CONGRUENCE OF MULTI-LEVEL PERCEPTIONS OVER THE LENGTH OF MARRIAGE AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT IN AIR FORCE COUPLES

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Diane Cone, B.S.
Denton, Texas
August, 1991

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Spousal congruence at multiple levels of perception was examined in relationship to marital adjustment. Subjects were 164 active duty and retired Air Force married couples. Each spouse completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) and a questionnaire measuring three levels of dyadic perceptions about various aspects of marriage (Allen & Thompson, 1984). Three ANOVAs (one for each perceptual level) indicated no consistent differences in congruence between adjusted and nonadjusted couples over the five categories of increasing lengths of marriage. Adjusted couples were more likely than nonadjusted couples to agree (level I congruence) at the 0-5 and the 18-23 year point of marriage. However, nonadjusted couples were more likely than adjusted couples to agree at the 24+ year point. Adjusted couples were more likely than nonadjusted couples to understand each other (level II congruence) at the 18-23 year point. Adjusted spouses were better able than nonadjusted spouses to predict whether they would be understood (level III congruence), but only at the 18-23 year point. Adjusted husbands, overall, understood their

wives more than did nonadjusted husbands. Correlations revealed that, for adjusted couples, congruence on each level was negatively associated with length of marriage. No associations were found between these variables for nonadjusted couples. A repeated measures ANOVA indicated that, for adjusted couples married 18+ years, there was no difference between congruence at the three levels. However, the same analysis for nonadjusted couples revealed that level I congruence was greater than levels II and III congruence. Positive relationships were found between couple marital adjustment and congruence at each level. Husbands' adjustment was positively related to couple congruence at all levels. Wives' adjustment related to couple congruence only for level II.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Much research has been conducted in the quest to determine how marital relationships change over the marital career. Variables such as finances, presence or departure of children, health, role expectations, individual development, status changes, aging, and other family stressors and transitions play major roles in how spouses will develop in their interactions as they go through time together (Mederer & Hill, 1983; Troll, Miller, & Atchley, 1979).

Fixed-sequence and circular-causal theories (Levinger, 1983; Stephen, 1985) represent two major schools of thought that seek to explain mate selection and relationship development over time. Additionally, exchange principles and notions from the symbolic interactionist theory contribute to a better understanding of the processes explained by the fixed-sequence and circular-causal theories. These four categories of theories, how they affect relationship development, and how they interface with each other, are discussed and explored in the following sections.

These theories and relevant research growing out of them provided the background for assessing the relationships between length of marriage, marital adjustment and

congruence of dyadic perceptions. Marital attitudes were assessed at three levels of perception in a cross-sectional design among adjusted and nonadjusted couples.

Fixed-Sequence Theories

Fixed-sequence theorists have postulated that two people are attracted to each other according to the specific characteristics (e.g., demographics, attitudes, personality traits) held by each (Stephen, 1985). A process of "selective filtering" occurs before deciding on a marriage partner. An individual continually scrutinizes the other, discovering new information in determining whether the partner remains attractive (e.g., Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962; Winch, Ktsanes, & Ktsanes, 1954). Fixed-sequence researchers have focused on static characteristics as the determining factors of a future successful relationship.

Most fixed-sequence theorists have assumed that homogeneity of characteristics of two people is the crucial aspect in relationship-building. In other words, similarities of demographic characteristics, as well as beliefs, attitudes, and values are crucial to a successful, long-term relationship. Many past studies have supported this line of reasoning. Byrne and Blaylock (1963) found that married couples tended to have similar attitudes about important topics. Katz (1965) found that untroubled married partners were more likely than troubled married partners to agree on the meaning of concepts relevant to marriage

(although no differences were found between groups regarding agreement of interpretations of concepts unrelated to marriage). Murstein (1967) found that, among courting partners assessed, a significant number were similar with regard to level of mental health functioning (i.e., well-functioning vs. poorly functioning). Bitter (1986) concluded that marriages beginning late in life tend to be unstable, not because of mental inflexibility, or becoming "too set in their ways," but because the two individuals have grown increasingly heterogeneous over their life. Creamer and Campbell (1988) found that happily married couples were significantly more similar in their self-descriptions than unhappy couples.

Even though some research outcomes (e.g., Centers, 1975) have not supported the notion that homogeneity is crucial to attraction and successful relationship-building, a plethora of studies have come to this conclusion (e.g., Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Byrne, London, & Reeves, 1968). White and Hatcher (1984) in their review of the literature, reported that, even though there are disconfirming studies, more evidence exists for the relationship of similarity to couple satisfaction than against it.

