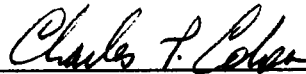


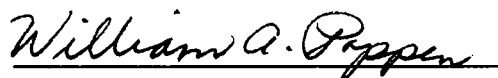
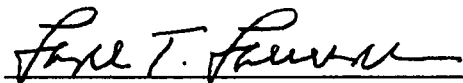
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Christopher E. Hebb entitled "Self-disclosure in Satisfactorily Married versus Remarried Couples." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.



Charles P. Cohen, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:



Accepted for the Council:



Vice Provost
and Dean of the Graduate School

SELF-DISCLOSURE IN SATISFACTORILY MARRIED
AND REMARRIED COUPLES

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Christopher E. Hebb

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ABSTRACT

Self-disclosure has been widely studied as a mediator of several important dimensions of marriage, including interpersonal perceptions, conflict resolution, and intimacy. Approximately 55% of marriages end in divorce, but about 80% of those people remarry. Despite this prevalent phenomenon, and the comparative study of other types of marriage (e.g., single versus dual career couples), self-disclosure has not been studied in first versus remarriages.

An under used and valuable research method is phenomenology, which describes the structure of peoples' experience. This study combines observations of self-disclosure in satisfactory first and remarriages and a phenomenological study of what it takes to make a satisfactory marriage.

Satisfactory first and remarriages were found to be similar in terms of disclosing more positive than negative material, disclosing more about the self than the spouse, and disclosing more unaffectively toned information on instrumental versus person perception questions. Remarried couples were found to show somewhat more negative and somewhat less positive disclosure than first married couples. Nine themes about the constituents of satisfactory marriage were found in the interviews of the two groups. The interplay of these themes is discussed.

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CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is organized around two primary themes. First is the relationship between self-disclosure, personal privacy, and marital satisfaction. Second is the prevalent phenomenon of divorce and remarriage in America.

In order to provide a context for the specific foci of this study a selective review of the literature on the various attributes of satisfied versus dissatisfied marriages is fitting.

Theoretical Perspectives

The literature can be usefully divided into relatively theoretical and empirical works. Gurman (1978) critiqued and compared the contributions of the three dominant theoretical perspectives: psychoanalytic, behavioral, and family system approaches.

As Gurman (1978) states, in the psychoanalytic perspective marital choice and ensuing satisfaction or conflict is seen as largely due to unconscious causes. The broad pattern of these supposed forces is that of need complementarity. The complementary or unfulfilled personality needs sought in the other may be of two kinds: (a) those in which partners differ in degree and/or (b) those in which partners differ in kind. Thus, as Meissner (1978) writes, "the object becomes a substitute for some unattained ego ideal of the subject" (p. 41).

A frequently cited report that offers some support for this hypothesis is Kerckhoff and Davis's (1962). They proposed a three stage

"filtering" process in the development of relationships, with similarity of social status variables (age, religion, attractiveness) operating early, similarity of values then coming into play, and complementarity of needs operating as the couple became more intimate.

In the psychoanalytic perspective partners are seen as being similarly immature psychologically, yet as having developed differing defensive organizations in response to their developmental difficulties (Gurman, 1978). As Skynner (1976, p. 43) states, "Couples are usually attracted by shared developmental failures." In turn, each partner's immaturity is understood as reflecting a lack of separation and individuation from their family of origin. That is, the person lacks development of an autonomous, well-rounded personal functioning and identity.

The two people are seen as entering unconsciously into a "collusion" to meet the unfulfilled needs of each other and thereby to protect each other from aspects of his or her experience which are fraught with anxiety. This is seen as an attempt by each party to maintain a consistent self-image by unconsciously attaining a "contract" (Sager, 1976) from the other to be seen and expected to function as one sees oneself. The classic (stereotypic) example of this hypothesis is the marriage of an affective and expressive but not highly orderly and rational woman to a logical and task oriented but relatively cool and distant man.

Marital conflicts are seen as arising when the reality of living with a partner impinges on the idealization of that other. There are two aspects to this. First, no person can consistently fulfill

idealized expectations. Secondly, those personality attributes of the other which are idealized were sought outside oneself precisely because they are modes of functioning which are abrasive to oneself. Yet by marrying someone with those attributes the person finds him or herself constantly rubbing up against those problematic, "split off" personality traits. Idealization masks ambivalence and when the repressed ambivalence returns there is likely to be trouble.

Difficulties with these hypotheses arise, first of all, because, like other psychoanalytic theories, the posited dynamics are said to operate unconsciously. They are thus difficult if not impossible to empirically test.

Even internally, however, there are vague areas to the theory. First, given that people are multifaceted and that needs vary in degree, it is unclear how much of which needs must be compensated for to form the basis for a satisfactory marriage. For example:

If the needs of both spouses are met, but just barely, should a more lasting or satisfying relationship be predicted than when some needs are virtually completely fulfilled and others are entirely unsatisfied? (Gurman, 1978, p. 450)

Secondly, if people marry others who embody traits that are disowned from themselves, and the reality of time together will break idealization down into disappointment and conflict, how does any couple achieve a satisfactory, stable relationship? Laurence (Note 1) offers one response to this problem. He suggests that the good times spent together during the idealized, illusory "falling in love" stage of an

intimate relationship provide a foundation and motivation for working through the ensuing phases of disillusionment and mourning, then through a rapprochement or repairing of the relationship, to the establishment of "couple constancy."

This working through requires each partner to deal with his or her own internal anxieties, conflicts, and felt deficiencies rather than pointlessly combating them as they are experienced in the spouse. As Gurman (1978) writes, "for a 'successful' marriage to obtain, each partner must be [or become] (relatively) free from neuroticism" (p. 454).

A third question about the analytic view of marriage is: If establishing a relationship on the basis of complementarity results from the psychological difficulties of the individuals, how do (relatively) healthy people establish an intimate relationship? Or must all marriages, as Whitaker has reportedly wondered, start as "a form of mental illness, a kind of folie à deux" (Framo, 1985, p. vii)?

An alternative hypothesis is offered by some of the empirical literature on complementarity and similarity of person perceptions. Murstein and Beck (1972) found similarity, in terms of responses about themselves by each partner to an adjective check-list, to correlate with marital adjustment. Newmark, Woody, and Ziff (1977) found satisfied couples were more similar in their responses to the MMPI than less satisfied couples. Hendrick (1981) found actual similarity on an attitude survey correlated with marital satisfaction. Creamer and Campbell (1988) found better adjusted couples were more similar in their responses to the California Personality Inventory than less well

adjusted couples. Kirkpatrick and Hobart (reported in Sillars & Scott, 1983) found greater similarity of attitudes among married partners than dating or engaged couples.

In a recent review White and Hatcher (1984) state:

Although there is general agreement that individuals tend to marry those of similar education, socioeconomic status, race, religion, age, culture, physical attractiveness and values, there is less agreement and much confusion as to the relationship between personality needs and mate selection, and between needs and couple satisfaction. (p. 15)

Nevertheless, these writers conclude, "marital adjustment is most often claimed to be positively related to need similarity, and rarely or not at all to complementarity" (White & Hatcher, 1984, p. 17) in nonclinical couples. Further, "there is a suggestion that trait dissimilarity per se is associated with instability and divorce" (ibid, p. 21). These writers suggest a model of "failed" complementarity as a source of marital dissatisfaction.

Similarly, Gurman (1978) reports:

Tharp . . . and Jacobson and Matheny . . . have argued that similarity of traits predominates among normal couples while complementarity of traits predominates among neurotic couples. (p. 451)

In this context it seems relevant that people holding unrealistic beliefs about how relationships should function tend to have unsatisfactory marriages (Bradbury & Fincham, 1988). Further, rather than complementarity of stereotypic masculine and feminine traits,

Bradbury and Fincham (1988) found that femininity in both husbands and wives correlated with their own satisfaction and with the spouse's satisfaction. This might be understood from Gilligan's (1982) viewpoint. She found that the feminine perspective emphasizes relationship themes over autonomy themes in resolving moral dilemmas.

A fourth problem area for the analytic approach arises in practice. Because of the active, powerful flow of marital (or family) interaction and the need to engage usually at least one reluctant spouse, there is a need for the clinician to be more active, more specifically goal oriented, and more diverse in technique than a traditional analyst (Gurman, 1978). Indeed, the fact that most mental health contacts are relatively brief (less than 21 sessions: Gurman, 1978) argues for such pragmatism in various forms of therapy. A somewhat restrictive approach to technique "has probably done more to hinder the progress of psychoanalytic therapy than any other single factor" (Gurman, 1978, p. 529).

In contrast to the strong developmental orientation of the analytic approach, the behavioral viewpoint on marriage is focused quite exclusively on the present. The most basic assumption is that marriages are successful when they are satisfying and they are satisfying because they are reinforcing. Successful marriages are thought to show more reciprocity of reinforcing behaviors by each spouse to the other while unsuccessful marriages show more coercive behaviors between the spouses. Coercion is defined as the use by one spouse of aversive or negative consequences in response to partner behaviors that the spouse wishes changed. Thus, marital difficulties are seen as the result of faulty

means of trying to change the spouse's behaviors. Presumably these principles hold true at any stage in the development and maintenance of a relationship (Gurman, 1978).

The advantages of this approach reside in its emphasis on discrete, concrete behaviors as the problem. This view counteracts the unproductive, circular, blameful "mindreading" and character assassination that troubled couples so often engage in. By emphasizing the contingent nature of overt interactive behavior, this approach presses partners to share in the responsibility for the future of their relationship. The concrete, instructive nature of behavioral therapy is probably more acceptable to psychologically unsophisticated people than more esoteric approaches (Gurman, 1978).

Problems arise from these same features, first of all in the definition of reinforcers. Most people agree that a slap in the face is aversive. But what about an interruption? Is it a sign of disregard or of enthusiastic interest? Couldn't it have a different valence at different times, in different contexts, for the same person? Who defines the valence of an action? The actor, the receiver, or an "objective" observer? In fact, normal families have been shown to engage in more interrupting than disturbed schizophrenic or nonschizophrenic families (Jacob, 1975).

The behavioral position is that the third party observer rates behavior. While this can certainly be one valuable perspective, other perspectives can be equally valuable (e.g. Olson, 1977; Sigafos & Reiss, 1985). For example, the importance of the receiver's perspective

of which spouse behaviors are reinforcing and which are aversive has been investigated under exchange theory (Gurman, 1978).

A second problem is that the greater degree of supposedly reciprocal positive behavior in satisfied marriages may be a function of the individuals rather than the interaction. People in satisfactory marriages may show more positive behaviors whether with their spouses or not. This would run counter to the situation-specific view of behavior of this school. In addition, satisfied married couples may show more positive behaviors when together than unsatisfied couples, but these behaviors may not actually be reciprocal (Gurman, 1978). That is, each spouse's positive behaviors may not, consistently, be contingent upon the other's. Satisfied couples may "randomly emit" more positive behaviors "simply" because they feel confident and good generally. Gottman has advanced a "behavioral model of a 'good relationship' which emphasizes that noncontingent positive exchanges and lack of reciprocity characterize stable, mutually satisfying marriages" (Gurman, 1978, p. 494, emphasis in original).

A third problem with the behavioral approach is that overt--observable--reciprocity seems more likely in some marriages than in other, possibly equally satisfying and stable, marriages. Weiss (quoted in Gurman, 1978) states:

None of the [behavioral] approaches have reported on couples whose interest is predominantly a traditional role-oriented marriage. The considerable egalitarian emphasis of these [behavioral] approaches . . . might well run into difficulty with such clients. (p. 484)

In fact, Fitzpatrick and Best (1979) found Traditionals to be higher than their other three marital types on measures of dyadic adjustment. Their Independents seem closest to an egalitarian marriage; they are described as balancing autonomy and interdependence. (Their other types are Separates and--the only combination frequently found--Separate/Traditionals, where the husband describes himself as a Separate while the wife describes herself as a Traditional.)

A fourth problem area arises when the behavioral approach is put into practice. Behavioral marital therapy--in an oversimplified-for-the-sake-of-argument form--proceeds by educating couples about reinforcement principles, assessing their use of reinforcers and coercion and the behavior changes each desires, and then helping the couple to negotiate behavior change contracts to redress their lists of grievances. Such an approach seems to presume that distressed couples will fairly readily acknowledge that the problems are in what goes on between them (versus "s/he's the problem"), that they both contribute to the problems, and that they will be open and willing and able to be consistently responsive to the therapist's suggestions (Gurman, 1978). As anyone who has worked with couples knows, the work is rarely that smooth. The perspective that the ways couples interact defines their selves is lacking. A person does not readily loosen his grip on his self.

In order for there to be a fair chance of a couple even engaging in therapy there first needs to be a commitment by both to their relationship. This is not always the case. Laurence (Note 1) outlines two broad types of couple problems: those involved in working out how

to remain a couple after the stage of romantic illusion passes, and those having difficulty even becoming a couple. It seems that marital therapies in general, and behavioral marital therapy in particular, are likely to fare better with the former type.

A second treatment related problem under the behavioral approach is that a change of impressions is expected to follow automatically on a change of behavior: "Behavior change yields 'corresponding changes in the other's impressions . . . of [the changed partner]'" (Stuart, quoted in Gurman, 1978, p. 486). Classic studies of the primacy effect in impression formation (Hilgard, Atkinson & Atkinson, 1975) undermine this assertion. In the context of marriage, the lack of impact of partner behavior on impressions is seen in the finding that intimate "individuals overestimate the similarity between their own and their partners' attitudes" (Sillars & Scott, 1983, pp. 155-56). Also, "self-reported perceptions of power have not correlated strongly with observational measures of decision-making influence" (ibid, p. 156). As Weick has observed, between intimates "'changed behavior tends to be assimilated to previous behavior, rather than recognized as new behavior'" (quoted in Sillars & Scott, 1983, p. 162).

The limits of behavior change, by itself, in changing relationship impressions and satisfaction are further shown in a study by Broderick and O'Leary (1986). They found that measures of positive feelings towards spouse, commitment, exchange orientation¹, and daily self-reports of spouse behavior all were significantly associated with

¹the attitude that interpersonal relationships are valued on the basis of the equity of exchange.

marital satisfaction. However, "the affective and attitudinal variables accounted for more unique variance in marital satisfaction than did the behavioral variables" (p. 514). Further, Broderick and O'Leary cited prior research which indicated that an increase in exchange orientation --which might be expected from following behavioral quid pro quo prescriptions--was associated with a decrease in marital satisfaction. It seems as if people do not like feeling that their partners are with them only because of what they can get from them.

If impressions do not necessarily change with behavior, one spouse may see the other's "positive" behavior changes simply as cleverer attempts at coercion--and remain just as dissatisfied. Studies of the recency effect suggest that pointed efforts to call attention to the changed behavior and/or disruption of prior impressions will be needed (Hilgard, Atkinson & Atkinson, 1975).

Lastly, in the behavioral perspective why people do what they do is not addressed (Gurman, 1978). "It is not the case that 'behavior is behavior is behavior,' but rather that behavior means" (Gurman, 1978, p. 491, emphasis in original).

As Gurman (1978) notes, there is marked diversity of theory and practice within the family systems approach. It is beyond the scope of this review to compare and contrast these various "subschoools." Instead, certain key concepts, especially ones that tend toward integration of theories, will be discussed.

In the family systems approach causality is circular: "A stimulus X_1 triggers a response Y_1 which, in turn, becomes the stimulus X_2 for

another response Y_2 , etc." (Gurman, 1978, p. 493). A patient, couple or therapist can arbitrarily pick any point in these loops as the cause and, by the same token, any point to intervene. Our understanding of causality shapes what we do; we respond to events out of our interpretations of them--however reflexive those interpretations may be. In this way causality is related to meaning. This is the sense of meaning captured in the phrase, "What does that mean for you?" In other words, "Given that, what will you do?" Thus, the meanings of events are, to a significant extent, a matter of how we choose to punctuate the flow of those events. In this way the systems view approaches an existential view.

While the circular (or, perhaps even better, spiral) nature of interaction is a metapsychological given in the family system approach, couples are seen as being more or less embedded or enmeshed in their system. Marital difficulties are seen as arising from a couple's lack of differentiation from each other, which reflects each individual's legacy of a lack of differentiation in their family of origin. One leading family systems theorist is Murray Bowen. Gurman (1978) writes:

For Bowenites, individuals (a) tend to seek out partners who repeat early familial experience and experience-of-self; (b) are attracted by potential mates who function at the same level of psychological development but manifest complementary overt behavior styles; and (c) expect their mates to make up for their own developmental failures.

(p. 510)

Bowen broadly describes the complementary traits of partners as one partner "overfunctioning" and the other "underfunctioning", or one being "dominant" and the other "adaptive." The similarity (despite Bowen's protests) to the psychoanalytic notions described above of "collusion" and "complementarity of needs" seems obvious. Gurman (1978) writes,

In Bowen theory the necessary and sufficient conditions for conflict in marriage and the process of symptomatic emergence in one spouse [the "underfunctioning" or "adaptive" spouse,] are indistinguishable from those postulated by object-relations [analytic] writers. (p. 511).

Another leading family system theorist, Boszormenyi-Nagy (1965) perhaps recognizes the relation of analytic thought to family system theory more than Bowen. He writes that separation "requires prior satisfactory achievement of the goals of affiliation and individuation" (p. 83). The necessary relational context is made clear when he writes, "individuation . . . applies to the family system as a whole. . . . Individuation . . . can occur only in a group which allows it" (p. 81). He describes the interplay of internal and external experience:

If we assume that one's discrete Self-experience depends on the vicissitudes of one's Self-Other encounters, the intrapsychic and the interpersonal relational realms assume interconnected causal significance. The internalized relational patterns will, to a certain extent, predetermine the external relational preferences and the fate and level

of involvements. External relationships, on the other hand, can contribute to the content and the quality of what evolve as building stones of the endopsychic structure of Self and Other representations. (1965, p. 74)

A third leading family system theorist, Robert Beavers, is clearly in agreement with analytic perspectives (e.g. Gurman, 1978; Laurence, Note 1) when he writes, "I consider an essential part of the treatment of chronic marital discord to be necessarily the assistance of individual self-development" (1985, p. 145, emphasis in original). He shares the analytic emphasis on developmental lack of differentiation and resulting complementary projective and defensive processes. He writes:

Boundary issues--the differentiation of the ego or self which is a vital part of psychic development . . . are a vital aspect of systems concepts, and projection is recognized as a powerful means of subverting boundaries in family systems. (1985, p. 143)

Beavers describes boundary issues as manifesting in variations of impotence/omnipotence themes, originally deriving from the infant/mother relationship. "The baby is totally helpless, yet that helplessness tyrannizes the mother and binds her to the task of caring for baby" (1985, p. 144). Different aspects of the same differentiation and boundary development process are reflected in the themes of belongingness and separateness (Laurence, Note 1) and oneness and separateness (Kaplan, 1978).

Beavers (1985) describes two problematic levels of these developmental themes. At the first level what predominates is the need for coherence and basic questions such as: "Who is feeling what? Who wants what? Which person is in pain? Who is motivated to change? Who is saying what at this particular time?" (p. 144). Explicitly tying individual psychological development to marital difficulties, Beavers continues, "Further up the scale of individual development and, hence, of the family and couple system, the focus is on control issues" (ibid). At the first level the impotence/omnipotence confusion is pervasive; at the second it is focused in specific sectors of interaction.

Beavers (following Stierlin) differentiates two family styles that reveal lack of individuation from the "undifferentiated family ego mass" (Bowen, 1965, 1976). These are "centripetal" and "centrifugal" families. Thus, Beavers (1985) describes a "two track" model of family system development, with the two tracks converging as health (family and individual differentiation) is approached.

Beaver's "centripetal - centrifugal" dimension can be compared to Minuchin's (1974) dimension of "enmeshment" and "disengagement," and Stierlin's (1976) alternate terminology of "overowning" and "disowning." The centripetal or enmeshed family can also be compared to Wynne's (Wynne, Ryckoff, Day, and Hirsch, 1958) "pseudo-mutual" family. Members of an enmeshed family would feel an unspoken compulsion to think and feel alike about issues and events, and involvement in relations outside the family would be discouraged as they might disrupt this pseudo-harmony. Members of a centrifugal family would create distance, both physically and emotionally, from each other and would appear to be more

involved with relations outside their family--until events forced them to deal with their family and their upset and confusion revealed their brittle, artificial individuation.

Beavers lists six shared beliefs and six behavior patterns which he finds characteristic of healthy couples. The six beliefs are in:

- 1) relative rather than absolute truth, 2) subjective reality, 3) the basic neutrality or benignity of family members' motives, 4) human encounter as rewarding, 5) a systems point of view, and 6) value and meaning in the human enterprise. (1985, p. 69)

The belief in relative versus absolute truth refers to the perspective that no one limited, fallible person possesses absolute truth. Any person's perspective of reality is inevitably subjective. Thus disagreements can be taken as "honest differences" and as an opportunity for synthesis rather than struggle. Such a capacity to disagree without disruption is also founded on the belief that the other is basically benign; difference is not translated into evil or perversity. In turn, this belief subsumes beliefs that the "stuff" of differences--such realities as sexuality, anger, willfulness, and abiding ambivalence--are normal features of the human condition. Given the foundations of seeing the other as "good enough" and oneself as "only human," couples can develop the trust and cooperation which constitute rewarding relations.

The belief in, or sense of, a systems point of view involves four assumptions. First, "Any individual needs a group, a human system for individual definition, coherence, and satisfaction" (Beavers, 1985,

p. 72). This is reminiscent of van den Berg's (1972) postulate that all mental illness is based in loneliness. It requires that a person be able to leave home and engage with others in wider society.

Second and third: "Causes and effects are interchangeable," and "Any human behavior is a result of many variables rather than one single cause" (Beavers, 1985, p. 72). These perspectives clearly complement the belief in relative versus absolute truth.

Fourth: "Since humans are limited and finite, a social role of absolute power or helplessness prohibits many of the needed satisfactions to be found in human encounters" (ibid). This view of people as functioning interactively in a system rather than any one person being in control or having no responsibility, ties back to the assumption that people need people to find satisfaction and meaning, and the belief that people can relate most fruitfully when they see others and themselves as benignly limited.

Beavers' six observable behavioral patterns of successful couples are:

- 1) a modest [versus dramatic] overt power difference, 2) the capacity for clear boundaries, 3) operating mainly in the present, 4) respect for individual choice, 5) skill in negotiating, and 6) sharing positive feelings (1985, p. 76)

Beavers points out:

Only in situations of equal overt power can there be intimacy In relationships of unequal overt power, the top dog is fearful of exposing weakness. Conversely, the bottom dog is fearful that anger, assertiveness, wishes

for equality or domination will surface [and disrupt the relationship]. (ibid, emphasis in original)

Beavers speaks of how fairly equal power can manifest in complementary--on an overt and pragmatic level--roles. It seems clear that it can also manifest as similarity.

Clear boundaries involve the ability to define and own one's own feelings and wishes and to recognize the other's feelings and wishes. No person or couple maintains this perspective constantly; it would be inhuman to do so. We all "lose it" in the heat of passion. Healthy couples can regain a balanced perspective and proceed to resolve issues.

Operating mainly in the present does not mean to disown the past. That would be a rigid and dysfunctional defence. It means to understand the present in light of the past but not as the past; to be guided by the past but not directed by it.

The value of knowing what you and your partner think and feel cannot be realized unless there is respect for autonomy and individual choice. This does not preclude compromise; it is the basis for it. An agreement without hidden expectations can only be reached between autonomous equals. Thus, respect for individual choice is the basis for skill in negotiating.

The result of these several beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors is that healthy couples can be seen to have "effective, optimistic, and fun" encounters (Beavers, 1985, p. 82).

A second branch of family system theorists is represented by Haley, Jackson, Watzlawick and the "Palo Alto Group" of communication theorists. Like the behaviorists, these writers are not concerned with

the genesis of a system or its conflicts. They focus on the current organization of interaction. Individual symptoms (and behavior in general) are seen as "ways of attempting to define and control relationships" (Gurman, 1978, p. 524). For Haley the primary dimension of self and other that is worked out--successfully or not--in relationships is that of power and control (Gurman, 1978). Beavers' thoughts about belief in relative truth, belief in the other's benignity, multiple and circular determination, a modest power differential, respect for choice, and negotiating skill in a successful relationship seem to revolve about the same issue. Haley, however, might not see a modest power differential as the only way to have a stable relationship--especially between therapist and patient.

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) see couple conflict arising from confusing or contradictory messages on the "report" versus "command" levels of communication. The report level is the overt content of a communication; the command level is the implied relationship directive of the same communication. This is the structure of paradoxical communication and, with part of the command level being that the receiver may not leave the field or unveil the contradictions, the famous "double-bind" (Bateson, Jackson, Haley, & Weakland, 1972). Klugman suggests an identity between paradoxical communicators and fused people. Klugman writes:

Contradictions between different levels of communication, that is, paradox, allow for a feeling of closeness through talking, without the danger of really defining an "I position," and without fear of contradiction being pointed

out, since its communication on separate levels also carries the message that this discrepancy may not be discussed.

Paradoxical communication has, as its goal, avoidance of open expression of ambivalence. To point to a defense mechanism is to point, implicitly, to what it is defending.

Thus, paradox carries the prohibition against its own discovery. (cited in Gurman, 1978, p. 520)

Fear of recognizing let alone expressing ambivalence in pathological families has also been discussed by both Beavers (1985) and Searles (1965).

For the contemporary Palo Alto group, "what is problematic 'is the meaning attributed to the situation, and therefore its consequences, but not the concrete facts'" (Watzlawick, quoted in Gurman, 1978, p. 522). This understanding of marital difficulties as a matter of faulty premises, "'considered to be more real than reality'" (Watzlawick, quoted in Gurman, 1978, p. 522), is a view of marital difficulties as arising from "attributional deficiency" (Gurman, 1978, p. 522). In this regard, and also in terms of its ahistorical stance and focus on recursive interaction, this communications perspective approaches the cognitive behavioral perspective and the methods of Beck and Ellis (Gurman, 1978). Such an attributional perspective is also an important empirical approach, and will be reviewed below.

Problems with the family system approaches parallel problems in the analytic and behavioral approaches. This is in keeping with the ways in which the system approaches have been compared to the analytic and behavioral approaches.

In the communications theory branch of the family systems approach there is a lack of attention to the individual. The individual is an important, more or less semi-autonomous subsystem in the family (as the family system is to its community system). For example,

From a phenomenological-humanistic perspective . . . the functional value of successfully controlling [and defining] an intimate relationship lies in its potential for [also] maintaining a consistent self-view and, thereby, self-esteem. (Gurman, 1978, p. 524)

Further, as in the behavioral approach, there is no acknowledgement of important unconsciously operating subsystems within the individual (Gurman, p. 530).

There is no evidence that paradoxical interventions, favored by the communications school, are any more effective or otherwise superior to other techniques for dealing with faulty premises (attributions) (Gurman, 1978), or pathology more broadly construed. As with other techniques, there needs to be a better understanding of when and for what problems paradoxical techniques are best used. The example of paradoxical techniques is but a primary example of an unfortunate focus on technique to the exclusion of relational issues in the practice of communications--and behavioral--therapy.

