Couples and Money: The Last Taboo

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Couples prefer talking about sex and infidelities rather than how to handle family finances or how much money they earn.

Atwood, 2012
# Research Increase

Search term: *“Couples and Money”*

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History

- 19th Century: breadwinning male’s greatest power; wives financial dependent, responsible for unpaid household tasks and caring for family
- By 1928: Couples’ quarreling about money often ended in court
- Early 1930s: Due to Great Depression, financial discord and strain increased
- WWII: Economic growth; couples enjoyed abundance and little debt

Atwood, 2012
History (con’t)

• 1970’s: Feminist movement leads to rise in female opportunity and power while male continued to play dominant role and wife submissive

• 1980’s: Recession, less financial security, increased unemployment; more women employed and higher earnings

• 1990’s: Marital roles less traditional and unclear combined with threat of job loss; Working women contributed 30%-40% of family income

Atwood, 2012
Current Situation

- Couples argue about money
- Generally have no financial education
- Consider money a taboo topic
- Carry irrational attitudes, beliefs, and anxieties about money
- Intimate relationships defined in theory as egalitarian, based on love, sharing all resources regardless of who contributes what

Atwood, 2012
Current Situation (con’t)

• Spouse who earns money wants to “own” that money
• Male’s value to society and family measured by his financial success
• Female’s role seen as supportive to the male
• Shifting away from traditional to create parallel or egalitarian

Atwood, 2012
Current Situation (con’t)

Varying ideas about:

* Equal partnerships
* Entitlements
* Money distribution

Result in major conflict

Atwood, 2012
Couples Financial Stress

Discord about finances =
Financial strain =
Marital strain =
Decreased relationship satisfaction =
Decreased relationship stability =
Increased likelihood of divorce
Money is reported to be the number one argument starter for couples.
Financial problems are a leading cause of divorce.
“The stress of divorce is … equivalent to the stress of experiencing a car crash every day over six months.”

Lyubomirsky, 2013, p. 15
Average person has
$16,860 personal debt
(excluding mortgages)

Palmer, Apr. 17, 2012
Marital Satisfaction

• Assuming and servicing consumer/student debt
  ➢ Increases conflict
  ➢ Increases marital stress
  ➢ Reduces marital satisfaction

• Paying off consumer/student debt increases marital satisfaction

• Assuming mortgage debt or paying it down increases marital satisfaction

• Increasing debt as income increases does not affect marital satisfaction

• Increasing debt when income lower decreases marital satisfaction

Falconier, 2011
Marital Satisfaction (con’t)

• Equitable monetary decision making increases marital satisfaction

• Perceptions of financial unfairness
  ➢ Increases money conflict
  ➢ Decreases marital satisfaction

Factors Affecting Couples’ Financial Life

• Spending styles
• Risk tolerance
• Personal characteristics and cognitions (tendency toward catastrophic thinking, view of partner’s trustworthiness, collaborative vs selfish and controlling, stable vs impulsive)

• Personal history (economic hardship in childhood, family-of-origin financial histories)

Falconier, 2011
Factors Affecting Couples’ Financial Life (con’t)

- Financial management styles  
  Falconier, 2011
- Financial maturity  
  Kinder, 1999
- Boundary setting
- Trust
- Power dynamics
- Commitment
- Gender  
  Shapiro, 2007
Factors Affecting Couples’ Financial Life (con’t)

- Social class
  - Education
  - Income
  - Financial security
  - Career development and occupation
  - Social networks
  - Attitudes about work, education, and social mobility
  - Values

McDowell, 2011
Factors Affecting Couples’ Financial Life (con’t)

- Beliefs and the meaning of gift exchange and gift-giving behaviors
- Status
- Previous relationships
- Communication patterns
- Perception of “ownership”
- Ideology

Burgoyne, 1991
Stanley, 2007
Sonnenberg, 2011
Ashby, 2008
In terms of financial personalities, 
Opposites attract 
One tends to save; 
One tends to spend to enjoy life more 

Opiela, 2002
Money Personalities

“Amasser: You are happiest when you have large amounts of money at your disposal to spend, to save, and/or to invest.”

“Avoider: You probably have a hard time balancing your checkbook, paying your bills promptly, and doing your taxes until the very last minute. You won’t know how much money you have, how much you owe, or how much you spend.”

“Hoarder: You like to save money. You probably have a budget and may enjoy the processes of making up a budget and reviewing it periodically. You most likely have a hard time spending money on yourself and your loved ones for luxury items or even practical gifts. These purchases would seem frivolous to you.”

“Money Monk: You think that money is dirty, that it is bad, and that if you have too much of it, it will corrupt you.”

