

THE INSTITUTE OF LAW RESEARCH AND REFORM
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SURVEY OF ADULT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
A TECHNICAL REPORT

RESEARCH PAPER NO. 15
NOVEMBER 1984

SURVEY OF ADULT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
A TECHNICAL REPORT

Report prepared by
T. D. Weiden & Associates Ltd.

Under Contract To
The Institute of Law Research and Reform
402 Law Centre
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Canada

NOVEMBER 1984

INSTITUTE OF LAW RESEARCH AND REFORM

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The portion of the project that forms the basis of this paper was supervised throughout by a Steering Committee consisting of Mrs. Elaine Callas, Crown Counsel, Department of the Attorney General; George C. Field, Q.C., one of the Institute counsel; Professor Gayle James of the Faculty of Social Welfare, University of Calgary; Dr. Richard Nutter of the Faculty of Social Welfare, University of Calgary; and Ms. Deloris Russell, Research Officer, Department of Social Services and Community Health of Alberta. The Institute gratefully acknowledges the dedication and assistance given to the project by the members of the Steering Committee.

The Institute also wishes to express its gratitude to Dr. T.D. Weiden of T.D. Weiden & Associates Ltd., who had the carriage of all of the work involved in the actual performance of the survey and the preparation of the initial report for discussion by the Steering Committee.

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ABSTRACT

Dramatic increase in the prevalence of couples living together outside marriage has generated acute interest in the legal and social issues associated with that form of living arrangement. As a result of this interest and because of the shortage of Canadian data on the topic, a survey of adult living arrangements has been conducted by The Institute of Law Research and Reform of Alberta. This survey documents the prevalence of nonmarried cohabitation among urban Albertans and examines their attitudes toward some of the legal issues related to nonmarital cohabitation. The survey also compares nonmarried and married cohabitants in terms of their socio-economic characteristics (such as age, duration of relationship, education, employment status, and religion) and their living arrangement (such as the presence and relationship of dependent children in the home, the ownership of property, and the type of agreements that exist between couples). Some of the reasons people give for cohabiting nonmaritally and maritally were also explored. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate how important these reasons were at the time their relationship was established as well as at the time of the survey.

The survey was conducted in the fall of 1983 using Dillman's (1978) total design method for mail surveys. The sample consists of over two thousand respondents, or over two-thirds of the questionnaire recipients. In this survey nonmarital cohabitants were defined as persons living with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender for six months or more. In addition, the relationship must have included at least one of the following characteristics: sexual intimacy, the provision of emotional support, the presence of dependent children in the home, the holding of property in common, or the pooling of resources. Only respondents 16 years of age or older are included in the sample.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This survey is part of a continuing series of studies in family law initiated by The Institute of Law Research and Reform of Alberta. It was designed to obtain data about the living arrangements of adult urban Albertans, with a focus on nonmarital cohabitational relationships. In particular, the survey was designed to determine the prevalence of nonmarital cohabitation, and to compare the socio-economic characteristics and living arrangements of nonmarried cohabitants with those of their married counterparts. The survey was also designed to examine some of the reasons people give for cohabiting nonmaritally and maritally, and document the attitudes of urban Albertans towards some of the legal issues associated with nonmarital cohabitation. The overall goal of the project was to collect data which would assist in determining whether proposals for law reform should be initiated in this area.

In this study, nonmarried cohabitants were defined as persons living with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender for six months or more. In addition, the relationship must have included at least one of the following characteristics: sexual intimacy, the provision of emotional support, the presence of dependent children in the home, the holding of property in common, or the pooling of resources. Only respondents 16 years of age or older were included in the sample.

A questionnaire entitled "Survey of Adult Living Arrangements" was developed by the Institute and sent to a random sample of Edmonton and Calgary residents. A total of 2,355 completed questionnaires were returned, for a net return rate of 67%. Respondents ranged from 16 to 96 years of age. Males and females accounted for 49.5% and 50.5% of the sample respectively.

Although the questionnaire was long and some of the questions were expected to be of a sensitive nature, the survey was favorably received by respondents. This was indicated by the relatively high rate of return and by the fact that over 1,000 respondents requested a summary of the results of the project.

The major findings are that:

1. The prevalence of nonmarital cohabitation among adult urban Albertans was 6.2% (+2%). Among cohabiting couples, the unmarried rate was 8.8% (+2.5%).
2. Overall, 27.1% (+2%) of the respondents reported that they had at one time or another cohabited nonmaritally with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender for a period of six months or more.
3. Nonmarried cohabiting respondents were younger on average than married cohabitants. Three-quarters of nonmarried cohabitants were under the age of 35 years.
4. The durations of nonmarital cohabitational relationships were considerably shorter on average than the durations of marital relationships. The median durations for nonmarried and married cohabitational relationships were 2.08 and 13.33 years respectively.
5. Over one-half of the nonmarried cohabitants described their living arrangement as "a common-law marriage," whereas most of the remainder used the term "a close personal relationship."
6. The education level of nonmarried respondents who had been cohabiting for 2 years or less was similar to that of their married counterparts. However, among those who

had been cohabiting for more than 2 years, both male and female married respondents tended to be better educated than their nonmarried counterparts.

7. Among respondents cohabiting for similar periods of time, proportionally more nonmarried than married males were unemployed and more nonmarried than married females were employed. In addition, there were proportionally fewer full-time homemakers and slightly more students among nonmarried as opposed to married female cohabitants.
8. Nonmarried cohabitants reported lower family incomes on average than did married couples who had been cohabiting for a similar period of time.
9. The religious affiliations of nonmarried and married cohabitants were not markedly different. However, religion was important to about one-quarter of the nonmarried cohabitants, and to a little more than one-half of the married cohabitants.
10. Approximately one-third of nonmarried cohabitants, in comparison to only one-tenth of married cohabitants, reported that they had been previously married.
11. Approximately one-quarter of the nonmarried cohabitants had dependent children in their home. In comparison, almost two-thirds of married cohabitants, who had been cohabiting for a similar period of time, had dependent children in their home.
12. Nonmarried cohabitants who had children in the home tended to have fewer children than their married counterparts. Also, their children were more likely to be from a previous relationship.
13. Nonmarried cohabitants who described their living arrangement as "a common law relationship" as opposed to "a close personal relationship" were more like married cohabitants in terms of having dependent children in their homes. Also, their children were more likely to be from the current relationship as opposed to a previous relationship of either the respondent or their partner.
14. Nonmarried cohabitants reported having separate bank accounts more often and joint bank accounts less often than did their married counterparts.
15. Home ownership was less common among nonmarried respondents than among married respondents who had been cohabiting for similar periods of time. Also, nonmarrieds who owned a home were less likely to claim joint ownership than were their married counterparts.

16. Nonmarried cohabitants who described their relationship as "a common-law relationship" were, in some respects, more like married cohabitants in terms of their financial and property arrangements than were those who used the term "a close personal arrangement."
17. Although the overall frequency of economic difficulties was low, nonmarried cohabitants reported proportionally more difficulties in getting government benefits and employee benefits than did their married counterparts.
18. In general, the break up of marriages was reported to cause more economic difficulties than the break up of nonmarital cohabitational living arrangements.
19. Both nonmarried and married cohabitants rated love as the most important reason for choosing to live with their present partner or spouse, both at the time the decision to cohabit was made and later. Companionship was rated second by nonmarried couples and third, behind personal commitment, by married couples.
20. For nonmarried cohabitants in general, avoiding the legal commitment of marriage was rated as a fairly important reason for not marrying. About one-quarter of the nonmarried respondents also cited as important the fact that one or the other partner was not legally free to marry.
21. Married respondents, particularly females, reported that the legal commitment involved in marriage was a fairly important consideration for them.
22. Nonmarried cohabitants, as compared with their married counterparts, placed a higher degree of importance on economic reasons ("its less expensive to live together") and convenience ("its easier this way") as reasons for cohabiting with their partner. Nonmarried cohabitants were also more likely to indicate that their living arrangement wasn't planned.
23. Nonmarried cohabitants who described their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship" rated such considerations as convenience and avoiding the legal, personal and social commitments that marriage involves to be less important reasons for cohabiting than did those who used the term "a close personal relationship."
24. There was a high degree of consensus among all respondents that couples cohabiting nonmaritally should not have the same adoption rights as married couples. Also, there was a high degree of consensus that the surviving children of a "common-law union" should be entitled to a share of the estate in the absence of a

will, and that unmarried fathers should have the same legal rights as unmarried mothers in situations where the family is living "common-law."

25. On the other hand, there was a relatively weak degree of consensus among respondents concerning the issues of whether unmarried couples should have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in contesting the estate of a deceased cohabitational partner, and in the division of property when there is a break up of the nonmarital cohabitational living arrangement.
26. There was a high degree of consensus that agreements between nonmarried cohabitants should be legally binding in matters having to do with child care, property, arrangements to be made on break up, and the division of expenses. On the other hand, little or no consensus among respondents was observed regarding the degree to which agreements involving either sexual conduct or household chores should be legally binding.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey was to obtain data about the living arrangements of adult urban Albertans and to document their attitudes toward some of the legal issues which affect couples who live together outside marriage. The overall goal was to collect information which would assist in determining whether proposals for law reform should be initiated in the area of nonmarital cohabitation. The specific goals of the survey were to document:

- * The prevalence of nonmarital cohabitation among urban Albertans.
- * The social and economic characteristics of individuals who are cohabiting nonmaritally as compared to those who are cohabiting maritally.
- * The nature of the living arrangements of couples who are cohabiting nonmaritally as compared to those who are cohabiting maritally.
- * The frequency and nature of economic difficulties which are related to the cohabitational arrangement.
- * The reasons people give for cohabiting nonmaritally as compared to the reasons others give for marrying.
- * The attitudes of urban Albertans toward some of the legal issues pertaining to nonmarital cohabitation.

This report is part of a continuing series of studies in family law initiated by the Institute of Law Research and Reform of Alberta. This particular study originates from a family law project dealing with an examination of law as it affects people who live together outside marriage. Other reports related to this project include: Living Together Outside Marriage (a research

paper prepared for the Institute by David Cruickshank, 1979). Living Together Outside Marriage: Commentary (Olive Stone, 1980). Living Together Outside Marriage: A Position Paper (M. Deborah MacNair, 1980). Proposal for an Empirical Study of People Who Live Together Outside Marriage (M. Deborah MacNair, 1981). Living Together Survey of Edmontonians (a methodological study prepared for the Institute by Donald G. Fisher, Kirsten Posehn, Marvin Brown and Ronald Fritz; 1983).

As argued in the "Proposal for an Empirical Study of People Who Live Together Outside Marriage" (MacNair, 1981), the present survey has been necessitated by a lack of available information about the prevalence and nature of nonmarital relationships in Canada, and by a lack of information about the attitudes of the public toward these relationships.

For example, census data collected by Statistics Canada does not currently differentiate between couples who live together in nonmarital as opposed to marital relationships. As a consequence, all such couples appear as a husband-wife family in the 1976 and 1981 Census reports (see MacNair; 1981, p. 97).

A notable exception is the Edmonton Area Survey; an annual survey conducted by The Population Research Laboratory, Department of Sociology, The University of Alberta. In the 1979 survey, 3.6 percent of the 440 people interviewed claimed to be living "common law." In the 1980 survey, this figure had risen to 6.3 percent (Edmonton Area Survey; 1980, 1981. See MacNair; 1981, p. 98).

Defining nonmarital cohabitation has been problematic for researchers in the area and no definition or set of criteria has emerged which satisfies all the needs of the various research endeavors. Critical issues have to do with the length of the relationship, the gender of the partners, and the degree of interdependency and/or emotional intimacy. Recognizing the limitations inherent in a highly specific definition of nonmarital cohabitation on one hand, and the interpretive shortcomings that can result from a lack of definitional precision on the other, the Steering Committee' for this project has prepared the following definition (see MacNair, 1981, for a discussion of these definitional criteria).

For the purpose of this study, nonmarital cohabitants are defined as:

- * two persons of the opposite gender,
- * who are not legally married to each other,
- * who are of the age of 16 years or more,
- * who are not related within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity prohibited by law, and
- * who have been sharing living quarters on a regular basis for not less than six months.

 'The Steering Committee for the "Project of People Who Live Together Outside Marriage" is a multidisciplinary committee chaired by George C. Field, Associate Director, The Institute of Law Research and Reform. Current members include Elaine Callas, Crown Counsel, Legislative Council, Department of the Attorney-General; Gayle James and Richard Nutter, Faculty of Social Welfare University of Calgary - Edmonton Campus; and Deloris Russell, Research Officer, Social Services Planning Secretariat, Department of Social Services and Community Health, Province of Alberta.

In addition, one or more of the following characteristics must be in evidence:

- * the persons are sexually intimate with each other,
- * there is a dependent child in the home,
- * the persons share financial obligations,
- * the persons hold property in common,
- * one of the persons is providing either total or partial financial support for the other or for any child in the home, and/or
- * the persons look to each other for emotional support.

In preparation for this survey, a pilot study was conducted to assess the relative merits (in terms of quality of information, return rate, and cost) of three survey techniques: telephone interviews, home interviews, and mailed questionnaires (Fisher et al., 1983). The pilot study was also designed to test the format, content and public acceptability of the survey items, and to assess the relative merits of sampling both partners in a household as opposed to only one.

This pilot study revealed good public acceptance of the survey. Moreover, it showed that a very acceptable return rate of approximately 70 percent could be achieved from mailed questionnaires using Dillman's (1978) total design method for mail surveys. It also showed that the quality of the information obtained with the mailed questionnaire was equal to if not superior to that obtained with either the telephone or home interview techniques. There was some evidence to indicate that the telephone and home interviews generated a greater "social

desirability" response bias than was the case with the mailed questionnaire (Fisher et al., 1983, p. 11).

As a result of these findings and the fact that telephone and home interviews were found to be considerably more expensive than mailed questionnaires, the latter was adopted for this investigation. It was also determined that only one member of a cohabitational relationship would be sampled due to limitations in funding and because intracouple response patterns revealed relatively high intracouple agreement.

CHAPTER TWO

METHOD

The Questionnaire

An 18 page questionnaire, entitled "Survey of Adult Living Arrangements," was developed for use in this study (see Appendix A). The eight part questionnaire consists of 45 questions with a total of 176 individual responses (respondents were not asked to answer all questions, as some would not pertain to their living arrangement). Though substantially modified, this questionnaire is based on a preliminary version developed for use in a methodological investigation that piloted the present study (Fisher, et al., 1983).

Questions concerning the marital and nonmarital status of the respondent's past and present living arrangements make up Part 1 of the questionnaire. Part 2 includes questions about the presence of dependent children in the home, their relationship to the respondent and to other adults in the home, and the source of their financial support. Part 3 contains brief descriptions of some situations in which the legal rights of couples living together outside marriage differ from those of married couples in the province of Alberta. Respondents are asked whether they think nonmarried couples should or should not have the same legal rights as married couples in these situations. In Part 4, a list of reasons for marrying and for living together outside of marriage is presented. Respondents are asked to rate how

important these reasons have been, and currently are, in terms of their decision to marry or to live together outside of marriage. Part 5 includes questions about the types of financial arrangements and agreements couples have between themselves. Parts 6 and 7 contain questions about economic difficulties that respondents may have had because of their present and past living arrangements, respectively. Basic demographic questions make up Part 8.

Parts 1, 3 and 8 contain questions relevant to all respondents. Parts 2, 4, 5 and 6 contain questions for respondents who are currently living with a partner of the opposite gender either maritally or nonmaritally. Part 7 contains questions for respondents who have experienced the break-up of a cohabitational arrangement prior to their current living arrangement.

The Survey

Sampling strategy

Individually addressed questionnaires were mailed to a randomly selected sample of adults living in and around the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. Rural Albertans were not sampled due to limitations in funds. The survey was conducted during the months of September through December, 1983.

The strategy of using mailed questionnaires as opposed to telephone or home interviews was adopted following

recommendations made in a methodological study which compared, for the purposes of the present research, the merits of each of these procedures (Fisher et al., 1983). The specific techniques adopted for the mailing procedure are based on Dillman's "Total Design Method" for mail surveys (Dillman, 1978).

Procedure

A sample of 4,000 names and addresses were drawn at random from the telephone directories of Edmonton and Calgary. Half of the sample (2,000 names) were selected from the approximately 236,000 noncommercial entries listed in the 1983 "City of Edmonton and Vicinity White Pages." The other half were selected from the approximately 210,000 noncommercial entries listed in the 1983 "Calgary and Area White Pages."

These people were then sent, via First Class mail, an individually addressed cover letter, the questionnaire, and a business reply envelope. The cover letter included a brief explanation of why the survey was being conducted. It also included an assurance of complete confidentiality.

This initial survey material was followed-up in the first week with a post card thanking the respondents for their cooperation and urging those who had not yet responded, to do so as soon as possible. In the fifth week, a second individually addressed letter (including a second copy of the questionnaire and another business reply envelope) was sent, via First Class mail, to all those who had not yet responded to the survey

request. Finally, a Special Delivery letter (including a third copy of the questionnaire and a business reply envelope) was sent in the eighth week to the remainder who had not yet responded. (Texts of the cover letters and the post card can be seen in Appendix B.)

Because public telephone directories contain proportionally more male than females names, half of the respondents in the sample received the following request: "we would like the questionnaire from your household to be completed by an adult female. If none is present, then it should be completed by an adult male." The other half received the opposite request: "we would like the questionnaire from your household to be completed by an adult male. If none is present, then it should be completed by an adult female." Although the use of this stratified sampling strategy may result in a sample that is not truly reflective of the proportion of males and females in the population, its omission essentially guarantees an over sampling of males when the telephone directory is used as a source of names.

The Sample

The use of the telephone directory as a source of names and addresses unavoidably eliminates from the sample some individuals who live within the catchment area. Missing will be those with unlisted telephone numbers, those living in group accommodations who do not have a telephone number listed in their name, residents who have moved into the area since the directory was published, and those who do not subscribe to telephone service. Although it is difficult to determine the number of people who will be missed for these reasons, estimates for urban areas, such as those under investigation in this study, are reported to be in the 5 to 10 percent range (personal communication, The Population Research Laboratory, University of Alberta. Also, see Dillman, 1978).

Return Rates

Of the 4,000 questionnaires mailed out, 496 were returned by the Post Office stamped "Moved, Address Unknown." This is a higher rate of nondeliverables than expected; however, it probably reflects the fact that a large number of people were in the process of relocating as the result of a significant downturn in the Alberta economy at the time.

Of the remaining 3,504 deliverable questionnaires, 73.6 percent (2,581 questionnaires) were returned by respondents. Two hundred and twenty-six (8.8%) of these were unusable, primarily because major parts of the questionnaire were not completed. A

small portion of the returns were unusable because they were from respondents under 16 years of age. Eliminating these, the resulting net return rate of usable questionnaires completed by urban Albertans 16 years of age or older was 67.2 percent (2,355 usable returns out of a total of 3,504 deliverable questionnaires). This rate was very similar for both the Edmonton and Calgary catchment areas (the return rates for these cities were approximately 66% and 68% respectively). The effects of the prompts (the post card, the follow-up letter, and the Special Delivery letter) on weekly return rates can be seen in Figure 1.

It should be noted that rates of 73.6 percent and 67.2 percent for total returns and net usable returns, respectively, are very substantial for a survey of the general public such as the present one. In fact, these rates are somewhat higher than would be expected on the basis of Dillman's work (Dillman, 1978).

