

“Behind every great man...”: The male marriage wage premium examined qualitatively

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Abstract:

Studies across diverse national contexts reliably show that married men earn more than unmarried, but the mechanisms responsible for this are still disputed. This article explores the male marriage wage premium (MMWP) from a new perspective, using longitudinal qualitative data from Russia (N = 94). Qualitative research is particularly suited to identifying underlying processes, and by analyzing men's accounts of the influence of their marital trajectories on their work we are able to re-examine existing hypotheses, and develop new ones. We propose four mechanisms which we hypothesize can influence men's work motivation and performance: premarital planning, two distinct "breadwinner" effects using expectancy and self determination theory, and monitoring by wives. We integrate these mechanisms within gender theory, arguing that the treatment aspect of the MMWP is an outcome of the "coproduction" of masculinity within marriage. Our re-contextualization of existing theory also enables us to reveal weaknesses in the specialization hypothesis.

“Behind every great man...”: The male marriage wage premium examined qualitatively

Married men earn more than their unmarried counterparts. Although this finding is consistent across diverse national contexts (e.g. Bardasi & Taylor, 2008; Petersen, Penner & Høgsnes, 2011; Pollmann-Schult, 2011; Rodgers & Stratton 2010), explaining it has proved more difficult. It is generally attributed to a combination of a “selection” effect – meaning that success in marriage and labor markets are related to the same underlying characteristics – and “treatment” effects, through which marriage somehow improves productivity, such as the specialization of husbands and wives in market and domestic work respectively. A final hypothesis is that employers discriminate in favor of married men, although this has so far received little empirical support (Peterson *et al.*, 2011). Different studies have arrived at divergent estimates of the contribution of selection and treatment effects to explaining the male marriage wage premium (hereafter MMWP), but all suggest some role for both. The precise mechanisms behind the two effects remain obscure.

We offer a new perspective on this debate using longitudinal qualitative data from Russia. The overwhelming majority of studies in this area measure the contribution of different variables to the premium using quantitative techniques. But, as will be seen, the theories guiding such research have not been adequate to explain the phenomenon. Research areas such as the MMWP where statistical relationships are robust, but the processes which generate them are unclear, are prime territory for the use of qualitative techniques. This allows the processes which lie behind quantitative findings to be identified and new theory to be generated. By analyzing men’s reflections on the links between their marital and employment trajectories in our longitudinal qualitative data, we are able to “re-contextualize” theory, shedding new light on existing hypotheses and generating new ones. We propose four

“treatment” mechanisms which we hypothesize can influence men’s work motivation and performance: premarital planning, two distinct “breadwinner” effects, and monitoring by wives. We also re-examine the selection and specialization effects, suggesting new analytical approaches and insights.

Russia is a revealing context in which to explore the processes through which marriage benefits men. Men have proved particularly vulnerable to the challenges of Russia’s economic transformation. This expresses itself in epidemic levels of alcohol abuse (Leon, Shkolnikov & McKee, 2009), and fluctuations in male life expectancy “unprecedented in peacetime in any country with complete death registration” (p.1630). In 2009 male life expectancy was only 62.7, twelve years below that of women (Rosstat, 2012a). Against this background the “treatment” effects of marriage are particularly visible.

We begin with an overview of the literature on the MMWP, highlighting unresolved issues, and suggesting new theoretical approaches. We then introduce the Russian setting and data, followed by an overview of our findings. Our analysis of the mechanisms underlying the MMWP is presented in sections on the selection effect, specialization, breadwinner effects and monitoring.

Literature review

Theories explaining the MMWP

As noted above, the three main lines of explanation of the MMWP have been “treatment” effects, selection and discrimination. Our data speaks to the first of these, allowing us to propose mechanisms through which marriage, and the anticipation of marriage, can influence men’s motivation and work behavior. In highlighting a premarital treatment effect, however, we also shed additional light on the selection effect.

The selection hypothesis is that married men have characteristics which make them both more marriageable and more productive. It is these which are held to explain married men's higher wages, rather than any effect of being married itself. The selection effect has received increasing attention, with recent studies finding it explained a large proportion of the premium in Britain (Bardasi & Taylor, 2008) and Denmark (Datta Gupta, Smith & Stratton, 2007). Notably, Petersen *et al.* (2011), using Norwegian matched employer-employee data from 1979-96, found that 80% of the premium was due to selection and only 20% to treatment effects. They showed that the selection effect worked through sorting, with married men and men who eventually marry sorting into different occupations and occupation-establishment units than the men who remain single (p.299). This is supported by earlier research (Cappelli, Constantine & Chadwick, 2000) which showed that placing a high priority on "finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life" in high school was positively and significantly related to men's hourly earnings 14 years later. Again, this occurred through men who valued family sorting into higher-paid occupations.

Nevertheless, the question of why men who go on to marry sort into better paid jobs remains unclear. The underlying characteristics which are assumed to explain success in marriage and labor markets have not yet been identified. Rodgers and Stratton tested for cognitive skills, parental occupation and self esteem, but although all of these were positively associated with earnings none of them were able to explain more than 15% of the selection component of the MMWP (2010, p. 737). Petersen *et al.* suggested conscientiousness and industriousness as potential explanatory variables (2011, p. 284), whereas Rodgers and Stratton hypothesized that agreeableness could be an important characteristic predicting both marriage and high earnings (2010, p. 738). But Mueller and Plug found that antagonism (the obverse of agreeableness) was associated with substantial earnings advantages for men

(2006), highlighting the difficulty of isolating a trait predicting both marriage and high earnings.

Despite the strong evidence for the selection hypothesis presented by Petersen *et al.*, they acknowledge that this does not settle the debate. They caution that:

It is possible that the men who eventually marry and have children act preemptively, seeking high-paying jobs in anticipation that they will get married and become fathers, thus expecting that they will need the money in the future. In that case, the marital and parenthood premia are, after all, treatment effects. What we observe may be adaptive behavior at a given point in time to expected future events....

Alternatively, it could be that earning high wages makes these men more marriageable. In that case it is a selection effect (2011, p. 302).

Their data show that most of the marriage and parenthood premia occur before entry to marriage, but this is consistent with either of the explanations. This ambiguity, combined with fact that the omitted variable(s) explaining the selection effect have not yet been identified, suggest further investigation is required.

