

Marriage Contract Paper

Timothy Crowley

Department of Sociology, Longwood University

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Dr. Scott Grether

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Part I.

Ashley and I studied on a Brock Experience to Yellowstone National Park in the summer of 2022 with Longwood University. We met through mutual friends there and ever since we met, we clicked immediately. Our friendship grew and we have been getting closer ever since. I chose Ashley to be my partner for this activity and assignment, as we are both in the class so it would be easy to explain everything. In addition, I chose her because we are already very close with each other and feel comfortable talking with one another. Ashley has been a great partner to work with and we grew our friendship even closer through this assignment.

Part II.

In all honesty, through this activity and assignment, there were very few arguments or disagreements about certain aspects pertaining to life choices and the contract in general. I would say one of the biggest disagreements we had was where the wedding was to be. Ashley started this disagreement, as she did not like my idea of having a rustic, country-like wedding in the countryside in a barn with a nice field. She wanted to have our wedding in the Bahamas and in a tropical, beachy setting. This disagreement did not last too long as Ashley was able to persuade me of her idea. She convinced me to follow her idea, as she brought up the valid point that we could just have our honeymoon there as well. During this argument, prior to resolution, I was stubborn and set on not changing my mind. I was also slightly frustrated, as this has been an idea of mine since about middle school days, so it was upsetting and frustrating to think that I wouldn't get my dream place to do our wedding. In the end, I was not upset or frustrated, as her valid point was convincing. I would say that it was a fair and mutual resolution, as Ashley brought up a very valid argument to have our wedding in the Bahamas, rather I just wanted it in the country-like setting because of its aesthetic.

Another disagreement that we came upon was the number of years that we agreed on for changing diversion of labor for ourselves. I would say that we disagreed on this because Ashley wanted the years to come soon, 3 years to be exact, and I thought it should be closer to 10 years. I was the one who initiated the disagreement, as I felt it was too short of time to think about changing any sort of diversion of labor. I felt that since we were agreeing on most of the contract, we shouldn't think about changing anything for another 10 years, but Ashley brought up the point that anything could change in the span of a minute. I followed up that point, supporting Ashley, that something could also happen in our lives, like changes of job hours, that would impact of ability to do the labor assigned to us at appropriate timing. At the end of the argument, I agreed with Ashley's point of reevaluating our division of labor every 3 years because of her convincing points. In the beginning of the argument, I felt confused because we made the decisions of who was best at the job and then once we were done, we assigned a year to reevaluate the decision. I felt this feeling of confusion, as we agreed on all of the different divisions of labor assignments rather quickly, so why would we want to reevaluate it as soon as three years? As the argument was happening, I felt more understandable, as I realized her reasoning behind making the evaluation of labor in 3 years. The resolution of this disagreement came from me, as Ashley had convincing points and convinced me to agree with her. After this disagreement, I felt satisfied, as I felt that we made a logical decision with reasonable points supporting our decision. I also felt satisfied as we came to an agreement mutually and less of a compromise. As previously stated, I feel that neither person necessarily won, but more of a mutual agreement and the resolution to the disagreement was very fair to both of us.

I would say that although it was agreed upon, there was a bit of conflict involved on financial decisions. The decision of how much money each spouse gets had a bit of conflict, as

we have both seen in our lives how being non-transparent with money spent in a relationship causes issues and turns toxic fast. Being transparent and communicative has always been one of the strongest aspects of marriage we have stated in our contract. When it gets to the point of one of us in the relationship hiding money being spent or taking more money than we should is the point in the relationship that it begins to become a toxic relationship. Having one person in charge of who gets to spend what is when things get messy and where problems start. Through this disagreement, I was frustrated, as Ashley wanted to take control on the money and be the only one to make the decision on how much we each spend. I did not like this idea at all. As said previously, having one person in charge of all the money and who gets to spend what is going to create nothing but problems. This was not the biggest argument we had but was the largest. It lasted for about 10 minutes, as Ashley was being stubborn about the decision. She believed because she would be a stay-at-home mother when the children were young, that she would have more time with organizing our money and decisioning who gets to spend what. This was not a valid reason to me, so I kept arguing the point that it will create nothing but problems and take away our most important part of a successful marriage, being transparency and communication. I finally convinced her to compromise and have no one be completely in charge and instead have mutual agree of both of us getting a say in organizing our money and deciding how much each person received to spend. One of the major aspects we took into account was that I will probably be making more money, as men typically do. In the article, Race and Gender in Families and at Work by Glauber, it found that men are paid more due to the idea of the fatherhood wage premium and that women are paid less because of the motherhood wage penalty. We took that into account when making our decision each of us have mutual decisions on spending. By the end of the argument, I felt a sigh of relief because this was a decision that I was personally

extremely passionate about and I convinced Ashley to do more of what I wanted to do. In addition, I also felt happy that our lives will be spent having mutual agreement of where our money was going and who got what to spend. In my opinion, I think the resolution was very fair, as our agreement will have lots of transparency and communication involved in that specific decision-making process. I also believe it was fair because it was more of a compromise on Ashley's part, as I convinced her to go more by my side. It was a fair decision because now spending our money will be mutual and not one person getting the say for both.

Part III.

Looking back at our contract, the different sections, and different decisions we made add up and seem to be cohesive. When reviewing what we said in the contract, now that the contract is complete, it is truly interesting to see that the different section creates consistency and flow. All of the sections are consistent with the goals that we made for our family, future, and marriage. In fact, some sections coincidentally say some of the same exact things.