“Spender: You enjoy using your money to buy yourself goods and services for your immediate pleasure. The odds are that you have a hard time saving money and prioritizing the things you’d like in your life.”

Meanings of Money

• Prestige  Atwood, 2012
• Safety and security
• Success
• Power
• Control
• Adequacy  Shapiro, 2007
Meanings of Money (con’t)

- Self-worth
- Competence
- Commitment
- Love
- Feeling loved and accepted
- Caring
- Acceptance in society
- Acknowledgement of relationship

Shapiro, 2007
In American culture, money has deeply rooted meanings including … masculinity, power, prestige, control, success, independence, freedom, and strength

Atwood, 2012
Meanings of Money: Reflection of Feelings

Yearnings
Fears
Vulnerabilities
Values
Hopes

Shapiro, 2007
Uses of Money

• Power
• Punishment
• Control
• Compensate for lacks in childhood
• Remedy shattered self-image
• Substitute self-worth dependent on outside validation

Atwood, 2012
Uses of Money (con’t)

• Withhold money; withhold feelings
• Manipulate
• Communicate values of individual to partner
• Express affection and love
• Substitute for love and affection
• Payment for love and affection
• Competition

Atwood, 2012
Uses of Money (con’t)

• Control children
• Glue to hold marriage together (when can’t afford a divorce)
• Measure someone’s true worth
• Measure someone’s true feelings
• Buy freedom from relationships
• Stop partner from leaving  
  Atwood, 2012
Seven Stages of Money Maturity

• Innocence: not knowing anything
• Pain: discovering that we need to work to earn money
• Knowledge: of such skills as saving and investing
• Understanding: more sophisticated emotional wisdom about greed and inequality
• Vigor: energy to reach financial goals
• Vision: directing vigor outward, perhaps to a community
• Aloha: altruism without expectation of gain of any kind

Kinder, 1999
Allocation Systems fall on a continuum between (inter)dependence and autonomy.

Sonnenberg, 2011
Allocation Systems

• Whole Wage System
  – Total control (typically male) – red flag for domestic violence
  – Lower income families: women manage household finances

• Allowance System, or, Dole System (e.g., man makes large income, gives wife allowance for household)

• Shared Management, or, Pooling System, or Joint Account (Both have access and share responsibility)

• Joint, or, Partial Pooling System (Each puts money in pot for household expenditures and keeps the rest)

• Independent Management System (e.g., you pay this, I’ll pay that)
Allocation Systems: Influencing Factors

Relative contribution of income
Age
Duration of relationship
Cohabitation
Children
Culture

Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2011
Allocations: Trend

Share money equally

Moving toward equally sharing money

Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006
Financial Stress: Types

• *Objective financial stress*: job loss, reduced savings, increased debt

• *Subjective financial stress*: perception that resources will not meet financial demands, such as catastrophic thinking or distress about different financial management styles

Falconier, 2011
Subjective stress = Financial Strain

Affects

- Moods
- Couples’ interactions with each other

Falconier, 2011
Cognitions affecting Financial Strain

- Gender
- Age
- Culture
- Life circumstances (spending priorities, saving decisions)
- Financial role in the relationship

Falconier, 2011
Five Types of Relationship Cognitions

Standards
Assumptions
Expectancies
Attributions
Selective perception

Epstein & Baucom, 2002
Five Types of Relationship Cognitions: Standards

• *Definition*: Beliefs about how people, relationships, and others aspects “should” be

• *Examples of violations*: Individuals do not buy expensive gifts for themselves and invest the money for the benefit of the group instead.

• *Relationship issue*: Violated standards around finances elicit distress because money for many people provides a *sense of security*

Epstein & Baucom, 2002
Five Types of Relationship Cognitions: Assumptions

- **Definition**: Beliefs about characteristics of objects and events
- **Example**: Financial successfully people sacrifice their own desires to accumulate wealth but the partner purchases gift for him/herself
- **Origin and Effect**: Developed from previous life experiences and may not fit in current situations

Epstein & Baucom, 2002
Five Types of Relationship Cognitions: Expectancies

• **Definition**: Conclusions about future circumstances

• **Example**: Catastrophic thinking “We’ll end up on the street” “He’ll spend until we’ve lost everything”

• **Relationship issue**: Worries increase if partner discounts concerns “Don’t be silly” “Everything will be ok” “Chill out”

Epstein & Baucom, 2002
Five Types of Relationship Cognitions: Attribution

- **Definition**: Inferences made about what causes observed events
- **Example**: Believing partner is selfish if purchase gift for self
- **Relationship issue**: Attributing displeasing actions to negative traits or intentions decreases marital satisfaction and increases negative behaviors toward partner