The treatment hypothesis is that marriage improves the productivity and hence wages of married men. The main suggestion as to the process through which this occurs is specialization – the idea that married women’s focus on domestic activities allows married men to concentrate on market work and hence enhance their human capital and wages (Becker, 1981). But the specialization hypothesis has received little empirical support. Some studies have used the wife’s employment as a proxy for specialization, the idea being that men whose wives are not employed or work fewer hours should receive domestic support that allows them to concentrate on market work, improving their productivity and ultimately wages. Although Gray (1997) found such an effect, Loh (1996) reported exactly the opposite:

that married men with employed wives received higher wages. More pertinently, Hersch and Stratton (2000) measured the specialization effect directly by analyzing time spent on housework. They found little difference in the total amount of time spent on housework by married and unmarried men, and that controlling for household time did not have a substantial effect on the measured marriage premium. Likewise, Pollmann-Schult found that German men whose wives were not employed did not change the time they spent on housework after marriage, whereas husbands of wives employed full-time spent one hour more on housework after marriage (2011, pp. 154-5).

Another potential mechanism explaining the superior productivity of married men is that they receive more training than their unmarried counterparts. Rodgers and Stratton suggested this could occur because married men have higher motivation to pursue training given their greater financial responsibilities, and/or because firms perceive them as more stable employees and hence are more willing to offer it to them (2010, pp. 726). These authors did find that married men received more formal and informal job training than did unmarried men and that this significantly increased their wages. But controlling for this did not substantially alter the estimated marriage premium for either their White or African American samples.

The findings regarding the mechanisms behind the selection and treatment effects are thus inconclusive, suggesting further theorizing is required. In our view, a key problem with existing theories is that they are insufficiently gendered and contextualized. Through an iterative process we used the contextual understanding provided by our qualitative data to inform our selection and development of theory. In the remainder of the review, we present additional theory on which we draw to conceptualize the four treatment mechanisms we identified in our data.

New theoretical avenues

To begin with gender: although gender relations are central to the MMWP literature, these are rarely theorized. We consider this a serious omission. In our understanding, gender is a central axis of human identity which must be continually asserted in action, words and bodily display – what West and Zimmerman call “doing gender” (1987). Failing to “do” gender appropriately leaves the individual vulnerable to being “called to account” by others in their social world (p.146). Thus, gender identity is not something that is attained, but an ongoing, provisional “project” (Connell 2009: 101). In terms of the MMWP, a key contribution of gender theory is to underscore the salience of breadwinning as aspect of masculine identity across diverse cultures (Thébaud, 2010, pp. 334-5) to which men can be held accountable.

We hypothesize that the importance of breadwinning for men’s identity promotes an autonomous desire to provide for dependents. We suggest that the most appropriate theoretical framework within which to capture this effect is self-determination theory (SDT), a theory of work motivation. SDT challenges the binary distinction between autonomous (intrinsic) and controlled (extrinsic) work motivation, contending that controlled motivation can become more autonomous through a process of internalization (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Internalization is promoted by the need “to be connected to others and to be effective in the social world” (p.337), and can occur to different degrees known as introjected, identified and integrated extrinsic motivation, with the latter the most autonomous (pp. 334-5). The way in which this relates to the gender theory laid out above is clear: being an “effective” man depends on breadwinning, as does, to some degree, sustaining the “connectedness” of spousal relations. Thus, for married men, working and earning money become “instrumentally important for personal goals” – a defining characteristic of integrated extrinsic motivation (p. 335). Significantly, autonomous motivation has been shown to be associated with more

effective performance of complex tasks, organizational commitment as well as improved job satisfaction and well-being (p.347).

Regarding wives' contribution to the MMWP, the theory of specialization relies on a caricatured portrait of marital relations in which wives service hardworking breadwinners by relieving them of domestic labor. On the basis of gender theory and the contextual insight provided by our qualitative research, we suggest a more nuanced account of how wives influence husbands' earning potential. We argue that wives hold men accountable to a "responsible" version of masculinity through monitoring and mentoring. In terms of the former, a wide range of studies show a positive relationship between marriage and improved health outcomes (e.g. Hu and Goldman 1990; Lilliard and Waite 1995; Lilliard and Panis 1996 and Murray 2000). Debra Umberson (1992) has linked the beneficial effects of marriage for men's health to the monitoring performed by their wives. We will propose that such monitoring should also have an impact on men's productivity.

Wifely mentoring, or pressure to earn, includes encouraging husbands to increase or maintain their income. We argue that this should increase married men's pay valence (affective orientation to pay). Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) predicts that increased valence towards a particular outcome will raise motivation (under the condition that there is some expectancy that effort will yield the desired reward). This idea finds support in the work of Gorman (2000), who, using US data, found that the valence of pay was higher, and dissatisfaction with earnings greater, for married individuals, though she found that this was true of both men and women. Pollmann-Schult (2011) likewise found higher levels of dissatisfaction with earnings among married men in Germany. On this basis he conjectured that the wage advantage of men with non-employed wives found by some studies did not derive from specialization, but from the financial demands implied by this arrangement.

Our study is guided by an overarching gender theory which we refer to as the “coproduction” of masculinity within marriage. This comprises men’s efforts to do gender, and women’s attempts to hold them accountable to a responsible version of masculinity. We specify the mechanisms through which this occurs using our qualitative data and the theories presented above.

Setting

With regard to the MMWP, the most salient aspects of a country’s gender order are breadwinner norms and the domestic division of labor. In this regard, Russia presents a contradictory picture. Women’s employment is high by international standards; in 2009 75.9% of working-age women were economically active (Rosstat, 2012b). This is a legacy of the Soviet state’s promotion of women’s employment. But the Soviet authorities also reinforced essentialist assumptions that equated parenthood with motherhood and defined domestic work as women’s responsibility (Ashwin, 2000). Thus, although men and women are equally likely to be employed, women have retained responsibility for caregiving and domestic labor (Ashwin & Lytkina, 2004; Kravchenko, 2008).

The corollary of women’s responsibility for household management and childcare is the idea that men should be primary breadwinners. Despite the high labor participation of women in the Soviet era, the ideology of the male breadwinner was preserved because men on average earned significantly more than women (Kiblitckaya 2000a). Statistical analysis has confirmed that the status of breadwinner (*kormilets*) is accorded to the highest earner in Russian households (Kozina, 2000). Being recognised as the *kormilets* is important to men’s identity and position within the household (Ashwin & Lytkina, 2004). The link between breadwinning and masculinity remains strong throughout the social hierarchy; erosion of Soviet gender norms is so far confined to young, unmarried, university-educated, non-

religious people (Motiejunaite & Kravchenko, 2008). Compared to other advanced industrialised economies, Russia stands at the less egalitarian end of the spectrum with regard to gender role attitudes (Thébaud, 2010, p. 342). But it is not a complete outlier: across the US, Europe and Asia breadwinning remains important to men's identity (pp.334-5), and women perform more domestic labor than men (Fuwa, 2004).

