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ELITE SCHOOLS AND OPTING-IN:
EFFECTS OF COLLEGE SELECTIVITY ON CAREER AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

Using College and Beyond data and a variant on Dale and Krueger's (2002) matched-applicant approach, this paper revisits the question of how attending an elite college affects later-life outcomes. We expand the scope along two dimensions: we do not restrict the sample to full-time full-year workers and we examine labor force participation, human capital, and family formation. For men, our findings echo those in Dale and Krueger (2002): controlling for selection eliminates the positive relationship between college selectivity and earnings. We also find no significant effects on men's educational or family outcomes. The results are quite different for women: we find effects on both career and family outcomes. Attending a school with a 100-point higher average SAT score increases women's probability of advanced degree attainment by 5 percentage points and earnings by 14 percent, while reducing their likelihood of marriage by 4 percentage points. The effect of college selectivity on own earnings is significantly larger for married than for single women. Among married women, selective college attendance significantly increases spousal education.

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1 Introduction

Although attending an elite college is strongly associated with higher earnings, Dale and Krueger (2002, henceforth DK) demonstrates that this association is eliminated after controlling for the non-random selection of individuals into such colleges. Using data from the Mellon Foundation’s College and Beyond survey, which is unique in its broad coverage of students at highly-selective and selective US institutions of higher education, DK finds no effect of college selectivity on later-life earnings when they account for students’ high school characteristics and college applications, acceptances, and rejections. Yet competition for admissions at the nation’s elite universities remains intense, and several schools now boast acceptance rates in the single digits. The perceived importance to students of admissions at particular selective schools is also reflected in the 2018 lawsuit brought by Students for Fair Admissions against Harvard University, as well as the various Supreme Court cases involving affirmative action in college admissions: *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003), *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), and the two *Fisher v. University of Texas* cases (2013, 2016).

One way to reconcile students putting a high value on attending an elite school with it having negligible labor market effects is the presence of substantial marriage market benefits. Economists have measured marriage market returns to schooling and their impact of college attendance, but the focus has been on quantity (years of schooling) rather than quality (e.g., Chiappori, Iyigun, and Weiss 2009; Ge 2011; Attanasio and Kaufmann 2017; Chiappori, Salanié, and Weiss 2017; Chiappori, Dias, and Meghir 2018).¹ Because the value of increased schooling could easily extend to the quality margin, it is natural to ask if attending an elite US college affects family outcomes, even in the absence of career benefits.

We do this by drawing on the same remarkable College and Beyond data source and credible matched-applicant identification approach developed in DK and then significantly expanding the scope of inquiry. We first revisit the question of how elite colleges affect earnings with a broader sample of individuals that is not limited to the full-time full-year workers studied in DK. Removing this restriction increases the sample size for our matched-applicant model by 41.9% overall and our sample of women by 88.7% (going from Column 3 to Column 1 in Table 3). Using this broader sample, we estimate statistically significant gains to college selectivity.² The contrast with the prior result suggests that workers with weaker attachment to the labor force are the ones whose earnings are most affected. Our larger sample enables us to separately consider men and women, and we find that the gains are indeed concentrated among women.³ This heterogeneity by gender, combined with the importance of including less attached workers in

1. The related literature on assortative mating by education has similarly focused on quantity rather than quality (e.g., Mare 1991; Pencavel 1998).

2. In DK, the main “matched applicant” model matches and compares individuals to others in their cohort who applied to, were accepted at, and were rejected from similar colleges, but who attended colleges that were more or less selective. DK report similar estimates from a “self-revelation” model that controls for applications but not for offers of admission; a subsequent study confirms the main findings from the self-revelation model using linked administrative data on career earnings from the Social Security Administration (Dale and Krueger 2014). For robustness, we also report estimates from “self-revelation” models in this paper.

3. Autor et al. (2016) also find gender differences in the returns to school quality in K12 education. Footnote 12 of DK describes their female

the sample, further motivates us to examine novel outcomes related to labor force participation, human capital accumulation, and family formation. For women, we find a positive effect of school selectivity on labor force participation, though not on the full-time full-year margin, as well as positive effects on own and spousal educational attainment, and a negative effect on marriage rates. We find no significant effects on those outcomes for men.

We also provide new evidence in support of the DK identification approach on our expanded sample. The idea behind the identification approach – that students’ application choices and colleges’ acceptance and rejection decisions absorb the major omitted variables that could relate college selectivity to earnings – is reasonable. Variations on it have been applied elsewhere (e.g., Arcidiacono, Aucejo, and Hotz 2016) and it was highlighted in a popular econometrics textbook (Angrist and Pischke 2014). Angrist and Pischke (2017) presents the paper as an illustration of the modern econometric paradigm, arguing that, although conditioning on student observable characteristics, as well as information about college applications and acceptances, “does not turn college attendance into a randomized trial, it provides a compelling source of control for the major forces confounding causal inference” (Angrist and Pischke 2017, p. 131). Nevertheless, because the variation is not based on experimental assignment, but is instead based on the decisions of human actors, it is conceivable that college selectivity, conditional on applications and acceptances, is still related to unobserved factors that affect earnings potential. In particular, it has been argued that students who attend less selective colleges within their choice set are making “a very odd choice” (Hoxby 2009, p. 115), which suggests they differ along other unmeasured dimensions as well.

DK discusses these concerns and presents evidence based on its estimation sample that any bias coming from non-random college choice in the matching models is likely to cause an overstatement of the value of college selectivity and would therefore leave the conclusions of the analysis unchanged. However, our main results differ from those in DK in that we find positive effects for women, and particularly for those who are less strongly attached to the labor force. This context raises new concerns about omitted variables related to career ambition and family goals that may be related to both college choice and to later outcomes. For example, young women’s rising expectations of future employment likely contributed to their increasing rates of college attendance (Goldin, Katz, and Kuziemko 2006). In Section 5.2, we consider maternal employment as a proxy for career orientation. We show that, while maternal employment is strongly related to female earnings, it is not predictive of college selectivity itself for women in our sample. As a result, controlling for maternal employment leaves our main estimates unchanged. For men, maternal employment is related to neither earnings nor school choice. Though not definitive, these results provide reassurance that it is worthwhile to apply the DK approach on our extended sample.

Our finding of a positive earnings effect of selectivity for women aligns somewhat with the broader literature on the impact of college quality on earnings that uses alternative data sources and identification approaches. Several papers using US data report significant positive effects of attending an elite college on later earnings. These include Brewer, sample of full-time full-year workers as being “too small to draw precise estimates from.”

Eide, and Ehrenberg (1999), that models wages and college choice, excluding net costs of attendance from the wage equation, Black and Smith (2004), that compares results from OLS and propensity score matching models, and Long (2010), that tracks how OLS estimates change over time under the assumption that omitted variable biases are stable. Long (2008) compares estimates on a single data source using different identification approaches, including a variant of the one in DK. The effect of college selectivity on earnings is positive and significant for men, but not women, in the full sample OLS model, but insignificant in the IV models (using distance to colleges) and the DK approach. Hoekstra (2009) uses a regression discontinuity (RD) design to study admission to a single state flagship university and finds significant returns. Outside of the US, Li et al. (2012) finds a significant wage premium from attending an elite university in China, as does Sekhri (2014) using an RD on public university admissions in India.

Although our focus is on higher education, the results contribute to the broader literature on school quality that is also concerned with effects in K12 education (e.g., Cullen, Jacob, and Levitt 2006; Kirabo Jackson 2010; Hanushek and Woessmann 2012; Pop-Eleches and Urquiola 2013; Abdulkadiroğlu, Angrist, and Pathak 2014; Deming et al. 2014; Dobbie and Fryer Jr 2015; Clark and Del Bono 2016). Our findings also contribute to the broader literature on the effects of education, which tends to find significant benefits to additional years of schooling and to college graduation (Mincer 1974; Angrist and Krueger 1991; Card 1993, 1999; Ashenfelter and Krueger 1994; Kane and Rouse 1995; Duflo 2001; Oreopoulos 2006; Heckman, Humphries, and Veramendi 2018). Our results on spousal education also resonate with estimates from an RD study of university admissions in Chile that finds marriage market returns to school quality (Kaufmann, Messner, and Solis 2013).

