% had education levels equal to the woman's. The mean years of education of the partners was 12.49 years. On average, partners were 2.26 years older than the women themselves.

The vast majority of relationships did not include a pregnancy or a birth, but 6% had a pregnancy that did not result in a birth and 8% had a birth. In terms of unshared childbearing, women had a child from a prior partner in 11% of their relationships, and 15% of partners had a child from a prior relationship.

Intimacy & Commitment

Table 3 presents the within-between models of the probability of dissolution. The first two columns focus on the probability of first dissolution for all 2,585 intimate relationships in our analytic sample and the second two columns focus on the probability of dissolution of the 642 relationships that reconciled after a first dissolution. Columns 1 and 3 present the between-relationship coefficients, which compare the mean levels across different relationships, and columns 2 and 4 present the within-relationship coefficients, which compare across weeks within the same relationship.

In general, serious relationships (those that are more intimate and committed) have lower dissolution rates than casual relationships. For the first dissolution, this is true both across and within relationships – relationships that last a long time have lower dissolution rates, and the risk of dissolution for a specific relationship is lower when it is more serious compared to when it is less serious. One woman described the lack of intimacy with her partner that led to the dissolution of their relationship, "We never talked, we never did anything. He was always gone, and I was at the house…" Conversely, another woman described the feeling of security she had in her current relationship because of its commitment to be monogamous, and how it contributed to her staying with her partner, "I don't have to think about who else I'm going to sleep with today. Or this weekend. You know, because I already know." She went on to describe the types of behaviors that come with intimacy, and why she was sticking with her current partner despite some communication problems:

> A lot of times when I had (past) boyfriends when I was sick, I didn't get the bath water ran, I didn't get the back massage or the foot rubbing (as she does in the current relationship)…. We (current relationship) need to start learning how to talk and agree; we still haven't learned that. But, this (bath water, back massage, foot rubbing) is some of the positive stuff, you know?

There is one exception to the general pattern that serious relationships have lower dissolution rates – within a relationship, the probability of dissolution while the couple is infrequently dating (but committed to be monogamous) is comparable to casual relationships (with no commitment to monogamy and not spending a lot of time together). In this situation, women were often not spending a lot of time with their partner because he lived somewhere else, and this long-distance dating is prone to dissolution. One respondent described why her long-distance relationship was difficult to maintain, but also how they eventually reconciled when they lived closer together, a pattern that is confirmed by the higher reconciliation rate of infrequent committed dating relationships that dissolved (shown in Appendix Table 1), relative to other types of relationships that dissolved.

> We dated other people in between (dissolution and reconciliation). When we graduated from (jointly attended) high school and then transitioned to college, we didn't go to the same school. He was all the way in [location removed] and I was in [location removed], so... You know, you go to college, and you realize you have this newfound freedom. You're on your own, obviously you're kind of finding yourself. So, we talked to other people, dated other people, but still kind of kept each other close. Until, I guess, we figured out what we wanted to do.

Although higher levels of intimacy and commitment buffer against a first dissolution and higher-order dissolutions *within* a relationship, relationships that are mid-level intimate and committed (i.e., infrequent committed dating, committed dating, and stayovers) actually dissolve more quickly, overall, than casual relationships (column 3). Because infrequent committed dating and stayover relationships also reconcile more quickly than casual relationships (see Appendix Table 1), this suggests churning. One young woman poignantly described her churning relationship, which eventually dissolved permanently.

