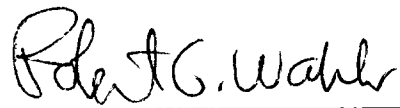


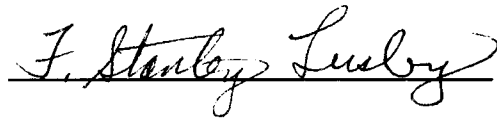
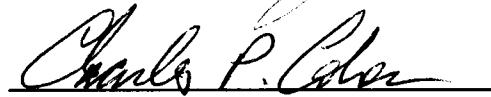
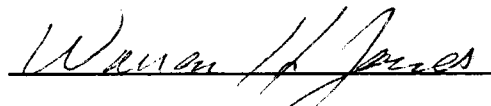
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Julie Elizabeth Thomas entitled "A Multifacted Approach to the study of Marital Intimacy: Behavioral and Phenomenological Analyses." 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.



Dr. R. G. Wahler, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:



Accepted for the Council:



Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of The Graduate School

A MULTIFACETED APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF MARITAL
INTIMACY: BEHAVIORAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSES.

A DISSERTATION
PRESENTED FOR THE
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
DEGREE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

JULIE ELIZABETH THOMAS
AUGUST, 1993.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated

to my father

Thomas George, Ph.D

for his consistent concern and cautiousness,

to my mother

Mary Thomas, Ph.D

for her passion and guts

and to both of you

for giving me my first glimpse into the intriguing phenomenon called marital
intimacy.

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I would like to begin by thanking my parents for giving me the opportunity to pursue higher studies. I greatly appreciate my advisor, Dr. R. G. Wahler's infinite patience, support and openness in allowing me to express my ideas in spite of our differences. He has remained my "constant object" through the turbulent periods of graduate school. I am also grateful to Dr. Cohen whose incisive and thought provoking comments as a clinical supervisor and as a committee member has greatly enriched my thinking and shaped my personality. I was fortunate to encounter Stan Lusby, an outstanding scholar and a truly humble human being. I thank him for allowing me to participate in his classes and for being a valuable committee member. I would also like to thank, Dr. Jones for his ideas and thoughtful suggestions and for giving me permission to borrow books from his vast library. In addition, I would like to thank Don Broach for helping make the process of computing statistics less terrifying and on occasions, even enjoyable! I would also like to thank Dr. Pollio and his lab members for giving me a powerful and valuable approach to analysing data, namely the phenomenological perspective. I also extend my gratitude to the three undergraduates, Margaret Pratt, Mandy Blackburn and Liz Gotten who worked diligently and conscientiously in rating the stories and videotapes and to Sheri L. Carter for patiently transcribing the audiotaped interviews. I am also extremely grateful to all the couples whose active participation and reflections made this study an exciting project for me. Finally, I would like to thank my brother, Vikram Thomas and my friends, Lana Chambliss, Amy Rutenberg, Susmita Kashikar and Sangeeta Panicker for their warmth and support in helping me accomplish the herculean task of obtaining a Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

A review of the literature indicated several conflicting definitions of marital intimacy. Based on previous research, I defined intimacy as the ability to maintain the "I" within the "We" on the three dimensions of intimacy, affective, interactional and cognitive, each of which operated on the disengaged-enmeshed continuum. In addition, marital intimacy was studied from two different perspectives, the behavioral and the phenomenological. The hypotheses in this study were exploratory, and were (1) to find the relation between the three dimensions of intimacy and the scores on the marital questionnaires (2) to describe the structure of marital intimacy based on the phenomenological interviews and (3) to give a description of marital intimacy that captured the intricacies of both perspectives. Data were obtained from eighteen middle class, normal (defined as couples who had not sought counseling), Caucasian couples who voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. Husbands', wives' and couples' videotaped interactions were rated separately by trained undergraduates using a rating scale devised by the author. Correlational and multiple regression analyses (stepwise) were conducted to find the best predictor of the husbands', wives' and couples' marital satisfaction, commitment and adjustment test scores. In addition, husbands and wives were interviewed separately. Behavioral results indicated that the wives' cognitive ratings were negatively correlated with their marital commitment and adjustment scores. This suggests that the more wives' described characters in their stories as sharing their thoughts and feelings and agreeing/disagreeing with each other, the less adjusted they were in their marriage. In addition, the wives' interactional rating was positively correlated with their marital adjustment scores which suggests that

the more wives argued/took charge or agreed/gave in, the more adjusted they were in their marriage. The phenomenological interviews, supported this paradoxical finding. In addition, seven themes were apprehended from the interviews. These were best friends, reciprocity, non-verbal communication, time, contrast, children and destiny/surprise. Both perspectives suggest that marital intimacy is paradoxical in nature.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Intimacy is a concept that has been referred to for centuries by poets, philosophers and the general public. Since the 1970's (the me decade) psychologists also began acknowledging this term. Everybody uses the word and claims to know what intimacy is; yet it's definition and specifics continue to remain elusive, in part due to a great deal of vagueness and confusion as to what it means. As Schaefer & Olson (1981), point out, one of the major problems in intimacy research is the varying definitions of the term. The concept also gets bogged down by idiosyncratic trivialities. The term seems to have fallen into the same alarming morass described by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who said in relation to pornography, "I can't define it, but I know it when I see it". Yet, intimacy is considered the interpersonal dimension sine qua non of marital adjustment (Waring, 1984). There is also a belief among the lay public that is shared by some researchers (Waring, 1984), that the greater the "intimacy" between couples, the better the marriage; at the same time people are very scared of becoming "intimate" (Hatfield, 1984). Intimacy is also related to psychological health (McAdams & Valliant, 1982) and to physical health by helping to buffer the impact of stress (Miller & Lefcourt, 1982). In my dissertation I have undertaken the task of attempting to

explore intimacy by describing, defining and measuring this phenomenon among normal married couples (defined as couples who have not sought marital counseling).

In this paper, I critically review the ways in which intimacy between couples has been defined in the empirical and theoretical literature; I also propose a novel and integrative approach to defining this very complex and intriguing concept which takes into account previous research; finally I suggest a unique multifaceted approach to measuring intimacy which uses a combination of the behavioral and the phenomenological points of view.

A critical overview of the literature

In a recent overview of intimacy research entitled 'Intimacy as the proverbial elephant', Acitelli and Duck (1987) observe that "It is a necessary part of the research enterprise that some researchers must feel some parts of the creature while others probe other areas. We will remain blind only if we fail to relate the different reports to one another or if we see them as exclusive and or competitive rather than as compatible or complementary" (pp. 306-307). In order to understand what an elusive concept such as intimacy means, I begin the review by referring to the dictionary for a definition.

Intimacy: a dictionary definition

The Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1983) describes intimacy thus: 1 a. intrinsic, essential; b. belonging to or characterizing

one's deepest nature 2. marked by very close association, contact or familiarity 3 a. marked by a warm friendship developing through long association; b. suggesting informal warmth or privacy. 4. of a very personal or private nature.

The word intimacy, is derived from the Latin "intimus" meaning inner or inmost and "intimaire" meaning to make the innermost known. In most romance languages (Sexton & Sexton, 1982), to be intimate with another is to have an awareness of and to have access to and comprehend his/her inmost character.

Intimacy : an emotional connection to the other

Hendrick & Hendrick (1983) define intimacy as the degree of closeness two people achieve. Walster, Walster & Berscheid (1978) define intimate relationships as relationships between loving persons whose lives are deeply intertwined. Brehm (1985) describes the defining characteristics of an intimate relationship as one of the following: behavioral interdependence, need fulfillment and emotional attachment. According to Feldman (1979) intimacy is characterized by (a) a close, familiar and usually affectionate or loving personal relationship; (b) sexual relations and (c) detailed and deep knowledge and understanding arising from close personal connection or familiar experience. These researchers thus emphasize the **emotional or the affective dimension** of intimacy. As McCarthy, 1983 cited in Duck & Perlman (1985), however, has pointed out, researchers have been wrong to assume too readily that relationships consist only of positive emotion. "Negative" emotions like

anger and jealousy are a natural, unavoidable and important constituent of close relationships and have to be accounted for. For example, Satir (1972) and Bach (1969) point out that the creative use of conflict, which involves the presence of negative emotions, without the loss of esteem to either partner represents the presence of energy as opposed to apathy. Hatfield (1984) aptly points out that love and hate often go hand in hand and that the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference. An example of the manner in which love and elements of hate are combined is the love bite. Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1972) has noted that the love bite, which is a form of kissing that takes the form either of rhythmically repeated nibbling or of a single controlled bite, can frequently be observed as a form of teasing in the love foreplay of human beings. It is often used as a reply to a mild provocation and also in defense and has its motivational origin in aggression. Thus not including the "negative" emotions does not do justice to the richness of the concept of intimacy and fails to take into consideration the double edged nature of intimacy.

It is important, however, to note that such aggression takes place in the context of care and responsibility which Fromm (1947) considers to be the constituent elements of love. Without these elements and without respect, which for Fromm is the ability to see a person as s/he is and to be aware of her/his individuality and uniqueness, love deteriorates into domination and possessiveness.

Non-verbal cues: an important indication of intimacy

Another way of viewing intimacy, as suggested earlier is by looking at **non-verbal cues** between the couple. Intimates have been found to be comfortable in close proximity. They gaze at one other (Argyle, 1967; Exline, 1972; Rubin, 1970) lean on one another (Hatfield, Roberts & Schmidt, 1980) and stand close to one another (Allegeier & Byrne, 1973; Sheflen, 1965) as cited in Hatfield (1984). Morris (1977) suggested public touch is an important 'tie-sign' that signals the bondedness of the pair to other observers. Thus nonverbal cues are yet another way of communicating between couples and are indicative of intimacy.

Summary:

While researchers agree that feelings and communication of these feelings verbally and non-verbally between two people are an important aspect of intimacy, emotions like anger are not given as much importance as love and affection. It is the interplay of conflicting emotions, love, affection and laughter on the one hand and jealousy, fear, sadness and anger on the other that gives vibrancy to the most intimate of relationships. It is in intimate relationships that we feel most intensely. Thus a definition of intimacy needs to take into account both the positive and negative affects involved in becoming increasingly connected to the other person, on an emotional level.

Intimacy : the process of getting to know each other

Researchers like Altman & Taylor (1973), Derlega & Chaikin (1975), Hatfield & Walster (1981), Jourard (1971) have associated **self-disclosure**, the revelation of personal information and feelings by one person to another to be associated with the development of interpersonal intimacy; self-disclosure is also thought to be a major vehicle for self-clarification, social validation and relationship development (Derlega & Grzlelak, 1979). Rubin (1973) states that intimacy literally means "to get into another person - to really know another" (p.160). Chelune et al. (1984) view intimacy as the subjective appraisal that emerges out of a relational process between two individuals in which each comes to know the "innermost" aspects of the other, and each is known in a like manner. Frey, Holley & L'Abate (1979) describe intimacy simply as the disclosing and sharing of hurt feelings. Clinebell & Clinebell (1970) and Dahms (1974) characterize intimacy as mutual sharing and need satisfaction in such areas as sexual, emotional, social, intellectual, recreational and spiritual. Schaefer & Olson (1981) after stating that "one of the areas most closely confused with intimacy is that of self-disclosure" (p.48) and that "the authenticity of a cold truth may serve only to separate individuals resulting in non intimacy" (p.49) go on to define "intimacy as a process and an experience which is the outcome of the disclosure of intimate topics and sharing of intimate experiences" (p.51). They developed the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory which measures the expected versus realized degree in five areas of intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational intimacy.

Perlmutter & Hatfield (1980) as cited in Chelune et al, (1984) go a step further when they define intimacy as "a process in which a dyad - via ideation, sensation, affect and behavior - attempts to move toward more complete communication, on all levels of the communication transaction" (p.18). They believe that communication is the basic medium through which intimacy develops; disclosure of personal information and what the couples say to one another is only the denotative aspect of communication. *Intentional metacommunication* - the subjective meaning of one's messages - is what they consider to be the sine qua non of intimate relations. In the same vein, Tannen (1990) borrowing terminology of Gregory Bateson differentiates between the *message* - the obvious meaning of the act, from *metamessages* - that is information about the relations among the people involved, and their attitude toward what they are saying or doing and the people they are saying or doing it to. Metamessages frame a conversation, like the picture frame provides a context for the images in the picture and they let you know how to interpret what someone is saying by identifying the activity that is going on. Since an outside observer lacks this frame, s/he is very likely to miss the subjective meaning of the messages among the people involved. The participant's subjective meanings can best be understood by allowing them to explain their understanding of a phenomena. This is referred to as the phenomenological perspective.

Gilbert (1976) along with Cozby (1973) suggest that the relationship between self-disclosure and relationship satisfaction may be curvilinear and that there may exist a point at which increased self-disclosure actually

reduces satisfaction with the relationship. Chelune (1979) finds no evidence to suggest that self-disclosure is the same as verbal intimacy; Waring and Chelune (1983) found that while self-disclosure was a major covariate of intimacy the two were not synonymous. Helgeson et. al. (1987) point out that though self-disclosure is not a necessary and sufficient feature of intimacy, it is nevertheless one important feature of intimacy.

Sternberg as cited in Jones (1986), has pointed out that the process of getting to know each other is not a rational process and in some sense, is at least as much our conception of that person, as it is that other person as he or she exists in reality. Jones (1986) also reiterates that relationships are psychological inventions of individuals and may only dimly reflect what people do or say from an observer's point of view. Similarly, Boszormenyi-Nagy (1973) points out that there is no objective middle ground of undistorted reality between partners in a relationship. Each partner has a need for distorting the love partner as a fitting object of his/her own need configuration. A close relationship between two partners is a dynamic encounter between need templates; thus, love is blind.

Summary

Intimacy, in addition to involving an emotional connection with the other, also involves a **cognitive dimension**, the process of getting to know the other, by sharing and disclosing the similarities and differences of one's views and opinions about oneself, the other, and the world. This process, far from being an objective and rational process, is based on the

manner in which the individuals conceptualize their relationship, and on what they see as similar and different and what they are comfortable with; in short, intimacy is based on the myth each couple creates about each other and their relationship. Thus every relationship tends to have unique aspects which are not readily apparent to the outside observer. In order to understand the participants' myths and subjective conceptualizations of intimacy they need to be given an opportunity to describe their perspective through an interview. This would represent the phenomenological perspective.

Intimacy : an interaction between two people.

A few researchers have provided us with some **interactional models** of intimate relationships. The equilibrium models proposed by Argyle and Dean (1965) and Patterson (1976, 1984) argue that we have optimal levels of intimacy that we prefer and being comfortable involves maintaining a balance between our desires to achieve and to avoid intimacy in our interactions. This dialectical perspective is important and unique from other theorists who propose a linear perspective of intimacy and claim that striving toward intimacy is good (Perlman & Fehr, 1987). Similarly, Feldman (1979) and Mace (1982) suggest that each marriage sets the level of intimacy it will tolerate. Mace's "love-anger cycle" suggests that as a couple becomes more intimate, differences are accentuated, which leads to disagreement. This in turn leads to anger. The failure to achieve love causes the couple to retreat to a more superficial relationship. Feldman's intimacy regulation model also asserts that too much intimacy

provokes anxiety. Spouses then initiate conflict to increase distance and thus reduce their anxieties about close relating. When a certain degree of distance exists, needs for intimacy reemerge, leading to conciliatory behavior. As intimacy increases, it again creates anxiety, repeating the cycle. Schaefer and Olson (1981) also suggest that an ideal degree of intimacy for marital adjustment does not exist. Harper & Elliott (1988) conclude from their study that intimacy like self-disclosure has a curvilinear relationship with marital adjustment. They further caution marital therapists that the assumption about more intimacy being better for marriage is not applicable to every case and that therapists should focus on the discrepancies between what spouses want and what occurs rather than assuming that more intimacy is good for everyone.

Equity theorists (Walster, Walster & Berscheid, 1978) believe that people seek a fair outcome, considering both their own costs and the outcomes that others receive. Hatfield and her associates (1985) have been especially concerned with the application of equity theory to the analysis of intimate relationships. They claim that equitable dating relationships are more likely to progress to higher levels of intimacy and that partners will be more content and less distressed in equitable relationships. Hatfield and her associates (1985) also state that when inequity exists, intimates will try to restore equity and following transitions or crises, couples will either work to reestablish equity or move towards breaking up and equitable relationships are especially likely to be stable and to persist. Thus equity theorists argue that although the unique characteristics of intimate relationships may change, the timing of the form of reaction to inequity

and fairness remains critically important in all relationships (Perlman & Fehr, 1987). Utne et al (1984) in their study found equity to be important in deeply committed relationships. A number of marital therapists base their theories of marital functioning and happiness on a fair exchange model of intimate relationship (Lederer & Jackson, 1968; Patterson & Reed, 1970). Klienke (1976) as cited in Chelune et al (1984) posits that as relationships unfold, interactants typically disclose personal information on a reciprocal basis - which is referred to as the reciprocity or dyadic effect in the self-disclosure literature. These theorists thus consider symmetry and a equal balance in terms of fairness as perceived by the partners to be important in intimate relationships. Margolin (1982) similarly, in expressing the behaviorist's notion of intimate relationships points out that intimate partners provide the most significant controlling environmental influence on one another's behavior. Since there is no logical point at which to interrupt the flow of interaction to identify cause-effect relationships, relationships are conceptualized as circular and reciprocal sequences of behavior in which each person's behavior is simultaneously being affected by and influencing the other (Weiss, 1978 as cited in Margolin, 1982).

Mills and Clark (1982) have challenged the application of equity theory to intimate relationships and differentiate these exchange relationships from communal relationships. They describe these relationships as a form of selfless concern in which the welfare of the other person predominates and in which equity considerations are thrown aside. Benefits are given because they will be pleasing to the other person

or because they are needed. In their experiments they found that in communal relationships, if one's partner reciprocated a favor, attraction decreased rather than enhanced. Moreover, when needs pertain to self-definitions and self-relevant emotions, responding to needs rather than adhering to equity rules is likely to engender feelings of being understood and cared for (Clark, 1985). Given that individuals frequently seek to increase the level of intimacy of their relationships (Miell & Duck, 1986), interpersonal exchange processes often follow a needs rule rather than an equity rule. They, thus suggest that even an imbalance or an asymmetry will be tolerated in a relationship if it is based on the needs of the partners.

Summary

Theorists, as the previous section indicated, seem to differ as to whether an intimate relationship is based on achieving a sense of balance or symmetry in the relationship, as the theories of equilibrium, equity or reciprocity posit, or whether they are based on asymmetry and imbalance in the service of the needs of the partners as the theory of communal needs suggest. In an intimate marital relationship, however, both partners influence what the other does or does not do by their own active participation or non-participation. This dimension can be referred to as the **interactional dimension** of intimacy. Thus in this dimension, couples implicitly or explicitly choreograph their movements depending on their capacity for intimacy. This capacity for intimacy seems related to whether each person feels secure and comfortable with himself/herself, and also depends on each person's capacity to connect and relate to another person.

Both these aspects of intimacy are influenced by early interactions with one's significant caretakers.