Epstein & Baucom, 2002
Five Types of Relationship Cognitions: Selective Perception

- **Definition**: Individual notices some of situation’s information but not others

- **Example**: Partner seen as buying gifts for self, but not noticing that all the bills are paid

- **Relationship issue**: Can increase financial strain if biased views are created about the couple’s financial situation  
  Epstein & Baucom, 2002
Effects of Financial Strain

• If one individual experiences strain, both individual may experience strain due to
  - Objective financial stressors
  - Contagion of strain from one to the other

• Increased hostile behavior toward partner

• Decrease in warm and supportive behaviors

• Results in decreased relationship satisfaction

Falconier, 2011
Coping: Types

Problem focused

Emotion focused

Falconier, 2011
Coping: Problem Focused

Engaging in behaviors believed to help resolve stressful situation (e.g., review expenses and develop a budget)

Falconier, 2011
Coping: Emotion Focused

Attempt to reduce stress by venting feelings, relaxing, avoiding, creating a positive reframe of the situation, controlling expression of feelings, seeking social support, denial of negative effects of situation

Falconier, 2011
Effects of Coping

• Emotional and problem focused coping reduce financial strain

• Substance use increase creates additional risks for couple

• Effective emotion-focused coping mechanisms are reappraisal and acceptance

• Effective problem-focused coping for controllable events are planning and information seeking (e.g., budgeting to reduce expenses, planning for retirement)

Falconier, 2011
Individuals who do not focus on emotions cope more successfully when using emotional coping strategies involving openness, such as active identification, processing, and expression of emotions.

Falconier, 2011
More on Coping

Sense of control and mastery helps

- Internal locus of control
- Self-efficacy

Falconier, 2011
Relationship-Focused Coping

• Strategies working in opposition are less effective

• *Protective buffering*: hiding concerns, denial, yielding to partner to avoid argument

• *Empathetic responding*: attempts to understand and respond in a supportive, caring way

Falconier, 2011
Relationship-Focused Coping (con’t)

• **Supportive**: one partner helps reduce other’s strain (can be emotion-focused or problem-focused)

• **Delegated**: reduce partner’s strain by taking some of the other’s tasks (e.g. paying bills)

• **Common**: jointly engage in problem-focused (e.g. pay bills together) or emotion-focused (e.g. share financial concerns, relaxing together)

Falconier, 2011
Negative Coping

• **Hostile**: offering problem-focus or emotion-focused support with hostility, mockery, or minimizing concerns
• **Ambivalent**: offering support with reticence or imply that should not be supporting
• **Superficial**: Offering support with insincerity or lacking empathy
Effects of Coping

- Negative coping linked with personal distress
- Positive coping predictor of relationship satisfaction

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Assessment

Since most couples experiencing financial stress will come to therapy due to nonfinancial issues:

- Engage couple in collaborate assessment and goal setting to address specific challenges, such as finances, communication skills, and intimacy.
- Assess fiscal knowledge.
- Assess communication processes in tasks, like creating a budget.

Aniol, 1997
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment

Identify all relational cognitions, standards, assumptions, expectancies, attributes, and selective perceptions to gain a detailed picture of subjective experiences leading to areas for intervention.

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Assessment

Identify:

- Each partner’s financial role
- Presence of subjective financial strain
- Effects of strain on each partner and relationship
- Individual and relationship coping strategies
- Couple’s communication and problem-solving skills
- Appropriateness for referral to financial counselor

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do? Assessment: Financial Roles

Assessment of financial roles

- History and structure of relationship
- Ask about financial roles: who provides income, who pays bills, who and why is money spent, etc.
- Identify standards regarding roles

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Financial Strain

• Integrate cognitive-behavioral therapy with stress and coping theory in order to see more clearly the contributing factors to the stress responses.

• Ask about specific types of stressors (e.g. work, childrearing, in-laws, financial).

• Follow up with questions to determine onset, frequency and severity of objective stressors.

• Inquire about subjective stressors (e.g. losing sleep, irritability).

• Facilitate each partner to express thoughts and emotions about their finances in order to increase each partner’s understanding of the other’s concerns.

