

A Racialized Cultural Reconciliation: Marital Aspirations and Egalitarian Ideology

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Background

Marital Decline Perspective:

- Predicts a retreat from marriage participation due to increased conflict regarding gendered divisions of work and home labor

Marital Resilience Perspective:

- Predicts the nature of marriage will evolve from a separate spheres model to a more egalitarian formation

Race differences in marriage rates and gender ideology:

- Black men and women are less likely to marry than white men and women
- Marriage aspirations and expectations continue to remain universally high
- Some research shows Blacks express more egalitarian attitudes than Whites and Whites may be more critical of mothers' employment
- There is no consistent pattern regarding racial differences in gender-role attitudes

Research Questions

What are the trends in marital aspirations?

What are the trends in preferred divisions of labor?

Do marital aspirations and preferred divisions of labor vary by gender and race?

Data

Monitoring the Future Survey (1976 – 2013)

www.monitoringthefuture.org

A survey given annually to a nationally representative group of American 12th grade students

Advantage of Monitoring the Future data: Youth attitudes capture changing cultural ideals that are less likely to have been reconciled with adulthood realities, a viewpoint understudied in the literature

Variables pertinent to my research questions were each asked on 1 of 5 forms distributed annually

- Thus, the number of observations varies depending on which form the questions appear

Analysis

Ordinal Logistic Regression

Predicting marital aspirations in 1976 and 2013 by race-gender groups, adjusting for the independent variables

Predicting desirable division of labor preferences over time and by race-gender groups, adjusting for the independent variables

Statistical analysis of division of labor vignettes

Independent Variables

Race-Gender; Survey year; Region; Mother's education; Mother's employment growing up; Parental presence in household at time of survey; Religiosity

Measures

Marital Aspiration Variables

Variable	Response Category
Which do you think you are most likely to choose in the long run?	Not getting married; I have no idea; Getting married; I am already married
If it were just up to you, what would be the ideal time for you to get married?	Within the next year or so; Two or three years from now; Four or five years from now; Over five years from now; I don't want to marry
One sees so few good or happy marriages that one questions it as a way of life	Disagree; Mostly disagree; Neutral; Mostly agree; Agree
Most people will have fuller and happier lives if they choose legal marriage rather than staying single, or just living with someone	Disagree; Mostly disagree; Neutral; Mostly agree; Agree