Intimacy: the development of an individual capacity which occurs in the context of early parent-child relationships

Erik Erikson (1959) argues that it is "only after a reasonable sense of identity has been established that real intimacy with the other sex is possible" (p. 52). He used the term intimacy primarily to describe a quality of mature adult heterosexual relationships and maintains that successful negotiation of the crisis of identity versus role confusion is a prerequisite of intimacy (Erikson, 1959). Zen Buddhism (Suzuki, 1962) also paradoxically points out that unless a person accepts himself/herself and is in touch with himself/herself, s/he cannot be in touch or fully relate to other organisms or the rest of the world. Self-alienation goes hand in hand with alienation from others and the world. Thus without a sense of "I" there cannot be a sense of "We" and vice versa.

Sullivan (1953), defines intimacy as a close dyadic relationship in which the participants value each other as they do themselves, validate each other's sense of worth and perhaps, most importantly engage in the process of consensual validation. The ability to make a shift from a largely parataxic mode (self-referential) to one that is syntactic, allows for the development of collaborative efforts and mature empathy, which according to him is crucial.

The capacity to become intimate with another person and to trust the other, along with the capacity to trust oneself and feel secure about

one's own identity, develops in the context of early parent-child relationships. Bowlby (1969) points out that the bond with the parents is stronger the more promptly they respond to the baby's crying and the more frequently they initiate social contact themselves. Separation of mother-child between 14-18 months of life results in the child at first protesting and then detaching himself/herself from her surroundings. Harlow's (1962), experiments with the rhesus monkeys demonstrate that baby monkeys were more likely to choose wire dummies covered with cloth that afforded good contact rather than the dummy which provided food. His later studies also reveal that a lack of bonding between baby monkeys and their mothers resulted in impaired social, sexual and emotional functioning in later adulthood. Spitz (1965) examined the total apathy that babies develop due to the lack of a close emotional bond with a parent. Thus for human beings to develop an attachment, certain social experiences such as the development of a personal relationship with a parent figure is crucial without which as Erikson (1963) points out a fundamental attitude of "basic trust" fails to develop; the development of trust is the prerequisite for any kind of emotional commitment. As R. Spitz (1965) writes children who have grown up without love become adults filled with hate. In place of basic trust the fundamental attitude of these unfortunate people is determined by basic mistrust of themselves and others.

D. W. Winnicott's theory of object relations is also particularly relevant to understanding how intimacy develops. Winnicott (1958, 1965) points out that the capacity to be alone ("I") which paradoxically develops

out of being alone with another ("We) who is reliable, consistent and nurturing, lays the basis for ego-relatedness which he considers to be the prototype of later intimate relationships. Clinebell and Clinebell (1970) emphasize that the hallmark of genuine intimacy is the respect for the need of each partner for periods of aloneness. Winnicott (1947) in addition, also describes the importance for mothers to be able to experience hatred towards their babies; it is through living and tolerating this experience of hatred without doing anything about it, that mothers grow closer to their babies. Individuals in intimate relationships, similarly, have to learn to tolerate each other's differences, intrusions and hatred of each other without doing anything more than acknowledging and tolerating its presence in the relationship. This cannot occur unless individuals respect and feel secure about themselves. Henry Dicks (1967) similarly points to the necessity of marital partners being flexible with each other to change their role behavior in response to the other's need of the moment without loss of self-respect or security; this need particularly applies to aggressive and to sexual needs, to tolerate and respond appropriately to the partner's varying moods for activity, passivity, a quarrel or a tender reconciliation. This flexibility which is an aspect to tolerate, fuse and use ambivalence is, according to him, the key to the secret of all human relations. It is the ability to 'contain hate in a framework of love' (p.31). He also reiterates that the deepest attitudes in terms of love and hate, security and anxiety are laid down in the responses and interactions between those of parents and infants.

Summary

Thus as theorists have pointed out the ability to become intimate with others depends on the development of one's own identity ("I"). Without a sense of "I" it becomes difficult to respect, tolerate and appreciate the other person and develop a sense of "We". The development of one's identity and the capacity to relate to others, occurs in the context of early parent-child interactions. Being one with others and with life, and being-one with oneself are for Zen the very substance of religious life. It is also, I believe, the essence of intimacy between couples, namely the ability to maintain the sense of "I" within the "We". This essential ability applies to the three previously described dimensions of intimacy, namely, the emotional, cognitive and interactional dimensions. In each of these dimensions a delicate balance needs to be achieved between being overly focused either on the "I" to the exclusion of the other, or on the "We" to the exclusion of meeting one's own needs. The optimal point on this continuum, however, very likely varies for each couple. An interview with the couples will be very helpful in understanding how couples achieve this balance. Allowing couples to talk about their view, as previously indicated, is referred to as the phenomenological perspective. Thus intimacy can be conceived as operating on a continuum ranging from the disengaged end to the enmeshed end.

Intimacy: a delicate balance of the "I" within the "We" on the Disengaged-Enmeshed Continuum

Family therapists (Bowen, 1978; Minuchin, 1974; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981) have discussed the delicate balance between marital cohesion (emotional bonding) and autonomy (individuation) of individual partners, indicating that it is possible for some spouses to be too enmeshed (there is over identification so that loyalty to and consensus between the spouses prevent individuation of family members) and to feel smothered by too much cohesion or on the other extreme to be disengaged (high levels of autonomy are encouraged and family members "do their own thing" with limited attachment or commitment to their family). They thus see marital cohesion and autonomy of the couples to be on the same continuum.

Clinebell and Clinebell (1970) similarly point to the necessity of achieving a balance between the needs for dependence, love and nurturance on the one hand and the needs for autonomy, self-fulfillment, achievement and independence on the other. Looking at the same picture from a different angle, Cohen and Sherwood (1991) point out that "love involves granting the other person some power to control us hence the vulnerability that is often associated with love.... there are gradations of attachment on a continuum along which the desire to control the other yields to a willingness to accept the other's freedom" (p. 166). Clinebell & Clinebell (1970) also point out that intimacy is not a constant, but is expressed in varying degrees in the ebb and flow of day-in and day-out living; it is never a once and for all achievement but must be nurtured

throughout marriage. Kahlil Gibran (1940) expresses this dialectical tension beautifully in verse:

But let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of heavens dance between you.
Love one another, but make not a bond of love;
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of
your souls.

Olson, Russell & Sprenkle (1979), similarly have devised a circumplex model of marital and family systems based on two orthogonal dimensions, family cohesion and family adaptability. Family cohesion is defined as the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another and the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system. They describe four levels of cohesion which range from disengaged (very low) to separated, to connected to enmeshed (very high). Family adaptability is defined as the ability of a marital or family system to change its power structure, role relationships and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress. There are four levels of adaptability which range from rigid (very low) to structured, to flexible, to chaotic (very high). In the model's central area individuals are able to experience and balance being independent from and connected to their families and have levels of adaptability (structured and flexible) that are more conducive to marital and family functioning.

In opposition to this circumplex model proposed by Olson et al, Beevers and Voellers (1983) argue that cohesion and autonomy need to be placed on separate dimensions rather than on orthogonal dimensions. They point out that autonomy (which they describe as the differentiation of self), is a quality pursued throughout one's life and is a developmental concept defining the functioning of the self. Autonomy should not be confounded with cohesion as they believe that the latter is a variable defining the interaction among family members.

Olson et al. in a later paper (1983) concur with Beavers and Voeller that autonomy is more adequately described in a linear dimension and revise their definition of family cohesion as "the emotional bonding members have with one another" (p. 80). They, however, go on to state that, although, they consider autonomy in individual development to be a less integral part of the Circumplex Model than family system dimensions, they support any effort to relate individual dynamics to one's current or past family system. This is precisely what family therapists such as Bowen, Minuchin and Olson et al. have attempted to do. As they indicate individuals in an intimate relationship attempt to maintain a delicate balance between autonomy and interdependence on each other. Autonomy, as Boszormenyi-Nagy (1973) points out is a dialectical concept. The child in a family does not develop autonomy in a vacuum. The process of self-differentiation is continually influenced by one's relationship. Moreover, in modern day society there has been a shift from the previously patriarchal heteronomy to the present day requirement of autonomy of adults. Successful adaptation to marriage, thus crucially

depends on a blend of the autonomy of the individual - an established sense of personal identity and ego-strength - with the preservation of the capacity for dependence. Technological society puts much pressure on *in-dependence*, which often means a bogus tough handling of dependence needs. For marital success, it is important to make available in adult life the toleration of the qualities of tender concern and dependent needs through caressing words and actions, both in the sense of continual thoughtfulness and in cherishing in daily relations (Dicks, 1967).

Barriers to intimacy, grow out of an inadequate sense of identity, the fear of being smothered, swallowed, losing one's autonomy or even oneself in a relationship; the fear of exposure, attack, being abandoned and also the fear of what one's own destructive impulses may do to the other (Hatfield, 1984). These fears are an integral part of every relationship and have to be continually dealt with in every intimate relationship. This is the reason why intimate relationships are potentially painful and threatening; yet it is what makes an intimate relationship when achieved so rewarding.

Summary

Family researchers and theorists (with the exception of Beevers & Voeller) believe that marital cohesion and adaptability are on a curvilinear continuum which ranges from couples being disengaged on one end, to being enmeshed on the other. They moreover emphasize that self-differentiation and the development of identity, occur in the context of an intimate relationship and involve a dialectical process between the

two. Individuals in an intimate relationship are satisfied depending on the extent to which they can see themselves and their spouses as being self-differentiated while at the same time being interdependent on their spouses. These theorists thus lay the basis for a new definition of intimacy. Since the existing definitions regarding intimacy are vague, unclear, and contradictory, I propose a new definition of intimacy.

Intimacy : a new definition

Although intimacy has been much researched, there are several conflicting definitions in the literature as to what intimacy means and paradoxically very little research done to empirically test these definitions of intimacy. I, therefore propose a new definition of the term which takes into account previous research. I also propose a manner for empirically testing this definition.

Intimacy, is the process of maintaining the dialectical tension between autonomy and dependence, aloneness and connectedness, being unique and spontaneous and being consistent and predictable. In essence it is the ability of the couple to maintain the "I", while belonging to the interdependent unit "We". While there are many ways of conceptualizing this dialectical tension, I choose to represent it on a linear continuum, that family researchers such as Minuchin (1974, 1981) and Olson et al (1983), have conceived of, ranging from disengaged to enmeshed; disengaged being the pole at which couples function predominantly independently of each other, and enmeshed being the pole where the couples are predominantly dependent on each other and are unable to function

separately. A couple's functioning can fluctuate on this continuum in their attempts to balance the tension between the disengaged and enmeshed poles. Although the use of the disengaged-enmeshed continuum is not new, the attempt to use this continuum to define intimacy as involving a dialectical tension of maintaining the "I" within the "We" on the three dimensions of intimacy, the affective, cognitive and the interactional, is new and unique.

The *affective dimension* of intimacy is the process by which couples express their emotional connection with the other, by expressing their feelings verbally and non-verbally on this disengaged-enmeshed continuum, ranging from being predominantly affectively indifferent (disengaged), to being predominantly affectively positive or predominantly negative (enmeshed).

The *cognitive dimension* of intimacy is the process by which couples get to know each other through sharing and disclosing one's opinions and views with each other. This process is based on the myth they create about each other; this dimension ranges from each person perceiving themselves as sharing very little thoughts and feelings and predominantly lacking agreement or disagreement with each other (disengaged) to perceiving themselves as predominantly sharing their thoughts and feelings and predominantly agreeing or disagreeing with each other (enmeshed).

The *interactional dimension* is the process whereby the couples communicate with each other and implicitly or explicitly regulate, control and choreograph their movements as to how they spend time and deal

with each other in everyday situations, which ranges from a predominant lack of regard of one's partner's movements (disengaged) to predominantly giving in or dominating one's partner (enmeshed).

Studying intimacy from two different perspectives

In order for intimacy as defined above, to be understood more fully, it needs to be studied from different perspectives, the behavioral and the phenomenological. Please refer to Figure 1.*

Intimacy : a behavioral perspective (the etic perspective)

Most of the research cited earlier, including my definition of intimacy, is based on the Cartesian world view which is mechanistic and in which reality is perceived by using the metaphor of a machine, where events are determined by forces and constraints outside the person. This Cartesian dualism between the observable, accessible body and the unobservable, inaccessible mind is still fundamental to most theory and practice in psychology. It represents the artificial distinction between the ("object-like") aspect of people, and the subjective ("subject-like") aspect of experience. The ontology (nature of being) is thus dualistic i.e human beings are considered to exist independently of the physical world.

In this method, moreover, the focus of research is on the underlying theoretical structures as described from a third-person view and the research logic is predictive. The strategy of such research is componential and seeks to understand phenomena through the analysis

* All tables and figures may be found in the Appendix

of component parts and the research goal is to reduce phenomena to an essential set of quantitative dimensions that adhere to determining laws and principles (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). At the same time, however, the advantage of such an approach is that the results are mathematically precise, easily open to verification and replication by others.

Such a research method can be described as *etic*, a term popular in the cross-cultural literature where the structure is created by the researcher. It is a process we continually engage in while visiting and living in a culture foreign to our own, where we impose our own structure and biases on others, to make sense of what we are perceiving. Clinicians too engage in this process of imposing their own structure on their clients to make sense of the latter's pathology.

If, however, this was the only method of approaching and understanding phenomena the process would be one-sided and totalitarian in character. Another crucial element in this process is being open to and allowing the participants to create their own structure and for researchers and clinicians to discover the already existing structure, without imposing their own biases, or by bracketing their biases. This is referred to, in the studies in cross cultural literature, as the *emic* approach

Summary

Thus the behavioral scientist's world view is based on the mechanistic, cartesian view where events are determined by forces outside the person. The nature of being is dualistic and is based on an artificial

distinction between mind and body and the research strategy is reductionistic and rendered in mathematical terms. The advantage of such an approach is that the results are mathematically precise and can be easily replicated by others. Thus, studying marital intimacy based on my outsider's understanding (etic approach) of this phenomenon while valid, would reveal only one side of the picture. To understand the other side requires a different approach. It is with this intention that I turn to the method of existential-phenomenological psychology (the emic approach).

Intimacy a phenomenological perspective (the emic perspective)

Existential phenomenological psychology, can be viewed as a discipline that is free of the Cartesian dualism. It seeks to explicate the essence, structure or form of both human experience and human behavior as revealed through essentially descriptive techniques, including disciplined reflection. They use the pattern metaphor where they do not study individuals separate from the environment but study the totality of the human-being-in-the-world.

The essence of the existential-phenomenological point of view is the notion of coconstitutionality, i.e. the notion of total indissoluble unity or interrelationship of the individual and his or her world. Each individual and his or her world coconstitute one another unlike the traditional conception in which people and their environment are seen as two separate and distinct things or poles. This co-constitutionality is based on a dialogical relationship between people in which people are condemned to choice. Each person is said to have situated freedom,

namely freedom based on making choices that is often limited by the situation (Valle & Halling, 1989). Consciousness, moreover, is considered to be intentional in nature or to be characterized by intentionality i.e. when one is speaking of consciousness, one is either implicitly or explicitly referring to its intended object as well. Phenomenological psychologists thus hold that the essential characteristic of experience is that it is always an experience of something (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). The aim, moreover, is to discover the structure in the form of meaning without imposing one's assumptions (emic approach). The major focus in this approach, therefore, is not the world as interpreted and created by scientific fact and theory, but the world of everyday experience as expressed in everyday language.

Another central concept of this point of view is hermeneutics which can be defined as "the study of understanding, especially the task of understanding texts" and is relevant to psychology as both are interested in being faithful to texts and the phenomena. The extent to which one deepens one's understanding has to do with a willingness and ability to reflect on one's preunderstanding of the text. The process of becoming aware of many of our preconceptions through bracketing, is essential to many human endeavors including developing a relationship (Valle & Halling, 1989).

Summary

The existential-phenomenologist's world view is a *contextualist* view in which experience is seen as a *pattern* that emerges from a context.

The nature of the being is *in-the-world* : experience and the world are viewed as coconstituting. The research focus is on experience as described from the first person view and the researchers seek the pattern as it emerges. The research strategy is holistic and seeks to relate descriptions of specific experiences to each other and to the overall context of the life-world, the goal being to give a thematic description of experience. The limitation of this methodology, however, is that the results may be flawed by subjective bias and limited by the interpretive skill of the interpreter. I turn next to a review of studies based on the first person point of view.

A critical review of research from a first person point of view

A few researchers have studied the lay person's everyday conceptions of intimacy. Waring and his collaborators (Waring et al., 1980) asked a sample of adults what intimacy meant to them and derived eight categories from their answers. In a second study (Waring et al., 1980) married couples spontaneously mentioned these categories in the following order of importance: affection, expressiveness (including self-disclosure), sexuality, cohesion (commitment), compatibility, autonomy (from parents), conflict (not arguing or criticizing) and identity (knowing oneself, knowing one's needs and enjoying adequate self-esteem). Helgeson, Shaver and Dyer (1987) extracted prototypes from college students' open-ended accounts of personal instances of intimacy and distance in same-sex and opposite sex relationships. At the heart of both sexes prototypes of intimacy were feelings and expressions of closeness, appreciation and affection; evident but less prominent were informational

self-disclosures. In contrast, prototypes of distance centered on felt and expressed dissatisfaction and disapproval (Reis & Shaver, 1988). These studies, were based on research with recently married couples who were mainly undergraduates.

Deborah Tannen (1990), based on her conversations with men and women, concludes that husbands and wives have different but equally valid conversational styles and different ways of attempting to preserve intimacy. She points out that there are gender differences in ways of speaking and we need to identify and understand them or we are doomed to blame others or ourselves or the relationship for the otherwise mystifying and damaging effects of our contrasting conversational styles. Although men as a class are dominant, she astutely points out that it does not account for conversations in which men and women are genuinely trying to relate to each other with attention and respect; the effect of dominance is not the intention to dominate. Both men and women, attempt to seek and preserve intimacy and avoid isolation but they do so in different ways. Men approach the world as an individual in a hierachial social order in which they are either one up or one down. In this world conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve the upper hand to preserve independence, establish status and avoid failure; while men are also concerned with achieving intimacy and avoiding isolation, they are not focused on these goals and pursue them in the guise of opposition. Women on the other hand approach the world as an individual in a network of connections and conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give

confirmation and support and try to reach consensus; while women are also concerned with achieving status and avoiding failure, these are not the goals they are focused on all the time and they tend to pursue them in the guise of connection. Though all humans need both intimacy and independence, women tend to focus on the first and men on the second. The essential element of the first, moreover, is connection and symmetry, while the essential element of the second is status and asymmetry. As Tannen states "It is as if the lifeblood of men and women ran in different directions." (p.26). Due to the different motivations and points of view of men and women, a man and a woman may perceive the same scene in different ways and misinterpret each other's motives. Understanding these differences, therefore, can deflect the misinterpretation and make sense where there seemed to be no sense and is a giant step toward opening lines of communication.

Register and Henley (in press) have made a significant contribution to the study of intimacy, by using the phenomenological method. They did a phenomenological interview on what ordinary people meant by intimacy. They asked eleven males and nine female volunteers to recall, describe and write a specific incident which they would call an "intimate experience." Results revealed seven major components to intimate experiences which included non-verbal communication (actions, gestures, facial mannerisms), presence (essence of a person which includes cognitive, affective, physiological and spiritual aspects), time (a keen awareness of the length of the experience), boundary (the edge of the life world of an individual - which was often physically and psychologically

disrupted), body (awareness of the body's involvement in the experience and through physical contact with the other person), destiny/surprise (the paradox of experiencing something unusual or surprising and yet feeling that it was very natural or destined) and transformation (the sense of creating something new through a movement or a merging). This study although important, was not about marital intimacy specifically.