As in behavioral marital therapy, the goal and the proof of progress in communications theory oriented family system therapy is observable change in interactions. Subjective experience is expected to follow. "There is a vast amount of research evidence . . . that feelings of well-being and even reliably counted behavioral changes do

not show any consistently high positive correlation" (Gurman, 1978, p. 528).

Lastly, as in the analytic approach, several family system concepts are untestable or unsupported. In regards to the latter category, Gurman (1978) cites the tenets that (a) all symptomatology is best understood as originating and operating at the family system level (though all individual symptoms probably have consequences at the family level), and (b) a change in any facet of the family system's functioning will change the functioning of the system as a whole.

Empirical Findings

In his review of family interaction studies in disturbed and normal families, Jacob (1975) organized the substantive findings into four content areas: conflict, dominance, affect, and communication clarity. Jacob's scheme will serve to organize the first part of this discussion.

Conflict has been defined in terms of interruptions (seen as a sign of conflicted process), expression of conflicted ideas (a content measure), disagreement, and failure to agree. The results have been somewhat mixed.

3 comparisons indicated more interrupting behavior in normal versus schizophrenic families; 3 comparisons indicated more conflict, disagreement, and failure to agree in schizophrenic versus normal families; and 1 comparison indicated more disagreement in normal versus schizophrenic families. (Jacob, 1975, p. 46)

In studies of nonschizophrenic disturbed versus normal families results were also somewhat mixed.

4 comparisons indicated more interrupting behavior in normal versus disturbed families; 3 comparisons indicated more interrupting behavior in disturbed versus normal families; 2 comparisons indicated mixed findings regarding group differences in interrupting behavior; and 4 comparisons generally indicated greater agreement, less disagreement, less failure to agree, or less channel conflict [e.g. judged incongruity of verbal and nonverbal communication] in normal versus disturbed family groups. (Jacob, 1975, p. 47)

It would seem, especially in regard to interrupting, that the same behavior means something different in different contexts. It may be that normal families can tolerate more dissenting views. It may also be that interruptions don't necessarily reflect dissent; they may reflect enthusiastic participation and/or less fragility of individual boundaries. When a person has fragile boundaries interruptions will be more disruptive.

The finding of more agreement than disagreement in normal versus nonschizophrenic disturbed families is consistent with the conclusion of another review article by Riskin and Faunce (1970). They found one consistent result to be that agreement-to-disagreement ratios greater than 1.0 characterized normal families, while ratios less than 1.0 characterized distressed families.

The "channel conflict" finding is consistent with the finding by Chelune, Sultan, Vosk, Ogden, and Waring (1984) that clinical couples

showed less congruence of verbal content and affective manner than nonclinical couples. That is, what they said and how they said it was less fitting in the clinical sample. The only other self-disclosure variable that distinguished the two groups in that study was the duration of speech. Clinical couples spoke for shorter periods of time and thus, presumably, with less elaboration.

Waring, McElrath, Lefcoe, and Weisz (1981) also found absence of conflict to correlate with marital adjustment. They suggest that absence of conflict is a function of the compatibility they also found to characterize satisfactory marriages. They defined compatibility as mutual commitment to the marriage and similarity of attitudes, beliefs, and preferred activities. Finding absence of conflict to typify satisfactory marriage, when contrasted to the findings regarding interruptions (see above), suggests that interruptions do not equal conflict--or that third party observations (Jacob's review) yield different results than self-report paper and pencil measures (Waring et al).

Waring et al. (1981) also found structure--explicit rules and roles in couple interaction--to characterize satisfactory marriages. In that complementary roles at an observable level--e.g. one cooks, the other cleans--can be quite compatible when agreed upon, "compatible" may serve as a higher level concept subsuming certain of the mixed similarity versus complementary findings discussed above. Observably complementary roles must be distinguished from complementary expectations based on projections and idealizations that the spouse is neither willing nor able to fulfill. In support of this hypothesis

Harper, Scoresby, and Boyce (1977) found that "parallel [i.e. "compatible,"] dyads adjusted to both . . . complementary and symmetrical conditions, whereas symmetrical and complementary dyads did not successfully accommodate rules outside their own class" (p. 199).

Jacob (1975) reports that the results of studies in the area of dominance and family adjustment are also mixed.

1 outcome measure indicated schizophrenic fathers to be more dominant than normal fathers; and 4 qualitative process measures indicated normal fathers, schizophrenic mothers, and normal children to be more dominant than schizophrenic fathers, normal mothers, and schizophrenic children, respectively. (p. 48)

In regard to studies of nonschizophrenic disturbed versus normal families, Jacob (1975) found more comparisons and was able to tentatively identify two trends.

First, family power structures are more often differentiated (hierarchical versus equalitarian) in normal than in disturbed families. . . . [However,] the sex of the participating child may importantly qualify (or even reverse) such a conclusion. Second, the most frequently reported difference in . . . normal and disturbed power structures . . . is, fathers are more influential (especially vis-a-vis the child) in normal than disturbed family groups. (p. 51)

These findings are consistent with Beaver's and others' differentiation hypotheses, and with the just mentioned finding by Waring et al. (1981)

of a structure factor in adjusted marriages. These findings do not, however, support Beaver's observation of a "modest overt power difference" in satisfied marriages. In this regard, these findings are more consistent with Fitzpatrick and Best's (1979) finding that their Traditional marriage types were the most well adjusted. A review of family power research by McDonald (1980) seems to cover both hierarchical and egalitarian findings. He concludes, "husband-dominance and equalitarianism are associated with high marital satisfaction, while wife-dominant marriages tend to have the lowest marital satisfaction" (p. 849).

It is important to note that the studies reviewed by Jacob (1975) were family interaction studies in which variables were measured by various third-party methods rather than self report. As noted above, "self-reported perceptions of power have not correlated strongly with observational measures of decision-making influence" (Sillars & Scott, 1983, p. 156). Fitzpatrick's (e.g. Fitzpatrick & Best, 1979) typology is based on self-report questionnaire responses. Thus, Fitzpatrick and Best's finding that Traditional marriages are more adjusted provides some cross method convergence with Jacob's similar dominance results using observational data.

While such convergence is heartening, it can also obscure the fact that different methods reflect importantly different perspectives. Self-report measures yield how the Subject sees herself--or how she wishes to present herself to the investigator. This perspective can be valuable, as long as its nature and limits are kept in mind. Third party observations yield a more consensual perspective: how the

Subjects are seen by others. The limit of this perspective is that it doesn't reveal how the Subjects see themselves, or how they wish to be seen.

In regard to affect in normal versus schizophrenic families results in Jacob's review (1975) were quite inconclusive.

14 of the total 31 comparisons were unable to significantly differentiate schizophrenic from control families in terms of amount or quality of affective expression. . . . 2 comparisons indicated that normal families were more expressive than schizophrenic families, and 3 comparisons indicated that normal families expressed more positive affect (general and specific) than did schizophrenic families. . . . Schizophrenic versus normal families were reported to express more negative affect in three comparisons, [and] normal versus schizophrenic families were reported to express more negative affect in four comparisons. (p. 52)

In contrast:

Comparison of disturbed nonschizophrenic and normal families in terms of affective expression reveals the most consistent set of findings thus far. . . . 5 comparisons indicated more positive affect in normal versus disturbed families, and 10 comparisons indicated more negative affect in disturbed versus normal families. (Jacob, 1975, p. 53)

Some of the most sophisticated research to date on affect, physiological concomitants of affect, and interpersonal cognitions as

they relate to satisfactory versus unsatisfactory marriage has been done by Gottman and his colleagues². In Gottman's work (at least) "negative affect" refers to "anger, contempt, disgust, sadness, fear, and to their blends" (Gottman & Levenson, 1986, p. 42).

Gottman and Levenson reviewed the role of emotion in marriage. They concluded:

Three patterns can be identified as the most consistent across laboratories. First, there is more negative affect in dissatisfied couples than in satisfied couples. Findings concerning positive affect are much less consistent.

(p. 37)

Assuming that Gottman and Levenson's review refers to comparisons of nonschizophrenic disturbed versus normal families (his terminology of "unsatisfied versus satisfied" marriages suggests this), this conclusion is consistent with Jacob's (1975) report.

Gottman and Levenson (1986) continue:

Second, there is greater reciprocity of negative affect in dissatisfied couples than in satisfied couples. . . .

[Conversely,] positive affect and positive affect reciprocity [have] not proven to be very useful in

²Gottman and his colleagues (e.g. Gottman & Levenson, 1986) have been able to show a high degree of sequentially in-phase correlation between ratings of nonverbal affect, self-report of affect, and physiological arousal. Physiological arousal characterizes negative affect, especially anger and fear, probably because such arousal is preparation for fight or flight. The arousal shows different patterns for different affects.

discriminating satisfied from dissatisfied marriages.

(pp. 37-38)

Boland and Follingstad (1987) report a study by Billings that reached a similar conclusion. Further, in addition to differentiating satisfied and unsatisfied couples in the present, negative affect and negative affect reciprocity were able to predict decline in marital satisfaction (Gottman & Levenson, 1986).

These conclusions may seem obvious, but wouldn't it have seemed just as obvious that there would be more reciprocation of positive affect in satisfied couples? That has not been found. Even the apparently obvious bears verification.

Thus, Gottman (1982) can conclude:

The quid pro quo hypothesis was simply wrong. It is the deescalation of negative affect and not the reciprocation of positive affect that discriminates [satisfactorily and unsatisfactorily married couples]. (p. 957)

It is interesting to note that the quid pro quo hypothesis was first advanced by Don Jackson (1965, cited in Gottman, 1982). As a member of the Palo Alto communications theory group, Jackson's understanding of quid pro quo was that it "is a metaphorical statement of the relationship bargain; that is, how the couple has agreed to define themselves within this relationship" (quoted in Gurman and Knudson, 1978, p. 126, emphasis added by Gurman and Knudson). This is different from the understanding of the behavioral marital therapists who adopted the quid pro quo hypothesis and developed reciprocal behavior contracting as a therapy technique. Behavioral therapists

would focus on the proposed behaviors per se, rather than any "meta-meaning."

In keeping with a family systems view of marriage, there have been frequent calls for studies of marriage in which the couple, versus the two individuals, is the unit of analysis, and where sequential interactive processes, rather than summary measures of an interaction, are compared. By coordinating on-going ratings of facial emotional expression in the speaker and the listener, ongoing ratings of the affective dimension of speech content, physiological measures of autonomic nervous system activity, and continuous self-report of positive-negative ratings of affect, Gottman and his colleagues have achieved several intriguing results.

Gottman, Markman, and Notarius (1977) found "distressed couples show an absence of the positive trend evident in . . . the nondistressed couples" (p. 467). They found that "distressed couples were more likely to express their feelings about a problem, to mindread³, and to disagree, all with negative nonverbal behaviors" (p. 468). It was not the case that the distressed and nondistressed couples showed a difference in the relative frequency of "mindreading," it was "the nonverbal mode of delivery that strongly discriminated the two groups" (p. 468). Distressed couples were also more likely to express agreement with accompanying negative nonverbal behavior--another example of channel inconsistency.

Sequential analyses revealed that:

³attribute thoughts, feelings, motives, attitudes, or actions to the other.

Nonclinic couples are likely to respond to information or an expression of feeling about a problem with agreement delivered with neutral affect, and they keep cycling through agreement. This loop is called "validation." . . . Clinic couples, on the other hand, respond to [information or an expression of feeling about a problem] with [information or feeling about a problem] of their own; this loop is called "cross-complaining." (Gottman et al., 1977, p. 470)

Both clinic and nonclinic couples rarely used direct questions about the other's feelings. Rather, they typically mindread. With neutral or positive affect accompanying it, such mindreading functioned as a sensitive probe leading to agreement and/or further exploration. However, the clinic couples could not sustain such positive exploration for as long as the nonclinic couples, and clinic wives had to do their mindreading with clearly positive (versus only neutral) affect in order to have any impact on the subsequent actions of their husbands (Gottman et al., 1977).

In contrast to neutral or positive mindreading, "in clinic couples, mindreading with negative affect is taken as a blaming criticism which is refuted by either spouse with negative affect" (Gottman et al., 1977, p. 474). The nonclinic couples did not engage in negatively affective mindreading ("blaming") enough to show an ensuing pattern.

Once a proposal stage in problem solving is reached:

Nonclinic couples are likely to engage in a sequence that intersperses agreement with proposals for solving the

problem. This sequence is called "contract." . . . On the other hand, interspersals of agreement are less likely for proposals made by clinic husbands, and nonexistent for proposals made by clinic wives. In fact, the sequence following a [proposal by a clinic wife] does not cycle through agreement but is one in which proposal is met by counterproposal. (ibid)

Boland and Follingstad (1987) report similar findings in a study by Ting-Toomey:

High marital adjustment couples were primarily characterized by patterns of summarization, paraphrasing, validation, and clarification. Unhappy couples demonstrated unique reciprocal patterns of (a) both confronting, (b) one confronting and the other defending, and (c) one defending and the other complaining. (p. 295)

Both clinic wives and husbands were more likely to show negative affect while listening than nonclinic wives and husbands (Gottman et al., 1977). Overall, "nonverbal behavior was a better discriminator between distressed and nondistressed couples than verbal behavior was" (ibid, p. 476). Similarly, Boland and Follingstad (1987) conclude, "positive nonverbal communication such as laughter, voice tone, touching spouse, and body position were found more frequently in happy couples" (p. 303).

Negative affect reciprocity is linked to autonomic nervous system arousal (Gottman & Levenson, 1986). Since such arousal is felt to be aversive, communication moments that stop the negative cycle and thus

calm the arousal may be reinforcing. Such "escape moments" (ibid) may consist of positive (empathic, loving) communications or coercive (aversive) communications (e.g. sudden anger). If such coercive "escape moments" are reinforcing, this would help explain the stereotyped coercive patterns of unhappy families (e.g. Patterson, cited in Gottman & Levenson, 1986; Waxler & Mishler, cited in Gottman, 1982). Conversely, positively toned "escape moments" may help to build marital satisfaction.

A final sequential finding in this affect domain has to do with the reciprocity of negative affect found to characterize dissatisfied couples. When "negative affect" is differentiated into types of negative affect (e.g. anger, fear, sadness, contempt, whining) the apparent symmetry of this reciprocity dissolves. A typical pattern that emerges is that a wife's anger leads to husband anger, but then the husband's anger leads to wife fear, which leads to further husband anger (Gottman & Levenson, 1986). This sequence reveals a clear dominance structure. If reciprocity of negative affect is more characteristic of dissatisfied couples, this sequential finding seems to qualify the findings reported above of more hierarchy in satisfied couples. Probably there are benign and toxic forms of hierarchy.

The fourth domain of Jacob's (1975) review involved communication clarity and accuracy. In regard to schizophrenic versus normal families, "Normal families were consistently found to communicate more clearly and effectively. . . . Specifically, normal families and parents were judged higher on attention and communication adequacy" (p. 54). "In contrast . . . the great majority of relevant comparisons

[of] disturbed [nonschizophrenic] and normal families reflected no reliable group differences" (Jacob, 1975, p. 55).

These findings seem somewhat surprising in light of the findings cited above of less "channel conflict" in normal versus nonschizophrenic disturbed families. Gottman (1982) argues that communication is a nonadditive interactive gestalt of "channels." Channels would include verbal content; paraverbal voice tones, rhythms, and inflections; and gestures and other body language. In other words, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Thus it seems hard to separate communication clarity and accuracy from channel conflict, and surprising that there were no consistent differences found in regard to the one when differences were found about the other. In fact, in their more recent review Boland and Follingstad (1987) report, "Nondistressed couples were more likely to have accurate encoding and decoding abilities, [and] show better listening skills and clarity of speech" (p. 303).

Gottman (1982) sees exchange theory as a major "breakthrough" in the study of marital interaction because it organizes the study of how people perceive the patterns of their interactions, versus the study of the interactions per se. In Gottman's view, "a sequence of actions, cognitions, and affects . . . is precisely the [sequence] that tells the story" (1982, p. 958, emphasis in original). Interpersonal perceptions is an area missing from Jacob's (1975) review.

Sillars and Scott (1983) did review this literature. This area of study is informed by "symbolic interaction" theory (e.g. Berger & Luckmann, 1967) as well as exchange theory (Stephen & Markman, 1983). From a symbolic interaction point of view, the congruence of perceptions

or interpretations of each other is an index of intimacy. In exchange theory, it is each person's perceptions of equity of exchange which count.

In regard to bias in perceptions between intimates, Sillars and Scott (1983) report that spouses see their own conflict behavior more favorably than they see their partners'. This result finds support in a more recent study, under the "attribution theory" rubric, by Jacobson, Waggoner McDonald, Follette, and Berley (1985). They found:

Distressed couples were particularly likely to attribute their partners' negative behavior to internal factors; nondistressed couples, on the other hand, were particularly likely to attribute their partners' positive behavior to internal factors. (p. 35)

Sillars and Scott (1983) report that a frequent finding is that partners often "overestimate the similarity between their own and their partners' attitudes" (p. 155). This tendency is dubbed "assimilation." Arias and O'Leary (1985) again replicated this result in their study of partners' independent definitions and semantic differential ratings of marriage related concepts.

Arias and O'Leary also found that:

Nondiscordant husbands and wives predicted their spouses' responses more accurately and perceived more similarity between themselves and their spouses than did discordant husbands and wives. . . . [However,] discordant and nondiscordant couples did not differ on . . . actual similarity. (p. 57)

The accurate prediction findings seem to further confirm the conclusion reached by Sillars and Scott (1983) that "a relationship exists between congruence of perception and the adjustment of intimates" (p. 165). For instance, Newmark et al. (1977) found that "satisfactorily married couples predicted significantly more of their spouse's responses [to the MMPI] than did the unsatisfactorily married couples" (p. 83). Similarly, Creamer and Campbell (1988) found that:

Accuracy of prediction [of the spouse's responses to the California Psychological Inventory] was correlated significantly with scores on the Hogan Empathy scale for males, but not for females. Conversely, accuracy was related significantly to dyadic adjustment in the case of females, but not for males. (p. 424)

This relationship has held when actual similarity of self description was controlled (Newmark et al., 1977; Sillars & Scott, 1983).

Further evidence along this line comes from a study by de Turck and Miller (1986). They found that "spouses who perceived each other as unique individuals rather than undifferentiated role occupants experienced significantly greater marital satisfaction" (p. 715).

Further still, Franzoi, Davis, and Young (1985) found that persons who tend to spontaneously adopt the psychological perspective of the other show greater relationship satisfaction.

These results suggest that satisfied married persons do not see their partners as idealized complements. If there is any complementarity within their compatibility, it is composed of realistic perceptions of the other. This notion is consistent with Laurence's

theory of a passage from positive illusion, through disillusionment, to couple constancy. Further support for Laurence's theory comes from the finding that satisfactorily married people show more introspection and, as a result, more self-disclosure (Franzoi et al., 1985). Laurence argues that, to reach satisfactory couple constancy, people must come to grips with their own internal dilemmas rather than trying to combat their private problems by seeing them in the other.

A further refining perspective comes from a study by Davidson, Balswick, and Halverson (1983). They compared partners' independent reports of the degree of negative and positive affects⁴ they expressed, and the degree of each affect they perceived coming from their spouses. They found that it was not just less negativity that characterized their satisfied couples, but greater comparability of self-perceived expression of affect, whatever the positive or negative level of that comparability. Those who "overbenefited" significantly by receiving more love and happiness disclosure than they gave were less maritally satisfied--much like the "underbenefited." Davidson et al. (1983) also found that satisfied couples who showed a discrepancy in self-reports of expression, tended to "correct" such discrepancies by compensatory misperception (vis-a-vis the other's self-perception) of what they saw coming from the other. It is as if an overbenefited person becomes anxious about eventually having to pay his debts.

A result that seems to contradict the findings of a correlation between accurate prediction of spouse responses and marital satisfaction

⁴sadness, anger, love, and happiness.

was obtained by Sillars, Pike, Jones, and Murphy (1984). They found that understanding was negatively related to marital satisfaction. However, this study involved predicting spouse feelings about typical marital conflict issues. Spurious "understanding" due to similarity of responses across spouses was statistically controlled. The upshot appears to be that "understanding" was measured only when one spouse accurately predicted the other's different feelings about a marital conflict issue. Perhaps it is not surprising that such "understanding" would relate to marital dissatisfaction.

Further, prediction of the spouse's feelings about these issues was more closely related to negative nonverbal expression (voice tone) than to verbal disclosure. Thus, "among the more satisfied individuals, those who were better understood were more negative in vocal tone" (Sillars et al., 1984, p. 340). Conversely, "among the less satisfied individuals, there was little relationship between communication and understanding" (ibid, p. 340-41). In regards to understanding the other's differing feelings about marital conflicts, in satisfied marriages negative voice tone was, not surprisingly, the most discriminating factor.

To return to Sillars and Scott's (1983) review of bias in interpersonal perception, as cited above, bias has been found in self-reports of family power versus observations of family decision-making influence. Perceptions of family power, in turn, seem affected by cultural and ideological variations (ibid).

Consistent with findings about attributions about strangers versus oneself (Jacobson et al., 1985), partners tend to assign responsibility

for conflicts to negative personality traits of the spouse, while they attribute their own behavior to situational causes (Sillars & Scott, 1983). Pursuing this line of inquiry further, Fincham and Bradbury (1987) present evidence from a one-year longitudinal study that "attributions influence marital satisfaction and not vice versa" (p. 515). These authors in turn suggest that "relationship expectations give rise to attributions" (p. 516). In a 1988 article Bradbury and Fincham suggest that negative responsibility attributions--"blaming"--in marital disagreements "underlie the patterns of negative affect reciprocity and conflict escalation observed in the interactions of distressed spouses (e.g. Gottman, 1979)" (p. 719).

Sillars and Scott list five contexts in which various biases are likely to be stronger. First, while time spent with someone should increase accurate perception of them in many respects, especially aspects more closely tied to observable behavior (e.g. the spouse's financial habits), this may not hold in regards to attributions of blame or affective intent. "Familiarity increases confidence in one's understanding of another person . . . and this confidence may extend to areas in which understanding is not present" (Sillars & Scott, 1983, p. 161). Similarly, because initial impressions are resistant to change (see above), misperception may increase if one partner changes. The spouse may tend to see the partner as s/he was (Sillars & Scott, 1983).

Second:

With increasing interdependence, the correspondence between a person's behavior and his or her underlying traits, attitudes, intentions, or perceptions is increasingly

ambiguous, because a given behavior may be motivated by any or all of several factors, including individual attitudes and traits, past behavior, and negotiated patterns or expectations. (Sillars & Scott, 1983, p. 162)

Third, "emotions are felt most strongly and expressed most spontaneously between intimates" (Sillars & Scott, 1983, p. 162). Emotionality tends to exaggerate similarities and differences in perception (ibid).

Sillars and Scott also note that bias in perception is likely to be greater when attitudes or ideological views of intimacy are dissimilar. This is due to the assimilation effect discussed earlier.

Perceptions of self also seem related to marital satisfaction. McDonald (1962) found that parents of emotionally disturbed children showed less self-acceptance than parents of normal children. Luckey (1964) found evidence that people who saw themselves (and their spouses) as manifesting culturally valued traits were more satisfied with their marriages. She also found that people who were unsatisfied with their marriages saw themselves (and their spouses) as manifesting culturally devalued traits. Murstein and Beck (1972) found that self-acceptance was correlated with marital adjustment.

A final extension, in a sense, of interpersonal perception views of marriage is exemplified by Sillars, Weisberg, Burggraf, and Wilson's (1987) study of content themes in marital conversation. They argue that:

Conversational themes can be viewed as a form of metacommunication about relationships. We suggest that the

prominent themes in the conversations of spouses identify factors assumed to have an important effect on the relationship. (p. 495)

This approach is, essentially, the phenomenological approach, in which the themes of subjects' reflections on their experience are assumed to describe the structure of those experiences for those people. Sillars et al. (1987) describe their method as "inductive-deductive" and consensual. That is, investigators discussed their impressions to arrive at final categories.

Overall, "satisfaction tended to be positively correlated with communal and impersonal themes and negatively correlated with individual themes" (Sillars et al., 1987, p. 495). Communal themes included: togetherness, cooperation, communication, romanticism, and interdependence. Impersonal themes included: normative, developmental, and intrinsic characteristics of individuals, society, or marriage; stoicism; and environmental influence. Individual themes included: separateness, personality, and role. It is important to note that communication does not necessarily denote openness per se. It refers to valuation of talking, sharing, and understanding generally (Sillars et al., 1987).

The relative importance of themes varied with the type of marriage. Using Fitzpatrick's typology (see above), Traditional partners were found to be characterized by communal and stoic themes. Separate partners were characterized by individualistic themes, and Independent couples fell between the extremes in terms of communal and individualistic themes. Thus, "the [negative] association between

satisfaction and individual themes was mediated somewhat by the preferred level of autonomy" of the couples (Sillars et al., 1987, p. 524).

On a methodological level:

One of the interesting findings of this research is the fact that a simple frequency count of content themes from a single conversation is sufficient to predict the type of relationship that people independently report having.

(Sillars et al., 1987, p. 525)

In other words, this study lends validity to the study of content themes in marital conversations.

Self-Disclosure and Marriage

It seems obvious that self-disclosure--verbal report of personal feelings and thoughts--would be one important mediator of conflict, dominance, affect, communication clarity and accuracy, and interpersonal perceptions in marriage. Thus it is not surprising that since Jourard published his first paper about self-disclosure in 1958 the topic, under several labels, has become very widely researched. Chelune (1979) wrote:

Thousands of papers dealing with a wide variety of self-disclosure topics are broadcast in journals and books [Self-disclosure] has blossomed into an important conceptual and empirical area of investigation that spans clinical and social psychology, communication theory, philosophy New findings are added to the

literature with almost every journal publication.

(pp. ix-x)

In the same volume Rosenfeld provides a research bibliography of nearly 800 published references pertaining to self-disclosure that appeared between 1970-1978 alone.

The marital relationship has been an obvious target for self-disclosure research. As Levinger and Senn (1967) argue:

Communication is a basic requirement for the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. It may be assumed that the most intimate relationships are those characterized by the greatest disclosure of information by self and other, and that this is particularly true with regard to the disclosure of feelings. . . . Marriage is a relationship in which disclosure is expected to be far higher than in most other relationships" (p. 237).

Hendrick (1981) quotes Jourard: "'The optimum in a marriage relationship, as in any relationship between persons, is a relationship between I and Thou, where each partner discloses himself without reserve'" (p. 1151).

As Jourard expected, self-disclosure has been shown to have a strong positive relationship with marital satisfaction, marital intimacy, marital evaluations and expectations for the future of the relationship, and marital adjustment (e.g. Chelune, Rosenfeld, & Waring, 1985; Rosenfeld & Welsh, 1985; Waterman, 1979). Chelune, Waring, Vosk, Sultan, and Ogden (1984) found that "various parameters of self-disclosing behavior [accounted] for 71.7% ($R = .853$) of the variance in

intimacy ratings from a structured interview" (p. 216; by my calculation $0.853^2 = 72.7\%$). In a recent review, Boland and Follingstad (1987) similarly conclude: "Couples with higher rates of self-disclosure and expression of love, support, and affection tended also to experience greater marital satisfaction" (p. 302).