In terms of marriage, the Soviet era was characterized by early, near universal marriage (Gerber & Berman, 2010), but in the 1990s marriage rates began declining and cohabitation rates increased dramatically. Still, the mean age of first marriage is relatively low compared to other developed nations – an estimated 26.1 years in 2004 for men, and 23.3 for women, up from 25.1 and 22.6 respectively in 2001 (Zakharov, 2008: 970).

To our knowledge, there has to date been no research specifically focused on the MMWP in Russia, although several studies on different topics have included marriage as a variable in wage equations. These all show a significant MMWP. Using data from rounds 9-11 of the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (RLMS) Ogloblin and Brock found a wage reduction of 19.6 log percentage points for men who were single (2005: 334), whereas Ogloblin found a wage premium of 13.3 log percentage points for married men in one model, and 14.5 log percentage points in another (2005: 17). Similarly, Oshchepkov, using data from NOBUS (National investigation of the welfare of the population and its participation in social programmes), found a MMWP of 12.5 log percentage points (2008: 295-97). Finally, in a study of the marriage wage differential comparing 15 countries using data from the Luxembourg Income Study, Claudia Geist found the highest MMWP in Russia at 40%, though also the largest variation (2006: 25). Our data are not appropriate for estimating the size of the marriage wage premium, so we do not attempt to judge which of these estimates is

more accurate. Rather, we take the clear evidence for the existence of a substantial MMWP as a starting point for our qualitative analysis of the mechanisms driving this.

Method

This article is based on data from a longitudinal qualitative project examining gender differences in adaptation to Russia's transformed labor market. In order to analyze "adaptation," the sample was drawn from groups facing labor market transitions at the beginning of the research in 1999. These were: employees of economically struggling organizations (in Moscow); new graduates from a university and technical training institutes (in Ul'yankovsk); the registered unemployed (in Samara), and state social assistance recipients (in Syktyvkar). The regions were chosen on the basis of the expertise of the Russian research teams. The original sample comprised 120 men and 120 women, spread equally between the different groups. Four semi-structured deep interviews were carried out with each respondent at six monthly intervals between 1999-2001 (T1 – T4). The research was resumed in 2010 (T5), when 126 of the original sample were found and interviewed (59 men and 67 women). Attrition occurred for a variety of reasons, from change of address to death. When referring to respondents we use a three-number code: the first indicates the respondent's city (1 for Moscow; 2 – Ul'yankovsk; 3 – Samara; 4 – Syktyvkar); the second is the respondent's number, and the third indicates the wave of research. Pseudonyms are used when respondents are named in case histories.

Questions asked of all respondents which were particularly relevant to this study concerned: labor market motivations, the household division of labor, as well as two specific questions regarding breadwinning: "Who is the breadwinner in your household?" (asked in every interview) and "Who should take primary responsibility for providing for the family?" (asked at T2 and T5).

For this article we have analyzed the interviews of all the men who remained in the study until at least T2 of the research. We excluded from the analysis those who were under 25 and unmarried when they left the study (16 respondents). The vast majority of these respondents planned to marry and had more in common with men who eventually married than those who remained unmarried over the age of 25. In a qualitative study it is impossible to “control” for age, so we decided to exclude these cases, as they dwarfed the small number of “confirmed bachelors” in the study (7 respondents). This left a total of 94 respondents in our analysis. The mean age of included respondents at T1 was 37 (range 18–61), and 45 at T5 (range 29–72).

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

In terms of the four regional groups, 33% of included respondents were from Moscow, 17% from Ul’yanovsk, 25% from Samara and 26% from Syktyvkar. Table 1 shows the occupational status of our respondents at T2 and T5. As can be seen, our sample is skewed towards higher occupational status because of our focus on particular labor market transitions. Two of the failing organizations in Moscow were scientific institutes, half of Ul’yanovsk respondents were university graduates, while engineers and accountants were the two most numerous professional groups among the registered unemployed in Samara at the time we drew our sample. (For more details about sampling see Ashwin, 2006). In line with this, the proportion of respondents with higher education in our sample, 46%, is approximately double the national average, though all levels of education are represented in our sample. Finally, our sample is ethnically quite homogenous, with 79% of those who gave an ethnicity self-defining as Russian. The other significant ethnic group in our sample is Komi, an indigenous people of north eastern Russia. They comprised 13% of those stating their ethnicity, all but one of them from Syktyvkar which is located in the Komi Republic.

Komi have their own language, but those in our sample spoke Russian and were assimilated into Russian urban life. This group does, however, suffer labor market discrimination. Our Syktyvkar sample had lower average socio-economic status than the other regional groups, and was also the only group with a significant ethnic minority. The Ul'yanovsk graduates from different levels of education comprised our youngest sample. In the results sections, we indicate when these differences are salient for our analysis.

Turning to marital status, the majority of our male respondents (69) were married by the time of their final interview, with 44 married throughout their participation in the study, and 25 marrying during the research period. Seventeen were divorced, eight of them throughout their participation in the study, while nine divorced or separated during the study period (a further three also divorced during the study but later re-married, so are categorized with the married respondents). One respondent was widowed. Seven respondents remained unmarried throughout their participation in the study. Following the suggestion of Petersen *et al.* (2011, pp. 290-2), we have included (formerly) cohabiting respondents in the married ($n = 2$) and divorced categories ($n = 1$).

In order to explore the processes lying behind the MMWP, we first mapped the marital and labor market trajectories of our male respondents, linking their self-reported behavior to their reflections on the way their relationship status had influenced their lives. This gave us a qualitative longitudinal “profile” of each respondent. We also coded thematically in several stages, using both inductive and a priori codes derived from existing theory. Through an iterative process comparing our codes with our respondent profiles, we arrived at four mechanisms which we hypothesized had influenced married men’s work motivation and performance: planning; pressure to earn from wives (hereafter “pressure to

earn”); men’s autonomous desire to provide for dependents (hereafter “autonomous motivation”), and monitoring.