Summary

These studies based primarily on the first person perspective give us a rich understanding of the participant's sense of intimacy. It opens the window to allow us to view the meanings, intentions and hopes of the individuals and also points to the different ways men and women seek intimacy.

None of these studies, however, specifically address the phenomena of marital intimacy, by using the phenomenological method described earlier. In addition, these studies have not attempted to compare the two perspectives, the phenomenological and the behavioral.

Behavioral and Phenomenological Perspectives of Intimacy: Laying the groundwork for developing a dialectical conversation between the two

Researchers have disagreed as to whether to study intimacy from the outsiders' or insiders' perspective. Phenomenologists value the subjective, whereas behaviorists value the objective (outsiders') frame of reference. As Olson (1977) points out there are two definitions offered by the individuals involved in the relationship (the insiders) and that

offered by individuals who observe the relationship (the outsiders). Subjective and objective measures of intimacy have been shown to produce discrepant results (Olson, 1977). Rather than assuming that the discrepancies indicate one perspective as more valid than the other, the significant issue is to use these discrepancies as providing useful information about the nature of a relationship and developing appropriate theoretical formulations. Thus, in this study both the researcher's perspective (the outsider) and the husbands' and wives' (insiders) perspectives need to be accounted for.

As discussed earlier, as human beings and particularly as researchers and clinicians, we are constantly engaged in the process of imposing our assumptions on others (the observers' or the etic perspective). At the same time, we are also engaged in checking our hypotheses and assumptions with the person/people experiencing the phenomena (the insiders' or the emic perspective). Although, I realise that even with the phenomenological perspective I am still making interpretations of the participants viewpoint it nevertheless brings me closer to studying the insider's perspective than the behavioral perspective.

Once again I turn to cross-cultural research to find a way to integrate the two perspectives. Berry (1967) suggests that hypotheses and descriptive categories can be applied in a tentative way (imposed etic); they can then be modified to suit the description within the system (emic); shared categories can be used to build up new categories valid for both systems (derived etic) until they constitute a universal. Thus one's assumptions

are constantly being modified by the information one gets from within the system.

Similarly, in studying the phenomenon of marital intimacy, I, as a researcher, am engaged in the dialectical process of checking out my assumptions of marital intimacy against those of the husbands' and wives' and modifying them in a manner that does justice to the latter's perspective. My assumptions of marital intimacy include my definition of marital intimacy, which I have defined as the ability of the couple to maintain the "I" within the "We" on the affective, cognitive and interactional dimensions. At the same time, husbands' and wives' in this study will be interviewed to understand their phenomenological perspective of marital intimacy. While being interested in finding the degree to which my assumptions of intimacy converge with their view of intimacy, I am also looking for differences between the two points of view, to further modify my own assumptions. This dialectical process between the two perspectives is hoped will create a rich, complex, and intricate understanding of marital intimacy.

Summary and Conclusions

A review of the literature indicates that the proverbial elephant of intimacy up to this point has been studied by probing its separate parts instead of studying it holistically. I believe that although, this is a necessary first step for studying this concept, an integrative approach to the study of intimacy at this point would be very helpful. Intimacy in addition to being a capacity within a person, is a process that develops between two

people in a relationship. It is characteristic of a relationship and emerges in the context of trust, commitment and mutual respect.

Intimacy is a multidimensional concept that fluctuates on a continuum ranging from disengaged to enmeshed. It is essentially the ability to maintain the "I" within the "We". The dimensions of intimacy include the cognitive, affective and the interactional, each of which operates on this continuum ranging from disengaged to enmeshed. The affective dimension is the process whereby two people express their sense of emotional connection verbally and non-verbally to each other; the cognitive dimension involves the process whereby two people come to know each other which is based on the myth they create about each other; and the interactional dimension is the process whereby the couples regulate each other's movements and choreograph their unique dance.

This definition of intimacy will be empirically tested from two perspectives: the behavioral and the phenomenological. In addition to an observer's or researcher's perspective, the husbands' and wives' subjective perspective about intimacy will also be considered crucial for a fuller and more holistic understanding of marital intimacy.

Thus the purpose of this dissertation is exploratory and the hypotheses are as follows:

(1) To find the relationship between the dimensions of intimacy as defined in this study, namely the affective, cognitive and interactional on a 1-5 rating scale ranging from disengaged (1) to enmeshed (5) (independent variables) and the scores obtained from marital satisfaction questionnaires (dependent variables).

(2) To describe the thematic structure of intimacy as it emerges from the phenomenological interviews with the husbands' and wives'.

(3) To find the extent to which the behavioral analysis of intimacy based on the researcher's perspective, and the phenomenological analysis of intimacy based on separate interviews with the husbands' and wives', the participants' perspective converge. In addition, to look for differences between the perspectives and to modify the researcher's understanding of marital intimacy such that the final description of marital intimacy captures the complexities and intricacies of both perspectives of marital intimacy.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

18 couples volunteered to participate in this study. The only stipulated requirements to participate in the study were that they be middle class, Caucasian couples who had not sought marital counseling, been married for at least two years and had completed high school. The couples who participated in this study, responded to posters about the study that were displayed in various churches in the vicinity of Knoxville, Tennessee and/or at the campus of University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The ages of the husbands ranged from 26 to 78 years while the ages of the wives ranged from 26 to 80 years. The husbands and wives belonged to varied religious denominations and professions; their highest degrees varied from having a high school degree to a doctorate degree. The number of years the couples were married varied from 2 to 54 years, the number of children the couples had varied from having 0 to 5 and the family income of the spouses varied from 10,000 to 200,000.

Please refer to Table 1 for a detailed listing of the frequencies of the husbands' and wives' ages, religious preferences, the highest degree earned, their occupations, the number of years the couples were married, the number of children they had and their annual family incomes.

Procedure

The study was conducted at the University of Tennessee Psychological Clinic. Once the couple arrived and completed the informed consent forms they were given the following instructions: "There are three parts to this study. The first part involves making up stories to the Thematic Apperception Test cards. These cards depict several characters in different situations. There are five cards and three questions on the answer sheet that will help you make up the story. The three questions are: What led up to this situation? What is happening now and what are the characters feeling? and How does the story end? Please write down the stories on the sheets given to you. I would also like you to do this task separately". The husband and wife were led to different rooms and were requested to call the experimenter after they had completed the task.

Once they had completed this task they were both led to a room which was equipped with a videotape and camera. They were given the following instructions: "The second part of the study involves doing the same task but this time I would like both of you to do this task together. Please make up one story to the same five TAT cards that you did separately. I would like you to write down the stories. This part of the study will be videotaped. Please call me when you have finished".

On completion of this part, thirteen of the eighteen couples who were selected randomly were interviewed. (A phenomenological analysis usually requires 10; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). The husbands and wives were interviewed separately. These interviews were audio taped. The question that was posed to the husbands and the wives was

"Was there a time when you were doing the task that you felt a sense of intimacy with your husband/wife"? If the answer was no they were asked "Please describe situations outside of this task when you have felt a sense of intimacy with your husband/wife". The interviewee was considered the expert in this situation and additional questions were asked only for purposes of clarification.

All of the 18 couples were asked to fill out the two marital satisfaction questionnaires separately before leaving.

At the end of the study, couples were also given the opportunity to ask questions of the examiner and to share any thoughts or concerns that they might have had about participating in the study.

Behavioral Measures

Three undergraduates were trained to use a rating scale devised on the basis of the author's definition of intimacy. The rating scale ranged from 1 to 5 on the three dimensions of intimacy, namely, the affective, interactional and the cognitive dimensions. (Please refer to Appendix A). They rated the husbands' and wives' separately, and together as a couple for each of the dimensions. Thus three scores were given, one for each husband, one for each wife and one for each couple on each of the dimensions of intimacy. Each of these dimensions ranged from a score of 1 (which was considered to be the disengaged end of the scale) to a score of 5 (which was the enmeshed end of the scale). Couples who did not fall at either end of this continuum were given a rating score of 3. A rating score of 2 was given if the observers considered the husbands', wives' and

couples to be leaning towards the disengaged end of the continuum and a rating score of 4 was given if the observers considered the husbands' and wives' to be leaning towards the enmeshed end of the continuum. For purposes of this study the dimensions were defined in the following manner:

The Affective Dimension (A) was defined as the process by which husbands', wives' and couples' expressed their emotional connection to each other; this dimension ranged from the husbands' wives' and couples' being predominantly without affect and lacking facial acknowledgments (which was the disengaged end of the scale and received a rating score of 1) to being predominantly sweet and/or angry towards each other, and constantly acknowledging the other's nonverbal cues (which was the enmeshed end of the scale and received a rating score of 5). Husbands' wives' and couples' who were eager and excited and expressed some facial acknowledgment were given a rating score of 3. The observers' rated this dimension while watching the videotape of the couples.

The Cognitive Dimension (C) was defined as the husbands', wives' and couples' perception of each other based on their myths about each other which ranged from perceiving each other as sharing little thoughts and feelings and lacking agreement or disagreement with each other (which was the disengaged end of the scale and received a rating score of 1) to perceiving each other as predominantly sharing thoughts and feelings and agreeing and disagreeing with each other (which was the enmeshed end of

the scale and received a rating score of 5). Husbands', wives' and couples' who perceived themselves as sharing ideas, thoughts and feelings received a score of 3. The observers rated this dimension by reading the written TAT stories. The scores for the husbands' and wives' on the cognitive dimension was based on the TAT stories they made up separately. The couple score on the cognitive dimension was based on the TAT stories they did together.

The Interactional Dimension (I) was defined as the process whereby husbands', wives' and couples' implicitly or explicitly regulated, controlled and choreographed what they said and did with each other; this dimension ranged from a predominant lack of discussion (which was a null category), to predominantly taking charge/arguing, being submissive/agreeing all the time (which was the enmeshed end of the scale and received a score of 5). Husbands', wives' and couples' who discussed the task and considered each other's ideas and opinions were given a score of 3. The observer's rated this dimension by watching the videotape of the couples.

In addition, the observers were asked to indicate a Global Rating (G) which comprised of the observers subjective impression after watching the videotape, as to how intimate they considered the husbands', wives' and couples to be in their relationship, on a scale ranging from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).

Marital Satisfaction Questionnaires

The two marital satisfaction questionnaires were the fifteen item Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (MAT), (Locke & Wallace, 1959) and the twenty-five item Marital Satisfaction and Commitment Scale (MSC), (Monroe & Jones, 1987). The MAT has a split-half reliability of .90 and discriminates between marriages that are well adjusted from those that are poorly adjusted. This questionnaire, however, does not discriminate between couples who are committed and satisfied in their marriage from couples who are committed but unsatisfied with their marriages. The MSC, on the other hand can do this and in addition has a high degree of internal reliability and measures a singular construct rather than an unrelated assortment of marital problems like the MAT.

Behavioral Analysis

The observers rated the three dimensions of intimacy, the affective, cognitive, interactional and the global ratings separately for the husband, the wife and for the couple and their ratings were correlated with each other. The observers obtained an inter-rater reliability of 67% on the affective dimension, 71% on the interactional dimension, 61% on the cognitive dimension and 57% on the global ratings. They obtained an overall inter-rater reliability of 68% across all the dimensions. Based on the correlations of the ratings between the observers, one master observer whose ratings correlated most highly with the ratings of the other two observers across all the dimensions was chosen. The master observers' ratings for the husband, wife and the couple on the three dimensions of

intimacy, the affective, cognitive and interactional and the global ratings were correlated with each other. These were the correlations of the independent variables. (Please refer to Table 13 and Table 15).

The marital satisfaction (MS) and the marital commitment (MC) items were scored separately as suggested by Monroe & Jones (1987), as there are couples who continue to stay in a marriage without necessarily being satisfied. Separating these two sets of items helped to differentiate between couples who were committed but not satisfied from those who were satisfied and committed. The scores from these questionnaires were then correlated with each other. These were the correlations of the dependent variables. (Please refer to Table 14 and table 16).

The master observer's ratings of the husband on the three dimensions (affective, cognitive and interactional) and the global rating were then separately correlated with the husbands' MAT scores, Marital Satisfaction (MS) and the Marital Commitment (MC) scores. A regression analysis was also performed to find which of the husbands' ratings were the best predictor of their marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores.

A similar set of analyses were conducted for the wives and for the couples. In the latter case, the observer's ratings of the couple were correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital adjustment scores, marital satisfaction scores and marital commitment scores. A regression analysis was performed to find which of the ratings were the best predictor of the couples' marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores.

The above set of analyses were repeated after discarding the data obtained from two couples from the original data set as during the process of administration, these two couples did not come up with a story together on the TAT when they were videotaped working together. They simply said "X's story" or "Y's story". These two couples were considered to be non-compliant and thus were not included in the study.

Outlier detection which is an examination of the data set to determine whether all points are appropriate for inclusion in the study, as Orr et al, (1991), point out is an essential aspect of data analysis. There are several sources of outliers including errors noted in observation or recording during the data gathering process. Orr et al, (1991) in their study which consisted of a mail survey of senior authors of all published papers using correlation and regression in the Journal of Applied Psychology and Personnel Psychology from 1984 to 1987 demonstrated that 67% of their respondents indicated that data points should be removed if they are extreme outliers provided there is an identifiable reason that leads you to consider them invalid. Since the two couples described above failed to complete the TAT task in the way they were instructed, they were considered to be outliers for purposes of this study.

Phenomenological Methodology and Analysis

The behavioral measures in the previous section emphasize an objective, standardized and quantifiable mode of investigation based on the researcher's understanding of marital intimacy. In contrast, the purpose of using a phenomenological methodology was to gain first-hand

knowledge about marital intimacy by questioning the participants involved. A primary phenomenological dictum is the concept of intentionality, which states that experience and the object of experience are a coconstituting unit. Thus, the essence of the phenomenological point of view is to understand and then describe experience as lived by the participants. Existential phenomenologists contend that lived experience may not always honor standard conceptual boundaries and, therefore, must be understood relative to the specific life-world from which it emerges (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1990). Moreover, as Collaizzi (1978) asserted there is no such thing as the phenomenological method. Each researcher, depending on his/her objectives and the particular psychological phenomenon s/he is studying, evokes a particular descriptive method. The methods chosen, typically involve strategies that are designed to remain close to the person's experience.

13 Husbands' and 13 wives' in this study were asked to describe their understanding and experience of marital intimacy. (Two sets of interviews had to be discarded due to the poor quality of taping). This was done in the context of an open-ended, dialogic interview. Each interview began with the question "Was there a time when you were doing the task that you felt a sense of intimacy with your husband/wife"? If the answer was no they were asked "Please describe situations outside of this task when you have felt a sense of intimacy with your husband/wife". The reason for the opening question was to establish an understandable domain for beginning the dialogue. The focus of the interview, however, was on the husbands' and wives' descriptions of marital intimacy and to

provide a setting for a descriptively focused, non judgmental dialogue. The manner in which the dialogue would unfold was not known in advance. The interviewer's questions and comments, moreover, were formulated in response to the participants descriptions. Thus the emergent dialogue of phenomenological interviewing was adapted to fit the phenomena rather than vice versa (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1990). Interviews lasted from about forty-five minutes to an hour and a half. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim. (Please refer to Appendix D for a sample phenomenological interview).

Data obtained from the perspective of the participants was then reviewed for significant statements. Significant statements were any element of the event that was seen as essential or as a central structuring agent within that event. After each protocol was reviewed for significant statements, words or short phrases, usually those used by the participants were identified to define recurring motifs. Such words and phrases were then listed along with specific quotations to capture each idea in a protocol. After further examination, preliminary themes were derived from an analysis of recurrent ideas and expressions. The protocols were thus interpreted by the researcher by means of an iterative back-and-forth process of relating a part of a text to the whole. This process is referred to as the hermeneutic endeavor (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1990). In this study the verbatim transcripts of audio taped interview sessions formed the texts. Interpretations were continuously revised as more of the texts were grasped. Interpretive themes reflect a fusion of horizons between the text and the researcher where the researcher attempts to look for

commonalties by seeing different situations as similar since commonalty is not an intrinsic property of the texts. Since the text forms the focus of interpretation, the phenomenological researcher, must be able to show where participant descriptions support the thematic interpretation (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1990). In this study thematic interpretations were demonstrated by quoting verbatim, excerpts from the husbands' and wives' interviews. After each interview was interpreted idiographically, the interpretive context was broadened as common patterns were identified across transcripts. These commonalties were referred to as *themes* (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1990).

One of the most useful analogies for conceptualizing a phenomenological theme is a melody. The perception of a melody does not depend on any one specific set of notes. What is critical is the organization of notes relative to each other as the notes can be transposed into a different octave, yet the same melody will be experienced. Similarly, it is the organization of a given set of circumstances within the life world that is central to understanding lived meanings, even though the specific facts of participant experiences can differ. Thus, it is from these shared experiential patterns that the thematic description in this study was derived. (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1990).

Many psychologists critique qualitative methodologies as they have felt that there are no such assurances for the dependability of data. In quantitative methodologies, the objective method of science is believed to ensure the purity, reliability and accuracy of results. Qualitative methodologies, are also concerned with issues of rigor, objectivity and

reliability but achieve them in different ways. The rigor of phenomenology is found in being faithful to the primacy, integrity and complexity of the phenomena as described by participants. By allowing participants to describe phenomena as they experience it without placing artificial methodological constraints on them, by re-contextualizing the data in order to describe it, and by avoiding reductionistic analyses, the phenomenologist believes that rigor is obtained (Giorgi, 1970).

Objectivity in qualitative research, moreover, is obtained through "fidelity to phenomena" (Collaizzi, 1978). This is achieved not by disengaging oneself from the phenomenon being considered but by investigating human experience by being personally engaged in both the research and the interpretive process. The phenomenologist does this through reflecting on his/her assumptions through "respectful listening to what the phenomenon speaks of" (Collaizzi, p. 52) and by describing the phenomenon as it is experienced by the participants not as it fits a theory or expectation. Unlike the behavioral methodology where the instruments of measurements render values which speak for themselves, a phenomenologist cannot describe data without an interpretive stance. We are all necessarily hermeneutic interpreters (Mallory, as cited in Hawthorne, 1988). The phenomenologist transforms experiential protocols into a meaningful structural description through bracketing.

The process of bracketing refers to methodological procedures that allow for seeing the text from a phenomenological perspective without predefining participants' experiences in terms of the interpretive framework. Two specific procedures have been recommended for

facilitating bracketing: (1) themes are rendered in emic terms (i. e. those of the participants), and (2) the evolving thematic description is periodically subjected to critical evaluation by an interpretive group. (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1990). The phenomenologist thus seeks validation in inter subjective agreement. The description and explication of the essential structure is thus considered dependable and accurate to the extent others find the interpretation clear and useful and can follow the researcher's descriptions. Obtaining inter subjective agreement, however, does not offer a validation of certitude, rather it suggests that the interpretation is the best that can be offered given present procedures (Hawthorne, 1990).