The relative contributions of self-disclosure (verbal intimacy) and affective and physical intimacy to marital satisfaction were studied by Tolstedt and Stokes (1983). They found that all three of the intimacy variables had a positive relation to marital satisfaction. However, "the unique contribution of physical intimacy is lower than for either verbal or affective intimacy" (p. 578). Barnett and Nietzel (1979) found that, not surprisingly, "nondistressed couples engaged in sexual intercourse . . . significantly more frequently . . . than did distressed couples" (p. 952). Tolstedt and Stokes (1983) argue that "the relation of physical intimacy and the satisfaction measures is due largely to their mutual correlations with the other two types of intimacy" (p. 578). It may be that sexual frequency reflects, but does not create, relationship intimacy. This would be consistent with the greater impact of affective and attitudinal variables versus behavioral variables on marital satisfaction found by Broderick and O'Leary (1986; see above).

Somewhat different results in regards to affect disclosure were obtained by Barnett and Nietzel (1979). They found no differences between distressed and nondistressed couples in terms of their measures of affective events. They did find that negative affective events correlated with day-to-day ratings of marital satisfaction (versus long-

term satisfaction). These different findings about the impact of affect on satisfaction may be due to different methodologies.

Tolstedt and Stokes measured affective intimacy through self-reports of feeling intimate, feeling important to the spouse, willingness to tolerate spouse unpleasantness, and moral support felt from the spouse. These reports would appear to reflect long-term impressions, or perceived traits, of the spouse. Barnett and Nietzel had spouses count (with wrist counters) in vivo occurrences of brief approving events by their partners (events that conveyed acceptance, affection, or approval of themselves) and disapproving events (events felt to express disapproval or dislike). Such passing events may be just those that Tolstedt and Stokes' subjects reported being more willing to tolerate.

Further light is shed on these differences by Jacobson, Follette, and Waggoner McDonald (1982). They found that: "Distressed couples were more reactive to recent events than were nondistressed couples. Their subjective satisfaction with the relationship depended to a greater degree on the frequency of recent positive or negative events" (p. 706). This result seems consistent with Gottman's proposal that satisfactory marriages are characterized by noncontingent positive exchanges and lack of reciprocity (cited in Gurman, 1978; see above).

Given that Barnett and Nietzel (1979) found a strong relationship between self-esteem and long-term marital satisfaction (especially for wives), it seems that satisfied married people may depend less on the day-to-day approval of the other for their self-esteem and (long-term) satisfaction. This would be consistent with the hypotheses of Beavers,

Laurence, and Feldman (1982) that marital satisfaction requires a preponderance of individual maturity. Such maturity would involve freedom from unrealistic, narcissistic expectations of the other to maintain one's self-esteem.

It may be that brief, passing disapproval would only effect long-term marital satisfaction when it is consistent and persistent enough to overcome the inertia of established positive impressions and commitment. Such recurrent disapproval might eventually change prevailing attributions about traits of the other and then, as argued by Fincham and Bradbury (1987; see above), effect marital satisfaction.

While it seems both reasonable and empirically supported that a high degree of self-disclosure is related to successful marriages, consistent with the above reasoning several authors have offered an important qualification. Cozby (1973), Bochner (1981), and others have argued for a curvilinear relationship between self-disclosure and marital success. This would echo a curvilinear relationship which Cozby and Jourard (Cozby, 1973) have posited between self-disclosure and mental health. Cozby (1973) writes:

Bennett classifies people who would withhold information as hermits, prudes, paranoids, or rascals. Yet Altman and Taylor . . . have expressed fear of a 'tyranny of openness' in which individuals have no freedom to have private thoughts because full disclosure is demanded by others in all social encounters. . . . Self-concealment (not lying or misrepresenting one's self, but maintaining a private area of the self) may have a functional significance in giving a

person a sense of "individuality." Simmel . . . suggests that some marital difficulties are the result of too much self-disclosure. (p. 88)

Support for this hypothesis comes from Levinger and Senn (1967) who found that:

Marital satisfaction was less related to the proportion of unpleasant than to that of pleasant disclosure; also, frequency of unpleasant disclosure was far higher in the Agency [clinical] than in the School [nonclinical] sample. (p. 246, emphasis in original)

These authors conclude, "For the average couple, selective disclosure of feelings seems more beneficial to marital harmony than indiscriminate catharsis" (ibid, emphasis in original). This is consistent with Gottman's (1982) conclusion (cited above) that "it is the deescalation of negative affect and not the reciprocation of positive affect that discriminates [satisfactorily and unsatisfactorily married couples]" (p. 957).

Such findings led Schumm, Barnes, Bollman, Jurich, & Bugaighis (1986) to alter the curvilinear hypothesis offered by Cozby (1973) and Gilbert (cited in Schumm et al., 1986). These writers found evidence for an interactive model in which increasing positive disclosure--in terms of reports of one spouse's behavior by the other spouse--correlated with marital satisfaction, while increasing negative disclosure correlated with decreasing satisfaction.

Bochner (1981) writes, "It is my opinion that people in long-term relationships cannot afford to throw caution to the winds with respect

to self-disclosure because they have too much to lose" (p. 120). In a study by Barrell and Jourard (1976) subjects were asked under what conditions they were reluctant to self-disclose to others whom they like. Subjects reported that it was fear of damaging the relationship that prevented them from disclosing. Hebb (Note 2) found that happily married persons were more revealing when interviewed individually than when interviewed with their spouses.

Derlega and Chaikin (1977) have discussed the balancing of privacy and self-disclosure in terms of boundary regulation. While they see a high degree of self-disclosure as needed to constitute an intimate relationship, they maintain that control over one's boundaries, including some measure of reserve or discretion, is nevertheless healthy. They argue that controlling one's own boundary adjustments in such forms as what topics to reveal, to what degree, when, and to whom is a necessary constituent of autonomy, and thus of self-worth and one's definition of self ("self-representation" or "sense of self").

"Boundary" is one of three dimensions of interpersonal relationships (the other two are "power" and "intimacy") described by Berman and Lief (cited in Waring et al., 1981). It seems similar to the "structure" factor that Waring et al. (1981) identified. Clearly, boundaries in relationships are the flip side of the differentiation coin discussed above in regards to analytic and family system theories.

In support of this framework, Altman (1977) has discussed privacy regulation as a cross-cultural phenomenon. He cites ethnographic data from several cultures, "particularly from societies with apparently maximum and minimum privacy It is concluded that privacy is a

universal process that involves culturally unique regulatory mechanisms" (p. 66).

There are a specific and a general point to be drawn from this discussion. Specifically, "the results lead us to reject the notion that the quantity of marital communication, in general, is the 'sine qua non' of marital quality" (Schumm et al., 1986, p. 246). Generally, the relationship between self-disclosure and marital success appears complex and multidimensional (e.g. Chelune, 1979). One must consider dimensions such as what kind of information is being disclosed, in what manner, and under what circumstances.

Statement of the Problem

The other factor in this field of study, marriage, also is better viewed as multidimensional. Most studies of marital success parameters and self-disclosure have either correlated a success parameter (satisfaction, intimacy, expectations, adjustment) with self-disclosure across a range of marriages, or have compared clinical and nonclinical groups. Sager (1976), based largely on his clinical experience, described seven types of marriage role that a marital partner may take. These can combine into 28 types of marriage. Fitzpatrick's (e.g. Fitzpatrick & Indvik, 1982) empirically derived typology has already been described. Filsinger, McAvoy, and Lewis (1982) empirically developed yet another typology including seven types of dyadic formation. These several typologies are different because of the different routes to their construction, and because of the need for judgement, and thus arbitrariness, involved in constructing each

(Filsinger et al., 1982). The point, however, is that there is agreement that there are different types of marriages beyond the clinical/nonclinical distinction.

These distinctions are informative; that is, they are differences that make a difference (Bateson, 1972). Fitzpatrick's types have shown significantly different patterns on four factors of dyadic adjustment (Fitzpatrick and Best, 1979). Her types have shown significantly different patterns of communication dimensions (Fitzpatrick, 1977). Her types have been shown to significantly differ in terms of both normative and perceived instrumental versus expressive roles (Fitzpatrick and Indvik, 1982). Sager (1976) explains how the different explicit and implicit expectations of different roles predict more or less marital success depending on what roles are combined. Filsinger et al.'s (1982) types were found to differ on value consensus and couple happiness.

A growing phenomenon in American marriages is that of remarriage. Glick (1980) states that the divorce rate reached 55% of all marriages by 1978. It has been relatively stable since then. About four out of five divorced persons will eventually remarry (Albrecht, 1979). Thus, 41% of marriages were remarriages by 1977. Despite this expression of hope, 44% of remarriages end in divorce (Coleman & Ganong, 1985)--a greater proportion than of first marriages.

Still, this leaves a significant proportion of remarriages that succeed out of the sizeable number that are tried. In fact, Hetherington has found (cited in Kent, 1980) that remarried parents tend to be as happy as never-divorced couples. Glenn and Weaver (1977), in three national surveys, found no substantial differences in reported

marital happiness between remarried and never-divorced persons.

Albrecht (1979) reported that 88% of his remarried sample stated that their present marriage was "much better" than their former marriage. These persons also rated their remarriages as better than the marriages of others they knew, and as better than they had anticipated their remarriages would be. Such self-reports can be interpreted in several ways, but the point is that some remarriages succeed in terms of the same criteria used to assess first marriage success.

Several writers, either explicitly or implicitly, have pointed out that a remarriage is importantly different from a marriage (e.g. Coleman & Ganong, 1985; Goetting, 1982; Kent, 1980; Price-Bonham & Balswick, 1980; Ransom, Schlesinger, & Derdeyn, 1979). Albrecht (1979) found that traditional correlates of marital happiness among the first-married were relatively poor predictors of marital happiness among the remarried.

Despite these differences there has been relatively little research on remarriages, and especially on the correlates of successful remarriage (Albrecht, 1979; Goetting, 1982; Kent, 1980; Price-Bonham & Balswick, 1980). This author's search has found no studies of self-disclosure in remarriage. This search has included a decade review (Price-Bonham & Balswick, 1980), an annotated bibliography for 1979-1982 (Bergquist, 1984) and review of Rosenfeld's (1979) nearly 800 item, 1970-1978 bibliography.

If Fitzpatrick's marital types show differing patterns of role-taking, communication, and dyadic adjustment dimensions, the grosser distinction between first marriages and remarriages deserves investigation. Given that self-disclosure is an important process in

any relationship, and especially in an intimate and long-term relationship, it deserves study in relation to remarriage.

A format of comparing two groups on self-disclosure dimensions-- i.e. first marriages and remarriages--is suggested by Rosenfeld and Welsh's (1985) comparison of dual-career and single-career marriages on dimensions of self-disclosure. The study of successful remarriages is strongly urged by Price-Bonham & Balswick (1980). They argue that clinical populations are too often studied, thus running the risk of biasing knowledge. Kent (1980) makes this same point. Knaub, Hanna, and Stinnett (1984) cite the developing focus on factors which contribute to family strength, versus family pathology. Historically, the focus on psychological health versus illness can probably be traced to Maslow and other "humanistic" psychologists.

The literature on remarriage appears to be largely at the stage of clinical lore, demographics, and theoretical speculation. This literature describes a number of unique problems confronting the remarried family. These problems can be subsumed under two broad categories: (a) lack of established role models for relating within a stepfamily, and (b) heightened expectations based in the hopes and fears of trying marriage again. Kent (1980) writes:

Remarriage may precipitate a crisis because members do not have a precedent for handling new roles, nor can they rely on definitions of old role boundaries from the former family composition. (p. 148)

✓ Goetting (1982) writes:

A great portion of the problems associated with remarriage are related to the complexities introduced by children from former marriages. The complexity of an institution in itself need not present problems, but if society fails to provide guidelines for the relationships involved, the outcome may be one of chaos and conflict. For lack of such guidelines in Western culture, the remarried pair is often expected to function in the same way as does a first married pair. (p. 217)

In regards to heightened expectations based in hope and fear, ✓ Coleman and Ganong (1985) elaborate eight remarriage myths and variations that they view as problematic. The four most salient for this discussion are:

1. Things must work out
 2. Keep criticism to oneself and focus on the positive
 3. If things are not going well, focus on what went wrong in the past and make sure it does not happen again [and]
 4. Marriage makes people significantly happier
- [including:] if two people are happy and love each other enough, then everyone will be happy, including children, grandparents, and ex-spouses. (pp. 117-118)

These myths derive in part from common first-marriage myths and the illusions of exceptional happiness that everyone is prone to. They are heightened, however, by the fact that "the reconstituted family . . . has a vested interest in denying the expression of

hostility lest anyone acknowledge marital conflict or the spectre of disintegration of yet another family" (Ransom et al., p. 39).

Coleman and Ganong (1985) argue that these concerns conduce to "pseudomutual" family adaptations. These would be examples of what Beavers (1985) calls "centripetal" families. Such families may involve: "rigid or tightly closed internal boundaries . . . when family members are not permitted to discuss feelings about the previous marriage, or only negative feelings" (Kent, 1980, p. 152), or:

tightly closed external boundaries . . . when family members are discouraged from bringing friends into the family home or discouraged from discussing problems that the family may be having in adjusting to changed status. (ibid)

The other primary type of family boundary problem that Kent (following Beavers) sees is the "centrifugal" family, which functions by "spinning out" members (p. 147). An example of this type of family boundary disturbance is the "scapegoated" child who becomes the "identified patient"--often via anti-social behavior problems--"while the family preserves its image of otherwise healthy functioning" (Ransom et al., 1979, p. 39). Ransom et al. see the reconstituted family as particularly prone to scapegoating. It seems clear that a variety of problems facing the remarried family involve various family boundary issues.

The solution to such family boundary problems, potential or manifest, appears to lie in negotiation (Kent, 1980). Coleman and Ganong (1985), following Jacobson, state: "The problems occur when an

intense fear of failure interferes with direct, open communication between the partners" (p. 117).

Further, communication appears to be needed to define new roles in the cited absence of culturally well established roles for remarriage. It is clear role-taking that constitutes healthy, firm but flexible, boundaries (Kent, 1980). Speaking of alternative lifestyles in general, Macklin (1980) states that persons seeking to establish a lifestyle for which there is a lack of societal norms require extraordinary negotiation skills.

Hypotheses

It has been argued above, however, that self-disclosing communication is not a royal road to marital success. In fact, it has been argued that individual boundary maintenance, which is part and parcel to clear role-taking and thus to familial boundary adjustment, requires an autonomous balance of disclosure and privacy. This leads to the following research question: If remarriage, because of its extraordinary adjustment and role demands, requires exceptional communication, but boundary adjustment requires discretion in self-disclosure, when, how, or about what do successfully remarried persons self-disclose?

A hypothesis that can bring some order to this question was offered by Levinger and Breedlove (cited in Sillars and Scott, 1983). They suggested that actual agreement, versus perceived agreement, is more strongly related to satisfaction on issues that are instrumental to the concrete coordination of relationship partners--e.g. child

discipline, budgeting--than on more abstract, e.g. person perception, issues. This hypothesis was not clearly supported, and has not been replicated despite frequent reference (Sillars & Scott, 1983). Some support, however, for the hypothesis comes from Barnett and Nietzel (1979). They found a significant negative relation between both long and short-term marital satisfaction and reports of the other's displeasurable instrumental activities. Expressions of approval and disapproval about oneself by the spouse only effected short-term (day-to-day) marital satisfaction. Sillars and Scott (1983) concluded more generally that "congruent interpersonal perception should facilitate relationship adjustment only to the extent that this helps individuals to interact in a compatible fashion" (p. 168).

Congruent interpersonal perception would rely, in significant part, on disclosure by self and spouse, especially since distortions based on initial impressions, wishes, expectations, and fears are hard to overcome (Sillars & Scott, 1983). Thus, one might expect successful couples to be more self-disclosing in regards to instrumental issues than person perception issues.

In these instrumental areas remarried persons face special problems with few conventionalized solutions: e.g. becoming accepted disciplinarians to children that were not born to them, dealing with child-support and alimony payments, and deciding how to fairly distribute emotional and financial resources between custodial and noncustodial, biological and step children (Coleman & Ganong, 1985; Goetting, 1982; Kent, 1980; Ransom et al., 1979). Thus, remarried

persons may need to be exceptionally self-disclosing on these instrumental issues.

My first pair of hypotheses were: 1.a) Satisfied couples will be more disclosing on instrumental questions than on person perception questions; 1.b) Satisfied remarried people will be more disclosing in regard to instrumental issues than satisfied first marriage couples.

It has been argued that successfully married people show some discretion in what they disclose, especially in their disclosure of negative feelings and judgments about their spouse. It has also been argued that remarried people are concerned about repeated marriage failure and thus tend to suppress any negative feelings about the relationship or their spouse while exaggerating positive evaluations.

My second pair of hypotheses were: 2.a) There is more positive disclosure about the spouse than negative disclosure about the spouse in satisfied couples; 2.b.) Satisfied remarried people will show less negative disclosure and more positive disclosure about their spouse than will satisfied first married people.

Franzoi et al. (1985) reported evidence that introspection and willingness to take the perspective of the other were correlated with marital satisfaction. Jacobson et al. (1985) found that satisfied married people were likely to attribute their partners' positive behavior to internal factors, and that these same satisfied partners showed almost as much external as internal attributions about negative spouse behavior. This generally more positive view of the partner's internal intentions may conversely conduce to a more balanced, critical view of one's own part in marital conflicts.

Gottman and Levenson (1986) reported that reciprocal negative affect in interaction was more related to marital dissatisfaction than positive reciprocity of affect was related to marital satisfaction. Gottman and Levenson speculated that negative or positive "escape moments" may end and reinforce reciprocal interaction patterns. It may be that satisfied married couples end negative cycles by taking the view of the other and looking in on themselves. This would be consistent with Beavers' (1985) and Laurence's emphasis on individual development for marital satisfaction. Satisfied couples might then be expected to show less negative than positive disclosure overall, but to show more negative disclosure about themselves than about their spouses.

My third pair of hypotheses were: 3.a) There is more negative disclosure about the self than about the spouse in satisfied couples;
3.b) Satisfied remarried people will show more negative disclosure about themselves than will satisfied first married people.

In two studies Chelune and his colleagues (Chelune, Rosenfeld, & Waring, 1985; Chelune, Sultan, Vosk, Ogden, & Waring, 1984) found greater congruence of affective presentation and content of disclosure in nonclinical than in clinical couples. This was the only difference of several obtained in the two studies that was found in both studies. The extraordinary problems facing remarried couples have been discussed. It would seem that whatever communication qualities correlate with successful marriages must be found in abundance in successful remarriages. My fourth hypothesis was: Successfully remarried persons will show greater affective congruence than successfully first married persons.

Methods Rationale

A rationale for the choice of interviews and later ratings as methods is appropriate. Most studies of self-disclosure have used self-report, questionnaire data (Waterman, 1979). Chelune (1979) discusses the pros and cons involved in both self-report and behavioral rating methods of investigating self-disclosure. This is in keeping with the truism that all methods have their limits. Since self-report has been overused to investigate self-disclosure this alone would argue for a different approach. In addition Chelune (1979) discusses "a number of uncontrolled or poorly controlled sources of variation . . . embedded in [self-report] designs" (p. 21). Self-report questionnaires are liable to various response biases; because the questions and answer choices are explicit the subject can present himself as he wishes to be seen by the experimenter. In a situation where the subjects are unsure what is measured--such as an only partially structured interview--a more "internal" ("projective") view of how the subject(s) function in private may be gained (Sigafos, Reiss, Rich, & Douglas, 1985; versus Olson, 1977). Ratings of observed behavior also allow for assessing of multiple dimensions of disclosure behavior (e.g. voice inflections and pacing as well as literal content) better than self-reports (Chelune, Sultan, Vosk, Ogden, & Waring, 1984; Gottman, 1982).

Phenomenological methods are also much underused. This study will incorporate phenomenology by paying attention to what the subjects say, as well as the ratings of their in vivo process. The Subjects' descriptions of their experiences may well illuminate the quantitative findings.

By inquiring of or observing the married couple, as a couple, phenomenological and behavioral direct observation approaches have the potential for investigating transactional relationship properties.

It may seem that talking to two people together, i.e. as a couple, for a phenomenological investigation would be no different than talking to the two of them as individuals, and thus would suffer the same problem of being an inappropriate unit of analysis. Research by Hebb (Note 2), however, indicates that happily married couples do interact with an interviewer differently in conjoint vs. individual interviews; they tend to be more open when speaking individually. Laurence cites other research that supports and elaborates this view (1980). In gathering descriptions from a couple of some topic(s) of phenomenological interest it appears that the descriptions develop transactionally in the interview.

From the phenomenological point of view, it is unnecessary to ask if such descriptions are untrue to the events described due to distortion because the spouse is present. It would be just as much a "distortion" of the couple's experience of the event to talk to the two individuals separately (Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1983; Romanyshyn, 1978). The events as described by the couple, in good faith, are the events as experienced by the couple, though the "same" events as described by the individuals most likely would reveal differing experiences. While "good faith" can probably never be guaranteed or certified, it can be reliably promoted by the investigator exercising such "good faith" himself in his approach to his subjects (e.g. Colaizzi, 1978; Leary, 1957).

One must keep in mind that the object of interest is the process which happens in the present of the interview--not the "truth" about the past. Jacobson et al. (1985) write:

It is impossible to determine whether or not the same--or for that matter, any--causal attributions would have occurred had the spouses not been asked to report them. A better approximation to the measurement of spontaneously occurring attributions would require an assessment of causal attributions in the absence of instructions to verbalize them. Several promising procedures have been developed, including a free-recall method, which asks subjects to retrospectively report their thoughts and feelings without specifically soliciting causal attributions. (p. 48)

Coupled with Sillars et al.'s (1987) understanding of conversational content themes as metacommunication about relationships with a structure analogous to the relationship, these passages constitute an empiricist argument for phenomenology.

However, phenomenology too has its limits. It is limited by the experience of its subjects. The first married subjects in this study will have no experience of successful remarriage, and these remarried subjects will have no experience of successful first marriage. Thus, the content themes common across the two groups of couples will be the overlap of these two diverse groups' experiences of marriage. Themes which are common to diverse but related groups should reflect the essential commonality of the groups.

CHAPTER II

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Participants

The participants in this study were 22 couples, all of whom identified themselves as satisfactorily married. Thus, there were 22 men and 22 women studied. The couples composed two groups of 11 couples each, one of first married people and one of couples in which at least one member was remarried. In fact, in eight of the 11 remarried couples both partners were remarried. Initially 24 couples were interviewed, but one couple from each group failed to return the questionnaire.

All other participants completed Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale (1976; see Appendix A). The mean Total Adjustment score of the sample is 114. Spanier's standardization sample of married people showed a mean of 114.8. The range of Total Adjustment scores for this sample was from 84 to 140; the lowest score is about half a standard deviation above Spanier's divorced persons' mean of 70.7. The First Married group has a mean Total Adjustment score of 113.6, with a range from 100 to 135. The Remarried group has a mean Total Adjustment score of 114.5, with a range from 84 to 140. The two groups are not significantly different in terms of their Total Adjustment scores ($t [42] = -.23$; $p = .820$).

All the couples were recruited through local churches--Methodist and Episcopal--primarily through adult study groups at their churches. All of the participants volunteered after discussion of the purpose, method, benefits, and provisions for confidentiality of the study, and

signing of Informed Consents (see Appendix B). The couples were interviewed in their homes, places of business, or at their church-- wherever they chose. All the couples studied were Caucasian. All had their own children living in their home. The Remarried couples had at least one child from a prior marriage living with them.

The participants ranged in age from 27 to 60 years old. In the First Married group the Subjects ranged in age from 27 to 40, with a mean of 34.4 years. The members of the Remarried group ranged from 30 to 60 years of age, with a mean of 40.6 years. The two groups were significantly different in their ages (t [42] = -4.18; p < .001). This difference held true for both First Married versus Remarried husbands (means: 35 vs. 42.5; t [20] = -3.13; p = .005) and wives (means: 33.8 vs. 38.6; t [20] = -3.01; p = .007).

There is also a difference between the two groups on the years they had been married--in the present marriage. The First Married group had a mean of years married of 11.2, with a range from 5 to 16.5 years, while the Remarried group have a mean of years married of 6.6, with a range from 3 to 13.5 years (t [20] = 3.06; p = .006). Unfortunately, the Investigator failed to ask the Remarried group for their cumulative years married.

The whole sample has a mean education of 16.2 years (where 16 years equals a bachelor's degree), with a range of 12 to 23 years. The First Married group has a mean education of 16.6 years, with a range of 12 to 20 years, while the Remarried group has a mean education of 15.8 years, with a range of 12 to 23 years. This difference is not significant (t [42] = 1.05; p = .302). Occupations in the sample were

predominantly professional or semi-professional; examples include lawyer, dentist, minister, administrator, sales director, business consultant, engineer, systems analyst, biologist, accountant, nutritionist, teacher, practical nurse, secretary, real estate agent, and homemaker. The sample thus represents a white, middle class, church-going population. While not a cross-section of the whole population, neither is this sample particularly deviant from the mainstream of this country. A fairly well-educated sample had been sought so that the interviews of the study, and the subsequent content analysis, would be more articulately carried out.

A third noteworthy difference between the two groups is in the age of their children (children's ages were not normally distributed; therefore using the Mann-Whitney U test: $p = .0001$). The First Married couples have a mean children's age of 4.9 years, with a range from 1 month to 10 years. The Remarried couples have a mean children's age of 14.4 years, with a range from 2 to 34 years (not all children were still at home).

Thus, the two groups of the sample are comparable in terms of marital satisfaction, race, education, socioeconomic status, religion, and having children to deal with. However, the Remarried group is older, has older children, and yet has been in their current marriage less time.

Instruments

Each couple participated in a semi-structured interview, which was audio recorded and later transcribed, and then completed Spanier's

Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The tapes and transcripts of the interviews were later rated for types of self disclosure on a Self Disclosure Rating Scale.

Interview: Each couple studied was interviewed once together. The interviews all consisted of five questions; two of the questions asked about instrumental tasks that any couple with a family faces (raising children, handling money), two questions addressed person perceptions (about changes in perception of self and of spouse). The fifth question asked the couple what they thought it takes to make a satisfactory marriage. The first four questions were presented in counterbalanced order so that half the couples in each group addressed an instrumental question first (about children) and half addressed a person perception question first (about self). The question about making a satisfactory marriage was always presented last in order to take advantage of the review of experience prompted by the first four questions.

Each question was explored, with follow-up questions by the Investigator prompted by the unfolding responses, until all three parties indicated a sense of completeness. The guiding principle was to elicit a complete articulation by the participants of their experience. Further, while one can never know with certainty how people (or anything) behave when not observed, it is assumed that reasonably pursuing a relatively complete response will more closely approximate the interactions of a couple in their private lives. This assumption finds support in the self-disclosure literature, specifically Altman and

Taylor's theory of social penetration process (e.g. Taylor, 1979; Taylor & Altman, 1975). That is:

Continuous reciprocation of self-disclosure occurs as long as individuals mutually experience a favorable reward-cost balance. Further, as relationships progress, the exchanges become more intimate. (Taylor, 1979, p. 114)

This method of interviewing is consistent with that described by Kvale (1983) in that the five questions supplied some structure by introducing major topics, yet the interviews were open-ended in that the degree and directions of exploration, and the illustration of each topic, was left to the participants' initiative. The interviews lasted 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Appendix C contains a protocol of the actual questions used.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale: This scale is a synthesis and expansion of all earlier marital adjustment scales (e.g. the often used Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, 1959) that employed careful item analysis to derive its final set of items. All items were screened by three judges for content validity. Criterion-related validity is demonstrated by each item on the final scale having significantly discriminated a married from a divorced sample at the $p < .001$ level of probability. Construct validity (i.e. empirical relations expected based on theoretical constructs) is supported by a correlation of .86 among married respondents and a correlation of .88 among divorced respondents with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. Construct validity is also supported by a factor analysis of the scale showing four factors, three of which were theoretically predicted a priori.