Pressure to earn and monitoring concern wives’ influence on men’s labor market behavior. It was important to understand women’s perspective on these issues, so we analyzed the T5 interviews of our female respondents, focusing on their relations with men in their households. This enabled us to compare women’s declared expectations of men, with men’s perception of those expectations.

Our analysis did not suggest that wives’ specialization in domestic labor was a significant mechanism influencing married men’s superior work performance, but given its prominence in the literature we report our findings on this issue. Our argument required us to understand household composition in Russia and, since we could not find recent published data on this, we analyzed the 2005 round of the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey, a nationally-representative survey, to gain the information we needed.

The coproduction of masculinity within marriage: mechanisms

We argue that the treatment aspect of the MMWP is an outcome of spousal coproduction of masculinity. In the following sections we present the mechanisms through which we propose this occurs, namely pre-marital planning, pressure to earn, autonomous motivation and monitoring. We see pre-marital planning and autonomous motivation as men’s efforts to “do gender” through breadwinning, while monitoring and mentoring are wives’ attempts to hold men accountable to this.

Table 2 shows the number of respondents whose interviews informed our four hypothesized mechanisms. The results for those married or divorced “throughout” the research, and those married or divorced “during” it are presented separately to preserve

longitudinal information. For example, we do not use retrospective data to inform our “planning” mechanism, while the changes in treatment mechanisms pre and post divorce are visible.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Our analysis revealed few regional differences with regard to our mechanisms. Likewise, we did not find strong variation on the basis of socio-economic status or education. Studies in other contexts have suggested that breadwinning is particularly salient for low income men because they are less likely to gain intrinsic rewards for their work (Christiansen & Palkovitz, 2001). We found that breadwinning was important to men across the social hierarchy. The only significant difference in our data was that monitoring was mainly reported by men lower down the occupational hierarchy, where problems such as alcohol abuse are particularly acute. The relative uniformity across social groups is likely related low levels of class-based income inequality during the Soviet era; in the late 1980s the earnings of upper blue-collar workers exceeded those of managers and some professionals (Gerber & Hout 2004, p.683). Inequality has now increased dramatically, but class-specific (gender) identities are only gradually emerging (Zdravomyslova, Rotkirch & Temkina, 2009).

Below we present the evidence informing our theory. We begin with prominent theories in the literature on which our analysis sheds new light – the selection and specialization hypotheses, before elaborating the theories our analysis suggests are significant – breadwinner effects and monitoring.

Disentangling the Selection Effect

Above we quoted Petersen *et al.*'s thoughts about the difficulty of interpreting the selection effect (2011, p. 302). Their data show that most of the marriage and parenthood premia occur

before entry to marriage, but this can be explained by either treatment or selection hypotheses. Our qualitative data illuminate both sides of this. On the one hand, they provide evidence in support of the “preemptive action” or what we call “planning” hypothesis. On the other, our data also lead us to suggest that a lack of desire to marry may be associated with particular characteristics which influence men’s earning potential. Thus, although the premarital treatment effect can be seen as part of the causal mechanism, it will benefit those who are predisposed towards marriage in the first place.

Our sample contains 25 men who married during the research period (including 3 second marriages), which allows us to provide a qualitative analysis of the planning hypothesis. All of the never-married men were asked about their attitude to marriage when single. Our analysis of the interviews with this group provides strong support for the planning hypothesis that young men with the intention of marrying seek higher wages in anticipation of the financial needs that will be created by marriage and fatherhood. This is a form of “doing gender” in which young men define their masculinity through their breadwinning potential. In order to be considered marriageable, a Russian man must be able to supply the “financial basis” for marriage, entailing the ability to provide a reasonable standard of living. He is also expected to be “on his feet” – that is, to have a secure footing in the labor market. Expectations regarding the extent of the required “financial basis” vary between different socio-economic groups, but the idea that securing it is a man’s responsibility is dominant throughout the social hierarchy.

As can be seen in Table 2, men reported planning prior to marriage in 17 of the 25 cases of marriage during the research period. Most of the men who married during the research came from our young Ul’yanovsk sample, but planning was found in all regional groups and across the social hierarchy, from professionals to manual workers. The following quotations,

from young men in our Ul'yanovsk sample who subsequently married – respectively a professional, technician, and future skilled manual worker just discharged from military service – illustrate the perceived financial prerequisites of marriage:

I already see life differently [after splitting up with his girlfriend] and think that in order to change my family status [i.e. get married] it's necessary to have at least a minimum basis in the form of an apartment and better pay than I get at the moment (2-45-3, age 23).

I think that the most important thing is financial... so that there's a basis for the family because when the children are hungry, and when the wife can't afford to dress properly, then there will be constant scandals with the wife (2-37-1, age 22).

I've got time. I've got four years to get myself together. I've now got a goal to get on my feet within four years, while she [his 16 year old girlfriend] waits for me (2-33-4, age 20).

Thus, men from across the social hierarchy perceive the need to plan to demonstrate their eligibility for marriage.

But this mechanism only applies to men who want to marry in the first place – without a desire to marry there is no need to plan. This can be seen clearly among our never-married men, four of whom had little motivation for either work or marriage. Pasha and Alexei (3-46, b. 1962 and 3-47, b. 1964) consciously rejected the demands implied by marriage, preferring not to be tied down to a regular job, surviving instead with the support of their parents and occasional earnings. Neither was in regular employment at T5. Mikhail (3-28, b. 1965) was less definite in his rejection of marriage, but did little to plan for it, living with his mother and earning some money from share trading from home, which he acknowledged was insufficient

to support himself, let alone a family. Finally, Grigorii (3-3, b. 1958) was also living with his mother, having rejected marriage despite having three children, products, he said, of the “sins of youth” (3-3-1). He neither saw nor supported these children. This group’s attitude to marriage is most starkly expressed by Alexei:

If I had children I would, perhaps, have thought about what I could do [to find work], but for myself – no. I am a free person.

Yes, that makes life easier in obvious ways.

It’s not just in obvious ways, I would say that it makes life very much easier. So many times in the last 5-6 years I’ve thought: “God, what a great bloke you are, that you didn’t get married!” You just can’t imagine. I literally think that. To me it’s not just in obvious ways, it really makes my life easier (3-47-2, age 35).