In this study, after each protocol was transcribed verbatim, a description of the themes containing the significant statements that were considered to be important to that particular participant was delineated. Once the themes were obtained, the researcher re-examined the protocol to ensure that the description fit with the data. In this way the themes were rendered in emic terms. (Please refer to Appendix E for an idiographic interpretation of the sample interview). Inter subjective agreement was achieved by using the members of a phenomenological lab to critically peruse the protocol and the thematic description obtained by the researcher. The phenomenological lab members, however, could not be periodically consulted, due to the researcher taking a leave of absence from the university. This process was thus a subjective one, based primarily on the researchers' interpretation of the interviews. The data was not verified by any objective measures.

It can be argued that the limitation of this methodology is that a hermeneutic approach may lead to results that are flawed by subjective bias and/or limited by the interpretive skill of the researcher. Accuracy in hermeneutic understanding cannot be quantified with a statistical value, for it is more conceptual than technical. Giorgi (1986) stated that the product of the human scientist is "neither arbitrary nor univocal", that is, the essential thematic structure that emerges from phenomenological analysis is neither one of many nor the only one. Thus, since texts are always open to multiple interpretations, the relevant issues in a phenomenological study are whether the interpretation is consistent with the aims motivating the study, can be directly supported by reference to participant description, and provides insight into the phenomena being investigated (Giorgi, 1986; Thompson et. al, 1989).

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Behavioral Results

Correlational analyses were conducted to determine the degree to which the husbands' affective, interactional, cognitive and global ratings were correlated with the husbands' scores on marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment questionnaires. Please refer to Table 2.

Table 2 reveals that the husbands' affective rating was positively correlated with the husbands' interactional ratings .58 ($p < .05$). In addition, the husbands' marital satisfaction scores were positively correlated with the husbands' commitment scores .56 ($p < .05$) and with the husbands' marital adjustment scores .74 ($p < .01$) respectively. The husbands' ratings on the affective, cognitive and interactional dimensions, however, were not correlated with the husbands' marital adjustment, satisfaction or commitment scores.

The stepwise regression analysis was undertaken to determine which of the husbands' ratings, affective, interactional, cognitive or global, was the best predictor of their marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores. As indicated above, since the correlations between the husbands' affective, interactional, cognitive and global ratings were not correlated with the husbands' marital adjustment, satisfaction and

commitment scores (refer Table 2), the regression analysis was not significant.

Correlational analyses were conducted to find which of the wives' affective, cognitive, interactional and global ratings were correlated with their marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores. Please refer to Table 3. Table 3 reveals a negative correlation of 0.50 ($p < .05$) between the wives' cognitive ratings and the wives marital commitment scores. In addition, the wives' affective rating was positively correlated with the wives' interactional ratings 0.89 ($p < .01$); the wives' marital adjustment test scores were also positively correlated with the wives' marital satisfaction scores .51 ($p < .05$) and with the wives' marital commitment scores .69 ($p < .01$) respectively.

A stepwise regression analysis was undertaken to determine which of the wives' ratings, affective, cognitive, interactional or global, was the best predictor of their marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores. Please refer to Table 4. Table 4 shows that the wives' cognitive ratings was the best predictor of the wives' marital commitment scores, accounting for 24.6 % of the variance which had a F value of 5.23 ($p < .04$). The wives' affective, interactional and global ratings dropped out of the equation as they did not contribute any unique variance. In addition, none of the ratings could predict either the wives' marital adjustment test scores or the wives' marital satisfaction scores.

Correlational analyses were conducted to determine the degree to which the couples' affective, interactional, cognitive and global ratings were correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital

adjustment, marital satisfaction and marital commitment scores. Please refer to Table 5. Table 5 shows that the couples' affective rating was positively correlated 0.48 ($p < .05$) with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores. In addition, the couples' affective ratings was positively correlated with the couples' interactional ratings .63 ($p < .01$) and the total of the husbands' and wives' marital adjustment scores were positively correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction scores .73 ($p < .01$) and with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores .65 ($p < .01$) respectively.

A stepwise regression analysis was undertaken to determine which of the couples' ratings, affective, interactional, cognitive or global, was the best predictor of the total of the husbands' and wives' marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores. Please refer to Table 6. Table 6 reveals that the couples affective rating was the best predictor of the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores contributing 22.7% which had a F value of 4.71 ($p < .05$). The couples' cognitive, interactional and global ratings dropped out of the equation as they did not contribute any unique variance. In addition, none of the ratings were effective in predicting the total of the husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction and marital adjustment test scores.

Two couples were discarded from the data pool as described earlier as they did not come up with a story when asked to do the TAT cards together. Instead they simply said X's story or Y's story or they rushed through the cards taking less than 5 minutes to complete it. Thus the same analysis that was conducted with the 18 husbands' and wives' were

conducted after removing the two outliers. Some notable differences emerged as a result of removing the two couples.

Results obtained on the correlational analyses between the husbands' affective, interactional, cognitive and global ratings and the husbands' scores on marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scales were similar to the results obtained with eighteen couples. The findings were consistent with the previous findings obtained with 16 couples and no notable differences were found. Please refer to Table 7.

The correlational analyses between the wives' affective, cognitive, interactional and global ratings and their marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores, however, revealed a significant negative correlation between the wives' cognitive ratings and the wives marital commitment scores $-.70$ ($p < .01$). This correlation coefficient was higher than that obtained with 18 couples. In addition, the wives' cognitive rating was also found to be negatively correlated with their marital adjustment test scores $-.51$ ($p < .05$). Another difference that emerged with 16 couples was the positive correlation 0.53 ($p < .01$) between the wives' interactional ratings and the wives' marital adjustment test scores. The other findings were similar to those obtained with 18 couples. Please refer to Table 8.

The stepwise regression analysis to determine which of the wives' affective, cognitive, interactional or global ratings was the best predictor of the wives' marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores, similarly indicated the wives' cognitive rating to be the best predictor of their marital commitment scores accounting for 48.6% of the variance which had an F value of 13.25 ($p < .003$). Although this was similar to the

results obtained with 18 couples the amount of variance contributed by this variable was almost double than with 18 couples. This was moreover, followed by the wives' affective ratings which uniquely accounted for 16.6% of the variance. With 18 couples the affective rating had dropped out of the equation. The affective and the cognitive variables combined accounted for approximately 65.2% of the variance in predicting the wives' marital commitment scores. They had a F value of 12.18 ($p < .001$). The other notable difference that emerged with 16 couples was that the wives' interactional rating was found to be the best predictor of the wives' adjustment scores, accounting for 28.3% of the variance which had an F value of 5.53 ($p < .03$). Please refer Table 9.

Notable differences were also found on the correlational analyses to determine the degree to which the affective, interactional, cognitive and global ratings of the 16 couples' were correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital adjustment, marital satisfaction and marital commitment scores. In addition to the couples' affective rating 0.61 ($p < .05$) being positively correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores, the couples interactional and global ratings, 0.54 ($p < .05$) and 0.54 ($p < .05$) respectively were also found to be positively correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores. Please refer Table 10.

The stepwise regression analysis undertaken to determine which of the couples' ratings was the best predictor of the total of the husbands' and wives' marital adjustment, satisfaction and commitment scores, moreover, found the couples' affective rating to be the best predictor of the

total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores. With 16 couples' the affective rating contributed 37.1 % which had an F value of 8.27 ($p < .012$) and was notably higher from that obtained with 18 couples. In addition the global rating uniquely accounted for 21.6% of the variance and the affective and the global ratings combined accounted for approximately 58.7% of the variance in predicting the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores. These two variables had an F value of 9.27 ($p < .0031$). Please refer to Table 11.

Thus with 16 couples the results obtained from the 18 couples were not only replicated but the coefficients and the variances obtained were much higher than those obtained with 18 couples. The results were greatly strengthened by discarding the data obtained from the two couples. In addition, new variables that were previously insignificant also emerged as being significant.

Phenomenological Analysis: A Gestalt Portrayal of Marital Intimacy

Table 12 presents the seven major interpretive themes apprehended from the present set of interviews: (1) Best Friends, (2) Reciprocity (3) Nonverbal Communication (4) Time (5) Contrast (6) Children and (7) Destiny/Surprise. Please refer to Table 12.

As with a perceptual figure/ground pattern, focus on one aspect of the gestalt can highlight certain characteristics of the whole that might otherwise escape notice. Thus, each thematic aspect will first be described and then their holistic organization will be discussed. To provide a clear sense of each of these themes, illustrative excerpts from the interviews

will be presented. Each excerpt will be identified as being from interviews with a husband or a wife.

It is pertinent to keep in mind that the themes represent the husbands' and wives' view at the time of the interview and may not necessarily be a reflection of their view over time.

(1) Best Friends: Feeling comfortable, close and enjoying being with each other

A recurrent theme of intimacy in the husbands' and wives' transcripts was the description of the marital partner as "being a friend". In addition, couples mentioned the sense of fun and enjoyment that they as a couple shared with each other primarily through laughing and talking and simply by being together. Couples also described feeling close and comfortable with each other. For example, one of the wives' stated "...we enjoy being together and talking in general...he's like a best friend". Another wife stated that "we just enjoy everything so much that it's rare that we don't feel close. It's just fun every day, it's just fun". A third wife stated that "...it's kind of like just laying back and floating on water. Just totally comfortable... and you know you've got enough uh...trust or something that the water is going to hold you up." One of the husbands said "that it doesn't really matter what we do...it's just fun being together". "We seem to get along real well, we got a lot in common.....going out to eat dinner, just the two of us in a quiet restaurant is intimate to me, obviously being at home, sexual intimacy, uh..going on long trips, just sitting in the car and talking one on one... just being together" according to

one wife contributed to her sense of intimacy with her husband. She continued to say that "...it's just comfortable... I mean I don't have to work at anything with him...I just know that, I mean, he may not like some of the things that I may do but he is going to accept me for who I am, for what I am and I don't have to try and do something I am not...He's just like my best friend, he's just always there and I just don't have to work at it." Her husband in a separate interview similarly stated that ".....it's wonderful..we just we just, I don't think there is anything that I couldn't just get up and tell her, I feel that comfortable about her, like she is a best friend and I think we are...a friend is someone you can share whatever experience you might be involved with and not feel you are going to be laughed at..." Another wife stated, "I guess we're best friends you know too..just you know you can talk about anything or just say what you really feel, where you maybe wouldn't with someone else". A husband similarly said that "...the bottom line is that you've just gotta be friends. Just very close, to be able to share."

Associated with that theme was the husbands' and wives', awareness of their separateness and their differences from each other. For example one husband stated that "...what makes me feel close to her is that we can do things together, or we can be a little bit apart and understand that. That's, that's I guess what I would feel as intimacy. We can have that closeness and still be able to do things by ourselves". Another husband stated "I wanted someone who could be independent and stand on her own, we respect each other. Our separateness works because we can talk with each other and uh..we respect each other's mental capacity and we

are just able to uh..have a dialogue and talk about it." Similarly, one of the wives' said "just being together, sharing the same experiences...we might disagree on something but it's nothing too big...and he treats me real respectful".

Each also described a mutual admiration and respect for the other, a kind of narcissistic investment in the other which in turn reflected the importance of their own self. As one wife put it "he thinks I'm greater than I think I am and I think he's greater than he thinks he is and that kind of supports the other". A husband said "....neither one of us feels, I, don't feel like either one of us have to question what we have to say to the other one.. we're both judgmental and we have our own opinions but we tend to respect what the other one says or feels and because of that, I don't think, neither one of us feels intimidated or shy about expressing their full opinions on something...that is a certain aspect of intimacy because you are sharing".

Although, husbands' and wives' talked about accepting these differences and the necessity of "giving each other their own space", the wives' unlike the husbands', described attempts early in their marriage to change their husbands; it was the acceptance of their husbands' as they were and accommodation to them, however, that led to their sense of intimacy. For example one wife stated: "You know the differences in personality don't ever cease to bother me at times, but I very quickly can say, No, I'm not going to change him and he's not going to change me and we might as well not worry about it, you know. You just don't dwell on it at all. You can just go on and do it your way".

While the couples talked about being comfortable with the predictability and familiarity of their relationship they also emphasized that "they not be taken for granted". According to one wife "it's just a continual sense of being appreciated and being cared for, not being taken for granted." At the same time, husband's and wives' also talked about enjoying being surprised by each other. For example, one husband said "Another (intimate) situation is when she has done something for me and it does not have to be something big and she's gone out of her way to do something, fix some special food or buy a gift or something that I was not expecting, that to me creates a spark of an intimate moment".

In short, the most prominent theme that emerged across transcripts about marital intimacy was the theme of the spouse being a best friend. In addition, husbands' and wives' also described intimacy as feeling comfortable, mutually admiring and respecting each other while being aware of and accepting each other's differences. At the same time some of them also indicated paradoxically that they did not want the relationship to become too familiar and predictable. An unexpected surprise enhanced their sense of intimacy with each other.

(2) Reciprocity: A fifty-fifty deal?

Husbands' and wives' described marital intimacy as involving a reciprocal relationship. At the same time, they also acknowledged that wives' were more likely to give in to their husbands' than vice versa. As one husband put it "it's one person wanting to please the other...we both tend to want to please each other....it's a fifty-fifty deal." Another husband

stated "I try not to dominate my way of thinking on hers and I think she does the same, tries not to do the same thing." He continued "...we agree and disagree sometimes, she'll give in or I'll give in, usually I'm the last to give in." One of the wives indicated "we give each other space when we need it. I give in probably more than I think I do". In the same vein another wife stated that "...I'm probably more submissive and let him, if there is something that he really wants to do around the house or anywhere, if he really wants to do it, I'll go along with it. Not that he wouldn't go along with me.....but I probably more often than 50% of the time, I'm...going along with him, what he might want to do. I don't like to make waves if things just aren't important. I mean, certain things, I don't care one way or the other and let him do what he wants". Similarly, another wife astutely reflected that its not so much the husband taking the lead as much as she allowing him to take the lead; she said "...I'd say he takes the lead and is sometimes more forceful about it. Other times I decide that its more worth doing something with him rather than having a conflict".

Thus, husbands' and wives' although perceiving their relationship to be reciprocal, were aware that wives' were more likely to give in to husbands' than vice versa.

(3) Nonverbal communication: much more than sexual intimacy

Husbands' and wives' described feeling intimate with each other through using "special" ways of communicating. They talked about a sense of "mental telepathy" that they shared with each other, the ability to

"read what the other is thinking without having to say it aloud". One husband for example stated that "...the common thread is the feeling of communication, almost like a radio or a non-mechanical ability to be separate but yet one....and when we see something that reminds us of something we could just give each other a glance and we know what the other one is thinking. Certain little signs, that's the feeling of intimacy". Another husband said ".....you know sometimes I feel we read each other's mind, we come out with I mean we say something together that we are thinking of, it's almost like ESP or something".

While most couples began the interview stating that intimacy is usually equated with sexual intimacy, they mentioned that sexual intimacy was not crucial to their sense of being intimate with each other. As one husband stated "as far as just having sex, no, it's not something that we based our relationship on before we got married and it's not something that we really strongly based our relationship on after we got married". One wife said "I don't think, I mean, I know with intimacy the first word you think of is sexual relationship, but to me, I don't think of it that way...it's just being there for each other". A husband succinctly said "the touching, the sex, all the other things around a marriage are important but the actual interaction on a daily basis is the intimacy...intimacy is not just sexual. I think it's the togetherness, that sense of being together is more powerful to me". Another husband said "I certainly think that uh.....physical, sexual intimacy is a part of intimacy, but I think that it goes farther than that, sometimes you can almost uh, you can almost read each other's mind uh, because you know each other,

you know what the other person is going to say or the way they will react and that's another form of intimacy".

Physical contact like touching, however, played a crucial part in the husbands' and wives' sense of intimacy. For example, one of the wives' mentioned that "we support each other very much and we stroke each other often. Affectionately rub backs or hold hands.....we have certain looks, certain touches....when somebody says something we can look at each other and we kind of get the same feeling of what has been said". Another wife said "I mean we're always close...we hug a lot...we're always physically pretty close to each other...". Another husband framed this in the following manner ".....it's not obviously 99% of the time, passion or lets go make love or something. It's just caring for someone, a hug for support, a hug for agreement which is closeness to being with someone....feeling someone you know cares about you".

A few couples also mentioned being comfortable with each other in the presence of silence. For example one husband said "we talk about things that uh, seems appropriate, but there's there is nothing wrong with not talking...as a matter of fact, a lot of times we have long quiet spells".

In short, for these couples marital intimacy meant much more than sexual intimacy. In addition to communicating with each other through physical touch, such as kisses and hugs, intimacy also included other nonverbal signs such as "mental telepathy" and "special looks".

(4) Time: Having to plan to be intimate with each other

Husbands' and wives' described feeling pressured by the lack of enough time, particularly those couples who had children who indicated "there is always so much to do". Time had to be set aside exclusively so that couples could "be with each other, just the two of them" "..we go from task oriented to do things that are unorganized or spontaneous". Intimacy occurs by planning to be with each other, outside the demands, constraints and pressures of time. As one husband described "intimacy for me are the times when the two of us are alone, when there are not any pressures on us, when there is no task to be done and we can focus on each other". Another husband in the same vein said "I guess when we're alone together just the two of us, it's a peaceful time. Well, a good situation maybe, if we are away from the house like on a trip...we just cuddle up in bed in a motel and just be content, because at home she always feels frantic or something and she works at home a lot too..so a lot of times it's when we get away that we are content and more intimate". Only a few couples talked about intimacy being present in their daily relationship. Thus given the constraints of time, couples had to paradoxically "plan to be spontaneous and disorganized".

Husbands' and wives' also described the manner in which by being together over time they consider themselves to have been molded by each other into "one unit". Although, they were aware of their differences and separateness from each other, there is the sense that the other spouse has influenced them, over time, in the way they think, act and feel. The couples, in addition, also described feeling as if they were part of a

common unit. One husband stated that "I know she's not me, but then again, I think we have grown together somewhat during the years...kind of meshing into one to some extent...Never be, never be one, but you're always kind of blending and meshing...your individuality is developed and shaped through the years by being with another person". In the same vein, another husband described "...we have our own separate identities but we've certainly become, she and I've become very intertwined, I guess you might say".

Husbands' and wives' who had been together for long periods of time described having disagreements with each other. Husbands' unlike wives' mentioned being able to let go off conflicts sooner than wives'. The latter, according to husbands' and wives' had a tendency to hold on to conflicts or emotions for longer periods of time. One husband said "she probably 90% of the time will want to bring in the conflict and say let's work it out, maybe 95% of the time...I usually don't do that. I can brush things off much easier than she can. She tends to hang on to it...". Another wife mentioned "...over the years, about twenty-four years, we've learned to talk about the disagreements enough that they don't fester and become anything that's ugly. When we first got married it was real hard for me to talk when I was so full of emotions about something. And it was real hard, I mean he had a real hard time with me, cause I would get all choked up and weepy, and when I'm that way I can't think straight and can't really be rational about things and I have to have time to kind of get rid of the emotion before I can talk about stuff". Another husband indicated "...I get on her because she doesn't vent her frustrations, and she gets on to me

because I vent mine too easily. Uh, I might get mad and let her know that I'm not happy and that it's usually over, I don't hold it for very long. In a couple of minutes I'm back to normal or if I need to apologize, I apologize. If I don't think I need to apologize, I don't. Sometimes that really bothers her and I try to let her know that I'm not really mad at her it could be something else that had made me angry and she's just triggered it".