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Financial Strain \(\text{(con’t)}\)

To initiate discussion utilize questionnaires:

- 13-item Family Economic Strain Scale (FESS)
- 8-item In Charge Financial Distress/Financial Well-being scale (IFDFW)

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment:
Effects of Financial Strain (con’t)

- Increase in negative emotions
- Increase in alcohol and substances
- Arguments
- Demand/withdrawal behavior
- Psychological aggression
- Relationship distress
- Inquire about history to determine if related to financial strain

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Coping Styles

Ask which coping strategies have used individually and as dyad

- Negative thoughts (e.g., hopelessness)
- Emotions (e.g., anxiety)
- Behaviors (e.g., withdrawal)
- Coping strategies, individual and dyadic

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Coping Styles Tests (con’t)

• Test to determine individual coping style
  ➢ *Ways of Coping Questionnaire* (WCQ: Folkman & Lazarus)

• Tests to determine couples coping styles (ask clients to focus on financial stress when completing)
  ➢ *Dyadic Coping Inventory* (DCI; Bodenmann)
  ➢ *Empathic Responding Scale* (ERS; O’Brien & DeLongis)  

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?  
Assessment: Coping Styles (con’t)

• Refer substance abuse treatment as needed
• Inquire how each partner’s coping strategies affects the other to identify which are helpful and which are not.

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Cognitions

Explore thoughts and beliefs about finances and financial roles in the relationship

- Wait for spontaneous expressions of cognitions and then explore
- Inquire about each person’s cognitions
- Probe for cognitions related to obvious upset

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?  
Assessment: Cognitions (con’t)

• Explore memorable experiences in each individual’s past as well as the couple’s past.

• Inquire about family-of-origin patterns (e.g., financial roles played by each parent, messages conveyed about money, periods of financial stress, family members’ reactions to financial strain, cultural expectations)

• Use Mumford and Weeks’ *Money genogram* for family-of-origin patterns

• Concerning previous couple relationships, ask about management strengths and challenges

• Therapist should be aware of own cognitions about finances.  

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Cognitions (Standards)

• Use cognitive-behavioral techniques to identify standards

• Interview partners regarding standards about financial roles and management (e.g., saving and spending) – Ask “should” questions

• Inquire about flexibility to standards

• Testing available online: Inventory of Specific Relationship Standards (ISRS; Baucom, et al.)

• Interview to determine agreement and disagreement about partners’ standards  
  Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Cognitions
(Assumptions about Standards)

• Assess whether assumptions held about each other affects financial and marital strain

• Identify what each person believes are good strategies for financial security

• Differences may require referral to a financial counselor

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do? 
Assessment: Expectancies

- Ask clients what their *expectancies* are about where their current behaviors will lead in the future (e.g., What do you think will happen to your financial security if you continue supporting your husband’s adult son?)

- Identify *attributions* by asking inferences about partner’s financial behavior (e.g., What thoughts go through your mind about why Sally gets massages without mentioning it to you?)

- *Selective perceptions* can be sorted out by asking for written logs of observations about each other’s spending behavior (e.g., How does behavior vary from the budget)
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Assessment: Communication and Problem-solving Skills

• Observe communication behavior (e.g., use of “I” statements, listening skills, empathetic responses)

• Ability to resolve problems collaboratively (e.g., identifying behaviors, brainstorming solutions)

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do? Assessment: Couples Therapy vs Financial Counselor

• If effective coping, clear cognitions, communication or problem-solving skills are in place, suggest referring to a financial counselor

• Psychological and interpersonal challenges require therapy

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment

• Increase each partners’ understanding of the other’s experience of financial strain
• Increase understanding of each other’s and own cognitions and the cognitions’ contribution to emotional and behavioral responses
• Modify extreme or undesirable cognitions contributing to conflict and financial strain
• Improve individual and dyadic coping
• Refer to a financial advisor as necessary  Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Increase Understanding

- During assessment, client will hear each other’s story about their current strain and family-of-origin memories.
- Continue to encourage more in-depth descriptions of experiences, thoughts, emotions, and behavioral responses.
- Increase self-awareness and expression with homework (e.g., log of upsetting situation, automatic thoughts).
- Train communication skills to increase collaboration.
- Set boundaries around criticism. 

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?  
Treatment: Cognitions

Identify: Needs, Wants

What’s a Therapist to Do?
Treatment: Cognitions (con’t)

• Describe types of cognitions (e.g., personal standards, attributions) and relation to emotions and behaviors

• Examine with couple the logs to identify financial issues (responses to financial issues, experiences illustrating cognitions and behavior)

• Watch for shifts in behavior and cues to emotional responses; ask to explain thoughts at that time

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Modify Cognitions

Use cognitive-behavioral methods to help couple evaluate the accuracy of their thoughts and beliefs. (e.g., believing that one’s self-worth depends on having a job could lead to anxiety and depression for a jobless person)

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?  
Treatment: Improving Communication

Acknowledge that in much of American society, talking about money is considered:

- Rude
- Intrusive
- Inappropriate
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Improving Communication (con’t)

• Coach couple to stop negative communication patterns and substitute constructive ones

• Ask partners to identify beginnings of negative interactions

• Use strategies to stop negative interactions (e.g., time-outs)