Overall reliability of the scale, assessed by Cronbach's alpha, was .96, with the four subscale (factor) reliabilities ranging from .73 to .94.

Self Disclosure Rating Scale: This scale was constructed by the Investigator for this study. It is a loose adaptation of Chelune's (Chelune, Rosenfeld, & Waring, 1985) "Modified Self-Disclosure Coding System." It is a 5-point Likert scale, which assesses Positive Disclosure about Self, Negative Disclosure about Self, Residual Disclosure about Self, Positive Disclosure about Spouse, Negative Disclosure about Spouse, and Residual Disclosure about Spouse. Residual Disclosure is defined as disclosure of information that is not distinguishable as positive or negative. An Affective Congruence item was also included as affective congruence had been previously shown to reliably differentiate matched clinical and nonclinical groups of married couples, when degree and type of disclosure did not (Chelune, Sultan, Vosk, Ogden, and Waring, 1984). Affective congruence is defined as the congruence between lexical content of speech and the manner of presentation; between what is said and how it is said. A precursor of the present scale, which simply assessed global "openness" on 3 points, had been successfully used in a pilot study for this project to discriminate degree of openness when married persons were interviewed separately versus conjointly (Hebb, Note 2).

The unit of measure with this rating scale was one person on one (major) question. Thus, both husband and wife of each couple were rated on each of the five interview questions. This produced 7 ratings per person per question, or 35 ratings per person per interview.

The raters for this project were two naive undergraduate seniors who volunteered their time for research credit. One was female and the other male. One was a psychology major, the other was not. The Scale was constructed in a reciprocal fashion working with these raters. Initially the Investigator, using his own judgement, chose statements from the cited pilot study to anchor as many points of each item of the scale as he reasonably could. Two examples for each point of each item were sought, i.e. a total of 30 examples (6 X 5) were sought (the seventh item, Affective Congruence, cannot be illustrated in writing as it involves the congruence between what is said and how it is said). A similar method had been used to anchor the 3-point scale of the pilot study.

The raters then used this prototype scale to practice rating on selections from the audio tapes of the pilot study. On their first trial the raters achieved exact agreement on 28 of 70 items, where 14 exact agreements would be expected by chance (Chi Square test: $p < .001$). They achieved a Spearman rank correlation (rho) of .36 ($p = .002$).

Feedback from the raters prompted the use by them of transcripts in addition to the audiotapes. Exact agreement by the two raters on points of the scale for which the Investigator had not identified two anchoring examples led to discussion of the salient statements in the selection that prompted the rating. When agreement was reached on the key passage(s) they were then included as anchoring examples for the scale. This process was continued throughout the rating of the interviews for this study. Thus, statements from participants in this

study, as well as statements from participants in the pilot study, anchor the scale. Appendix D contains the final "Self Disclosure Rating Scale Manual."

The raters completed three more practice trials. Their agreement and reliability results appear in Table I. Given these results, rating

Table I Rating Trials

Trial	Exact Agreement	<u>Chi Square</u> <u>p</u>	Spearman <u>rho</u>	<u>p</u>
Trial 1	28/70	<.001	.36	.002
Trial 2	28/70	<.001	.51	<.001
Trial 3	42/70	<.001	.75	<.001
Trial 4	39/70	<.001	.66	<.001

of the interviews of this study proceeded.

Reliability/agreement maintenance continued throughout the rating of the interviews. After each two interviews rated the Investigator met with the raters and any item that was rated more than one point differently was discussed. Within one point agreement had been deemed acceptable prior to the rating.

Tinsley and Weiss (1975) discussed indices of interrater reliability and agreement. They point out that both measures are needed to establish the acceptability of ratings. This is because two raters may, on the one hand, give different absolute ratings while their ratings parallel each other in terms of increasing and decreasing. For example, every time rater A gives a "1" rater B gives a "3," while every time rater A gives a "3" rater B gives a "5." This case would yield high reliability, but low agreement. On the other hand, two raters

might give ratings that closely approximate each other's, but they may vary in contradictory directions. For example, when rater A gives a "3," rater B sometimes gives a "4" and sometimes a "2"; or, when rater A gives a "3" rater B gives a "4," but when rater A gives a "4" rater B gives a "3." These cases would yield high (within one point) agreement, but low reliability. In either case it would be doubtful if either set of ratings, or the means of the ratings, would be valid.

Neither set of ratings was normally distributed (Kolmogorov--Smirnov goodness of fit tests: both p 's < .001 that observed distributions are chance variations from normal). Therefore Spearman's rank correlation, ρ , was used as a test of reliability. The two sets of ratings were moderately different from each other in their distributions (Wilcoxon Matched-pairs Signed-ranks test: p = .04 that the two distributions are different only by chance). The within raters variance was not less than expected by chance; that is, there was not a critical restriction in the variance of the ratings (following Tinsley & Weiss, 1975).

The results of the Spearman ρ tests of reliability are detailed in Table II. Kendall's τ_c and Pearson's r are given as comparative evidence. As can be seen, the overall correlation of the two raters was .608, and all of the correlations were significant at or beyond .001.

Tinsley and Weiss (1975) recommended using the Lawlis and Lu (1972) index of interrater agreement. This is a Chi Square test of the observed frequency of agreement. The Lawlis and Lu method allows an investigator to choose the degree of agreement deemed critical, e.g. exact agreement, agreement within one point, agreement within two

Table II Reliability

Sample	<u>rho</u>	<u>p</u>	Kendall's <u>tau</u>	<u>p</u>	Pearson <u>r</u>	<u>p</u>
Couple F1	.388	.001	.307	<.001	.384	<.001
Couple F2	.662	<.001	.561	<.001	.654	<.001
Couple F3	.414	<.001	.330	<.001	.445	<.001
Couple F4	.730	<.001	.574	<.001	.676	<.001
Couple F5	.716	<.001	.610	<.001	.724	<.001
Couple F6	.543	<.001	.433	<.001	.528	<.001
Couple F7	.708	<.001	.568	<.001	.727	<.001
Couple F9	.660	<.001	.517	<.001	.660	<.001
Couple F10	.638	<.001	.513	<.001	.595	<.001
Couple F11	.596	<.001	.473	<.001	.589	<.001
Couple F12	.707	<.001	.577	<.001	.701	<.001
Group F	.626	<.001	.503	<.001	.623	<.001
Couple R1	.399	<.001	.323	<.001	.390	<.001
Couple R2	.747	<.001	.604	<.001	.734	<.001
Couple R4	.584	<.001	.475	<.001	.606	<.001
Couple R5	.585	<.001	.464	<.001	.545	<.001
Couple R6	.517	<.001	.416	<.001	.546	<.001
Couple R7	.728	<.001	.615	<.001	.738	<.001
Couple R8	.708	<.001	.578	<.001	.695	<.001
Couple R9	.562	<.001	.466	<.001	.571	<.001
Couple R10	.508	<.001	.404	<.001	.498	<.001
Couple R11	.579	<.001	.454	<.001	.589	<.001
Couple R12	.603	<.001	.494	<.001	.587	<.001
Group R	.593	<.001	.468	<.001	.587	<.001
All	.608	<.001	.485	<.001	.605	<.001

points, etc. The Investigator decided, prior to initiating the rating process, that agreement ≤ 1 would be acceptable on a 5 point scale. This would allow for acceptance of close but not exact agreement, while not being so broad a criterion as to make "agreement" meaningless.

Tinsley and Weiss also recommended reporting a measure of the degree of agreement, as well as whether the frequency of agreement exceeds chance. On a large data set it is possible to have a result that well exceeds chance, without that result accounting for much of the variance. They propose a I statistic: $I = (N_1 - NP)/(N - NP)$; where N_1 = the observed number of agreements, N = the number of items rated, and P = the probability of chance agreement (given the number of points on the rating scale and the number of raters, i.e. 2 raters on a 5-point scale = .2 for exact agreement and .52 for within-one agreement).

When the observed agreement is equal to the expected chance agreement, I is 0, and I is 1.0 when perfect interrater agreement is observed. Positive values of I indicate that the observed agreement is greater than chance agreement, while negative values indicate that observed agreement is less than chance agreement. (Tinsley & Weiss, 1975, p. 368)

The results of the tests of agreement are detailed in Table III. In accordance with Tinsley and Weiss, the results of tests of exact agreement, and exact I values are presented. As can be seen, the number of exact agreements, per individual couple, range from a low of 22 out of 70 ratings to a high of 43 out of 70. The exact agreement I values range from .14 to .52. The within-one frequency of agreements ranged

Table III Rater Agreement

Sample	# Exact	p	# Within One	p	Exact I	Within One I
F1	27/70	<.001	58/70	<.001	.23	.64
F2	43/70	<.001	63/70	<.001	.52	.79
F3	31/70	<.001	63/70	<.001	.30	.79
F4	34/70	<.001	63/70	<.001	.38	.79
F5	32/70	<.001	69/70	<.001	.32	.97
F6	32/70	<.001	63/70	<.001	.32	.79
F7	40/70	<.001	67/70	<.001	.46	.91
F9	33/70	<.001	63/70	<.001	.34	.79
F10	36/70	<.001	65/70	<.001	.39	.85
F11	29/70	<.001	58/70	<.001	.27	.64
F12	32/70	<.001	65/70	<.001	.32	.85
Group F	369/770	<.001	697/770	<.001	.35	.80
R1	29/70	<.001	60/70	<.001	.27	.70
R2	43/70	<.001	69/70	<.001	.52	.97
R4	33/70	<.001	64/70	<.001	.34	.82
R5	26/70	<.001	59/70	<.001	.21	.67
R6	34/70	<.001	67/70	<.001	.36	.91
R7	41/70	<.001	69/70	<.001	.48	.97
R8	40/70	<.001	68/70	<.001	.46	.94
R9	29/70	<.001	66/70	<.001	.27	.88
R10	36/70	<.001	66/70	<.001	.39	.88
R11	24/70	.004	55/70	<.001	.18	.55
R12	22/70	.021	56/70	<.001	.14	.58
Group R	357/770	<.001	699/770	<.001	.33	.81
All	726/1540	<.001	1396/1540	<.001	.34	.81

from 55 out of 70 to 69 out of 70. The within-one agreement I values range from .55 to .97.

The Investigator kept a reliability log as rating progressed. A separate tracking of the raters' performance on the Affective Congruity items revealed that, while still sometimes achieving significance, this type of item gave the raters more trouble than the rest. These items also appeared to display a more restricted range. It might be that these two groups of satisfied couples did not demonstrate a wide range of affective congruity. The difficulty rating these items probably also resulted from the lack of "anchors" for these items (see above). One could devise a set of tape recorded anchors in future work, but that would be cumbersome for raters to refer to. In any event, this type of item was not used in the data analyses.

Analysis Methods

Two types of analyses were made of the interviews: a content analysis resulting in themes about what it takes to make a satisfactory marriage, and statistical analyses of the types of self-disclosure. Once the interviews had all been rated, those numbers were put aside and the content analysis done first. This was to prevent any of the statistical results from prejudicing the content analysis.

Content Analysis: This phenomenological analysis proceeded along lines adapted from the work of the Phenomenological Laboratory at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The phenomenological psychology approach treats continuous interview data as text. Thus the task is interpretive or hermeneutic. While there is, hopefully, procedural

system--and systematic relevance--in interpretation, any such study's system will evolve between the text and the interpreter. One tries to meet and understand the material with personal beliefs and prejudices acknowledged and, as much as possible, held in abeyance or "bracketed" (Aanstoos, 1983). The ideal is to elucidate the thematic structure of the Subjects' material, versus supporting personal preconceptions. Since the nature of textual materials vary, and interpreters can never completely bracket preconceptions, the particular procedures will vary from one set of material to another, and one interpreter to another (Colaizzi, 1978; Wertz, 1983). The rough outline of this Investigator's procedure derives from Colaizzi (1978).

Throughout, the interpretive analysis was guided by the question: "What does it take to make a satisfactory marriage?" A common language was deliberately sought to stay close to the language of the participants, to stay close to the language of the interview questions, and to allow broader recognition by readers. It might be argued that the actual interview question--"How have your ideas about what it takes to make a satisfactory marriage changed over time?" (see Appendix C)--is not, strictly, a phenomenological question. This would be because it does not direct the participant to his or her experience. It does not ask the participant when or where or how he or she experiences X. Yet "how have your ideas changed" does ask the Subject to describe her experiences, not to judge or analyze. This is the essential criterion of phenomenological inquiry (Giorgi, 1983).

The first step for both the content and the statistical analyses was the transcribing of the interviews. Upon returning to the

interviews, as each separate couple was taken up, the original audiotape was reviewed with its transcript. The hours of transcribing and this review effectively immersed the Investigator in the data, allowing for a sense of it as a whole.

The second step with each transcript was to "clear the text." This meant to remove the excess verbiage, the "um's" and "ah's" and other false starts and extraneous asides. The third step involved separating the text into "meaning units." By this is meant that the Investigator went through the text sequentially, separating it (with a "/"), into units from a phrase to a paragraph in length. Each unit was a passage addressing a single topic. These passages remained in the participant's own words. The Interviewer's words were also removed at this point. Paraphrases were added as necessary to introduce participant statements.

The fourth step with each transcript was to move meaning units that dealt with the same topic together. As couples speak in interviews, they move from one topic to another, even while addressing a general issue. The fifth step was to edit the clusters of passages to remove redundancy. Paraphrase was used minimally to change tenses, and provide connectors and introductions. Thus, the grouped passages remained largely in the participants' words. Deciding which meaning units go together, and what constitutes a given topic are, obviously, a matter of the Investigator's judgment. The concept of a paragraph as dealing with one topic is, however, useful. Also, in order to accomplish each mechanical step, the text had to be reviewed again and again. This kept the Investigator immersed in and faithful to the

original data. Each transcript was taken through these five steps in an order decided by randomizing across the entire sample.

Once all the transcripts had been arranged into edited clusters of passages, a sixth step of gathering the clusters across couples within each group was undertaken. In order to accomplish this two large outlines were built. The group taken up first was decided by the toss of a coin. The transcripts within that group were taken up in the same random order as before. As each cluster of each transcript was reviewed, the epitomizing statements were selected and either given a heading and appended to the outline, or added to an established block, or made subsidiary to an established block. Whenever in doubt as to the selection of passages, the Investigator erred on the side of being too inclusive. The participants' own words were used as far up in the outlines' hierarchies as possible. Thus, major and most secondary headings were supplied by the Investigator, but the bulk of each outline was the participants' words. The outline was built from the bottom up; that is, from the detail of what was said to collecting themes. The validity of this analysis rests on remaining close to the words of the participants. It may be considered a type of face validity.

As much as possible, the outline was organized to reflect the described interactions of topics and themes. The topics that participants had put together were kept together. At the same time, attention was paid to keeping track of apparent contradictions in the material. One easy example of this is that several couples insisted on the advisability of joint checking accounts. Other couples were just as convinced of the value of separate checking accounts. This applied

across groups. In response to such contrasts, The Investigator sought overarching, connecting themes. In this case it was easy enough to see that what was important to marital cohesion was similarity in what the husband and wife thought about checking accounts.

Once the two bulky outlines were made, condensed outlines were made. That is, the bones, or structure, of the large outline were derived. Single statements, summarizing a block of a participant topic, were paraphrased or selected. The major outline headings resulting from this process are, to a large extent, the final themes.

At this point additional perspective was sought. Two colleagues, versed in phenomenological method, reviewed the condensed outlines in a conjoint meeting. Working in a parallel fashion, each colleague worked out a tentative list of themes, and meta-themes. The Investigator interacted with both. This step was similar to the discussion method used by Sillars et al. (1987).

Most of the labels for the themes can easily be found in the condensed outline, many in participants' words. These include: "accept," "similarities," [valuation of self, marriage, spouse], "communication," "compromise," "tolerance," [separateness and togetherness], and "trust." Other theme labels are easily derived. For instance, the paraphrased statement:

Sharing values and communicating is not enough. The other person has to do something about what you communicate . . . accepts the theme label "responsibility." As another example, the paraphrase:

You learn, over time, where your spouse's toleration limit
is . . .

fits under "attunement." A list of themes is not necessarily the only possible list of themes to summarize a text. It must, however, be sufficient.

Once a working list of themes was derived from the two colleagues' lists, the Investigator sought to organize the material from the two condensed outlines, with frequent reference to the complete outlines, under those themes. Wherever possible, the more specific, often concrete, material was organized as contrasting statements under a theme. This process led to the addition of two themes, and some refinement of the contrasts.

Statistical Analyses: These analyses were guided by the hypotheses: 1.a) Satisfied couples will be more disclosing on instrumental questions than on person perception questions; 1.b) Satisfied remarried people will be more disclosing in regard to instrumental issues than satisfied first marriage couples; 2.a) There is more positive disclosure about the spouse than negative disclosure about the spouse in satisfied couples; 2.b.) Satisfied remarried people will show less negative disclosure and more positive disclosure about their spouse than will satisfied first married people; 3.a) There is more negative disclosure about the self than about the spouse in satisfied couples; 3.b) Satisfied remarried people will show more negative disclosure about themselves than will satisfied first married people.

Due to the constraint of having 44 subjects, a four-cell analysis of variance design was chosen. That allowed for the minimal power of at

least 10 subjects per cell. Questions 1.a, 2.a, and 3.a above call for repeated measures designs. That is, two measures, e.g. positive and negative disclosure, on the same sample are to be compared. For such tests a four-cell multivariate analysis of variance was used. Although the stated hypotheses could be tested with t-tests, analysis of variance was chosen as it yields more information per test. Two main effects and an interaction can be tested (vs. one main effect in a t-test).

This becomes significant because the number of tests that can be run and their results taken to mean anything is limited by probability. If $p \leq .01$ is accepted as the criterion of significant difference (the alpha level), then out of one hundred comparisons run on a sample one is likely to be that different by chance. Thus, to be conservative, with alpha set at .01 a limit of 49 tests would result in a better than average chance of any results of $p \leq .01$ being reliable. Actually, it only becomes likely (an "average" chance) that a $p = .01$ discrepancy between groups could happen by chance on the hundredth test. Further, the more p is less than .01, the better the chance is that a given result is reliable. At any rate, with alpha set at .01, a marginal significance zone of $p < .06$ was set. That is, results of $p > .01$ but less than .06 would be considered marginally significant.

Throughout, the mean of the two raters' scores were used. There was no observed reason to think that one rater was more reliable or valid than the other. Further, neither the variances nor the distributions of the two sets of ratings were highly different ($p = .30$ for the difference of variances; $p = .04$ for the difference of the distributions). Although the overall distribution of mean ratings was

not normal ($p < .001$ that the distribution is a chance variation on the normal distribution),

One advantage of the analysis of variance is that reasonable departures from the assumptions of normality and homogeneity may occur without seriously affecting the validity of the inferences drawn from the data. (Ferguson, 1981, p. 246)

In order to test the stated hypotheses, and to explore further following on the results of those tests, a number of new variables had to be computed. For instance, Total Instrumental Disclosure combined positive, negative, and residual disclosure, about self and spouse, over the two instrumental questions. Whenever such combinations were computed a mean of the combined scores was used. Thus, the resulting new variables all range across the original 5-point scale. The procedure was to run a series of comparisons related to each of the main effects of interest.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Statistical Results

The first pair of hypotheses was: 1.a) Satisfied couples will be more disclosing on instrumental questions than on person perception questions; 1.b) Satisfied remarried people will be more disclosing in regard to instrumental issues than satisfied first marriage couples. Comparisons of instrumental and person perception questions, starting from total disclosure on each, tested hypothesis 1.a. The results of those tests appear in Table IV.

Certain terms require definition. "Self + Spouse Instrumental versus Person Perception" (entry #2) amounts to the same test of instrumental versus person perception as does "Total Instrumental versus Person Perception." It appears as a separate entry because the main effect of total disclosure about self versus spouse on instrumental versus person perception questions was compared in a separate anova.

"Valenced" refers to a combination of positive and negative disclosure, as opposed to residual disclosure. Again, "Valenced + Residual Instrumental versus Person Perception" amounts to the same test of instrumental versus person perception disclosure as does "Total Instrumental versus Person Perception." The separate entry appears because the main effect of "Valenced versus Residual" on instrumental versus person perception questions was also tested.

There is a small difference between the significance of the "Valenced + Residual Instrumental versus Person Perception" result and

Table IV Instrumental vs. Person Perception Question Comparisons

Instrumental vs. Person Perception Comparison		Significance	Direction
1.	Total Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.001	>
2.	Self + Spouse Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.001	>
3.	Valenced + Residual Instrumental vs. Person Perception ^a	<.001	>
4.	Spouse Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.002	>
5.	Self Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.011 ^b	>
6.	Positive + Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
7.	Positive Self + Spouse Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
8.	Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
9.	Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
10.	Self + Spouse Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
11.	Self Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.049 ^b	>
12.	Spouse Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
13.	Self Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
14.	Spouse Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group ^c	.049 ^b	>
15.	Self Positive + Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
16.	Spouse Positive + Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
17.	Self + Spouse Residual Instrumental vs. Person Perception	<.001	>
18.	Self Residual Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.001	>
19.	Spouse Residual Instrumental vs. Person Perception	<.001	>

^aInteraction; see Figure 1. ^bMarginal effect.

^cMarginal interaction; see Figure 2.

the significance of the "Total Instrumental versus Person Perception" result ($p < .001$ versus $p = .001$). This is because of the significant interaction effect found with "Valenced versus Residual by Instrumental versus Person Perception."

When there is no interaction between main effects "constant differences will be maintained between cell means" (Ferguson, 1981, p. 256). These constant differences would be equal to the differences between the cells' respective row or column means.

The interaction term in the analysis of variance is n times the sum of squares of deviations of the observed cell means from the expected [vis-a-vis row and column differences] cell means. (*ibid*, p. 257)

Thus, a significant interaction implies that the differences between cell means depart significantly from the differences that would be found between cells in a comparable test where there was no interaction. This has the effect of "sharpening" the differences between the cells involved in a main effect. Another way to look at this is that a certain portion of the error variance of a comparable test is accounted for by the interaction. Again, this has the effect of reducing the "noise" in a test while sharpening the differences between factors of the main effects.

The "Direction" symbol should be read as a "greater than/less than" sign. It is oriented to the main effect being listed, always written in the same direction in a given table and in that table's title. All the tables may be read in the same manner.

As seen in Table IV (p. 83), there was generally more disclosure on the instrumental questions than on the person perception questions. Thus, hypothesis 1.a is supported.

Inspection of Table IV reveals that only seven of nineteen comparisons were significant--though these seven all showed more disclosure on the instrumental than the person perception questions. Close inspection reveals that the first four tests, all of which were quite significant, all involved some comparison of total disclosure--positive, negative, and residual--on instrumental versus person perception questions (this is true of test #5 also; a marginal result in the same direction). Tests 6 through 16 all involve specifically positive, negative, or positive plus negative disclosure--but not residual disclosure. In regard to instrumental versus person perception questions, the residual disclosure seemed to make a difference.

This hypothesis was investigated further. First, residual disclosure about self, spouse, and self plus spouse on instrumental versus person perception questions was tested. These results appear as entries 17, 18, and 19 in Table IV. It can be seen that there was more residual disclosure on the instrumental questions than on the person perception questions.

Given that the comparisons in which residual disclosure was not involved failed to reach significance, one can argue that it was, in fact, largely the residual disclosure that made the instrumental versus person perception difference. This is not hard to understand; on instrumental questions a person seems likely to give more objective, instructional, "how we've done it," information.

The relative importance of residual and affectively toned disclosure then became a question. This was investigated by comparing, overall, the degree of affectively toned--"valenced"--disclosure to the residual disclosure, and by comparing the valenced versus residual disclosure on just the instrumental and person perception questions. The results of those tests appear in Table V. It seems fairly clear

Table V Valenced vs. Residual Disclosure Comparisons

Valenced vs. Residual Disclosure Comparison		Significance	Direction
1.	Valenced vs. Residual	<.001	>
2.	Instrumental + Person Perception Valenced vs. Residual ^a	<.001	>

^aInteraction; see Figure 1.

that, while the residual disclosure may have made the difference between instrumental and person perception questions, there was generally more affective than neutral disclosure--or more disclosure was perceived by the raters when the content seemed to them affective.

One more test investigated the relative contributions of affectively toned versus residual disclosure. This was a test of valenced versus residual disclosure by instrumental versus person perception questions. This test appears as entry #3 in Table IV (p. 83) and entry #2 in Table V. A significant interaction was found. An interaction of this sort is best understood through a graph. Figure 1 portrays this interaction. Again, it appears that there was generally more valenced (affectively toned) disclosure than residual disclosure,

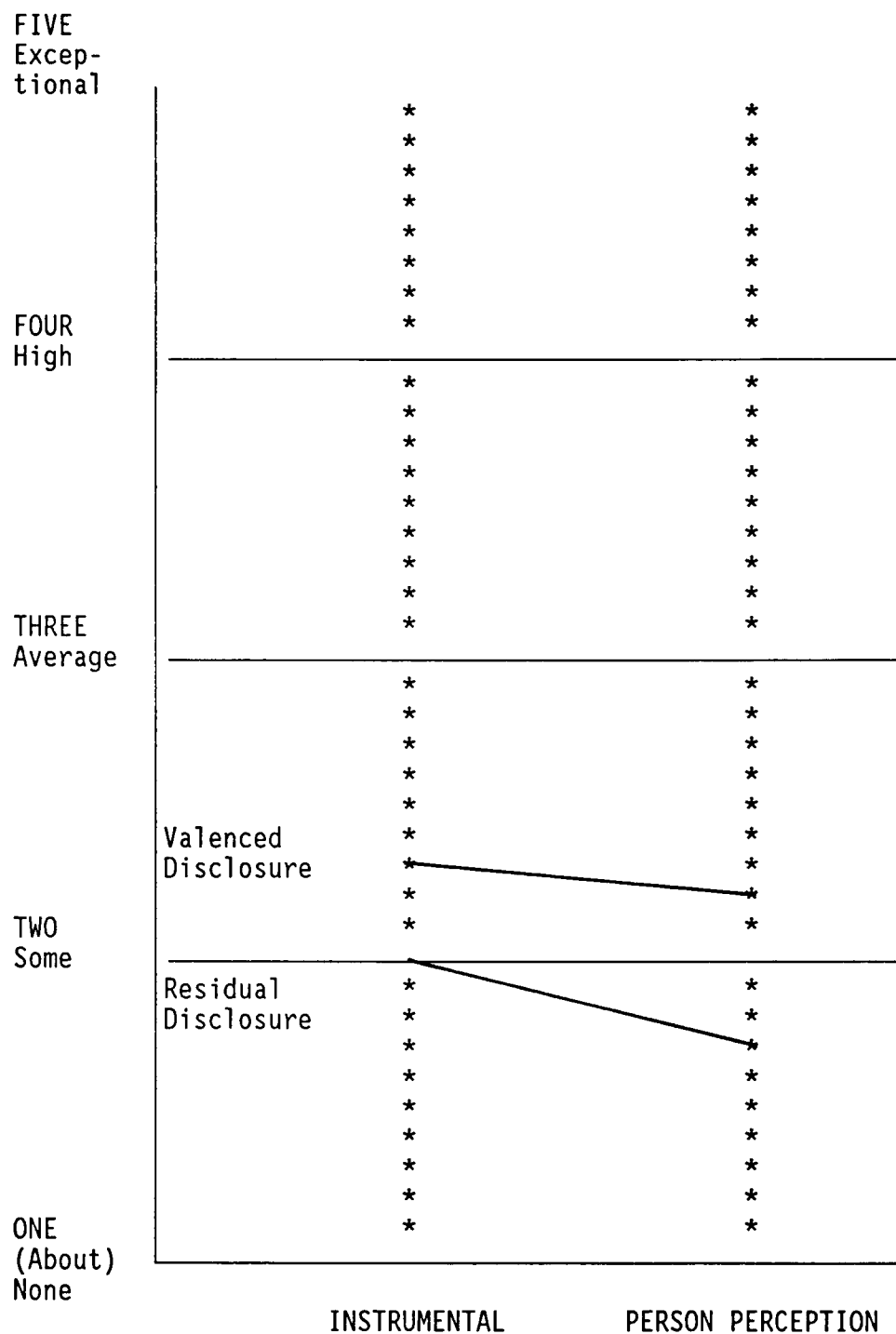


Figure 1 Valenced vs. Residual Disclosure by Question Type

and that the degree of affectively toned disclosure is about the same on instrumental and person perception questions. Also again, we see there was significantly more residual disclosure on the instrumental questions. This interaction and all the significant interactions are also listed separately in Table VI, where the significance figures are

Table VI Significant Interactions

Comparison	Interaction Significance	Figure No.
1. Valenced vs. Residual by Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.005	1
2. Spouse Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group	.032 ^a	2
3. Total Positive vs. Negative by Group	.003	3
4. Spouse Positive vs. Negative by Group	.002	4
5. Negative Self vs. Spouse by Group	.052 ^a	5
6. Instrumental Negative Self vs. Spouse by Sex	.059 ^a	6

^aMarginal effect.

reported. A list of all the tests run appears in Appendix E.