> *Every time [partner name] started getting very clingy, I got so irritated, and I just couldn't handle it. I wouldn't even break up with him; honestly, half the time I would just avoid him completely – turn my phone off, stay away from my house because I knew he would just show up. But then I always missed him, because he was my friend. And, I just loved him to death. So I'd miss him, and then I would call him and he would be so sad. And I always just pictured him like, like a little puppy. Just a sad little puppy that needs me. So, I had to go back to him every time.*

Duration is also a strong predictor of dissolution, both first time and higher order, is duration. Long-term relationships dissolve much more slowly, overall, than short-term relationships. Although the probability of dissolution increases over time (at these ages) *within* a relationship, net of all other aspects of intimacy and commitment, that within-relationship effect is smaller than the large coefficient for between-relationship differences in dissolution across relationships of different duration. As one respondent explained:

> *We've been through anything and everything a person can think of. And we're still holding on. Some days I feel like it's just not going to work, then other days, it's "Okay, we got this." But I guess that's true with anybody, you know. You go through things and at the end of the day, it's either going to work or it's not. I figure, we've been together this long for a reason, so… We're trying to make it work. Trying diligently.*

Conflict & Power

In terms of conflict and power, first-time dissolutions and higher-order dissolutions show a very different pattern. For first-time dissolutions, conflictual and power imbalanced relationships dissolve more slowly, overall, than more harmonious relationships (column 1). This may be because women find it difficult to exit intimate relationships with controlling partners. One woman described her on-again, off-again relationship with a controlling partner:

> *My mom told me, you need to cut that off because he has too much power over you. So I was like okay, you're right. So I finally cut it off in* [month removed]*, so then in late* [subsequent month]*, he ended up texting me, and I said, I'm down in* [location removed]*, I'm having fun. And then I got this text, and I thought, oh I miss you. I fell for it again. And we ended up just talking, we weren't even boyfriend and girlfriend, we were just having sex. And I was thinking, you know, he still loves me and stuff, and oh we want to have kids, wife, you know…..just all that stupid stuff.*

However, experiences with conflict and power imbalance increase a relationship's probability of dissolution relative to before that experience occurred (column 2). In the semi-structured interviews, the most frequent reason young woman gave for the dissolution of past relationships was partner non-monogamy. One woman explained how she hadn't cared when she was younger whether her partner cheated, but now she does.

(Describing her past self) *I know he's cheating on me. I'm still going to be with him. (I'm) one of those "down" girls who doesn't care what her man does.* (Describing her current self) *Now I do. Love, (you) might try to cheat on me now, but you can hit the door. I ain't having that. I'm not going to be cheated on. I aint getting no STDs. I'm good on that one.*

Many women described the dissolution of physically violent relationships, typically with former partners. For example,

He was putting his hands on me. He tried to hit me with a car. [...] I had to let him go. Love might make people stay sometimes... but I had to let him go.

Another woman described a slap as the last straw:

I think I was taking him home, and we got to arguing. I was calling him names, calling him bitch, and he's like, "What did you say?" And I called him one again, and then he slapped me while I was driving him home. I got slapped, and I was like you know what, I'm done.

Interesting, she implied earlier in the conversation that the fight was caused by his cheating. Many young women described physically violent relationships or other relationships in which they were unhappy that they ended only when they discovered that their partner was having sex with someone else. Cheating seemed to provide the one unquestionable excuse for a break up. For example,

I have a really big heart and I didn't want to hurt him even though he was hurting me. Once I found out that he was talking to another girl, it was like, I have a reason, now I have that reason.

Another woman explained how her boyfriend changed from a basketball player into a rapper with tattoos all over his body, and she was no longer attracted to him. But she felt unable to dissolve their relationship until he cheated on her. She said, "I think it took for him to cheat on me. Yeah, he cheated on me, and I caught him red handed," even implying that *knowing* he was cheating was not enough to justify dissolving the relationship, but *catching* him cheating was clearly enough. And another described a physically abusive relationship when she was younger:

Well there was abuse, he was physically abusive and sexually abusive. So that's something I look back on now; someone should've said something to me.... I just started to realize how much better I deserved, just really started to grow up, and just do a lot better. It was some things that I found out about him and other girls, so I was just like forget it.

In contrast, there are few effects of conflict, even violence, when in a reconciled relationship, with the exception of non-monogamy. Similar to its effects on first dissolution, partner non-monogamy increases the probability of dissolution of reconciled relationships, even though such reconciled relationships with non-monogamous partners have lower dissolution rates overall than monogamous relationships. Reconciled violent relationships are the opposite – they dissolve at a higher rate than reconciled non-violent relationships (column 3), and have a lower probability of dissolution after the physical assault than before the physical assault (column 4).