Even though the questionnaire was long and some of the questions were expected to be of a sensitive nature, the fairly high rate of completion in contrast to the relatively low rate of unusable questionnaires indicates that the survey was favorably received. Moreover, the survey generated enough interest among respondents to stimulate over 1,000 to request a summary of the results; a much higher figure than anticipated.

Sample demographics

Gender and age. Figure 2A shows the age distribution of the sample by gender (Table A1 in Appendix C presents this data in

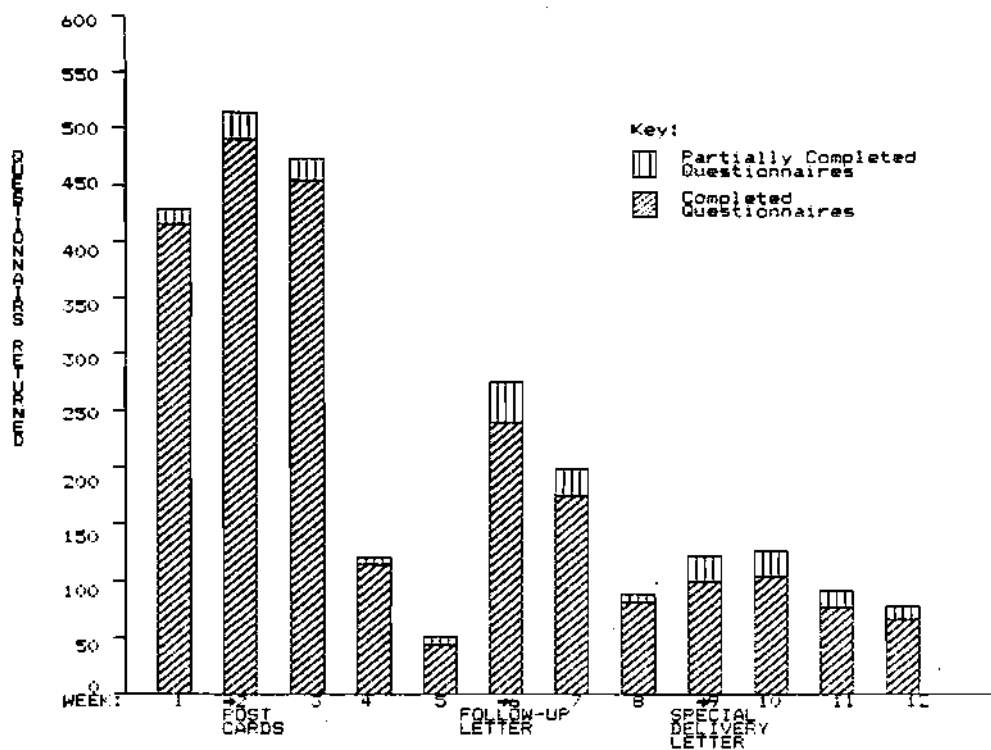


FIGURE 1
WEEKLY RETURN RATES

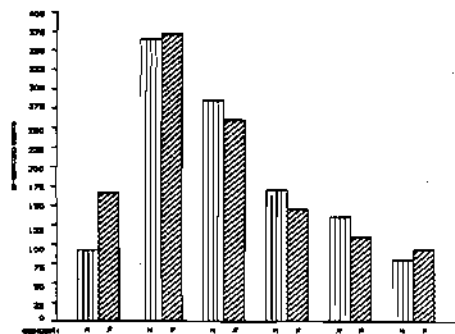


FIGURE 3a

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE BY GENDER (Males, Females)

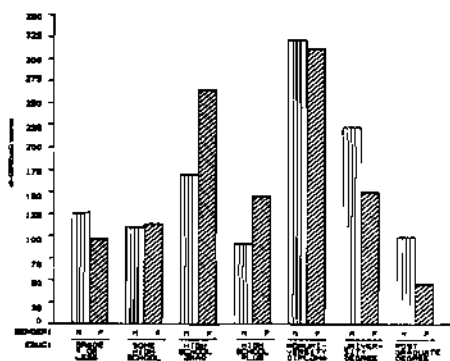


FIGURE 3b

EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE SAMPLE BY GENDER (Males, Females)

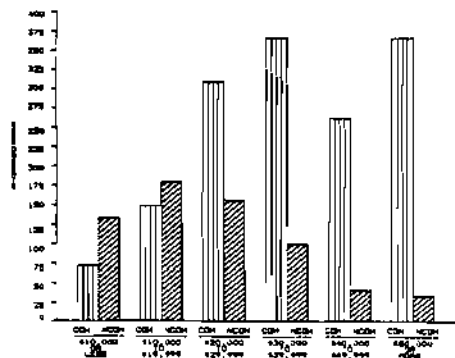


FIGURE 3c

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME FOR COHABITING (Coh) AND NONCOHABITING (Ncoh) RESPONDENTS IN THE SAMPLE

tabular form). As may be seen, male and female respondents are fairly evenly represented in most all age ranges. An exception is in the 16 to 25 year age range in which more female than male respondents returned completed questionnaires. Over all, males account for 49.5 percent of the sample and females 50.5 percent. The average age of respondents was 40.6 years and the median age (that which separates the sample in halves) was 36.9 years. The age range of the sample was 16 to 96 years.

These gender by age range proportions are very consistent with those reported in the recent Census for Edmonton and Calgary (Statistics Canada, 1981). The only exception being in the 16 to 25 year age range. In the 1981 Census report, people between the ages of 15 to 25 years made up approximately 29 percent of the adult population (that is, people 15 years of age or older). In the present sample, approximately 11 percent were between the ages of 16 and 25.

This discrepancy may be accounted for in part at least by the following circumstances. First, the Statistic Canada data which has been cited includes people who were 15 years of age, whereas the cut off age for the present sample was 16. Thus, the present sample would be expected to include a smaller proportion of respondents in the age range in question than indicated by the Census data.

Second, since it is reasonable to assume that a greater proportion of people between the ages of 16 and 25 years, relative to those in the older age groups, would not be living

independently and/or have a telephone number listed in their name, it is also reasonable to assume that they would not likely be recipients of the present survey materials. As may be recalled, names and addresses as listed in the telephone book provided the source from which the present sample was drawn. Thus, the present sample would again be expected to include a smaller proportion of respondents in the 16 to 25 year age range than indicated by the Census data.

Third, data recently reported by the Alberta Bureau of Statistics (see The Edmonton Journal, October 13, 1984) indicates that a disproportionately high number of people in the 15 to 29 year age group have moved out of the province over the last 12 months (this is presumably because of a reduction in the availability of employment opportunities). Thus, the smaller proportion of respondents in the 16 to 25 year age range that make up the present sample, in relation to that reported in the 1981 Census, may also be a reflection of this trend in migratory patterns. It is, perhaps, relevant to note that over 70 percent of the present sample report that they have lived in the province of Alberta for 10 years or more.

Education level. Figure 2B shows the education level of the sample by gender. As may be seen, the sample includes respondents with a wide range of educational experience. On one hand, 20.8 percent of the sample have less than a Grade 12 education, while 22.5 percent hold one or more university degrees. More males than females (28.2% versus 17.0% respectively) hold university

degrees. The largest proportion of respondents (27.6%) hold non-university certificates or diplomas from community colleges, nursing schools, or technical schools (see Table A2 in Appendix C for a complete breakdown of these data in tabular form).

In comparing the education levels of the respondents in the present sample with those reported in the recent Census (Statistics Canada, 1981), respondents in the sample appear to be better educated than what may have been predicted. For example, the proportion of respondents at the 9th through 12th Grade education level in the present sample is lower than that reported in the 1981 Census (11.1% versus 28.7% respectively). On the other hand, the combined proportion of respondents with non-university and university certificates or degrees is higher in the present sample than in 1981 Census (50.0% versus 32.4% respectively).

Due to the circumstances noted above regarding the apparent discrepancy in the age range data, the differences in education level are not easy to interpret. It may be argued, however, that the education levels reported by respondents in the present sample are what would be expected given (A) that the sampling procedure used in the present survey enhanced the probability of sampling adults who were living independently (that is, respondents who were less likely to be in school), and (B) the recent drop in the 15 to 29 year old population in relation to that reported in the 1981 Census (that is, a drop in the proportion of potential respondents who would more likely be in

school and, perhaps, be less well educated).

Income level. The annual, before tax, income of respondents in the sample is shown in Figure 2C. Because respondents living with their spouse or with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender were asked to report their combined family income, the income data for cohabiting couples are shown separately from those of noncohabiting respondents.

As anticipated, family incomes of \$20,000 or more were seen to be common for respondents currently cohabiting with another adult of the opposite gender in either a marital or nonmarital relationship. In contrast, incomes of less than \$30,000 were more common for widowed, divorced or separated, and never married respondents not currently cohabiting with another adult (see Table A3 in Appendix C for a complete breakdown of these data in tabular form).

The family incomes of cohabiting couples as reported by respondents in the present sample can be seen to be very consistent with those reported for households in the recent Census (Statistics Canada, 1981). For example, a little less than 10 percent reported incomes of \$10,000 or less and approximately 50% reported incomes of \$30,000 or more in both cases.

Summary of sample demographics. In conclusion, these demographic data reveal a sample which is fairly evenly split between male and female respondents. The data also reveal a sample that includes respondents from a broad range of age,

education and income levels. When coupled with (A) the sampling strategy used, (B) the relatively high net return rate of 67.2 percent, and (C) the very favorable degree of agreement with recent Census data, these observations indicate that the sample is likely to be a very good representation of the population of adult urban Albertans that the study was designed to survey.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prevalence of Nonmarital Cohabitation

The prevalence of nonmarital cohabitation among adult urban Albertans is a major concern of this study. As may be recalled, a respondent is defined to be cohabiting nonmaritally, in this study, if he or she has been living with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender for six months or more. In addition, the relationship must include at least one of the following characteristics: sexual intimacy, the provision of emotional support, the presence of dependent children in the home, the holding of property in common, or the pooling of financial resources. Only respondents who are 16 years of age or older are included in the sample. These criteria are defined more fully in the introduction section.

Forty-two respondents who report that they are currently living with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender failed to meet the above criteria. Thirty-three failed because they had not lived with their partner for six months or more. The other nine report that they are sharing accommodations for financial reasons only. These respondents claim that they are not sexual intimates, and that they do not own property in common, or pool their resources, or depend on their partners for emotional support, or have dependent children in the home.

All but two of the 145 respondents who did meet these criteria report that they are sexually intimate with their partner. One of these reported that she and her partner are not sexually intimate and the other did not answer this question. Both of these respondents are defined as cohabiting nonmaritally because they report that there are dependent children in the home, that they and their partner generally pool their resources, and that they depend on their partners for emotional support.

Thus, the prevalence of urban Albertans 16 years of age or older who are currently cohabiting nonmaritally is estimated to be 6.2 percent (145 nonmarried cohabitants out of a total sample of 2,355 respondents; see Figure 3A). Based on the size of the sample and the sampling procedures used in this study, this prevalence rate is statistically estimated to be accurate to within 2 percentage points 95 times out of 100 (that is, the prevalence rate is estimated to be between 4.2% and 8.2% at a 95% confidence level)

The preceding prevalence estimate represents the nonmarital cohabitation rate for adult urban Albertans. A prevalence rate has also been estimated for urban Albertan couples who are currently cohabiting with an adult of the opposite gender. In this case, 8.8 percent of urban Albertan couples are estimated to be cohabiting nonmaritally (145 out of 1640 "currently cohabiting" respondents; see Figure 3B). At the 95 percent confidence level, the error rate for this population estimate is 2.5 percent .

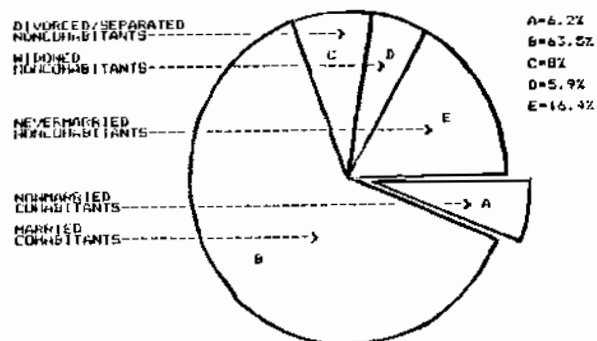


FIGURE 3A
COHABITATIONAL STATUS OF THE SAMPLE

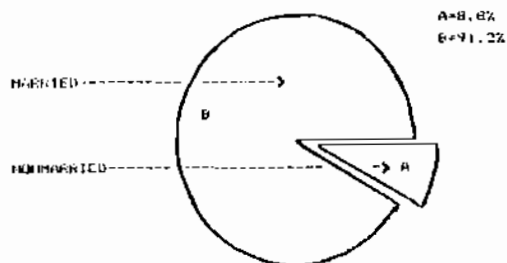


FIGURE 3B
STATUS OF "CURRENTLY COHABITING" RESPONDENTS

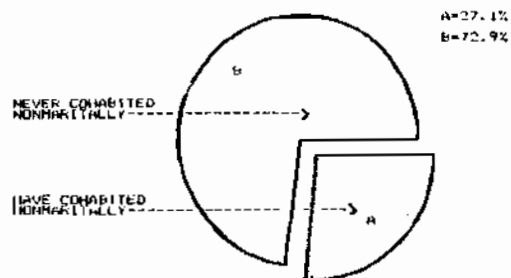


FIGURE 3C
NONMARITAL COHABITATIONAL EXPERIENCE

These prevalence rates are consistent with those reported in a survey of Edmontonians which piloted the present study (Fisher, et al., 1983). In that survey, 5.1 percent of adults (13 out of 243 respondents) and 7.6 percent of cohabiting couples (13 out of 172 respondents) were found to be cohabiting nonmaritally. The prevalence rates found in the present study are also in accord with previous surveys which report between 2 to 6 percent of the population to be living together outside of marriage (see MacNair, 1981).

In addition to the above prevalence rates, the present study reveals that a total of 27.1 percent of urban Albertans have at one time or another cohabited nonmaritally with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender for a period of six months or more (see Figure 3C). Among "now married" respondents, 20.7 percent report that they had lived with their present spouse for six months or more before marrying. Among all respondents, 10.8 percent report that they had lived for a period of six months or more with an unrelated partner of the opposite gender with whom they are no longer living.

Social and Economic Characteristics of Cohabiting Couples

Age

Table 1 shows the age distribution of nonmarried and married cohabitants according to gender (the age range of all respondents broken down by living arrangement and gender can be seen in Table A1 in Appendix C). As can be seen, females tend to be younger than males in both of the cohabitational categories. Also about three-quarters of the respondents (74.6%) who are cohabiting nonmaritally are between 16 and 35 years of age. On the other hand, a little less than one-third of the married respondents (31.2%) are between 16 and 35. These data also reveal that the proportion of nonmarried cohabitants over the age of 65 is very low (1.4% for males and females combined).

These findings suggest that nonmarital cohabitation is restricted mostly to younger couples, or that the popularity of this form of living arrangement is relatively new, or both. The first alternative is consistent with the idea that nonmarital cohabitation represents a modern version of courtship, and is therefore age related. The second is consistent with the idea that nonmarital cohabitation represents an alternative to marriage that has become popularized in recent years, and is therefore era related. This issue will be taken up again at various points throughout this report.

TABLE 1

AGE OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITANTS BY GENDER

(All respondents 16 years or older)

AGE RANGE:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
16 TO 25 YEARS	18	28.6	26	3.3	25	31.6	66	9.9
25 TO 35 YEARS	29	46.0	219	27.9	41	51.9	226	33.9
35 TO 45 YEARS	9	14.3	230	29.3	8	10.1	183	27.4
45 TO 55 YEARS	4	6.3	147	18.7	3	3.8	101	15.1
55 TO 65 YEARS	2	3.2	115	14.6	1	1.3	64	9.6
OVER 65 YEARS	1	1.6	48	6.1	1	1.3	27	4.0
MISSING DATA	1	(1.6)	23	(2.8)	2	(2.5)	19	(2.8)
TOTAL	64	100.0	808	99.9	81	100.0	686	99.9

Duration of the relationship

Related to age is the concomitant finding that the durations of nonmarital cohabitations are considerably shorter, on average, than marital cohabitations (the median durations for nonmarital and marital cohabitations are 2.08 and 13.33 years respectively). As can be seen in Table 2, almost all of the respondents who are cohabiting nonmaritally (95.1%) have been living with their current partner for 10 years or less. The majority of married couples (60.5%), on the other hand, have been living with their current spouse for more than 10 years.

Although these data clearly show that nonmarital cohabitations are typically of shorter duration than marital cohabitations, it is not clear whether this fact reflects differences in the nature of the relationship, or the recently increased popularity of this form of adult living arrangement. It is clear, however, that if these nonmarried and married cohabitants are compared across-the-board, the findings will be confounded by the large differences that exist between these groups in the durations of their relationships and in the ages of these respondents.

Because the duration of the relationship is likely to be an important consideration in dealing with the legal implications of nonmarital cohabitation, it seems appropriate to take this aspect of the relationship into account when describing this form of living arrangement. This seems particularly appropriate when comparing nonmarried cohabitants with their married counterparts.

TABLE 2

DURATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF NONMARRIED
AND MARRIED COHABITING COUPLES

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%
LESS THAN 2 YEARS	68	46.9	126	8.8
2 TO 5 YEARS	54	37.2	190	13.2
5 TO 10 YEARS	16	11.0	251	17.5
MORE THAN 10 YEARS	7	4.8	870	60.5
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	58	(3.9)
TOTAL	145	99.9	1495	100.0

Secondly, because age is seen to be positively correlated with the duration of the relationship (these correlations are $r=.34$ for nonmarried cohabitants and $r=.84$ for married cohabitants), comparisons between nonmarried and married cohabitational relationships according to their duration will partially reduce the potentially confounding effects of both duration and age. Thus, comparison between nonmarried and married cohabitants in the remainder of this report will be analyzed according to duration of relationship where appropriate.

Typically, cohabitational cutoff periods of 2 years and 10 years will be used for these analyses. The 2 year cutoff period has been selected because it was believed to represent a reasonable criterion of permanence. The 10 year cutoff period has been selected because approximately 95 percent of nonmarried respondents have been cohabiting for 10 years or less (see Table 2). In addition, cohabitants have been grouped according to gender when a break down by this variable appears to be of interest.

Description of the nonmarital relationship

Over half of the nonmarried cohabitants (56.7%) select the term "a common-law marriage" to describe their living arrangement. On the other hand, 42.6 percent select the term "a close personal relationship." Only a very small proportion of nonmarried cohabitants (0.7%) select the term "just shared accommodation for financial reasons only."

As can be seen in Table 3, males and females who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years are not substantially different in the terms they select to describe their living arrangement. Females, however, who have been cohabiting for 2 years or more (that is, 2 to 10 years, and more than 10 years) appear to select the term "a common-law marriage" a little more frequently than males (these proportions are 65.9% for females and 54.5% for males).

Table 3 also reveals that there is a greater tendency for nonmarried male and female cohabitants to describe their living arrangement as "a common-law marriage" as the duration of the relationship increases. That is, 52.2 percent of respondents (males and females combined) who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years describe their relationship as "a common-law marriage." This proportion increases to 59.4 percent for respondents who have been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years, and to 71.4 percent for those cohabiting for more than 10 years. As noted previously, females tend to contribute more to this trend than males.