Hypothesis 1.b requires a comparison of the first married and remarried groups on the instrumental questions. The group comparisons are presented in Table VII. Entry 23 shows that there was no significant difference found between the groups on total instrumental disclosure. Thus, 1.b is not supported; first and remarried couples are fairly similar in regard to their degree of disclosure on instrumental questions.

Table VII First vs. Remarried Comparisons

Comparison	First Married vs. Remarried Significance	Direction
1. Total Disclosure by Group		
2. Total Self + Spouse by Group		
3. Total Positive + Negative by Group ^a		
4. Total Positive by Group		
5. Total Negative by Group		
6. Total Residual by Group		
7. Total Valenced + Residual by Group		
8. Positive Self + Spouse by Group ^b		
9. Negative Self + Spouse by Group ^b		
10. Self Positive + Negative by Group		
11. Spouse Positive + Negative by Group ^c		
12. Total Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
13. Self Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
14. Spouse Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
15. Positive Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
16. Negative Instrumental + Person Perception by Group	.042 ^d	<
17. Self Positive Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
18. Spouse Positive Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
19. Self Negative Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
20. Spouse Negative Instrumental + Person Perception by Group^e	.009	<
21. Self Residual Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
22. Spouse Residual Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
23. Self + Spouse Instrumental by Group		

^aInteraction; see Figure 3.

^bMarginal interaction; see Figure 5.

^cInteraction; see Figure 4. ^dMarginal effect.

^eMarginal interaction; see Figure 2.

In fact, as Table VII shows, of the comparisons made of the first and remarried couples only one, #20, was significant. Still, at the .009 level of significance, this result can be regarded as reliable. It indicates that the remarried couples showed more negative disclosure about their spouses than the first married couples. The one marginal group result, #16, also reflects a tendency for the remarried couples to show more negative disclosure.

Interestingly, the same one positive result (#20) among the first versus remarried comparisons shows a marginal interaction. Figure 2 portrays this interaction. It appears that, while across groups there was marginally more negative disclosure about the spouse on the instrumental than the person perception questions (see Table IV, p. 83, #14), the remarried group increased their negative disclosure about their spouses on the person perception questions to equal their disclosure on instrumental questions.

The group comparisons, though yielding only one significant main effect, yielded two significant interactions and one more marginal interaction. The first of these (entry #3) is the total positive versus negative disclosure by group interaction. This interaction is shown in Figure 3 (p. 92). It appears that the remarried group shows the same degree of disclosure overall, but that they do this by showing less positive and more negative disclosure. The marginal interaction, entry #9, will be discussed under the third pair of hypotheses, with other comparisons of disclosure about self versus spouse. The other significant interaction between the groups, entry #11, will be discussed

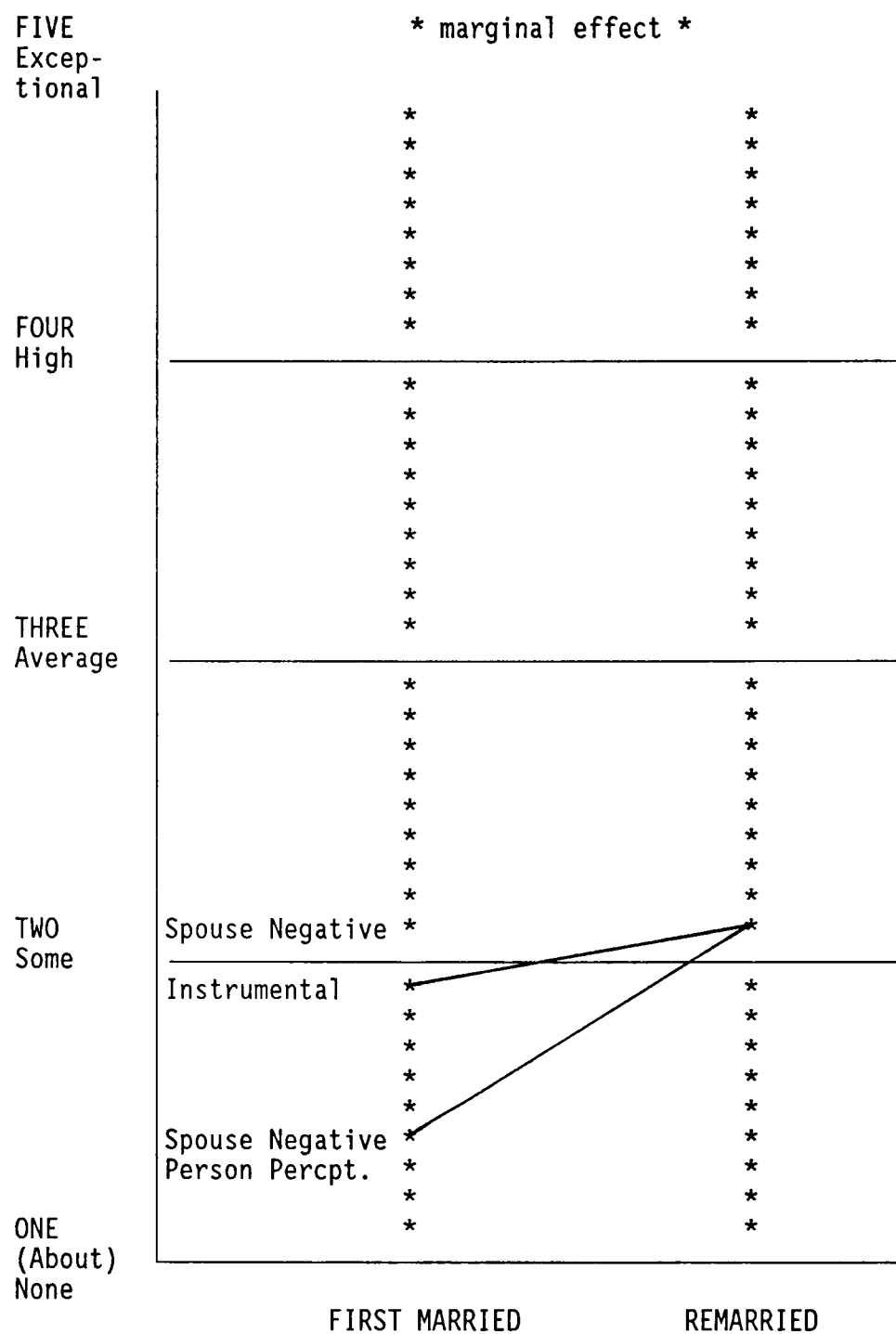


Figure 2 Spouse Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group

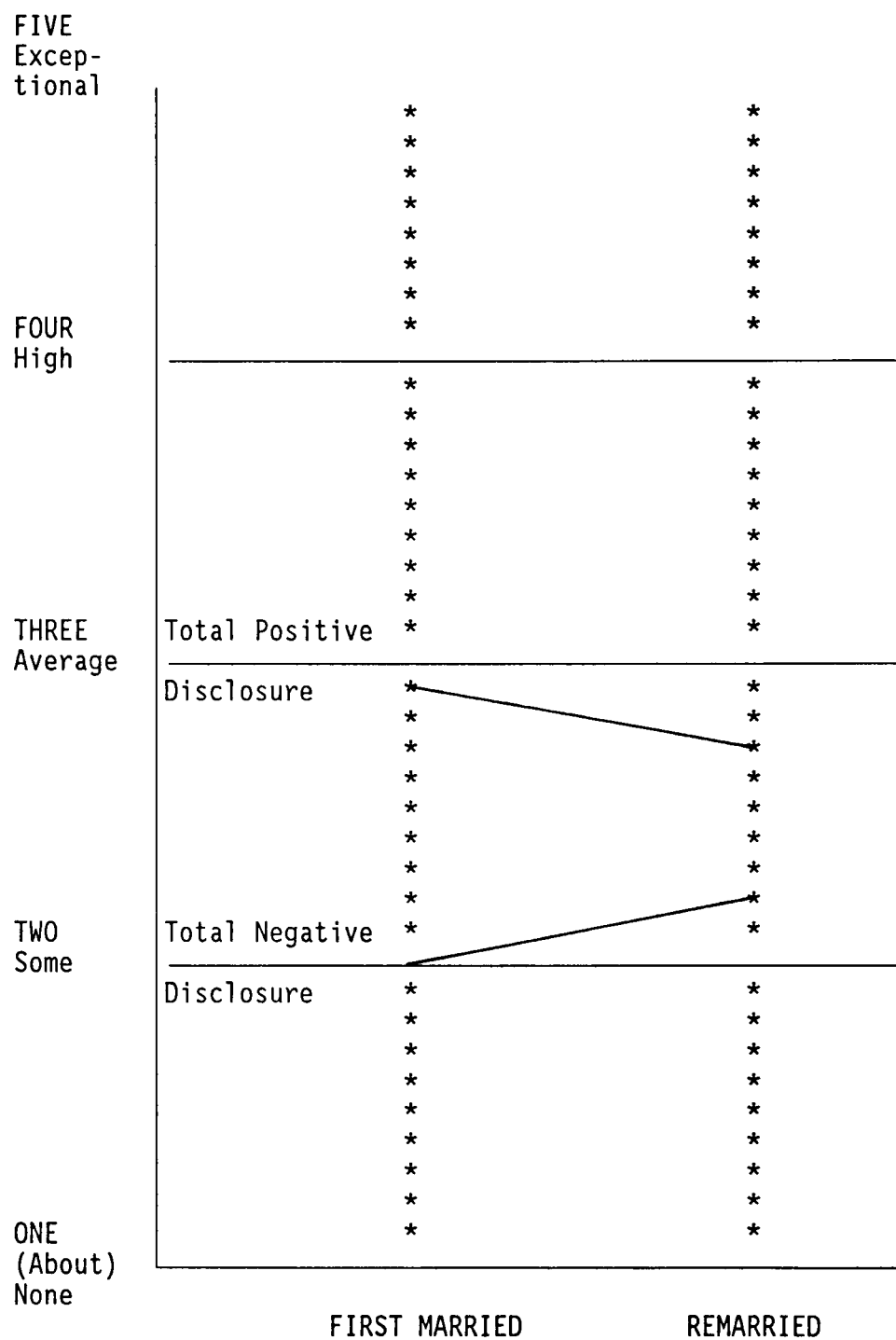


Figure 3 Positive vs. Negative Disclosure by Group

momentarily, under the second pair of hypotheses, with other comparisons of positive versus negative disclosure about the spouse.

The second pair of hypotheses was: 2.a) There is more positive disclosure about the spouse than negative disclosure about the spouse in satisfied couples; 2.b.) Satisfied remarried people will show less negative disclosure and more positive disclosure about their spouse than will satisfied first married people.

The concern here is a comparison of positive and negative disclosure about the spouse. Table VIII contains the positively toned

Table VIII Positive vs. Negative Disclosure Comparisons

	Comparison	Significance	Direction
1.	Total Positive vs. Negative by Group ^a	<.001	>
2.	Self Positive vs. Negative	<.001	>
3.	Spouse Positive vs. Negative by Group ^b	<.001	>
4.	Instrumental + Person Perception Positive vs. Negative	<.001	>
5.	Instrumental + Person Perception Self Positive vs. Negative	<.001	>
6.	Instrumental + Person Perception Spouse Positive vs. Negative	<.001	>

^aInteraction; see Figure 3.

^bInteraction; see Figure 4.

versus negatively toned disclosure comparisons. We can see that there was generally more positive than negative disclosure, and entry #3 shows that disclosure specifically about the spouse is no exception. Thus hypothesis 2.a is supported.

Entry #3 in Table VII (p. 89), "spouse positive versus negative by group," shows a significant interaction. Figure 4 shows that the remarried group displayed somewhat less positive disclosure and somewhat more negative disclosure about their spouses than did the first married group. This evidence is directly contradictory to hypothesis 2.b. However, comparison of Figure 3 (p. 92) with Figure 4 shows that the pattern of positive versus negative disclosure about the spouse by group closely follows the pattern of total positive versus negative disclosure by group. It seems the remarried group showed somewhat less positive disclosure and somewhat more negative disclosure.

The third pair of hypotheses was: 3.a) There is more negative disclosure about the self than about the spouse in satisfied couples; 3.b) Satisfied remarried people will show more negative disclosure about themselves than will satisfied first married people. These hypotheses are tested by "negative disclosure about self versus spouse by group." Table IX (p. 96) contains the disclosure about self versus spouse comparisons. As can be seen, there was generally more disclosure about self than about spouse--total, positive, negative, and residual. Thus, hypothesis 3.a is supported, but by being part of a larger trend.

Entry #3 in the self versus spouse table shows that there was a marginal interaction when negative disclosure about self versus spouse was viewed as a function of group (this is the same test as entry #9 in Table VII, p. 89). Figure 5 (p. 97) shows that there was no appreciable difference between first and remarried couples in regard to negative disclosure about the self. This evidence is contradictory to hypothesis 3.b. Figure 5 does show, however, that, while there was more negative

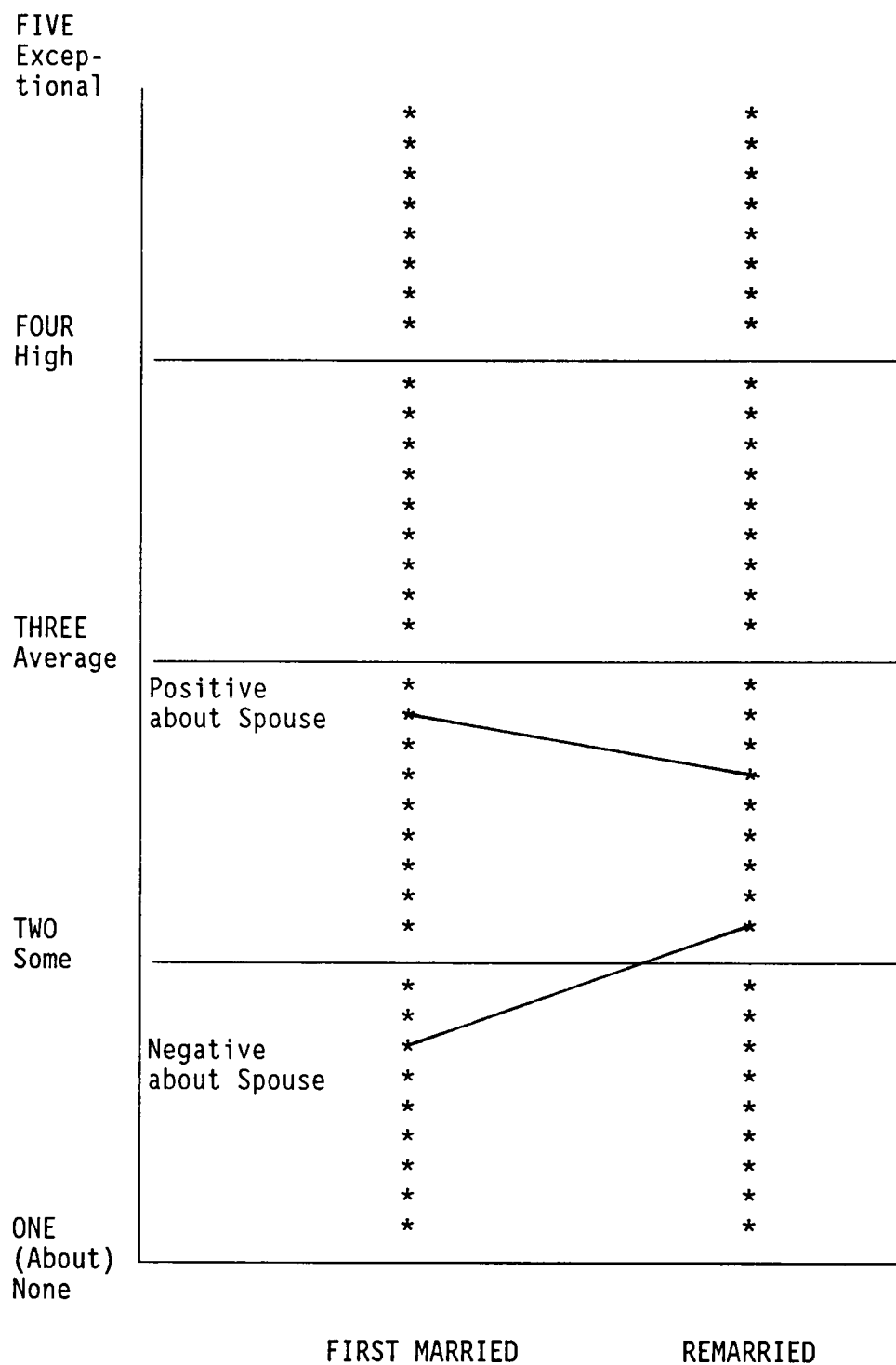


Figure 4 Spouse Positive vs. Negative by Group

Table IX Disclosure About Whom Comparisons

Comparison	Self vs. Spouse	
	Significance	Direction
1. Total Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
2. Positive + Negative Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
3. Negative Self vs. Spouse by Group ^a	<.001	>
4. Positive Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
5. Instrumental + Person Perception Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
6. Instrumental + Person Perception Positive Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
7. Instrumental + Person Perception Negative Self vs. Spouse	.016 ^b	>
8. Instrumental + Person Perception Residual Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
9. Instrumental Self vs. Spouse	<.001	>
10. Instrumental Negative Self vs. Spouse by Sex ^c		

^aMarginal Interaction; see Figure 5. ^bMarginal effect.

^cMarginal Interaction; see Figure 6.

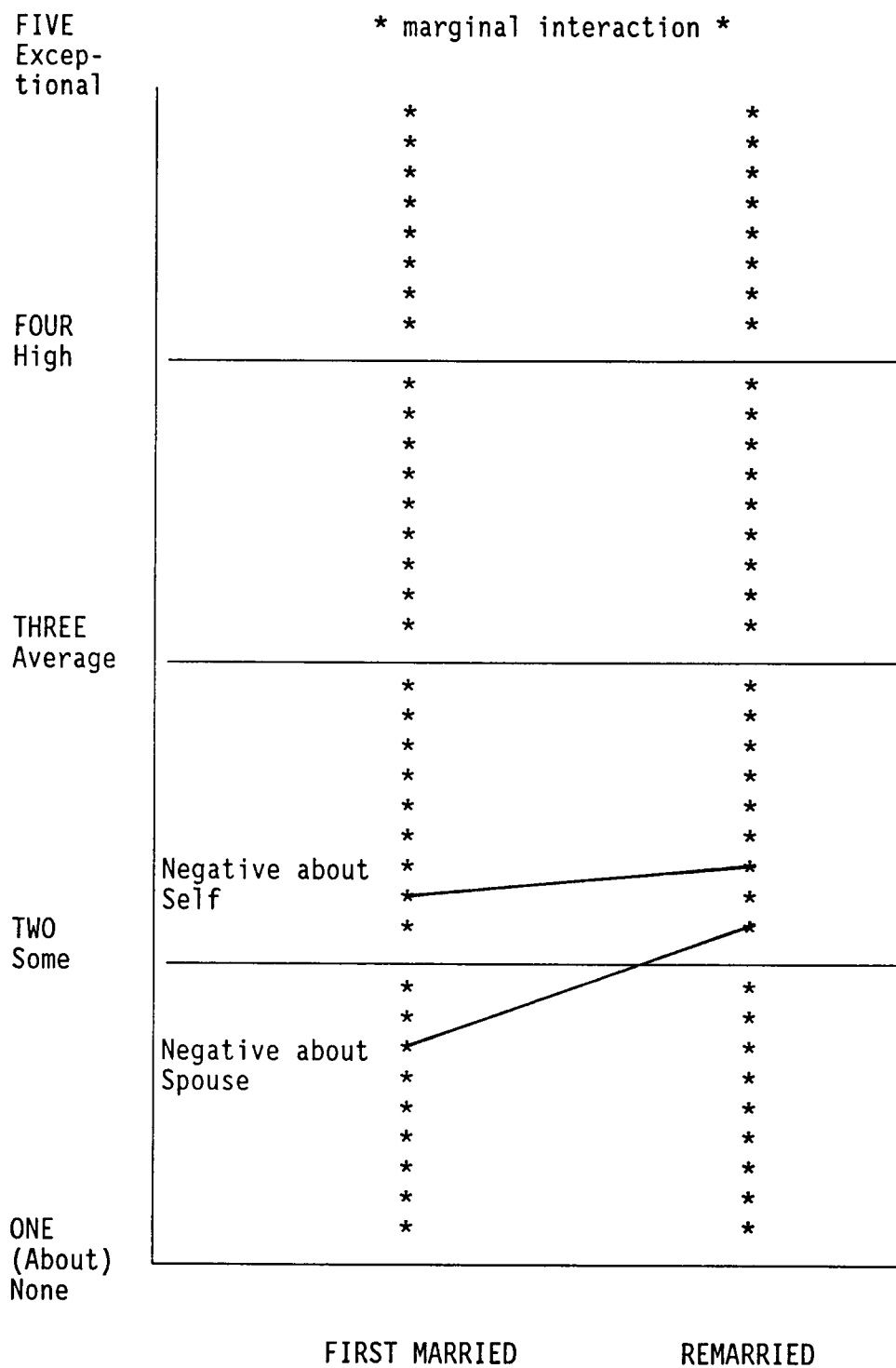


Figure 5 Negative Self vs. Spouse by Group

disclosure about self than about spouse across groups, the remarried group did tend to show somewhat more negative disclosure about the spouse. While this interaction is only marginal, it is consistent with the significant interaction portrayed in Figure 3 (p. 92), the significant interaction portrayed in Figure 4 (p. 95), and the marginal interaction portrayed in Figure 2 (p. 91).

There is another marginal interaction listed in Table IX (p. 96): the comparison of negative disclosure about the self versus about the spouse on instrumental questions viewed as a function of sex. This interaction is shown in Figure 6. It seems that, on instrumental questions, husbands have a tendency to show more negative disclosure about themselves than about their wives. On the same questions, wives show more negative disclosure about their husbands than about themselves. It's as if husbands tend to find fault with how they do things, while wives also tend to find fault with how their husbands do things.

However, this is only a marginal result, and the only result of any kind found among the sex comparisons, including the similar but more inclusive tests of negative self versus spouse by sex and total negative disclosure by sex. The several sex comparisons are listed in Table X (p. 100). Plainly the important result in regards to sex is that there were not significant differences in disclosure between husbands and wives.

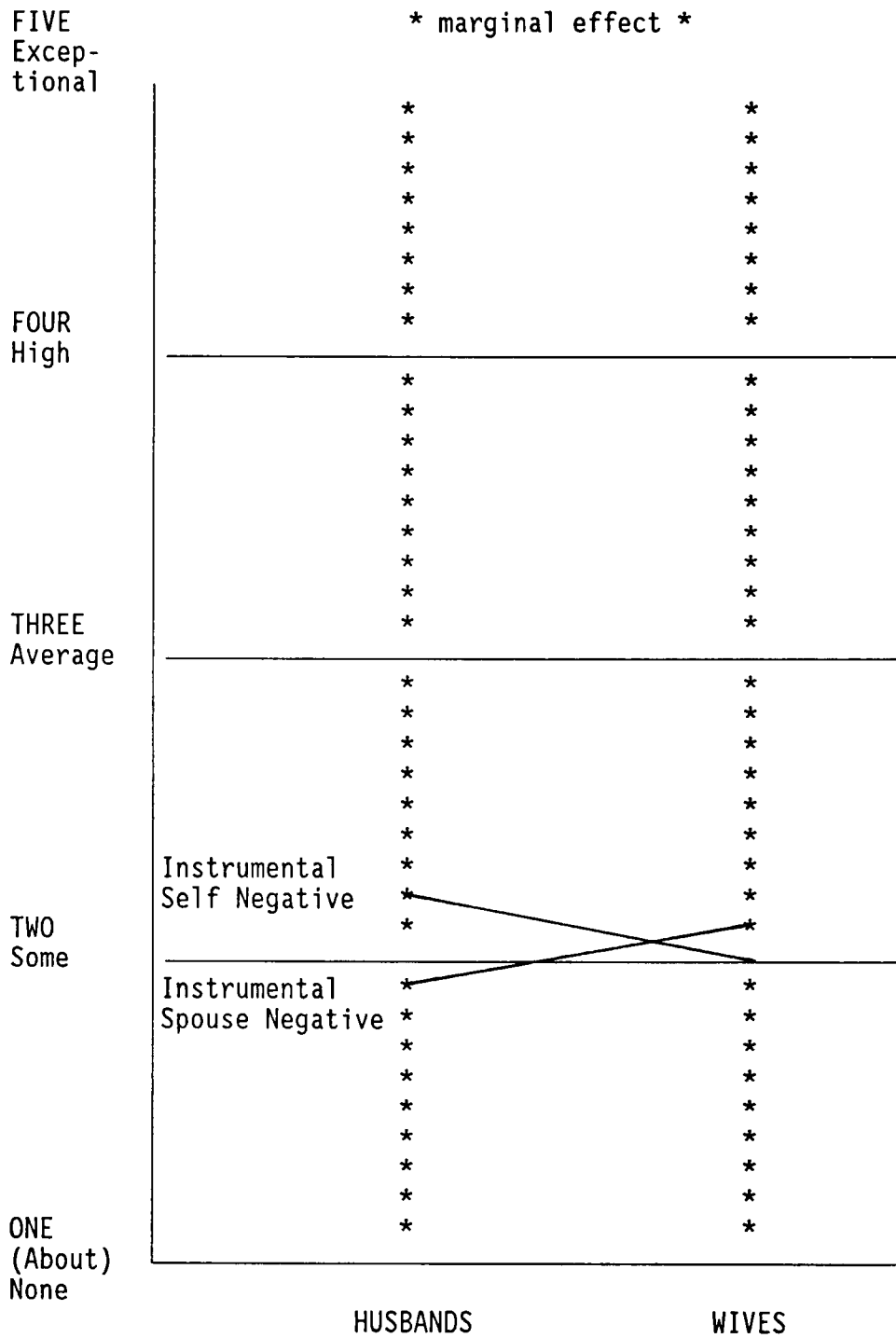


Figure 6 Instrumental Negative Self vs. Spouse by Sex

Table X Sex Comparisons

Comparison	Husbands vs. Wives	
	Significance	Direction
1. Total Disclosure by Sex		
2. Total Self + Spouse by Sex		
3. Total Valenced vs. Residual by Sex		
4. Positive Self + Spouse by Sex		
5. Negative Self + Spouse by Sex		
6. Total Positive + Negative by Sex		
7. Self Positive + Negative by Sex		
8. Spouse Positive + Negative by Sex		
9. Total Positive by Sex		
10. Total Negative by Sex		
11. Total Residual by Sex		
12. Total Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
13. Self Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
14. Spouse Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
15. Positive Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
16. Self Positive Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
17. Spouse Positive Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
18. Negative Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
19. Self Negative Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
20. Self Residual Instrumental + Person Perception by Sex		
21. Instrumental Negative Self + Spouse by Sex ^a		

^aMarginal interaction; see Figure 6.