• Encourage individuals to speak for themselves, identify personal values, share negative memorable experiences, thoughts, and state personal needs

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Improving Communication (con’t)

• Guide listener to ask clarifying questions and provide information

• Discourage defensiveness

• Address other problem areas (e.g., trust issues, conflicting standards)

• Help couple adjust financial arrangements, if appropriate

• Cultivate increased mutual understanding, which may lead to increased intimacy and relationship satisfaction

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Treatment: Enhance Coping

• During assessment, some individual and dyadic coping strategies were revealed

• Identify individual and dyadic coping strategies that have worked

• Brainstorm other strategies (e.g., self-talk, expressing emotions, broadening perspective, relaxation techniques, mindfulness practices, recreation, individual therapy)

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Enhance Coping

Encourage the couple of start an “Agreement Book”
– Write down each time an agreement is made.

Opiela, 2002
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Other Issues

- Keeping secrets
- Over- or under-functioning
- Regulating affect
- Repeating inappropriate family-of-origin behaviors

Shapiro, 2007
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Treatment: Enhance Coping (con’t)

• Identify with couples alternatives to try, discussing possible effects on individuals and dyad
• Explore ways of dealing with partner’s financial strain
• Help individuals identify ways that the other has been helping and help acknowledge that effort
• Analyze which efforts has been effect and which have not, so that effective ones can be used

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Refer to Financial Counselor

• Disagreements about financial management strategies (e.g., investment, retirement pensions, savings)

• Both feel comfortable talking about financial issues

• Blaming reduced, mutual understanding of financial strain experience, coping strengthened

• Ask for release to financial counselor is remaining in therapy

• Hold a joint session with the financial counselor

Falconier, 2011
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Treatment: Refer to Financial Counselor (con’t)

Alternatives, if funds unavailable

- Government websites
  (http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Money/Personal-Finance.shtml)
- Free financial education problems (e.g., libraries)
- Consumer Credit Counseling (budget only)
- Hands on Banking: online course
  http://www.handsonbanking.org/en/
What’s a Therapist to Do?  
Treatment: Other Alternatives

• Acceptance Therapy
  ➢ Help partners change through acceptance rather than demands
  ➢ Reframe harder emotions (anger) as softer emotions (fear, sadness)

• Help couple gain a balance between work and family

• Educate couple on importance of equality in obscure areas, such as organizational responsibility and emotional work; Help them see how equality affects their relationship

Atwood, 2012
What’s a Therapist to Do?

Treatment: Other Alternatives (cont’t)

Move from competitive, taking paradigm to giving

- Encourage fun and reassurance
  - Have more fun, complain less, rely less on other when anxious. Shift couple from wanting other to meet needs to wanting to be with and enjoying

- Be giving and loving
  - Verbalize appreciation and share more decision making

- Shift from poverty to wealth
  - Switch from desire to appreciation. Be thankful for what have, not envious of what others have

- Move from provocation to play
  - Lighten up, de-escalate conflict. Set aside time each week to talk about money

Atwood, 2012
What’s a Therapist to Do?
Treatment: Benefits

Build

Autonomy

Trust

Commitment

Intimacy

Shapiro, 2007
Specific Groups: Couples

- In 2011, 63% of unhappily married couples gave financial issues as primary source of unhappiness; increased from 59% in 2009
- 89% of married couples making $50,000 or more say happy
- 79% of married couples making less than $50,000 say are unhappy
- Couples who say money is not important are 10%-15% happier in relationship
- 1 in 5 couples with both admitting a love of money had more financial conflicts, even if financially stable
Specific Groups: Couples (con’t)

- 5% below poverty line
- Tend to accumulate 77% more assets annually than singles
- 11% indicated finances a problem as move toward retirement  
  Xiao, 2008
- Couples with financial plans and specific financial goals for the upcoming year had higher net worth  
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Couples (con’t)

• Tend to marry someone with similar economic characteristics  
  Xiao, 2008

• A sizable number of spouses’ earnings fluctuate from year to year, shifting the “balance of power”  
  Winkler, 2005

• Individual with higher income regardless of work hours, resulted in less time in childcare  
  Deutsch, 2003

• The longer the marriage, the more polarized their roles

• Often enter therapy when fight over money: tax time, when beginning a family, or buying a house  
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Couples (con’t)

• Power in relationships relates more to gender than status and income

• When wife is employed, communication problems increase and marital satisfaction less

• When wife’s job seen as more important, couple tries to hide financial arrangements from others, and even lie

• Downplay wife’s income by using the funds to pay for non-essentials and extra family needs. However, non-essentials may be essential, such as childcare

Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Couples (con’t)

• Most couples:
  - Talked about a financial goal in last 3 months
  - Saved a set amount each week
  - Kept financial documents in one place in home

• Couple’s financial satisfaction more strongly related to perceptions of well-being than financial management behaviors or net worth

Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Couples Allocation

• Higher earners and breadwinners entitled to greater amounts of personal spending money  

  - Sonnenberg, 2011

• Lower earning partners felt they had less right to spend money on themselves  

  - Ashby, 2008

• The younger a partner is tend to have greater share of personal spending money  

  - Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006
Specific Groups: Couples Communication

- Relate primarily partner as financially irresponsible and marriage as financially distressed
  
  Aniol, 1997

- Softer start-up when conflict begins reduces conflict

  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Couples
Decision-Making

• Charitable giving tends to be separate
• More expensive items involved joint decision-making  
  Burgoyne, 2005
• Purchasing decisions often made by one person in married couples, probably for convenience; together in co-habiting ones  
  Razzouk, 2007
Specific Groups: Couples (con’t)

• Married and cohabiting couples in UK, USA, and Australia define equality as contributing equally to household expenses (rather than savings and personal spending)  

Vogler, 2005

• Military: returning after deployment: potential for arguments about how additional income from tax breaks and combat duty pay may have been spent.  

Becoming, 2014
Specific Groups: Couples (con’t)

Accounting practices reflect fundamental aspects of relationship (e.g., husband reviews wife’s credit card expenditures)

Pahl, 2000
Specific Groups: Couples
Effects of State Funding

- When the State provides financial support to mothers, this strengthens the position of women and improves the standard of living of children. However, this reduces the responsibility of the fathers, increasing the number of single parent mothers.

- When the State provides support to the father, this increases the dependency and subordination of women and does not necessarily get money to children.

- State support through tax deductions to family are perceived as owned by individual.

- State support through welfare seen as longing to the family.

- Financial subordination to men may be the price women pay for male co-operation in child-rearing.  

Pahl, 1986
Specific Groups: Cohabiting Couples

• Cohabiting couples with children tend to spend more on alcohol and tobacco and less on child-related goods. DeLeire, 2005

• Cohabiting parents more likely to use Pooling (woman manages) and House-keeping Allowance System

• Childless cohabiting couples likely to use Partial-Pool or Independent, especially when female middle class professional and male partner under 55 and when female earns more. Vogler, 2005
Specific Groups: Cohabiting Couples

Cohabiting couples
3 times more likely to terminate relationship
when inequality exists between incomes,
especially if women earns more

Razzouk, 2007
Specific Groups: Remarried Couples

- Likely to discuss money before marriage
  - Atwood, 2012
- Low levels of conflict and disagreement over money
- Balance of power still in favor of men, who had higher incomes and more assets
- Half use Independent Management System compared to 2% in general population
- Separate asset ownership tendency
- If children present in previous relationship, asset distribution after death goes to children rather than jointly in current relationship.
  - Burgoyne, 1997
- Women who switch to homemaking from employment in second marriage, sometimes rewarded with gratitude and increase in marital power
  - Deutsch, 2003
Specific Groups: Couples with Great Marriages

• Usually one partner handled day-to-day finances
• Couple decided that person who handles finances:
  ➢ Person with experience or expertise
  ➢ Who has time
  ➢ Who enjoys doing it
• Trust and communication not realized initially, but develops over time
• Trust and communication in place
  ➢ To not overspend
  ➢ To pay bills on time
  ➢ To talk about large purchases before making them

Skogrand, 2011
Specific Groups: Couples with Great Marriages

- Are aware that debt load decreases marital satisfaction
- Little or not debt or had goal of paying off debt
- Maintain goal of staying out of debt
- Live with means and frugal
- Generally Pooling or Independence System
- May argue about money and have financial challenges, but still have great marriage, as these difficulties may bring them closer as a couple
- Identified that couples with financial challenges:
  - Might be selfish
  - Lack communication skills
  - Do not appreciate each other

Skogrand, 2011
Specific Groups: Same-Sex Couples (con’t)

- Utilize more frequently Independent Management System
- Satisfied or very satisfied with financial arrangements
- Make decisions together
- Financial practices egalitarian
- Little discomfort with disparities in earning
- Less tension around money
- Typical predictors (age, income, etc.) did not affect financial management practices
- Both names on mortgage

Burgoyne, 2011
Specific Groups: Same-Sex Couples

• Tend to have more debt
• Exhibit similar financial attitudes as heterosexual couples
• Tend to use Independent Management allocation Terres, 2011
• More likely to seek help from professionals, but this may be compromised by therapist lack of knowledge in treating this population
• Less conflict about finances
• Lesbians report better communications Means-Christensen, 2003
Specific Groups: Women