Other theorists of the fixed-sequence school of thought have postulated that heterogeneity of characteristics between two people is necessary for attraction and a lasting relationship. That is, two people are attracted to each

other because one possesses desired traits, possessions, or other aspects that may be unavailable to, or at least perceived as insufficient within the other. For example, a passive, nonassertive person would be attracted to an outgoing, assertive partner. Complementarity, the most frequently discussed type of heterogeneity, exists when two people possess characteristics that balance, or complement each other (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967).

Early psychoanalytic theorists conceived of complementarity as being a characteristic of only "neurotic" couples (e.g., Oberndorf, 1938). Reik (1964) suggested that we often seek others who have characteristics that we lack; and, therefore we choose our partners for basically selfish motives. Early psychoanalytic thinking deemed it normal for persons to choose someone similar to his or her opposite-sexed parent as a substitute for unmet Oedipal desires of childhood (Lasswell, 1985). However, if one's defenses have been mobilized excessively against Oedipal desires, he or she will choose someone just the opposite of the opposite-sexed parent. This is unhealthy according to this theory. Ehrenwald (cited in Lasswell, 1985) has called this phenomenon "neurotic exogamy" (p. 144).

However, choosing partners who fulfill complementary needs was later thought of as a normal phenomenon of nonneurotic couples (Winch, 1955; Winch et al., 1954). Watzlawick et al., (1967) referred to complementarity as one

of the basic, common styles of dyadic communication and long-term relating. Some researchers have viewed it as necessary to marital happiness (e.g., Ktsanes & Ktsanes, Cited in Winch & Ktsanes, 1954; Winch, 1952).

Many fixed-sequence theorists believe that both homogeneity and heterogeneity of personal characteristics of two people are important to successful relationships. Winch and Ktsanes (1954) incorporated both lines of thinking when they hypothesized that one chooses a potential mate from a "field of eligibles." The field is a group which contains persons of similar demographics. However, while the one chosen is similar in terms of such variables as age, race, religion and even basic beliefs, he or she is also ". . . that person who gives the greatest promise of providing. . . maximum need-gratification" (p. 242). The chosen mate possesses resources (traits, possessions, etc.) unavailable to the other. Therefore, while similarity of demographics is important as a factor for initial attraction, complementarity of needs maintains the relationship over the long-term. Winch (1955) went on to test this theory with a sample of 25 couples married less than two years. Using interviews, case histories, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) cards, and a final conference of experts, he arrived at each person's needs. Although information from the interviews and final conferences were the only sources that supported the theory, information from the case histories and the TAT cards did

not support the alternative homogamy theory of mate-selection.

Newcomb (1956) asserted that "complementarity is a special case of similarity" (p. 579). He gave the example of an assertive person being attracted to a receptive person. The relationship is successful in that the two have the similar opinion that one should be assertive or receptive. In other words they agree, verbally or implicitly, to be different.

Even though family therapists have continued to emphasize the importance of complementarity, according to White and Hatcher's (1984) review, there is more clinical evidence in support of the homogeneity, or similarity theory, than the complementarity theory of attraction and relationship satisfaction.

Circular-Causal Theories

Theorists who have ascribed to a circular-causal viewpoint have gone beyond focusing simply on dyadic attraction to the study of how a relationship grows and develops. They have maintained that background demographic factors or static characteristics and beliefs are not as important to a successful relationship as the dynamic process of relationship formation. Many circular-causal theorists have asserted that the processes of spending time together and actively communicating over time serve to gradually create similarity. This process approach to the

study of mate selection puts the focus on the relationship versus the characteristics of two separate individuals who happen to be together.

In an early article, Fried and Stern (1948) described progressive assimilation as the process of married partners forming almost identical interests and habits over the years, thus leading to great satisfaction as well as greater interdependency. The authors were referring to behaviors becoming more similar; but, perhaps, it can be assumed that attitudes and perceptions also become more similar.

Bolton (1961), writing from a symbolic interactionist frame of reference was also among the first to stress the importance of the process of relationship-building versus the mere matching of demographic variables. This process begins as soon as two people meet and it is a ". . .process in which the transactions between individuals. . .are determinants of turning points and commitments out of which marriage emerges" (p. 2354). The interaction between two people is more important than the characteristics of each of them as individuals. (The theory of symbolic interactionism is elaborated upon in a later section.)

Pineo (1961) viewed marriage in a processual sense, changing through time. However, he pointed out how couples may grow to be less similar and more disenchanted.