These comparisons are informative, but it is important to emphasize the unusual and important subpopulation that we are able to analyze with the College and Beyond survey. The sample is focused on individuals who attended selective and highly-selective US schools, with school-average SAT scores in 1978 ranging from 1020 to 1370. As such, it provides a view of a subpopulation of particular interest that is hard to capture using other sources (Goldin 2006), but the results may not translate to the general population of college students in 1976. In particular, female graduates of elite private universities in the US have lower average labor force participation than those from other institutions (Hersch 2013) and there are strong negative associations between family formation and subsequent labor supply and earnings for those women (Goldin 2006; Goldin and Katz 2008; Herr and Wolfram 2012; Hersch 2013; Bertrand, Goldin, and Katz 2010). These patterns indicate a lower baseline level of labor force attachment in the group of women on the margin of attending elite schools, possibly because of greater parental or spousal resources. This implies that those women have more capacity than average to increase their labor supply, particularly after family formation.

We therefore consider two possible mechanisms related to family formation that contribute to the overall earnings effects that we observed in our sample. First, it is possible that attending a selective school makes women less likely to start families. Second, conditional on starting a family, having attended a selective school could mitigate the career

penalty from family formation. We find empirical support for both of these mechanisms in our data. Marriage is associated with lower earnings and elite schooling lowers marriage rates, which supports the first mechanism. Elite schooling also increases earnings more for married than for unmarried women, supporting the second one. School selectivity also affects matching within the marriage market, conditional on marriage, as it increases the likelihood of having a more educated spouse. Because we also find an increase in women's own schooling, it is possible that part of the marriage market effect is from additional years of schooling, which has been previously shown to affect marriage rates and spousal quality (Lefgren and McIntyre 2006; Ge 2011; Lafortune 2013; Bruze 2015).⁴

In contrast to the effects for women, we find no effects of school selectivity on family outcomes, educational investment, or career-family interactions for men. We also test for interactive effects between higher degree attainment and school selectivity on earnings, but find no significant effects for men or women.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 outlines our theoretical framework, Section 3 details our empirical strategy, and Section 4 discusses the data. Section 5 presents our results. Section 6 concludes.

2 Theoretical Effects of College Selectivity

Before turning to estimation, it is useful to outline the ways in which attending a more selective college can affect a person's post-collegiate career and family prospects. This section presents four channels for the effects and then discusses how interactions between career and family can complicate the analysis.

The first channel is that a person attending a more selective college may accrue more human capital there than they would have accrued at a less selective institution. The pace of learning may be faster, leading to more skill accumulation by graduation. This could be because selectivity is predictive of instructional quality, because classes in more selective schools are aimed at more academically capable students, and therefore cover more challenging material, or because students in selective school have access to more stimulating extra-curricular activities and to more accomplished and renowned faculty members. These advantages can improve labor market outcomes immediately upon graduation, and they may also improve graduate school admissions prospects, leading to additional human capital accumulation through more years of schooling.

Second, regardless of what students learn in college, the fact of having attended a more selective school is a signal that conveys positive information to potential employers and spouses. Third, the type of college a young person attends can shape his or her ambitions and expectations about the future. Finally, attending a more selective college places a student in a social and professional network that is, on average, drawn from peers with higher test scores than those at less selective schools. These higher-ability peer may also contribute to the first three channels: improving educational

4. Lafortune (2013) and Ge (2011) also consider the natural implication of these effects in analyzing how marriage market conditions and expectations, respectively, affect educational investment.

outcomes for other students (Zimmerman 2003; Sacerdote 2001), raising the signal value attached to attending a particular school, and establishing higher norms and expectations for academic and career achievement.

If students do in fact acquire more human capital in more selective colleges, that should increase their productivity in the labor market, which should lead to higher wage offers. It could also increase their productivity in household production (such as child-rearing or household management), which would improve the quality of their marriage offers. The signaling effect operates similarly. If the signal is positive, it will lead to better offers and to worse offers if negative. The difference between the first and second effects is that first relates to the changes in the individual students themselves, while the second is about others' expectations and beliefs about them.

The social network effect of having higher-achieving peers is perhaps more ambiguous. Conditional on actual human capital and school prestige, having better peers translates into lower access costs to an improved professional network and marriage pool. The higher quality of this pool is evident, for example, in the strong positive correlation between school selectivity and wages, without controlling for selection. This access would tend to improve the distributions of offers of both types. But having a better peer group also means that the set of closest competitors in those social and professional markets is also of a higher caliber. This less favorable relative comparison could eliminate the benefit of greater access to the stronger pool; at the same time, access to weaker pools is now more costly. It is therefore possible for the network aspect on its own to have a negative effect on the distributions of offers.

After considering the separate effects on marital and career outcomes, it is important to emphasize the potential interactions between the two sets of outcomes. Higher male wages are generally thought to improve their marriage prospects, but the effect is less clear for women. A woman who finds work that is remunerative and more personally satisfying to her may want to maintain her participation in the labor market after marriage. This increases the household's budget and some of that can be transferred to the spouse. Offsetting this improvement is the fact that the woman who is attached to her career may be less willing to specialize in domestic production within marriage and to sacrifice her own career progression to help her partner advance.⁵ Men and women might also want to conform to traditional gender norms within their relationships in which the dominant (or at least majority earner, Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan 2015) earner is male. For whatever reason, high career ambition may be perceived as an unattractive trait in a potential wife (Bursztyn, Fujiwara, and Pallais 2017). Preference estimates from an online dating platform indicate that, while men and women both value income positively, women place twice as much weight on it than men do (Hitsch, Hortaçsu, and Ariely 2010).

In addition to shifting the distribution of wage and marriage offers, college selectivity can also affect the thresholds that individuals apply for accepting or rejecting such offers. This can play out through interactions between the two markets, where a better offer distribution in one market raises the threshold for accepting an offer in the other one. For

5. For example, they may be less willing to act as a "trailing" spouse who relocates for her spouse's new job or who passes up job opportunities to stay near her partner's work (Burke and Miller 2018).

example, a woman who anticipates substantially higher earnings offers will have a higher utility outside a marriage and may subsequently set a higher threshold for utility that she requires within marriage to accept an offer. Conversely, a woman who gains access to more unearned (spousal) income through marriage may set a higher wage threshold to accept a job offer. Moving thresholds alone can be sufficient to shift average outcomes among market participants (workers or married people), even if the offer distributions are unchanged.

Our empirical analysis centers on the effects of college selectivity on career earnings. We estimate overall effects and then draw on the channels above to formulate additional tests related to the mechanism. Specifically, we examine intermediate effects on own years of completed schooling as well as effects on family status and spousal characteristics, with the understanding that those outcomes may themselves be determined in part by anticipated or actual earnings.

3 Empirical Strategy

Our empirical analysis is based on the “matched applicant” model developed in DK. The model applies a “selection on observables” approach to address the non-random assignment of individuals to colleges.

Formally, we model outcomes after college using the DK notation:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SAT_j + \beta_2 X_{1i} + \underbrace{\beta_3 X_{2i}}_{u_i} + \varepsilon_i,$$

where Y_i is the outcome of interest for individual i , who attended school j , which has an average SAT score of SAT_j . SAT_j is our explanatory variable of interest; it is meant to capture school selectivity. We include observable characteristics of the individual in the vector X_{1i} , but we are not able to observe everything that affects outcomes. In particular, we model the error term u_i as a sum of two components that are not observed in the data: X_{2i} , which is information known to the student and to the admissions officers at colleges at the time of college applications and ε_i , which is a random shock that is uncorrelated with SAT_j , X_{1i} , and X_{2i} .

The variables included in X_{2i} include personal traits such as ambition, confidence and drive, as well as other skills, talents and life experiences that are not reflected in test scores and grades. The problem with estimating the model without data on the variables in X_{2i} is that those variables are likely to be correlated with college applications as well as admissions decisions. They may therefore plausibly be correlated with school characteristics such as selectivity, which would bias the estimate of β_1 . If, for example, the unmeasured factors that predict higher earnings are also positively correlated with admission to an elite university, then we should expect the estimated effect of school selectivity to be biased upward. A similar logic applies to our other outcomes of interest, but the direction of the bias is less clear. If women who are more career-oriented are more likely to attend selective schools, then the estimated effects of selectivity in the model above that does not account for selection would be biased upward for labor supply and

earnings, but could be biased downward for marriage and children. Because students can anticipate these admission decisions when they decide where to submit their applications, information about their ability (and perceived chances of admission) as well as (unconstrained) preferences will be incorporated into their application choices.

The innovation in DK is to match students into who applied to, were accepted to, and were rejected from similar colleges. The regression model can then account for variation in elements of X_{2i} that drive selection concerns by using a set of indicator variables representing each of the groups of students. This approach does not explicitly model the application and admission decisions; nor does it attempt to identify or parameterize effects of the different components of X_{2i} . Instead, it accounts for the application and admissions decisions in a highly flexible way that uses information about the selectivity level of each of the colleges that students applied to and were accepted at or rejected from. The critical assumption is therefore that, conditional on applications and acceptances, students' enrollment decisions are uncorrelated with X_{2i} or ε_i .