These findings suggest that the terms used by nonmarried cohabitants to describe their living arrangement may, in fact, be indicators of the perceived permanence of the relationship. The use of the term "a common-law marriage" may indicate that the living arrangement is perceived by the cohabitants more as an alternative to legal marriage and less as an extended form of courtship; that is, that the living arrangement is more marriage

TABLE 3

NONMARRIED COHABITANTS' DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR
LIVING ARRANGEMENT BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP
AND BY GENDER

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:
LESS THAN 2 YEARS

DESCRIPTIONS:	-- MALE --		-- FEMALE --	
	N	%	N	%
COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE	15	51.7	20	52.6
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP	14	48.3	18	47.4
SHARE ACCOMODATION	0	0	0	0
MISSING DATA	1	(3.3)	0	(0.0)
TOTAL	30	100.0	38	100.0

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:
2 TO 10 YEARS

DESCRIPTIONS:	-- MALE --		-- FEMALE --	
	N	%	N	%
COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE	15	53.6	25	64.1
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP	12	42.9	14	35.9
SHARED ACCOMODATION	1	3.6	0	0
MISSING DATA	1	(3.4)	2	(4.9)
TOTAL	29	100.1	41	100.0

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:
MORE THAN 10 YEARS

DESCRIPTIONS:	-- MALE --		-- FEMALE --	
	N	%	N	%
COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE	3	60.0	2	100.0
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP	2	40.0	0	0
SHARED ACCOMODATION	0	0	0	0
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
TOTAL	5	100.0	2	100.0

like. On the other hand, use of the term "a close personal relationship," may indicate that the living arrangement is perceived by the cohabitants more as an extended form of courtship and less as an alternative to legal marriage; that is, less marriage like. This suggestion will be examined further in the following sections.

Education level

Table 4 shows the education level of nonmarried and married cohabitants broken down by duration of relationship and by gender. As can be seen, there are only minor differences in the educational levels of male and female respondents who have been cohabiting with their current partner or spouse for less than 2 years. This similarity in education level is apparent between nonmarried and married cohabitants within each category of gender and between males and females within each category of cohabitants (that is, nonmarried and married).

On the other hand, Table 4 reveals that among respondents who have been cohabiting from 2 to 10 years, proportionately more married males hold university or post graduate degrees (34.2%, combined) than nonmarried males (14.3%, combined). Similarly, more married females hold university and post graduate degrees (23.5%, combined) than nonmarried females (10.0%, combined).

These data also show a clear trend for males to be more highly educated than females if they have been cohabiting for 2 years or more, regardless of whether they are cohabiting

TABLE 4

**EDUCATION LEVEL OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITING
RESPONDENTS BY GENDER AND BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP**

(All respondents 16 years or older)

**DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:
LESS THAN 2 YEARS**

EDUCATION LEVEL:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GRADE 9 OR LESS	1	3.3	2	3.8	1	2.6	4	5.6
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	2	6.7	7	13.5	4	10.5	9	12.7
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	6	20.0	6	11.5	5	13.2	12	16.9
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL	4	13.3	7	13.5	5	13.2	11	15.5
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA*	11	36.7	17	32.7	14	36.8	22	31.0
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	4	13.3	12	23.1	7	18.4	11	15.5
POST GRADUATE DEGREE	2	6.7	1	1.9	2	5.3	2	2.8
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	3	(5.5)	0	(0.0)	5	(6.6)
TOTAL	30	100.0	33	100.0	38	100.0	76	100.0

**DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:
2 TO 10 YEARS**

EDUCATION LEVEL:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GRADE 9 OR LESS	1	3.6	7	3.2	2	5.0	9	4.1
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	3	10.7	15	6.9	5	12.5	17	7.7
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	7	25.0	37	17.1	14	33.0	59	26.6
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL	4	14.3	16	7.4	6	15.0	27	12.2
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA*	9	32.1	67	31.0	9	22.5	58	26.1
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	3	10.7	48	22.2	3	7.5	39	17.6
POST GRADUATE DEGREE	1	3.6	26	12.0	1	2.5	13	5.9
MISSING DATA	1	(3.4)	11	(4.8)	1	(2.4)	11	(4.7)
TOTAL	29	100.0	227	99.8	41	100.0	233	100.2

**DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:
MORE THAN 10 YEARS**

EDUCATION LEVEL:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GRADE 9 OR LESS	3	60.0	75	15.2	0	0.0	33	9.9
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	1	20.0	59	12.0	0	0.0	62	17.5
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	0	0.0	67	13.6	0	0.0	91	25.6
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL	1	20.0	31	6.3	1	50.0	43	12.1
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA*	0	0.0	137	27.8	0	0.0	79	22.3
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	0	0.0	77	15.6	1	50.0	39	11.0
POST GRADUATE DEGREE	0	0.0	47	9.5	0	0.0	6	1.7
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	33	(6.3)	0	(0.0)	22	(5.8)
TOTAL	5	100.0	526	100.0	2	100.0	377	100.1

* Nonuniversity certificate or diploma such as community college, nursing school, technical school.

nonmaritally or maritally. As can be seen, proportionately more males than females who have been cohabiting for 2 years or more hold non-university certificates or diplomas, university degrees, and post graduate degrees. The combined proportions for these education levels are 63.1% for males versus 46.9% for females.

Thus, for respondents who have been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years, these data reveal that the education level of male and female nonmarried respondents is lower than their married counterparts. These data also show that, regardless of their cohabitational status, the education level of males is higher than females.

Although the number of nonmarried respondents (N=7) who have been cohabiting for more than 10 years is considered to be too small to establish any reasonable conclusions, these data have been presented in Table 4, along with their married counterparts, for the sake of completeness and for the interested reader. (The education level of all respondents, broken down by living arrangement and gender but not duration of relationship, can be seen in Table A2 in Appendix C.)

Employment status

Table 5 shows the employment status of nonmarried and married cohabitants broken down by gender and by duration of relationship. Among respondents who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years, there were approximately 11 percent fewer nonmarried males (77.4%) employed than there were married males

TABLE 5

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITING
RESPONDENTS BY GENDER AND BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

LESS THAN 2 YEARS

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EMPLOYED	24	77.4	48	88.9	31	77.5	51	68.9
TEMPORARILY UNEMPLOYED	4	12.9	1	1.9	2	5.0	6	8.1
RETIRED	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
DISABLED	0	0.0	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
FULL-TIME HOMEMAKER	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.5	14	18.9
STUDENT	3	9.7	4	7.4	5	12.5	3	4.1
OTHER	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.5	0	0.0
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	1	(1.8)	0	(0.0)	2	(2.6)
TOTAL RESPONSES*	31	100.0	55	100.1	40	100.0	76	100.0

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

2 TO 10 YEARS

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EMPLOYED	18	60.0	190	86.4	31	70.5	118	49.6
TEMPORARILY UNEMPLOYED	9	30.0	16	7.3	4	9.1	23	9.7
RETIRED	1	3.3	2	0.9	2	4.5	0	0.0
DISABLED	2	6.7	1	0.5	1	2.3	0	0.0
FULL-TIME HOMEMAKER	0	0.0	2	0.9	4	9.1	86	36.1
STUDENT	0	0.0	4	1.8	2	4.5	8	3.4
OTHER	0	0.0	5	2.3	0	0.0	3	1.3
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	7	(3.1)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
TOTAL RESPONSES*	30	100.0	227	100.1	44	100.0	238	100.1

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

MORE THAN 10 YEARS

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EMPLOYED	5	83.3	404	79.4	1	50.0	180	48.9
TEMPORARILY UNEMPLOYED	0	0.0	26	5.1	1	50.0	15	3.9
RETIRED	0	0.0	60	11.8	0	0.0	29	7.6
DISABLED	0	0.0	6	1.2	0	0.0	2	0.5
FULL-TIME HOMEMAKER	0	0.0	8	1.6	0	0.0	149	38.8
STUDENT	0	0.0	2	0.4	0	0.0	5	1.3
OTHER	1	16.7	3	0.6	0	0.0	4	1.0
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	17	(3.2)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
TOTAL RESPONSES*	6	100.0	526	100.1	2	100.0	384	100.0

* Respondents can select more than one alternative.

(88.9%). These figures are reversed for females, with approximately 9 percent more nonmarried females (77.5%) being employed than married females (68.9%). On the other hand, there were 11 percent more nonmarried males (12.9%) temporarily unemployed than married males (1.9%). The unemployment figures for females were 5.0 percent and 8.1 percent, respectively.

Labor force participation rates can be established from these data by pooling the proportion of respondents in each category who are either employed or temporarily unemployed. This analysis reveals that there is very little difference in labor force participation rates between nonmarried and married respondents who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years (these rates are 85.9% and 82.8%, respectively). Further analysis reveals only a slight increase in the labor force participation rate for nonmarried as opposed to married females (these rates are 82.5% and 77.0%, respectively). Participation rates for nonmarried and married males are seen to be very similar (these rates are 90.3% and 90.8%, respectively).

Finally, the data presented in Table 5 for respondents who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years reveal that there are fewer full-time homemakers and more students among nonmarried as opposed to married females (2.5% versus 18.9% for full-time homemakers and 12.5% versus 4.1% for students, respectively).

For respondents who have been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years the employment pattern is similar, though more pronounced, to that described above. As can be seen in Table 5, there are more

nonmarried males than married males who were temporarily unemployed (30% versus 7.3%, respectively), and there are more nonmarried females than married females who were employed (70.5% as opposed to 49.6%, respectively). Among nonmarried and married males, 60 percent versus 86.4 percent were employed, respectively.

Although the labor force participation rate for nonmarried respondents who have been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years is marginally greater than for their married counterparts (83.7% as opposed to 75.8%, respectively), virtually all of this difference is due to the greater labor force participation rate for nonmarried females (79.6%) than married females (59.3%).

Finally, the data for respondents who have been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years reveal that there are fewer full-time homemakers among nonmarried as opposed to married females (9.1% versus 36.1%, respectively). On the other hand, the proportion of students among the nonmarried and married females in this group is very similar (4.5% compared with 3.4%, respectively).

Thus, in summary, there is an overall tendency for more nonmarried males to be unemployed and more nonmarried females to be employed relative to their married counterparts. In addition, nonmarried females are more likely to be in the labor force and less likely to be full-time homemakers than married females.

Income level

Table 6 shows the annual combined income, before tax, of nonmarried and married cohabitants broken down by duration of relationship. As can be seen, the income level of nonmarried couples who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years is somewhat less than their married counterparts. For example, 57.1 percent of nonmarried couples have an annual income of less than \$30,000, whereas only 41.3 percent of married couples have an income within this range.

This trend is continued for couples who have been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years. That is, 55.2 percent of nonmarried couples within this group have an income below \$30,000, whereas only 35 percent of married couples fall into the same income range. (The income level of all respondents, broken down by living arrangement and gender can be seen in Table A3 in Appendix C).

Religion

The religion of nonmarried and married cohabitants is shown in Table 7A. Table 7B shows the importance of religion for these respondents. As can be seen, there is little difference between the religious affiliations of respondents who are cohabiting nonmaritally as opposed to maritally. The only appreciable difference is in the proportion of cohabiting respondents with no religious affiliation. Among this group, there are about 8 percent more nonmarried than married cohabitants who claim to have no religious affiliation (these proportions are 20.1% and

TABLE 6

INCOME LEVEL OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITING
COUPLES BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP*

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

LESS THAN 2 YEARS

ANNUAL INCOME:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%
UNDER \$10,000	4	6.3	7	5.8
\$10,000 TO \$19,999	14	22.2	20	16.5
\$20,000 TO \$29,999	18	28.6	23	19.0
\$30,000 TO \$39,999	11	17.5	33	27.3
\$40,000 TO \$49,999	8	12.7	21	17.4
\$50,000 OR MORE	8	12.7	17	14.0
MISSING DATA	5	(7.3)	5	(4.0)
TOTAL	68	100.0	126	100.0

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

2 TO 10 YEARS

ANNUAL INCOME:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%
UNDER \$10,000	4	6.0	14	3.3
\$10,000 TO \$19,999	9	13.4	39	9.3
\$20,000 TO \$29,999	24	35.8	94	22.4
\$30,000 TO \$39,999	9	13.4	109	26.0
\$40,000 TO \$49,999	14	20.9	70	16.7
\$50,000 OR MORE	7	10.4	93	22.2
MISSING DATA	3	(4.3)	22	(5.0)
TOTAL	70	99.9	441	99.9

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

MORE THAN 10 YEARS

ANNUAL INCOME:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%
UNDER \$10,000	0	0.0	37	4.6
\$10,000 TO \$19,999	0	0.0	64	8.0
\$20,000 TO \$29,999	3	42.9	139	17.4
\$30,000 TO \$39,999	2	28.6	186	23.3
\$40,000 TO \$49,999	1	14.3	142	17.8
\$50,000 OR MORE	1	14.3	230	28.8
MISSING DATA	0	(0.0)	72	(8.3)
TOTAL	7	100.1	670	99.9

* Combined annual income gross of taxes.

TABLE 7A

RELIGION OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITING RESPONDENTS

(All respondents 16 years or older)

RELIGION:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%
ANGLICAN	18	12.5	178	12.2
BAPTIST	4	2.8	49	3.4
JEWISH	0	0.0	13	1.0
LUTHERAN	5	3.5	88	6.0
ORTHODOX	6	4.2	30	2.1
PENTECOSTAL	1	0.7	25	1.7
ROMAN CATHOLIC	31	21.5	342	23.5
UNITED CHURCH	38	26.4	365	25.1
OTHER	12	8.3	190	13.0
NONE	29	20.1	174	11.9
MISSING DATA	1	(0.7)	39	(2.6)
TOTAL	145	100.0	1495	99.9

TABLE 7B

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION FOR NONMARRIED AND MARRIED RESPONDENTS

(All respondents 16 years or older)

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%
VERY IMPORTANT	9	6.3	407	27.8
PRETTY IMPORTANT	29	20.1	394	26.9
NOT TOO IMPORTANT	62	43.1	464	31.7
NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	44	30.6	197	13.5
MISSING DATA	1	(0.7)	33	(2.2)
TOTAL	145	100.1	1495	99.9

11.9%, respectively).

There is, however, a fairly strong tendency for nonmarried cohabitants to view religion as not being very important to them. As can be seen in Table 7B, 73.6 percent of nonmarried cohabitants as compared with 45.2 percent of married cohabitants indicate that religion is either "not too important" or "not important at all." On the other hand, 27.8 percent of married versus 6.3 percent of nonmarried cohabitants report that, for them, religion is "very important." Because these data did not differ appreciably in relation to the duration of the relationships or gender, results of those analyses have been omitted.

The religious affiliation of all respondents in the sample, broken down by living arrangement, can be seen in Table A4A in the Appendix C. Similarly, the importance of religion for these respondents can be seen in Table A4B.

Marital history

Table 8 shows a summary of the marital history of nonmarried and married cohabitants broken down by gender. As can be seen, a about one-third of the nonmarried cohabitants have previously been married. In contrast, about one-tenth of the married respondents have previously been married. Similarly, more nonmarried than married cohabitants have been divorced and/or separated. These percentages are 23.8 and 20.0 percent for nonmarried males and females, respectively, and 8.5 and 7.3

TABLE 8
MARITAL HISTORY OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED
COHABITANTS BY GENDER

(All respondents 16 years or older)

MARITAL HISTORY:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		NON-MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PREVIOUSLY MARRIED	23 ^a	37.1 ^b	83	10.4	26	33.8	64	9.5
EVER DIVORCED/SEPARATED	15	23.8	68	8.5	16	20.0	49	7.3
EVER WIDOWED	1	1.6	15	1.9	4	5.2	15	2.3
DEPENDENT CHILD IN THE HOME FROM PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIP ^c	6	9.5	44	5.5	15	18.8	42	6.2

^a Number of respondents who replied "YES."

^b Proportion of respondents who replied "YES," relative to the number who answered the question.

^c Includes children of the respondent's previous relationship and of the respondent's spouse or partner's previous relationship.

percent for married males and females.

A related finding is that there is a slightly greater proportion of dependent children from a previous relationship of either the respondent or their partner in the homes of nonmarried as opposed to married cohabitants (9.5% and 18.8% for male and female nonmarrieds, compared to 5.5% and 6.2% for their married counterparts).

Summary of social and economic characteristics

Approximately three-quarters of the respondents who were cohabiting nonmaritally with a partner of the opposite gender were between 16 and 35 years of age. The majority of their married counterparts, on the other hand, were over 35 years of age. Thus, it would appear either that nonmarital cohabitation is age related (that is, that it represents a contemporary version of courtship), or that it is era related (that is, that it represents a recently popularized alternative to marriage), or both.

Consistent with this finding is the concomitant observation that the duration of the relationship of nonmarried cohabitants tended to be much shorter on average than that of their married counterparts. The median duration for nonmarried and married cohabitant relationships was 2.08 and 13.33 years, respectively. As a consequence of this difference, cohabitants have been grouped, where appropriate, according to duration of relationship in the comparative descriptions that make up this report. In

addition, cohabitants have been grouped according to gender where appropriate.

Over half of the respondents (56.7%) who were defined as cohabiting nonmaritally described their living arrangement as "a common-law marriage." The vast majority of the remainder choose the term "a close personal relationship." In addition, there was an increase in the tendency to select the term "a common-law marriage" as the duration of the relationship increased. This tendency was slightly greater among female than among male respondents.

As a consequence of these findings, it was suggested that the terms used by nonmarried cohabitants to describe their living arrangement may indicate the perceived permanence of the relationship. Those who use the term "a common-law marriage" may view their living arrangement to be more similar to legal marriage, whereas those who use the term "a close personal arrangement" may view it to be less similar to marriage.

The education level of nonmarried and married respondents who had been cohabiting for less than 2 years was seen to be very similar. However, for those who had been cohabiting for 2 to 10 years, the educational level of male and female nonmarried cohabitants was lower than it was for their married counterparts. Also, males in this group were seen to be more highly educated than females regardless of their cohabitational status.

Proportionally more nonmarried males were unemployed and more nonmarried females were employed when compared with their married counterparts who had been cohabiting for 10 years or less. Moreover, the labor force participation rate for nonmarried as opposed to married females was higher by about 20 percent, for those cohabiting for 2 years or more. The labor force participation rate was similar for nonmarried and married cohabiting males. There were proportionally fewer full-time homemakers and marginally more students among nonmarried females cohabitants than among their married counterparts.

The income level of nonmarried couples who had been cohabiting for 10 years or less was lower than married couples who had been cohabiting for the same period. Of this group, approximately 53 percent of nonmarried as opposed to 35 percent of married couples reported combined annual incomes below \$30,000.

Although nonmarried and married cohabitants did not appear to differ in terms of their religious affiliation, only about one-quarter of the nonmarried cohabitants viewed religion as being important to them. In comparison, a little more than one-half of the married cohabitants viewed religion as being important.

Finally, about one-third of nonmarried cohabitants had been previously married as compared with one-tenth of their married counterparts. The majority of these were divorced or separated as opposed to being widowed. Related to this is the finding that

there was a slightly greater proportion of dependent children from a previous relationships of the respondent or their partner in the homes of nonmarried as compared to married cohabitants.