Division of Work and Family Labor Variables

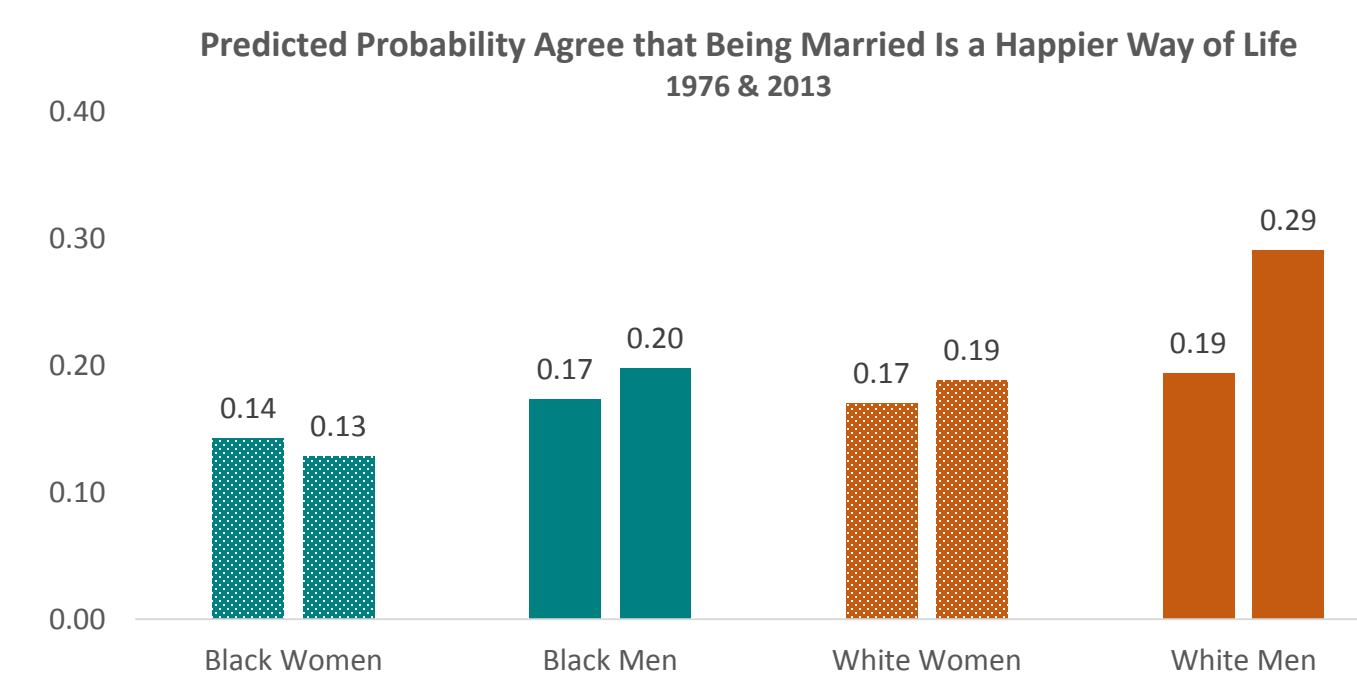
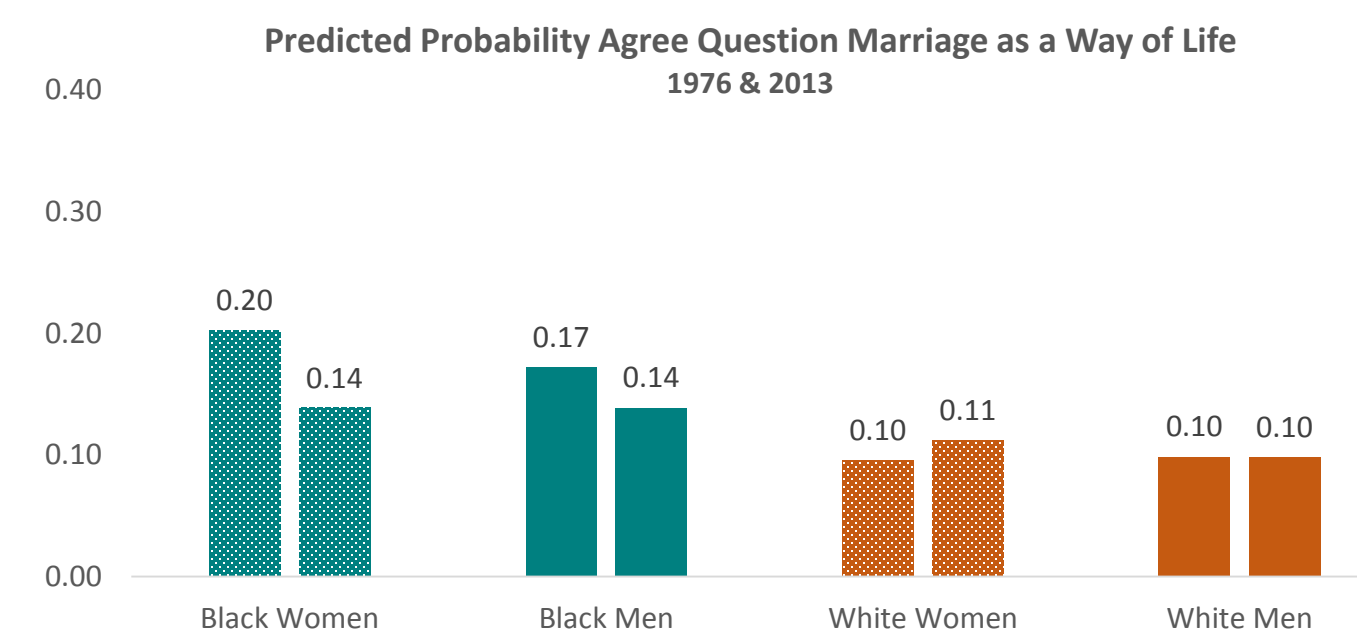