I would say that the practicality of the contract could be used in real life; however, things change consistently and never can be this concrete. For example, I could get a job that works hours that I wouldn't be able to complete my division of labor and Ashley would have to take some others on. Furthermore, life can change in the span of a second and nothing on paper could account for those changes. Yes, practically this would be a great contract if we abide by every aspect of it, but in reality, we are known that is not how life works. For example, when talking about changes we would account for if becoming a custodial parent, we never thought about if the child needs accommodations because they may have a disability or illness. My point is that we could write down a bunch of rules and how we want our future to go perfectly, but there is no telling what could change that would make us go off the contract.

I think in the end our contract turned out pretty fair. I think that there were a lot of decisions that we made based off of stereotypical ideals brought by society, like the division of labor decisions. Meaning, I think we made a lot of decisions based of “oh your male, you should do the male oriented job” like mowing the lawn care. In addition, we put me in charge of taking care of auto repairs and maintenance because not only do I have a little more experience than Ashley in that field, but it is also a male oriented field. I think that because of our similar ideals and values this contract turned out really fair for the both of us and we both got equal shares. In addition, we both made equal decisions and when we had disagreements, we worked them out and made either a compromise or a mutual agreement.

Part IV.

Throughout this project, we have both learned a lot about each other. I would say that the most unpleasant surprise I learned about my partner is that she is very stubborn just like me and likes everything to go her way. Before we did this assignment, I did not realize this about her. I thought she was more docile and didn't care too much. I found the opposite in her and that she cares deeply for values as well as her ideals and that she is extremely stubborn. I would say that the most pleasant surprise I learned from my partner is that she is willing to compromise with valid IV points. After learning that she was stubborn and not docile, this was definitely the most pleasant surprise, as I thought it was going to be hard to convince her in some aspects, but it wasn't too hard. Through this I also learned that she wants to be a stay-at-home mom until her kids are grown enough to take care of themselves. Furthermore, I found that she is just like me, in regard to the fact that she cares deeply for her family, as it is one of the biggest parts of her life. I found it really interesting that Ashley didn't care for the idea about the 2nd shift. In the Work and Family PowerPoint, the 2nd shift is described as the domestic work which awaits

parents for when they get home from work. I on one hand am fine with it, but Ashley like the idea that she would just stay as a stay-at-home mom until the kids are grown up and able to care for themselves.

I would say that throughout this process of completing the marriage contract, I have learned a lot about myself. I have learned that I will be highly involved in my future wedding planning with my future partner. I have also learned that there are specific aspects of marriage like communication and loyalty that I take extremely seriously with marriage. In addition, there are specific key parts of marriage that I feel strongly about, like financial decisions. I have learned that I am stubborn but can be convinced on aspects rather quickly with valid points unless I feel strongly towards my stance. In addition, I have learned that there are some decisions in the marriage contract that I have been based off of past experiences that I have witnessed with either my own family or families that I have seen like a friend's family. I think through this process my partner through this simulation has learned that I am very passionate about some key aspects, as noted above. I think they have also learned that I can be stubborn on certain topics, but with a debate with valid points taken into account, I have an open mind on things. I think she has also learned a lot of personal points about my life, like how many kids I want to have, where I want to live when I am older, and that I take family seriously, as it is one of the biggest components of my life. In the reading *Is it Our Day or the Brides Day? The Division of Wedding Labor and its Meaning for Couples* by Sniezek talks about how the bride disproportionately takes on more of the wedding planning duties and that most of the wedding planning aspects falls under woman to do the work. I learned that in my case, I oppose that point, as I want to be extremely involved in the wedding planning process and take on a lot of wedding planning duties, as it is my special day too. I think she has also learned that we have a lot of similar

viewpoints on marriage and different key decisions as a part of marriage, like how we want to raise of children and how we want to split up diversion of labor within our marriage.

I have learned a lot about decision-making through this process. I have learned that marriage is all about decision making; what do we want for dinner one night, what are we watching on tv tonight, who is coming to our wedding, how many kids do we want, etc. Decision-making is a very hard part of my life, as I am a very indecisive person. However, that being said, I have learned through this process that I am willing to help with a lot of decisions regarding our future, marriage and family. I have learned that you must be able to make decisions, as that is one of the biggest components of marriage. In addition, it was interesting to see how much decision-making and critical thinking goes into marriage, while working on this simulation.

Through this assignment, I have learned a lot about marriage that I never thought of before. I never realized how intensive marriage is and how every decision has an influence on your future and your family. I have always thought marriage was just a title to put on a relationship but have learned that it is much more than that. In fact, while doing this, I have learned how simple arguments can originate and how they have such a huge impact on your daily lives. Simple disagreements through this simulation could turn into big issues when in a marriage in reality. In addition, this simulation and assignment has brought a lot of new perspectives into my thinking, as it has opened up my view on the reality of life. This has caused me to think about new aspects of marriage like financial decisions, the ways I want to raise my children, and where I want to live when I am older. I never thought about how much financial decisions impact your day-to-day life, but they are significant. Furthermore, this assignment and simulation has created an extensive part of my critical thinking skills, as it has made me think of my future and how

much my future means to me. Before this assignment, I never genuinely took time to think about how I want my future to go and who I want to be a part of my future. After this assignment, it has caused me to think outside of the box on what is most important to me in my life and how I want to choose to spend it.