This assumption will be violated if the choice to attend a more or less selective school, within the set of admission offers, is correlated with unmeasured student characteristics that themselves are predictive of our outcomes of interest. We control for parental income, but are not able to directly account for differences in financial aid offers. These issues are discussed at length in DK, who argue that the bias from omitted variables related to college choice is more likely to cause them to overstate than to understate the impact of college selectivity on earnings and would therefore leave the conclusions of their analysis unchanged.

While this may be true for their sample, it is worthwhile to reconsider the issue of bias in light of the expanded scope of the present analysis. This is particularly important because we include in our sample individuals who are less strongly attached to the labor market, and because we are interested in labor force participation as well as family-related outcomes. These considerations present another dimension of potential bias that was less relevant for the DK analysis. Specifically, women who attend less selective schools from within their choice set may do so because they expect academic and labor market outcomes to be less important to them later in life, possibly because they value family formation and investments more. Clearly, controlling for SAT scores and class rank, as well as college applications and admissions, goes some distance in addressing that concern. In Section 5.2, we test for remaining bias by using information on maternal employment when the individual was in high school as an observable proxy for career orientation.

In addition to the matching model, DK also present estimates from a related "self-revelation" model that relies on the notion that students have a good understanding of their own ability levels, which they reveal through their college application destinations. For example, it is possible that students with higher academic ability (conditional on SAT scores and high school GPA, which we can observe in our data) apply to colleges with higher average SAT scores. This can be addressed in the regression model by controlling for the average SAT score of the colleges to which the student applied. The limitation of this approach relative to the matching model is that it ignores information coming

from colleges about acceptances and rejections. These decisions clearly affect which schools students attend, and they may be correlated with later-life outcomes, even after conditioning on application decisions. We therefore focus on the matching model in this paper, but we also report estimates from the self-revelation model on the sample of matched-applicants in Table 2.⁶

4 College and Beyond Data

Our main data source is the College and Beyond survey, which has been previously described and analyzed in DK, as well as Bowen and Bok (1998), Goldin (2006), Small and Winship (2007), and Groen and White (2004). The dataset combines rich self-reported survey information on students who attended one of 34 US colleges and universities in 1951, 1976, and 1989 with administrative student records from those schools and supplemental information from the Higher Education Research Institute and the College Entrance Examination Board. The included schools are all selective or highly-selective institutions that award bachelor's degrees, with school-average SAT scores in 1978 ranging from 1020 to 1370.⁷ The institutional administrative data includes SAT scores and GPA and was collected for every matriculant at the 30 private colleges and a subsample of the entering cohorts at the four public universities.⁸ Data from the College Entrance Examination Board includes information from the Student Descriptive Questionnaire, such as high school class rank and parental income, and supplementary data on parental occupation and parental education are obtained from a questionnaire of college freshmen administered by the Higher Education Research Institute and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program.

Because we are interested in middle-career outcomes, we focus on the 1976 college entering cohort, who were in their late 30s in 1996–1997 at the time of their survey. Members of the 1951 cohort were in their mid-60s and 1989 cohort members were only in their mid-20s when surveyed. In historical context, the women of this cohort are at the forefront of the fifth cohort of twentieth century American female college graduates described in Goldin (2004); this cohort was the first to aspire to achieving “career and family” at the same time. Following DK, we exclude individuals who attended four historically black colleges and universities, individuals with missing income information, and individuals with missing college application information. These restrictions leave us with 9,917 women and 9,738 men in what we call our full sample.

The College and Beyond survey collected data on, among other things, annual earnings in 1995, occupation,

6. It is possible to estimate the self-revelation model on a larger sample that includes unmatched applicants, but we prefer to maintain the sample definition for better comparability of results and greater similarity in the college application and admissions profiles of individuals in the sample. The matched and unmatched applicants do not appear to differ substantially, but unmatched applicants are more likely to have submitted only a single college application and to attend a public university.

7. The two schools with the lowest school average SAT in the sample are Dennison University (1020) and Pennsylvania State University (1038). The full list of schools is presented in Appendix Table 1 in DK.

8. At public universities, data were collected for all minority students, all varsity letter winners, all students with a combined SAT score of 1,350 or higher, and a random sample of other students. We follow the literature and account for the non-random sampling procedure by using weights in our descriptive statistics and regression models.

demographics, education, some spousal characteristics, and satisfaction measures. Respondent and household earnings are reported in ten intervals.⁹ Following DK, we assign log earnings for respondents and households equal to the log of the relevant interval midpoint and use the 1990 Census to calculate average log earnings for 36–38 year old college graduates who earn more than \$200,000 for earnings in the topcoded category. This process means that respondents and households cannot have \$0 in earnings, and we therefore consider individuals with earnings above \$1,000 (i.e., in the second earnings interval or higher) to be labor force participants. We define spousal earnings as the difference between household earnings and respondent earnings, meaning that spousal earnings can equal zero dollars.

The survey also collected information on other schools that individuals applied to, along with self-reported acceptances or rejections from those schools. Following DK, we use this information, together with data on school average SAT scores, to match students with others who applied to, were accepted by, and were rejected from, similar schools. Because matching based on the exact set of schools is too demanding of the data, in practice, we treat schools as comparable if their average SAT score is in the same fixed 25 point interval. Table A1 in our Appendix is reproduced from DK to illustrate the matching process for a hypothetical group of students. Students who apply to only one school or whose school set does not coincide with others' school sets are excluded from the matched sample.

Our matching procedure diverges from the one in DK along one key dimension: we impose the additional restriction that individuals must be matched to others of their same gender. This additional restriction does not alter our results, as we demonstrate below, but it is necessary for the analyses that follow in which we estimate our models separately on male and female students. Although this restriction reduces the sample size for estimation, it also increases the similarity within groups of matched applicants. Our matched sample includes 40.8% of individuals from the full sample (40.8% of women and 40.7% of men).

Our second major shift from DK is that we remove the requirement of working full-time and full-year at the time of the survey. Our reasons for removing the restriction are that: (1) we want to include variation in labor force participation and work hours as part of the total effect we measure, (2) we want to study males and females separately, and (3) we consider outcomes other than earnings, such as education, marriage and spousal characteristics, for which there is no clear reason for restricting the sample based on labor force participation. In Table 1, we report summary statistics for our estimation sample of matched applicants, along with the respective values for the same variables published in DK for their sample of full-time full-year workers for comparison. It is perhaps not surprising that our sample is more female (50.8% compared to 38.5%), and has lower reported log-earnings (10.5 versus 11.1) than the DK sample; it is also has slightly lower SAT scores and fewer college applications. Within our sample, women had, on average, lower earnings and labor force participation in their late 30s. They also had slightly lower SAT scores and were less likely to be college athletes. For completeness, we also report summary statistics on the full sample in

9. They are: less than \$1,000; \$1,000–\$9,999; \$10,000–\$19,999; \$20,000–\$29,999; \$30,000–\$49,999; \$50,000–\$74,999; \$75,000–\$99,999; \$100,000–\$149,999; \$150,000–\$199,999; and more than \$200,000.

5 Estimated Effects of College Selectivity

This section presents results from our estimation of the effects of college selectivity on career and family outcomes at ages 38–39 for men and women in the 1976 college-entering cohort of the College and Beyond survey. We start with annual earnings and proceed to consider labor force participation and then educational and family outcomes. We also explore heterogeneous effects of selectivity based on educational attainment and family status and present new evidence supporting the validity of the DK matching approach on our expanded sample.

5.1 Earnings and Labor Force Participation

The starting point for our analysis of the relationship between school selectivity and log-earnings is the basic regression model used in DK, which includes controls for the individual characteristics of sex, race, ethnicity, SAT score, high school class rank, (predicted log of) parental income and an indicator for being an athlete in college. Our explanatory variable of interest is the average SAT score at the college the individual attended; higher average scores indicate more selective institutions. We report coefficient estimates for this variable in Table 2 in the main text, with Panel A showing results for the pooled sample of men and women, Panel B showing women only and Panel C showing men only. The full set of estimates from each of these samples are in Appendix Tables A3, A4, and A5, respectively.¹⁰ As noted previously, all regressions include weights to adjust for the sampling procedure used for students at the four public universities.

Estimates from the basic regression model (Column 1) show a significant return to attending a more selective college across the panels. The coefficients associate 100-point increases in school average SAT scores with 13.3% higher earnings in the pooled sample, 18.8% higher earnings for women, and 7.7% for men. However, controlling for selection using only the self-revelation model (Column 2) reduces the coefficients on earnings to 4.7% overall, 8.4% for women and 0.9% for men; the estimate for men is not significantly different from zero. Employing the full matching model (Column 3) yields estimates of 7.1% overall and 13.9% for women and a statistically insignificant 1.1% increase for men.