Living Arrangements of Cohabiting Couples

Dependent children

Table 9 shows the occurrence and relationship of dependent children in the homes of nonmarried and married couples who have been cohabiting for 10 years or less. The cohabitation duration of 10 years or less has been selected for these comparisons because approximately 95 percent of nonmarried couples fall within this range (see Table 2). Also, 10 years seems to be a reasonable period of time for cohabiting couples to establish families if they are inclined to do so. It should be noted, however, that even within the limited time frame of 10 years there remains an over representation of short duration relationships among nonmarried cohabitants relative to their married counterparts. Thus, in the comparisons that have been presented, nonmarried cohabitants had less time, on average, to establish families than married couples.

As Table 9 reveals, about one-quarter of the nonmarried couples who have been cohabiting for 10 years or less report that they have one or more dependent children in their home. On the other hand, nearly two-thirds of comparable married couples have one or more dependent children in their home. Secondly, nonmarried couples with dependent children in their home tend to have fewer children than their married counterparts. That is, there are proportionally more nonmarried families with one dependent child in the home than there are with two or more (14.0% versus 11.8%, respectively), whereas these proportions are

TABLE 9

DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED
RESPONDENTS COHABITING FOR TEN YEARS OR LESS

(All respondents 16 years or older)

	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN IN THE HOMES OF RESPONDENTS:				
NONE	101	74.3	219	39.4
ONE	19	14.0	146	26.3
TWO OR MORE	16	11.8	191	34.3
MISSING DATA	2	(1.4)	11	(1.9)
TOTAL	138	100.1	567	100.0
RESPONDENTS WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN IN THE HOME:				
A. That are of the current relationship	20	57.1	309	94.8
B. That are of a previous relationship	25	71.4	77	24.6
SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN IN THE HOME:				
A. Other than respondent	20	57.1	167	50.6
B. Current spouse/ partner	19	95.0	161	94.7
C. Child's parent from a previous relationship	4	20.0	13	7.8
RESPONDENTS WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN LIVING ELSEWHERE	12	8.9	20	3.6
RESPONDENTS WHO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN LIVING ELSEWHERE	6	54.5	13	59.1

reversed for married couples (26.3% versus 34.2%).

Among nonmarried couples who do have dependent children in their home, 71.4 percent of these families include children of a previous relationship of either the respondent or their partner. For married couples, only 24.6 percent of the families fall into this category. In contrast, 57.1 percent of the nonmarried couples who do have dependent children in their home, have one or more children that are of their current relationship. This figure is 94.8 percent for comparable married couples.

Sources of financial support for dependent children, as shown in Table 9, are very similar for nonmarried and married couples who have been cohabiting for 10 years or less. However, 20 percent of the children of nonmarried couples receive support from the child's parent from a previous relationship, while only 7.8 percent of the children of married couples receive such support. This difference reflects the previously reported observation that proportionally more nonmarried than married couples are living with a dependent child of a previous relationship. Approximately the same proportion of nonmarried and married couples who live with a dependent child of a previous relationship (16.0% and 16.9%, respectively) receive support from the child's other biological parent.

When data concerning dependent children were analyzed according to how nonmarried cohabitants describe their living arrangement, the following patterns emerged. Almost twice as many nonmarried cohabitants who describe their living arrangement as

"a common-law relationship" have dependent children in the home as compared to those who describe it as "a close personal relationship" (these proportions are 35.8% and 18.3%, respectively). In addition, those who use the term "a common-law relationship" have proportionately more children in their home than those who use the term "a close personal relationship." For example, 17.3 percent of the former cohabitants report having 2 or more children in their home, while none of the latter report having more than one. Finally, among nonmarried cohabitants with dependent children in their homes, 69.0 percent of those who describe their living arrangement as "a common-law marriage" have children that are of their current relationship. This proportion is 34.6 percent for those who describe their living arrangement as "a close personal relationship."

Thus, nonmarried cohabitants who describe their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship," as opposed to "a close personal relationship," appear more similar to married cohabitants in terms of having dependent children in their home.

Financial arrangements

Table 10 shows the types of financial arrangements nonmarried and married cohabiting couples have with each other. These data are broken down by duration of relationship and by gender.

Among couples who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years, a larger proportion of the nonmarried than married

TABLE 10

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITING
COUPLES BY GENDER AND BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

LESS THAN 2 YEARS

TYPE OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH PARTNER OR SPOUSE:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON- MARRIED		MARRIED		NON- MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GIVE AN ALLOWANCE	8*	27.6*	10	19.6	3	7.9	9	13.2
RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE	3	10.3	7	13.7	6	15.8	8	11.8
GENERALLY POOL RESOURCES	24	80.0	49	96.1	23	60.5	61	88.4
HAVE JOINT BANK ACCOUNT	9	30.0	42	80.8	5	13.2	56	80.0
HAVE SEPARATE BANK ACCOUNT	28	93.3	27	52.9	34	89.5	47	67.1
LEFT JOB TO BECOME HOMEMAKER	1	3.4	0	0.0	1	2.6	11	15.9
PARTNER LEFT JOB TO BECOME HOMEMAKER	0	0.0	13	25.0	0	0.0	1	1.5

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

2 TO 10 YEARS

TYPE OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH PARTNER OR SPOUSE:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON- MARRIED		MARRIED		NON- MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GIVE AN ALLOWANCE	1	3.8	56	27.2	4	10.3	30	13.6
RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE	0	0.0	19	9.2	5	12.8	50	22.9
GENERALLY POOL RESOURCES	18	69.9	189	90.3	30	75.0	195	88.6
HAVE JOINT BANK ACCOUNT	10	38.5	190	91.3	15	39.5	192	87.3
HAVE SEPARATE BANK ACCOUNT	21	80.8	75	36.8	33	82.5	120	54.5
LEFT JOB TO BECOME HOMEMAKER	0	0.0	2	1.0	6	15.0	103	46.6
PARTNER LEFT JOB TO BECOME HOMEMAKER	2	7.7	88	42.3	2	5.1	8	3.7

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

MORE THAN 10 YEARS

TYPE OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH PARTNER OR SPOUSE:	MALES				FEMALES			
	NON- MARRIED		MARRIED		NON- MARRIED		MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GIVE AN ALLOWANCE	1	20.0	127	27.3	0	0.0	34	10.5
RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE	0	0.0	33	7.1	1	50.0	75	22.9
GENERALLY POOL RESOURCES	4	80.0	430	90.1	2	100.0	296	89.2
HAVE JOINT BANK ACCOUNT	4	80.0	424	86.7	1	50.0	308	89.8
HAVE SEPARATE BANK ACCOUNT	3	60.0	209	43.7	2	100.0	196	58.0
LEFT JOB TO BECOME HOMEMAKER	0	0.0	28	6.1	1	50.0	233	68.9
PARTNER LEFT JOB TO BECOME HOMEMAKER	1	20.0	289	60.6	0	0.0	15	4.6

* Number of respondents who answered "yes."

* Proportion of respondents who answered "yes" relative to the total number who responded to the question.

cohabitants, regardless of gender, report having separate bank accounts (these proportions are 91.2% and 61.2%, respectively, after combining male and female respondents). In addition, the proportion of nonmarried couples who have joint bank accounts is less (these proportions are 28.0% and 80.3%, respectively, for nonmarried and married cohabitants).

Although a small portion of respondents either give or receive an allowance, the majority of both nonmarried and married couples generally pool their resources. The pooling of resources is, however, more prevalent among married cohabitants. Finally, a greater proportion of married females report that they had left employment to become full-time homemakers during their present relationship than is the case for nonmarried females.

The foregoing patterns of financial arrangements can describe, with few exceptions, couples who have been cohabiting for 2 or more years as well (see Table 10 for details).

When these data were analyzed according to how nonmarried cohabitants describe their living arrangement, those who use the term "a common-law relationship" more often report that they pool their resources than do those who use the term "a close personal relationship" (these proportions are 78.8% versus 63.9%, respectively). Also, 43 percent of the former report having a joint bank account, whereas only 20 percent of the latter report the same. No other notable differences in financial arrangements were observed between these two groups of nonmarried cohabitants.

Property ownership

Property ownership of nonmarried and married cohabiting couples is shown in Table 11. As can be seen, over 60 percent of nonmarried couples who have been living together for up to 10 years do not own a house. The proportion of married couples who likewise do not own a house ranges from 54.1 percent for couples cohabiting for less than 2 years to 22.2 percent for those cohabiting for 2 to 10 years and 6.0 percent for those cohabiting for more than 10 years. Thus, married cohabitants are more likely to own a house than nonmarrieds, particularly as the duration of the relationship increases from less than 2 years to 2 years or more.

This table also reveals a strong tendency for married couples to have joint ownership of a house. Nonmarried couples, on the other hand, tend to report separate ownership more frequently.

With regard to the ownership of personal property (such as cars and furniture), the majority of married couples report joint as opposed to separate or mixed ownership regardless of the duration of their relationship ("mixed ownership" refers to both partners owning some of the property independently). On the other hand, among nonmarried couples who have been cohabiting for 10 years or less, mixed ownership of personal property is reported more frequently than either joint or separate ownership. Among nonmarried cohabitants who describe their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship," a greater proportion report that

TABLE 11

**PROPERTY OWNERSHIP OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED
COHABITING COUPLES BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP**

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP: LESS THAN 2 YEARS

TYPE OF PROPERTY:	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	N	%	N	%
HOUSE:				
A. Jointly owned	5	7.4	39	32.0
B. Separately owned	14	20.6	16	13.1
C. Mixed ownership	3	4.4	1	0.8
D. Neither own this	46	67.6	66	54.1
(Total)	(68)	(100.0)	(122)	(100.0)
PERSONAL PROPERTY:				
A. Jointly owned	11	16.2	73	59.8
B. Separately owned	11	16.2	7	5.7
C. Mixed ownership	46	67.6	42	34.4
(Total)	(68)	(100.0)	(122)	(99.9)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP: 2 TO 10 YEARS

TYPE OF PROPERTY:	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	N	%	N	%
HOUSE:				
A. Jointly owned	13	19.4	312	72.9
B. Separately owned	12	17.9	16	3.7
C. Mixed ownership	1	1.5	5	1.2
D. Neither own this	41	61.2	95	22.2
(Total)	(67)	(100.0)	(428)	(100.0)
PERSONAL PROPERTY:				
A. Jointly owned	19	28.4	324	75.7
B. Separately owned	16	23.9	15	3.4
C. Mixed ownership	32	47.8	89	20.8
(Total)	(67)	(100.1)	(428)	(99.9)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP: MORE THAN 10 YEARS

TYPE OF PROPERTY:	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	N	%	N	%
HOUSE:				
A. Jointly owned	5	71.4	727	87.8
B. Separately owned	1	14.3	34	4.1
C. Mixed ownership	0	0.0	17	2.1
D. Neither own this	1	14.3	50	6.0
(Total)	(7)	(100.0)	(828)	(100.0)
PERSONAL PROPERTY:				
A. Jointly owned	6	85.7	644	77.8
B. Separately owned	1	14.3	39	4.7
C. Mixed ownership	0	0.0	145	17.5
(Total)	(7)	(100.0)	(828)	(100.0)

they own their home jointly as opposed to separately (these proportions are 20.8% and 14.3%, respectively). Conversely, among those who describe their living arrangement as "a close personal relationship" these proportions are reversed (10.3% versus 25.9%, respectively). There are no appreciable difference between these two groups in home ownership in itself, nor in the way they describe the ownership of their personal property.

Agreements

Table 12 shows the types of agreements between nonmarried and married cohabiting couples, broken down by duration of relationship. It should be remembered that these data are based on the perceptions of only one of the partners of the cohabitational relationship. Data collected in a pilot study (Fisher et al., 1983) indicated that there may be disagreements between partners on these issues.

As may be seen, over one-half of the nonmarried and married cohabitants who own property claim that they have agreements between themselves to cover their ownership. Similarly, about one-half of the nonmarried and married cohabitants have agreements to cover the division of household chores. Married respondents who have been cohabiting for more than 10 years form an exception to this latter observation. Only 34.2 percent of these respondents report that they have agreements to cover the division of household chores.

TABLE 12

**AGREEMENTS OF NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITING
COUPLES BY DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP**

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP: LESS THAN 2 YEARS

	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	N	%	N	%
HAVE AGREEMENTS TO COVER:				
Ownership of property	10	51.4*	53	63.1
Financial support for partner or spouse	20	38.5	52	48.1
Financial support for children	11	47.8	22	36.1
Custody of children	9	40.9	14	25.5
Division of household chores	37	60.7	70	61.4
Don't have any agreements	19	29.7	40	33.4

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP: 2 TO 10 YEARS

	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	N	%	N	%
HAVE AGREEMENTS TO COVER:				
Ownership of property	21	56.8	225	64.7
Financial support for partner or spouse	15	28.8	159	43.2
Financial support for children	6	23.1	142	47.2
Custody of children	3	13.6	82	29.3
Division of household chores	30	50.8	191	49.1
Don't have any agreements	24	40.0	150	36.8

DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP: MORE THAN 10 YEARS

	<u>NONMARRIED</u>		<u>MARRIED</u>	
	N	%	N	%
HAVE AGREEMENTS TO COVER:				
Ownership of property	5	71.4	513	69.4
Financial support for partner or spouse	2	33.3	363	51.3
Financial support for children	2	40.0	277	47.3
Custody of children	1	25.0	150	29.8
Division of household chores	4	57.1	227	34.2
Don't have any agreements	3	42.9	329	44.3

* Percentages are based on the number of respondents for whom question applied.

Agreements covering financial support for the partner or spouse can be seen to be proportionally less frequent for nonmarried than for married cohabitants. The patterns of agreements regarding financial support for and custody of children are less clear. The sizable fluctuations in these data for respondents who have been cohabiting for less than 2 years, 2 to 10 years, and more than 10 years may be due to the relatively small number of nonmarrieds who have dependent children in the home (see Table 9).

Roughly the same proportion of the cohabitants, whether married or not, report that they do not have agreements between themselves to cover any of the aforementioned areas.

Although there are a series of four additional questions in the survey which were designed to uncover more detail about the nature of the agreements between cohabitants, these questions failed to yield very meaningful information because the patterns of responses were uninterpretable (see questions 25b to 25e of the Questionnaire in Appendix A). Presumably, the questions were worded such that some respondents were able to interpret the questions differently than others. As a consequence, the results of these analyses have been omitted from this report.

Summary of the living arrangements of cohabiting couples

Approximately one-quarter of the respondents who had been cohabiting nonmaritally for 10 years or less had dependent children in their homes. In comparison, almost two-thirds of

married respondents who had been cohabiting for the same period of time had dependent children in their homes. Nonmarrieds who did have dependent children in their homes also tend to have fewer children than did their married counterparts. In addition, their children were less likely to be of the current relationship, and more likely to be of a previous relationship. Sources of financial support for the dependent children were seen to be very similar.

More than one-third of the nonmarried cohabitants who described their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship" were seen to have dependent children in their homes. Less than one-fifth of those who described their relationship as "a close personal relationship" reported having dependent children in their homes. In addition, among nonmarried cohabitants who had dependent children in their homes, 69.0 percent of the respondents who described their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship" reported that they had children that were of their current relationship. On the other hand, this proportion was only 34.6 percent for respondents who described their living arrangement as "a close personal relationship." Thus, nonmarried cohabitants who describe their living arrangement as "a commonlaw relationship" appear to be more similar to married cohabitants in terms of the occurrence of dependent children in the home than do those who describe it as "a close personal relationship."

In terms of their financial arrangements, nonmarried cohabitants were seen to have separate bank accounts more often, and to have joint bank accounts less often than their married counterparts. Although the majority of both groups reported that they generally pool their resources, this arrangement was more frequently reported by married cohabitants.

The financial arrangements of nonmarried cohabitants who described their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship," as opposed to "a close personal relationship," tended to be more like those of their married counterparts. That is, proportionally twice as many of the former reported that they had joint bank accounts. In addition, 78.8 percent of the former, as compared to 63.9 percent of the latter, reported that they generally pool their resources.

Comparisons of property ownership patterns revealed the following. Home ownership was less common among nonmarried respondents than among their married counterparts. Also, nonmarrieds owning a home were less likely to claim joint ownership than were their marrieds counterparts.

In terms of the ownership of personal property (such as cars and furniture), nonmarried respondents who had been cohabiting for 10 years or less reported that they had mixed ownership more often than joint ownership. The majority of married respondents, on the other hand, reported joint ownership more often than mixed.

Nonmarried cohabitants who described their relationship as "a common law relationship" and who owned a home were more likely to report joint as opposed to separate ownership. Conversely, those who described their living arrangement as "a close personal arrangement" were more likely to report separate as opposed to joint ownership of their home. There were no appreciable differences between these groups in the proportion owning homes nor in the way they described the ownership of their personal property.

Economic Difficulties of Cohabitational
Living Arrangements

Difficulties resulting from the present living arrangement

Table 13 shows the relative frequency with which nonmarried and married cohabitants report experiencing economic difficulties because of their present living arrangement. As can be seen, there is a greater tendency for nonmarried than married cohabitants to report having difficulty getting both government benefits (10% versus 2.5%) and employee benefits (7.2% versus 0.5%).

The types of government benefits that nonmarried cohabitants report having difficulty with include "tax exemptions for dependent partners", "housing grants", "social assistance", "single parent subsidies", "day care subsidies", and "student loans". The few married cohabitants who report having difficulty in this area indicated that their "combined income is too high to qualify for most government handouts."

The types of employee benefits that nonmarried cohabitants report having difficulty with are medical and dental insurance coverage for their partners. A very small proportion of married cohabitants report having difficulties with the same problem. In these cases, it is females who report that they are having difficulty getting medical and dental insurance coverage for their families, although they claim that the coverage is available for the families of male employees at their place of

TABLE 13

ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY NONMARRIED AND MARRIED
COHABITANTS BECAUSE OF THEIR PRESENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DIFFICULTY:	NONMARRIED		MARRIED	
	N=145 ^a	%	N=1495	%
GETTING GOVERNMENT BENEFITS	14 ^b	10.0 ^c	33	2.5
GETTING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	10	7.2	7	0.5
GETTING OR MAINTAINING A JOB	2	1.4	18	1.4
GETTING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF, OR FOR YOUR CHILDREN	3	5.7 ^d	14	2.5
MEETING CLAIMS FOR MONEY OR PROPERTY MADE BY A FORMER SPOUSE	11	22.4 ^d	34	11.6

^a Total number of respondents in this category.^b Number of respondents who replied "Yes."^c Percentage of respondents who replied "Yes," relative to those who answered the question (may be less than the "N" listed in the column heading).^d Percentage of respondents who replied "Yes," relative to those for whom the question was appropriate.

employment.

Table 13 also shows that there is a tendency for nonmarried cohabitants to experience more difficulty than married cohabitants in getting financial support for themselves or for their children (5.7% versus 2.5%). They were also more likely to report difficulty in meeting claims for money or property made by a former spouse (22.4% versus 11.6%).

The former difficulty is reported almost entirely by females who are having problems receiving alimony and/or child support. In contrast, one married cohabitant reported that she was having difficulty getting a business loan without having to have her husband countersign for her.

The difficulty of meeting claims for money or property made by a former spouse is reported almost exclusively by male respondents. This difficulty typically involved problems in meeting alimony and/or child support payments. In the words of one respondent, "there isn't enough financial strength to support two families."