• 28% single women below poverty line  
  Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006

• Control ¾ of purchasing decision  
  Dunleavey, 2014, Feb. 23

• More involved in task of money management  
  Xiao, 2008

• Education increasing long-term prospects influences the internal ‘balance,’” increasing women’s power over time  
  Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006
Specific Groups: Women (con’t)

• Financial strain is not in marital satisfaction  
  Aniol, 1997
• Traditional gender role may reduce personal spending
• Still consider themselves husband’s helper and secondary provider
• Want to keep some money separate
• Some women accept husband’s entitlement to funds  
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Women (con’t)

- Women may experience social pressure to avoid personal spending to focus on home life.
  Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006
- In parenthood, extra money brought in is “family money”
- Carry greater responsibility for collective household expenditure
- Devotes higher proportion of own earnings to children
  Sonnenberg, 2011
- Responsible for selecting and purchasing gifts for Christmas.
  Burgoyne, 1991
Specific Groups: Women (con’t)

• Believe that if work harder, organize better, be more efficient, can manage work and family; must handle it all

• Work-family balance is a “women’s issue”  Atwood, 2012

• Financial concerns relate only to own deficits in problem-solving  Aniol, 1997

• Charity: more likely to give to health and education causes; influenced by husband after marriage  Burgoyne, 2005
Specific Groups: Women Earning More (con’t)

• Do not tend to feel embarrassed about their income level
  Deutsch, 2003

• Suffer no penalties for higher income

• If income higher, has more control and influence over decisions; not attributed to higher earnings but organizational and management skills

• Earning higher income taboo; hide, minimize and attempt to compensate for higher income

• If higher income, may give control of finances to husband, relinquishing power
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Women Investing

- Believe not good with money
  Atwood, 2012
- On average have just over half the retirement assets that men do
  Dunleavey, 2014, Feb. 23
- Tend to lack investment knowledge
- More likely to ask for professional advice
  Xiao, 2008
- When make money in stock market, credit advisor; when lose money, blame self
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Women Investing (con’t)
• Invest holistically and emotionally
• When investing, want coaching, saving and support
• Want to learn investing in a “welcoming” environment
• Like financial information in plain English
• When making investment decisions, like to evaluate carefully, avoid rash moves, ask a lot of questions

Dunleavey, 2014, Feb. 23
Specific Groups: Men

- 13% below poverty line  
  Xiao, 2008

- Tend to be involved in investment

- Male partners with higher education tend to have more personal spending money

- Men spend more money on drinking and gambling

- Lower class men may spent money socially (avoid losing social capital to ensure work position; e.g., going to drink with the guys)  
  Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006

- Trained to believe that money equals power  
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Men Feelings and Identity

• Breadwinning part of identity  
  Atwood, 2012
• Identity and self-worth tied to earnings
• Have stronger negative and positive feelings about own income
• Suffer negative consequences when breadwinning status in question
• More likely to feel embarrassed about their income level
• Tend to have more positive feelings about income because earn more than women
• Relative income matters
• Higher income results in more gratitude from spouse and feelings of appreciation  
  Deutsch, 2003
Specific Groups: Men In Relationship

- Place importance on financial competence and success, so financial strain is a major factor in marital satisfaction
- Financial concerns relate to both wife and own deficits in problem-solving  
  Aniol, 1997
- Men who feel unable to support families without wife’s help are more depressed and marriages more conflict-ridden
- Prefer earning more than spouse  
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Men In Relationship (con’t)

• Men equally or more involved in information search and buying stages; man decides how much to pay and what method of payment to use  
  Aniol, 1997

• When in heterosexual marriage, report paying more rent/mortgage, major household appliances, and entertainment/eating  
  Solomon, 2005

• More extravagant with their purchases  
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Men In Relationship (con’t)

- Adopt greater entitlement in spending money
- View earnings as ownership of joint funds
- When wife’s income higher, may do equal share of household chores

Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Men (con’t)

• In parenthood, extra money brought in is own to manage and spend  
  Sonnenberg, 2011

• Breadwinning buys men out of childcare more than it does women

• Younger men more accepting of women’s work roles, but no change in their perception of their own work role (breadwinning)  
  Deutsch, 2003

• Charity: tend to give to adult recreation  
  Burgoyne, 2005
Specific Groups: Men Investing

• Believe good at money
  Atwood, 2012

• Make investment decisions based on data: research, transactions, performance
  Dunleavey, 2014, Feb. 23

• When make money in stock market, credit self; when lose money, blame advisor
  Atwood, 2012
Specific Groups: Mexican-Americans