Our larger estimates for women than for men, together with the divergence between our estimates and those in DK for full-time full-year workers, suggest that labor force engagement (participation or work hours) is a key part of the explanation for the increased earnings we observe. We therefore consider two measures of engagement as outcomes in the next two columns of Table 2.

10. There is no *Female* estimate in the matching models because the variable is collinear with the group fixed effects.

First we consider the extensive margin using an indicator equal to one if the individual reports positive earnings. Because the lowest earnings bin available in the College and Beyond data is up to \$1,000, this effectively means that we apply an income threshold of \$1,000 to define labor force participation. On the participation margin, we find significant effects of selectivity for women, but not for men or in the pooled sample (Column 4). For women, attending a school with a 100-point higher average SAT score increases the probability of working by 2.3 percentage points (2.8%). This increase in participation may come from either increased labor supply or labor demand. An example of the demand effect would be if graduates of elite schools have better access to work options that they find personally meaningful or that offer more appealing schedules.

We next consider a more demanding measure of labor market engagement that is an indicator for responding “yes” to the survey question: “Were you working full-time for pay or profit during all of 1995?” This is the question that DK use to restrict their sample to full-time full-year workers. We treat it as an outcome variable in Column 5 using the sample that includes part-time workers as well as non-workers. The point estimates for this outcome are small (< 0.005) and statistically insignificant across the panels, suggesting that elite college attendance is more important for shifting women into part-time work from non-employment than for shifting them from part-time to full-time work. The matched-applicant model estimates indicate that the increase in women’s labor force attachment is coming from the more weakly attached workers. The self-revelation model estimates for these two labor force participation outcomes (reported in Columns 1 and 2 of Appendix Table A6) are less precise; for women, they are both positive (0.014 and 0.012), but not significantly different from zero.

These estimates suggest that increases in labor force participation contribute to the overall effects on earnings, but do not rule out further effects on earnings conditional on participation. We examine this in Table 3 by limiting the sample in Column 2 to individuals with positive earnings and in Column 3 to those working full-time and full-year. Column 1 repeats the matching model estimates from Column 3 of Table 2 for comparison. For the overall sample, as well as for female workers, the consistent pattern is that these sample restrictions reduce the magnitude of the estimated effects of school selectivity on earnings. Although the point estimates remain positive, they are much smaller (going from 0.139 to 0.006 for women) and not statistically significant on the restricted samples.

Though not definitive proof against an effect on hourly wage rates, these results are certainly consistent with the finding in DK that school selectivity does not significantly improve earnings for full-time full-year workers, either male or female. But the comparison to DK is not complete. Although the sample restriction in Column 3 matches that in DK, the matching method differs in that we restrict matches to people with the same gender. This affects both the composition of the groups and the total sample size, because individuals who only have opposite-sex matches are dropped in our scheme. To assess the practical importance of our alternative matching approach, we report an estimate in Column 4 of Table 3 that uses the DK sample restrictions and matching method on the pooled sample. The point estimate is essentially unchanged between the two columns that differ only in the matching method: 0.018 (standard

error of 0.028) in Column 3 and 0.018 (standard error of 0.020) in Column 4.

Taken together, the estimates in Tables 2 and 3 suggest that attending a more selective school has a significant impact on earnings for women by inducing them to increase their labor force participation.

5.2 College Choice and Labor Force Attachment

Before we examine the possible mechanisms underlying this effect, we first consider whether the estimates for female labor force participation are biased in the DK matching approach. In particular, one might be concerned that the college choice decision differs fundamentally between male and female students, because all men plan to participate fully in the labor force as adults but not all women do. Because one of the major private benefits from college attendance is the improvement in expected earnings, the possibility that women vary in their expected participation rates (in terms of expected hours or years of work) complicates the calculation for them. It could be that women who are more career oriented are the ones that value college selectivity more, and therefore attend the more selective schools within their choice sets. If those adolescent expectations also map to work decisions for women in their late-30s, then the estimates from the matching model for the effects of school selectivity on earnings and labor force participation would both be biased upward for women, but not for men.

The main conceptual weakness with this challenge is that it ignores the fact that the matching model (and even the self-revelation model) is based on comparisons among women who applied to the same schools. If young people applying to colleges only considered the potential impact on their own earnings as the benefit, then it is unclear why women who are not planning to work would even consider, and make the investment of applying to, elite schools in the first place. Rather, it is more likely that there are other benefits associated with school selectivity, even among women who are less career-oriented. Those could be related to personal growth and development or to marriage market considerations, which we consider in Section 5.4.

We nevertheless consider it worthwhile to examine the empirical importance of the concern that women with greater anticipated labor force participation are the ones who systematically choose more selective schools from among their offers of admission. We do this using data on maternal employment during the individual's senior year of high school as a proxy for the individual's own anticipated labor force attachment after college. The results in Table 4 provide some reassurance (full results from the model are in Appendix Table A7). They confirm that, as expected, maternal employment is a significant predictor of earnings for women (Column 1) but not for men (Column 3). But, it is not a significant predictor of school selectivity in our matched-applicant model for women (Column 2) or men (Column 4). As a result, including that variable as an additional control in the earnings model has a minimal impact on our main coefficient of interest, β_1 , which goes from 0.139 (Table 2, Column 3) to 0.135 (Table 4, Column 1) with no change in significance.

A second reason for concern about non-random college choice for women in particular is the prominence of single-sex colleges for women in the sample, attended by 17.2% of the female matched sample. Because the decision to attend an all-female college may be correlated with social or career preferences and also with school selectivity, we conduct a robustness check on our log-earnings model that adds an indicator for attending one of the four all-female schools in the sample. The estimated effect of school-average SAT score is unchanged in magnitude (0.139) and significance ($p < 0.10$).

The results in this section provide a stronger empirical foundation for our application of the matched-applicant model to study men and women separately and, in the following sections, to examine outcomes related to schooling, family formation and spousal quality.

5.3 Educational Attainment

Table 5 reports estimated effects of school selectivity on educational attainment, for women (Panel A) and for men (Panel B). Within the sample of selective and highly selective institutions included in the College and Beyond survey, we find no significant effects of school quality on the likelihood of earning a bachelor's degree: the point estimates are small and negative (Column 1). This result may not apply across the full spectrum of 4-year college quality, where on-time graduation rates vary from under 10% to over 85% (Hoxby and Turner 2015) and differing norms about on-time graduation may affect student behavior (Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson 2009). For the students in our sample, the more meaningful margin appears to be advanced degree attainment. For this outcome, we find sizable and significant positive effects for women but not for men. A 100-point increase in school average SAT scores increases women's probability of earning an advanced degree by 4.8 percentage points (or 9.4%; Column 2). This finding is also present in the self-revelation model (Appendix Table A6, Column 3).

In the remaining columns of Table 5, we explore how the estimated effects of school selectivity on earnings is mediated by changes in educational attainment. We do this by adding variables to our basic matching model: an indicator for educational attainment (either college or advanced degree) and an interaction term between that indicator variable and the school-average SAT score. A caveat is in order regarding these additional regressions, which is that the educational variables are themselves the result of choices made after college enrollment. As such, our identification of the effects of schooling in these models is much weaker than the matched-applicant model's identification of the effect of school selectivity. They should therefore be interpreted cautiously, in the spirit of exploring heterogeneous effects and not as resulting from a fully-specified model of years of schooling.

With that caveat in mind, we can consider the estimates. The estimated earnings effects of graduating from college are negative and statistically insignificant, while the interaction terms between graduation and school selectivity are positive and insignificant (Column 3). Column 4 similarly shows no significant level effects or interactions from

higher degree attainment, but for women, the signs are reversed from Column 3. Column 5 of the table includes both education variables and interaction terms in the same model and also finds no effects. The absence of significant interaction terms means that the effects of selectivity on those with higher and lower levels of educational attainment are not statistically distinguishable from one another. Nevertheless, the interactions do show varying significance of selectivity across education groups. For women, the models show that selectivity significantly increases earnings for women who graduate from college but do not earn an advanced degree ($p < 0.05$ in Column 3 and $p < 0.10$ in Column 5). There are no significant effects of college selectivity on men, irrespective of education, or on female college dropouts or advanced degree holders.

Taken together, the results in Table 5 provide only limited support for educational attainment serving as a major channel for the earnings effects we observe. We do find increases in graduate degree attainment for women, but the relationship between that greater level of attainment and earnings is not precisely estimated in our data. The interaction effects suggest, if anything, that earning an advanced degree is a substitute for attending a less prestigious undergraduate institution.