Relationships with older partners have lower dissolution rates than relationships with same age or younger partners. And, although relationships that were asymmetric in terms of education did not dissolve at higher or lower rates than educationally symmetric relationships, relationships with more educated partners (regardless of the woman's own education level) had lower dissolution rates than

those with less educated partners. One young woman bluntly described why she broke up with a woman in the past, whom she considered to be from a different social class.

> *Just differences, like her opinion was so different from mine. The way she was raised was so different from me. I'm not going to say, I don't know, I was raised kinda – my daddy was a minister – I'm not going to say I had the best of everything, but I didn't grow up in the projects. This is almost like the projects to me. I grew up in a very nice home. I had success, I graduated 3rd in my class, I'm not stupid. I just, I don't know, after it kept going on, I just kept noticing stuff about her. I think I was picking at her about who she was, and I mean I can't take that from her. That's who you are (she is), but that's not who I am.*

Childbearing History

Relationships that involve a pregnancy (that doesn't lead to a birth) have lower dissolution rates, overall, than those without a pregnancy (column 1). But the experience of the pregnancy itself does not increase or reduce the probability of dissolution after it occurs (column 2). This may be because experiencing a pregnancy draws some couples closer, but pushes others apart. For example, one young woman explained, "We were kind of fighting a lot, and so we'd been talking about… we were trying to work through it. But he said even if we can't work through it, he at least wants to be here so he can be part of the child's life. He's always here, he's always helping me." On the other hand, a different young women described how her partner's desire to be with her was not enough if it was simply a response to her pregnancy. She found his devotion more compelling because it was independent of the pregnancy:

> *Before we found out I was pregnant* [partner's name] *would tell me all the time, "I know within my heart and soul and mind and every part of me, I just know that you're the one for me," "I've never met a girl like you before," "You're just so amazing," "I know you're the one," "I can't wait to spend the rest of my life with you." One night he couldn't sleep, so he texted me at two in the morning – I didn't get it until the next morning because I never get text messages in the middle of the night – but it said, "Couldn't sleep last night so I stayed up all night thinking about what it would be like to spend the rest of my life with you and I can't wait to have a family with you one day," and this and that. So I know that it's not just because of our child.*

And in contrast, another young woman explained how the pregnancy angered her boyfriend and actually caused the break-up.

> *Respondent: He isn't happy (about the pregnancy). He was okay about it at first, when I said I was going to get an abortion. Then after I didn't want it (the abortion), he said he's not claiming the kid and that was basically it (for the relationship).*
>
> *Interviewer: Did he get angry?*
>
> *Respondent: Uh-huh (yes).*
>
> *Interviewer: How did that go?*
>
> *Respondent: He just – we really don't talk anymore.*

Individual Characteristics

Within this young age range, relationships formed at older ages dissolve more slowly than those formed when the women were younger. But, net of the characteristics of the relationships themselves, highly religious, African-American, disadvantaged and/or sexually experienced women's relationships dissolve at similar rates as non-religious, non-African-American, socioeconomically advantaged, sexually inexperienced women's relationships. The exceptions are that the relationships of women who are receiving public assistance dissolve more quickly than the relationships of women who have more financial advantages, and women who did well in high school have lower dissolution rates than women who did less well in high school. Women who had one or more pregnancies during adolescence have higher dissolution rates than women who had no pregnancies in adolescence.

Other Reasons

In the semi-structured interviews, several women described incarceration as a key reason that their relationships dissolved. For example, "See [child's name]'s daddy is locked up, for being dumb, trying to sell drugs all day long." And another woman said, "Really, when he went to prison, I just stopped contacting him. We just stopped contacting each other, so I moved on." Unfortunately, this was not measured in the survey data.