In 1962, Kerckhoff and Davis had 94 "seriously attached" couples fill out a self-report inventory and the Firo-B, and then again after eight months. They found that filtering factors such as similar social attributes (e.g., class, race, etc.) were important to mate selection in the earliest stage of a relationship, consensus of values was important somewhat later in the relationship (but less than 18 months), and complementarity of needs was crucial for long-term couples (or those who had gone together for more than 18 months). The authors interpreted results to mean that filtering factors, value consensus, and need complementarity, in this order, work to enhance progress toward a couple's permanence. Levinger, Senn, and Jorgensen (1970) repeated this study using 330 university couples, testing once, then six months later. However, they found only marginal support for the hypothesis. Despite contradictory results, such studies suggested that needs change over a marital life-span, implying a process of relationship development, and suggested that both similarity and complementarity are important at different points in a relationship.

Berger and Kellner (1964), writing in a more philosophical vein, conceived couples as forming their own conjoint reality whereby two people come to possess similar cognitions the longer they live together. Cognitions (beliefs, attitudes, and values) are ever-changing.

Eventually, a shared world view emerges between two people whereby they come to think and interpret stimuli in a similar manner. Through conversation, giving and receiving feedback, confirming and reconfirming ideas, a couple is always in the process of constructing reality together.

Zonderman, Vandenberg, Spuhler, and Fein (1977) examined relationships as a dynamic process, finding evidence for couples becoming more similar over time in the way of cognitive abilities. Watkins and Meredith (1981) also studied cognitive traits, comparing newlyweds to long-standing couples. Dyadic resemblance for cognitive traits was found among the newlywed couples; however, an examination of long-standing couples suggested little change over time.

Examining whether personality characteristics of mates become more similar to each other, Price and Vandenberg (1980) found no increasing similarity of personality traits over the length of marriage, as measured by subjects' completion of the Comrey Personality Scales. Guttman and Zohar (1987) did a very similar study. The authors employed 138 professional couples living in Jerusalem who had been married less than 22 years. The authors used the same seven Comrey personality dimensions as did Price and Vandenberg. Scattergrams showed that after 7 to 15 years extreme differences between spouses in 5 out of 7 personality dimensions disappeared. Evidence for convergence of these

traits was only slight however, as these same results were not borne out from correlational data. Buss (1984) found that older couples tended to be less similar to each other with respect to interpersonal dispositions than spouses married only briefly. Although outcomes from the above studies may have differed, they still supported a processual model of relationship development.

Byrne and Blaylock (1963) also espoused a dynamic view of relationship-building, which incorporated exchange principles as well. From this perspective couples come to be more similar over time because of the greater reward value to be gained. Finding that husbands and wives tended to agree about important topics, the authors theorized that "not only should similar attitudes about object X lead to attraction between A and B, and dissimilar attitudes about X lead to repulsion, but attraction between A and B should lead to similar attitudes about X" (p. 637). Furthermore, because it was found that assumed similarity of attitudes was greater than actual similarity, the authors proposed that a person may actually distort one's perception of his or her partner's beliefs for the sake of achieving similarity.

Following up on this idea that it is important for couples to develop a similar way of understanding the world, Stephen (1985) maintained that it is this world view attained by a couple over time that compensates for possible

disagreements, making them tolerable by re-interpreting the other's behavior into something understandable and acceptable. As in the recently mentioned study by Byrne and Blaylock (1963), Levinger and Breedlove (1966) found it quite important for couples to <u>believe</u> they agree. The authors found that, among 60 middle-class married couples, spouses' <u>assumed</u> agreement exceeded their <u>actual</u> agreement with regard to marriage-relevant topics, and <u>assumed</u> agreement varied with marital satisfaction. Results from these types of studies have espoused the importance of cognitive consistency, maintaining that couples, especially satisfied ones, actually strive for cognitive symmetry (e.g., Schram, 1979).

In summary, the premise of a circular-causal theory of relationship development is that similarity of two people, and/or complementarity of needs, or any other static variables, by themselves, are not sufficient to explain how two people remain together in a successful relationship for many years. A relationship is a dynamic, constantly-changing entity. There are many reasons, according to circular-causal theorists, that two members of a couple, grow more similar as they interact. Similarity is often reinforced by the other partner, thereby rewards of agreeing outweigh costs of disagreeing (a behavioral and exchange explanation). It also appears that a satisfied couple might feel some element of cognitive dissonance to admit to

disagreement. In a similar vein, perhaps it is not socially desirable to admit to disagreement in one's marriage.