- Women feel more powerful when unilateral decisions are made
- Men feel more powerful when they have control over partner and bring home money
- Individual with least interest in relationship has more power (less emotional attachment, more resources (e.g., physical attractiveness, money, employment)
- Power defined as
  - Control over the other by majority-- woman used terms “influence, manipulating”, men used term “dominating”; commanding or ordering around partner
  - Make decisions independently without partner

Harvey, 2002
Specific Groups: Mexican-Americans (con’t)

• Feelings of power
  - Women: make decisions independently major importance
  - Men: female subservient—silent, not saying what she wants, woman gives into everything man asks for
  - Both: believe that men feel more powerful if in control of women’s behavior
• View of women working outside of home
  - Men: women have more power
  - Women: women saw as increased independence
  - Both men (more frequently) and women: have money
• Men seen by both genders as making decisions about money more frequently
• Having children influences women to stay in relationship

Harvey, 2002
Specific Groups: Older Adults
Concerns

• Increased number of years in retirement
• Experience less marital stress when have financial issues
• Adequate health care at very old age
• Older women, especially minorities, more economically disadvantaged     Xiao, 2008
Specific Groups: Older Adults
Recommendations

• Suggest working past 65
• Delay Social Security benefits to 70
• Practice healthful behaviors  Xiao, 2008
Specific Groups: Older Adults
Elder Abuse Red Flags

Clues to financial abuse:

- Life circumstances do not match finances
- Large withdrawals from accounts
- Accounts switched
- Unusual ATM activity
- Signatures on checks don’t match individual’s

Elder, 2014
Specific Groups: Older Adults In Relationship

- Experience less marital stress when have financial issues  
  Xiao, 2008
- Older couples may discount negative actions of spouse
- Blend warmth and control dimensions of interpersonal behavior in discussion
- Older men showed increased warm control during disagreement  
  Smith, 2009
Specific Groups: Older Adults
In Relationship (con’t)

- Older couples may discount negative actions of spouse
- Blend warmth and control dimensions of interpersonal behavior in discussion
- Older men showed increased warm control during disagreement

Smith, 2009
Specific Groups: Older Adults
Women by Emotion Response

• Types of women by emotion response to money management in couple:
  - Accepters: accept financial inequality and dominance by husband—lack confidence, give little thought to future (e.g., when husband’s income ceases at death), may depend on children
  - Resenters: recognize inequalities and resent them, realize problems exist and may be equipped to handle
  - Modifiers/Resisters: retain independence and power within relationship—handle money with ease and feel confident; had career or jobs
Specific Groups: Low-income Families

- Stagnant wages
- Lack of assets and health insurance
- “Unbanked”
- Predatory lending (short-term loans)
- Low home ownership
- Credit use

Xiao, 2008
Specific Groups: Business-Owning Families

• Managing family/business interface
• Financial and human resources flow between family and business
• Interpersonal relationships
• Tensions between family and business
  ➢ Justice conflict (unfair compensation)
  ➢ Role conflict (Who’s the boss?)
  ➢ Work/family conflict (When business supersedes family needs over long period of time)
  ➢ Identity conflict (Family members attempt to differentiate themselves from family expectations to establish independence and autonomy)
  ➢ Succession conflict (Ownership issues)  

Xiao, 2008
Specific Groups

• High school students: low financial literacy

• College students: risky credit card behavior  
  Xiao, 2008

• China, urban and rural: Parental matchmaking results in selecting partner who makes higher income to benefit their family collectively  
  Huang, 2012

• Germany and U.S.:
  ➢ Money considered joint
  ➢ Seen as each individual’s contribution to the relationship
  ➢ Often converted into resources, like domestic work or recognition  
  Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2011
Specific Groups (con’t)

• Kenya: Eldest son expected to support mother     Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006
• Indian women: accepters hoping to rely on children in old age Bisdee, 2013a
• Sweden:
  ➢ Tend to report equal access to money.     Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2006
  ➢ Having individual money important
  ➢ Money belongs to person who earned it     Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2011
  ➢ Access to money coincides with avoiding housework     Halleroed, 2005
• Spain:
  ➢ Use Shared Management System; management of finances not gender-related
  ➢ Spent individually on minor items
  ➢ All money belongs to couple     Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2011
Resources to Recommend


Resources to Recommend (con’t)

Books and resources by:

- Furnham, Adrian

Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University
[http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu](http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu)
Resources to Recommend (con’t)

Twelve Step Groups:

- Debtors Anonymous
- Gamblers Anonymous
- Shopaholics Anonymous
References


References (con’t)


References (con’t)


References (con’t)


References (con’t)


KEY: - Classic and significant works

*Core source for this presentation*