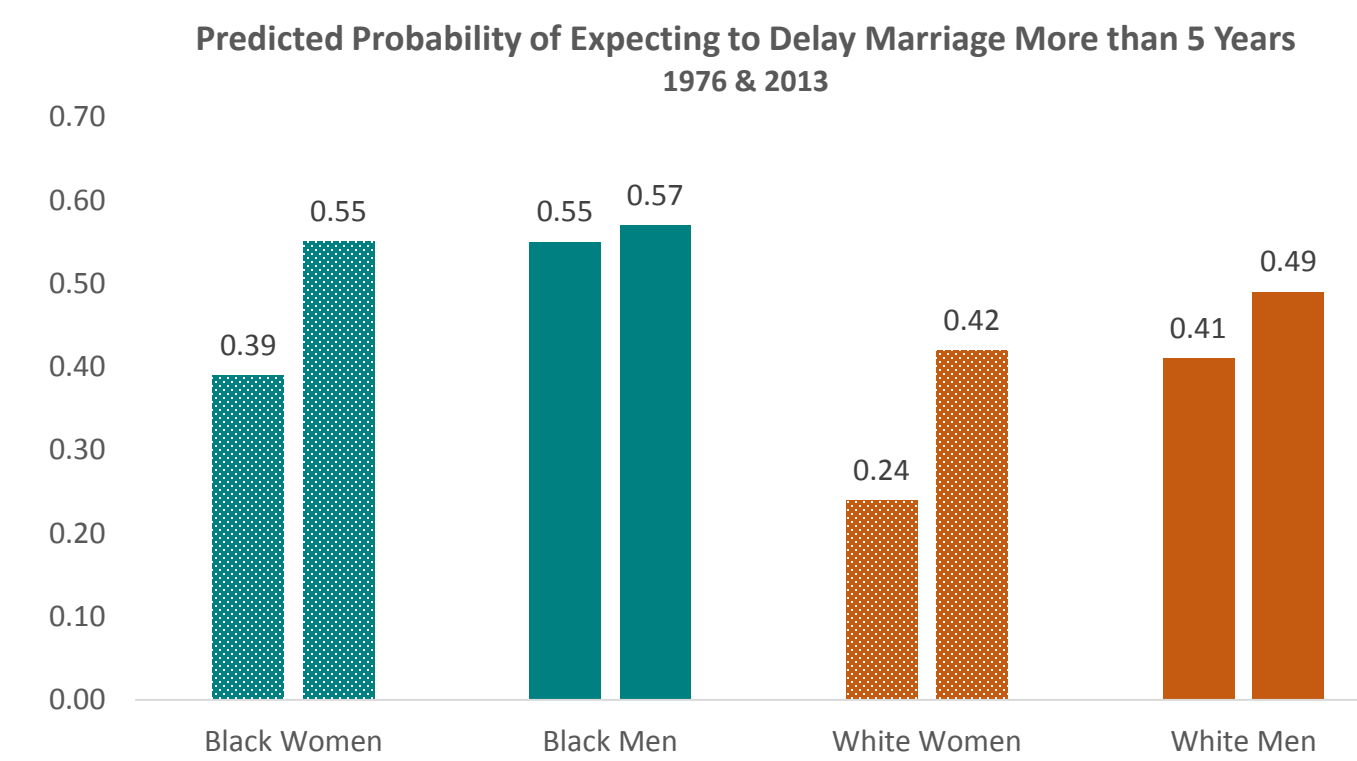
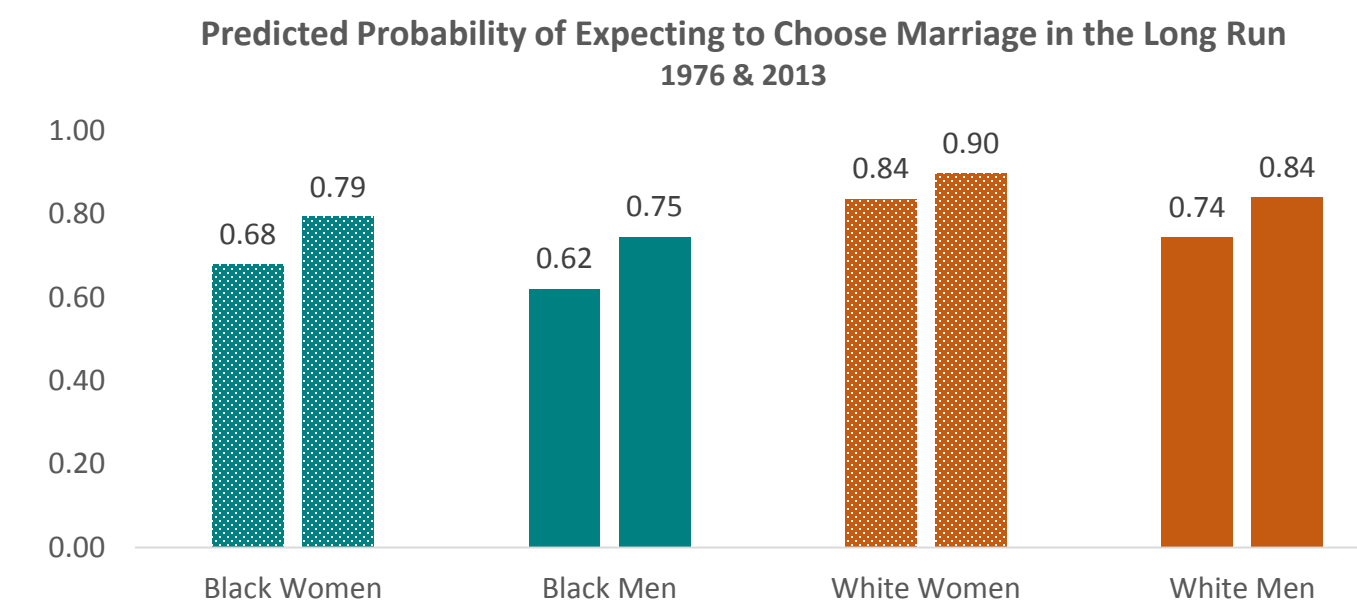
Imagine you are married and have one or more pre-school children. How would you feel about each of the following working arrangements?