The wives' while indicating that arguments were upsetting to them were also aware of the time-limited nature of their disagreements or anger. As one wife described "we have arguments, it upsets me of course, but hum... usually things don't go on too long with this, I mean we may be angry at each other for a day or two,...but it's not something that carries on and on and on". Another wife said "I really liked that in him and he still does that. I mean, he'll apologize thirty minutes later for getting mad at me over something stupid". In a sense they have a sense of security in the continual yet transient nature of their disagreements. As one wife stated "...every time we argue, I think this is just awful, and at the time I think I just never want to talk to him again but I know that's not going to last. I mean that feeling of not wanting to talk is not going to last".

Thus time plays a very important and paradoxical role in intimacy. Given the demands of daily life, couples had to plan to set aside time to be intimate with each other. At the same time, over time couples felt that they became intertwined. Finally, although wives were aware of the time limited nature of the disagreements with their husbands', they reportedly had a harder time letting go of the conflict and accompanying feelings than did their husbands'.

(5) Contrast: from Other Couples and from their Family of Origin

Husbands' and wives' in describing their sense of intimacy often contrasted themselves from other couples. As one husband stated "We want to talk to each other...many other couples don't do that and by not doing that they do not have the opportunity to get to know each other on a daily basis". A wife stated "It's hard for us to imagine couples being married three or four years and being divorced or being separated in the first year of marriage. I mean that's so hard for us to imagine anyone would be that unhappy in the first year of marriage. I mean we are just as happy now if not happier than we were in the first year that we got married..." In the same vein, a husband said "...we both tend to want to please each other, I mean not do anything that would hurt the other person, so we get along well. We..uh..have friends at church, you know, married couples like ourselves who tend to act, uh, mad at each other or appear to have a problem in their marriage and it surprises us that they can't be as happy as we are". Yet another husband said "we see other couples that may have quite a bit different personalities and they want to do a lot of things separately...we like doing things together, that's for us a sense of happiness".

Husbands' and wives' also pointed to the contrasting styles of their respective family members, and the way in which these different styles have influenced their own relationship. According to one wife "there's more of a contrast between his family and my family. It's almost like my family likes to kid around and joke while on the other side his family isn't as much so, so we kind of have to find a halfway point to meet". A

husband indicated "We just have different backgrounds. My parents are from a farm background and her parents are from the urban development and I grew up, did not grow up Catholic, I became a Catholic before we got married. Her whole family is Catholic and its different, just from jargon and daily speech to different diet, everything has been kind of interesting. Just kind of the simple day to day stuff.....It's been a learning experience, how to deal with people". Another wife stated "You know he didn't like a lot of big family get togethers, and I think partly because his immediate family got together but not everybody else.....I just kind of took it for granted, doing activities with the family, like holidays and stuff, um, I think he would prefer for most of them to be just us and not with the family." In the same vein, another wife said "...his family is not as close as my family and uh, sometimes he, you know he doesn't understand that. But uh, he appreciates that I feel that way about my family you know and I think, I wish that his family was that close. That you know that's just the difference in families....".

Some couples, at the same time, referred to how members in their family were role models for them. One wife stated "....I felt like at first that I had to do everything he wanted to do...He didn't really make me but that's the way I grew up..uh I guess that's the way my family was. Although my mother really ran the family, daddy worked making money, but she made the dollar stretch did what was needed to be done. I guess.....it felt like the man always said what you were supposed to do....." Another wife commented on the similarities between her grandfather whom she greatly admired and her current husband "...I mean my

grandfather was such a loving and giving and generous, not just materialistically generous but, uh a person that loved everybody....And my husband's that way. To me he is that way. I don't know if other people see him the same way or not, I do". A husband described the manner in which his parent's experiences helped shape his marriage "...mom and dad, they have a very close marriage, stable marriage. It's probably been a reassuring stabilizing thing in mine, how dad perhaps handled a situation with my mother.....and when the children begin to leave home, I hope it will bond us together, that's what it did for mom and dad when the family left and they realized that they have only got each other..."

Thus, this sense of contrast, "we are not like them", seems to enhance the couples' separateness from others while emphasizing their own sense of closeness and togetherness with each other. Husbands' and wives' in addition to having been influenced by particular family members also seem to use the relationship of their parents as a template for dealing with their own marriage.

(6) Children: Bringing couples closer, yet creating tension and stress on marital intimacy

Husbands' and wives' who had children described the paradoxical role that children played. On the one hand they felt that the children brought them closer to each other, on the other hand they were very aware of the tremendous stress that children put on their marriage, in terms of time, money and demands of child rearing which sometimes pulled them apart. As one wife described "I think it's probably one of the

most difficult things about having a child is to maintain the relationship, you know, with the spouse and not just becoming a total parent, um, neglecting the spouse or whatever..." Another wife described the tension resulting from raising children "...when you have just one child as we did, one of the things that was real hard for us was our approach with our child. And when he was younger, we were fine, but as he became a teenager, we would often have different approaches with him. And so that was a little hard.....I felt that he was too hard on our son and I would sometimes take our son's part and that would hurt my husbands' feelings a lot and I didn't always support him and I had to really watch that, I guess I had to learn how to deal with that better...". A husband initially indicated that intimacy for him came from the children "where we have to work together to help solve the problem whether it be at school, or injury, or an emotional problem that the child is having and we get together and actually discuss how we want to handle that". Later in the interview he indicated "having children is a stress to the marriage. At first you are together, you've shared everything. When you have a child, you begin to have disagreements..it creates a real stress, financially and mentally on both spouses". A third wife described it thus: "It's just different, the time before children and the time after children...your life is different, your responsibilities are a lot more and the relationship between the two of you is also different. I miss those times of just being together and I think, wouldn't it be nice if the kids go away to school you know, it would be just us again but then you are wishing your life away...I don't know how to really get around it and focus on our relationship....."

Thus children play a paradoxical role in bringing the couples together, financially, emotionally and physically to take care of the demands of the children. At the same time, the focus on children takes away the couples' time, energy and focus from each other thus creating a strain on intimacy.

(7) Destiny/surprise:

Some husbands' and wives' also described a sense of destiny and the influence of an "outside force" in bringing and keeping them together. One wife stated "...it's very hard to believe that we ever ended up together, after everything we went through...I just think that everything that happened in our relationship in that period of time, was too coincidental to not have an outside force or some source knowing that we were meant to be together.....there's a sense of destiny or whatever... I don't know but it was meant to be". At the same time, husbands' and wives' express a sense of surprise that "in spite of everything we are still together". As one husband succinctly described it "we get along real well and that's been to my surprise to find out that, that things are going well...Yeah, it may just be by chance that it worked out that way...."

Thus, it appears that on the one hand, husbands' and wives' feel that their intimate relationship was natural and the result of destiny. On the other hand, there is a sense of surprise and wonderment at the unexpected happening, that somehow they had never really conceived that their relationship could possibly continue to remain intimate.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Behavioral Analyses

Results indicated that the husbands' ratings were not associated with their marital adjustment, commitment or satisfaction scores. It was only the wives' cognitive, interactional and affective ratings that were correlated and predictive of their marital commitment and adjustment test scores.

A notable finding was the significantly high negative correlation between the wives' cognitive ratings and their marital commitment and adjustment test scores. This suggests that the wives' who described stories in which the characters were predominantly sharing their thoughts and feelings and agreeing or disagreeing with each other, were less committed and adjusted to their marriage. The wives' cognitive rating was also found to be the best predictor of their marital commitment scores.

Analyses performed with 16 wives also indicated that the wives' affective rating was the second best predictor of their marital commitment scores, following the wives' cognitive rating. Thus, the observation of the wives' tone of voice, facial expressions and body language were also predictive of their marital commitment scores.

In addition, analyses with 16 wives also suggested a positive correlation between the wives interactional ratings and their marital

adjustment test scores. This suggests that the wives who were observed to be predominantly taking charge and/or arguing or being submissive and/or agreeing with their husbands were more adjusted to their marriage. The interactional ratings were also found to be the best predictor of their marital adjustment test scores. These results do not seem to support the basic premise of the equity theorists such as Walster et. al (1978) and Hatfield et. al (1985) that people seek a fair outcome in their relationships.

The results based on the wives' cognitive and interactional ratings, moreover, seem paradoxical in nature. On the one hand, the more the wives described characters in their stories as predominantly sharing thoughts and feelings and as agreeing or disagreeing with each other, the less committed and adjusted they were in their marriage. On the other hand, the more the wives were observed to be predominantly taking charge and arguing, or being submissive and agreeing with their husbands, the more adjusted they were to their marriage. Thus, the wives' stories contradicted their actual behavior. Since the stories to the TAT were assumed to be a projection of the wives' fantasies and expectations about their relationship, these stories can be considered to be myths, ideals or internal working models (Bowlby, 1969) that the wives' hold about their relationship.

Finally, the couples' affective rating was also found to be positively correlated with, and to be the best predictor of, the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores. In other words' couples' who were observed to be predominantly speaking sweetly and/or critically to

each other and maintaining eye contact, nodding and smiling at each other were more committed to their marriage. The finding was not only replicated with 16 couples but in addition, the couples interactional and global rating were also found to be positively correlated with the total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores. Since the husbands' ratings were not associated with their marital commitment and adjustment scores, and since the wives' cognitive, interactional and affective ratings were effective in predicting their commitment and adjustment scores, one can speculate with regard to the couples' ratings, that it was the rating of the wives' behaviors that was predictive of the couples' commitment to their marriage.

Phenomenological Results: Illustrating the Behavioral Results

The association between the wives' affective ratings and their marital commitment scores was also supported by husbands' and wives' in their separate phenomenological interviews. For example, one wife described "we just enjoy everything so much that it's rare that we don't feel close. It's just fun everyday, it's just fun". A husband said "...it doesn't really matter what we do...it's just fun being together." Husbands' and wives' also indicated the importance of nonverbal communication in the interviews. For example, a husband said "...and when we see something that reminds us of something, we could just give each other a glance and we know what the other is thinking. Certain little signs, that's the feeling of intimacy." A wife said "...we stroke each other often, affectionately rub backs or hold hands...we have certain looks, certain touches....". This

finding gives support to the results of Hendrick & Hendrick (1983), Brehm (1985) and Feldman (1979) who indicate that intimacy is characterized by closeness, affection and emotional attachment and to researchers like Argyle (1967) and Rubin (1970) as cited in Hatfield (1984), and Morris (1977) who suggest that nonverbal communication plays an important role in intimacy.

The paradoxical finding in the behavioral results, was also illustrated by husbands and wives in their separate phenomenological interviews. On the one hand, husbands and wives stated that their relationship was reciprocal and was based on sharing. On the other hand, they acknowledged that the wives' were more likely to give in to their husbands' than vice versa. For example one husband said "....I try not to dominate my way of thinking on hers and I think she does the same, tries not to do the same thing..we agree and disagree sometimes, she'll give in or I'll give in, usually I'm the last to give in". A wife similarly indicated '...we give each other space when we need it. I give in probably more than I think I do." As indicated earlier, these results do not support the basic premise of the equity theorists, Walster et al., (1978) and Hatfield et. al., (1985), that people seek a fair outcome in intimate relationships. Couples, moreover, do not attempt to restore equity or move towards breaking up the relationship even though they are aware that their relationships are not usually equitable.

The statements of the husbands' and wives' in the phenomenological interviews, moreover, seem to support the theory of communal needs. For example one wife stated "....I'm probably more

submissive and let him, if there is something that he really wants to do around the house or anywhere, if he really wants to do it, I'll go along with it. Not that he wouldn't go along with me..but I probably more often than 50% of the time, I'm going along with him, what he might want to do...". This example illustrates Mills and Clark (1982) belief that benefits are given to the other person because they will be pleasing to the other person or because they are needed. At the same time, however, the behavioral and phenomenological results do not completely support Mills and Clark's belief that equity considerations are thrown aside by couples. Thus, although, wives decide that it is worthwhile doing something with their husbands, rather than having a conflict, the wives' also believe that their husbands will also "go along with them". Moreover, both husbands' and wives' described their relationship as being reciprocal.

An Explanation of the Puzzling Paradox

Results suggest that husbands' and wives' seem to perceive their relationship as being reciprocal. In addition, wives who held the myth that the more individuals in a relationship shared thoughts and feelings and agreed/disagreed with each other, the less adjusted and committed they were to their marriage. In the process of interacting with each other, however, husbands and wives (the insiders), and the observers (outsiders), seem to agree that one person was seen as predominantly taking charge or being submissive to the other. When this occurred, wives indicated being more adjusted to their marriage. This finding supports Sternberg's postulation as cited in Jones (1986), that relationships are not based on a

rational process and are psychological inventions created by the participants, since the husbands and wives' perceptions do not match their behavior.

One explanation of the puzzling finding between the wives' cognitive and interactional ratings could be in the nature of the correlation between the wives' ratings. Table 13 and table 16 show the wives' affective and interactional ratings to be positively correlated with each other. These two ratings, however, were not correlated to the wives' cognitive rating. This suggests that the affective and interactional ratings shared commonalties but were unrelated to the cognitive ratings. Moreover, the stories were more easily subject to distortions since there is a greater element of control over what one says. In contrast, interactions are less controllable, and perhaps more accurate.

Another explanation could be Tannen's (1990) conclusion regarding the stylistic differences observed in men and women. According to her, women attempt to seek and preserve intimacy through confirmation and consensus whereas men seek and preserve intimacy through achieving the upper hand and preserving their status and independence. Perhaps, wives in this study perceived that the more sharing of thoughts and feelings and the more agreement/disagreement individuals in a relationship had with each other, the greater the likelihood for conflict, since their husbands' would be uncomfortable with their active participation in the relationship. Therefore, wives indicated being less adjusted to their marriage.

In their actual interactions, however, wives either argued with their husbands and took charge of the situation or agreed and gave in. The phenomenological interviews seem to suggest that the wives' gave in more to their husbands' or made the decision to go along with their husbands, than vice versa. This is in keeping with the wives intention, as suggested by Tannen (1990), of achieving consensus and giving confirmation. This explanation rather than showing the results as being paradoxical, supports Boszormenyi-Nagy's (1973) view that relationships are based on distortions of the love partner as a fitting object of his/her own need configuration.

A third explanation of this finding rests in understanding the socio-cultural zeitgeist. Even though, during the past few decades, the feminist movement has played an increasingly vocal role in ensuring that women have equal rights as men, marital equality remains more of an ideal than an accomplished fact. Burgess (1985) also indicates that even though educated women may be taught to think and act independently, marriage teaches another lesson, namely to be conservative and submissive. This is hypothesized to occur since marriage changes a women's life more than a man's as women may have to move from a highly diverse environment to one which is more clearly defined and predictable. In such a situation a woman has the role of a caretaker, she is often required to do tasks such as house-cleaning and childrearing that are dull and monotonous, she has to perform these tasks in relative isolation, the main potential resources being the husband, and she loses control over her life and is more dependent on her husband's success in determining how well and where

they live. Burgess thus suggests that marriage seems to be more important to a women's overall happiness with her life and that women make more adjustments in their marriage than men do because they see themselves as having more at stake. Moreover, as family systems dynamics dictates, one person has to give in to the other. Thus one can also consider the wives' myth or ideal that the more sharing of thoughts and feelings between individuals in a relationship and the more agreement/disagreement the less adjusted they were in their marriage as an accurate representation of what was happening in their relationship. In reality, one person does argue/take charge of the situation and agree/give in to the other and given the cultural zeitgeist the person typically giving in, and/or making the decision to give in are the wives.

Another notable finding was the different roles played by husbands in this study. On the one hand, in the behavioral results, the husbands' ratings were not associated with their marital satisfaction, commitment or adjustment scores suggesting that they did not play a significant role. On the other hand, in the context of the phenomenological interviews, husbands' gave a rich and elaborate description of marital intimacy. In the light of the earlier discussion, one possible explanation about this paradox maybe the difference in the nature of the task and in the husbands' motivation and interest in the two contexts. Husbands' may not have been as keenly motivated to fill out questionnaires or make up stories to the TAT cards with their wives' since, perhaps, they felt comfortable with their wives and had already established their dominance. In contrast, in a face to face interview with a young female researcher, where they had an

opportunity to talk about their view of marital intimacy, there may have been a need to achieve the upper hand by giving a rich and elaborate description of intimacy.

The Thematic Structure of Marital Intimacy

Seven major interpretive themes (as indicated in the results) were delineated from the phenomenological interviews of husbands' and wives'. These themes appeared to be paradoxical in nature. A thematic structure that allows the seven thematic aspects to be organized into a coherent whole will now be described. (Please refer Fig. 2)

The emergent property of marital intimacy can be illustrated and understood by using an analogy of the hour glass. Just as the hour glass is held in place by the wooden frame, marital intimacy emerges within a context, the context of the marital relationship. Marital intimacy does not emerge out of a vacuum but as indicated by the husbands' and wives' interviews, is embedded within the background of the marital relationship.

Marital intimacy, like the hour glass, however, has its own curvatures, including a foreground and background. The theme of Best Friends forms the focal point of marital intimacy and can be represented by the point in the middle where the hour glass narrows and moves close to each other. Husbands' and wives' highlighted their sense of closeness and enjoyment with each other. This supports theorists like Sullivan (1953) who define intimacy as a close dyadic relationship and the definition of intimacy stated in Webster's dictionary that intimacy is

marked by a warm friendship. At the same time, just as the middle of the hour glass never completely merges, husbands and wives' were aware of their separateness and differences and respected these differences.

The themes of Reciprocity and Nonverbal Communication, form the upper two corner points of the hour glass. These two themes highlight the nature of the relationship between the couple. Although, husbands' and wives' were aware that the wives' were more likely to give in to their husbands', they both perceived the relationship as being reciprocal. Wives' indicated that they would given in to their husbands' rather than creating a conflict. At the same time they also believed that their husbands would go along with them. Husbands', similarly, mentioned their relationship as being reciprocal, while mentioning at the same time that their wives were more likely to give in to them. This paradoxical finding, as indicated previously, not only supports the behavioral results but also gives some support to the theory of communal needs rather than the equity theory.

Husbands' and wives' also described special ways of communicating with each other nonverbally which enhanced their closeness and enjoyment of each other. They described using certain signs, such as glances, physical touch including kisses and hugs and even ESP. While stating that sexual relationship was important, husbands' and wives' described that it was enjoying being together that was crucial to feeling intimate with each other. Just as the upper part of the hour glass curves and narrows in the middle, both these themes thus highlight and bring into focus the central theme of marital intimacy, namely, that of being best friends.

The themes of Children and Destiny/Surprise appear to consist of the common products of the relationship and forms the base of marital intimacy. On the one hand, children bring the couple closer to each other as they are perceived as being a creation of the couple and since the couple has to work together to meet the needs of their children. At the same time, focusing on their children, creates a strain on marital intimacy since it makes it hard for the couples to have time and energy for each other and thus pushes them apart.

Similarly, the theme of destiny/surprise appears paradoxical. On the one hand, husbands' and wives' believed that fate or destiny had a role to play in bringing them together. At the same time, they expressed surprise that by continuing to be together, the unexpected had happened. This theme is similar to the interpretive theme found by Register and Henley (in press) in their study, in which participants were allowed to talk about any aspect of intimacy.