There are several research outcomes, however, that while maintaining the processual aspect of relationship development, have not supported the notion that couples become more similar, and in fact have supported the opposite outcome. It could be that, in some specific areas, two people do become more similar over time, but not in other areas, and in some ways a couple may even become less similar. Another possibility is that particular characteristics of a couple (e.g., high marital adjustment) may result in their being more likely to become similar than other couples. The possibility of such an interaction effect is discussed in a later section.

Symbolic Interactionism

The theory of symbolic interactionism, founded in the early 1900s by the well-known sociologist George Herbert Mead (see Cashdan, 1982), seems to be at the heart of a circular-causal framework of relationship development, and therefore, deserves explanation. Mead, as well as other writers after him such as Blumer and Cotrell (cited in Cashdan, 1982), asserted that we internalize others' values, beliefs, and attitudes and use these to form our own identity by engaging in internal conversations. Mead conceived of the "self" as made up of the "I" and the "me." "I" reacts to others in an immediate, spontaneous fashion,

and "me" takes information and reflects on it, weighing consequences and thinking out options. One's "me" can be made up of "voices" of others, such as parents, friends, or society in general. One's "I" may react differently, depending on the situation. Therefore, we have many "I-me's" within ourselves, which are in constant conversation, forming and reforming our identities.

Cotrell (cited in Cashdan, 1982) formulated what he called "self-other systems" which are similar to Mead's "I-me" systems. He maintained that we would not even have a sense of self without anticipated responses of others to which we compare ourselves. The self has inner conversations with the other to guide our behavior and to decide about who we are. Singelmann (1972) discussed how we actually look at ourselves as objects through the eyes of others.

We form our sense of identity by comparing ourselves and ideas to others in society. We need validation of ourselves by others, according to Berger and Kellner (1964), and our ideas of self change according to who the validating source may be. These authors asserted that marriage is one of the most crucial instruments by which one is validated. Two people with pre-existing identities and different, even though perhaps somewhat similarly-structured, pasts come together, and they must redefine themselves in relation to this new person with whom they

will be living. Through time and conversation together, one spouse's previously-held values, beliefs, and attitudes about reality and oneself will be confirmed or rejected by the other and, consequently, re-evaluated by the first spouse. According to Berger and Kellner (1964),

> marriage thus posits a new reality. The individual's relationship with this new reality, however, is a dialectical one--he acts upon it, in collusion with the marriage partner, and it acts back upon both him and the partner, welding together their reality. (p. 12)

An example of this (a similar one being found in Berger and Kellner, 1964) would be how John's attitude about his friend Dan may change after John's new wife, Janice, begins challenging her husband about what she sees as Dan's selfish motives behind their friendship. Berger and Kellner also suggested that couples tend to be pushed toward groups that strengthen the definition of themselves as a couple, such as classes for married couples or a couples' bridge group or dinner club. Soon, one's single friends tend to fade away, and she and her husband begin spending time with married friends. One may be eventually thought of as one of a team of two. (For example, we often hear phrases like "Oh, yes, isn't she John's wife?").

These changes are slow and subtle and occur without one's being keenly or even consciously aware. We create reality even though we think we've discovered it. We are in

the process of change on a continual basis. Although much of a couple's growth toward a greater union seems to happen rather naturally, evidence from the aforementioned studies by Byrne and Blaylock (1963) and Levinger and Breedlove (1966) suggest that couples, at least some couples, may actually strive either consciously or unconsciously to be similar.

Communication, through verbal and nonverbal language, is highly emphasized in this theory of symbolic interactionism; and human conversation is the most crucial vehicle of communication. Two people reconstruct reality through conversation, and actually become an entity, just as one forms one's separate identity via a conversation within himself or herself.

Stephen (1985) described the role of communication from a fixed-sequence framework as "expressive." One conveys to another various facts about himself or herself so that selective filtering and choice of partners can ensue. However, a circular-causal viewpoint (on which symbolic interactionism is a major influence) would view communication as "persuasive." Communication is a medium whereby two people exchange knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and values which will be altered and re-altered, setting a process in motion that will bring about a <u>shared</u> belief system. Not only is one telling the other thoughts and feelings, but he or she is actually changing the

relationship. Communication actually changes another's behaviors, thoughts, etc., which will, in turn, impact upon the first member.

This theory of symbolic interactionism suggests that couples have symbols, meanings, rituals, etc., which they and they alone understand, and that these meanings or symbols reflect and create a dynamic, mutually understood environment. Jan Trost (1964) described a "symbolic environment" as ". . .the meaning which the words (verbal symbols) have for a person. Meaning is the object to which the word is knitted, the behavior which is associated with the word, and the emotion which is associated with the word" (p. 30). Both members of a couple will tend to ascribe the same meaning, behavior, and emotions with certain words, phrases, statements, etc.