Difficulties resulting from a previous living arrangement

Table 14 shows the relative frequency with which nonmarried cohabitants, married cohabitants, and noncohabitants report experiencing economic difficulties which are the result of the break up of either a previous marriage, or of a previous nonmarital cohabitational relationship. In general, this table reveals that there are more economic difficulties associated with

TABLE 14
ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BECAUSE OF THE BREAK UP
OF A NONMARITAL OR MARITAL COHABITATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

(All respondents 16 years or older)

DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BECAUSE
OF THE BREAK-UP OF A MARRIAGE

DIFFICULTY:	CURRENT COHABITATIONAL STATUS					
	NONMARRIED		MARRIED		NOT COHABITING ^a	
	N=31 ^b	%	N=96	%	N=141	%
GETTING GOVERNMENT BENEFITS	3 ^c	9.7 ^d	4	5.0	5	3.5
GETTING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.4
GETTING OR MAINTAINING A JOB	1	3.2	3	3.8	6	4.1
GETTING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF, OR FOR YOUR CHILDREN	4	22.2 ^e	4	10.3	16	20.8
GETTING PENSION BENEFITS WHEN PREVIOUS SPOUSE, OR PARTNER, RETIRED	0	0.0 ^f	1	6.3	1	3.3

DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BECAUSE
OF THE BREAK-UP OF A NONMARITAL
COHABITATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

DIFFICULTY:	CURRENT COHABITATIONAL STATUS					
	NONMARRIED		MARRIED		NOT COHABITING	
	N=20	%	N=39	%	N=73	%
GETTING GOVERNMENT BENEFITS	0	0.0	1	2.6	1	1.4
GETTING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	0	0.0	1	2.6	0	0.0
GETTING OR MAINTAINING A JOB	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
GETTING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF, OR FOR YOUR CHILDREN	1	20.0	0	0.0	2	9.1
GETTING PENSION BENEFITS WHEN PREVIOUS SPOUSE, OR PARTNER, RETIRED	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	10.0

^a Includes noncohabiting respondents who have never married (34.0%), those who are currently divorced and/or separated (26.4%), and those who are currently widowed (19.6%).

^b Number of respondents in this category; for example, the number of respondents who have experienced the break-up of a marriage just prior to their current living arrangement AND who are currently cohabiting nonmaritally.

^c Number of respondents who replied "Yes."

^d Percentage of respondents who replied "Yes," relative to those who answered the question (may be less than the "N" listed in the column heading).

^e Percentage of respondents who replied "Yes," relative to those for whom the question was appropriate.

the break up of a marriage than with the break up of a nonmarital cohabitational relationship.

This table also shows that there are few if any substantial differences in the relative frequency with which respondents report having problems which, in turn, can be related to their current cohabitational status. That is, current cohabitational status does not appear to be related to whether or not respondents are experiencing economic difficulties that stem from a previous cohabitational relationship.

Summary of economic difficulties

Although the overall frequency was low, nonmarried cohabitants reported more difficulty in getting government benefits and employee benefits than did their married counterparts. Also, nonmarried females reported more difficulty in getting alimony and/or child support from a former spouse, whereas nonmarried males reported more difficulty in meeting claims for money or property made by a former spouse than did married respondents.

In general, marriage breakups seemed to generate more economic difficulties than did the break up of a nonmarital living arrangement. There were, however, few if any substantial differences in the reporting of these difficulties which could be associated with the respondents' current cohabitational living arrangements.

Reasons for Cohabiting Nonmaritally

Table 15A lists thirteen reasons people may have for cohabiting nonmaritally. The data contained under the column heading "Importance Then" are the mean ratings respondents gave to the following question: "Why did you begin living with your present partner? How important were the following reasons at the time you began living together?" Respondents were asked to rate each reason from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "not very important" and 5 meaning "very important" (respondents could also select a "does not apply" response). The data under the column heading "Importance Now" are mean ratings to the question: "Why are you now living together?" A similar set of ratings completed by married cohabitants is presented for comparison in Table 15B. These questions and the response format can be seen in Part 4 of the Questionnaire (see Appendix A).

The reasons listed in Tables 15A and 15B have been rank ordered from most to least important according to their mean Importance Then rating. Also, the difference between the Importance Then and the Importance Now mean ratings have been tested for statistical significance using paired comparison procedures. A fairly stringent significance level of .01 or less was adopted for these and other comparisons in this report because of the exploratory nature of these investigation.

Only data from couples who have been cohabiting for 10 years or less have been presented in Tables 15A and 15B. The

cohabitational duration of 10 years or less has been selected so that comparisons can be made between reasonably sized groups of nonmarried and married cohabitants, and because approximately 95 percent of nonmarried couples fall within this range (see Table 2).

Because the wording of some of the questions in this section of the questionnaire differed for nonmarried and married respondents, responses from nonmarried and married cohabitants will be presented separately. Comparisons between the responses of nonmarried and married cohabitants then will be presented for those questions which had comparable wording. The final analyses will examine differences between the responses of males and females and between nonmarried cohabitants who describe their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship" and "a close personal relationship."

Nonmarried cohabitants

Among the list of reasons for living together presented in Table 15A, the alternative, *We were (are) in love*, was rated by nonmarried cohabitants as being the most important both Then and Now. This reason is followed closely by, *For companionship*. The alternative, *At least one of us was not legally free to marry*, received a mean Importance Then rating of 3.73, and is therefore ranked third. It should be noted, however, that less than a quarter of the respondents (N=30) rated this alternative. This alternative apparently did not apply to the other respondents.

TABLE 15A

REASONS FOR COHABITING NONMARITALLY, RATED IN TERMS OF THEIR IMPORTANCE AT THE TIME THE RESPONDENT BEGAN COHABITING (IMPORTANCE THEN) AND NOW (IMPORTANCE NOW). REASONS ARE RANKED ACCORDING TO THEIR MEAN IMPORTANCE THEN RATING. RESPONSES RANGE IN VALUE FROM 1 TO 5 WITH 5 MEANING THAT THE REASON WAS (IS) VERY IMPORTANT. ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN COHABITING FOR 10 YEARS OR LESS.

(All respondents are 16 years or older)

RANK: REASON:	IMPORTANCE THEN		IMPORTANCE NOW		MEAN DIFF.	T VALUE
	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION		
1 LOVE (N=123)	4.39	0.98	4.53	0.89	-0.14	1.72
2 COMPANIONSHIP (N=128)	3.92	1.24	4.28	1.10	-0.36	4.01*
3 ONE OF US WAS (IS) NOT LEGALLY FREE TO MARRY (N=30)	3.73	1.78	3.30	1.99	0.43	1.78
4 DIDN'T WANT THE LEGAL COMMITMENT OF MARRIAGE (N=78)	3.50	1.63	2.76	1.76	0.74	4.09*
5 WE DIDN'T REALLY PLAN IT (N=69) ¹	3.26	1.55	--	--	--	--
6 TRIAL MARRIAGE (N=85)	3.16	1.45	2.82	1.56	0.33	2.39
7 SEX (N=106)	3.00	1.54	3.24	1.55	-0.24	2.28
8 ECONOMIC (N=96)	2.67	1.48	2.67	1.61	0.00	--
9 DIDN'T WANT THE PERSONAL COMMITMENT OF MARRIAGE (N=77)	2.61	1.64	2.42	1.63	0.19	1.16
10 POSTPONED MARRIAGE FOR ECONOMIC REASONS (N=44)	2.39	1.69	2.36	1.73	0.03	0.12
11 DIDN'T WANT THE SOCIAL COMMITMENT OF MARRIAGE (N=70)	2.37	1.54	2.03	1.45	0.34	2.67*
12 BIRTH (OR IMPENDING BIRTH) OF A CHILD (N=16)	1.75	1.44	2.37	1.89	-0.62	1.78
13 COULDN'T GET DIVORCE FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS (N=14)	1.29	1.07	1.29	1.07	0.00	--

* Significant at the .01 level or less ($p < .01$).

¹ Question relates to reason for beginning to live together and not for staying together.

Of particular interest is the relatively high rating given to the alternative, *We didn't want the legal commitment that marriage involves.* This reason is ranked fourth in Importance Then with a mean rating of 3.50. The alternatives, *We didn't really plan it*, *As a trial marriage*, and *To have a sexual relationship*, are ranked fifth, sixth, and seventh. Their mean Importance Then ratings are 3.26, 3.16, and 3.00, respectively.

The following reasons, listed in descending order, were given mean Importance Then ratings of less than 3.

- * *For economic reasons. Its less expensive to live together.*
- * *We didn't want the personal commitment that marriage involves.*
- * *We wanted to get married, but postponed it because of current economic reasons.*
- * *We didn't want the social commitment that marriage involves.*
- * *Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child.*
- * *At least one of us couldn't get a divorce for religious reasons.*

As may also be seen in Table 15A, mean Importance Then ratings are very similar to mean Importance Now ratings. In fact, only four of the thirteen reasons have mean differences that are statistically significant. The reason, *For companionship*, was rated by nonmarried cohabitants as being less important Then as opposed to Now (the mean Then minus Now difference is -0.36). On the other hand, the reasons, *At least one of us was (is) not legally free to marry* and *We didn't (don't) want the social commitment that marriage involves*, were rated as more important

Then as opposed to Now (these mean differences are 0.74 and 0.34, respectively).

Married cohabitants

A list of ten reasons for cohabiting maritally are shown in Table 15B. As may be seen, the alternatives, *We were (are) in love*, *For the personal commitment that marriage involves*, and *For companionship*, have the three highest mean Importance Then as well as Importance Now ratings. As was the case for nonmarried cohabitants, the alternative, *For companionship*, was rated as being significantly less important for married cohabitants Then as opposed to Now (this mean difference is -0.20).

The alternative, *For the legal commitment that marriage involves*, is ranked fourth with a mean Importance Then rating of 3.04. This is in contrast to the inversely worded alternative, *We didn't want the legal commitment that marriage involves*, which was given a mean rating of 3.50 by nonmarried cohabitants.

The remaining reasons were given mean Importance Then ratings of less than 3. Listed in descending order, these are:

- * *Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child.*
- * *For the social commitment that marriage involves.*
- * *To have a sexual relationship.*
- * *For the religious commitment that marriage involves.*
- * *We didn't really plan it.*
- * *For economic reasons. It's less expensive to live together.*

TABLE 15B

REASONS FOR COHABITING MARITALLY, RATED IN TERMS OF THEIR IMPORTANCE AT THE TIME THE RESPONDENT BEGAN COHABITING (IMPORTANCE THEN) AND NOW (IMPORTANCE NOW). REASONS ARE RANKED ACCORDING TO THEIR MEAN IMPORTANCE THEN RATING. RESPONSES RANGE IN VALUE FROM 1 TO 5 WITH 5 MEANING THAT THE REASON WAS (IS) VERY IMPORTANT. ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN COHABITING FOR 10 YEARS OR LESS.

(All respondents are 16 years or older)

RANK: REASON:	<u>IMPORTANCE THEN</u>		<u>IMPORTANCE NOW</u>		MEAN DIFF.	T VALUE
	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION		
1 LOVE (N=517)	4.68	0.73	4.66	0.76	0.02	0.82
2 PERSONAL COMMITMENT (N=508)	4.19	1.56	4.20	1.87	-0.01	0.27
3 COMPANIONSHIP (N=507)	4.18	1.07	4.38	0.94	-0.20	5.61*
4 LEGAL COMMITMENT (N=460)	3.04	1.56	3.07	1.57	-0.03	0.55
5 BIRTH (OR IMPENDING BIRTH) OF CHILD (N=168)	2.64	1.78	3.06	1.81	-0.42	3.32*
6 SOCIAL COMMITMENT (N=456)	2.63	1.40	2.59	1.44	0.04	0.81
7 SEX (N=470)	2.61	1.45	2.82	1.46	-0.21	4.69*
8 RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT (N=433)	2.60	1.61	2.63	1.67	-0.03	1.12
9 DIDN'T REALLY PLAN IT (N=156) ¹	1.92	1.38	--	--	--	--
10 ECONOMICS (N=406)	1.59	1.04	1.88	1.27	-0.29	5.86*

* Significant at the .01 level or less ($p < .01$).

¹ Question relates to reason for beginning to live together and not for staying together.

Besides the alternative, *For companionship*, three other alternatives may be seen to have lower mean Importance Then as opposed to Importance Now ratings. These are: *Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child*, *To have a sexual relationship*, and *For economic reasons* (these mean differences are -0.42, -0.21 and -0.29, respectively).

Comparison of nonmarried and married cohabitants

Seven comparably worded reasons for cohabiting were rated by both nonmarried and married respondents. A comparison of these reasons is shown in Tables 16A and 16B. The mean Importance Then ratings for six of the seven alternatives have been presented in Table 16A. One of the alternatives (*For convenience. It's easier this way*) was listed only in the Importance Now section of the questionnaire. Thus, it is not included in the Importance Then ratings presented in Table 16A. Similarly, another alternative (*We didn't really plan it*) was only listed in the Importance Then section, and is therefore not included in the Importance Now ratings presented in Table 16B.

As shown in Table 16A, five of the six commonly worded reasons for cohabiting have mean Importance Then ratings that differ significantly for nonmarried and married cohabitants. Three of these were rated as being more important by nonmarried as opposed to married cohabitants. These are: *We didn't really plan it*, *For economic reasons*, and *To have a sexual relationship*. The other two were rated as being less important by nonmarried cohabitants. They are: *We were in love* and *For companionship*.

TABLE 16A

A COMPARISON OF THE MEAN RATINGS GIVEN BY NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITANTS TO SIX REASONS FOR COHABITING. THE RATINGS ARE IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION "HOW IMPORTANT WERE THE FOLLOWING REASONS AT THE TIME YOU BEGAN LIVING TOGETHER?" THESE IMPORTANCE THEN RATINGS RANGE IN VALUE FROM 1 TO 5, WITH 5 MEANING "VERY IMPORTANT." ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN COHABITING FOR 10 YEARS OR LESS.

(All respondents are 16 years or older)

IMPORTANCE THEN

REASON:	NONMARRIED			MARRIED			MEAN DIFF.	F RATIO
	NUMBER	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION	NUMBER	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION		
LOVE	129	4.03	0.97	549	4.67	0.73	-0.64	12.23*
COMPANIONSHIP	129	3.87	1.27	539	4.19	1.08	-0.32	7.93*
WE DIDN'T REALLY PLAN IT	69	3.26	1.55	156	1.92	1.38	1.34	14.04*
ECONOMIC REASONS	107	2.53	1.51	445	1.58	1.03	0.95	60.59*
SEX	115	3.00	1.55	499	2.39	1.45	0.61	7.16*
BIRTH OF CHILD	18	1.83	1.46	206	2.54	1.78	-0.74	2.70

* Significant at the .01 level or less ($p < .01$).

TABLE 16B

A COMPARISON OF THE MEAN RATINGS GIVEN BY NONMARRIED AND MARRIED COHABITANTS TO SIX REASONS FOR COHABITING. THE RATINGS ARE IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION "HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING REASONS TO YOU NOW FOR STAYING TOGETHER?" THESE IMPORTANCE NOW RATINGS RANGE FROM 1 TO 5, WITH 5 MEANING "VERY IMPORTANT." ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN COHABITING FOR 10 YEARS OR LESS.

(All respondents are 16 years or older)

IMPORTANCE NOW

REASON:	NONMARRIED			MARRIED			MEAN DIFF.	F RATIO
	NUMBER	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION	NUMBER	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION		
LOVE	124	4.53	0.89	527	4.65	0.77	-0.12	2.21
COMPANIONSHIP	126	4.28	1.10	518	4.37	0.94	-0.09	0.96
CONVENIENCE	69	2.75	1.58	156	1.88	1.36	0.87	10.66*
ECONOMIC REASONS	100	2.62	1.60	435	1.92	1.31	0.70	21.15*
SEX	111	3.23	1.56	486	2.89	1.46	0.41	7.05*
BIRTH OF CHILD	23	2.70	1.89	306	3.56	1.72	-0.86	5.28

* Significant at the .01 level or less ($p < .01$).

A comparison of the mean **Importance Now** ratings for nonmarried and married cohabitants is shown in Table 16B. As can be seen, only three of the six alternatives have ratings that are significantly different for nonmarried and married cohabitants. All three were rated as being more important by nonmarrieds. These alternatives are: *For convenience*, *For economic reasons*, and *To have a sexual relationship*. They are essentially, the same three reasons that were observed to be more important for nonmarrieds in terms of the **Importance Then** mean ratings.

Additional Analyses

Additional analyses of the data failed to reveal any significant gender differences among nonmarried cohabitants. That is, no statistically significant differences were found between the mean ratings given by nonmarried female as opposed to male cohabitants to the thirteen reasons that had been listed.

On the other hand, one reason was rated differently by female as opposed to male married cohabitants. The alternative, *For the personal commitment that marriage involves*, was given a higher **Importance Then** mean rating by married females than males (these means are 4.34 and 3.98 for female and male respondents, respectively; $t=3.48$, $df=532$).

When the data were analyzed according to how nonmarried cohabitants describe their living arrangement, the following patterns emerged. Those who describe their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship" as opposed to "a close personal

relationship" gave reliably lower mean Importance Now ratings to four of the thirteen alternatives. These are:

- * *We don't want the legal commitment of marriage*
(Mean: 2.35 versus 3.48. $t=2.98$; $df=81$).
- * *For convenience. It's easier this way*
(Mean: 2.41 versus 3.39. $t=3.10$; $df=88$).
- * *We don't want the personal commitment that marriage involves*
(Mean: 2.00 versus 3.12. $t=3.17$; $df=82$).
- * *We don't want the social commitment that marriage involves*
(Mean: 1.69 versus 2.64. $t=2.87$; $df=77$).

On the other hand, the same respondents gave a higher mean Importance Now rating to the alternative, *We are in love*. These means are 4.71 and 4.28, respectively ($t=2.73$; $df=121$). Thus, it would appear that nonmarried cohabitants who describe their living arrangement as "a commonlaw relationship" are more committed to their current living arrangement than those who describe it as "a close personal arrangement."

Summary of reasons for cohabiting

Nonmarried and married cohabitants alike rated love as the most important reason for choosing to live with their partner or spouse, both at the time the decision to cohabit was made and later. Companionship was rated second by nonmarried cohabitants and third, behind personal commitment, by married cohabitants.

Although love and companionship were rated very highly by both nonmarried and married cohabitants, nonmarried cohabitants, on average, rated these reasons as being less important at the

time the relationship was established than did married cohabitants.

An important reason for about one-quarter of the nonmarried cohabitants was that one or the other partner was not legally free to marry. In general, however, avoiding the legal commitment that marriage involves was rated as a fairly important reason by nonmarried cohabitants. Married respondents, in contrast, reported that the legal commitment involved in marriage was a fairly important consideration for them.

In general, the response patterns seem to suggest that nonmarried cohabitants, on average, are somewhat less committed to their living arrangement than married cohabitants. Nonmarried cohabitants, for example, placed a fair degree of "importance" on the fact that they didn't really plan the living arrangement that they are now in, and that one of their considerations for staying in the relationship is its convenience. Neither of these considerations were rated very highly by married cohabitants.

However, nonmarried cohabitants who described their living arrangement as "a common-law relationship" rather than as "a close personal relationship" responded more like married cohabitants. For example, they rated such considerations as avoiding the legal, personal and social commitments that marriage involves, and convenience as less important than did those who described their living arrangement as "a close personal relationship."