[to be completed]

Conclusion [to be written]

References [to be completed before ASA]

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Table 1 Characteristics of the Sample (n = 906 Ever-partnered Women; Relationship Dynamics and Social Life Study)

	%/mean (SD)
Demographic Characteristics	
Respondent's age at the beginning of the study (range = 18.12 - 20.34)	19.19 (.57)
Black	.34
Highly religious	.57
Family Background	
Received public assistance during childhood	.37
Mother had first birth before age 20	.37
Mother did not graduate from high school	.09
Grew up without two parents	.48
Current Socioeconomic Position	
Receiving public assistance	.50
High school GPA below average	.27
Adolexcent Experiences with Sex	
First sexual intercourse before age 17	.53
Two or more sexual partners	.62
Ever had sex without contraception	.50
One or more pregnancies	.27
Total # of weekly interviews completed (range: 2 - 165)	61.18 (-42.27)

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics for Relationship Variables

Woman Level (n = 910)	%/Mean (SD)	Relationship Level (n = 2,623)	%/Mean (SD)	Week Level (n = 35,786)	%/Mean (SD)
Woman ever had a(n)……		Relationship was ever…..		% of weeks within a relationship that were…..	
Dependent Variable					
Intimate relationship dissolve	.72	Dissolved	.80		
Intimacy & Commitment					
Casual relationship	.53	Casual	.46	Casual	.08
Uncommitted dating relationship	.49	Uncommitted dating	.33	Uncommitted dating	.05
Infrequent dating relationships	.62	Infrequent dating	.35	Infrequent dating	.18
Committed dating relationship	.67	Committed dating	.37	Committed dating	.19
Stayover relationship	.51	Stayover	.24	Stayover	.13
Cohabiting relationship	.44	Cohabiting	.18	Cohabiting	.17
Engaged/married relationship	.30	Engaged/married	.12	Engaged/married	.20
		Total duration of relationship (range = .01 - 10.99)	0.74 (1.32)		
Conflict & Asymmetry					
Non-monogamous partner	.33	Partner non-monogamous	.21	After a partner was non-monogamous	.12
Relationship with decision-making dominated by the partner	.21	Partner-dominated decision-making	.11	After a partner dominated decision-making	.13
Relationship where she was non-monogamous	.23	Respondent non-monogamous	.13	After respondent was non-monogamous	.10
Relationship where she dominated the decision-making	.32	Respondent-dominated decision-making	.19	After a respondent dominated decision-making	.17
Relationship with fighting	.84	Fighting	.48	After first fighting	.74
Relationship with disrespect from her partner	.47	Partner disrespected respondent	.21	After first disrespect	.35
Relationship with threats from her partner	.14	Partner threatened respondent	.06	After first threats	.08
Relationship with physical assault by her partner	.17	Partner physically assaulted respondent	.06	After first physical assault	.11
		Stable Relationship Characteristics			
		Education Difference			
		Partner has less education	.37		
		Equal	.19		
		Partner has more education	.46		
		Partner's education	12.49		
		Age difference between partners (man - woman) (range = -5.87 - 33.24)	2.26 (3.63)		
		Shared & Unshared Childbearing History			
		Shared Childbearing			
		Relationship had no pregnancy or birth	.86		
		Relationship had a pregnancy but no birth	.06		
		Relationship had a birth	.08		
		Respondent entered relationship with a child from a prior partner	.11		
		Partner entered relationship with a child from a prior partner	.15		

Table 3 Within-Between (Hybrid) Linear Probability Models of Intimate Relationship Dissolution (Relationship Dynamics and Social Life study; ages 18 through 22)