5.4 Marriage and Children

Our second exploration of mechanism and heterogeneous effects considers two key dimensions of family status: marriage and children. The results are presented in Table 6 using a structure that mirrors that of Table 5.

We first treat the family status indicators as outcomes in regression models. For marriage, we find a striking effect for women: attending a college with a 100-point higher school-average SAT score reduces the chances of being married in their late 30s by 3.9 percentage points (Column 1). The marriage rate among women in our sample is 0.759 (Table 1), which means that the estimated effect is equivalent to a 5.3% decrease in the share married or to a 16.1% increase in the share unmarried. A similar 4.2 percentage point decline ($p < 0.01$) is estimated in the self-revelation model (Appendix Table A6, Column 6). For men, the point estimate is positive and not statistically significant. The coefficient estimates in Column 2 for having any children point in the same direction – a lower likelihood of being a mother and a higher one of being a father – but they are not precisely estimated. This finding that elite school attendance lowers marriage (and possibly motherhood) rates for women in particular strongly indicates that family factors are an important part of the story for why earnings increase with school selectivity. The importance of family factors is also suggested by the fact that the earnings effects are related to variation in labor force participation and that the impact is only felt for women, who traditionally bear the career costs of marriage and children (Loughran and Zissimopoulos 2009; Miller 2011; Kleven, Landais, and Søgaaard 2018).

We explore this channel more directly in the next columns of Table 6, by adding indicators for being married (Columns 3 and 5) and having children (Columns 4 and 5) to the log-earnings model. These coefficients are consis-

tently large, negative and statistically significant, which confirms the general pattern of a negative relationship between family formation and earnings for women is also present in our sample. That result is useful for supporting the hypothesized mechanism, though the estimates should not be interpreted as identifying the causal effect of marriage or fertility. This is because those are clearly choices that can be related to labor market expectations and realizations, for example, if women with better careers decide to forgo marriage and children.

The last columns of the table also explore heterogeneous effects of school selectivity on log-earnings based on family status, by including interaction terms between the family status indicator variables and the measure of school selectivity. Here we find significant interaction terms that show significantly greater earnings benefits from school selectivity on married women (Columns 3 and 5) and women with children (Column 4). In fact, the estimated effects of selectivity on earnings of women in the omitted group, who are unmarried (Column 3), childless (Column 4) or both (Column 5) are either very small (0.009) or negative and not statistically significant. The lack of an effect for single women can be interpreted as consistent with the results for men, for full-time full-year workers, and in the original DK paper. By contrast, the effects are all significantly different from zero ($p < 0.05$) for married women in Column 3 (the sum of the baseline effect and the married interaction term), women with children in Column 4 (baseline effect and children interaction) and for married women with children in Column 5 (baseline plus married interaction plus children interaction).

These results support the importance of changes in family status as a key driver for the earnings gains experienced by elite college women, but they also likely understate its importance. The reason is that our measures are point-in-time snapshots of status; as such, they fail to capture timing effects. If women at elite schools are also more likely to delay marriage and motherhood, for example from their early twenties to their mid-twenties or even to their thirties, the delay itself could have lasting effects on labor force participation, work hours, and earnings in later years (Miller 2011; Bailey, Hershbein, and Miller 2012; Miller 2013). The higher rate of advanced degree attainment found in Section 5.3 certainly suggests that the possibility of delayed family formation.

Our finding in this section that attending a more selective school lowers marriage rates for women but not for men, in addition to contributing to our understanding of the correlates of the earnings effects, is also independently interesting for showing marriage market responses to college selectivity. As discussed in Section 2, the interpretation of the effect on marriage rates is complicated by the fact that attending a more selective school can affect the set of marriage offers available to a woman (a demand for wives effect) or the minimum quality threshold that she sets for accepting an offer (a supply of wives effect). The decline in total marriages could be consistent with lower demand, for example, if attending an elite schools makes a woman less appealing to prospective spouses. It could also be consistent with women's greater utility outside of marriage lowering supply. We are not able to observe marriage offers or their acceptances or rejections. Nevertheless, we can use information on realized matches to infer something about whether supply or demand effects predominate. We do this in the next section where we examine spousal characteristics as our

outcomes of interest.

5.5 Spousal Characteristics

In this section, we focus on married individuals and test whether attending a more selective college affects characteristics of their spouses. We consider three measures related to spousal quality: a human capital measure of having an advanced degree, a labor force participation measure of earning over \$1,000, and a composite measure of log-earnings. We observe information on spousal education directly in the survey. We calculate the latter two measures using a working definition of spousal earnings as the difference between household earnings and own earnings reported in the survey. We measure effects separately for women and men.

The results of our analysis for women are in Columns 1 to 3 of Table 7. A 100-point increase in school-average SAT scores increases the likelihood that a woman's spouse has an advanced degree by 8.0 percentage points (or 13.4% of the sample mean; Column 1), but has no significant effects on their spousal labor market participation (Column 2) or earnings (Column 3). The significant improvement in spousal education (also present in the self-revelation model; Column 5, Appendix Table A6) and positive point estimates for the other outcomes indicates an improvement in spousal quality among married women for those who attend elite colleges. This implies that the declining marriage rate for those women is more likely due to them setting higher bar for potential spouses than to their experiencing a worsening of marriage prospects.

The point estimate on spousal earnings is 0.043, with a standard error of 0.031, so we are not able to rule out moderately-sized effects in either direction. If present, changes in spousal earnings could also contribute to the effects on women's own earnings and labor force participation that we report in Table 2. In particular, drops in spousal earnings could increase women's labor supply because of income effects (if leisure is normal). It is possible that for some couples, increases in spousal earnings would increase women's earnings as well, for example, if women were intentionally suppressing their earnings to avoid surpassing their spouses (Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan 2015), but this would apply to very few couples in our sample. Instead, we conclude that the lack of any significant negative effect on spousal earnings suggests that changes in unearned income within marriage are not the driving force behind married women's increased earnings (Table 7).

Although the earnings impact is only present for women (Table 2), there are at least a couple of reasons to imagine that men might also experience marriage market benefits from elite college attendance. First, potential spouses might value elite education as a trait in a husband, for its signal value of earnings potential or because of prestige or other direct benefits unrelated to earnings. This could apply to potential spouses, irrespective of their own educational background. Second, the social network effects described in Section 2 could make it more likely that men who attend elite colleges marry others who do as well. Those individuals have significantly higher earnings than do other college

graduates, on average, and the unconditional difference is what is relevant here; it does not matter to the man if his spouses' earnings are higher because of innate ability, ambition, or human capital acquired in college. At the same time, the fact that women's earnings and labor force participation are significantly lower than men's implies that the marriage market effects on spousal earnings will be more important for women than for men.

Results for men are reported in the remaining columns of Table 7. We find no support for the hypothesis that elite college attendance improves spousal quality for men. The point estimates are negative and statistically insignificant. In sum, our analysis finds no meaningful effects of attending a more selective school on men's career or family outcomes. By contrast, we find significant effects on women's career and family outcomes.

6 Conclusions

Using data from the 1976 college-entering cohort of the College and Beyond survey and an extension of the matched-applicant model in the influential DK study, we examine the effects of college selectivity on a range of previously unexplored career and family outcomes. We start with the same log-earnings outcome as DK, but use an expanded sample that includes part-time and partial-year workers as well as non-workers. This increases the sample size sufficiently to be able to estimate separate models for men and women. We find important earnings effects of attending a more selective school on women's career outcomes, but not on men's. We also examine additional outcomes related to human capital accumulation, labor force participation, and family status; on these dimensions, as well, we find significant effects for women but not for men.

The pattern of estimates for women indicates that elite college attendance increases women's labor force participation and earnings in their late thirties. Attending a more selective college also lowers a woman's probability of marriage while improving her spousal characteristics, possibly because it makes her set a higher threshold for accepting a marriage offer. These results argue against applying a causal interpretation to the popular descriptions of women with elite educations "opting out" of the paid labor force to devote more time to their families (e.g., Belkin 2003). Women who attend highly selective schools will not all persist in the labor market after marriage and childbearing, but these departures are not induced by their choice of college. In fact, married women with children are the group whose earnings are improved the most by attending a more selective college.

At the same time that we find this range of new effects on women's labor force participation, human capital and family formation, we also confirm and support the original result of DK of no earnings effect of college selectivity on full-time full-year workers. Also consistent with DK, we find no earnings effects for men, none for women after conditioning on their work hours, and none for single or childless women. These differences highlight the importance of gender and family status as sources of heterogeneous effects of college choice among high-achieving students who started college in the mid-1970s. For female students in that cohort, the choice of which college to attend affected a

wide set of later-life outcomes.