Katz (1965) administered a variant of Osgood's semantic differential to 20 "troubled" married couples and 20 "untroubled" couples. Results were strongly in support of the hypothesis that happy couples would possess greater semantic similarity for concepts relevant to marriage than unhappy couples (i.e., untroubled were more likely to similarly interpret meanings of concepts).

Kreckel (1982) maintained that one forms concepts based on one's past knowledge and experience. No two people will ever possess the <u>exact</u> same concepts, since we all have different interactions with the world. However, the more

one interacts with another directly, sharing similar experiences, the greater the opportunity there is for these two to form similar concepts. Kreckel went on to assert that conceptual similarity, or shared knowledge, also depends on a couple's desire to share experiences with each other in the future. The greater the desire, the more interaction, the more knowledge that is shared, and the more concepts are converged.

This line of thinking goes back to Bolton's (1961) proposal, that a couple develops a mutually understood language, and to Berger and Kellner's (1964) original conception of a shared world view or a conjoint reality. Couples grow to form an ever-growing, increasingly similar view of the world, according to these theorists.

Exchange Theory

Because it has been alluded to in the discussions of both fixed-sequence and circular-causal theories, further explanation of exchange theory, its principles, and its pertinence to relationship development is in order. A review of this theory sets the stage for this paper's contention that the fixed-sequence and circular-causal models can be combined to better explain relationship development.

Nye (1982) explained that the foundation of exchange theory can be traced back to the writings of Thibaut and

Kelly, and Homans (cited in Nye, 1982). In describing this broad theory, Nye stated that its major

> . . .principle or most general proposition. . .is that humans avoid costly behavior and seek rewarding statuses, relationships, interactions, and feeling states to the end that their profits are maximized. Of course, in seeking rewards they voluntarily accept some costs; likewise in avoiding costs, some rewards are foregone, but the person. . .will choose the best outcome available, based on his/her. . .perception of rewards and costs. (p. 14)

Nye (1982) went on to discuss some general sources of rewards and costs. Two that seem pertinent to relationship formation and maintenance include approval and agreement. Partners in committed relationships look for approval from their mates and may strive towards it to gain the desired attention from the other. Agreement is closely related. Nye explained that "it is rewarding to have others subscribe to our values and beliefs" (p. 19). "At the psychological level, it may reinforce our feeling of competence or worth. Obviously, to have our own opinions and values rejected is costly and people tend to avoid those who predictably differ from them" (pp. 19-20).

The basic premise that we seek out others who we anticipate will provide rewarding experiences supports a fixed-sequence line of reasoning. According to both fixed-

sequence and exchange theories, we are attracted to particular qualities or characteristics in a person that we think will be beneficial or provide satisfaction to us in the long-run. In order to receive the approval and acceptance that, as has been mentioned, are crucial elements in a close relationship, one looks for things such as ". . .status of the other, physical beauty, and similarity of the other's attitudes, personality, and social characteristics to one's own" (Huston & Burgess, 1979, p. 14). This process of seeking out another can be likened to selective filtering.

However, exchange theory has gone much further than proposing how persons are attracted to their mates. Exchange principles, just like circular-causal principles, have been used to describe how a relationship grows, even after the initial attraction. After meeting someone, often by sheer circumstance, most relationships will remain superficial, according to Huston and Burgess (1979). This is because the rewards perceived to be available from the other person can be obtained by a number of other sources, or the profits anticipated from the other are not high enough to warrant further exploration or involvement. However, when it is perceived that the relationship may provide rewards over and above what is available from others, each person gathers new information about the other. This starts an unfolding process of continued exchange made

possible through increased communication and mutual reinforcement.

Huston and Burgess (1979) viewed relationships as ". . .a consequence of an unfolding social-exchange process, which may be conceived as a bartering of rewards and costs" (p. 4). They went on to assert that the relationship itself is a unit of analysis, formed via social transactions. It is continually changing, a dynamic entity of exchanging information and reinforcing each other, resulting in a deepening of commitment. Patterson and Reid (cited in Huston & Burgess, 1979) maintained that because partners tend to reinforce or reward behaviors that are similar to their own, the two will become more similar over time. This idea of a relationship being a constantly changing and growing entity supports a circular-causal line of reasoning.