Interestingly, the gender of the respondent did not appear to have much influence on the ratings that were given. One exception was that married females tended to rate the personal and legal commitment that marriage involves higher than married males.

Attitudes Concerning Legal Issues of Nonmarital Cohabitation

Seven situations were described in which the legal rights of a man and woman who are living together, but who are not legally married, differ from those of a legally married couple in the province of Alberta. In each case, respondents were asked to indicate whether they think unmarried couples should or should not have the same legal rights as married couples in these situations. In addition, they were asked to indicate how strongly they felt about it. It should be noted that the descriptions of these situations were not intended to be legally precise statements, rather they were intended to convey, simply and briefly, the essence of the issue.

Respondents who felt "very strongly", "pretty strongly", or "not too strongly" that they should have the same rights were given a score of "+3", "+2", or "+1", respectively. On the other hand, those who felt "very strongly", "pretty strongly", or "not too strongly" that they should not have the same rights were given a score of "-3", "-2", and "-1", respectively. Respondents who had expressed "no opinion" on the issue were given a score of "0". The response format can be seen in Part 3 of the Questionnaire (see Appendix A). The situations, as described in the Questionnaire, are presented in Table 17 along with their mean and median scores.

TABLE 17

SITUATIONS COMPARING THE LEGAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MARRIED AND NONMARRIED COHABITANTS IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, WITH THE MEAN AND MEDIAN OPINION SCORE FOR EACH

SITUATIONS:

A. Adoption Rights:

(Mean¹ = -1.05; Median Score² = -2)

A married couple can adopt a child if they meet certain requirements, but an unmarried couple cannot. Do you think an unmarried couple who meet the same requirements as a married couple should or should not be able to adopt a child?

B. Paternal Rights:

(Mean = 0.97; Median Score = +2)

The law states that a married couple have an equal say in how their child should be brought up (schooling, religion, discipline, medical treatment, etc.). An unmarried couple do not have an equal say in these things. Do you think an unmarried father who is living in a common-law union with his child's mother should or should not have the same legal rights as the mother?

C. Estate Rights of the Surviving Partner:

(Mean = 0.30; Median Score = +1)

When a married person dies without a will, the surviving spouse is entitled to a share of the estate. However, the surviving partner of a common-law union does not have those same rights to the estate of the deceased partner. Do you think the law should or should not be the same for married and unmarried couples in this situation?

D. Estate Rights of the Surviving Child:

(Mean = 1.64; Median Score = +2)

When a married person dies without a will, the surviving children are entitled to a share of the estate. However, the surviving children of a common-law union do not have the same rights. Do you think the law should or should not be the same for the children of married and unmarried couples in this situation?

E. Contesting the Estate:

(Mean = 0.36; Median Score = +1)

When a married person dies, with or without a will, the surviving spouse can make a claim to receive some of the estate if they think they haven't been properly provided for. Do you think an unmarried person should or should not be able to make a similar claim against the estate of the partner he or she has been living with?

F. Division of Property:

(Mean = 0.52; Median Score = +1)

Do you think a man and woman who live together, but who are not married, should or should not have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in dividing up property if the couple break up?

G. Support Payments to the dependent partner:

(Mean = 0.00; Median Score = 0)

Do you think a man and woman who live together, but who are not married should or should not have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in making support payments to a dependent partner if the couple breaks up?

¹ The arithmetic mean of scores ranging from -3 (respondent feels "very strongly that they should not") to +3 (respondent feels "very strongly that they should").

² The score which divides the sample in half. For example, 50% of the sample have a score of -2 or higher in SITUATION A. The N ranged from 2,309 to 2,254.

Overview

Probability distributions of the scores for each of the seven situations can be seen in Figures 4A to 4G. As these figures reveal, about 10 percent of the respondents, on average, either did not have or did not express an opinion on a given situation (these are the respondents with a score of "0"). An additional 10 percent, or less, did not feel very strongly about the issue, although they did have an opinion concerning the situation (these are the respondents with scores of "+1" or "-1"). Thus, for any given situation, relatively firm opinions were expressed by approximately 80 percent of the respondents.

Many of the respondents who did not express a firm opinion commented that the duration of the nonmarital relationship would be critical to their opinion. In general, the argument was that nonmarried partners should not have the same rights and responsibilities as married partners if the nonmarried partners have not been cohabiting for some significant period of time. This argument has been stated in the negative because that reflects the type of comments that the respondents made. It should be noted that many of the respondents who did indicate firm opinions on these issues also qualified their judgments in terms of the duration of the nonmarital relationship. That is, they stated that their opinion is conditional on the fact that the relationship has exceeded some "significant period of time." Because no systematic attempt was made in this survey to determine what the respondents felt was a "significant period of

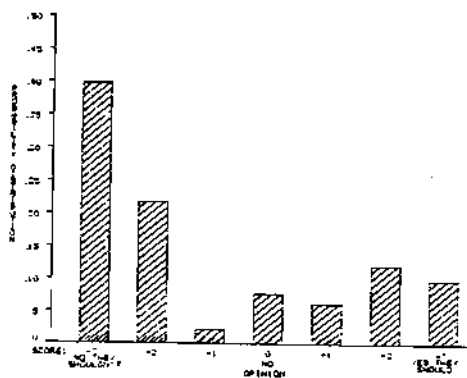


FIGURE 38L ADOPTION RIGHTS

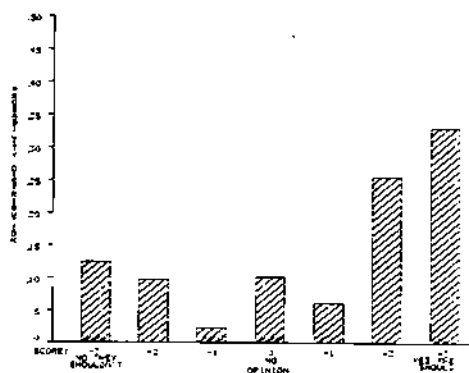


FIGURE 39L PATERNAL RIGHTS

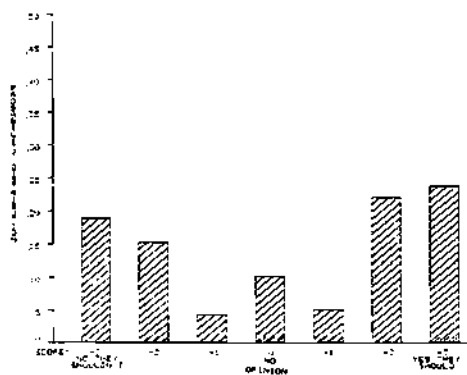


FIGURE 40L ESTATE RIGHTS OF THE SURVIVING PARTNER

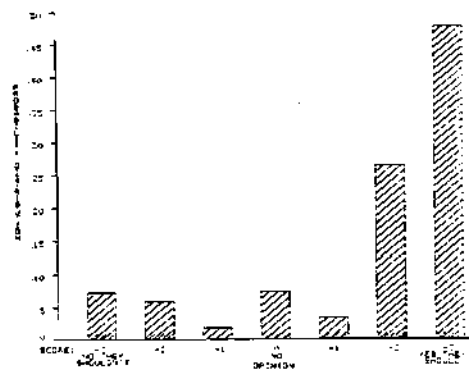


FIGURE 41L ESTATE RIGHTS OF THE SURVIVING CHILD

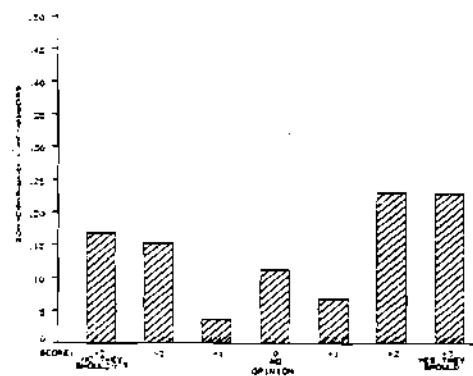


FIGURE 32. CONTESTATION OF THE ESTATE

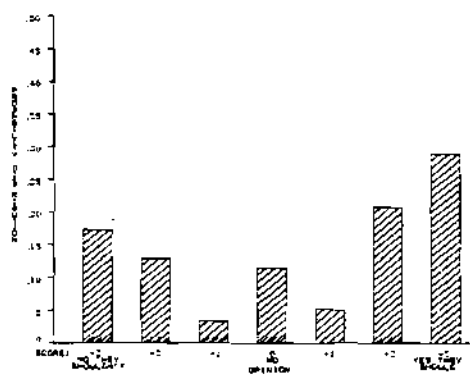


FIGURE 33. DIVISION OF PROPERTY

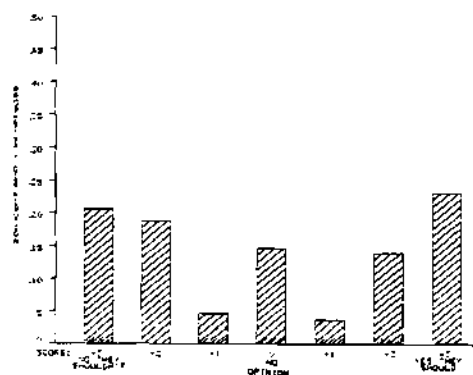


FIGURE 34. SUPPORT PAYMENTS TO THE DEPENDENT PARTNER

time," the determination of this duration will have to await further study.

In addition to identifying the general strength, or lack thereof, of opinion on the issues, Figures 4A to 4G also reveal the degree of consensus among respondents on each of the situations. For example, relatively flat response distributions can be observed for three of the seven situations (Situations C, E and G). This indicates that there is a fairly low degree of consensus among the respondents in these cases. These situations have to do with the estate rights of the surviving partner (Figure 4C and 4E), and the issue of support payments to the dependent partner in the event of the break up of the relationship (Figure 4G).

In contrast, a fairly high degree of consensus can be observed among the respondents in three of the other situations, each involving the issue of children (these are Situations A, B, D). Figure 4A reveals that 61.5 percent of the respondents feel "pretty strongly" or "very strongly" that unmarried couples should not have the same adoption rights as married couples. Figure 4B reveals that 58.7 percent feel "pretty strongly" or "very strongly" that unmarried fathers should have the same legal rights as unmarried mothers in situations where the family is living "common-law." And Figure 4D reveals that 74.2 percent feel "pretty strongly" or "very strongly" that the surviving children of a "common-law union" should be entitled to the same share of the estate in the absence of a will as surviving children of a

marriage.

The response distribution shown in Figure 4F indicates that respondents tend to feel that unmarried couples should have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in the division of property when there is a break up of the relationship (Situation F). However, the figures also reveal that the consensus is not very strong on this issue. That is, less than 50 percent feel either "pretty strongly" or "very strongly" in favor of extending rights to nonmarrieds in this situation.

Additional analyses

In an effort to understand better the attitudes of the respondents in regard to these situations, the opinion scores for each of the seven situations were analyzed in terms of the respondents gender, age, education level, and degree of religiosity. A significance level of .01 has been adopted for these analyses due to the exploratory nature of the investigation. However, because of the large size of the sample, relatively small mean differences in the opinion scores will reach statistical significance. Thus, the magnitude of the mean differences in the data to be reported should be used as a rough estimate of whether or not an observed difference constitutes a "real" difference in terms of population trends. The larger the mean difference, the more important the difference in practical terms (given that the difference is also found to be statistically significant).

Gender: There were no reliable differences between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents in two of the seven situations described. These are Situations *A. Adoption rights*, and *G. Support payments to the dependent partner*.

In the five remaining situations, females were seen to be more in favor of extending marital rights and responsibilities to nonmarital relationships than were males. These situations and their respective means, in order of female then male, are listed below.

- * <F 2>B. Parental rights
Means: 1.10 and 0.84 Mean difference: .26
Standard deviation: 2.16
- * C. Estate rights of the surviving partner
Means: 0.44 and 0.15 Mean difference: .29
Standard deviation: 2.32
- * D. Estate rights of the surviving child
Means: 1.83 and 1.49 Mean difference: .34
Standard deviation: 1.89
- * E. Contesting the estate
Means: 0.53 and 0.24 Mean difference: .29
Standard deviation: 2.53
- * F. Division of property
Means: 0.84 and 0.23 Mean difference: .61
Standard deviation: 2.31

Age: For these comparisons respondents were divided into three groups: those between the ages of 16 and 35; those between 35 and 55; and those Over 55. No reliable differences were found between these groups in their response to Situation *F. Division of Property*, or *G. Support payments to the dependent partner*. In each of the five remaining situations, however, respondents between the ages of 16 and 35 were more in favor of extending

marital rights and responsibilities to nonmarried relationships than were those in the older age groups. These five situations and their respective means, in order of younger to older age groups, are listed below.

- * *A. Adoption rights:*
Means: -.85, -1.18, and -1.24
Standard deviation: 2.20
- * *B. Paternal rights:*
Means: 1.31, 0.80, and 0.54
Standard deviation: 2.16
- * *C. Estate rights in the absence of a will:*
Means: 0.55, 0.09, and 0.12
Standard deviation: 2.32
- * *D. Estate rights of children:*
Means: 1.85, 1.53, and 1.48
Standard deviation: 1.89
- * *E. Contesting the estate:*
Means: 0.59, 0.19, and 0.27
Standard deviation: 2.26

Education level: For these comparisons respondents were divided into three groups according to their level of education: those with less than high school, those with high school and/or non-university diplomas or certificates, and those with a university degree. The only situation in which this grouping was seen to produce reliable differences in mean opinion scores was with regard to situation G. *Support payment to the dependent partner*. Here, the lower the education level of the respondent the more they were in favor of extending marital rights to nonmarried relationships. These means are 0.37, 0.02, and -0.14 in order of lower to higher education level.

Religiosity: For this comparison respondents were divided into two groups according to their answer to the question "How important is religion to you?" Those who answered "very important" or "pretty important" are grouped together in the Religious group. Those who answered "not too important" or "not important at all" are grouped together in the Nonreligious group.

The mean opinion scores of all but one of the situations was found to be reliably related to this grouping of the respondents. That situation was G. *Support payment to the dependent partner*. For the other six situations, respondents in the Nonreligious group were more in favor of extending marital rights to nonmarried relationships than were those in the Religious group. The following is a listing of those situations with their respective means in order of Nonreligious then Religious, respectively.

- * *A. Adoption rights:*
Means: -0.61 and -1.47 Mean difference: .86
Standard deviation: 2.20
- * *B. Paternal rights:*
Means: 1.24 and 0.72 Mean difference: 0.52
Standard deviation: 2.16
- * *C. Estate rights of the surviving partner:*
Means: 0.68 and -0.06. Mean difference: 0.74
Standard deviation: 2.32
- * *D. Estate rights of the surviving child:*
Means: 1.81 and 1.52. Mean difference: 0.29
Standard deviation: 1.89
- * *E Contesting the estate:*
Means: 0.76 and 0.03. Mean difference: 0.73
Standard deviation: 2.26
- * *F. Division of property:*
Means: 0.73 and 0.35. Mean difference: 0.38
Standard deviation: 2.31

Legality of agreements between nonmarried cohabitants

In addition to the opinions concerning the situations described in Table 17, respondents were asked to give their opinions about the legality of certain matters that nonmarried cohabitants may agree to regulate in their relationship. That is: Which matters should and which should not be legally binding in such agreements? Table 18 shows the respondents' opinions on these issues.

As can be seen, there is a lack of consensus with regard to the issue of making agreements concerning *sexual conduct* legally binding. There is also a lack of consensus regarding the regulation of *household chores*.

On the other hand, about three-quarters of the respondents feel that agreements concerning *child care* should be binding. A little over two-thirds feel that agreements concerning *property* and *arrangements to be made on break-up* should be legally binding. Over one-half feel that agreements concerning the *division of expenses* should be legally binding. And, although close to twice as many respondents indicate that agreements concerning *any matters the partners choose* should be legally binding (46.6% versus 23.4%), almost one-third (30.1%) expressed "no opinion" on the matter.

TABLE 18

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE LEGALITY OF AGREEMENTS BETWEEN
NONMARRIED COHABITANTS (SHOULD SUCH AGREEMENTS BE LEGALLY
BINDING?)

(All respondents 16 years or older)

AGREEMENTS:	SHOULD BE	SHOULD NOT BE	NO OPINION
DIVIDING EXPENSES (N=2166)*	57.9	27.0	15.1
HOUSEHOLD CHORES (N=2146)	37.7	43.0	19.3
PROPERTY (N=2152)	69.1	18.1	12.8
CHILD CARE (N=2180)	76.1	12.9	11.0
SEXUAL CONDUCT (N=2127)	36.5	38.2	25.3
ARRANGEMENTS TO BE MADE ON BREAK UP (N=2152)	67.2	16.9	15.8
ANY MATTERS THE PARTNERS CHOOSE (N=2152)	46.6	23.4	30.1

* Number of valid responses. The proportion of missing responses range from 7.4% to 9.6%.

Summary of attitudes concerning legal issues of nonmarital cohabitation

About 10 percent of the respondents did not express an opinion on one or another of the seven situations involving legal issues which were presented. An additional 10 percent reported that they did not feel very strongly about the opinions that they did express. Many of the respondents who did not express a firm opinion commented that the duration of the nonmarital relationship would be a major consideration in their decision. Thus, for any given situation, relatively firm opinions are expressed by approximately 80 percent of the respondents.

Of the seven situations described, a fairly high degree of consensus was observed in three, each involving children. The majority of respondents felt either "pretty strongly" or "very strongly" that unmarried couples should not have the same adoption rights as married couples, that unmarried fathers should have the same legal rights as unmarried mothers in situations where the family is living "common-law," and that the surviving children of a "common-law union" should be entitled to the same share of the estate in the absence of a will as surviving children of a marriage.

In one other situation, the consensus was less strong. A slight majority of respondents expressed the opinion that unmarried couples should have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in the division of property when there is a break up of the relationship. There was however,

a substantial proportion of respondents who expressed the contrary opinion.

Little if any consensus was observed in the remaining three issues: estate rights of the surviving partner, contesting the estate of the deceased partner, and support payments to the dependent partner following the break up of the relationship.

Additional analyses revealed that when there were differences in opinion which could be related to the gender, age, or religiosity of the respondents, the following trends occurred. Females, younger respondents, and respondents who report that religion is not very important to them, all tended to be more strongly in favor of extending marital rights to couples in nonmarital relationship than were their appropriate counterparts. On the other hand, education level was not often observed to be related to the response patterns of the respondents.

Respondents expressed opinions about which matters should and should not be considered legally binding in agreements between nonmarried cohabiting couples. On matters of agreement having to do with child care, property, arrangements to be made on break up, and the division of expenses, the consensus was that such agreements should be legally binding. On agreements involving either sexual conduct or the regulation of household chores, little if any consensus could be discerned.

Chapter Four

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this survey was to obtain data about the living arrangements of adult urban Albertans, with a primary focus on nonmarital cohabitational relationships. The objectives of the survey were to provide an estimate of the prevalence of nonmarital cohabitation, to compare the socio-economic characteristics and living arrangements of nonmarried cohabitants with those of their married counterparts, to examine some of the reasons people give for cohabiting nonmaritally and maritally, and to document the attitudes of urban Albertans about some of the legal issues associated with nonmarital cohabitation.