He continued by saying that he saw family and children as really “serious,” “on a different level” – and not for him. As can be seen from this quotation, it would be misleading to attribute the low earnings of such men to the absence of a treatment effect of marriage. Rather, this is influenced by social and/or psychological dispositions which shape their attitude to both work and marriage.

Our data suggest the planning hypothesis is likely to be fruitful in contexts with a strong male breadwinner norm: our proposition is that the perceived financial and labor market prerequisites of marriage stimulate men who want to marry to seek higher earnings. This effect may be particularly potent in men who want to marry, but are otherwise not very committed to work. Men who do not want to marry will not plan for it. The motivational pathways for the planning effect are those proposed in our two breadwinner effects outlined below.

Treatment Effects: Specialization, Breadwinning and Monitoring

Specialization

The contextual knowledge provided by our qualitative research suggested to us that specialization was unlikely to constitute a significant aspect of the treatment effect. This hypothesis assumes that married men receive domestic services from a spouse, whereas single men lack such services. Countries such as Russia where the vast majority of domestic tasks are performed by women would appear to be prime territory in which to find evidence for such an effect. But the idea that married men derive particular benefit from specialization neglects the fact that the social norms surrounding domestic labor do not focus on wives specifically. Rather household tasks are gendered “feminine” or “masculine”. Thus, female domestic labor does not have to come from a wife – it can be performed by a mother, sister or some other woman. Single men living with an adult woman should therefore reap equal benefit from the gender division of labor as their married counterparts.

In line with this, we found that prior to their marriage 17 of the 25 men who married during the research period had their housework done by a woman (usually their mothers). Only one respondent made a significant domestic contribution in the presence of a woman. Meanwhile, five of our seven bachelors were looked after by their mothers, and seven of our 16 divorcees had their housework done by a woman. Again the same rule applied: divorced and single men only did their own housework when there was no woman in their household.

This is crucial. Survey data on household composition reveal that the overwhelming majority of single Russian men do not live alone, but are embedded in households containing women. Most men do not leave the parental home until they marry, and receive domestic support from their mothers that would otherwise be provided by wives. Meanwhile, divorced men often return home to their mothers. Those unmarried men who do not live with their

mothers generally live with other relatives such as siblings or grandparents. We substantiate this using RLMS data from 2005. There were 4267 men over 18 in this sample, of whom 1184 were neither married nor co-habiting. In the latter group only 185 (15.6%) were living in single-person households. Of the 999 single men living in larger households, only 56 lacked a co-resident woman over 18. Thus, 79.6% of single men were living in a household containing an adult woman (authors' calculations available on request). These figures clearly show that, in the Russian case at least, the notion of the single man living alone, cut off from the benefits of the gender division of labor, is an abstraction with little empirical basis. Although Russia has a historic housing shortage, which resulted in longer periods living in the parental home, such patterns are not exclusive to Russia. For example, late exits from the parental home are also common in Southern European countries such as Spain (Delgado, Meil & López, 2008), and Italy (De Rose, Racioppi & Zanatta, 2008).

These observations may explain why it has proved so difficult to find evidence for the specialization hypothesis. The level of the specialization effect in any given society is determined not only by the prevailing gender division of labor, but also by household composition. In contexts where most men pass straight from the care of mothers to wives, married men gain little advantage in terms of domestic service. Rather, all men gain an advantage over women who have additional responsibilities and correspondingly less time to devote to market work. But that is another story.

Wives as mentors: extrinsic pressure to earn

A more promising line of enquiry is the breadwinner effect. Our hypothesis is that the male breadwinner norm impacts men's work motivation in two distinct ways. The first results from direct pressure to earn exerted by wives, which we consider increases the pay valence of married men. As noted in the literature review, Gorman showed that marriage increased the

pay valence of men but she attributed this to the fact that marriage “raised material goals” (2000: 67) and created competition for power between spouses in which higher pay conferred advantage (p.68). Our data suggest that rather than acting as competitors, women are more likely to coach and cajole their husbands to raise their earnings. Nevertheless, the outcome of increased pay valence is the same, suggesting expectancy theory is a useful framework for understanding the influence of marriage on men’s work motivation.

Breadwinning is an important means through which men “do gender” in marriage, and women are active in holding them accountable to this. As indicated in Table 2, 12 of the 25 respondents who married during the research period, and 24 of the 44 respondents who were married throughout their participation in the study reported experiencing pressure to earn from their wives. Information on this topic was volunteered during discussions of breadwinning rather than in response to a direct question, so these figures are likely an underestimate, capturing those who felt the pressure most acutely. Pressure to earn was experienced by men in all regions and across the social spectrum from university-educated professionals to janitors. It was most intense during the years of child-rearing, but tailed off as retirement approached.

The case of Vadim, (3-37, b.1960), a journalist by training, illustrates the nature of wifely influence found in our data. Vadim felt consistent pressure from his wife, Zina, to provide for the family, and her mentoring had a significant influence on his earnings. Vadim was part of our Samara sample of registered unemployed, but by T2, age 39, he had found a job as chief editor of a youth paper. Although he liked this job, the payment was irregular and Zina was dissatisfied. Vadim then spent a brief time working as a caretaker and free-lance decorator, the latter of which also gave him some satisfaction. Zina, however, “was worried that the orders would suddenly stop, and I’d be left without work. It’s not stable.” Thus, by T3 Zina

had persuaded Vadim to take a well-paid job as a factory worker. Vadim was stoic about his diminished social status, but made it clear that he had only taken the job to address Zina's financial concerns, confiding at the end of the interview, "now, finally, she'll be satisfied." Vadim did not last long on the factory floor; by T4 his friends had found him a job in the press centre of the regional tax office. This move entailed a drop in earnings, but Zina allowed him to take it, suggesting she understood that sustaining Vadim as a provider required a compromise between two bases of masculine identity – breadwinning and professional status:

Prestige is not the most important thing for her, the most important thing for her is money, the family. But she took it calmly. Even though I said it would mean less money she said, "Take it, I know that in your heart you're longing for it."

This case study provides a clear illustration of the way in which wifely pressure to earn can propel men to seek higher earnings. This can entail steady pressure, as well as advice on income raising strategies such as changing job, working overtime or finding secondary employment. Meanwhile, Vadim's compliance reveals his acceptance of his wife's demands as legitimate. This is generally the case in our data, though some men are more resistant to wifely pressure, especially when being pushed to change profession in pursuit of higher income.