Husband works full-time; Wife doesn't work	Not at all acceptable; Somewhat acceptable; Acceptable; Desirable
Husband works full-time; Wife works about half-time	
Husband doesn't work; Wife works full-time	
Husband works about half-time; Wife works full-time	
Both work about half-time	
Both work full-time	

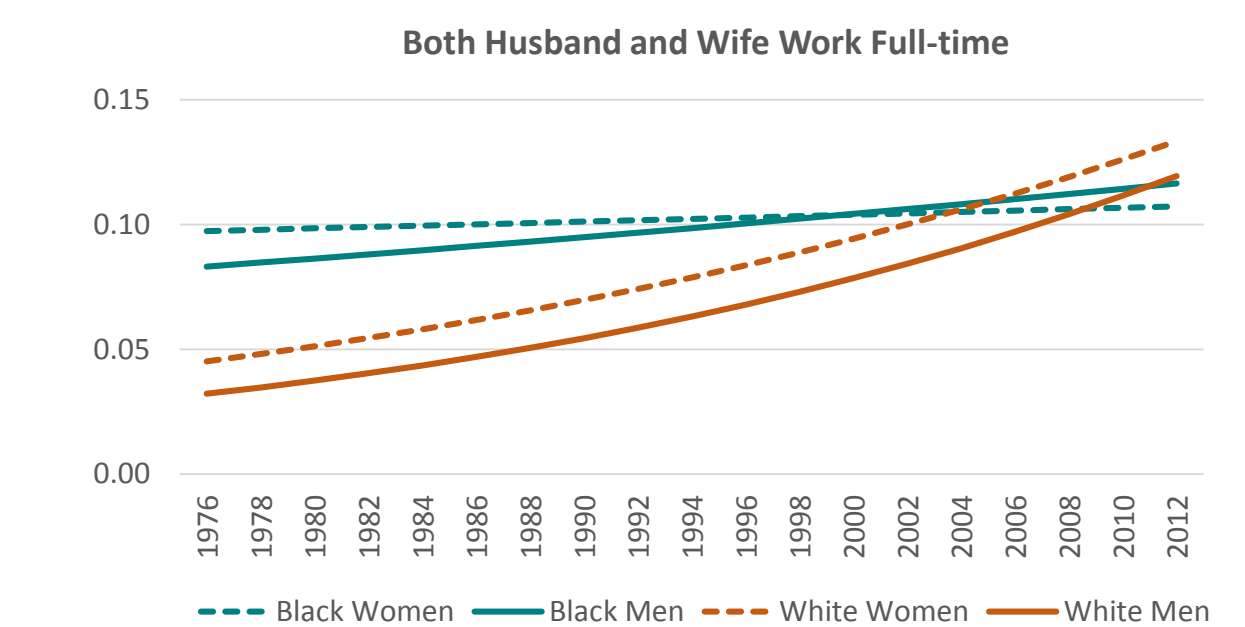
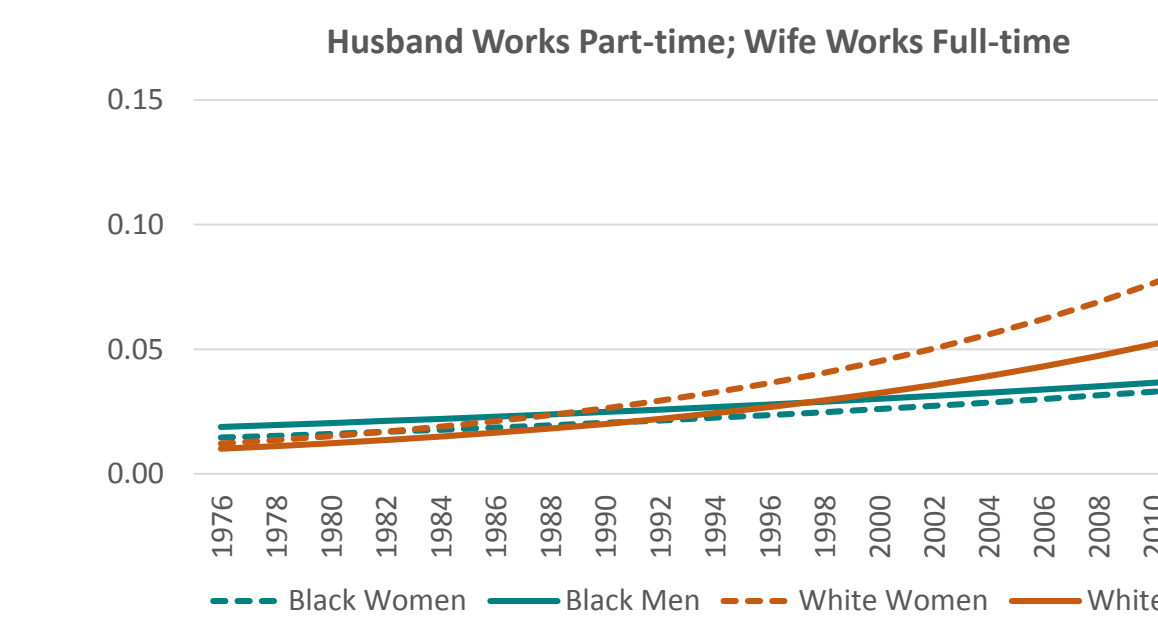
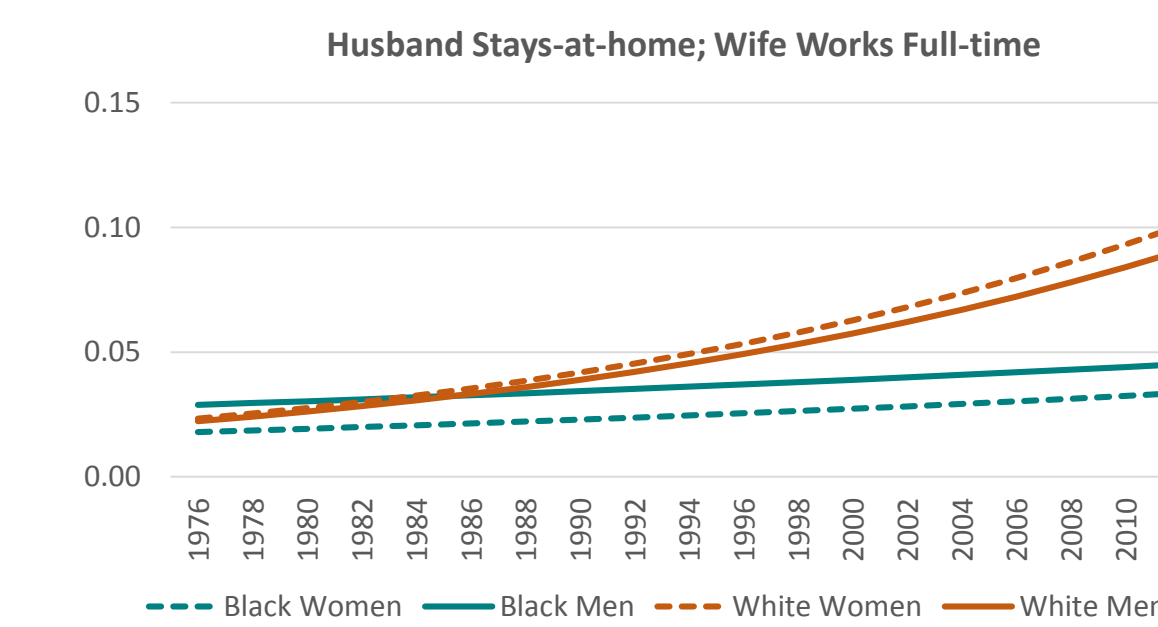