Exchange Theory and Symbolic Interactionism

Stephen (1984) admitted that a symbolic interactionist viewpoint has difficulty lending itself to empirical testing and that propositions of the theory are vague. He, therefore, combined this theory with exchange theory, suggesting that exchange theory better explains the process whereby two people communicate and grow toward further commitment, and symbolic interactionism better explains what gets exchanged. The interaction of these two theories warrants elaboration.

Symbolic interactionism would maintain that the confirmation of one's interpretation of reality by the other is the reward in dyadic interactions. The validation of one's identity, values, and interpretation of the world is an important need, as has been discussed. When one's ideas are confirmed as valid by an important other, such as a spouse, this is rewarding.

This validation is achieved by the process of mutual exchange of information through confirming (rewarding), rejecting (costly), reconfirming, etc. Stephen (1984) suggested that, from this process of exchanging confirming and disconfirming meanings, what emerges is a "symbolic interdependence [which] describes a state of emergent, blended consciousness between relationship members" (p. 397).

Stephen (1984) went beyond his theoretical synthesis of social interactionism and exchange theory to an empirical test. He proposed the following hypotheses: (a) couples in more advanced relationships will display greater levels of symbolic interdependence, (b) greater levels of symbolic interdependence will be positively associated with greater levels of couple satisfaction, and (c) greater levels of symbolic interdependence will be positively associated with greater levels of commitment to the relationship. His subjects were 160 couples along with 43 males and 43 females who were not involved in a committed relationship. Each

single was randomly assigned to another of the opposite sex. They all completed the Relationship-World Index-Version 2 (RWI-2) the Commitment subscale of Lewis' Dyadic Formation Inventory and a version of the Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjustment Test which was modified for the single subjects. Predictions (b) and (c) were supported. Prediction (a) was also supported, but only for couples together under one year. While the overall trend was towards greater symbolic interdependence among couples in more satisfied and committed relationships, perhaps couples who had been together for many years in long-term relationships had less of a need to be similar (see Levinger et al., 1970). The current study addressed this issue.

Singelmann (1972) also believed the theories of symbolic interactionism and exchange theory to be compatible. Symbolic interactionism attempts to clarify the nature of the inter-relationships between individuals and society, and exchange theory looks at why one acts as he does when he does. Singelmann stressed that rewards are satisfying only insofar as one perceives them to be, and that a symbolic interactionist theory accounts for the fact that different people perceive different things to be rewarding. In other words, values and meanings toward objects or behaviors are defined as rewards only by the interactants. Singelmann pointed out that both symbolic interactionist and social exchange viewpoints consider

". . .interaction as continuously being constructed and reconstructed by actors who 'test' the adequacy of their actions in relation to the responses of others" (p. 419). Singelmann's paper pointed to the importance of the congruence of perceptions between partners in interpreting the meaning of rewards offered in the couple interaction.

Perceptual Congruence

As may be gathered from the previous discussion, much research has been devoted toward understanding the pattern of changes in marriages over time. Various studies have been presented revealing how couples may or may not become more similar with regard to such variables as values, needs, cognitions, personality traits, interpersonal dispositions, attitudes, rituals, and semantic interpretations.

Another topic of particular relevance for the present study is congruency of perceptions. The term congruency as it is used in this paper can be likened to similarity or agreement in some ways, but it actually refers to a somewhat different phenomenon. If spouses are similar or they agree in areas such as values, attitudes, etc., the couple is congruent. Agreement, however, is considered only one type or level of congruence. It was proposed that a couple can be congruent at deeper levels of understanding, even though they may not agree on an issue, if each has the correct perception of the other's beliefs.

In the sections which follow, a more thorough discussion is offered of the notion of perceptual congruency and its multiple levels. In addition, the relationship between multi-level perceptual congruency and marital adjustment is explored as well as how these variables may interact and change over the marital career. Finally, these relationships are tied into the previously discussed theories of circular-causality, exchange theory, and symbolic interactionism, together leading into the purpose of this study.

Multiple Levels of Perceptual Congruence and Marital Adjustment

It was contended in this study that congruency would be associated with a good marriage. Plechaty (1987) assumed that ". . . the satisfied couple is less defensive with one another, and, being less prone to perceptual distortions should show better perceptual congruence. . . than the unsatisfied couple" (p. 527).