Content Analysis Results

The result of the content analysis is a group of themes. These results are reported in Figure 7. One cannot say much more about the themes, beyond listing them, without discussing their interrelationships. That discussion appears in the next chapter.

1. Separateness and Togetherness
2. Similarity of Values
3. Acceptance and Tolerance
4. Valuation
 - a. of Spouse
 - b. of Marriage
 - c. of Self
5. Trust
6. Responsibility
7. Communication
8. Attunement
9. Compromise

Figure 7 Marital Themes

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Discussion of Empirical Results

At the outset it is important to note that the results and thus interpretations of this study rest on a sample of white, middle class, church-going couples. All three of these factors have been shown to relate to the stability of marriage (Bell, Daly, & Gonzalez, 1987; Glick, 1980; Pittman, Price-Bonham, & McKenry, 1983), although one study (Hatch, James, & Schumm, 1986) found evidence that spiritual intimacy operates only indirectly, through emotional intimacy, on marital satisfaction. Emotional intimacy might be equally constituted from other sources.

There was more disclosure on the two instrumental questions (about negotiating money and children), but the difference from the person perception questions was due to increased residual disclosure only. Levinger and Breedlove (cited in Sillars and Scott, 1983) suggested that actual agreement, versus perceived agreement, is more strongly related to satisfaction on issues that are instrumental in the coordination of partners. Barnett and Nietzel (1979) found that daily ratings of disagreeable instrumental activities by the other related to both long and short-term marital satisfaction. Ratings of positive versus negative expressions of approval about one partner by the other only related to day-to-day ratings of satisfaction.

Though all the couples in the present study were relatively satisfied with their marriages, they all also reported disagreements.

One wife exclaimed, "The money to me has been the absolute worst thing in the past 5 years, worse than the kids" (R4,W). If agreement on instrumental issues is more critical to relationship satisfaction, and disagreeable instrumental activities do lead to short and long-term marital dissatisfaction, then one might expect instrumental issues to be more volatile for any couple. Thus such questions might provoke more affective disclosure in general, more negative disclosure, and especially more negative disclosure about the spouse. Generally, this study found no differences in affective disclosure on instrumental versus person perception questions. Only a marginal effect of instrumental versus person perception questions was found for negative disclosure about the spouse.

It may be that satisfied married people tend to keep their negative feelings about their spouse to themselves, on instrumental and any other questions. This study, in fact, found more positive than negative disclosure (see below). However, Jacobson et al. (1982) found that "distressed couples were more reactive to recent events than were nondistressed couples" (p. 706). It may also be that satisfied married people are less reactive and thus better able to let go of day-to-day interpersonal dissatisfactions. Perhaps the long-term satisfaction that instrumental behaviors effect is less affect and more judgment oriented.

The greater degree of residual disclosure on the instrumental questions probably reflects more discussion of actual practices, i.e. "how we've done it" disclosures by the couple. It is reasonable that the task demands of dealing with instrumental issues would increase such disclosure. It seems that, in these satisfied couples, the need to

coordinate on instrumental issues led to more pragmatic discussion, but not increased affectivity. It is as if these couples do not invest their feelings heavily in having their way, in being "right." Further, even when they do become emotional about differences over instrumental issues, it seems that these satisfied couples do not let such affect unduly sway their judgment about the worth of their marriages.

It seems these satisfied couples' greater residual, pragmatic disclosure may increase agreement on pragmatic practices--or agreement to disagree. One couple put it,

[I do] not think that Larry has absolutely got to change to come to my point of view or I absolutely have to change to come to his. . . . Every day you think, "It's a temporary adjustment. I'm not really changing the way I feel, I'm not changing my values. {R12,W} I really don't think you have to make dramatic or long-lasting changes. I think you have to shift a little left or a little right and be more tolerant. {R12,H}

For these couples, disagreements did not threaten the end of their relationship. One couple put it, "Forgiveness and continuing the relationship is what this marriage has taught me" {F1,W}. "Fighting doesn't mean the end of the world" {F1,H}.

Such a perspective was not always present at the outset of a marriage. Echoing the problematic search for an idealized, undifferentiated other that Beavers (1985), Laurence (Note 1), and Feldman (1982) cite, one husband said,

[The initial difficulty I had with marriage] gets back to that self-centered thing. A lot of that had to do with basic immaturity. It used to be that she had to agree with everything that I felt or that I thought. Feelings would get hurt if she disagreed with one of my thoughts. {F4,H}

One wife said realizing that being right is sometimes less important than keeping your marriage together "was something that I had to learn" {F3,W}.

Future research could test the proposition that satisfied couples resolve or let pass disagreements over instrumental tasks, and compare this to the long-term impact of day-to-day personal ratings of spouse behavior. Groups of relatively satisfied and dissatisfied couples could be interviewed and compared in terms of positive, negative, and residual disclosure on instrumental versus person perception questions, and ratings of frequency and intensity of disagreeable behavior by the spouse. Perhaps dissatisfied couples would show a greater correlation than satisfied couples between reports of disagreeable behavior by the spouse and negative disclosure about the spouse.

Alternatively, a sample of couples could be studied longitudinally. Using methods like those used by Fincham and Bradbury (1987), one could investigate to what extent reports of frequency and intensity of conflict; ratings of positive, negative, and residual disclosure on instrumental versus person perception questions; measures of reactivity; and behavioral counts of displeasing instrumental activities predict marital satisfaction after, for instance, one year. One might find correlations between reactivity, degree of conflict, and

negative disclosure about the spouse. Counts of the spouse's instrumental behavior might be a more autonomous factor. Some combination of these factors might predict decreased satisfaction in the future. It would also be worthwhile to incorporate a typology of marriage dimensions (such as Fitzpatrick's) into either of these studies.

In regard to the generally greater degree of affective than residual disclosure, it was suggested that the raters perceived more disclosure when the content seemed affective to them. From this point of view, when wives complain that their husbands don't talk enough to them, what they may really want is more affect from their husbands. Meanwhile, husbands may be trying to control their affect. Males are socialized to control affect and thus may feel that they will communicate better, in response to wife requests for more communication, if they do control their affect even more.

No difference was found between the first married and the remarried groups in overall disclosure on instrumental questions. In fact, out of 23 comparisons only one significant difference was found between the two groups. This result is important given the extraordinary tasks remarried couples face (e.g. Coleman & Ganong, 1985; Goetting, 1982; Kent, 1980; Price-Bonham & Balswick, 1980; Ransom, Schlesinger, & Derdeyn, 1979), and the finding that traditional demographic correlates of marital satisfaction (presence/absence of children, religious homogeneity, social class) were relatively poor predictors of marital happiness among the remarried (Albrecht, 1979). It seems that, in terms of the process variable of disclosure, couples

who achieve satisfaction in a remarriage are more like satisfied first married couples than they are different.

While the articulation of differences between groups (or individuals) is an important goal, it is also valuable to identify commonalities at times. The commonalities here suggest that success in marriage lies, not in conventional circumstances, but at a meta-level. Though the tasks of a remarriage do appear to differ significantly from those of a first marriage, in some ways the successful approach to those differing tasks is similar.

The one significant difference that was found between the groups was that the remarried couples showed more negative disclosure about their spouses. Interaction effects suggested that the remarried couples showed somewhat less positive and more negative disclosure in general, and somewhat less positive and more negative disclosure about their spouses. Contrary to the expectation that remarried persons would be extra cautious in what they say about their spouses, that having been once burned they would be twice cautious, it appears that these remarried couples were less cautious in their disclosures.

This may be because, having been through divorces, remarried couples are somewhat more observant for negative events and so strive less to maintain positive illusions. It may also be that they fear dissolution of their marriages less. The taboo has been broken once, but also a divorced and remarried person knows that divorce is survivable. One couple put it, "You know you can survive without that other person, you know the children will make it without that other

person" {R12,W}. "We've both already proven in the past we can survive [singly]" {R12,H}.

Somewhat paradoxically, this couple felt that their knowledge of their ability to divorce clarified and thus strengthened their relationship: "So we're together because we want to be together and we like each other" {R12,W}.

It may also be that this greater negative disclosure and lessened positive disclosure in the remarried couples is actually (or also) a function of age. The remarried husbands and wives were older than the first married husbands and wives. It is well documented that there is a dip in marital satisfaction midway through the family life cycle, i.e. when children dominate the home (e.g. Steinberg & Silverberg, 1987; Miller, 1976). Perhaps the expression of somewhat more negative and somewhat less positive disclosure does reflect a sort of security or habituation about what a relationship can or must tolerate and/or about getting by on one's own if comes to that. This could be investigated in regards to age and/or marital status in future work. Security might be measured, for instance, by the Anxiety scale on the MMPI, and it could be correlated with age, cumulative years married, marital status, positive and negative disclosure, and marital satisfaction.

When considering the finding that remarried people were somewhat less positive and more negative in their disclosure, it must be kept in mind that both first and remarried couples were clearly more positive than negative in their disclosures overall--about themselves, about their spouses, on instrumental and person perception questions. These

results replicate the work of Levinger and Senn (1967), Chelune et al. (1984), and Schumm et al. (1986).

These results are also consistent with the view that even in the presumably most intimate of relationships satisfaction is facilitated by maintaining some personal privacy--at least in front of an interviewer. In a sample of 22 couples it is presumed that each person could find about as much bad as good to say about their partner. Thus, the greater positive disclosure reflects a desire--and ability--to maintain discretion in disclosure.

The finding of more positive than negative disclosure about the spouse may relate to the finding by Franzoi et al. (1985) that people in satisfied marriages spontaneously adopt the perspective of the other, i.e. are more empathic, than people in dissatisfied marriages. One person would be sensitive to the other's preference to have good things reported about them. Future research might investigate this hypothesis by correlating perspective taking and positive disclosure, and perspective taking and the difference between positive and negative disclosure in a range of first and remarried couples.

Despite Schumm et al.'s (1986) finding that negative disclosure is inversely related to marital satisfaction, expressing the positive to the exclusion of the negative would create difficulties in problem solving. Beavers (1985) said:

The most rapid way to determine the health of a human system is to ask that system to do something. . . . Negotiating ability . . . is closely related with health. (p. 82)

Thus, satisfied couples should be able to "put their cards on the table" at times. The present Subjects pointed out that they knew when a disagreement or tension really did need to be talked about. One remarried wife put it: "I think that we both realize when discussion is necessary. I think we both sense when tension's building with the other person" {R9,W}. A first married wife put it: "Whenever there's anything really bothering one or the other of us we won't let it go all day" {F5,W}. Thus, "it's not always pleasant" {F11,W}. Communication and discretion in communication will be discussed further below.

It was argued and hypothesized that satisfied married people would show more negative disclosure about themselves than about their spouses. This proved to be true, but in the context of greater disclosure about the self than the spouse in every comparison made (in regard to positive, negative, and total disclosure, and on instrumental and person perception questions). Therefore it seems inappropriate to interpret the finding of greater negative disclosure about the self than the spouse separately.

The finding of more disclosure about the self than the spouse could indicate a healthy valuing of the self in satisfied marriages. Self acceptance or seeing oneself as possessing socially desirable traits has been shown to correlate with marital satisfaction (Murstien & Beck, 1972; Luckey, 1964). Self-esteem has shown an indirect effect on marital cohesion, through an influence on making a favorable comparison between one's spouse and other potential partners (Pittman et al, 1983).

Secondly, the greater disclosure about the self may be related to the greater proportion of "I statements,"--comments phrased from the

first person, singular viewpoint--expected in successful marriages by Bowen (Gurman, 1978). Satisfied couples are theorized to speak in terms of what they think and feel, rather than implicating the other for their thoughts and feelings. This is consistent with the lesser degree of internal attributions for the other's displeasing behavior found in successful couples (see Chapter I).

Thirdly, the greater disclosure about self may be due to greater sensitivity about disclosing about the spouse than about oneself to an interviewer. However, this possibility seems to apply more to negative disclosure than positive disclosure. If a person is sensitive to possible spouse discomfort at extolling the spouse's virtues, then that same person seems likely to be modest about themselves.

Fourthly, although the interview questions were phrased with an inclusive "you" (e.g. "In managing and disciplining your children, how have you come to do whatever it is that you do?"), the Subjects may have felt that the demand of the question was to answer in terms of themselves, i.e. they heard "you" as a singular pronoun. It may be that with differently phrased questions, e.g. questions that explicitly asked the couple about their interactions, a different result would have been found. Still, hearing an ambiguous "you" as a singular "you" may tie back to the positive self-regard of satisfied marital partners.

Some support for the hypothesis that demand characteristics of the questions effected the self versus spouse disclosure results comes from an additional test that compared disclosure about self versus spouse on the two person perception questions, i.e. the question about changes in perception of self versus the question about changes in perception of

spouse. A significant interaction was found. As seen in Figure 8, Subjects disclosed more about themselves than about their spouses when asked about changes in their perceptions of themselves, and more about their spouses when asked about changes in their perceptions of their spouses. While this seems an obvious result, it does confirm that the overall tendency in this study towards more disclosure about the self was nevertheless sensitive to the question asked.

Who a person discloses about may also depend on who their audience is. There is a myth, in some circles anyway, that people, especially wives, talk more about their spouses with same sex friends than with their spouses. If pairs of same sex friends, both of whom report they are satisfactorily married or dissatisfactorily married, could be found and interviewed this myth could be tested.

A related factor may be the principle that a person pays attention to certain things only when they are a problem. For instance, we generally don't notice our breathing--until we have trouble breathing. It might be found that maritally satisfied same sex peers disclose less about their spouses, especially that they show less negative disclosure, than maritally dissatisfied same sex peers. It might also be found (contrary to stereotypes that men communicate less than women) that peer husbands disclose roughly as much about their wives as their wives disclose to peers about the husbands. Getting the sample would be a major difficulty in carrying out such a study.

This study of self disclosure in satisfied marriages, generally, found no differences between the sexes. Neither did this study find any differences in marital satisfaction between husbands and wives. For the

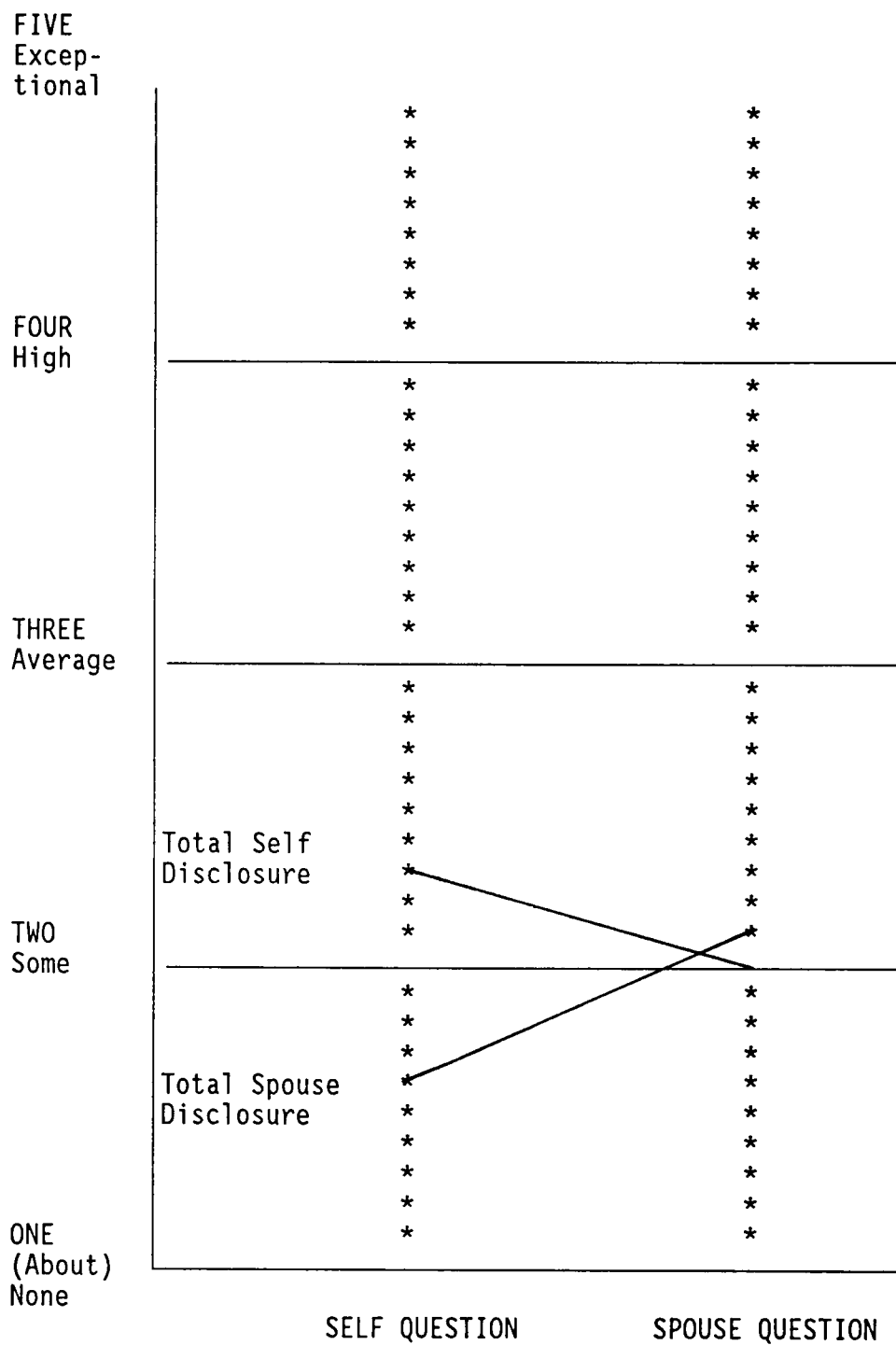


Figure 8 Self vs. Spouse Disclosure by Self vs. Spouse Questions

whole sample the total dyadic adjustment scores of husbands versus wives were not different (t [42] = $-.57$, p = $.569$), nor were the total adjustment scores different for the first married group (t [20] = $.12$, p = $.908$) or the remarried group (t [20] = $-.71$, p = $.487$).

These are important results as several studies of marital satisfaction have found sex differences. Burke, Weir, and Harrison (1976) found that wives reported disclosing problems to their spouses more often than husbands (they also found, however, that for both husbands and wives increased disclosure correlated with increased marital and life satisfaction). Similarly, Hendrick (1981) found that wives reported greater self-disclosure than husbands. On the other hand, Davidson et al. (1983) found that equity in self-reports of affective disclosure correlated with marital satisfaction for husbands and wives.

Berry and Williams (1987) found that:

Agreement over financial expenditures contributed to satisfaction with quality of life indirectly, through satisfaction with spouse for husbands and through satisfaction with spouse and income satisfaction for wives.

(p. 107)

Creamer and Campbell (1988) found that accuracy of prediction of the spouse's responses to the California Personality Inventory was related to marital adjustment for females but not for males (while accuracy related to scores on the Hogan Empathy scale for males but not for females). Barnett and Nietzel (1979) found that self-esteem was even more correlated with marital satisfaction for females than for males.

Fincham and Bradbury (1987) found that causal and responsibility attributions predicted marital satisfaction one year later for wives, but not for husbands. de Turck and Miller (1986) found that perceptions of one spouse as powerful by the other related to the first spouse's self esteem for wives, but not for husbands. Pittman et al. (1983), citing other research, report that husbands evidence less effect of the contingencies of the marital life cycle on their marital satisfaction. In their own study Pittman et al. found that husbands reported higher marital cohesion than wives. Murstein and Beck (1972) found strong evidence of the greater importance to marital satisfaction of wives being able to predict husband responses to an adjective checklist than husbands predicting their wives' responses.

Murstein and Beck argue that men still enjoy economic and social advantages in our society and thus that wives have a greater need to gauge spouse responses accurately so that they can adjust to these more powerful individuals. Fincham and Bradbury (1987) conclude that there have been:

A number of studies showing that women may be the barometers of marital functioning. . . . This is most likely because women in our society are more concerned with issues such as attachment, intimacy, and caring than men are (e.g. . . . Gilligan, 1982). (p. 515)

The lack of sex differences in this study need not contradict the differences cited from other studies. First, self-disclosure in the present study was measured by the ratings of outside observers versus self-report. It may be that wives feel and report more self-disclosure,

while raters see husbands and wives as disclosing similarly. Perhaps wives feel more vulnerable about disclosing so that what seems equal to a third-party observer feels greater to the wives. Such differences in perspective could contribute to the complaint by many clinic wives--which mystifies husbands--that husbands are unwilling to communicate.

Second, the self-disclosure and satisfaction measured in this study reflected current process and evaluation of the Subjects' marriages. We do not know whether wives' disclosure (positive, negative, or total; about self or about spouse) might better predict future marital satisfaction or adjustment. In the Fincham and Bradbury study (1987) that found that wives' attributions, but not husbands', predicted future marital satisfaction, both husbands and wives showed concurrent relations between marital satisfaction, two types of attributions, and unrealistic relationship expectations. A longitudinal study correlating third party ratings of disclosure at one time with measures of marital adjustment at a later time (or vice versa) could investigate these questions.

Nor do we know from this study whether wives' (or husbands') disclosure relates to wives' (or husbands') ability to concurrently predict spouse responses to adjective checklists or other personality or attitude measures. Ability to predict spouse responses to such self-report measures may well be influenced by factors tangential to marital satisfaction. For example, women may want to be seen (by the Investigator) and see themselves as empathic, while men may want to be seen and see themselves as independent and more separate. The relation of prediction to marital satisfaction may result from a desire for such

traditional roles in marriage. Fitzpatrick's Traditional marriages were highest in marital satisfaction (see Chapter I). It is quite different to report about one's relationship than to be observed relating. It was partly due to such confounds that self-report measures were not an interest in this study.

Earlier the similarities in disclosure patterns between first and remarried satisfied couples were discussed. It was argued that such similarities, despite the significantly different tasks that the two types of marriage face (first married people do not have to deal with alimony, child support, step-children, ex-spouses, and a lack of societal guidelines for these tasks; Goetting, 1982), indicate commonalities at a meta-level in the ingredients of satisfactory marriage.

Sillars et al. (1987) argued that conversational content themes of couples constitute metacommunication about their relationships with a structure analogous to the relationship. Thus the content themes common to these two groups of satisfied married people may be understood as one categorization of common meta-level processes involved in making a satisfactory marriage.¹

¹As will be seen, Sillars et al found somewhat different themes. Perhaps this was because of using a different sample of couples, but also because he and his colleagues started with different organizing ideas about what they would find and thus "punctuated" their Subjects' conversations differently--see the discussion of process "punctuation" in Chapter I.

Discussion of Phenomenological Results

A discussion of the themes found in this research might well begin with the theme of Separateness and Togetherness. This is because the basic paradox of marriage is that of two separate persons forming a unity. Underlying sub-themes include the balance of separate and conjoint activities (inside and outside the home; vis-a-vis spouse and vis-a-vis the whole family), and autonomy versus dependency.

While successful couples vary in the degrees of Separateness and Togetherness conducive to their relationship, the studied couples all mentioned some degree of each. What seems important is that a couple be compatible in the degree of Separateness and Togetherness that suits each individual. In this regard Separateness and Togetherness partakes of one of the other major themes: Similarity of Values.

An illustration of the interaction of these two themes is instructive. Most couples said that Similarity, or consistency, in how children are dealt with (at least in terms of what the children witness) is important. While agreeing with this, one couple {F11} also said they didn't think that agreement on everything in regards to how to deal with children is necessary. The wife went on to say that they had come to know when each one's different ways of dealing with the children would be more useful. This couple also emphasized Separateness more than some in other areas.

How the two contrasting movements, Separateness and Togetherness, work together to form one marital theme is well described by one of the remarried wives:

You have to give a person enough room to move and breathe and be independent. And yet, in order to have a really close, intimate relationship, there is an amount of dependence as well. {R8,W}

Couples varied in regard to how marriage had affected their preexisting tendencies towards autonomy or dependence. Some reported becoming more independent as a result of marriage, others reported becoming more dependent. It appears that the partner who was originally more autonomous would tend to become more dependent while the partner who was originally more dependent would tend to become more autonomous. However, given that Similarity of Values is another major theme in satisfactory marriages, it seems that a couple's initial difference on Separateness and Togetherness had best not be too great. Perhaps the tolerable degree of difference on Separateness and Togetherness varies as a function of the strength of other attractions. Such an algebra may hold for all the themes. At any rate, the important issue is whether a couple is able to forge a comfortable (for them) "balance" of Separateness and Togetherness.

While nine primary themes emerged, they can be clustered together, for heuristic purposes, to form two sets of meta-themes. The first of these sets is: (a) "With Other" (engaged with actual spouse), (b) "Toward Other" (mindful of the spouse), and (c) "Apart From Other"

(engaged apart from actual spouse--yet the relationship is maintained through this separateness).²

In terms of this first meta-theme set, Separateness and Togetherness is unique in that it bridges the three clusters. Togetherness in concrete activity can be seen to fall under "With Other." Togetherness in its dependency sense--depending on the other for emotional support, valuing the other's opinions and approval--can be seen to fall under "Toward Other."

Separateness can be seen to fall under "Apart From Other." Yet, paradoxically, Separateness is involved in being with the other. Without a foundation in Separateness you can't communicate and compromise, or even play a meaningful game of Gin Rummy. There is no reason to communicate unless there is realization of having a different, i.e. separate, perspective. How could a card game work unless your hand is kept hidden, i.e. separate, from your opponent? This will be explored further below.