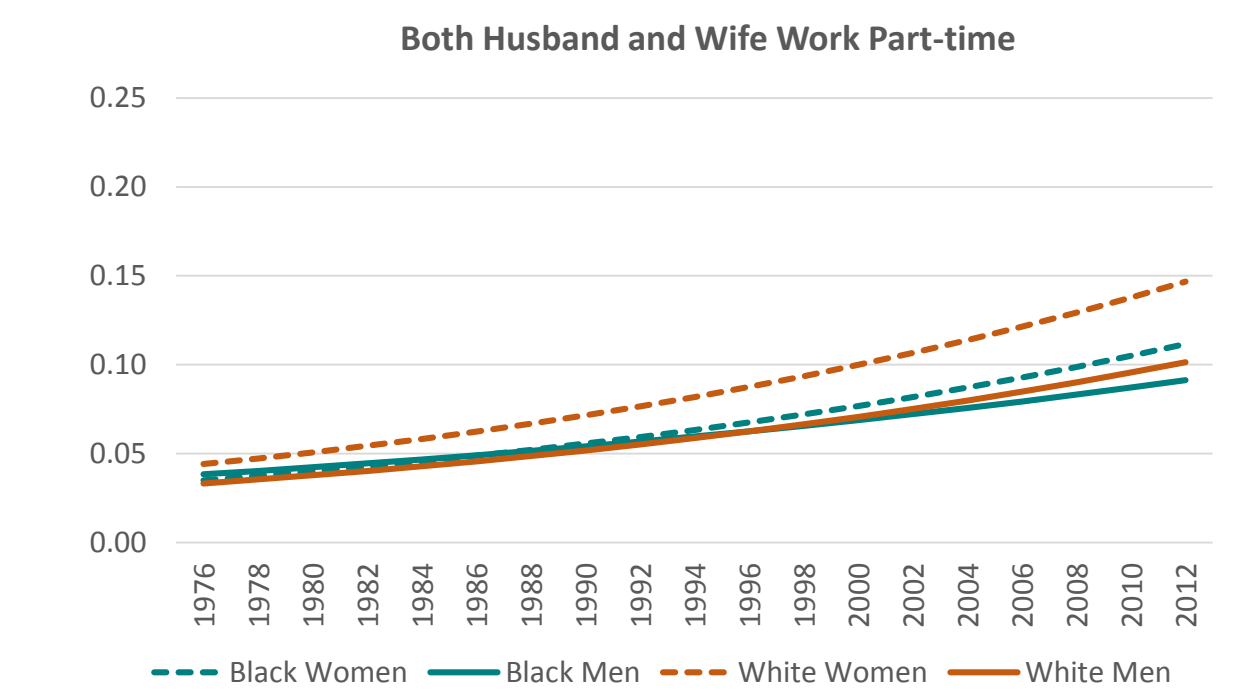
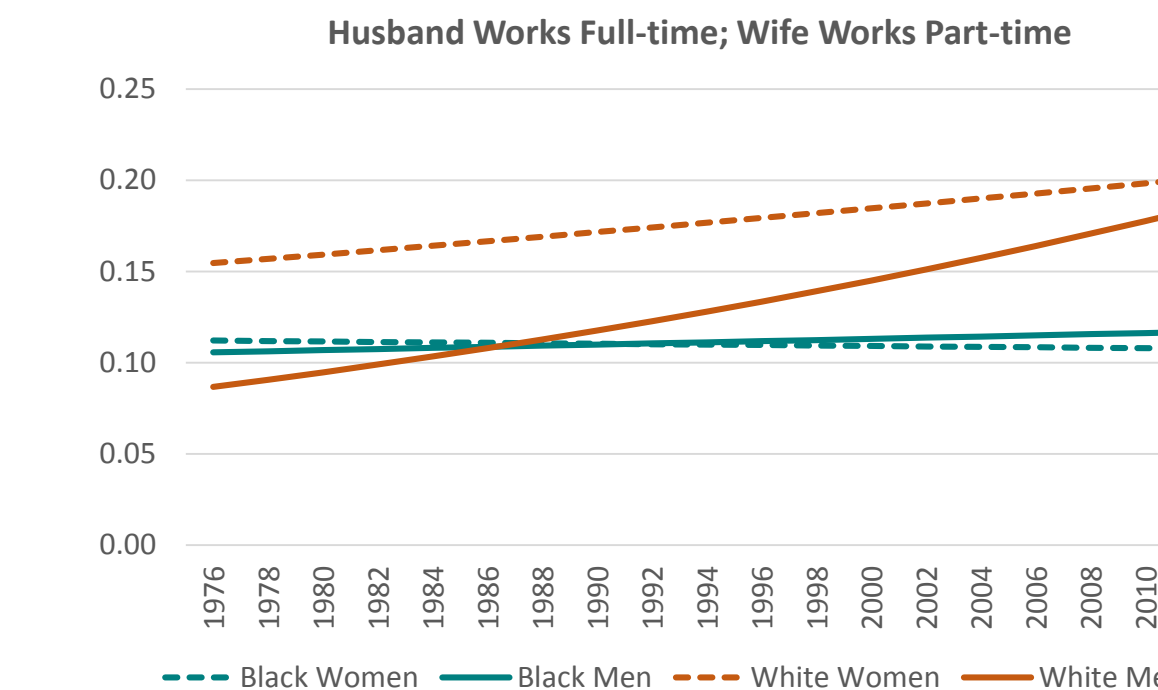
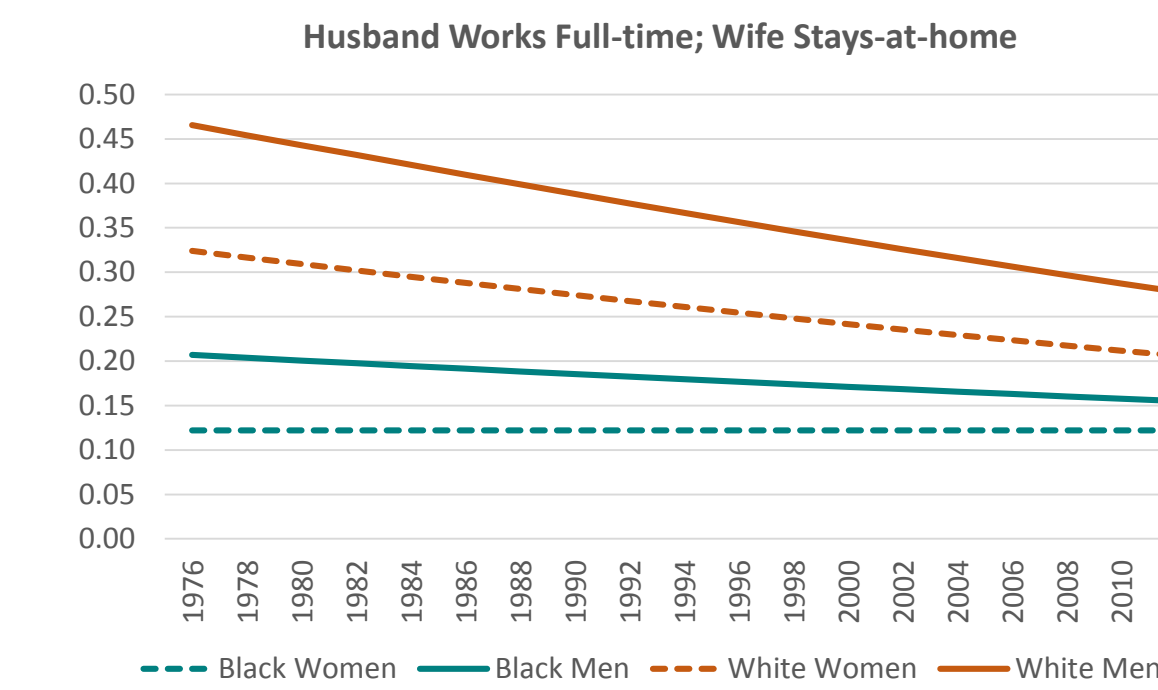
Race-Gender Differences in Marital Aspirations and Division of Labor Preferences