But such resistance is risky: our data suggest that failing to earn what is deemed an adequate income endangers a man's marriage. In 11 of the 20 cases of divorce among our male respondents the men concerned considered their failure to fulfill their perceived duties as primary breadwinner to be a major factor in the breakup of their marriages. There were cases of this in all regional groups, and across the social spectrum. The high level of female employment in Russia paradoxically reinforces the male breadwinner norm, by allowing

women the financial independence to leave men seen as inadequate providers. The following quotations are illustrative:

As soon as that *perestroika* [began], money became tight, I already couldn't support her.... And then I already couldn't give her money as I did before, [and] she, clearly, had second thoughts (3-2-1, age 53).

A man should earn more, right? Well that's also my policy. Our recent disagreements – I've broken up with my wife – worked out like this: when I got 190 [roubles] at the factory, she got 82, but then everything changed and she began to get one and a half times more, and began to reproach me, while my mother-in-law urged her on, and the result was those differences between us. Because of the fact that I started to earn less than her at the factory. Continual reproaches. So we split up (3-15-2, age 39).

Our female respondents are also vocal about men's duty to provide, several of them reporting leaving men perceived to be failing in this regard, as illustrated in the following quotation:

Well if a person doesn't work he can't support [you]. Everything came from me and when the money ran out – everything finished immediately.... It worked out that I had no money, a child and an empty fridge; I was unemployed – it was the last straw, probably. I should have done it [divorced her husband] in 1999 already (3-6-5).

As can be seen, this respondent was unemployed at the time of her divorce, but she saw it as her husband's responsibility to resolve their financial difficulties. As another respondent said of her husband, "when the money runs out – it's his problem" (2-58-5). This is not to say that women do not step into the breach when their husbands fail to provide – there is evidence that they do – but this often results in resentment and tension (Kiblitckaya, 2000b). Failure to

perform as a primary breadwinner is locally accepted as a legitimate reason for divorce, mainly because money is the central contribution that men are expected to make to the household (Ashwin & Lytkina, 2004). To protect his marriage, a man must therefore demonstrate that he appreciates and is addressing his wife's concerns regarding income levels.

We therefore hypothesize that wifely pressure to earn increases the pay valence of married men. Even in cases where this pressure is not explicit, the local male breadwinner norm, and the possible consequences of its violation, will be the taken-for-granted background shaping married men's labor market behavior. According to expectancy theory (Vroom 1964) this should raise work motivation, which in turn should lead to superior performance at work (pp.191-210). It should also promote other behaviors designed to raise earnings such as working overtime and changing job.

Autonomous motivation: "being a man," supporting the family

The second component of the breadwinner effect stems from married men's autonomous desire to be the primary breadwinner. As noted in Table 2, it was expressed by 19 of the 25 men who married during the research period, and 20 of the 44 respondents who were married throughout their participation in the study. Again, these figures possibly underestimate the prevalence of this feeling as these declarations did not come in response to a specific question, but rather arose in the context of broader discussions. This autonomous aspiration is multi-stranded. In Russia, being a primary breadwinner is an important component of successful masculinity; performing this role reinforces gender identity and provides a sense of efficacy. It is also a gendered expression of love which communicates a man's concern for his wife and family. Thus, providing for their families is generally meaningful and important

to married men. We argue, using SDT, that this promotes the internalization of extrinsic work motivation.

Autonomous motivation to provide was found in all regions and social groups from managers and professionals to unskilled workers such as security guards. It is strengthened by the arrival of children, as can be seen in the following quotations men who had recently become fathers, an academic and marketing professional respectively:

How has the birth of your child affected your life?

I've begun to sleep less! No, I really wanted children. I think that there must be children in a family. Well, how to express it: I've got someone for whose sake I need to work. I know that I've got to provide for my wife and child (2-49-5, age 33).

It goes without saying that there's a need for extra pay, because I've got to provide for him [his child] as well, haven't I? But I love him very much, so I am fully satisfied and happy with that aspect (2-12-5, age 33).

This additional motivation persists while children remain dependent – fathers of older children worry about how they are going to pay for higher or vocational education. It is important to stress, however, that the motivational effect of fatherhood depends on marriage – as Killewald (2013) has shown using US data, the fatherhood wage premium only operates where men are married and co-resident with their children.

The potency of autonomous motivation is strikingly demonstrated by the case of Vyacheslav (4-48, b. 1964). In 2001, Vyacheslav, a 37 year old unemployed widower from Syktyvkar, was living on state benefits supplemented by occasional casual work and was drinking heavily. Between T4 and T5, however, he was “rescued” by Sonya, a teacher from his daughter's school with whom he became romantically involved after she came on a home

visit in connection with his daughter's absenteeism. Although they did not marry, their relationship lasted several years. Under Sonya's influence, Vyacheslav was converted from a demoralized alcoholic into a model worker. His employer, the most prestigious construction firm in the city, sent him to St. Petersburg for training, gave him a bonus every year, and displayed his photo on the enterprise "honor board" of excellent workers. Vyacheslav saw his years with Sonya as "the most beautiful time ... you can cross out all of my life and just leave that." Unfortunately, Vyacheslav was unable to stay away from alcohol, and the relationship broke down after a drinking binge. Sonya said she lacked the strength to pull him out of alcoholism a second time, and, reluctantly, left him. He then returned to regular drinking and lost his job; by T5 he had reverted to his pre-Sonya state. Although Vyacheslav's reformation was temporary, he was able to sustain several years in full-time employment during the time he was with Sonya.

How did Sonya transform Vyacheslav? By giving his life meaning, she provided him with motivation to work and stay away from drink. This is powerfully illustrated by a comment he made at T5. Talking about his loneliness and alcohol abuse after his separation, Vyacheslav remarked that when he was working he was able to forget his problems. The interviewer jokingly quipped, "So perhaps you should work more?" His response starkly illustrated his crisis of motivation in the absence of Sonya: "But why? For whom? A woman warms your heart. You understand the point of living." This highlights a recurring theme in men's discussions of breadwinning: the meaning derived from working "for the sake of" someone else. In Vyacheslav's case it also provided (at least temporary) protection from demoralization and alcoholism. Sonya's monitoring played some role here, but as argued below, this is more effective when combined with autonomous motivation.

Vyacheslav's case is a dramatic illustration of the gendered sense of purpose provided by marriage. In line with self determination theory laid out above, we hypothesize that this promotes the internalization of extrinsic work motivation, since breadwinning becomes instrumental for personal goals. As noted above, such internalization is associated with organizational commitment, more effective performance of complex tasks and job satisfaction (Gagné and Deci, 2005, pp. 347).