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Table 1: Summary Statistics of the College and Beyond Survey: 1976 College Entering Cohort

	Panel A: 1976 Characteristics			
	DK statistics	All	Women	Men
Female	0.385 (0.487)	0.508 (0.500)	1.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Black	0.050 (0.219)	0.042 (0.201)	0.050 (0.217)	0.035 (0.183)
Hispanic	0.014 (0.117)	0.012 (0.107)	0.012 (0.107)	0.012 (0.107)
Asian	0.027 (0.163)	0.022 (0.147)	0.022 (0.145)	0.022 (0.148)
Other race	0.003 (0.057)	0.003 (0.052)	0.003 (0.054)	0.002 (0.050)
Predicted log(parental income)	9.997 (0.349)	9.928 (0.298)	9.941 (0.299)	9.915 (0.296)
Own SAT/100	11.875 (1.632)	11.439 (2.649)	11.170 (2.717)	11.717 (2.547)
School average SAT/100	11.812 (0.943)	11.784 (0.938)	11.762 (0.942)	11.807 (0.932)
High school top 10 percent	0.427 (0.495)	0.405 (0.491)	0.392 (0.488)	0.419 (0.493)
High school rank missing	0.355 (0.478)	0.380 (0.485)	0.403 (0.491)	0.355 (0.479)
College athlete	0.085 (0.279)	0.083 (0.276)	0.060 (0.238)	0.107 (0.309)
Average SAT/100 of schools applied to	11.601 (0.991)	11.545 (1.001)	11.466 (0.998)	11.626 (0.998)
One additional application	0.490 (0.500)	0.566 (0.496)	0.576 (0.494)	0.556 (0.497)
Two additional applications	0.490 (0.500)	0.337 (0.473)	0.342 (0.475)	0.331 (0.471)
Three additional applications	0.134 (0.340)	0.092 (0.289)	0.080 (0.272)	0.104 (0.306)
Four additional applications	0.011 (0.104)	0.005 (0.069)	0.001 (0.038)	0.008 (0.090)
N	6,335	8,012	4,049	3,963

Continued: Summary Statistics of the College and Beyond Survey: 1976 College Entering Cohort

Panel B: 1995 Characteristics				
	DK statistics	All	Women	Men
Log(annual earnings)	11.148 (0.737)	10.504 (1.593)	9.836 (1.834)	11.192 (0.866)
Full-time, full-year worker		0.750 (0.433) [8,012]	0.579 (0.494) [4,049]	0.927 (0.261) [3,963]
Earnings > \$1,000		0.911 (0.285)	0.831 (0.374)	0.992 (0.087)
Graduated college	0.862 (0.345)	0.855 (0.352)	0.851 (0.356)	0.859 (0.348)
Earned advanced degree	0.573 (0.495)	0.545 (0.498)	0.508 (0.500)	0.582 (0.493)
Any children		0.704 (0.457)	0.703 (0.457)	0.705 (0.456)
Married		0.759 (0.428)	0.742 (0.438)	0.777 (0.416)
N	6,335	8,012	4,049	3,963
Conditional on being married:				
Spousal advanced degree		0.507 (0.500) [6,009]	0.597 (0.491) [2,954]	0.419 (0.493) [3,055]
Spousal earnings > \$1,000		0.692 (0.462) [5,965]	0.922 (0.269) [2,914]	0.469 (0.499) [3,051]
Log(spousal earnings)		10.976 (0.707) [4,102]	11.140 (0.705) [2,674]	10.662 (0.597) [1,428]

Notes: All statistics are from the matched-applicant sample and outcomes are reported for the year 1995. Standard deviations are in parentheses, and number of observations are in brackets when it differs from the matched-applicant sample. Means are weighted to reflect sampling procedures at public universities. Spousal earnings are defined as the difference between household earnings and respondent earnings, hence the loss in sample size due to zeros. Means and standard deviations from Dale and Krueger's (2002) sample are copied from their Table II and are reported when available. Dale and Krueger's (2002) sample includes both men and women and includes only full-year full-time workers. Our sample also includes part-time workers and non-workers.

Table 2: Effects of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

Panel A: Men and Women					
	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
School-average SAT score/100	0.133*** (0.016)	0.047** (0.021)	0.071* (0.041)	0.009 (0.006)	0.001 (0.010)
Adjusted R^2	0.195	0.198	0.208	0.099	0.171
N	8,012	8,012	8,012	8,012	8,012
Panel B: Women					
	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
School-average SAT score/100	0.188*** (0.029)	0.084** (0.039)	0.139* (0.069)	0.023** (0.011)	0.004 (0.022)
Adjusted R^2	0.029	0.031	0.046	0.032	0.021
N	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049
Panel C: Men					
	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
School-average SAT score/100	0.077*** (0.016)	0.009 (0.022)	0.011 (0.032)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.008)
Adjusted R^2	0.026	0.031	0.047	0.026	0.030
N	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table 3: Earnings Effects for Alternative Samples and Matching Rule

Panel A: Men and Women				
	Matching model	Matching model on earners above \$1,000	Matching model on FTFY sample	FTFY workers with DK matches
School-average SAT score/100	0.071* (0.041)	0.037 (0.027)	0.018 (0.028)	0.018 (0.020)
Adjusted R^2	0.208	0.176	0.129	0.118
N	8,012	7,309	5,647	6,200
Panel B: Women				
	Matching model	Matching model on earners above \$1,000	Matching model on FTFY sample	
School-average SAT score/100	0.139* (0.069)	0.046 (0.048)	0.006 (0.043)	
Adjusted R^2	0.046	0.042	0.074	
N	4,049	3,381	2,146	
Panel C: Men				
	Matching model	Matching model on earners above \$1,000	Matching model on FTFY sample	
School-average SAT score/100	0.011 (0.032)	0.033 (0.029)	0.026 (0.031)	
Adjusted R^2	0.047	0.056	0.056	
N	3,963	3,928	3,501	

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. All models are matching models and all outcomes are log 1995 earnings. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities. Samples using the FTFY worker outcome are further conditioned on having positive earnings at all.

Table 4: Effects of College Selectivity with Controls for Maternal Labor Supply

	Women		Men	
	Outcome: ln(earnings)	Outcome: school- average SAT/100	Outcome: ln(earnings)	Outcome: school- average SAT/100
School-average SAT score/100	0.135* (0.068)		0.010 (0.032)	
Mother worked during senior year HS	0.276*** (0.087)	0.011 (0.010)	-0.052 (0.043)	-0.005 (0.013)
Adjusted R^2	0.051	0.815	0.047	0.789
N	4,049	4,049	3,963	3,963

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. All models are matching models. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table 5: Decomposing the Effects of College Selectivity on Earnings Using Education

Panel A: Women					
	Outcome: graduated	Outcome: has advanced degree	Outcome: ln(earnings)		
School-average SAT score/100	-0.006 (0.009)	0.048*** (0.015)	0.021 (0.094)	0.159* (0.080)	0.097 (0.128)
Graduated × School- average SAT score/100			0.140 (0.095)		0.081 (0.123)
Graduated			-1.624 (1.156)		-1.017 (1.487)
Advanced degree × School- average SAT score/100				-0.088 (0.092)	-0.096 (0.085)
Has advanced degree				1.599 (1.095)	1.695 (0.999)
Adjusted R^2	0.094	0.087	0.051	0.071	0.068
N	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049

Panel B: Men					
	Outcome: graduated	Outcome: has advanced degree	Outcome: ln(earnings)		
School-average SAT score/100	-0.004 (0.007)	-0.005 (0.018)	-0.059 (0.071)	0.002 (0.029)	-0.043 (0.072)
Graduated × School- average SAT score/100			0.050 (0.072)		0.038 (0.067)
Graduated			-0.170 (0.829)		-0.084 (0.752)
Advanced degree × School- average SAT score/100				-0.000 (0.036)	0.015 (0.035)
Has advanced degree				0.276 (0.444)	0.040 (0.439)
Adjusted R^2	0.027	0.081	0.071	0.068	0.084
N	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. All models are matching models. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table 6: Decomposing the Effects of College Selectivity on Earnings Using Family Status