Similarly, Togetherness is involved in being apart from the other. It is an underlying sense of Togetherness that maintains the relationship through being engaged apart from the other. It is because of this intertwining and counterbalancing of Separateness and Togetherness that they are seen as one theme.

The second meta-theme set that has emerged is the pair: "The Other as a Narcissistic (self-enhancing) Extension" and "The Other as a

²"Away From Other," the fourth logical permutation of this set, involves the dissolution of relationship and thus is deep background and antithetical to the thrust of this study, i.e. "What makes a satisfactory marriage?"

Separate Person," a person "in their own right." Togetherness can be seen to come under "The Other as Narcissistic Extension"--in some ways. When together with one's spouse and enjoying, admiring, or appreciating the latter's attributes or actions, your self-esteem is enhanced. After all, this special person is with you. To the extent that the other's values and personality are similar or complementary to oneself, your sense of their difference, and thus their separateness, is reduced. They seem a mirror or extension of oneself. Conversely, when one is engaged together "With the Other" in a disagreement, "The Other as Separate Object" comes to the fore.

Similarly, Separateness appears to come under "The Other as Separate Object"--in some ways. By virtue of your, in fact, inescapable separateness, you do have different values, interests, and wants than your spouse from time to time. For example, suppose you enjoy a certain hobby, e.g. golf or fishing, which your spouse does not enjoy. When you are out practicing this hobby--"Apart From the Other"--Separateness and "The Other as a Separate Object" is manifested. Your spouse may be quite comfortable, even glad (if it makes you a more pleasant person to live with), to have you enjoy your separate hobbies (up to a point . . .). However, it is an assumed, underlying sense of Togetherness, an "Us-ness" with your spouse, a sense of your spouse as, in a sense, a part of yourself (and you of her/himself) that maintains the relationship through this Separateness. In this underlying way "The Other as Narcissistic Extension" is also involved in Separateness.

Luckey (1964) found that the "Togetherness" related perception of the spouse as "obedient" was correlated with marital satisfaction. She

also found, however, that "able to give orders; good leader" and "independent; self-reliant and assertive" were descriptions of the spouse that correlated with marital satisfaction. Sillars et al. (1987) identified "Togetherness" and "Separateness" as two distinct themes. They found that different types of marriage (Traditional, Separate, Independent) emphasized one or the other theme more. Laurence (Note 1) concluded that the separate, individual quality of identity is the key requisite for forming "couple constancy" together. The functions of both privacy and self-disclosure in differentiation and boundary regulation between couples were discussed in Chapter I. The relation of this study's finding of greater positive than negative disclosure to the Separateness related theme of privacy was discussed above. Thus, the Separateness and Togetherness theme discussed by the present satisfied couples converges with other empirical findings and theory.

Similarity of Values, has already been mentioned. One Subject stated this theme this way: "It's important that we have basic values that we share but it's not necessary that our opinions coincide on everything" {F11,H}.

This theme has to do with how things are done; it is disclosed as a couple engages in concrete tasks and behaviors. We usually think of values as how we think things should be done. However, it seems that how we truly think things should be done is only fully revealed by how we, in fact, seek to do things. Thus, valid similarity is only discovered through time.

In all, the following areas of similarity were found: (a) how children should be dealt with, (b) how money should be handled, (c) the

degree of giving and wanting of affection there should be, (d) the degree of routine versus variability of schedules desired, and (e) the relative emphasis on career versus family.

It is important to point out that the content of the similarity matters less than that both partners come to share values about how their family will operate. For instance, one couple found their strictness with their children to be conducive to a satisfied home life. Other couples found their leniency with their children to be satisfactory. Some found it best for the husband to be more involved in discipline because he was not around the children all day; some found it best for the wife to be more involved in discipline because she was around the children more; some found it best for both to be as equally involved as possible. Some found the natural parent to be more effective with or accepted by children; one couple found the stepfather to be in some ways more effective and accepted.

Some were financially conservative, some were "middle of the road"; some were quite planful financially, others were more casual. Some couples strongly advocated a joint checking account and couldn't imagine having it otherwise, while other couples as strongly insisted on separate checking accounts (it is easily seen how a couple's position in regard to Separateness and Togetherness informs this latter example).

Different couples indicated that their backgrounds, with their families of origin, had been relatively similar or relatively different in regards to how children were raised or how money was handled. The similarity or dissimilarity of backgrounds did not appear to be necessarily related to compatibility versus contention in the studied

couples. That is, some of the studied couples were able to work out sufficient similarity in how they handle children or money despite differences in backgrounds.

Couples varied in terms of their degree of Similarity of Values. It was clear, however, that those who had markedly dissimilar ideas about how to deal with children or how to deal with money had experienced much more conflict than those who had more similar ideas.³ In any case, again it is the meta-level of agreement more than the concrete level of what is agreed on that seems critical for satisfactory marriage.

With regard to the meta-themes, Similarity of Values can be seen as falling under "Apart From Other." One's values are individual beliefs and feelings about how one ought to do things. Such beliefs and feelings are brought into a relationship. Values may change in response to an other, yet values are still individually held. You do not have a value with another person like you have a conversation with them. Nor do you direct a value toward another specific person in the way that you direct appreciation or tolerance toward another person. You appreciate or tolerate some other. Values are themselves the objects of an individual's awareness.

³One couple recognized that their differences about money and children had been used as a medium for fighting out broader issues. Perhaps those issues involved questions of power--who was to be in charge--and fears (heightened by having gone through divorces) of the vulnerability necessary to cooperation. Perhaps their fears would've been less if the differences between them had been less: each would feel s/he had less to lose.

In the research sample, a remarried wife struggled and was confused because she was unsure what she believed: she was tossed between trying to please her children--who wanted leniency and service from her--and being pulled to please her husband--who thought she should set more limits. This woman's uncertainty of her individual values seemed to make matters worse; she felt pulled to believe "with" whoever she was with. Thus, values can be seen to be a constituent of individual identity (cf. Laurence, Note 1). Further, it seems that having your own clear values, "Apart From Other," is conducive to relationship, as long as there's a sufficient degree of Similarity of (individually held) Values overall. Similarity of Values is serendipitous, it cannot be contrived.

Regarding the second meta-theme set, Similarity of Values can be seen as falling under "The Other as a Narcissistic Extension." When the other serendipitously shares many of one's values the effect is a mirroring or echoing of one's identity, and thus an affirmation of self. Thus, Similarity of Values helps to constitute the good feelings which provide a cushion when the disillusionment of friction between lovers strikes. It is when there are differences in values that "The Other as a Separate Object" comes to the fore; that is when the "otherness" of the other is apparent--and aversive.

Empirical findings relating similarity (of personality descriptions and attitudes) and perceived similarity to marital satisfaction were discussed in Chapter I. One additional relevant finding comes from Luckey (1960). She found that congruence of self-description and description of the self by the spouse correlated with

marital satisfaction; content of the congruent descriptions was not a concern. Sharing of attitudes, beliefs, interests, and values is subsumed under the Togetherness theme in Sillars et al.'s (1987) study. Again, the themes developed from the conversations of the present Subjects converge with other findings.

When the "otherness" of the other is apparent then Acceptance and Tolerance comes into play. No matter how similar or compatible two people are, there will be differences. A marriage partner cannot hope for this to change. As one wife said: "You have to accept people the way they are. You can't go around trying to reconstruct people's basic personalities and values" (R8,W).

Several sub-themes can be listed under this theme: (a) accepting limits of the marital relationship per se (e.g. the couple may make a decision together that later turns out to have been ill advised; being with person X means you're not with anyone else), (b) acceptance of disagreements, (c) acceptance of the limits of oneself (e.g. falling short of ideals for yourself as a marriage partner, finding you can't be everything to everyone in the family at all times), (d) accepting the limits of one's spouse (e.g. your spouse doesn't idealize you as much after living with you, and your shortcomings, as s/he was able to when you only saw each other on dates), (e) accepting the limits imposed by agreeing, for other reasons, to the spouse taking on certain roles (e.g. if he handles the money, and she basically likes that arrangement, she must accept that he may know more about what she spends than she may know about what he spends), (f) accepting differences in how the spouse deals with children, money, etc., (g) accepting the less than joyful

aspects of having children (e.g. they make messes), and (h) accepting personal misfortunes and all the effects they may have on a person and a family (e.g. a job loss).

Two couples spoke of valuing disagreements in some senses. One husband {F11,H} spoke of enjoying a certain amount of debate, of give and take of ideas, and of how he wouldn't want a wife who would "sop up every opinion and belief that I held and be a carbon copy." The solidity of identity that this stance reflects seems somewhat exceptional. Still, even while appreciating his wife's individuality and the testing of ideas in debate, this man would have to accept the at least slight tension that must go with disagreement. Another husband {F1,H} spoke of coming to know his wife (and she him) through their fights, and of enjoying making up after a fight. He also valued the discovery, through this experience, that a fight doesn't necessarily mean the end of relationship (see quote above). This husband seems to appreciate some of the potential fruits of disagreements, but he must still accept the discomfort of the disagreement per se. Just because one finds value in disagreement doesn't mean there is no disagreeableness to accept.

Acceptance and Tolerance contribute to two other important functions. First, they help to build Trust, a theme to be discussed below. A marriage partner comes to have intimate knowledge of attributes and actions of the spouse that s/he finds disagreeable. When the partner at least tolerates these aspects of the other, and doesn't use his/her knowledge of the other's disagreeable aspects against the other, the other has their trust in the partner confirmed and

encouraged. Such refraining from misusing experience of the other is also a form of Responsibility, yet another theme to be discussed.

Second, Acceptance and Tolerance, as opposed to a false covering up of dislike of certain attributes or actions, is an important form of feedback, or mirroring, for the other. Many people seem to think of mirroring as liking or appreciating everything about another. Appreciation of the other, without communication of acceptance or tolerance of what one dislikes, would tend to convey a distorted and incomplete picture of him or herself to the other. It would be like looking in a mirror that only showed your attractive features. There would be eerie blind spots in the reflection. The unreflected features of oneself would be felt to be rejected and/or unreal. This is a disservice, in a marriage or elsewhere. It is when the other notes and tolerates one's warts and bad breath that one may truly feel accepted.

Acceptance/Tolerance would fall under "Toward Other." Unlike a value, which one can hold in the absence of any specific other, one must be mindful of a specific person, and of specific attributes or actions of theirs, to accept them. Acceptance/Tolerance would also fall under "The Other as a Separate Object," as noted above.

Tolstedt and Stokes (1983) inquired about one spouse's willingness to tolerate unpleasant aspects of the other as part of their measure of affective intimacy. They found affective intimacy to correlate with marital satisfaction. Beavers (1985) depicted successful couples as believing in relative versus absolute truth and that people are basically neutral or benign. Such beliefs would form a ground for tolerance. Tolerance is quite close to Sillars et al.'s (1987) theme of

Stoicism: "recognition that conflicts and problems are inherent in marriage" (p. 507). Tolerance is also involved in aspects of their theme of Cooperation, which involves "mutual respect and consideration" (p. 506).

A second form of mirroring, or feedback, offered to the other is Valuation. This theme includes three sub-themes: (a) valuation of spouse, (b) valuation of the marital state, and (c) valuation of oneself. Valuation of spouse involves ways of treating or responding to the spouse that explicitly or implicitly communicate that the spouse is valuable ("precious") to one. Some examples are: the spouse's opinion and approval are valued; even at his worst the spouse is seen as "nowhere near as bad" as the prior spouse; paying regular attention to the spouse, including showing affection (versus patting and grabbing demeaningly); being aware of and responsive to the effect of one's actions on the spouse (caring for the other); treating the spouse as a best friend, including being open about business and/or professional interests and sharing hobbies; depending on the spouse for emotional support (however covertly); not misusing knowledge of the spouse to hurt; being willing to compromise or "give in" (emphasis on "giving") to the spouse; feeling lucky to have married the spouse--the spouse is seen as the special one; and being proud of one's spouse, including his/her competence, endurance, and discretion. Several of these items also fall under other primary themes; their message value as appreciation of the spouse is the focus here.

Findings that converge with Valuation of Spouse follow. Tolstedt and Stokes (1983) inquired about one partner's felt importance to his or

her spouse and the degree of moral support that a partner felt from the spouse as part of their measure of affective intimacy, which was correlated with marital satisfaction. Bell et al. (1987) found perceived use of physical affection and sensitivity ("spouse acts in a warm, caring, and empathic manner" p. 448) by husbands to correlate with wives' marital satisfaction. Luckey (1964) found evidence that people who saw their spouses as possessing culturally valued traits, including appreciativeness, were more satisfactorily married. Sillars et al.'s (1987) theme of Romanticism involves "having shared affection, being in love, having mutual physical affection and attraction" (p. 506). Beavers (1985) views successful couples (a) as believing that encounters with their spouse can be rewarding, and (b) as sharing positive feelings together.

Valuation of the marital state refers to statements about a marital relationship as opposed to aspects of the other per se. Examples are: "I've discovered marriage can be better than just O.K."; "I value home and family more because in my first marriage I didn't really have those"; "I always liked the institution of marriage, it was just finding the right person"; "we're together because we want to be together"; "what it boils down to in a marriage is do you want the marriage, are you willing to work at it"; "both of us are committed much more to the welding of this marriage than either of us were to our prior marriages"; "the family is now the highest priority in my life" (versus work); "one of the smartest things we did was to move into a new house that is 'ours,' versus 'hers' or 'mine'."

An important sub-set of Valuation of Marriage is the projection of a future together: the couple sees themselves together in the future and plans on that. Statement examples are: "it's very important to have the same goals"; "despite disagreements and problems you see a future time where your current difficulties don't exist"; "we're starting to make plans for retirement"; "I see us rocking on our front porch, holding hands."

Beavers (1985) stated that healthy couples intuitively believe in and operate on a systemic view of relationships. One of the assumptions of this view, he said, is that any individual needs to be part of a relationship system for individual definition, coherence, and satisfaction. This is consistent with the basic view that people need people. It appears that marital research has not otherwise identified valuation of the marital state or lifestyle as a separate variable.

There have been periodic calls to study the nature and functioning of commitment in marriage. Commitment does not appear as a separate theme here as it seems composed of Valuation of the marriage state and Valuation of the specific other.

Valuation of Self received less explicit attention from this study's Subjects than did valuation of spouse or of marriage. Examples of self valuation that were stated are: "I'm worth the work that making a satisfactory marriage takes"; "I feel I have made a better life for myself"; [I've had the ability to deal with the special difficulties of making a remarriage satisfactory]; [I've gained in self-confidence and am now secure that things will pick up where they left off when my husband returns from business trips]; "I can be an individual person,

Karen X versus Mrs. Don X, in this marriage and I like that"; "whether or not an individual is happy is largely a matter for the individual to manage, I don't depend on my spouse for that"; "you have to construe all situations as happening for the best, you need to do that for yourself." Research relating self-esteem or self-acceptance to marital satisfaction was reviewed in Chapter I and above.

In addition to these examples from everyday life, members of 3 remarried couples and 1 first married couple had been in individual, marital, or family therapy. Therapy can be viewed as an investment in, or Valuation of, the self and/or one's relationship and/or one's family.

It is worth noting that Valuation not only requires a person (self or other) or relationship that supports being valued. It also requires an active awareness and appreciation of those good qualities; it requires initiative. Thus, Valuation seems to be a reflective experience. Discrimination of the constituents of a well functioning relationship, and response to those constituents, seems to further enhance the relationship. By not taking the other, oneself, or the relationship for granted when the relationship is going well, a positive feedback loop is created.

Earlier it was mentioned that the other's trust in oneself is built by demonstrating, over time, that you will not hurt the other.⁴ Building on whatever goodwill towards men (basically positive object relatedness) he has, a person's valuation of the other seems a primary

⁴Global goodwill toward men is another matter, best exercised with due discretion; naive trust of a specific Other is also a different matter--such trust may or may not turn out to be well founded.

motivation for not hurting the other. There seem to be two aspects to this: (a) one does not want to damage that valued other, and (b) one wants the trust and positive regard of a valued other. Conversely, being trusted by the valued other would tend to enhance your Valuation of that other.

Valuation of the spouse and Valuation of marriage appear to fall under the "Toward Other" meta-theme. They are attitudes that condition how one is likely to interact with the other. Valuation of Self appears to fall under "Apart From Other" (if not balanced by valuation of spouse and marriage/relationship it might slide over to "Away From Other").

Valuation of the spouse, however, implicitly reflects on oneself: this valued other is with you. Similarly, the valued marriage is something one has or is in. Given these considerations, Valuation of spouse and marriage can be placed under the "Other as a Narcissistic Extension" meta-theme (Valuation of Self does not itself fit into this meta-scheme).

Other objects of Valuation that should be mentioned are religious faith and humor. In this sample, which was recruited through churches, five remarried persons and eight first married persons spoke of how they valued their religious involvement. This religious valuing involved three aspects: (a) people spoke of their faith as a source of personal strength; (b) they spoke of religious involvement as strengthening their commitment to each other, "because [the] commitment was not only to each other but to God"; (c) people spoke of the social value of their church involvement, both as shared, cohesion building, family activity, and as a place to meet similar families.

Curiously, only five remarried people--no first married people--spoke explicitly of the value of humor. All the interviews, however, contained some humor. One remarried woman put it this way: "It's kind of a steam vent. If you can just laugh together for a minute it relieves a certain amount of tension. And then when the appropriate time comes you can get down to the heavy details" {R9,W}. She also observed, "You just can't take everything so dead seriously because by the time you're in your second marriage there have been so many calamities and disasters in your life."

Trust has already been referred to as being built by Acceptance, Responsibility, and Valuation of the Other. Trust appears to include two primary sub-themes: trust of the other's commitment and trust of the other's competence. Trust of the other's commitment includes trust of the other's fidelity. Trust of the other's competence includes trust of the spouse's ability to manage finances and to deal with the children on his/her own. This interest extended into the future in that one husband {F12,H} stated quite strongly that he was relieved that if he should die his wife was quite capable of handling affairs and bringing up their (his) children.

A primary meaning of trust appears to be an absence of anxiety vis-a-vis the other. When you trust a person you don't worry about them hurting you. This can be contrasted to Valuation, which is a presence of positive feeling. Valuation involves not taking the other's qualities--their being--for granted; Trust involves taking the other's commitment and competence--their doing--for granted.

The building of Trust for an other is furthered by that other's Acceptance, Valuation, and Responsibility toward oneself. However, the process appears to require an initiative by the Self. If you do not first risk, then you can never find out that the other is worthy of the trust you put in them. Even the other's taking risks with you, which you prove worthy of, would not be sufficient guarantee to a thoroughly paranoid person. Thus, Trust originates in a "leap of faith" by the Self.

Trust would fall under the "Toward Other" meta-theme. It is an implicit attitude towards the spouse. Like Valuation but unlike values, trust seems other-specific. A person would not need to trust everyone to decide to trust a particular person. Trust would also fall under the "Other as a Separate Person" meta-theme. A person that could hurt you, but does not, must be a separate person. An extension of oneself would not be seen as having that potential.⁵

Responsibility can be seen to have a very close relationship to Trust. Whether the absence of hurting the other that furthers Trust is the result of doing or not doing (lack of sins of commission or omission), Responsibility vis-a-vis the other is involved. Responsibility and Trust are the two sides of a relation. My responsibility towards you rewards your trust in me; your trust in me is a prime occasion for my responsibility towards you.

⁵This is not the place to discuss theories of self-destructive behavior; suffice it to say that there is some misguided attempt to make things better for oneself by attacking aspects of oneself that are seen as separate and threatening.

Responsibility might be seen as subsumed by Valuation or as subsuming Acceptance/Tolerance. The difference between Responsibility and Valuation or Acceptance/Tolerance is that both Valuation and Acceptance develop over time in response to a specific other. Even one's passing appreciation for a "good looking" member of the other sex can only develop (however quickly) once one "lays eyes on" that other. Responsibility, on the other hand, seems to be a trait that inheres in the person, independent of any specific other. In that way Responsibility is akin to an individual's values. A responsible person is generally responsible.

Responsibility thus can be grouped under the "Apart From Other" meta-theme, though it is exercised "Toward Other." It would also be grouped under the "Other as a Separate Object" meta-theme. One acts (or refrains from action) in regard to a separate person. To act (or refrain from acting) responsibly toward another one must consider the other's best interests as potentially different, i.e. separate, from one's own wishes.

Bell and Daly (1984) identified seven clusters of affinity-seeking "strategies," or ways of presenting oneself to increase closeness with another. One cluster was labelled "Mutual Trust" and included being trustworthy. Another was labelled "Concern and Caring" and included being altruistic. Bell et al. (1987) found that wives' perceptions that their husbands related to them honestly--a form of responsibility--correlated with wives' marital satisfaction. Elements of Trust and Responsibility seem to be included in Sillars et al.'s (1987) theme of Cooperation. It involves "conscious, active working together to resolve

problems . . . [and] mutual respect and consideration" (p. 506). Trust seems to underlie the belief in the basic benignity or neutrality of the other that Beavers (1985) cites as characteristic of successful marriages. Responsibility seems founded on Beavers' observation of a capacity for clear boundaries in successfully married people. Laurence (Note 1) points out that willingness to assume personal responsibility is characteristic of the key trait of personal identity he found in happy couples. Beavers (1985) states: "Combining a healthy respect for uncertainty with the belief that family members are not malevolent goes a long way towards developing a climate of trust and cooperation" (p. 72). Such a climate leads to the optimistic belief that relationship can be rewarding. In turn, such hope is necessary to any successful endeavor.

One of the buzz-words of relationship workshops and self-help books is Communication. Not surprisingly this emerged as a major theme in this study as well. Indeed, as Don Jackson once observed, one cannot not communicate. It is hard to see how a person can build or maintain a relationship without honest communication and thus reliable information from the other. Two first married wives {F9,W; F5,W} pointed out that such honest communication presumes, on the communicator's part, an honest "communication" with her or himself. A communicator must be clear about him/herself before s/he can be clear to the other.

What is perhaps less obvious than the need for communication is the importance of discretion in communication. For instance, members of three remarried couples and three first married couples stressed the importance of constant, honest communication. However, one remarried

person pointed out that both she and her husband prefer not to feel compelled to communicate everything, as they value their sense of individuality as well as their marriage. She said they trust that each will communicate what is necessary. Three first married persons said that, unless a point is essential, they would rather let it go than confront their spouse about it.

Two remarried persons pointed out how crucial communication is. Yet two remarried persons and one first married person pointed out how necessary it is to stop communicating, to temporarily let an issue go at times, rather than to keep "hammering" at it and risk over-alienating the spouse. One first married couple went as far as saying that sometimes, even if you're sure you're right, it is more important to permanently let something go, even to apologize, to maintain the relationship.

One remarried person and four first married persons spoke of how it is best to deal with an issue when it arises, to "put your cards on the table," rather than to suppress one's thoughts and feelings and have them fester. One remarried couple and two first married couples pointed out that it is important to pick and chose when to talk about sensitive topics, that it is often not wise to pursue a volatile topic, or introduce a new one, when the precipitating event is freshly upsetting.

Two remarried persons pointed out that misconceptions can become vicious circles if each person does not explain their actions. One remarried person pointed out that some issues, which seemed important at the time, soon enough ebb to the point that they don't need to be talked about at all.

One first married person, echoing a common sentiment, said, "You know what the other person is going to say before they even say it." Two first married persons pointed out that it is false to think that you don't have to communicate because you know your spouse so well after many years together. One wife put it:

When we discuss something you bring out your side and I bring out my side. I can't of thought of his side and he can't have thought of mine. . . . That's difficult because I'm not always aware that he's not aware. {F9,W}

This is the same point made by Sillars and Scott (1983): the "tendency to overestimate understanding may further reduce understanding because people seek less information when they believe they have an accurate understanding" (p. 161).

This exercise in point-counterpoint could be pursued even further. The point is not to debunk the importance of Communication in marriage (or other relationships). It is to debunk any simple prescriptive approach to Communication. It is to illustrate the subtle interweaving of various concerns that condition communication.

Two conclusions arise from this discussion. First, the need for discretion, tact, and timing in effective communication. Second, that what is effective communication for one couple may be different from what is effective for another couple. As with Separateness and Togetherness, a given couple must work out, within some range, their own modus operandi. Indeed, a couple that prefers more separateness is likely to feel less of a need to communicate everything.

Communication can be seen as falling under the "With Other" meta-theme. It can also be seen as falling under the "Other as a Separate Person" category. The need to communicate arises primarily because of separateness, especially since what needs to be resolved are areas of disagreement. Certainly the importance of communication in satisfactory marriage is reflected in the literature, as are some of the subtleties of the relationship of communication and satisfaction.

The way, it appears, that couples learn to play the subtle music of communication with discretion is by developing, over time, an Attunement, a sensitive and knowledgeable caring, for each other.

This is not to say that simply spending time with someone guarantees developing Attunement. It seems one must have an intent to understand and a respect for the other as a separate, different person. One remarried husband said, "[Making a satisfactory marriage takes a] consciousness of what's going on" {R5,H}. Another said, "[You've got to] be aware of how whatever you're doing right now, [is] going to affect your relationship" {R11,H}. A remarried wife said, "Probably the most important thing is just to have a mutual respect for the other person, even if they are different from you" {R9,W}. To traverse the time until (relative) attunement or understanding is achieved, one needs Tolerance. As one remarried husband said, "Even if you don't understand them, I think it means a lot of time tolerating until you can understand" {R12,H}.

Thus, the interplay of these themes is illustrated. Valuation motivates the development of Attunement, Trust allows one to act, Responsibility is a valuing way of acting, Communication (broadly

construed) with discretion provides the means of acting, Attunement refines Valuation and Communication, and Tolerance binds time while seeking Attunement. A fairly similar set of Values, including the mix of Separateness and Togetherness that each partner prefers, gives a couple an advantage towards Attunement. There is perhaps a minimum "critical mass" of similarity beyond which the influence of other factors can enter. Meanwhile, Attunement facilitates the other's Trust by allowing a person to be more fine tuned in his/her Responsibility towards the other, in large part by informing the when, how, and what of Communication.

Attunement also is not without it's paradoxical qualities. One remarried husband said, "If I'm not thinking about her as my most important person I could put something else first" {R7,H}. Another, on the other hand, said, "I don't think [thinking about my family a lot while away is] anything necessary to keep the marriage going" {R10,H}. Shortly after that, however, the same husband said, "I do [think about my family] at times during the day, especially when I know it's getting late in the afternoon and I've got to call home to say hello." This illustrates the interplay of Attunement, the presence of a responsive awareness of the other, with Trust, an absence of anxious concern about one's relationship with the other.

Another contrast under Attunement is the degree of attunement couples felt at the point of marriage. One husband said that he knew he cared a great deal for his wife when they married, that she had the attributes that he was looking for, and that "the chemistry was right." His wife pointed out that, having dated for only 5 months, "we were

still really getting to know each other when we got married" {R2,W}. Members of eight remarried couples spoke of how their perceptions of their spouses had not appreciably changed since they married, and how this lack of surprises helped their marriages. Two remarried persons made statements to the effect, "If I hadn't had a clear perception [of my spouse's personality], or thought I had, I don't think I would've gotten married" {R9,W}.