This mechanism may appear redundant in men intrinsically motivated by job content. Notably, most of the married men for whom none of our treatment mechanisms were recorded were intrinsically motivated by the content of their work. It was therefore hard to distinguish what contribution marriage made to their motivation. Nevertheless, autonomous motivation to provide for their families can become important for intrinsically motivated men when they face professional setbacks. This occurred in the case of Vadim whose case was discussed in the previous section.

Breadwinning is important to men's gender identity, and communicates their care for their families. This, we hypothesize on the basis of SDT, promotes the internalization of extrinsic work motivation. Together with the pay valence mechanism discussed above, this should "produce" higher-earning men, and help sustain them in the face of setbacks.

Monitoring

As noted in the literature review, marriage is associated with improved health outcomes for men, which have been linked to wifely monitoring (Umberson, 1992). In the same vein, our data suggest that female monitoring plays an important role in producing more reliable male employees. In the Russian context, controlling men's alcohol intake is the most significant aspect of female monitoring, on which this section focuses in order to illustrate wider processes. As well as playing a central role in the premature death of Russian working-age

men (Leon, Shkolnikov & McKee, 2009), alcoholism obviously has a negative effect on productivity (Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, 2009, p. 26). Although marriage does not always prevent alcoholism, unmarried men are at greater risk (Pridemore *et al.* 2010; Tomkins *et al.* 2007), with divorce and separation increasing men's chances of experiencing alcohol problems (Leon, Shkolnikov & McKee 2009, p. 1634). Aside from this, those most at risk of alcoholism are poor men, and those with the least education (Jukkala *et al.* 2008; Tomkins *et al.* 2007).

Ten of the men married throughout the research period, and three of those married during it reported their wives' monitoring activities. In contrast to the other mechanisms, this appears to have a class dimension: nine of the thirteen men reporting monitoring were manual laborers, the majority unskilled. Correspondingly, this was most prevalent in our socially vulnerable Syktyvkar sample (7 out of 13 cases, although 2 cases were found in each of the remaining regional groups). Monitoring was found in all age groups: it is a job for life. The class profile of monitoring is almost certainly related to the prevalence of alcohol abuse in Russian working class communities in which men tend to valorize heavy drinking and deride sobriety as "feminine" (Hinote and Webber, 2012, p.300). Monitoring may, however, be under-reported by men further up the social hierarchy.

Monitoring men is a taken-for-granted feminine duty in Russia, which, like domestic work, passes from mothers to wives. As one mother in our data, desperate to relinquish her burdensome duty of care put it, "Let his wife take him in hand ... it will be easier for me – like passing over the responsibility" (4-2-5). The intensity of monitoring varies according to the needs of the man involved. In relation to drinking, it ranges from expressing disapproval to pushing men into treatment for addiction. With established drinkers, women often describe their role as "nursing" – as one of our respondents said of her alcoholic ex-husband: "we

lived together thirty years. He drank very heavily, and I nursed him all my life” (3-33-5).

Whatever the degree of their husbands’ alcohol use, most wives try to limit its employment impact, helping their husbands to avoid absenteeism, lateness and inebriation at work, in some cases interceding with employers when violations of discipline occur.

A successful example of monitoring is provided by the case of Nikolai (4-22, b.1957). By T4, aged 44, Nikolai was struggling with alcoholism. He deliberately chose low-paid work because of his fear of being sacked if he risked taking better-paid jobs entailing more exacting standards of labor discipline. A decade later at T5, Nikolai’s life had been transformed by his marriage to Tanya. He had stopped drinking and had enjoyed several years of well-paid employment (although by the time of the interview he had developed heart problems and had been forced to take a less intensive, lower-paid job found for him by Tanya). Tanya, who participated in the interview, took obvious pride in her achievement: “yes, the man doesn’t drink. Those who he used to drink with now look up to him. He’s grown in the eyes of everyone. They are already scared to approach.” This quotation highlights Tanya’s skillful negotiation of two bases of masculine identity salient in Russian working class communities – “responsible” and hard-drinking “real” masculinity (Hinote and Webber, 2012). She acknowledged that embracing responsibility had alienated Nikolai from his drinking companions, but stressed that he was the “real” man – his former comrades were “scared to approach”.

Maintaining Nikolai as a disciplined worker required monitoring:

Tanya: Yes, now he’s not allowed to drink.

Nikolai: No, now I don’t drink. It’s sad. Ha, ha. She’s made me a better person.

This had been effective because Nikolai was motivated by his desire to sustain his relationship, which he knew had improved his quality of life:

And Nikolai, do you feel that your quality of life has improved in comparison to when you lived alone?

Yes, of course, it's more comfortable. On your own it's generally hard.... Things are just good for me. She does some things, I do others. I am generally a sociable person, created for family life. It's an instinct that men and women are together.

This case illustrates the difference that marriage can make to vulnerable men. Had Nikolai remained single, it is very likely that his problems with alcohol would have intensified. At a certain point, alcoholism tends to render men unemployable, and certainly excludes them from better-paid work (Ilyina 2006; Saburova *et al.* 2011). The monitoring efforts of women like Tanya can therefore have a significant impact on the earning potential of the men who are the beneficiaries of their attention. Conversely, divorce or separation can prompt an accelerated decline. Indeed, our respondent Sasha (4-25, b. 1968) tragically died aged 32 after heart failure brought on by a drinking binge in the aftermath of his divorce.

As mentioned above, monitoring is a duty that passes from mothers to wives. Recalling the above discussion regarding specialization, it could be argued that female monitoring is a constant with or without marriage. We argue, however, that monitoring acquires additional power when combined with the autonomous motivation that marriage can provide. We can illustrate this from the perspective of the three parties involved in monitoring. To begin with the monitored: Vyacheslav, like Nikolai, was “rescued” by a woman. Sonya certainly engaged in intensive monitoring. She convinced Vyacheslav to attend an addiction clinic where he underwent “coding,” a placebo therapy widely used in Russia in which the physician convinces the patient that his brain has been altered so as to

make the consumption of alcohol harmful or fatal (Raikhel, 2010). She also helped him back into regular work, and expressed constant disapproval of drinking, in part through her own abstinence. But these efforts only worked for as long as they did because of Vyacheslav's desire to maintain their relationship.