Panel A: Women					
	Outcome: married	Outcome: any children	Outcome: ln(earnings)		
School-average SAT score/100	-0.039** (0.019)	-0.024 (0.018)	-0.023 (0.072)	0.009 (0.070)	-0.054 (0.071)
Married \times School- average SAT score/100			0.179*** (0.051)		0.142* (0.073)
Married			-3.039*** (0.579)		-2.087** (0.876)
Any children \times School- average SAT score/100				0.167** (0.066)	0.092 (0.080)
Any children				-3.022*** (0.766)	-1.890* (0.936)
Adjusted R^2	0.021	0.017	0.095	0.113	0.119
N	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049
Panel B: Men					
	Outcome: married	Outcome: any children	Outcome: ln(earnings)		
School-average SAT score/100	0.022 (0.017)	0.021 (0.020)	-0.011 (0.041)	-0.040 (0.039)	-0.019 (0.038)
Married \times School- average SAT score/100			0.016 (0.034)		-0.052 (0.065)
Married			0.244 (0.393)		0.830 (0.743)
Any children \times School- average SAT score/100				0.061* (0.030)	0.084 (0.060)
Any children				-0.284 (0.340)	-0.678 (0.684)
Adjusted R^2	0.016	0.016	0.089	0.099	0.105
N	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. All models are matching models. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table 7: Effects of College Selectivity on Spousal Characteristics

	Married Women			Married Men		
	Outcome: spouse has advanced degree	Outcome: spousal earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: spouse's ln(earnings)	Outcome: spouse has advanced degree	Outcome: spousal earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: spouse's ln(earnings)
School-average SAT score/100	0.080*** (0.017)	0.008 (0.011)	0.043 (0.031)	-0.005 (0.023)	-0.0003 (0.015)	-0.074 (0.044)
Adjusted R^2	0.082	0.002	0.047	0.066	-0.004	0.061
N	2,954	2,914	2,674	3,055	3,051	1,428

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. All models are matching models. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Spousal earnings are defined as the difference between household earnings and respondent earnings, and the sample for this variable is limited to observations with positive values. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

A Appendix: Additional Tables

Table A1: Illustration of Matched-Applicant Group Construction

Student	Matched-applicant group	Student applications to college							
		Application 1		Application 2		Application 3		Application 4	
		School average SAT	School admissions decision	School average SAT	School admissions decision	School average SAT	School admissions decision	School average SAT	School admissions decision
Student A	1	1280	Reject	1226	Accept*	1215	Accept	na	na
Student B	1	1280	Reject	1226	Accept	1215	Accept*	1155	Accept
Student C	2	1360	Accept	1310	Reject	1270	Accept*	1155	Accept
Student D	2	1355	Accept	1316	Reject	1270	Accept*	1160	Accept
Student E	2	1370	Accept*	1316	Reject	1260	Accept	1150	Accept
Student F	Excluded	1180	Accept*	na	na	na	na	na	na
Student G	Excluded	1180	Accept*	na	na	na	na	na	na
Student H	3	1360	Accept	1308	Accept*	1260	Accept	1160	Accept
Student I	3	1370	Accept*	1311	Accept	1255	Accept	1155	Accept
Student J	3	1350	Accept	1316	Accept*	1265	Accept	1155	Accept
Student K	4	1245	Reject	1217	Reject	1180	Accept*	na	na
Student L	4	1235	Reject	1209	Reject	1180	Accept*	na	na
Student M	5	1140	Accept	1055	Accept*	na	na	na	na
Student N	5	1145	Accept*	1060	Accept	na	na	na	na
Student O	No match	1370	Reject	1038	Accept*	na	na	na	na

Notes: This table is reproduced from Dale and Krueger (2002), Table I.

* Denotes school attended.

na = did not report submitting application.

The data shown on this table represent hypothetical students. Students F and G would be excluded from the matched-applicant subsample because they applied to only one school (the school they attended). Student O would be excluded because no other student applied to an equivalent set of institutions.

Table A2: Summary Statistics for the Full Sample of the College and Beyond Survey: 1976 College Entering Cohort

Panel A: 1976 Characteristics				
	DK statistics	All	Women	Men
Female	0.392 (0.488)	0.507 (0.500)	1.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Black	0.050 (0.218)	0.042 (0.202)	0.051 (0.219)	0.034 (0.182)
Hispanic	0.013 (0.115)	0.011 (0.102)	0.010 (0.101)	0.011 (0.103)
Asian	0.023 (0.150)	0.020 (0.140)	0.019 (0.135)	0.022 (0.145)
Other race	0.003 (0.059)	0.003 (0.059)	0.004 (0.059)	0.003 (0.056)
Predicted log(parental income)	9.984 (0.353)	9.919 (0.302)	9.928 (0.303)	9.909 (0.300)
Own SAT/100	11.672 (1.634)	11.170 (2.795)	10.933 (2.824)	11.414 (2.744)
School average SAT/100	11.655 (0.943)	11.642 (0.941)	11.632 (0.948)	11.653 (0.934)
High school top 10 percent	0.418 (0.493)	0.395 (0.489)	0.393 (0.488)	0.397 (0.489)
High school rank missing	0.356 (0.479)	0.388 (0.487)	0.398 (0.489)	0.377 (0.485)
College athlete	0.078 (0.268)	0.079 (0.270)	0.060 (0.237)	0.099 (0.298)
Average SAT/100 of schools applied to	11.513 (0.940)	11.495 (0.943)	11.448 (0.943)	11.543 (0.941)
One additional application	0.225 (0.417)	0.234 (0.423)	0.239 (0.426)	0.228 (0.420)
Two additional applications	0.225 (0.417)	0.207 (0.405)	0.202 (0.402)	0.213 (0.409)
Three additional applications	0.156 (0.363)	0.139 (0.346)	0.127 (0.333)	0.152 (0.359)
Four additional applications	0.040 (0.196)	0.032 (0.175)	0.026 (0.159)	0.037 (0.190)
N	14,238	19,658	9,917	9,738

Continued: Summary Statistics for the Full Sample of the College and Beyond Survey: 1976 College Entering Cohort

Panel B: 1995 Characteristics				
	DK statistics	All	Women	Men
Log(annual earnings)	11.096 (0.747)	10.475 (1.580)	9.818 (1.819)	11.152 (0.872)
Full-time, full-year worker		0.753 (0.431) [19658]	0.585 (0.493) [9,917]	0.927 (0.260) [9,738]
Earnings > \$1,000		0.911 (0.285)	0.833 (0.373)	0.992 (0.089)
Graduated college	0.839 (0.367)	0.837 (0.370)	0.834 (0.372)	0.840 (0.367)
Earned advanced degree	0.542 (0.498)	0.515 (0.500)	0.482 (0.500)	0.549 (0.498)
Any children		0.699 (0.459)	0.696 (0.460)	0.701 (0.458)
Married		0.756 (0.429)	0.741 (0.438)	0.772 (0.419)
N	14,238	19,658	9,917	9,738
Conditional on being married:				
Spousal advanced degree		0.487 (0.500) [14695]	0.572 (0.495) [7,234]	0.403 (0.490) [7,460]
Spousal earnings > \$1,000		0.696 (0.460) [14603]	0.923 (0.267) [7,144]	0.475 (0.499) [7,458]
Log(spousal earnings)		10.940 (0.709) [10,093]	11.101 (0.710) [6,566]	10.635 (0.599) [3,527]

Notes: All statistics are from the full sample and outcomes are reported for the year 1995. Standard deviations are in parentheses, and number of observations are in braces when it differs from the matched-applicant sample. Means are weighted to reflect sampling procedures at public universities. Spousal earnings are defined as the difference between household earnings and respondent earnings, hence the loss in sample size due to zeros. Means and standard deviations from Dale and Krueger's (2002) sample are copied from their Table II and are reported when available. Dale and Krueger's (2002) sample includes both men and women and includes only full-year full-time workers. Our sample also includes part-time workers and non-workers.