On the other hand, 9 remarried persons, including 4 of the same persons, stated that their perceptions of their spouses had changed in noticeable ways since marriage.⁶ It seems to make sense both that you ought to know a person that you are marrying rather well, and that there is no way to know that person in the intimate detail that can come after years of marriage. Further, it seems that you can know a person and, in another sense, not know that person at the same time. One remarried wife illustrated this paradox:

You're exactly the person I thought you would be. I really hadn't seen him in the role of disciplinarian and we really hadn't experienced any joint financial ventures. But it's been so comfortable because I really haven't been surprised at any of the ways he's handled things. {R9,W}

This experience of continuity yet change in one's experience of the other echoes our sense of continuity yet change in ourselves. We all feel, in some sense, we are the same person we have been, at least

⁶This may be either because their spouses had changed, or because they had come to a clearer perception of how their spouse had always been; in actuality these two aspects may be quite difficult to distinguish.

since we've been adults. Yet we also all feel how much we have changed in 5, 10, or 20 years. The flow of self and relationship through time is like water.

Attunement can be seen as falling under the "Toward Other" meta-theme. The Communication that helps build Attunement (and which, in turn, is enhanced by Attunement) is "With Other," but Attunement, as an attitude and as knowledge of the other, is Toward Other. Attunement can also be grouped under "The Other as a Separate Person." You do not need to attune to an extension of yourself; an extension is by definition attuned to you. Literature reporting the evidence of a correlation between being able to predict spouse responses and marital satisfaction was reviewed in Chapter I.

With the help of Attunement, Tolerance, and Valuation, Communication often leads to Compromise. Eight remarried people and five first married persons spoke of how the married state demands negotiation with and accountability to the other, as opposed to the independence of a single person. One remarried husband put it this way: "When you're out there on your own [you're] independent. Then, when you come into a [family,] you have to give and take rather than be independent" {R10,H}. A first married husband put it: "[When] you're single and independent you don't have to worry about anybody else or what they like or are they upset with you" {F3,H}. Another first married husband put it: "You develop the ability to surrender part of what you've always done to the other person, so the whole thing's stronger" {F5,H}.

Compromise needs to be distinguished from passive-dependent compliance. Compromise takes place between two equals, each of whom start from a well-defined position. It is a "fair fight." The statement of one remarried wife illustrates this understanding: "He was willing to do things I didn't think he was willing to do. It's not that he wants to do it, that's a compromise he will make" {R5,W}. Although the end of compromise may be to "give in" to the other, "giving in" implies a solid position that is surrendered. Passive compliance carries a sense of going along with the other without resistance: "anything for you, darling." Its intent is to become and remain deserving of, and positioned for, unrealistic dependent gratifications. When, inevitably, these gratifications do not materialize the relationship will go sour (like an overripe fruit, too much sweetness makes the fruit go bad). In contrast, Compromise between worthy negotiators, assuming it is followed through with Responsibility, enhances the Trust in a relationship. Thus, an argumentative couple may be as good, or better, at compromising as couples where there is "rarely a ripple on the pond."

The fruit of compromise is a resolution. A resolution may be either long or short-term. The choice between making a lasting decision and making "temporary adjustments" (see above) may be limited by the nature of the issue at hand. Certain situations--such as a job opportunity that requires a cross-country move, whose house to live in, or whether to have a joint or separate checking accounts--require a one-time decision. Other situations are ongoing and can be negotiated day by day. The wife who spoke of making temporary adjustments was

specifically referring to dealing with children--an area in which she and her husband disagreed. Similarly, the husband in another couple that disagreed about dealing with children said, "I don't expect we will ever come up with a hard and fast set of rules, or with total agreement in a lot of areas" {R2,H}.

Once the decision is made, or the particular instance adjusted to, it seems there is fair agreement that the issue should then be considered closed. Two remarried persons and one first married person spoke of how, once the negotiating/arguing has reached a conclusion, it should stay concluded. It seems it is generally not a good idea to "throw the past up in someone's face."

This is one aspect of how Responsibility is critical in fulfilling the purpose of Compromise. Responsibility is also the basis for following through on Compromise. As one remarried wife said, "Feeling heard is important, but it's not enough. [The other person has] to do something about what is being said" {R5,W}.

Being able to close and/or follow through on an issue seems closely related to being able to see and adhere to an overriding commitment: Valuation of the other and of marriage. Such a commitment is a prerequisite to forgiveness. The couple quoted before seems worth quoting again:

Learning to forgive people is so important. I think forgiveness and continuing the relationship is what this marriage has taught me. I mean really forgiving, not having any bad feelings left over. {F1,W}

This same couple related forgiving to Trust, in two ways. First, one had to trust that arguing wouldn't destroy the relationship in order to be able to disagree or fight openly. Second, you must trust that the other will not take advantage of your forgiveness--for most people there are only so many cheeks that can be turned. Thus, forgiveness can be seen to be a fruit of Trust, Responsibility, Acceptance, and Valuation.

An area of Compromise that may not be as obvious is compromise with oneself, or acting deliberately (as opposed to acting according to how one feels). One remarried husband exemplified this phenomenon:

I have discovered how uncomfortable I feel being a parent.

And yet I know realistically that I'm a very good parent.

It's something I have to work very hard at doing. {R4}

Eight remarried people and ten first married people said their preconceived notions of what a spouse and/or a satisfactory marriage ought to be like had to be changed or compromised. Five remarried people, including two of the same people, said their ideas, about what it would take to make a satisfactory marriage, had not changed appreciably. One remarried wife pointed out that it was after her divorce but before her remarriage that she did most of her changing of what she wanted in a spouse and in a marriage. "When I found a person I felt that I could fulfill those needs with then I latched onto him" {R2,W}. Four first married people, including one of the people who had said his ideas about marriage changed noticeably, said they did not have any clear ideas about what marriage should (let alone "would") be like when they married. A compromise worked out by oneself, apart from the other, is the basis of a valid change in values. This is in contrast to

reactively attempting to believe with the values of whoever one is with at the moment (see example above).

Compromise, except for compromise with oneself, can be grouped under the "With Other" meta-theme. Compromise with oneself would fall under "Apart From Other." As compromise presumes, and originates from, two different positions about an issue, it would also fall under the "Other as a Separate Object" meta-theme. Even compromise with oneself might be seen as treating oneself in an objective fashion, i.e. as a separate person.

In the Sillars et al. (1987) study the content theme of Cooperation appears quite similar to the present theme of Compromise. The Cooperation theme was mentioned before in connection with Trust, Responsibility, and Tolerance. These related themes have been separately articulated in this study. Beavers' (1985) posited beliefs in relative versus absolute truth and a systemic point of view, and his observations of no more than a modest power differential, a capacity for clear boundaries, operating mainly in the present, respect for individual choice, and skill in negotiating all seem related to the theme of Compromise.

Much has already been said about how these themes interact. It only remains to say a bit more about when a theme becomes figural and what theme(s) become background when it does.

Communication and Compromise, when a couple is engaged in them, are perhaps the most figural of these themes. This is because of their concrete, active, interpersonal nature. They are overtly "With Other." The need for compromise arises when there is a disagreement between

partners. When there is disagreement between partners their Valuation of each other would recede into the background (which isn't to say it would disappear entirely). Conversely, in order to move toward Compromise rather than dissolution when there is disagreement, Tolerance and Attunement would need to complement each other in the "Toward Other" foreground.

Attunement would recede to the background when one is engaged apart from the other, when you are exercising the separateness aspect of Togetherness and Separateness. However, Attunement would still play a role in informing the person when it is time to return home. When a partner is acting autonomously--at home or elsewhere, with or without the spouse present--Attunement would recede. When a partner is feeling dependent Attunement would again come to the fore, to assist in obtaining dependent gratification.

Responsibility would come to the fore as compromises are followed through or tasks are carried out effectively (e.g. with children or money). When there is an opportunity sensed by one partner for the other to hurt, but the other does not, the other's Responsibility would also then be in evidence. Valuation of the Other would be likely to come to the fore, at least for a while, on the heels of such an event.

Valuation would generally come to the foreground in harmonious times. For instance: when making up after an argument, when quietly mindful of the other, hopefully when making love, or perhaps in a social situation where you can observe your spouse being appreciated by others--"That's my gal (or guy)!" When Valuation is in the foreground, Acceptance/Tolerance would recede to the background. Similarly,

Compromise would be in the background during harmonious times. Communication might then be background or foreground, depending on whether you share your appreciations.

Once a relationship is established, Similarity of Values and the mix of Togetherness and Separateness would tend to remain background, i.e. aspects of ongoing, prereflective experiencing. They would become foreground only when there is a problem of dissimilarity. These similarities could be foreground and contribute to Valuation of the Other when a couple is learning to know each other. Somewhat similarly, once established, Trust seems to remain in the background--unless there is a problem. As one remarried husband put it:

Trust is something that you just don't think about. You either got it or you don't have it. You know when you don't have it, and you don't realize when you have it that you got it. {R8,H}

In that way, trust is like breathing.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

First and remarried satisfied couples appear quite similar in how they self-disclose with each other. Both groups disclose more positive than negative material. These results can be understood as reflecting a sense of individual identity, including a degree of privacy and the boundary maintenance that preserves privacy. The results can also be understood as reflecting the common sense that is another aspect of a secure sense of identity: if you want to maintain a positive relationship you emphasize the positive while being able to recognize when and how to deal with the negative.

Both groups also seem to disclose more about themselves than about their spouses. This could reflect self-esteem, sensitivity about disclosing about the spouse before an interviewer, and/or that the Subjects construed the questions as asking primarily about themselves as individuals.

On the other hand, these remarried couples disclosed somewhat more negative material, in general and about their spouses, and somewhat less positive material than did these first married couples. The remarried couples might be different in their perspective and approach due to having gone through failed marriages and/or because they were an older group. They might feel more secure and/or more cynical.

Finding a significant degree of similarity between first and remarried groups despite the different challenges that these two types of marriage face implies a need for further research into the

similarities and differences in processes characteristic of first and remarriages. Particularly important might be the investigation of sequential patterns of verbal and nonverbal exchange during conflict resolution. Both Subject and third party sequential (vs. summary) ratings of these processes would be valuable perspectives.

These satisfied couples, both groups combined, developed themes around the question, "What does it take to make a satisfactory marriage?" The themes developed in this study closely resemble theoretical constructs, empirical results, and themes found in other literature. This lends convergent validity to the themes found, and to the phenomenological method employed. This also reveals that intelligent lay people have something worthwhile to contribute to psychological study.

The themes do not operate in an independent, mechanical fashion. They interweave in a subtle music that is also conditioned by the personalities and values of the individuals, and of the couple that those individuals create. To borrow a phrase, there is "no single thread" that creates a satisfactory marriage. Although neither a couple nor a therapist could successfully impose such a subtle, living scheme on a marriage, an active awareness and appreciation of these themes could help a couple understand and develop their relationship.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Code: _____

DATA SHEET

Age: _____ Years Married: _____ Race: _____ Ages of Children: _____

Education, in years (e.g. B.A. = 16): _____ Occupation: _____

Number of prior marriages (if any): _____ Number of children in home from prior marriage: _____

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

(Spanier, 1976)

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occa- sionally Disagree	Fre- quently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests and activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. Do you confide in your mate?	5	4	3	2	1	0

	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
20. Do you ever regret that you married?	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each others nerves?"	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

	Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate?	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your spouse?

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
26. Laugh together	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
27. Calmly discuss something	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
28. Work together on a project	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no.)

	Yes	No	
29.	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	Being too tired for sex.
30.	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	Not showing love.

31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

- 5 I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
- 4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
- 3 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- 2 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
- 1 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- 0 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

Reference

Spanier, G. B. Measuring dyadic adjustment: New scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1976, 38, 15-28.

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

We, the undersigned married couple, do hereby give our consent to be voluntary subjects in the dissertation research project of Christopher E. Hebb. We understand that we will be asked to complete a short "Dyadic Adjustment Scale" for the purposes of analyzing subscale areas of marital satisfaction. We understand that we will be asked to undertake together one interview, with Mr. Hebb, of about an hour's duration. We understand that the interview will explore the following five topics related to marriage: 1) how we have arrived at our child discipline practices, 2) how we have arrived at our budget priorities (we need not disclose what those priorities are), 3) how our ideas or perceptions of ourselves have changed since we married, 4) how our ideas or perceptions about our spouse have changed since we married, 5) how our ideas about what it takes to make a satisfactory marriage have changed. We understand that our responses, to the questionnaire and the interview, will be held in strict confidence by Mr. Hebb. We understand that the interviews will be audiotaped, for later analysis, but that both the tapes and the questionnaires will be identified only by code numbers. We understand that the audiotapes will be erased upon the conclusion of the project. We understand we will not be given any individualized results from this research, i.e. about ourselves. We understand there will be no financial compensation for our participation in this project, but that we may, upon request, receive a copy of the abstract of the (generalized) results of the project. We understand that we may withdraw from the project at any time without any penalty or prejudice.

Mr.: _____ Date: _____

Mrs.: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

1. In managing and disciplining your children, how have you come to do whatever it is that you do? [Instrumental]
2. How have your ideas or perceptions about yourself changed since you married? [Person Perception]
3. In budgeting and spending your money, how have you come to do whatever it is that you do? [Instrumental]
4. How have your ideas or perceptions about your spouse, each about the other, changed since you married? [Person Perception]
5. How have your ideas about what it takes to make a satisfactory marriage changed over time?

APPENDIX D

SELF-DISCLOSURE RATING SCALE MANUAL

Instructions

There will be 5 major questions in each interview--refer to the attached lists. You will rate each question twice, once for the wife and once for the husband. Listen to a question, rate that question, and then listen to the next of the 5 questions. Rate each person's response, for each question, on all 7 dimensions.

A given passage within a question may contribute to more than one of your ratings. Thus, some of the examples below are repeated under more than one dimension.

Use the following 5-point scales for each person. Each "point" will contain some range. As with the MMPI and other common tests, if a response is more this than that, rate it as this. Primary consideration should be given to whether the speaker considers the qualities (s)he describes to be negative or positive. This judgment will be informed by whether you, as a representative of "people in general," feel the speaker's statements are positive or negative and whether the spouse appears to consider the speaker's statements to be positive or negative (the spouse, in many ways, knows the speaker best). Try to keep to overt or only slightly inferential evidence.

	(About) none	Some	Average	High	Excep- tional
Positive Self-Disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Negative Self-Disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Residual Self-Disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Positive Spouse-Disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Negative Spouse-Disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Residual Spouse-Disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Affective Congruence	1	2	3	4	5

Guide

Below are examples chosen to illustrate/anchor each point. These examples were all selected from conjoint interviews done for a pilot study, and thus are selected from the range of responses found in conjoint interviews. These examples have been edited out of long, conversational responses; you will always need to rate within the context of the whole response to the question. Use these examples to guide (but not straitjacket) your judgments.

Positive Self-Disclosure

This dimension is rated for positive information or feelings disclosed about the self.

1. (About) No Positive Self-Disclosure: This is a default category used when you cannot detect any appreciable positive self-disclosure by the Subject.

2. Some Positive Self-Disclosure:

(Self-assertively) I wish I was a nymphomaniac, but I'm not, so it's, that's just the breaks.

AND

There wasn't a whole lot I expected [getting married] to help me to do. I didn't expect it to help me reach academic goals or things like that. But I expected companionship, somebody to be there to listen to me and somebody I could talk with, just to be comforted and cared for.

3. Average Positive Self-Disclosure: (by H:)

W: He usually has to start things going . . .

H: Well that's something we've talked about and we're working on it and we realize that sometimes you have to like give in or realize that . . . something might be bothering the other one.

AND

I could care for [my child] and was able to. And, I, I've had several child development courses and parenting courses and it made me feel good when I realized that I could apply that . . .

4. High Positive Self-Disclosure:

I don't know that I wish anything was different, about myself. I feel like I'm fairly tolerant, I like folks most of the time. . . . We're nice people. We've worked hard. . . . I like myself, I'm not going to change anything.

High Positive Self-Disclosure (con.)

AND

We're pretty self-sufficient. . . . We tried to get pregnant. . . . I'm having a hard time saying there's anything real bad about [having our first baby]. It's been too much fun. . . . From the minute we found out, to the minute she was born was kind of fun. The LeMass classes were even fun. W: Oh, I loved it. H: She had a ball, I was . . . I, it was OK. But the having the baby was a ball. I mean I think we had a good time. I know it was super hard on [my wife], it was hard on me, but it was neat, y'know, and it was something we shared, something we did together, something we wanted. . . . Boy, we sound like an ideal couple (all laugh). "Wait 'till page 2!"

5. Exceptional Positive Self-Disclosure: [No examples have yet been identified for this category. Rate it for positive self-disclosure that exceeds any of the above examples.]

Negative Self-Disclosure

This dimension is rated for negative information or feelings disclosed about the self.

1. (About) No Negative Self-Disclosure: This is a default category used when you cannot detect any appreciable negative self-disclosure by the Subject.
2. Some Negative Self-Disclosure:
Sometimes I wish I could . . . overcome my selfishness . . .
AND
[He's] usually the one that says "I'm sorry" first, it's real hard for me to say that, or to admit--I know, I know I'm wrong all the time or, when I am wrong that I am wrong, but it's real hard for me to say "Hey, I'm sorry," or "No, I was in the wrong."
3. Average Negative Self-Disclosure:
I wish I wasn't . . . as stubborn, or I was more willing to act.
AND
I'd like not to worry so much. . . . I worry too much, when there's nothing I can do about it. . . . I wish that I were more tolerant of [my husband's] father. . . . I'm not as tolerant as I should be with him.
4. High Negative Self-Disclosure:
At first [the arrival of our first child] was hard, because I told her, I said, number one you're gonna want him around more than me, 'cause he's new, you had to carry him for 9 months, and . . . I'm gonna be number two for awhile. And that was really hard for me.

High Negative Self Disclosure (con.)

AND

The one thing I really have discovered over the last 5 years and probably only within the last 12 months, don't totally understand it but basically I do, is how uncomfortable I feel being a parent. . . . It's something that I really have to work very, very hard at doing, it is not something that is very easy. I don't feel comfortable being a parent. . . . Here I had a situation of an 11 year old [step-]daughter who was going through puberty and one day was a little bitty girl and the next day was running on 21. I didn't know how to handle it, I really didn't. . . . I would suspect that both [my wife and I] did not have a very good image of ourselves as parents, in looking back on it. . . . There were not knock down, drag out fights [over dealing with the children] but the intensity of the anger that was there frequently and the lack of resolution was just continuing for long periods of time.

AND

I could sit there (sic) and laugh about it now and, but [in the past] . . . [my husband] could mention the word "money" and I just clammed up. And . . . he'd get mad because I didn't say anything. Well I knew that, so I didn't say more of anything. . . . And it was just an ongoing battle, continuously. That was probably worse than the kids, the money. That to me has been the absolute worst thing in the past 5 years.

5. Exceptional Negative Self-Disclosure: [No examples have yet been identified for this category. Rate it for negative self-disclosure that exceeds any of the above examples.]

Residual Self-Disclosure

This dimension is rated for self-disclosures of information that is not distinguishable as positive or negative. Background, story-like details given to elaborate a response to one of the Major questions, details that are not directly tied to or necessary to making a clearly positive or negative evaluative point will be scored here. This category reflects information that the subject gives about him/herself that adds to the "data" on that person, but that does NOT add to your empathic sense of the person, i.e. it is information that does NOT itself evoke any particular affective response in the listener (one may feel frustrated by the apparent avoidance of giving an evaluative response, but this frustration is not a response to the information per se).

1. (About) No Residual Self-Disclosure: This is a default category used when you cannot detect any appreciable residual self-disclosure by the Subject.

2. Some Residual Self-Disclosure: There are occasional details that are not clearly positive or negative.

There wasn't a whole lot I expected [getting married] to help me to do. I didn't expect it to help me reach academic goals or things like that. But I expected companionship, somebody to be there to listen to me and somebody I could talk with, just to be comforted and cared for.

Some Residual Self-Disclosure (con.)

AND

I guess I'd describe a disappointment as something that you're sorry you got married or you're sorry you ever thought of this, or you're sorry you didn't think of this before you got married . . . or you're sorry that, "Why didn't I see this before?"

3. Average Residual Self-Disclosure: There is a comfortable degree of elaborative detail.

I had tried to meet a variety of people and, through church groups and whatever, and one night I was at . . . [a cocktail lounge]. . . . And I had gotten to where I would go [there] every Friday night for Happy Hour. . . . For a buck-fifty you could get two bourbon and ginger ales and get a little buzz and you could eat all the free hors d'oeuvres you want. . . . I'd been going there for several months. And this particular night I might've had 4 drinks.

AND

[My wife and I] have different values, I think, about money and the importance we, the symbology we place on it is quite different I think. What we do is, all of the money that we, we earn, or receive in any way . . . we put into a joint family checking account. And out of that joint family checking account we sit down once a month and we, we pay monthly expenses together, O.K., and decide on any discretionary spending basically. . . . For household expenses, for food, groceries, and incidentals for Linda . . . what she can't live without at Target, we, we . . . opened up a second checking, it's a joint one, but the second one only Linda writes checks on. . . . And we transfer from the, from the family checking account--so it's really a record of all the income-outgo, O.K.--we transfer from it once every 2 weeks a few hundred bucks to go into the other account to buy groceries and to take care of Linda's incidental living expenses. . . . It just turns out that I think that, that, that our expectations [about money] are quite different. . . . Linda I think used, associates with money being powerful, that, that, that it's powerful not to have to account for the money. . . . I view it as being powerful to have a large reserve in a savings account.

4. High Residual Spouse-Disclosure: There is an abundance of elaborative details, but the Subject's evaluative responses are not lost in those details. [No examples of this category have yet been identified.]5. Exceptional Residual Spouse-Disclosure: There is a great abundance of elaborative details, often rambling, and any evaluative responses by the Subject seem to be (nearly) lost or avoided. [No examples have yet been identified for this category.]

Affective Congruence

This dimension assess the congruence or agreement between the literal linguistic content of what is said and the manner of its presentation, including voice inflections, volume, and rhythms. That is, it assesses the congruence between what is said and how it is said.

1. No Affective Congruence: The sample of satisfied married persons probably will not contain extreme inappropriateness so LITTLE congruence will be rated here. The incongruence should still be marked, however. Examples might include: persistent and disruptive nervous and/or inappropriate laughter; markedly exaggerated, labile, or over-dramatic presentations; markedly flattened affect, especially if accompanied by much unexplained sighing or such; marked discrepancy between "surface" manner (e.g. "everything's wonderfully equal between us") and intent (e.g. "I'm the boss and you'd better not forget it") of speech; and/or extreme poverty or irrelevancy of response.
2. Some Affective Congruence: This category would include noticeable but not marked incongruities. Examples might be: some nervous laughter, affectivity that is exaggerated or over-dramatic (though not frankly inappropriate) for the context and material, some discrepancy between "surface" and intent of speech (see #1), or dull yet not markedly flattened speech.
3. Average Affective Congruence: This category and #4 cover the usual range of congruity. This category defines the lower end (in terms of affectivity) of everyday public speech. There is a "businesslike," mundane degree of affective expression involved in the speech, i.e. some inflection but not much. The presentation is rather "ho-hum," or may occasionally show some nervousness or impatience. It is appropriate to content which is unexceptional, not too personal.
4. High Affective Congruence: This item covers presentations which are congruent and appropriate and which display a greater than "ho-hum" affectivity. More lively, interested, or confident, yet still publicly conventional or "working place" presentations would be scored here. This category would also include affectivity that may well be heard in informal or private settings, but which is at the less affective and/or less intimate end of that range. Examples might include: relaxed laughter, and noticeable irritation, tenderness, or sadness if they are appropriate.
5. Exceptional Affective Congruence: To rate this item would require content for which, within the context of the conversation, a greater than average affectivity is appropriate. In a sense, #5 is like #4 only more so. This category could include quite animated conversation. Content is required for which, within the conversation, exceptional affectivity--e.g. very marked tenderness, anger, or sadness, very hearty to "sidesplitting" laughter, or affectivity approaching these extremes--is appropriate and congruent.

APPENDIX E

List of Tests

Comparison		Interaction Significance	Figure No.
1.	Total Disclosure by Group and Sex		
2.	Total Self vs. Spouse by Group		
3.	Total Positive vs. Negative by Group	.003	3
4.	Total Positive by Group and Sex		
5.	Total Negative by Group and Sex		
6.	Total Residual by Group and Sex		
7.	Valenced vs. Residual by Group		
8.	Positive Self vs. Spouse by Group		
9.	Negative Self vs. Spouse by Group	.052 ^a	5
10.	Self Positive vs. Negative by Group		
11.	Spouse Positive vs. Negative by Group	.002	4
12.	Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
13.	Self Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
14.	Spouse Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
15.	Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
16.	Self Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
17.	Spouse Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
18.	Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
19.	Self Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
20.	Spouse Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group	.032 ^a	2
21.	Self Residual Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Group		
22.	Spouse Residual Instrumental + Person Perception by Group		
23.	Self vs. Spouse Instrumental by Group		
24.	Total Self vs. Spouse by Sex		
25.	Total Positive vs. Negative by Sex		
26.	Total Valenced vs. Residual by Sex		
27.	Positive Self vs. Spouse by Sex		
28.	Negative Self vs. Spouse by Sex		
29.	Self Positive vs. Negative by Sex		

^aMarginal effect.

List of Tests (con.)

	Comparison	Interaction Significance	Figure No.
30.	Spouse Positive vs. Negative by Sex		
31.	Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
32.	Self Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
33.	Spouse Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
34.	Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
35.	Self Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
36.	Spouse Positive Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
37.	Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
38.	Self Negative Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
39.	Self Residual Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Sex		
40.	Instrumental Negative Self vs. Spouse by Sex	.059 ^a	6
41.	Self vs. Spouse by Positive vs. Negative		
42.	Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Self vs. Spouse		
43.	Instrumental vs. Person Perception by Positive vs. Negative		
44.	Valenced vs. Residual by Instrumental vs. Person Perception	.005	1
45.	Positive Self vs. Spouse by Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
46.	Negative Self vs. Spouse by Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
47.	Self Positive vs. Negative by Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
48.	Spouse Positive vs. Negative by Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
49.	Residual Self vs. Spouse by Instrumental vs. Person Perception		
50.	Self vs. Spouse Disclosure by Self vs. Spouse Question	<.001	8

^aMarginal effect.

VITA

Christopher E. Hebb was born December 29, 1951 in Oakland, California. Being the first grandchild on his mother's side, his parents soon moved back east. Christopher grew up in central Massachusetts and attended public schools. He entered Carleton College, in Northfield, Minnesota, in September 1969. He graduated in June 1973 with a B.A. in English Literature.

After selling books, doing insurance inspections, working as a cook, and other odd jobs Christopher settled on a career in mental health. He began working in psychiatric hospitals in December 1976 and shortly thereafter began pursuing a Master's degree in Counseling at Boston State College. Christopher received his M.Ed. in June 1980.

Christopher found he still did not have enough education to get a good job in his field. With the encouragement of a respected supervisor, Christopher decided to try to get a Ph.D. He entered the Clinical Psychology program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in September 1982. After interning at Springfield Hospital Center, an APA approved site in Maryland, Christopher finally completed this dissertation and received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in December 1989. He is now working at Ridgeview Psychiatric Hospital, a private facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.