	First Dissolution		Dissolution after Reconciliation	
	Between Relationships (compare across relationships) 1	Within Relationship (compare across weeks) 2	Between Relationships (compare across relationships) 3	Within Relationship (compare across weeks) 4
Relationship Characteristics				
Time spent not in a relationship with this partner (in days)			.45 (.35)	-.17 (.31)
Intimacy & Commitment				
Relationship Type (Reference = Casual)				
Uncommitted dating	.27 (.27)	-1.15 *** (.18)	.35 (.27)	-.65 *** (.16)
Infrequent committed dating	-2.24 *** (.29)	-.26 (.19)	.51 * (.26)	-1.15 *** (.17)
Committed dating	-1.91 *** (.29)	-1.04 *** (.20)	1.01 *** (.27)	-1.55 *** (.18)
Stayovers	-2.43 *** (.35)	-1.27 *** (.23)	.71 * (.33)	-1.47 *** (.21)
Cohabiting	-2.04 *** (.37)	-1.81 *** (.26)	.49 (.37)	-1.43 *** (.27)
Engaged/Married	-3.45 *** (.45)	-1.25 *** (.35)	.26 (.40)	-1.56 *** (.31)
Duration (in exact years)	-3.86 *** (.32)	2.03 *** (.27)	-14.05 *** (.95)	1.51 * (.61)
Duration^2	.28 *** (.04)	-.07 + (.04)	5.76 *** (.57)	-.25 (.30)
Conflict & Power Imbalance				
Partner non-monogamous	-1.43 *** (.36)	1.65 *** (.30)	-.76 ** (.30)	.91 *** (.27)
Partner-dominated decision-making	-3.04 *** (.47)	2.23 *** (.36)	-.01 (.31)	.06 (.29)
Woman non-monogamous	-2.99 *** (.41)	2.50 *** (.32)	-.58 + (.31)	.46 (.28)
Woman-dominated decision-making	-2.72 *** (.41)	2.43 *** (.36)	.21 (.33)	.13 (.31)
Fighting	-3.50 *** (.27)	2.20 *** (.20)	-.25 (.29)	.05 (.26)
Disrespect	-1.32 *** (.35)	1.12 *** (.24)	-.48 + (.28)	.29 (.25)
Threats of violence	.07 (.71)	.75 + (.44)	-.79 (.49)	1.09 * (.45)
Physical assault	-1.72 * (.68)	1.27 ** (.42)	1.45 *** (.43)	-1.54 *** (.40)
Age difference[a]	-.03 * (.02)		-.03 + (.02)	
Education difference (reference = equal)[a]				
Partner has less education	.17 (.15)		.07 (.14)	
Partner has more eduction	.08 (.12)		.14 (.10)	

Partner's education (in years)[a]	-.12 *		-.01	
	(.06)		(.05)	
Couple's Childbearing History				
Shared Childbearing *(ref = none)*				
Couple had pregnancy (no birth) together	-2.55 ***	.51	-.21	.32
	(.72)	(.47)	(.48)	(.39)
Couple had birth together	-.54	.48	.98	-1.24 +
	(.71)	(.63)	(.67)	(.65)
Unshared Childbearing				
Woman had child with prior partner[a]	-.39 +		-.32	
	(.22)		(.21)	
Partner had child with prior partner[a]	.09		-.17	
	(.16)		(.16)	
Individual Characteristics (random effects) [a]				
Demographic Characteristics				
Age (in years, at start of relationship)	-.37 ***		-.04	
	(.06)		(.06)	
Black	.14		-.07	
	(.13)		(.10)	
Highly religious	-.07		.09	
	(.11)		(.10)	
Family Background				
Received public assistance during childhood	.01		-.05	
	(.12)		(.10)	
Mother had first birth before age 20	.14		-.12	
	(.11)		(.10)	
Mother did not graduate from high school	-.01		-.07	
	(.20)		(.17)	
Grew up without two parents	.07		.07	
	(.11)		(.10)	
Current Socioeconomic Position				
Receiving public assistance	.40 **		.13	
	(.15)		(.14)	
High school GPA below average	-.34 **		-.03	
	(.11)		(.09)	
Adolexcent Experiences with Sex				
First sexual intercourse before age 17	.01		.08	
	(.13)		(.10)	
Two or more sexual partners	.00		.03	
	(.14)		(.11)	
Ever had sex without contraception	.01		.06	
	(.13)		(.11)	
One or more pregnancies	.38 *		.07	
	(.17)		(.14)	
Total number of weekly surveys completed	-.01 ***		-.01 ***	
	(.00)		(.00)	
Constant	11.31		1.98	
N (weeks)	28,427		4,163	
N (relationships)	2,585		642	
Chi-square	1289.08		391.07	
Log-likehood	-4322.20		-724.09	