	All	Black Women	Black Men	White Women	White Men
Likely Choose Marriage	2.77	2.66	2.58	2.84	2.74
Delay Marriage	2.26	2.36	2.62	2.08	2.39
Questioning Marriage as a Way of Life	2.64	3.14	3.09	2.57	2.55
Marriage Is a Happier Way of Life	2.99	2.76	2.95	2.90	3.12
Husband Full-time Wife Homemaker	2.89	2.25	2.48	2.85	3.10
Husband Full-time Wife Part-time	2.75	2.65	2.65	2.85	2.67
Both Work Part-time	2.01	1.93	1.94	2.10	1.94
Husband Homemaker Wife Full-time	1.56	1.31	1.46	1.58	1.59
Husband Part-time Wife Full-time	1.74	1.63	1.74	1.80	1.70
Both Work Full-time	1.82	2.15	2.13	1.83	1.72

Marital Aspirations (Predictions)



Changes in Desired Division of Labor (Predictions)



Ordinal Logistic Regression of Preferred Divisions of Work and Family Labor (N = 76,074; df = 22)

	Husband Full-time Wife Homemaker	Husband Full-time Wife Part-time	Both Work Part-time	Husband Homemaker Wife Full-time	Husband Part-time Wife Full-time	Both Work Full-time
Race-Gender (White men are ref.)						
White Women	-12.42*** (3.22)	30.85*** (3.46)	-3.82 (3.48)	-13.45*** (3.31)	-6.29* (3.16)	12.88*** (3.40)
Black Men	-28.05*** (6.78)	43.80*** (6.93)	54.06*** (8.47)	58.11*** (7.44)	15.09* (7.11)	60.33*** (7.63)
Black Women	-50.11*** (6.13)	49.22*** (5.90)	45.35*** (7.79)	49.26*** (6.32)	-5.40 (6.38)	75.59*** (6.49)
Year (1976 - 2013)	-0.02*** (0.00)	0.02*** (0.00)	0.04*** (0.00)	0.05*** (0.00)	-0.03*** (0.00)	0.04*** (0.00)
Race-Gender X Year						
White Women X Year	0.01*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)
Black Men X Year	0.01*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.03*** (0.00)	-0.03*** (0.00)	-0.01* (0.00)	-0.03*** (0.00)
Black Women # Year	0.02*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.04*** (0.00)
Cut 1	-48.82*** (2.46)	46.22*** (2.63)	83.62*** (2.76)	99.23*** (2.59)	66.06*** (2.44)	79.40*** (2.67)
Cut 2	-47.45*** (2.46)	48.01*** (2.63)	84.50*** (2.76)	100.64*** (2.60)	67.54*** (2.44)	80.54*** (2.67)
Cut 3	-45.63*** (2.46)	50.59*** (2.63)	86.11*** (2.76)	102.98*** (2.60)	69.40*** (2.45)	82.07*** (2.68)
Wald Chi ²	7268.01	1823.90	4066.43	6343.27	3923.45	6603.93
AIC	182,157	169,738	138,540	157,708	182,160	167,390

Standard errors in parentheses; * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001; two-tailed tests
Source: Monitoring the Future (1976 - 2013)

Summary

MARITAL ASPIRATIONS

- Marital expectations have increased over time but there is remarkable delay in ideal timing for all youth.
- Women are slightly more likely than men to say they will choose to get married in the long run, but men are more likely than women to agree that marriage is a happier way of life.
- There is little change in Whites questioning marriage as a way of life, while Black men and women are less likely to question marriage in 2013 than in 1976.

DESIRED DIVISION OF LABOR

- All youth are less likely in 2013 than in 1976 to desire the husband to be a full-time worker and the wife to be a homemaker.
- The male breadwinner/female homemaker is still the most desired division of labor in 2013, but all other division of labor arrangements have increased in desirability for all youth over time.
- Desired divisions of labor show trends differ primarily by race, not by gender.