The degree to which this survey may be judged to be successful in achieving these objectives is dependent to a large extent upon three critical components: the representativeness of the sample of respondents, the quality of their responses, and the quality of the questions asked. Although it is ultimately up to the reader to form such judgments, there are good reasons to believe that the survey has not suffered from any major problems in these areas.

The fact that a little over two-thirds of the randomly selected target sample returned completed questionnaires provides a good measure of assurance that the sample was indeed representative of the target population of adult Albertans living in the Calgary and Edmonton areas. The generally favorable degree

to which the demographics of the obtained sample agreed with recent Census data for these areas is further support for this conclusion. Although the methodology used to obtain the sample was fairly elaborate and time consuming, these results indicate that this effort was appropriate.

Assessing the quality of the responses received can be done from at least three perspectives. First, by examining the amount of missing data, second, by noting the degree to which respondents took the time and effort to clarify their answers and opinions with written comments, and third, by observing the number who requested feedback on the survey.

The practice adopted throughout this report was to specify in the appropriate tables, where practical, the number and percent of missing responses. This was done so that the reader would be able to assess the strength of the data being reported. These figures also provide a preliminary way of assessing the quality of the responses, for large proportions of missing data tend to suggest that the respondents were either careless, that they did not wish to provide the information, or that they were unable to provide an appropriate answer. As a quick review of the tables will confirm, the percent of missing responses rarely was above 5%, and no survey items had extra ordinarily high levels of missing data. These are very acceptable results for a survey of this nature and they provide a preliminary indication that the quality of the responses was good.

Second, what was not adequately reflected in the body of the report was the sizeable amount of written comments that many of the respondents included. In virtually all of these cases, the comments were aimed either at clarifying aspects of their living arrangement, which the respondent thought may be pertinent to the survey, or at clarifying their opinion on matters relating to nonmarital and/or marital cohabitation. Demonstrations of such concern on the part of respondents indicate very serious consideration of the questions and a high quality of response.

Third, as was noted in the Method section of this report, almost half of the respondents (a little over 1,000) requested feedback on the survey by including their name and address on the back of the return envelope. This was a much higher rate than had been expected. It is another indication that the respondents were interested and concerned participants in the survey.

The questionnaire appears to have been of high technical quality. Both the respondents' written comments and their high rates of responding to virtually all the items indicate that the questions and the provided lists of alternative answers were, for most respondents, clear and meaningful.

Judgements about the quality of the content of the questions are best left to individual readers. Ultimately, the questionnaire in particular, and the survey in general, will be assessed on the basis of how well these data answer questions, focus debate and interpretation, and stimulate further research.

This survey, to the best of our knowledge, represents a unique attempt to document and compare, from a socio-legal perspective, the living arrangements of nonmarried and married cohabitants in Canada. We regret that we were unable to survey both rural and urban adults, and that we were unable to survey both members of each cohabiting couple in our sample. However, as with research projects in general, limited resources served to restrict the scope of this project.

As may be recalled, the overall goal of this survey was to collect data which would assist in determining whether proposals for law reform should be initiated in the area of nonmarital cohabitation. However, little was said about this issue in the report. The reason is that this is a technical report of survey findings. It is not an interpretive document of the socio-legal implications of the findings. In a subsequent phase of this project, comments and recommendations from legal sources and other interested parties will be solicited to assist in the interpretation of these findings as they relate to issues in law reform in this area.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire # _____

INSTITUTE OF LAW RESEARCH AND REFORM
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, ALBERTA.

SURVEY OF ADULT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

This survey is being conducted to better understand the living arrangements of Alberta residents. We are also seeking the opinion of Albertans about possibilities for law reform which would affect couples living together outside of marriage.

Please note that you will not have to answer all of the questions. Many will not apply to you. The questionnaire may take 20 minutes of your time to complete. If you wish to comment on any of the questions, please use the margins or a separate sheet of paper.

"Survey of Adult Living Arrangements" is sponsored by the Institute of Law Research and Reform, University of Alberta. If you have any questions or comments regarding this survey please write or call. The telephone number is 432-5291.

Thank you very much for your help. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Return this questionnaire to:

The Institute of Law Research and Reform
#402 Law Centre,
The University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Alberta.
T6G 9Z9.

PART 1

WE WOULD FIRST LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR PAST AND PRESENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS. PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER TO THE RIGHT OF EACH QUESTION UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED. (PLEASE IGNORE THE VERY SMALL NUMBERS ON THE RIGHT MARGIN, THEY ARE FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.)

1a. Have you ever been legally married?

Yes..... 1
No (Skip to Q.6a)..... 2

b. Have you ever been widowed, divorced, or legally separated?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
(1) Widowed.....	1	2
(2) Divorced.....	1	2
(3) Legally separated.....	1	2

c. How many times have you been married?..... Time(s)

2a. Are you now widowed?

Yes..... 1
No (Skip to Q.3a)..... 2

b. When did your husband, or wife, die? In what month and year?

(1) Month.....
(2) Year.....

3a. Are you now divorced or legally separated?

Yes..... 1
No (Skip to Q.4a)..... 2

b. When did you become divorced or legally separated? In what month and year?

(1) Month.....
(2) Year.....

4a. Are you now legally married?

Yes..... 1
No (Skip to Q.6a)..... 2

b. When did you marry your present spouse? In what month and year?

(1) Month.....
(2) Year.....

c. Did you live with your present spouse for six (6) months or more before marrying him or her?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

5a. Are you presently living with your spouse?

Yes (Skip to Q.7a)..... 1
No..... 2

b. When did you stop living together? In what month and year?

(1) Month.....
(2) Year.....

c. What is the major reason for living apart from your spouse -- marital incompatibility, illness, employment, or some other reason? (Circle one.)

Marital incompatibility..... 1
Illness..... 2
Employment..... 3
Other (Specify)..... 4

6a. Are you now living with an unrelated partner of the opposite sex?

Yes..... 1
No (Skip to Q.7a)..... 2

b. When did this living arrangement begin?
In what month and year?

(1) Month.....
(2) Year.....

- c. How would you describe this living arrangement? As a common-law marriage, a close personal relationship, or just shared accommodation for financial reasons only? (Circle one.)

A common-law marriage..... 1
 A close personal relationship..... 2
 Just shared accommodation..... 3

- d. Have you been sexually intimate with the partner you are now living with?

Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

- 7a. Have you ever lived with an unrelated partner of the opposite sex other than your current spouse, or partner? (Don't count those with whom you shared accommodation for financial reasons only.)

Yes..... 1
 No (Skip to PART 2 on this page)..... 2

- b. How many different partners of the opposite sex have you lived with for a period of six (6) months or more other than your current spouse, or partner? (Don't count those with whom you shared accommodations for financial reasons only.)..... Partner(s)

PART 2

TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUR LIVING ARRANGEMENT, WE'D LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT ANY DEPENDENT CHILDREN WHO MAY BE LIVING WITH YOU (THAT IS, CHILDREN DEPENDENT FOR THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT ON YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE). IN PARTICULAR, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW HOW THESE CHILDREN ARE RELATED TO YOU, AND WHETHER ANY PERSON OTHER THAN YOURSELF REGULARLY CONTRIBUTES TO THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

- 8a. Are there any dependent children living with you?

Yes..... 1
 No (Skip to Q.10a)..... 2

- b. How many of the children are of your current relationship?.....

- c. How many of the children are of a previous relationship of yours, a previous relationship of your spouse (or partner), or of some other relationship?

(1) Yours.....
 (2) Your spouse, or partner.....
 (3) Some other relationship (specify).....

- 9a. Does any person other than you, yourself, regularly contribute to the financial support of any of these children?

Yes..... 1
 No (Skip to Q.10a)..... 2

- b. Who regularly contributes to their financial support other than yourself (circle as many as apply)?

(1) Your current spouse, or partner..... 1
 (2) The child's parent of a previous relationship of yours..... 2
 (3) The child's parent from a previous relationship of your spouse, or partner..... 3
 (4) Other (specify).....4

- 10a. Do you have any dependent children of a past or present relationship who are not now living with you?

Yes..... 1
 No (Skip to PART 3 on page 5)..... 2

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
b. Do you, yourself, regularly contribute to their financial support?.....	1	2
c. Does your current spouse, or partner, regularly contribute to their financial support?.....	1	2

PART 3

IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION WE HAVE DESCRIBED SOME SITUATIONS WHERE THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF A MAN AND WOMAN WHO ARE LIVING TOGETHER, BUT WHO ARE NOT LEGALLY MARRIED, ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF A LEGALLY MARRIED COUPLE IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THESE LEGAL DIFFERENCES — WHETHER YOU THINK UNMARRIED COUPLES SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT HAVE THE SAME LEGAL RIGHTS AS MARRIED COUPLES IN THESE SITUATIONS.

- 11a. A married couple can adopt a child if they meet certain requirements, but an unmarried couple cannot. Do you think an unmarried couple who meet the same requirements as a married couple should or should not be able to adopt a child? Or don't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, they should..... 1
 No, they should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

- 12a. The law states that a married couple have an equal say in how their child should be brought up (schooling, religion, discipline, medical treatment, etc.). An unmarried couple do not have an equal say in these things. Do you think an unmarried father who is living in a common-law union with his child's mother should or should not have the same legal rights as the mother? Or doo't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, he should..... 1
 No, he should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

- 13a. When a married person dies without a will, the surviving spouse is entitled to a share of the estate. However, the surviving partner of a common-law union does not have those same rights to the estate of the deceased partner. Do you think the law should or should not be the same for married and unmarried couples in this situation? Or don't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, it should..... 1
 No, it should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

- 14a. When a married person dies without a will, the surviving children are entitled to a share of the estate. However, the surviving children of a common-law union do not have the same rights. Do you think the law should or should not be the same for children of married and unmarried couples in this situation? Or don't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, it should..... 1
 No, it should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

- 15a. When a married person dies, with or without a will, the surviving spouse can make a claim to receive more of the estate if they think they haven't been properly provided for. Do you think an unmarried person should or should not be able to make a similar claim against the estate of the partner he or she has been living with? Or don't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, they should..... 1
 No, they should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

- 16a. Do you think a man and woman who live together, but who are not married, should or should not have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in dividing up property if the couple break up? Or don't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, they should..... 1
 No, they should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

- 17a. Do you think a man and woman who live together, but who are not married, should or should not have the same rights and responsibilities as married couples in making support payments to a dependent partner if the couple breaks up? Or don't you have an opinion on this issue?

Yes, they should..... 1
 No, they should not..... 2
 No opinion..... 3

- b. How strongly do you feel about it?

Very strongly..... 1
 Pretty strongly..... 2
 Not too strongly..... 3

18. Some unmarried couples have agreed to regulate certain matters in their relationship. Which of the following matters should and which should not be legally binding in such agreements?

	<u>Should Be</u>	<u>Should Not Be</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Dividing expenses.....	1	2	3
b. Household chores.....	1	2	3
c. Property.....	1	2	3
d. Child care.....	1	2	3
e. Sexual conduct.....	1	2	3
f. Arrangements to be made on break-up....	1	2	3
g. Any matters the partners choose.....	1	2	3

PART 4

IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION WE ARE TRYING TO LEARN WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE TO MARRY AND WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE TO LIVE TOGETHER OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE. ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT THE REASONS FOR THESE DECISIONS ARE OFTEN VERY PERSONAL, IT IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT THEM. IF YOU ARE NOW MARRIED, WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 19 AND 20. IF YOU ARE NOW LIVING WITH AN UNRELATED PARTNER OF THE OPPOSITE SEX (OTHER THAN JUST SHARING ACCOMMODATION FOR FINANCIAL REASONS), WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 21 AND 22. OTHERWISE, PLEASE SKIP TO PART 7 ON PAGE 13.

Please answer if you are now married.

19. Why did you get married? How important were the following reasons at the time you got married to your present spouse? Please indicate how important each reason was by circling a number from 1 - 5 to the right of the question. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the reason was not very important, and a score of 5 as meaning that the reason was very important. What score from 1 - 5 comes closest to the way you felt? If the reason does not apply in your case, circle number 9.

	Not Very				Very	Does Not Apply
a. For companionship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. For the legal commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. We were in love.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. For the personal commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. For economic reasons. It's less expensive to live together.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. For the social commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. To have a sexual relationship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. For the religious commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. We had previously lived together..	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. We didn't really plan it.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
l. Other (specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	9

Please answer if you are now married.

20. Why are you now married? How important are the following reasons to you now for staying married? Please indicate how important each reason is by circling a number from 1 - 5 to the right of the question. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the reason is not very important, and a score of 5 as meaning that the reason is very important. What score from 1 - 5 comes closest to the way you feel? If the reason does not apply in your case, circle number 9.

	Not Vary				Very	Does Not Apply
a. For companionship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. For the legal commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. We are in love.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. For the personal commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. For economic reasons. It's less expensive to live together.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. For the social commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. To have a sexual relationship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. For the religious commitment that marriage involves.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. For convenience. It's easier this way.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. Other (specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	9

*** PLEASE SKIP TO PART 5 ON PAGE 12. ***

Please answer if you are now living with an unrelated partner of the opposite sex.

21. Why did you begin living with your present partner? How important were the following reasons at the time you began living together? Please indicate how important each reason was by circling a number from 1 - 5 to the right of the question. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the reason was not very important, and a score of 5 as meaning that the reason was very important. What score from 1 - 5 comes closest to the way you felt? If the reason does not apply in your case, circle number 9.

	Not Very				Very	Does Not Apply
a. For companionship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. We didn't want the legal commitment that marriage involves.	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. We were in love.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. We didn't want the personal commitment that marriage involves.	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. For economic reasons. It's less expensive to live together.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. We didn't want the social commitment that marriage involves..	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. To have a sexual relationship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. At least one of us couldn't get a divorce for religious reasons.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. As a trial marriage, to see if we were suited to each other.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. We didn't really plan it.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
l. We wanted to get married, but postponed it because of current economic reasons.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
m. At least one of us was not legally free to marry.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
n. Other (specify)_____	1	2	3	4	5	9

Please answer if you are now living with an unrelated partner of the opposite sex.

22. Why are you now living together? How important are the following reasons to you now for staying together? Please indicate how important each reason is by circling a number from 1 - 5 to the right of the question. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the reason is not very important, and a score of 5 as meaning that the reason is very important. What score from 1 - 5 comes closest to the way you feel? If the reason does not apply in your case, circle number 9.

	Not Very				Very	Does Not Apply
a. For companionship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. We don't want the legal commitment that marriage involves.	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. We are in love.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. We don't want the personal commitment that marriage involves.	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. For economic reasons. It's less expensive to live together.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. We don't want the social commitment that marriage involves..	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. To have a sexual relationship.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. At least one of us can't get a divorce for religious reasons.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Because of the birth (or impending birth) of a child.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. As a trial marriage, to see if we are suited to each other.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. For convenience. It's easier this way.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
l. We want to get married, but are postponing it because of current economic reasons.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
m. At least one of us is not legally free to marry.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
n. Other (specify)_____	1	2	3	4	5	9

PART 5

WE WOULD NEXT LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT THE TYPES OF ARRANGEMENTS YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE, OR PARTNER, HAVE AND THE KINDS OF AGREEMENTS YOU HAVE ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP.

23. Do you and your spouse, or partner, own the following types of property jointly, separately, mixed (we both own some but not jointly), or don't you own it? (Circle one number for each type of property.)

	<u>JOINTLY</u> <u>We Both</u> <u>Own It</u>	<u>SEPARATELY</u> <u>One Of Us</u> <u>Owne It</u>	<u>MIXED</u> <u>We Both</u> <u>Own Some</u>	<u>NEITHER</u> <u>We Do Not</u> <u>Own This</u>
a. House.....	1	2	3	4
b. Land.....	1	2	3	4
c. Business.....	1	2	3	4
d. Personal property (such as, car, furniture, etc.).....	1	2	3	4

24. What types of financial arrangements do you and your spouse, or partner, have?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
a. Do you give an allowance to your spouse, or partner?.....	1	2
b. Does your spouse, or partner, give you an allowance?..	1	2
c. Do you and your spouse, or partner, generally pool your resources?.....	1	2
d. Do you and your spouse, or partner, have a joint bank account (either checking or savings)?.....	1	2
e. Do you, yourself, have a separate bank account (either checking or savings)?.....	1	2
f. Did you leave employment to become a fulltime homemaker during your present relationship?.....	1	2
g. Did your spouse, or partner, leave employment to become a fulltime homemaker during your present relationship?..	1	2
h. Does your spouse, or partner, now work outside the home?.....	1	2

25a. Have you and your spouse, or partner, reached a written or oral agreement covering any of the following:

	YES	NO	DOES NOT APPLY
(1) Ownership of property/house?.....	1	2	3
(2) Financial support for you or your spouse, or partner?.....	1	2	3
(3) Financial support for the children?.....	1	2	3
(4) Custody of the children?.....	1	2	3
(5) Division of household chores?.....	1	2	3
(6) Other (Specify).....	1	2	3

b. When do the agreements apply: (Circle one.)

Only when you are living together?..... 1

Only if the relationship breaks up?..... 2

Both when you are living together and
if you break up?..... 3

Don't have any..... 4

c. Are the agreements written, oral, some of each, or don't you have any? (Circle one.)

Written..... 1

Oral..... 2

Some of each..... 3

Don't have any.... 4

d. At what point in your relationship did you first reach an agreement on any of the above -- before you decided to get married (or live together), within one year after you got married or began living together, more than one year after you got married or began living together? Or don't you have any?

Before we got married, or began living together..... 1

Within one year after we got married or began living
together..... 2

More than one year after we got married or began
living together..... 3

Don't have any..... 4

- e. Did you obtain advice in formulating any of the agreement(s) from the people listed below?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
(1) A relative.....	1	2
(2) A friend.....	1	2
(3) A clergyman.....	1	2
(4) A lawyer.....	1	2
(5) A bank manager.....	1	2
(6) Other (Specify).....	1	2

26a. How many times in the last six (6) months have you and your spouse, or partner, lived apart for more than four (4) days in a row?..... Times(s)

- c. What was the reason for living apart from your spouse, or partner, during this (these) occasion(s)? (Circle as many as apply or circle number 7 if the question does not apply in your case.)

(1) Business trip.....	1
(2) For work.....	2
(3) Separate vacations.....	3
(4) Temporary incompatibility..	4
(5) Illness.....	5
(6) Other (Specify).....	6
(7) Does not apply.....	7

PART 6

WE'D NOW LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT ANY ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES YOU MAY HAVE HAD BECAUSE OF YOUR PRESENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT.

27. Have you had any difficulties getting government benefits because of your present living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

If yes, please specify_____

28. Have you had any difficulties getting employee benefits because of your present living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

If yes, please specify_____

29. Have you had any difficulties getting or maintaining a job because of your present living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

If yes, please specify _____

30. Have you had any difficulty getting financial support for yourself, or for your children, because of your present living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2
Does not apply..... 3

If yes, please specify _____

31. Have you had any difficulties, because of your present living arrangement, meeting claims for money or property made by a former spouse? For the purpose of this question, former spouse is someone to whom either you or your present spouse, or partner, was married.

Yes..... 1
No..... 2
Does not apply..... 3

If yes, please specify _____

PART 7

WE'D NEXT LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS PEOPLE MAY HAVE FOLLOWING THE BREAK-UP OF A RELATIONSHIP. IF YOU HAD BEEN MARRIED OR HAD LIVED TOGETHER WITH AN UNRELATED PARTNER OF THE OPPOSITE SEX (OTHER THAN JUST SHARED ACCOMMODATION FOR FINANCIAL REASONS) JUST BEFORE YOUR PRESENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING EIGHT QUESTIONS. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO PART 8 ON PAGE 17.