The theme of Time can be illustrated by the sand in the hour glass which slowly moves from one side to the other, forming the background against which the other themes of marital intimacy are highlighted. Although time is a common "ground" theme in phenomenological studies against which we become aware of certain "figures", it plays out uniquely in marital intimacy. Husbands' and wives' described time as constantly placing demands on them and taking away the focus from each other. Paradoxically, they have to plan and create time to be intimate and spontaneous with each other. This is particularly true of couples with children. Husbands' and wives' also described the close friendship, special

means of communication they developed with each other, over the course of time. They were also aware of the time limited nature of their disagreements. Finally, they also felt destiny had a role to play in bringing them together while feeling surprised at still being with each other over time.

The theme of Contrast forms the space between the hour glass and the wooden frame. Just as the space accentuates the shape of the bell jar, the theme of contrast from other couples and family members, or "the differences from others" enhances the togetherness of the couple. At the same time, couples indicate that they have been influenced by their respective family members. This theme supports Boszormenyi-Nagy's (1973) postulation that one does not cut off relationships with one's family of origin; instead there is a continuing tension to re balance old loyalties while developing new ones.

Although, the themes of marital intimacy can be described separately like the parts of the hour glass, it is within the context of the marital relationship and as an holistic thematic structure that marital intimacy can be richly and fully understood.

Marital Intimacy: A Multifaceted Description

The results from the two perspectives - the behavioral (outsiders' perspective) and the phenomenological (the insiders' perspective) provide a unique understanding of marital intimacy. Rather than considering the results from one perspective to be more valid than the other, the results will be used to provide a multifaceted description of marital intimacy.

Marital intimacy emerges in the context of the marital relationship. Marital intimacy is described as a relationship between best friends who feel close, comfortable and enjoy doing things together. At the same time, individuals in an intimate relationship are aware of their separateness and differences and respect each other's need for their own space and time away from each other. Sexual intimacy is not considered to be as important as developing "special" means of communicating with each other through glances, mental telepathy and touch. Moreover, observation of the wives' body language, facial expressions and their interactions are more predictive of their marital adjustment and commitment scores. Although, the perception of reciprocity is important, in an intimate relationship, one person (the wife) predominantly gives in or makes the decision to give in to the other. In addition, the wives' hold the myth that the more the individuals in a relationship share their thoughts and feelings and agree/disagree with each other, the less adjusted they were in their marriage. Intimate moments with each other have to be planned exclusively by the individuals in the relationship, and does not occur in the course of everyday activities. Thus, couples have to plan to be spontaneous and intimate with each other. Although, couples contrast themselves from other couples and differentiate themselves from their own families, they are also aware of being influenced by their respective families. Children enhance intimacy by requiring the couples to work together to meet the children's needs, yet children also pull them apart by taking away the focus from each other. Finally, there is a sense that marital

intimacy is destined and natural, yet, there is also a sense of surprise that the unexpected happened.

The behavioral and the phenomenological results together indicate that marital intimacy is paradoxical in nature. Marital intimacy appears to be like the Winnicottian notion of tolerating the tension of a paradox without necessarily doing anything to resolve it. Intimacy appears much too complex and intricate to be captured by merely one statement. This suggests the reason for the difficulty that previous researchers, including myself, had with defining intimacy. Marital intimacy involves several paradoxes that can be more fully captured through a description rather than a definition.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was threefold. To define marital intimacy and measure it based on the researcher's understanding of marital intimacy, which constituted the behavioral or etic perspective; to understand the lived meaning of marital intimacy of the participants' in the study, which constituted the phenomenological or emic perspective; to find the extent to which the two perspectives converged and to use the discrepancies to reveal the richness, complexity and intricacy of this phenomenon.

As a researcher and outside observer, I had defined intimacy as the ability to maintain the "I" within the "We" on a continuum ranging from disengaged to enmeshed on the three dimensions of intimacy, the affective, cognitive and interactional. Based on this definition of intimacy,

I developed a rating scale that trained observers could use to measure marital intimacy. The behavioral analyses indicated that only the wives' cognitive, interactional and affective ratings were associated with their marital commitment and adjustment scores. Furthermore, the results of the wives' cognitive ratings and their interactional ratings when placed together, were paradoxical. The more the wives described characters in their stories as sharing thoughts and feelings and agreeing/disagreeing the less committed they were to their marriage. In contrast, the more the wives were observed to be predominantly taking charge and arguing or being submissive and agreeing with their husbands the more adjusted they were to their marriage. Thus, the wives' stories contradicted their actual behavior. The husbands' ratings were not predictive of their marital commitment, adjustment or satisfaction scores, although in a different context, namely, the phenomenological interviews they gave a rich and elaborate description of marital intimacy.

13 husbands' and 13 wives were interviewed get a description of what intimacy meant to them. Based on the participants' (emic) perspective, seven interpretive themes were apprehended from the interviews regarding marital intimacy. The seven themes were best friends, reciprocity, nonverbal communication, time, contrast, children and destiny/surprise. The emergent thematic structure was illustrated by using an analogy of the bell jar. Marital intimacy appears to emerge from the context of the marital relationship, just as the bell jar is held in place by the wooden frame. The theme of best friends seem to form the crux of marital intimacy. Reciprocity and nonverbal communication describe the

nature of the couples' intimate relationship and formed the upper two points of the bell jar. The themes of children and destiny/surprise, the common products of the intimate relationship form the base of the bell jar. The theme of time forms the ground against which the other themes form the figures. Finally, the theme of contrast, accentuates the sense of togetherness of the couple.

Although, the two perspectives converged with the researcher's definition of intimacy, the phenomenological perspective added themes that were not previously considered by the researcher. Both perspectives indicated marital intimacy to be paradoxical in nature. Together the two perspectives laid the basis for a rich, complex and intricate understanding of marital intimacy. It is also hoped that this description of marital intimacy will give clinicians a framework for developing theoretical formulations and therapeutic interventions with couples who seek marital counseling.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
RATING SCALE

Disengaged

Enmeshed

1-----3-----5

Please rate the husband, wife and couple separately on the above scale based on your subjective impression after viewing the videotape in the categories described below.

I.	AFFECTIVE	1	3	5
A	<i>(Tone of Voice)</i>			
		Affectless	Eager	Overly sweet
		monotone	Excited	Overly critical
	<i>(Facial Expression)</i>			
		Lack of eye	Some	Constant
		contact,	facial	facial
		nodding,	acknow-	acknow-
		smiling or	ledgements	ledgements
		anger.		
C	<i>(Body Language)</i>			
		Lack of	Some touching	Constant
		touching or	and leaning	touching
		leaning forward	Sitting close	Sitting
			together	very
				close

II INTERACTIONAL

A (*Content*)

Null category	Discussion about the task, Considers each other's ideas	Takes Charge/ Submissive Constant arguing/ agreeing
---------------	--	--

III. COGNITIVE

This dimension is to be scored by rating the written TAT stories for the husband, wife and the couple on the same rating scale.

The character(s) is/are described as sharing very little thoughts and feelings and do not agree/disagree with each other.	The character(s) share ideas, thoughts and feelings	The character(s) are described as predominantly sharing thoughts and feelings and predominantly agreeing/ disagreeing with each other.
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IV. GLOBAL RATING

In addition on a scale from 1-5, with 1 being very unhappy and 5 being very happy, please rate how satisfied you think the husband, wife and the couple appeared to be after watching their videotape.

APPENDIX B
TABLES

TABLE 1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBJECTS

A. Frequencies of the Ages of Husbands' (H) and Wives (W)

AGES	25-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	> 60
H	4	2	4	1	1	4	1	1
W	5	2	3	1	2	4	0	1

B. Frequencies of the Husbands' (H) and Wives' Religious Preferences (R.P)

R. P	B	C	M	P	U	L	N.D
H	2	5	5	1	1	1	3
W	2	6	5	2	1	1	1

B= Baptist; C= Catholic; M = Methodist; P = Presbyterian;

U= Unitarian; L = Lutheran; N.D= Non Denominational

C. Frequencies of the Highest Degree (H.D) Earned of Husbands' and Wives'

H.D	High-Sch	2 yr	Bachelors	Masters	Doctorate
H	1	3	4	5	5
W	0	1	11	5	1

D. Frequencies of the Occupations (OCC) of Husbands' (H) and Wives' (W)

OCC	C	C.P	D	E	H	L	M	S	St	S.W	T
H	1	1	2	2	1	1	5	0	1	1	3
W	0	1	0	0	3	0	2	2	2	5	3

C = Chemist; C.P = Computer Programmer; D = Dentist; E = Engineer;
H = Homemaker; L = Lawyer; M = Manager; S = Secretary;
St = Student; S.W = Social Worker; T = Teacher

E. Frequencies of the Years the Couples' (C) were married

YEARS	2-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	> 35
C	6	2	1	3	1	2	2	1

F. Frequencies of the Number Of Children (NOC) of the Couples' (C)

NOC	0	1	2	3	5
C	4	4	6	2	2

*G. Frequencies of the Annual Family Incomes (AFI) of the Couples' (C)
(ranging from 10,000 \$ to 200,000\$)*

AFI	10-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	> 90
C	1	3	2	4	4	0	1	1	2

TABLE 2

CORRELATION MATRIX OF HUSBANDS' RATINGS (PREDICTOR
VARIABLES) AND HUSBANDS' SCORES ON THE MARITAL
QUESTIONNAIRES (CRITERION VARIABLES) WITH 18 HUSBANDS

	HA	HI	HC	HG	HMS	HMC	HMAT
HA	-	.5835*	-.0461	-.1271	-.1865	.2090	-.0111
HI		-	-.1958	-.0511	0.1087	.2210	-.0183
HC			-	0.0732	.0203	.0316	.3551
HG				-	.0768	.2048	.0378
HMS					-	.5570*	.7436**
HMC						-	.4541
HMAT							-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

HA-Husbands' Affective Rating

HI- Husbands' Interactional Rating

HC-Husbands' Cognitive Rating

HG-Husbands' Global Rating

HMS-Husbands' scores on the Marital Satisfaction items

HMC-Husbands' scores on the Marital Commitment items

HMAT-Husbands' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 3

CORRELATION MATRIX OF WIVES' RATINGS (PREDICTOR
VARIABLES) AND WIVES' SCORES ON THE MARITAL
QUESTIONNAIRES (CRITERION VARIABLES) WITH 18 WIVES

	WA	WI	WC	WG	WMS	WMC	WMAT
WA	-	.8892**	-.0981	.1808	.1755	.3609	.3597
WI		-	-.2144	.0406	.1388	.3383	.4344
WC			-	-.0816	-.1040	-.4965*	-.3410
WG				-	-.0054	.1764	.0691
WMS					-	.2970	.5075*
WMC						-	.6933**
WMAT							-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

WA-Wives' Affective Rating

WI- Wives' Interactional Rating

WC-Wives' Cognitive Rating

WG-Wives' Global Rating

WMS-Wives' scores on the Marital Satisfaction items

WMC-Wives' scores on the Marital Commitment items

WMAT-Wives' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 4

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING WIVES' SCORES ON
MARITAL COMMITMENT FROM 18 WIVES' AFFECTIVE, COGNITIVE,
INTERACTIONAL AND GLOBAL RATINGS

	MULTIPLE R	R ²	F	sig.F
WC	.49647	.24648	5.23	.0361

VARIABLES NOT IN THE EQUATION

	Beta Weights	T	sig. T
WA	.315284	1.501	.1540
WI	.243073	1.101	.2831
WG	.136774	.616	.5472

WC - Wives' Cognitive Rating

WA - Wives' Affective Rating

WI - Wives' Interactional Rating

WG-WivesGlobalRating

TABLE 5

CORRELATION MATRIX OF COUPLES' RATINGS (PREDICTOR
VARIABLES) AND COUPLES' SCORES ON MARITAL
QUESTIONNAIRES (CRITERION VARIABLES) WITH 18 COUPLES

	COA	COI	COC	COG	HWMAT	HWMS	HWMC
COA	-	.6282**	-.2447	.1723	.2968	-.0898	.4769*
COI		-	.0830	.0000	.1578	-.1379	.3754
COC			-	.0000	-.2080	-.0511	-.1805
COG				-	.2407	.2671	.2845
HWMAT					-	.7312**	.6451**
HWMS						-	.3926
HWMC							-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

COA-Couples' Affective Rating

COI- Couples' Interactional Rating

COC-Couples' Cognitive Rating

COG-Couples' Global Rating

HWMS-The total of the husbands' and wives' scores on the Marital Satisfaction items

HWMC- The total of the husbands' and wives' scores on the Marital Commitment items

Table 5. (contd...)

HWMAT- The total of the husbands' and wives' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 6

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING THE TOTAL OF THE
HUSBANDS' AND WIVES' SCORES ON MARITAL COMMITMENT
ITEMS FROM 18 COUPLES' AFFECTIVE, COGNITIVE, INTERACTIONAL
AND GLOBAL RATINGS

	MULTIPLE R	R ²	F	sig.F
COA	.47689	.22743	4.71006	.0454
VARIABLES NOT IN THE EQUATION				
	Beta Weights	T	sig. T	
COI	.125156	.432	.6721	
COC	-.067822	-.291	.7754	
COG	.208548	.931	.3666	

COA- Couples' Affective Rating

COI-Couples' Interactional Rating

COC-Couples' Cognitive Rating

COG-Couples' Global Rating

TABLE 7

CORRELATION MATRIX OF HUSBANDS' RATINGS (PREDICTOR
VARIABLES) AND HUSBANDS' SCORES ON THE MARITAL
QUESTIONNAIRES (CRITERION VARIABLES) WITH 16 HUSBANDS

	HA	HI	HC	HG	HMS	HMC	HMAT
HA	-	.5570*	-.1101	-.1907	-.1641	.2978	.0019
HI		-	-.2933	-.1270	.1527	.3392	-.0015
HC			-	-.1443	.0136	.1224	.3954
HG				-	.1179	.3109	.1148
HMS					-	.5485*	.7587**
HMC						-	.4652
HMAT							-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

HA-Husbands' Affective Rating

HI- Husbands' Interactional Rating

HC-Husbands' Cognitive Rating

HG-Husbands' Global Rating

HMS-Husbands' scores on the Marital Satisfaction items

HMC-Husbands' scores on the Marital Commitment items

HMAT-Husbands' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 8

CORRELATION MATRIX OF WIVES' RATINGS (PREDICTOR
VARIABLES) AND WIVES' SCORES ON THE MARITAL
QUESTIONNAIRES (CRITERION VARIABLES) WITH 16 WIVES

	WA	WI	WC	WG	WMS	WMC	WMAT
WA	-	.8867**	-.0479	.1581	.2252	.4403	.4370
WI		-	-.1615	.0000	.1962	.4288	.5320*
WC			-	.0000	-.2183	-.6973**	-.5115*
WG				-	-.1083	.3424	.2206
WMS					-	.2010	.4413
WMC						-	.6416**
WMAT							-

* p < .05

** p < .01

WA-Wives' Affective Rating

WI- Wives' Interactional Rating

WC-Wives' Cognitive Rating

WG-Wives' Global Rating

WMS-Wives' scores on the Marital Satisfaction items

WMC-Wives' scores on the Marital Commitment items

WMAT-Wives' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 9

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING WIVES' SCORES ON
MARITAL COMMITMENT AND ADJUSTMENT FROM 16 WIVES'
AFFECTIVE, COGNITIVE, INTERACTIONAL AND GLOBAL RATINGS

(A) CRITERION VARIABLE: WMC

	MULTIPLE R	R ²	F	sig. F
WC	.69733	.48626	13.25	p<.0027
W A	.80757	.65218	12.18	p<.0010

VARIABLES NOT IN THE EQUATION

	Beta Weights	T	sig. T
WI	-.211785	-.563	.5837
WG	.285036	1.881	.0844

(B) CRITERION VARIABLE: WMAT

	MULTIPLE R	R ²	F	sig. F
WI	.53203	.28306	5.52740	.0339

VARIABLES NOT IN THE EQUATION

	Beta Weights	T	sig. T
W A	-.162442	-.321	.7532
WC	-.436938	-2.134	.0525
WG	.220640	.973	.3482

Table 9. (contd..)

WA-Wives' Affective Rating

WI- Wives' Interactional Rating

WC-Wives' Cognitive Rating

WG-Wives Global Rating

WMS-Wives' scores on the Marital Satisfaction items

WMC-Wives' scores on the Marital Commitment items

WMAT-Wives' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 10

CORRELATION MATRIX OF 16 COUPLES' RATINGS (PREDICTOR
VARIABLES) AND COUPLES' SCORES ON MARITAL
QUESTIONNAIRES (CRITERION VARIABLES) WITH 16 COUPLES

	COA	COI	COC	COG	HWMAT	HWMS	HWMC
COA	-	.6128*	-.2566	.1327	.3543	-.0513	.6094*
COI		-	.1029	-.0919	.2250	-.0822	.5444*
COC			-	-.0992	-.1315	-.0159	-.1701
COG				-	.4452	.4335	.5420*
HWMAT					-	.7185**	.6237**
HWMS						-	.3211
HWMC							-

* p < .05

** p < .01

COA-Couples' Affective Rating

COI- Couples' Interactional Rating

COC-Couples' Cognitive Rating

COG-Couples' Global Rating

HWMS-The total of the husbands' and wives' scores on the Marital
Satisfaction items

HWMC- The total of the husbands' and wives' scores on the Marital
Commitment items

Table 10 (contd....)