Luckey (1960a, 1960b) was one of the first to consider congruence of a couple's beliefs, or perceptions, on more than one level. She conducted a series of studies of the relationship of congruency, or noncongruency, of perceptions to marital adjustment. In the first of the series (1960a) she hypothesized that marital satisfaction was related to congruence of (a) perception of one's self and that held of him or her by the spouse; (b) perception of one's self and

perception of one's ideal self; (c) perception of one's self and perception of the same-sexed parent; (d) one's perception of spouse and one's perception of the opposite-sexed parent; and (e) one's perception of ideal self and one's perception of spouse. She employed married couples who were former university students. The "satisfied" group and the "unsatisfied" group were differentiated by the Locke Modified Marital Adjustment Scale and Terman's seven-point self-rating happiness scale. Perceptions were indicated by the Interpersonal Check List (ICL) filled out five times by each subject for self, spouse, mother, father, and ideal self. Every hypothesis was supported, as indicated by *t* tests, except the one dealing with congruence between perceptions of oneself and ideal self (hypothesis b).

In a second study, Luckey (1960b) broke down the above findings on the basis of sex. It was discovered that marital satisfaction was related to the congruence of the husband's self-perceptions and those held of him by his wife, but that satisfaction was not associated with congruence of concepts that the wife held of herself and those held of her by her husband. Luckey suggested that other studies (e.g., Burgess & Locke, cited in Luckey, 1960b) have indicated that, because the wife tends to adjust more in a marriage than the husband, she must, out of necessity, be able to perceive her husband's self-image.

Stuckert (1963) arrived at similar conclusions, finding that it was important to marital satisfaction that the wife accurately perceive her husband, but not necessarily important that the husband understand his wife. The author had 50 couples, divided into satisfied and dissatisfied groups per the Burgess-Wallin Schedule, answer 30 questions in an interview format. Each subject was asked to evaluate ten personality needs in three ways: their importance to marriage in general, their importance to his or her marriage, and their importance from the point of view of the spouse. For wives, marital satisfaction correlated highest with congruence between their perceptions of their husbands' evaluations and their husbands' actual evaluations. For husbands, marital satisfaction was mostly related to congruence between their own evaluations and their wives' evaluations.

Laing, Phillipson, and Lee (1966) described more specifically how perceptions can occur at several levels; and they pointed out that couples who are found to differ on one level of perception may still be congruent on another level. In other words, couples' perceptions may or may not be congruent on one or more levels. For example, a man may <u>disagree</u> with his wife on how money should be budgeted (this will be called a "level I" disagreement or noncongruence of perceptions), but each may <u>understand</u> that the other disagrees (this will be called "level II" congruence of

perceptions on the part of both spouses). Furthermore, each may or may not realize that he or she is being understood ("level III"). In other words, level I would be "I see X in this manner" (and couples may or may not agree on how they see X); level II would be "I see you as seeing X in this manner" (and couples may or may not understand each other); and level III would be "I see you as seeing me as seeing X in this manner" (and one may or may not realize how the other sees him or her). (Laing et al. described a fourth aspect of perception called feeling understood or misunderstood, by which one guesses whether he or she will be predicted accurately by the spouse.)

Taylor (1967) used the Interpersonal Check List with couples asking them to choose the items describing themselves, those describing their mates, those predicting how their mates would describe them, and those predicting how their mates would describe themselves. (This analysis closely corresponds to the first two of Laing et al.s', 1966, levels of perception.) Results suggested that perceptual congruence in all of the cases was related to marital adjustment.

Larson (1975) made use of the concept of levels in exploring interpersonal perceptions of families. He had 29 students administer questionnaires to members of their own families (15 couples were included). The pretested questionnaires inquired about attitudes, values, and norms

concerning various roles of family members. Each member gave a response to an item on a four-point Likert scale, from "high importance" to "no importance" (similar to Laing et al.'s, 1966, level I). Each then indicated the response he or she believed each other family member would give (level II). After comparing perceptions it was found that, in this particular study, husbands and wives did not differ significantly in their level I perceptions. They had similar values concerning marital roles, and they were also able to predict each other's responses (level II).

Sporakowski and Hughston (1978) examined congruence in older couples. Using an interview, a semantic differential scale filled out for self and other, the Locke-Wallace Short Form Marital Adjustment Scale and the Interpersonal Check List, the authors found that marital adjustment in couples married 50 or more years was related to congruence of self-other perceptions (or level II congruence).

Plechaty (1987) suggested that perceptual agreement between married spouses should promote better understanding, better communication, more desirable behaviors, and better marital coping skills (Kotlar; Meck & Leunes; Murstein; Stuckert; Tharp; and Wayman & Hammond, cited in Plechaty, 1987). He found, in his own study, that satisfied couples were more congruent than unsatisfied couples in their beliefs concerning four out of five aspects of marital life, and they were also more congruent in four out of five marital attitudes.