- 32a. How long had you lived with that spouse, or partner, before the break-up of that relationship?

Years.....
Months.....

- b. Were you legally married, or were you living together outside of marriage?

Legally married..... 1
Living together outside of marriage..... 2

c. Are you married to that partner now?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

33. Have you had any difficulties in getting government benefits because of that past living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

If yes, which ones _____

34. Have you had any difficulties in getting employee benefits because of that past arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

If yes, please specify _____

35. Have you had any difficulties getting or maintaining a job because of that past living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

If yes, please specify _____

36. Have you had any difficulty getting financial support for yourself, or for your children because of that past living arrangement?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2
Does not apply..... 3

If yes, please specify _____

37. Have you had any difficulty getting pension benefits when that previous spouse, or partner, retired?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2
Does not apply..... 3

If yes, please specify _____

PART 8

SO THAT WE CAN SEE HOW YOUR OPINIONS COMPARE WITH THOSE OF OTHER PEOPLE, WE'D LIKE A FEW ADDITIONAL FACTS ABOUT YOU.

38. What is your sex?

Male..... 1

Female..... 2

39. In what month and year were you born?

(1) Month.....

(2) Year.....

40. What is the highest level of formal education you obtained? (Circle one)

Grade 9 or less..... 1

Some high school..... 2

High school graduate (or equivalency)..... 3

More than high school..... 4

Non-university certificate or diploma

(e.g., community college, nursing school,

Technical school)..... 5

University degree..... 6

Post graduate degree(s)..... 7

41. Are you presently employed, temporarily unemployed, retired, disabled, a full-time homemaker, a student, or what? (Circle as many as apply.)

Employed..... 1

Temporarily unemployed..... 2

Retired..... 3

Disabled..... 4

Full-time homemaker..... 5

Student..... 6

Other (Specify)..... 7

42. Approximately, how many years have you lived in the province of Alberta?..... years

43a. What is your religion, if any? (Circle one.)

Anglican..... 1

Baptist..... 2

Jewish..... 3

Lutheran..... 4

Orthodox..... 5

Pentecostal..... 6

Roman Catholic..... 7

United Church..... 8

None..... 9

Other (Specify)..... 10

b. How important is religion to you?

Very important..... 1
 Pretty important..... 2
 Not too important..... 3
 Not important at all..... 4

44. How much do you depend on each of the following people for emotional support in times of trouble? Please indicate how much you depend on each person by circling a number from 1 - 5 on the scale to the right of the question. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that you do not depend on the person very much and a score of 5 meaning that you depend on the person very much. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to the way you feel? If the person does not apply in your case, circle number 9. (Circle one number for each person.)

	Not Much				Very Much	Does Not Apply
a. The spouse, or partner, I'm now living with.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. One or both of my parents.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. My brother(s) and/or sister(s).....	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. My children.....	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. Another family member(s).....	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. A close friend(s).....	1	2	3	4	5	9

45. What was your approximate annual income from employment and from all other sources, before taxes last year, in 1982? If you are living with your spouse, or with an unrelated partner of the opposite sex, combine your income with theirs.

a. Under \$10,000 a year (or under \$192.30 a week).....	1
b. \$10,000 to \$19,999 a year (or between \$192.30 and \$384.99 a week)..	2
c. \$20,000 to \$29,999 a year (or between \$385.00 and \$576.99 a week)..	3
d. \$30,000 to \$39,999 a year (or between \$577.00 and \$769.99 a week)..	4
e. \$40,000 to \$49,999 a year (or between \$770.00 and \$961.99 a week)..	5
f. More than \$50,000 a year (or more than \$962.00 a week).....	6

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your past or present living arrangement that may be important for law reform considerations? If so, please use this space for that purpose.

Your contribution to this effort is very greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT on this questionnaire). We will see that you get it.

APPENDIX B

ESTABLISHED BY:
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Edmo to Alberta
T5H 3C9

In the past few years there has been a lot of discussion about the legal rights and responsibilities of adults who live together outside of marriage. As you may know, these rights are often different than those of legally married couples. Married people in the province of Alberta, for example, have certain responsibilities to each other when there is a divorce or separation, while persons living together outside marriage do not. We are studying the effects of these laws to determine whether to make law reform recommendations to the provincial government. In order to do this, we need to learn more about the living arrangements of Albertans. We also need to know how Albertans feel about possible alternatives for law reform in this area.

Your household is one of a small number in which people are being asked to give their opinion on these matters. It was drawn in a random sample of households in the Edmonton and Calgary areas. In order that the results will truly represent the thinking of the people in these areas, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned. It is also important that we have about the same number of men and women participating in this study. Thus, we would like the questionnaire for your household to be completed by an adult male. If none is present, then it should be completed by an adult female.

Please be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may remove your name from the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

The results of this research will be made available to officials and representatives of the Alberta government, and all interested citizens. You may receive a summary of results by writing "copy of results requested" on the back of the return envelope, and printing your name and address below it. Please do not put this information on the questionnaire itself.

I would be most happy to answer any questions you might have. Please write or call. The telephone number is 432-5291.

Yours truly,

George C. Field,
Associate Director

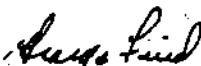
October 3, 1983

Last week a questionnaire seeking your opinion about adult living arrangements was mailed to you. If you have already completed and returned it to us, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today.

Because this questionnaire has been sent to only a small sample of people, it is extremely important that yours also be included if the results are to accurately represent the opinions of Alberta residents.

If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or it was misplaced, please call the Institute right now, at 432-5291, and we will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,



George C. Field,
Associate Director,
Institute of Law
Research & Reform.

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408 LAW CENTRE
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, ALBERTA T6G 2H6
TELEPHONE (403) 492-9331

November 1, 1983

M. a ky
101 11 St. NW
Calg., Alberta
T3B 2H7

About four weeks ago I wrote to you seeking your help in our effort to understand better the current living arrangements and experiences of Alberta residents, and to seek your opinion about possibilities for law reform which would affect couples living together outside of marriage. As of today we have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

We have undertaken this study because of the belief that citizen opinions and experiences should be taken into account in the formation of law reform recommendations in this area.

I am writing to you again because of the significance each questionnaire has to the usefulness of this study. Your name was drawn through a scientific sampling process in which all households in the Edmonton and Calgary areas had an equal chance of being selected. In order for the results of this study to be truly representative of the opinions and experiences of the residents of these areas, it is very important that each person in the sample return their questionnaire. As mentioned in our last letter, the questionnaire from your household should be completed by an adult male. If there is no adult male present, then it should be completed by an adult female.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

George C. Field,
Associate Director

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205 LAW CENTRE
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, ALBERTA T6G 2M6
TELEPHONE (403) 482-6551

November 28, 1983

SPECIAL DELIVERY

For e...typed
122 - 1 Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5L 4B8

I am writing to you about our study of adult living arrangements. As of today we have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

The large number of questionnaires returned is very encouraging. But, whether we will be able to describe accurately how Albertans feel on these important issues depends upon you and the others who have not yet responded. This is because our past experiences suggest that those of you who have not yet sent in your questionnaire may hold quite different opinions on these issues.

It is for this reason that I am sending this to you by special delivery. In case our other correspondence did not reach the person in your household whose response is needed (an adult female, unless there is none in which case an adult male should respond), a replacement questionnaire is enclosed. May I urge you to complete and return it as quickly as possible.

I'll be happy to send you a copy of the results if you want one. Simply put your name, address, and "copy of results requested" on the back of the return envelope. We expect to have them ready to send early in the new year.

Your contribution to the success of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

George C. Field
George C. Field,
Associate Director

P.S. A number of people have told us that they have had difficulty fitting the questionnaire into the small business reply envelope that we have enclosed. Although the fit is tight, the questionnaire will just fit if it is folded in thirds. If this has caused you any inconvenience, please accept my apologies.

APPENDIX C

TABLE A1

AGE OF COHABITING AND NONCOHABITING RESPONDENTS

(All respondents 16 years or older)

ALL RESPONDENTS

ALL RESPONDENTS	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
AGE RANGE:										
16 TO 20 YEARS	2	1.4	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	22	5.9
20 TO 30 YEARS	93	65.0	395	21.0	26	14.1	1	0.8	222	59.0
30 TO 40 YEARS	33	23.1	470	32.3	52	28.3	4	3.1	74	19.7
40 TO 50 YEARS	5	3.5	282	19.4	52	28.3	10	7.9	30	8.0
50 TO 60 YEARS	6	4.2	246	16.9	28	15.2	31	24.4	11	2.9
60 TO 70 YEARS	3	2.1	106	7.3	16	8.7	33	26.0	12	3.2
70 YEARS OR OLDER	1	0.7	42	2.9	10	5.4	48	37.8	5	1.3
MISSING DATA	2	(1.4)	42	(2.8)	5	(2.6)	13	(9.3)	10	(2.6)
TOTAL	145	100.0	1495	99.9	189	100.0	140	100.0	386	100.0

MALE RESPONDENTS

AGE RANGE:	COHABITING				NONCOHABITING					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
16 TO 20 YEARS	1	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	5.4
20 TO 30 YEARS	36	57.1	118	15.0	3	11.9	0	0.0	113	61.4
30 TO 40 YEARS	17	27.0	256	32.6	18	26.5	0	0.0	38	20.7
40 TO 50 YEARS	2	3.2	163	20.8	22	32.4	1	3.3	14	7.6
50 TO 60 YEARS	5	7.9	152	19.4	19	14.7	9	30.0	2	1.1
60 TO 70 YEARS	1	1.6	68	8.7	6	9.9	6	20.0	5	2.7
70 YEARS OR OLDER	1	1.6	28	3.6	4	5.9	14	46.7	2	1.1
MISSING DATA	1	(1.6)	23	(2.8)	2	(2.9)	5	(14.3)	5	(2.6)
TOTAL	64	100.0	808	100.1	70	100.1	35	100.0	189	100.0

FEMALE RESPONDENTS

FEMALE RESPONDENTS	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
AGE RANGE:										
16 TO 20 YEARS	1	1.3	2	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	8.3
20 TO 30 YEARS	56	70.9	186	27.9	17	14.8	1	1.0	109	57.1
30 TO 40 YEARS	16	20.3	214	32.1	24	29.6	4	4.1	36	18.8
40 TO 50 YEARS	3	3.8	119	17.8	30	26.1	9	9.3	16	8.4
50 TO 60 YEARS	1	1.3	94	14.1	18	15.7	22	22.7	9	4.7
60 TO 70 YEARS	2	2.5	38	5.7	10	8.7	27	27.8	6	3.1
70 YEARS OR OLDER	0	0.0	14	2.1	6	5.2	34	35.1	3	1.6
MISSING DATA	2	(2.5)	19	(2.8)	4	(3.4)	9	(8.5)	6	(3.0)
TOTAL	81	100.1	686	100.0	119	100.1	106	100.0	197	100.0

TABLE A2

COHABITING AND NONCOHABITING RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATION AND BY SEX

(All respondents 16 years or older)

ALL RESPONDENTS

ALL RESPONDENTS	COHABITING				NONCOHABITING					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED / SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EDUCATION:										
GRADE 9 OR LESS	8	5.6	140	9.5	24	13.1	39	30.0	13	3.4
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	16	11.1	176	12.0	21	11.5	24	18.5	19	5.0
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	32	22.2	282	19.2	35	19.1	13	10.0	74	19.5
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL	21	14.6	137	9.3	16	8.7	15	11.5	48	12.6
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA*	43	29.9	398	27.1	56	30.6	28	21.5	109	28.7
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	18	12.5	236	16.1	23	12.6	8	6.2	87	22.9
POST GRADUATE DEGREE	6	4.2	98	6.7	8	4.4	3	2.3	30	7.9
MISSING DATA	1	(0.7)	28	(1.9)	6	(3.2)	10	(7.1)	6	(3.2)
TOTAL	145	100.1	1495	99.9	189	100.0	140	100.0	386	100.0

MALE RESPONDENTS:

MALE RESPONDENTS:	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EDUCATION:										
GRADE 9 OR LESS	5	7.9	89	11.2	14	20.6	10	32.3	8	4.3
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	6	9.5	84	10.6	5	7.4	5	16.1	10	5.4
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	13	20.6	115	14.5	10	14.7	5	16.1	27	14.5
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL	9	14.3	54	6.8	2	2.9	2	6.5	25	13.4
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA*	20	31.7	230	29.0	16	23.5	6	19.4	50	26.9
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	7	11.1	144	18.2	15	22.1	2	6.5	54	29.0
POST GRADUATE DEGREE	3	4.8	77	9.7	6	8.8	1	3.2	12	6.5
MISSING DATA	1	(1.6)	15	(1.9)	2	(2.9)	4	(11.4)	3	(1.6)
TOTAL	64	99.9	808	100.0	70	100.0	35	100.1	189	100.0

FEMALE RESPONDENTS:

FEMALE RESPONDENTS:	COHABITING				NONCOHABITING					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EDUCATION:										
GRADE 9 OR LESS	3	3.8	50	7.4	10	8.8	29	29.3	4	2.1
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	9	11.3	91	13.5	16	14.0	19	19.2	9	4.7
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	19	23.8	167	24.9	24	21.1	8	8.1	47	24.4
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL	12	15.0	83	12.4	14	12.3	13	13.1	23	11.9
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA*	23	28.8	168	25.0	40	35.1	22	22.2	59	30.6
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	11	13.8	92	13.7	8	7.0	6	6.1	33	17.1
POST GRADUATE DEGREE	3	3.8	21	3.1	2	1.8	2	2.0	18	9.3
MISSING DATA	1	(1.2)	14	(2.0)	5	(4.2)	7	(6.6)	4	(2.0)
TOTAL	81	100.3	686	100.0	119	100.1	106	100.0	197	100.0

* Nonuniversity certificate or diploma such as community college, nursing school, technical school.

TABLE A3

COHABITING AND NONCOHABITING RESPONDENTS BY INCOME AND BY SEX

(All respondents 16 years or older)

ALL RESPONDENTS

ALL RESPONDENTS	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON- MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ANNUAL INCOME*										
UNDER \$10,000	8	5.8	64	4.6	22	13.1	49	42.6	63	17.4
\$10,000 TO \$19,999	23	16.8	127	9.1	43	25.6	33	28.7	104	28.7
\$20,000 TO \$29,999	45	32.8	264	19.0	40	23.8	17	14.8	99	27.3
\$30,000 TO \$39,999	22	16.1	345	24.8	35	20.8	5	4.3	60	16.6
\$40,000 TO \$49,999	23	16.8	240	17.3	13	7.7	4	3.5	24	6.6
\$50,000 OR MORE	16	11.7	350	25.2	15	8.9	7	6.1	12	3.3
MISSING DATA	8	(5.5)	105	(7.0)	21	(11.1)	25	(17.9)	24	(6.2)
TOTAL	145	100.0	1495	100.0	189	99.9	140	100.0	386	99.9

MALE RESPONDENTS

ANNUAL INCOME*	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON- MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
UNDER \$10,000	3	5.0	25	3.3	6	9.8	9	34.6	33	18.8
\$10,000 TO \$19,999	6	10.0	66	8.7	4	6.6	7	26.9	40	22.7
\$20,000 TO \$29,999	19	31.7	149	19.6	15	24.6	5	19.2	51	29.0
\$30,000 TO \$39,999	12	20.0	193	25.4	16	26.2	0	0.0	28	15.9
\$40,000 TO \$49,999	9	15.0	133	17.5	11	18.0	2	7.7	17	9.7
\$50,000 OR MORE	11	18.3	195	25.6	9	14.8	3	11.5	7	4.0
MISSING DATA	4	(6.2)	47	(5.8)	9	(12.9)	9	(25.7)	13	(6.9)
TOTAL	64	100.0	808	100.1	70	100.0	35	99.9	189	100.2

FEMALE RESPONDENTS

FEMALE RESPONDENTS	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON- MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ANNUAL INCOME*										
UNDER \$10,000	5	6.6	38	6.1	16	15.1	39	44.3	29	15.7
\$10,000 TO \$19,999	16	21.1	60	9.6	39	26.8	26	29.5	64	34.6
\$20,000 TO \$29,999	26	34.2	113	18.1	25	23.6	12	13.6	48	25.9
\$30,000 TO \$39,999	10	13.2	152	24.3	19	17.9	5	5.7	32	17.3
\$40,000 TO \$49,999	14	18.4	107	17.1	2	1.9	2	2.3	7	3.8
\$50,000 OR MORE	5	6.6	155	24.8	5	4.7	4	4.5	5	2.7
MISSING DATA	5	(6.2)	61	(8.9)	13	(10.9)	18	(17.0)	12	(6.1)
TOTAL	81	100.1	686	100.0	119	100.0	106	99.9	197	100.0

* Annual income gross of taxes. Cohabiting couples reported their combined income.

TABLE A4A

RELIGION OF COHABITING AND NONCOHABITING RESPONDENTS

(All respondents 16 years or older)

ALL RESPONDENTS

ALL RESPONDENTS	COHABITING				NONCOHABITING					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
RELIGION:										
ANGELICAN	18	12.5	178	12.2	24	13.4	26	19.5	22	5.9
BAPTIST	4	2.8	49	3.4	5	2.8	4	3.0	19	5.1
JEWISH	0	0.0	15	1.0	2	1.1	2	1.5	5	1.3
LUTHERAN	5	3.5	88	6.0	13	7.3	9	6.8	26	7.0
ORTHODOX	6	4.2	30	2.1	5	2.8	7	5.3	9	2.4
PENTECOSTAL	1	0.7	25	1.7	7	3.9	0	0.0	7	1.9
ROMAN CATHOLIC	31	21.5	342	23.5	33	18.4	20	15.0	93	24.9
UNITED CHURCH	38	26.4	365	25.1	47	26.3	39	29.3	74	19.8
OTHER*	12	8.3	190	13.0	18	10.1	19	14.3	49	13.1
NONE	29	20.1	174	11.9	25	14.0	7	5.3	69	18.5
MISSING DATA	1	(0.7)	39	(2.6)	10	(5.3)	7	(5.0)	13	(3.4)
TOTAL	145	100.0	1495	99.9	189	100.1	140	100.0	386	99.9

TABLE A4B

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION FOR COHABITING AND NONCOHABITING RESPONDENTS

(All respondents 16 years or older)

ALL RESPONDENTS

ALL RESPONDENTS	----- COHABITING -----				----- NONCOHABITING -----					
	NON-MARRIED		MARRIED		DIVORCED/ SEPARATED		WIDOWED		NEVER MARRIED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION:										
VERY IMPORTANT	9	6.3	407	27.8	34	19.1	60	45.8	80	21.3
PRETTY IMPORTANT	29	20.1	394	26.9	57	32.0	35	26.7	91	24.2
NOT TOO IMPORTANT	62	43.1	464	31.7	65	36.5	29	22.1	141	37.5
NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	44	30.6	197	13.5	22	12.4	7	5.3	64	17.0
MISSING DATA	1	(0.7)	33	(2.2)	11	(5.8)	9	(6.4)	10	(2.6)
TOTAL	145	100.1	1495	99.9	189	100.0	140	99.9	386	100.0

* See text.