HWMAT- The total of the husbands' and wives' scores on the Marital Adjustment Test

TABLE 11

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING THE TOTAL OF THE
HUSBANDS' AND WIVES' SCORES ON MARITAL COMMITMENT
FROM 16 COUPLES' AFFECTIVE, COGNITIVE, INTERACTIONAL AND
GLOBAL RATINGS

	MULTIPLE R	R ²	F	sig F
COA	.60940	.37137	8.27068	.0122
COG	.76670	.58783	9.27006	.0031
VARIABLES NOT IN THE EQUATION				
	Beta Weights	T	sig. T	
COI	.424702	2.053	.0625	
COC	.018155	.094	.9263	

COA- Couples' Affective Rating

COG-Couples' Global Rating

COI-Couples' Interactional Rating

COC-Couples' Cognitive Rating

TABLE 12

SEVEN MAJOR INTERPRETIVE THEMES THAT WERE APPREHENDED
FROM THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEWS

- (1) Best Friends: Feeling comfortable, close and enjoying being with each other, yet not wanting the relationship to be too predictable.
 - (2) Reciprocity: A common perception shared by husbands and wives, although both acknowledge that the wives' given in more than the husbands'.
 - (3) Nonverbal Communication: much more than sexual intimacy and physical touch; also involving mental telepathy and special glances.
 - (4) Time: Feeling constrained and pressured with the demands of everyday life, thus having to set aside time exclusively to be spontaneous and intimate with each other.
 - (5) Contrast: from other couples and from their family of origin; on the one hand enhancing the couples' sense of togetherness, yet on the other hand acknowledging that family members serve as role models for their relationship.
 - (6) Children: Bringing couples closer, yet creating tension and stress on marital intimacy
 - (7) Destiny/Surprise: Feeling that their intimate relationship was natural or destined yet expressing surprise at the unexpected happening.
-

TABLE 13
CORRELATION OF ALL THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES WITH 18
COUPLES

	HA	HI	HC	HG	WA	WI	WC	WG	COA	COI	COC	COG
HA	-	.58*	-.05	-.13	.44	.50*	-.41	.22	.80**	.78**	-.06	.00
HI		-	-.20	-.05	.42	.44	-.12	.18	.47	.75**	.09	.14
HC			-	-.07	-.14	.11	-.17	-.07	-.04	.07	.27	.00
HG				-	.33	.25	-.22	.44	.18	-.20	-.09	.82**
WA					-	.89**	-.10	-.18	.73**	.56*	.05	.36
WI						-	-.21	.04	-.67**	.72**	.13	.25
WC							-	-.08	-.50*	-.33	.55*	-.16
WG								-	.18	.06	.07	.82**
COA									-	.63**	-.24	.17
COI										-	.08	.00
COC											-	.00
COG												-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

HA-Husbands' Affective Rating

HC-Husbands' Cognitive Rating

WA- Wives Affective Rating

WC-Wives' Cognitive Rating

COA-Couples' Affective Rating

COC-Couples' Cognitive Rating

HI- Husbands' Interactional Rating

HG-Husbands' Global Rating

WI-Wives' Interactional Rating

WG- Wives' Global Rating

COI-Couples' Interactional Ratings

COG-Couples' Global Rating

TABLE 14
CORRELATION OF ALL DEPENDENT VARIABLES WITH 18 COUPLES

	Hmat	Hms	Hmc	Wmat	Wms	Wc	Hwmat	Hwms	Hwmc
Hmat	-	.74**	.45	.39	.30	.00	.89**	.72**	.36
Hms		-	.56*	.23	.14	-.22	.63**	.81**	.33
Hmc			-	.55*	.13	.13	.59*	.49*	.87*
Wmat				-	.51*	.70**	.77**	.47	.79**
Wms					-	.30	.46	.69**	.26
Wc						-	.35	.01	.61**
Hwmat							-	.73**	.65**
Hwms								-	.39
Hwmc									-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Hmat-Husbands' Marital Adjustment Test Scores

Hms-Husbands' Marital Satisfaction Scores

Hmc-Husbands' Marital Commitment Scores

Wmat-Wives' Marital Adjustment Test Scores

Wmc-Wives' Marital Commitment Scores

Wms-Wives' Marital Satisfaction Scores

Hwmat-Total of the husbands' and wives' Marital Adjustment Test scores

Hwmc-Total of the husbands' and wives' marital commitment scores

Hwms-Total of the husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction scores

TABLE 15
CORRELATION OF ALL THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES WITH 16
COUPLES

	HA	HI	HC	HG	WA	WI	WC	WG	COA	COI	COC	COG
HA	-	.56	-.11	-.19	.42	.48	-.36	.19	.80**	.78**	-.05	-.08
HI		-	-.29	-.13	.40	.41	-.02	.13	.44	.73**	.11	.06
HC			-	-.14	-.18	.06	-.09	-.14	-.09	.00	.31	.09
HG				-	.31	.22	-.15	.38	.15	-.29	-.18	.80**
WA					-	.89	-.05	-.16	.72**	.55*	.06	.35
WI						-	-.16	.00	-.66**	.71**	.15	.22
WC							-	-.00	-.48	-.26	.61*	-.06
WG								-	.15	.00	.00	.80**
COA									-	.61*	-.26	.13
COI										-	.10	.09
COC											-	.10
COG												-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

HA-Husbands' Affective Rating

HI- Husbands' Interactional Rating

HC-Husbands' Cognitive Rating

HG-Husbands' Global Rating

WA- Wives Affective Rating

WI-Wives' Interactional Rating

WC-Wives' Cognitive Rating

WG- Wives' Global Rating

Table 15. (contd....)

COA-Couples' Affective Rating	COI-Couples' Interactional Ratings
COC-Couples' Cognitive Rating	COG-Couples' Global Rating

TABLE 16
CORRELATION OF DEPENDENT VARIABLES WITH 16 COUPLES

	HMAT	HMS	HMC	WMAT	WMS	WMC
HMAT	-	.76**	.47	.35	.26	-.09
HMS		-	.55*	.21	.11	-.29
HMC			-	.52*	.06	.04
WMAT				-	.44	.64**
WMS					-	.20
WMC						-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Hmat-Husbands' Marital Adjustment Test Scores

Hms-Husbands' Marital Satisfaction Scores

Hmc-Husbands' Marital Commitment Scores

Wmat-Wives' Marital Adjustment Test Scores

Wmc-Wives' Marital Commitment Scores

Wms-Wives' Marital Satisfaction Scores

APPENDIX C
FIGURES

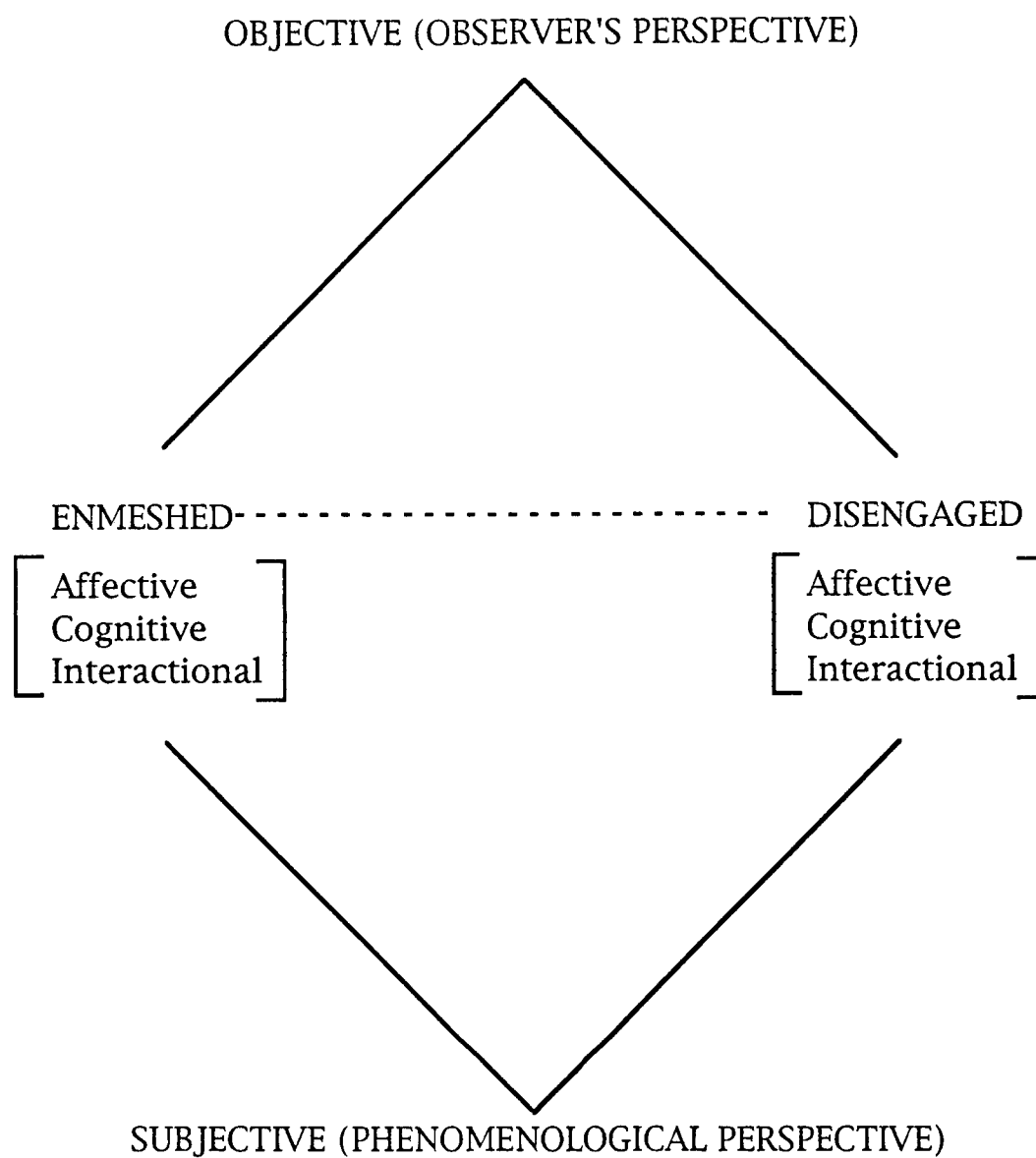


**FIG. 1: INTIMACY - A MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONSTRUCT
ON A CONTINUUM**

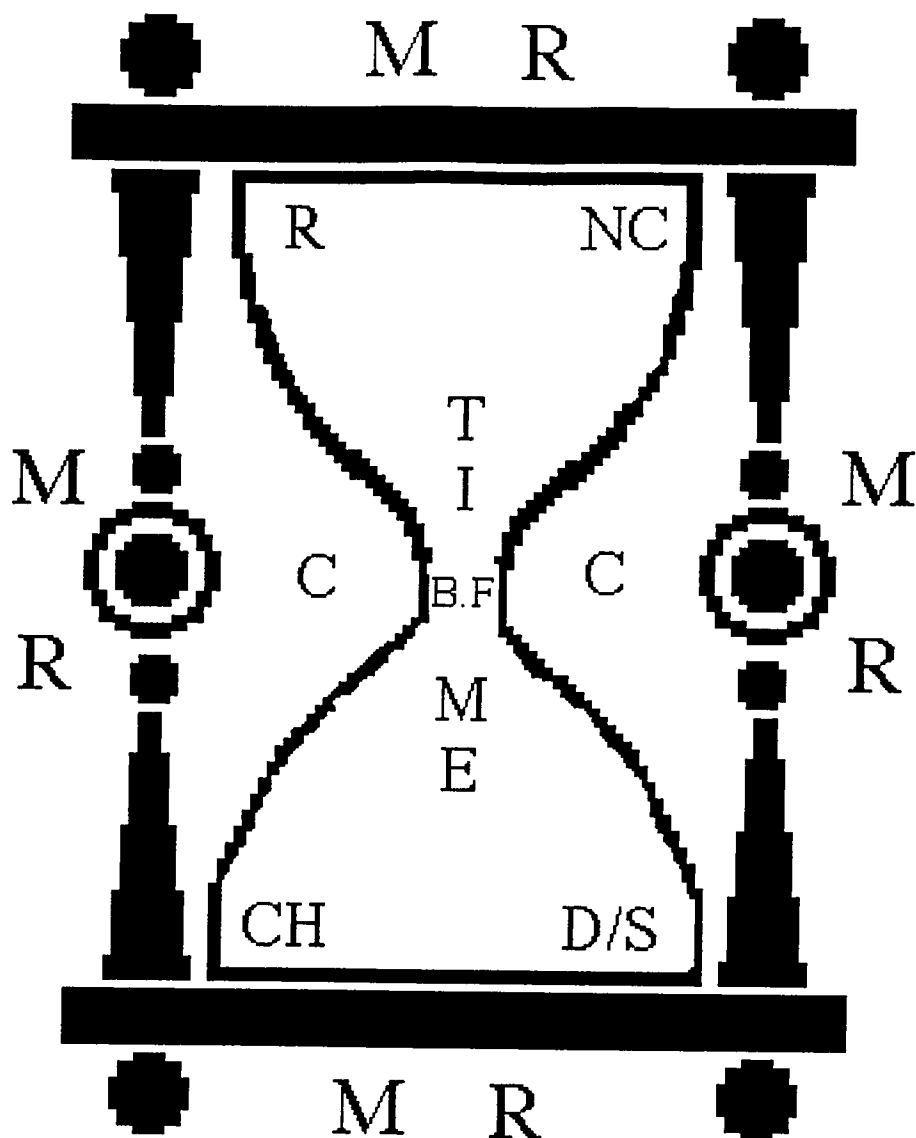


FIG.2: STRUCTURE OF MARITAL
INTIMACY

KEY:

R = RECIPROCITY

NC = NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

B.F = BEST FRIENDS

C = CONTRAST

CH = CHILDREN

D/S = DESTINY/SURPRISE

M R = MARITAL RELATIONSHIP

APPENDIX D

A SAMPLE PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEW

I: Was there a time when you were doing the task with your husband that you felt a sense of intimacy with him?

S: ..a task?

I: Yeah, when you were doing that task in the room.

S: Oh! (Pause) I don't know, it's hard to say, I mean it depends on what you call intimacy. I mean, I, to some extent enjoyed it. You know, I thought it was funny to hear what he thought about some of them and what I thought of some of them, but you know, I guess, I liked the idea of us doing it together.

I: Uh-huh.

S: As far as, I don't know if you mean sexual intimacy..

I: whatever it means to you..

S: No. I mean, I just you know, I enjoy doing things with Tim, that's why we like to do things that were involved with marriage, because we like to do things together. Our interests are very different in a lot of things, but we also enjoy doing things together. So, it was, I mean, I guess there's a lot of couples who wouldn't like to do this kind of thing but we enjoyed it and you know, I was glad he was there with me, as opposed to doing it by myself but... I don't know I mean, that particular situation, I can't.. there's

not a whole lot about it.... I mean no lights went off or anything like that
(Laughs).

I: Can you tell me a little more about what you mean by that?

S: Well, I don't know, I don't know whether I think of it as being a particularly intimate situation, I mean, going through those pictures. I don't really see what was intimate about it, what I would consider intimate.

I: Please describe some situations outside of the task when you felt a sense of intimacy with your husband.

S: (Pause) Well (laughs) it's kind of embarrassing... Uh.. I'm just trying.... I just enjoy his company, enjoy being with him. I mean, I'm not sure where to go with this question... you mean, like things that we do, that we like to do together.

I: Uh-huh. To you it seems like a sense of intimacy comes from doing things with him, together with him.

S: Yeah...I..mean, the best times we have are for me, it is when we don't have our kids and when we are off doing something, just the two of us together, going somewhere, or going out to eat or just being in the house by ourselves, nobody else...uh...those are probably some of the best times.

I: Can you describe to me a little more about those times?

S: (pause) Well, like I mean, like every other month our relatives keep our children, like his brother and his wife keep our kids. and I mean, it's just the two of us, just like when we got married or before ..B.C... before kids (laughs) and I don't know, some of those weekends are just for us, we just do whatever we want to do and when we want to do it. We don't

make any outside plans with anybody else, unless it's just to meet for dinner or something, so I don't know, it's just the feeling of being one on one with him that I like...uh...otherwise, I mean, when we are not, when we have got the kids at home, our lives are so hectic. We're just running all the time and we are dead tired when we get to bed, then you think of what you've got to get up and do the next morning. When we have those weekends, when it's just the two of us, it's like, it's just us, you know and we can do whatever we are feeling and I don't know...it's just...I think we focus more on each other instead of it being so hectic.

I: So the time before children, is not the same as after children. When you are with your children, it's not the same...

S: No, it's not, I mean I'm not sure that it can be. It's just different, your life is different, your responsibilities are a lot more and you know the relationship between the two of you is also different. There was a lot of private time that we had, you know together, uh... (pause), yeah... I mean, it's just, I don't know how to describe it but I mean you just don't, I mean my thoughts are a lot more on daily activities than they are on concentrating on him and our relationship together. And I mean I don't like that... but it's kind of just... uh.., the way through the years, it's just progressed that way, so I really look forward to those weekends because they are our way of pulling ourselves back together, just us.

I: ...so that's the time that the two of you focus on each other..

S: I mean we try to other times you know, go out occasionally, just the two of us, or whatever, but for the most part you know, I mean, you know like I go to bed real early and he stays up late working on the computer. And

you know I may feel like getting up early and then he has stayed up late and then he doesn't like getting up early when he's stayed up late, so he sleeps a little bit later. I mean we both get up at 5:30 or 6:00 no matter what, but I mean he may stay up till 1:30 or so. Our time schedules are just different you know and the kids are always..I need this and I need that" and you just don't have the time to spend with each other that you had before kids.

I: So your mind is not on each other, it's on the kids and daily activities...

S: Yeah... it's on cleaning the house, it's on mowing the yard, it's on making sure the clothes are washed and you know...Tim just kind of takes care of himself a lot of times and he has got other things to deal with. He's got his job that he has to deal with and the things businesses around the house that he's got to take care of, he's trying to learn how to operate the computer he has got, he's got things he wants to do with the kids, there's errands to be run...I mean there's just daily activity that gets in the way. I miss those times sometimes, of just being together and I think, wouldn't it be nice if the kids go away to school you know, it would be just us again but then you're wishing your life away. I don't know how to really get around it and focus on the relationship, but it's just circumstances of life, I think.

I: So you said there are times when he spends on himself and on things that he likes to do, like on the computer. And then there are things you have to take care of. Are there times when you spend on activities that are not the same by yourselves?

S: Are there times when we spend on activities not together?

I: Yeah.

S: Well, yeah. I mean he's involved in more stuff than I am, like he tends to get more involved in different community meetings and stuff like that. I don't do a whole lot of that. I mean I don't have any other scheduled meetings other than church. Last three years we went to church one or two nights a week and that was something we did together, uh,, we kind of cut that out and we want to get back started probably this year.... uh.. anyway, for the last two or three months we haven't been doing that. Yeah, I mean, you know, I don't know, I really don't know where our time goes and what we do with it, except that we're always busy. We're always running around, there are very few nights during the weekends that we sit down and just be together. I mean occasionally we try to, one night a week, have a family night you know. Like we'll all sit down and play a game or do something but that doesn't even happen once a week, not because we.. I guess we don't try to plan it hard enough. Uh..the kids go to bed by 8 'o' clock, so there.....by the time we get home, get dinner and get homework done, it is kind of their bedtime. So we lots of time miss out on the family time and then when they go to bed, it's like either Tim works on his computer or the house needs to be cleaned, or something needs to be done all the time. Maybe we are always doing something, instead of just taking the time to be together. We never watch TV, hardly unless it's is a movie or something. I just always feel like there's (laughs), always something that needs to be done you know.

I: There's the pressure of time..., there's always something to do..

S: Yeah.

I: You were talking about your having different interests but inspite of that you enjoy spending time together and I was wondering how you'll relate those different interests and still be together.

S: I don't know. I worry about that sometimes (laughs). Uh.. he likes to play golf. Growing up, I always used to ride horses. Not now it's just too expensive..uh..I don't really have a whole lot of hobbies, I mean, at some point in time I do want to take up golf, just so we can do that together. I see that, a long time in the future, something we can do together but I don't want to take that up now, because I don't have time to go out and take the lessons. It's expensive number one and it takes four hours to play it and I just don't have four hours to devote on Saturday afternoon or Sunday afternoon. He doesn't go, he's not a weekend golfer, you know, he may go about ten times a year, I don't know, not very often, maybe once a month he may take off. It's something that he enjoys doing but he feels guilty doing it when he needs you know, when he feels like he needs to be spending time with the family. We both try to do things with the family, at least on like make Sunday a family day, or Saturday a family day. One day during the weekends is pretty much devoted to doing fun things with the kids. Uh.. (pause)...uh..I forgot what I was going to say.. I mean, he likes to get up late and I like to go to bed early (laughs). I don't really know what his hobbies are. We do love to get out and drive in the car, love to sit in the car and just talk . We love to drive to Florida. I mean it's a 10 hour drive but it goes by quite fast because we just talk. We don't have time to talk during the week you know, the normal day to day activities that go on, so there are things that we love to do. We love to go and look at new

houses, we don't have any money to buy a house, we just like houses and the way they are built and the different plans and stuff..uh..we could spend a whole day just going in and out of new houses and just looking....uh...(pause)..we like to go to movies (laughs) we like to go out to dinner. I don't know whether they are hobbies though, we don't really have a hobby that we like to do together. We cannot work together in the same room very well. We can't work in the kitchen real well together. He likes me to be close to him and I like him to be close to me but we get on each others nerves if we are too close...