The lay expertise of mothers and wives likewise suggests that successful monitoring depends on the motivating possibilities of marriage. For example, Lena looked to wifely monitoring, combined with the crucial ingredient of autonomous motivation, to save her alcoholic son:

When he was going out with her [his ex-girlfriend], he had some kind of goal in life. Now he's lost his goal. He's hanging around.... He needs to find a good girl ...one who would help him, support him, so that he'd have some kind of goal in life (4-27-5).

Similarly, Alla believed that her success in extricating her husband from a period of alcohol dependency depended on restoring his autonomous motivation:

My husband was drinking that year. He took it really badly that I was in a managerial position [at work]. I decided: my husband wants me just to be a wife, and to provide for me and the children. [I thought]: You want to be a breadwinner, be a breadwinner. Then he stopped drinking, got coded, earned money (3-43-5).

The gendered nature of this approach is clear – Alla left her job in order to allow her husband to realize the gender “project” of successful breadwinning. Although Alla's action itself is not typical, it reveals the way in which autonomous motivation boosts the effectiveness of monitoring.

The case studies of Vyacheslav and Nikolai suggest that the combined effect of the motivation and monitoring provided by a relationship with a woman can have a significant effect on men's labor market prospects, performance at work and hence wages. These are striking examples, but our data is full of accounts of women's positive effect on male morale and behavior. This is particularly significant in the Russian context, because the impact of demoralization is often so devastating. But alcohol and substance abuse is not confined to Russia. If, as the health studies suggest, wifely monitoring is widespread, this could form a significant element of the treatment effect, particularly for the most vulnerable men.

Conclusion

The unusual approach of using qualitative data to examine the MMWP has enabled us to refine and develop theory. We propose four mechanisms underlying the treatment aspect of the MMWP: premarital planning, two distinct but inter-related "breadwinner" effects, and monitoring. We have argued that a portion of what has been seen as the selection effect may be attributable to "planning," and proposed an explanation for the failure of specialization theory. In terms of generalization, our breadwinner and planning hypotheses depend on the existence of a male breadwinner norm, and monitoring on a feminine duty of care. These are eroding in many contexts, which we would ultimately expect to reduce the treatment effects of marriage. The pace of this, however, is an empirical question for future research.

Our four mechanisms can be integrated within gender theory. Pre-marital planning and autonomous motivation are products of men "doing gender." By marrying, men implicitly commit themselves to a "responsible" version of masculine identity, to which breadwinning is a central. Paid work thus becomes personally meaningful. It is also externally validated by wives, who attempt to hold men accountable to "responsible" masculinity through pressure to earn and monitoring. They do this in the face of potentially

competing sources of masculine identity such as professional status (as in Vadim's case) or hard drinking (noted with regard to Nikolai and Vyacheslav). When pressure to earn or monitoring fail to secure the desired level of responsibility men can be censured; the ultimate sanction of divorce is viewed as legitimate. The coproduction of masculinity in marriage thus underlies the mechanisms we have proposed.

In relation to specialization, a theory our study did not support, we have argued that tasks defined as "feminine" within local gender divisions of labor do not necessarily have to be performed by wives. As in Russia, they can be carried out by mothers or other female relatives co-resident with single men. Their performance can also be purchased in the marketplace. This may explain why the differences in the housework hours of single and married men reported by the studies cited in the literature review are smaller than expected, and, more generally, why the specialization hypothesis has received so little empirical support. This is a clear example of where the re-contextualization allowed by qualitative research has provided a new perspective.

To turn to selection: we do not deny that this plays a role in the MMWP. But we argue that some of what appears to be selection may derive from what we term the "planning" effect: men with the intention of marrying seek higher wages in anticipation of the financial demands implied by marriage and fatherhood. The motivation for this behavior combines our two breadwinner effects. Men have an autonomous motivation to define their masculinity by preparing for breadwinning, and their pay valence is increased by the anticipated demands of prospective partners. We hypothesize that this makes a significant contribution to the sorting of men who eventually marry into better-paid jobs.

Our study proposes two mechanisms through which marriage influences the work motivation of married men. In holding men accountable to responsible masculinity, wives

exert significant pressure on men to provide. This increases married men's pay valence, suggesting that married men would have significantly higher levels of motivation than their unmarried counterparts, both in terms of job performance and seeking out opportunities to raise earnings. Alongside this, the link between breadwinning and masculine identity imbues the work of married men with additional meaning which encourages the internalization of extrinsic work motivation. According to SDT, this should improve performance of complex tasks, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. These theories depend on a male breadwinner norm, the strength of which will vary cross-nationally and also between social groups; the extent of variation is a matter for empirical investigation. In Russia, the male breadwinner norm currently remains salient across the social hierarchy, though this may change in the future as social differentiation continues.

Finally, we hypothesize that monitoring forms part of the treatment effect. In Russia, this is crucial in relation to alcohol consumption, playing a vital role in maintaining men's productivity, and, in the case of heavier drinkers, employability. Russian mothers monitor unmarried sons, but our analysis suggests that wifely monitoring is more effective both because of the gendered sense of purpose marriage can provide, and the exit options available to wives. The health literature shows that wifely monitoring occurs widely, and we would expect it to have a similar, albeit possibly less dramatic, effect on men's productivity elsewhere. In Russia, monitoring is most important at the lower end of the occupational hierarchy as higher income and education are associated with a lower risk of alcohol abuse.

To summarize our model of the treatment aspect of the MMWP: we argue the premium is an outcome of the coproduction of masculinity prior to and within marriage. As mentioned in the literature review, it has been shown that most of the MMWP occurs before entry to marriage (Petersen *et al.* 2011). We argue that this partly results from planning, with

men who want to marry striving to secure earnings consistent with “responsible” masculinity. Marriage motivates men to maintain their income, and this is reinforced by their wives who mentor and monitor them. Men’s autonomous motivation and wives’ enforcement activities are strengthened by the presence of dependent children. Pressure to provide slackens somewhat as retirement approaches. Monitoring, however, is a life-long commitment for wives who perceive their husbands to be vulnerable.

In a twist on the title, “great” men, may not be the biggest beneficiaries of marriage since they are less likely to need additional motivation and monitoring. Rather, the most significant gains may go to ordinary men to whom “great” women like Sonya and Tanya can make an enormous difference by monitoring them, motivating them, showing them, in Vyacheslav’s words, “the point of living.”

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