Appendix Table 1 Logistic Regression Model of Ever Reconciled and Fixed-Effects Linear Probability Model of Reconciliation

	Ever Reconciled	Probability of Reconciliation
Days since dissolution		-.01 ***
		(.0004)
Relationship Characteristics at the time of Dissolution		
Intimacy & Commitment		
Relationship Type (Reference = Casual)		
Uncommitted dating	.24	.29 +
	(.16)	(.16)
Infrequent committed dating	.16	.47 **
	(.16)	(.17)
Committed dating	.19	.26
	(.17)	(.20)
Stayovers	.29	.67 *
	(.24)	(.27)
Cohabiting	.20	.43
	(.25)	(.30)
Engaged/Married	.17	1.15 ***
	(.25)	(.34)
Duration (in exact years)	.50 ***	.45 **
	(.11)	(.15)
Duration^2	-.06 **	-.05 +
	(.02)	(.03)
Conflict & Power		
Partner non-monogamous	.05	.01
	(.15)	(.16)
Partner-dominated decision-making	.16	.65 **
	(.20)	(.21)
Woman non-monogamous	.003	.02
	(.17)	(.17)
Woman-dominated decision-making	-.08	-.10
	(.14)	(.17)
Fighting	.34 *	.43 **
	(.14)	(.14)
Disrespect	.35 +	.07
	(.18)	(.20)
Threats of violence	.04	-.38
	(.33)	(.38)
Physical assault	.48	.24
	(.34)	(.38)
Age difference[a]	.003	.01
	(.02)	(.02)
Education difference (reference = equal)[a]		
Partner has less education	.004	.07
	(.15)	(.20)
Partner has more eduction	.11	.00
	(.12)	(.16)
Partner's education (in years)[a]	-.02	.02
	(.06)	(.08)
Couple's Childbearing History		

Shared Childbearing (ref = none)		
Couple had pregnancy (no birth) together	.91 *	1.60 ***
	(.39)	(.40)
Couple had birth together	.44	1.58 **
	(.31)	(.52)
Unshared Childbearing		
Woman had child with prior partner[a]	-.03	1.08 *
	(.21)	(.46)
Partner had child with prior partner[a]	-.20	-.55 **
	(.18)	(.19)
Individual Characteristics[a]		
Demographic Characteristics		
Age (in years)	-.34 ***	-.38 ***
	(.07)	(.11)
Black	.15	[a]
	(.13)	
Highly religious	.17	[a]
	(.12)	
Family Background		
Received public assistance during childhood	-.02	[a]
	(.12)	
Mother had first birth before age 20	.16	[a]
	(.11)	
Mother did not graduate from high school	.25	[a]
	(.17)	
Grew up without two parents	-.09	[a]
	(.12)	
Current Socioeconomic Position		
Receiving public assistance	-.16	[a]
	(.14)	
High school GPA	-.002	[a]
	(.12)	
Adolexcent Experiences with Sex		
First sexual intercourse before age 17	-.09	[a]
	(.14)	
Two or more sexual partners	.09	[a]
	(.15)	
Ever had sex without contraception	-.003	[a]
	(.13)	
One or more pregnancies	.04	[a]
	(.16)	
Total number of weekly surveys completed	.01 ***	[a]
	(.00)	
Constant	4.68	
N (relationships)	2,160	416
Chi-square	250.27	608.47
Log-likehood	-1188.05	-2227.41

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001; two-tailed t-tests.

[a] These variables are constant within women and thus are not estimated in this model.