I: So there's a kind of balance....

S: Yeah.. I mean like if he's cooking, I could be (pause) let's see...let me think of a good example...uh..like if we are getting ready to have company, I could be in charge of something, I could be in charge of doing the table you know, getting all the stuff out and setting up the tables, but leave him at the counter and don't bother his space. Yet we are together physically in the same room doing something, or for example...if we were going to wallpaper a room, he can wallpaper up here and I can wallpaper up there and we just love it, but if we try to wallpaper in the same area, it just really wouldn't work, we couldn't do that.

I: So you have to give each other their space..?

S: Yeah. Because we each have different ways of doing the same thing, very different...I do things very different that he does.

I: You were talking about taking charge of things. How do you'll decide who takes charge of what?

S: In the house?

I: Yeah, or in any kind of situation...

S: (Pause).. I don't know, that's ..it's never really been a big problem. He generally does stuff in the outside, I mean I guess we take the more traditional roles, I'm more inside, cleaning, cooking, you know. He's more on the outside, around the house, I don't know. I'm probably more submissive and let him, if there is something that he really wants to do around the house or anywhere, if he really wants to do it, I'll go along with it. Not that he wouldn't go along with me, but I'm, usually the one who says, you know, "What do you want to do?" and he may say something and I'll say that's fine let's do that, not that I can't tell him no, but I probably more often than 50% of the time, I'm doing....going along with him, what he might want to do. I don't like to make waves if things just aren't important. I mean, certain things, I don't care one way or the other and let him do what he wants.

I: It's not that big of a deal to you..

S: Right and he...I don't know he just has a stronger personality or way of doing things and wants them done that way and I'm just....I'll bend. And he'll bend too, but I'll bend more.

I: And then there are times when you'll kind of respect each other's spaces like whether it is doing wallpaper, you'll do it on different sides. Each of you have your own way of doing things.

S: Yeah. Right. Yeah.

I: And does that kind of pose a source of conflict for both of you or..

S: Uh.. I'll give you an example in the kitchen. I'll cook and eat and he cleans, he usually cleans up as he goes and it just drives him bananas

(laughs) to see the countertop just filled with all the stuff that's involved in making a meal when he would have had it all cleaned up. So he has a hard time, he just has to overlook that (pause) ... and ..I mean I know it bothers him but I just go on, I can't clean up every time, I mean, that's just the way I am. And so those things drive him crazy and usually he just doesn't get involved, I mean when he doesn't get involved in cooking the dinner, he can just look at the counter and say "Oh God this looks awful", but if he's not really involved in making the dinner, then he can't say too much about it; but if I was to ask him to help me to fix something to go with dinner and he had to get in there and help me...

I: Uh-huh..

S:.. I mean there would be conflict, then , you know because he would have to be working over my junk and he just couldn't handle that and then he would be mad (laughs) and I'd get mad you know, it's just like "ugh!" I mean through the years you learn how to just tolerate each other, their weaknesses or whatever. We're both very strong willed and when it come to certain things and we can be very stubborn and very argumentative and we can blow up at each other and we just get into dog fights (Laughs), I mean not physically but verbally we can just lay each other havoc and then you know we may not speak for six hours (laughs) you know, but eventually you know, I guess we just get tired of fighting together and we just get over it, but sometimes it might not be that night or it may not be the next morning, we just have to have some space between us.

I: So you'll feel comfortable kind of blowing up at each other, if..?

S: Well it's never fun (laughs) but it does happen you know. Oh yeah, there are just times you think "How did I marry him, how could I marry her, he's just awful, she's awful and it's like don't touch me, don't get near me..Ugh! get out of my life you know". I mean you mean those things. You feel them at the time but it's like after so many hours pass you get over it and you just feel bad about that uncomfortableness and I think he can't tolerate it too, it drives him crazy too, it drives us both crazy, so we just get over it and forget about it and go on. I guess, you just have to do that. You can't let.... most of the stuff we argue about are little things, it's just an accumulation of a lot of little things and you just blow up or I do (laughs) but uh..he's a shouter, he could shout, he yells at me, I've never had anybody yell at me, I mean my parents but not anybody else that I've ever dated but he does. That's just his nature to yell and he yells and he gets over it and I hold things in and let them build up and then I explode...

I: Uh-huh,...

S: and then I'll talk about it. He gets over things a lot quicker than I do.

I: So you'll have different styles of approaching things...

S: Yeah...

I: And you were saying that over time and over the years of marriage, it's kind of, how have you'll kind of gotten used to each other.?

S: Uh. (sighs). I really don't know. I mean I really don't know, every time we argue, I think, "this is just awful" and at the time I think I just never want to talk to him again but I know that's not going to last, I mean that feeling of not wanting to talk to him is not going to last. I mean it hasn't in

nine years. I don't know how its changed over the years to be honest with you.

I: Actually, has it changed over the years?

S: (Pause) I don't know, I don't really know that it has, except that I don't worry about it maybe as much as in early years when I worried about it more. "Why do we do this, is this going to be healthy for a long relationship and now we just kind of get mad at each other and get over it and go on. I guess, if there is any difference, I don't worry about it as much.

I: Hmn...

S: I don't really don't know, you just kind of...you kind of get where you know what to expect out of somebody, you know how they are going to react and he know how I'm going to react and (laughs) you may not like it, but you just live through it and go on....

I: Get used to it....

S: Yeah.. Right... I wouldn't want to trade it, I wouldn't want to live with anybody else and you know, I mean it's just, I don't have any regrets, it's not perfect by a long shot but I'm not sure, I don't think relationships are always perfect, maybe it is, but ours is not (laughs).. but I don't want to trade it....

I: So is there a kind of sense of specialness for you about him..

S: Oh yeah, oh yeah...I love him... I don't know what I'd do without him. I know that I could survive to get along but I wouldn't want to. I mean, I choose to live with him because I love him. I don't love everything about him or everything that he does. I'm sure that he doesn't love everything I

do but, I'm, not sure, I mean I know that I can't change him and really wouldn't want to, it's just him.

I: So there's a lot you have accepted about him and you love him in spite of everything...

S: Yes. I love him a lot (laughs).

I: When we started out, you were saying that it depends on what you meant by intimacy and I was wondering, was there something that was going through your mind when you were thinking about intimacy?

S: No... I was just thinking how that session in there to me wasn't intimate. I mean we were together and alone but the topic of conversation was not (laughs) what I would call intimate.

I: What do you call as being intimate, what would be an intimate situation for you?

S: Well...going out together to eat dinner, just the two of us in a quiet restaurant is intimate to me, obviously being at home, sexual intimacy, you know that type of thing is intimate, uh...just going on those long trips that we talked about, just sitting in the car together, no distractions, uh...just knowing that we're just talking one on one..I don't know.... just being together.

I: Uh..it seems like you are saying that it is by being with him or being together that gives you a sense of intimacy with him. And you'll may have different styles, yet it's being together and knowing to give each other their own space and then having your fights but being able to come back after all that, is what seems to be most important to you...

S: Yeah, it's just comfortable..... I mean I don't have to work at anything with him.... I just know that, I mean, he may not like some of the things that I may do but he is going to accept me for who I am, for what I am and I don't have to try to be something I am not...

I: Uh-huh...so you can be what you are with him...

S: Yeah, a good bit (laughs) good, bad or indifferent, you know.

I: (laughs) and you accept him..

S: Yeah, so I mean, I guess you know, we've always been able to talk, you know, always I don't know, I guess, just, I guess just being yourself and knowing that they love you for yourself and loving him for his self...

I: No pretenses...

S: Yeah... I guess, I don't think about it that much (laughs). I mean, I've dated people in the past where you know, I've just thought of them all the time, it's never really been that way with us. We've always just been buddies kind of like, just buddies, but yet not I mean, I don't mean, we're just good buddies, because we are intimate and I love him but he's just like my best friend, he's just always there. (Pause) . And I just don't have to work at it.

I: Uh-huh...Can you tell me a little more about him being your best friend?

S: Uh... Well I don't....(laughs) we dated, we..I've known him for ten years before we got married and I used to date a guy in college that I was crazy about, I mean I, talk about head over heels in love, I would have done anything but it was a different relationship. Looking back, it wasn't it wasn't as healthy, I don't think, you know I always kind of, always followed him around like a puppy, but anyway I dated him for four years

but in the meantime, Tim and I were friends and we had mutual friends and it always was a joke at these parties (this other guy's name was Pete) when Pete and I were over a Pete's apartment, Tim would come over and I would spend all night talking to Tim in the kitchen. We'd just get up over the countertop and shoot the breeze, we just always enjoyed just talking, you know. There wasn't anything sexual about it, it was just a friendship and I don't know, I'm always, when you said that, I think about those times, because people would laugh about it, you know, she'd in there talking to Tim in the kitchen. And..uh..so I don't know.. I mean on our wedding ring, Tim put, it's in initials, he put "From ten years of friendship to a lifetime of love and happiness. So, we just kind of developed into a relationship. It wasn't a slow process, but I guess, because I knew him for a long time just really as friends, that we had that background together, and I think that's been good for us.

I: So it's not the head over heels kind of love where you follow this person around and you are crazy about him, it's more of a comfortable friendship...

S: Well it wasn't, yeah, well it did, I don't know how long you've got, but there was a time when it was like head over heels. I was a fres..., no a sophomore in high school. I had a date with his friend and we went to this party but when we got there, Tim was drunk out of his mind. This was a high school party and everyone was drinking (laughs) and Tim was sitting on the couch and I remember there was this roomful of people in this motel and I just sat down and he said " Hi! how are you? (laughs) that's all he said, he was just being nice, polite, you know and I think I just

remember thinking, hey he's a really nice guy and he's cute. From that time on, I just had the biggest crush on him. I didn't want to date the other guy anymore but Tim never really knew that I really liked him. I didn't want to date the other guy anymore but Tim never really knew that I really liked him. And, I just, I would look for him in the hallways in high school. I don't know if you remember or not (laughs) , I'm sure you do; you know you've found somebody who you want to know what they are doing all the time and that's the way I was about him and when if there was a dance that a girl could ask a guy to, I would ask him to go and he would go, but he would never think that I really liked him, he would never even really try to kiss me or anything like that and I was always "Uh-huh, I hope he kisses me". he never did. And so you know, then I went on to college and started dating that guy and you know our lives just... but we still had mutual friends through those ten years and then when I quit dating that guy, a little bit later, a friend of ours said, "I'm going to get Tim to call you", I mean he wasn't dating anybody and I wasn't dating anybody so we went out some then, maybe five or six times and I thought if he calls me again, I'm going to barf! I do not want him to call me. This is just gross! You know we're friends, we can't date, it's just yuk! He thought the same thing. Finally, he quit calling me and never called me back and I thought, I hope he doesn't call me back. It was a mutual thing you know, it just wasn't going anywhere and we just weren't comfortable. We were trying to make dating out of a friendship. That was about 6-7 years in the 10 year period. Then we didn't see each other for three years at all, I mean not intentionally, we never ran into

each other. And then for whatever reason, something just came back in me and myself thinking "I need to look up Tim... I need to find him. He's a really nice guy" and I just started getting feelings for him, so I went to where he works and it so happened to be that he was out in the parking lot, this particular day, and he said "Come on in" and so we sat down and talked and just reminisced I guess. And he was taking jazzercise at that time..

I: Uh-huh

S: and I thought, Well I'm going to take jazzercise and we started going out to dinner, just kind of friends after jazzercise cause neither one of us had eaten. And anyway, from that time I saw him at Mac's, within six months we were engaged and within six months we were married. It was just the timing was just right and so I went back and think maybe in high school, it was just a, I mean I did have a head over heels feeling, I did have that friendship and now it's just you know got kind of both. So I don't know, you know, it's been kind of strange.....it's very hard to believe that we ever ended up together, after everything we went through.

I: It sounds kind of like your relationship evolved; you can see different stages..

S: Right and then we went different ways and then for whatever,, I mean the timing was right, that's the way I look at it, in putting us together at the right time.

I: Can you tell me a little more about 'God having a lot to do with that'.

S: I don't know, I just think that everything that happened in our relationship in that period of time, was too coincidental to not have an

outside force or some source knowing that we were meant to be together. I don't know what made me have those feelings for or drive to Mac's that day and he happen to be out in the parking lot, you know. I don't know.

I: So there's a sense that it was like.....

S: Destiny or whatever... I don't know... but it was meant to be. And then it's whole another story (laughs) but when we got engaged, about a month or two after we got engaged, Tim started having second thoughts, 'cause he had this old girlfriend with who he had never really finished things with. I think he'd realized that he was getting tied down and he wanted to be but then he really didn't want to be... I mean it was a real hard time, a hard two or three months before we got married. And I think he really thought about not getting married at all and we just weren't getting along and that was real hard, to go ahead and make that decision you know, to get married and then once we got married, I think he finally got over the fact that you know that he wasn't free anymore. He had made a commitment that was what he wanted to do. So once we got married, we got along a whole lot. The first year of marriage wasn't hard compared to the other two or three months before we got married. So we never really had that first year, you know where they say, uh..that the first year of marriage is really the hardest, it really wasn't for us (laughs) it was before we got married. I forgot now... I think you'd asked me about God, but I mean, I think God guides my life hopefully day to day on what I do and I think he does Tim's life, not that he did when first got married because neither of us were that close to God during that time. But somehow, I just think we are good for each other and God knows that and put us together.

I: So it's like, I mean you were saying earlier, your relationship with him has evolved over time and you have developed a kind of a friendship, along with being head over heels, I mean, it's not like you are head over heels all the time, it's just you take each other for what they are without any pretenses, and being comfortable with each other without having to constantly work at each other and giving each other your own space. It's all these things together that give you a sense of intimacy with him..Am I..

S: Yeah, you're right.. you know, I don't think he has ever had the head over heels feeling. I mean, I just don't think, he could tell you, it'll be interesting. I mean, I had it in high school and I know that I had it for the guy that I dated in college but other than that.... With Tim it has been an evolution of love and sometimes I wish I could bring that head over heels feelings back but then I think, well, what we have is better really because it is more consistent.

I: And then, you have the sense that God kind of led both of you to each other.

S: Yeah.

I: Is there anything else you would like to add?

S: I can't think of anything. Seems like I told you our life story. I can't really think of anything. There's good things and bad things about our relationship but overall I think it's good. I mean, I feel comfortable with it.

I: I really appreciate you coming by and doing this for me.

S: Well, I appreciate you having me

I: Thank you!

APPENDIX E

AN EXAMPLE OF AN IDIOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION

Based on the sample phenomenological interview, marital intimacy for this particular wife involves "being together and talking" to her husband and "enjoying doing things together". Although she is aware of the differences between her husband and herself and recognizes that she can "live without him" it is accepting these differences and enjoying being with him that is key to her sense of intimacy. While she acknowledges that in her relationship she gives in more to her husband than vice versa, she believes that "he will go along with me too". While sexual intimacy and "falling head over heels in love" is one aspect of intimacy, she goes on to state that intimacy involves much more than sexual intimacy. She describes her husband as being her best friend, "...he is just like my best friend, he's always there". Time, is viewed as being coercive and restrictive and she feels pressured by time "...there is so much to do". She also contrasts herself from other couples by stating that she did not know how many other couples would be willing to be part of a study like the present one. Children through their constant demands are also seen as taking away her time from her husband. Intimacy for her occurs exclusively when her husband and she are alone and they have private, quiet time away from the hectic, structured and pressured activities of her daily routine. Intimate time has to be planned so that she can be spontaneous and do what she wants with her spouse. She also believes that "God" or destiny had a lot to do with putting them together at the right time and place as she believes they were meant to be together. At the

same time she indicates that "it is kind of strange that we ended up together, after everything we went through.

APPENDIX F

"INFORMED CONSENT" FORM

The purpose of this study titled "A Multifaceted Approach to the Study of Marital Intimacy: Behavioral and Phenomenological Analyses", is an attempt to understand the nature of marital relationships among white, middle class, American couples who have not sought counseling, have been married for at least three years and have completed high school. The entire study will be about two hours in duration. You will be asked to fill out two questionnaires. You will then be requested to complete a task which will be videotaped. An interview will follow which will be audio taped. Both the audio tapes and the videotapes will be locked securely in my departmental office, Room 226 G and will be kept confidential. They will be accessible only to three trained responsible undergraduates, Margaret Pratt, Mandy Blackburn and Liz Gotten, who will code the tapes, to my advisor, Dr. Wahler, and myself. Once the data have been scored and analysed in the privacy of my office, the tapes will be erased and any written information will be shredded.

The study will help promote a clearer understanding about normal marital relationships. Although, the study may not have any direct benefits to you, it may increase your awareness about relationships. During the course of the study, if any personal information that is embarrassing or uncomfortable about you or your partner emerges, please

feel free to discuss it with me. You can also seek psychological services at the clinic, at your personal expense, if you are more comfortable with this option.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or withdraw at any time during the study without penalty. If you have any questions pertaining to the research either now or later, please feel free to contact me at the psychological clinic at the following address:

Julie Thomas, UT Psychological Clinic, 227 Austin Peay Building,
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-0900 or please call me at 615-974-2161.

* * * * *

I have read and understood the explanation of this study and agree to participate.

Name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX G

TRANSCRIBER AND RATER CONFIDENTIALITY PLEDGE

In participating in the Marital Intimacy study, I understand that I will be viewing videotapes and listening to the interview tapes of people who rightfully expected that the information contained in those tapes would be kept confidential. I understand that I have the responsibility to honor their privacy and confidentiality. I agree by signing this form to keep all of the information from these tapes to myself, that I will not discuss any information with any person not directly involved in this project (i. e., approved by Julie Thomas). To violate this contract would be a very serious ethical breach and I pledge not to do so.

Signature of Project Team Member

Julie E. Thomas

Project Director

VITA

Julie Elizabeth Thomas was born in Ernakulam in the state of Kerala, India on July 14, 1966. She grew up in Bombay, India and attended elementary school at Lady Vissanji Girls' Academy, at Andheri, in Bombay. In May 1981, on successfully passing her 10th grade examination from this school she received the Secondary School Certificate. She obtained her Higher Secondary Certificate (equivalent to a high school diploma) from Bhavan's college in May 1983. At this college, she was the recipient of the Best Student Award. The following June, she entered Sophia college and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, in June of 1986. She entered the University of Bombay in August 1986 and received a merit scholarship for academic excellence for two years. In June 1988, she received the Master of Arts in Psychology from the University of Bombay. She was ranked second in the graduate program, at the Department of Psychology.

In August of 1988, she entered the Clinical Psychology Program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She completed her predoctoral internship training at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. In August of 1993, she was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Psychology.

She is currently doing a Post-Doctoral Internship in Clinical Psychology at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.