Table A3: Full Results for Men and Women: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
School-average SAT score/100	0.133*** (0.016)	0.047** (0.021)	0.071* (0.041)	0.009 (0.006)	0.001 (0.010)
Predicted log(parental income)	-0.070 (0.060)	-0.106* (0.060)	-0.111 (0.083)	-0.039** (0.015)	-0.068*** (0.024)
Own SAT score/100	0.004 (0.014)	-0.010 (0.014)	-0.011 (0.020)	0.001 (0.003)	-0.004 (0.005)
Own SAT score missing	0.159 (0.168)	0.032 (0.170)	0.078 (0.278)	0.061 (0.044)	0.029 (0.056)
Female	-1.344*** (0.051)	-1.330*** (0.051)			
Black	0.322*** (0.090)	0.301*** (0.088)	0.369*** (0.106)	0.085*** (0.017)	0.136*** (0.028)
Hispanic	-0.030 (0.145)	-0.045 (0.145)	-0.003 (0.173)	-0.010 (0.032)	-0.001 (0.036)
Asian	0.478*** (0.091)	0.451*** (0.092)	0.487*** (0.107)	0.061*** (0.015)	0.105*** (0.025)

Continued below

Continued: Full Results for Men and Women: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
Other/missing race	0.088 (0.291)	0.079 (0.300)	0.129 (0.314)	0.018 (0.054)	0.185* (0.091)
High school top 10 percent	0.188*** (0.047)	0.183*** (0.048)	0.206*** (0.059)	0.024*** (0.009)	0.033* (0.018)
High school rank missing	0.094*** (0.032)	0.071** (0.033)	0.091* (0.050)	0.017** (0.008)	0.004 (0.014)
Athlete	0.166*** (0.042)	0.156*** (0.043)	0.217*** (0.037)	0.024*** (0.008)	0.028** (0.012)
Average SAT score/100 of schools applied to		0.115*** (0.023)			
One additional application		-0.275** (0.112)			
Two additional applications		-0.283** (0.116)			
Three additional applications		-0.195 (0.116)			
Adjusted R^2	0.195	0.198	0.208	0.099	0.171
N	8,012	8,012	8,012	8,012	8,012

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort of men and women. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table A4: Full Results for Women: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
School-average SAT score/100	0.188*** (0.029)	0.084** (0.039)	0.139* (0.069)	0.023** (0.011)	0.004 (0.022)
Predicted log(parental income)	-0.322*** (0.105)	-0.368*** (0.108)	-0.358** (0.139)	-0.081*** (0.027)	-0.111** (0.041)
Own SAT score/100	0.024 (0.024)	0.008 (0.026)	0.006 (0.035)	0.003 (0.006)	-0.003 (0.008)
Own SAT score missing	0.550** (0.238)	0.395 (0.263)	0.451 (0.397)	0.117 (0.076)	0.100 (0.093)
Black	0.690*** (0.120)	0.663*** (0.123)	0.817*** (0.144)	0.141*** (0.024)	0.255*** (0.039)
Hispanic	-0.194 (0.256)	-0.203 (0.254)	-0.111 (0.279)	-0.027 (0.065)	0.033 (0.069)
Asian	0.807*** (0.123)	0.792*** (0.117)	0.797*** (0.141)	0.108*** (0.024)	0.180*** (0.040)

Continued below

Continued: Full Results for Women: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
Other/missing race	0.621* (0.360)	0.592 (0.363)	0.646 (0.631)	0.064 (0.116)	0.331* (0.192)
High school top 10 percent	0.235*** (0.079)	0.233*** (0.079)	0.262*** (0.094)	0.035** (0.016)	0.037 (0.025)
High school rank missing	0.093 (0.074)	0.074 (0.074)	0.118 (0.089)	0.028* (0.016)	-0.014 (0.021)
Athlete	0.156 (0.101)	0.146 (0.103)	0.273*** (0.072)	0.045** (0.018)	0.031 (0.032)
Average SAT score/100 of schools applied to		0.136*** (0.039)			
One additional application		-0.824* (0.421)			
Two additional applications		-0.835* (0.427)			
Three additional applications		-0.695 (0.417)			
Adjusted R^2	0.029	0.031	0.046	0.032	0.021
N	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort of women. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table A5: Full Results for Men: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
School-average SAT score/100	0.077*** (0.016)	0.009 (0.022)	0.011 (0.032)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.008)
Predicted log(parental income)	0.202*** (0.062)	0.174*** (0.060)	0.155** (0.068)	0.005 (0.005)	-0.019 (0.019)
Own SAT score/100	-0.017 (0.017)	-0.029* (0.015)	-0.031 (0.018)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)
Own SAT score missing	-0.284 (0.234)	-0.391* (0.224)	-0.420 (0.281)	-0.018 (0.020)	-0.075 (0.056)
Black	-0.247*** (0.056)	-0.262*** (0.055)	-0.305*** (0.073)	-0.000 (0.010)	-0.042 (0.029)
Hispanic	0.135 (0.167)	0.118 (0.162)	0.127 (0.174)	0.010 (0.008)	-0.025 (0.041)
Asian	0.186** (0.085)	0.155* (0.091)	0.175* (0.086)	0.014** (0.007)	0.026 (0.018)

Continued below

Continued: Full Results for Men: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes

	Outcome: ln(earnings)			Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker
	Basic model	Self- revelation model	Matching model	Matching model	Matching model
Other/missing race	-0.636 (0.418)	-0.626 (0.410)	-0.576 (0.396)	-0.055 (0.050)	-0.000 (0.078)
High school top 10 percent	0.145*** (0.038)	0.140*** (0.038)	0.138** (0.053)	0.012* (0.006)	0.025 (0.020)
High school rank missing	0.101*** (0.032)	0.077** (0.032)	0.068 (0.044)	0.005 (0.005)	0.027 (0.018)
Athlete	0.189*** (0.039)	0.180*** (0.038)	0.185*** (0.043)	0.011*** (0.004)	0.030** (0.013)
Average SAT score/100 of schools applied to		0.092*** (0.021)			
One additional application		-0.201** (0.094)			
Two additional applications		-0.195** (0.087)			
Three additional applications		-0.144 (0.101)			
Adjusted R^2	0.026	0.031	0.047	0.026	0.030
N	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table A6: Self-Revelation Model Estimates of the Effect of College Selectivity on Career and Marriage Outcomes

Panel A: Men and Women					
	Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker	Outcome: has advanced degree	Outcome: married	Outcome: spouse has advanced degree
School-average SAT score/100	0.006 (0.005)	0.004 (0.009)	0.026*** (0.009)	-0.024** (0.010)	0.023** (0.010)
Adjusted R^2	0.086	0.169	0.087	0.018	0.096
N	8,012	8,012	8,012	8,012	6,009
Panel B: Women					
	Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker	Outcome: has advanced degree	Outcome: married	Outcome: spouse has advanced degree
School-average SAT score/100	0.014 (0.009)	0.012 (0.017)	0.036*** (0.012)	-0.042*** (0.013)	0.024* (0.012)
Adjusted R^2	0.015	0.023	0.091	0.021	0.070
N	4,049	4,049	4,049	4,049	2,954
Panel C: Men					
	Outcome: earnings > \$1,000	Outcome: FTFY worker	Outcome: has advanced degree	Outcome: married	Outcome: spouse has advanced degree
School-average SAT score/100	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.016 (0.010)	-0.008 (0.012)	0.021 (0.015)
Adjusted R^2	0.003	0.001	0.075	0.013	0.064
N	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,963	3,055

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. All models are self-revelation models. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.

Table A7: Full Results: Effect of College Selectivity on Career Outcomes with Controls for Maternal Labor Supply

	Women		Men	
	Outcome: ln(earnings)	Outcome: school- average SAT/100	Outcome: ln(earnings)	Outcome: school- average SAT/100
School-average SAT score/100	0.135* (0.068)		0.010 (0.032)	
Mother worked during senior year HS	0.276*** (0.087)	0.011 (0.010)	-0.052 (0.043)	-0.005 (0.013)
Predicted log(parental income)	-0.236* (0.132)	0.021 (0.018)	0.133* (0.072)	-0.010 (0.028)
Own SAT score/100	0.005 (0.035)	0.024*** (0.007)	-0.030 (0.018)	0.034*** (0.010)
Own SAT score missing	0.434 (0.401)	0.269** (0.102)	-0.410 (0.279)	0.457*** (0.141)
Black	0.776*** (0.146)	0.092** (0.039)	-0.295*** (0.073)	0.095* (0.046)
Hispanic	-0.110 (0.288)	0.248** (0.095)	0.129 (0.172)	0.045 (0.101)
Asian	0.786*** (0.139)	-0.008 (0.032)	0.180** (0.087)	0.036 (0.038)
Other/missing race	0.664 (0.604)	0.325** (0.143)	-0.578 (0.391)	-0.136 (0.204)
High school top 10 percent	0.255*** (0.090)	0.029 (0.022)	0.136** (0.053)	-0.027 (0.024)
High school rank missing	0.117 (0.083)	-0.002 (0.035)	0.068 (0.044)	-0.083 (0.056)
Athlete	0.267*** (0.071)	0.078*** (0.023)	0.186*** (0.043)	0.075** (0.029)
Adjusted R^2	0.051	0.815	0.047	0.789
N	4,049	4,049	3,963	3,963

Notes: *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level, respectively. Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the school-of-matriculation level. The data come from the College and Beyond survey for the 1976 college entering cohort of men and women. Estimates are weighted using sampling weights from the College and Beyond survey to reflect sampling procedures at the four public universities.