Creamer and Campbell (1988) divided 20 married couples into two halves ("happy" and "unhappy" groups) according to their scores on the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). All subjects filled out the California Personality Inventory (CPI) according to how one predicted his or her spouse would fill it out. Then, each spouse answered another CPI on himself or herself. Employing different combinations of perceptions than heretofore discussed, the authors found a positive correlation between adjustment scores and real similarity (i.e., the extent of similarity between the spouses' self-descriptions on the CPI). There was also a positive correlation between adjustment scores and accuracy (i.e., the degree of similarity between one spouse's prediction of the other's self-description and the other's actual self-description). Accuracy scores would be similar to Laing et al.'s (1966) level II. However, the correlation was significant for the wives, only. In other words, the wife's ability to understand her husband was more important to marital adjustment than the husband's ability to understand his wife. This latter finding is consistent with results of Luckey's (1960b) and Stuckert's (1963) studies mentioned above, as well as others (i.e., Corsini and Kotlar, cited in Creamer & Campbell, 1988). Creamer and Campbell also derived an assumed similarity score, comparing one's CPI with the CPI predicted for the spouse. No

differences were found as a function of sex in the tendency to assume that one's partner is similar to oneself.

Considering this idea of congruency from a slightly different angle, it is known from past research that congruence of perceptions on level I does not have to be present for a couple to be satisfied. For example, Safilios-Rothschild (1969) showed that even couples who were satisfied with their marriages disagreed about who typically made certain decisions. (This can be likened to Laing et al.'s, 1966, level I). It is possible, however, that couples such as these understand that they disagree (level II) and/or each may realize that he or she is understood by the other (level III). Level I congruence may or may not be as important to marital adjustment as level II and/or level III.

This idea was suggested by the results of Allen and Thompson (1984) who modeled a questionnaire after Laing et al.'s (1966) Interpersonal Perception Method system (IPM) which takes three levels of perceptions into consideration. Allen and Thompson's questionnaire asked subjects to rate their beliefs about aspects of self, spouse, and their marriage on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. Taken three times, each answered according to (a) one's own beliefs, (b) one's prediction of the spouse's beliefs, and (c) one's predictions of the spouse's predictions of one's beliefs. After giving their questionnaire to couples, they found that

agreement (a comparison of each spouse's beliefs--level I congruence) was related to communication satisfaction; understanding (how well each predicted the other's beliefs--level II congruence) from both spouses was not related to communication satisfaction; and realization that one is understood by the other (or, how well one predicted one's spouse's predictions of one's beliefs--level III congruence) was related to communication satisfaction, but only for husbands. A fourth level of congruence, feeling understood, guessing how well one will be understood, was related to communication satisfaction for both husbands and wives. The authors asserted that ". . .marital satisfaction can be predicted best by measures of communication" (p. 916). Therefore, the results of this study supported the contention that perceptual congruence is related to marital adjustment; however, not necessarily in all areas. Some levels of perceptual congruence may be more important than others.

Cone (1988) administered to 250 volunteer married couples an instrument devised by Ray W. Johnson (1988) of the University of North Texas. This instrument (the Power-Intimacy Questionnaire) is a variation of Laing et al.'s (1966) IPM, and it measures dyadic perceptions of intimacy and power on three levels of perception (similarly to the IPM and Allen and Thompson's questionnaire described above). Only the items related to power were considered for Cone's

study. The couples were also asked to complete the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and the Marital Communication Inventory (MCI), among other instruments. Results indicated a moderately positive relationship between congruence of dyadic perceptions of power on all three levels of perception and marital adjustment and, likewise, between congruence on all three levels and quality of marital communication. An interesting finding was the increase in the degree of these relationships as the levels of perception became deeper.

Lasswell (1985) discussed what she called "illusions of marital happiness" or idealized fantasies, often unfounded, that people hold of marriage. One of these is the illusion of "mutuality," that happy couples "should" agree on most everything. She maintained that a good marriage is quite difficult to achieve if the couple holds onto the belief that happiness means complete accord. These couples, she asserted, set themselves up for problems with unrealistically high expectations.

Bochner, Krueger, and Chmielewski (1982) warned against assuming that congruence of perceptions, on any level, is necessary for marital satisfaction. On the contrary, they pointed out that often inaccurate perceptions are functional to a marriage. Through their analysis of couples' perceptions on three levels, the authors found that subjects' perceptions of their own positive role performance

and of their spouses' satisfaction with that performance were important to marital adjustment; whereas, real role performance success and what the other spouses really believed was not related to marital adjustment. That is, perceptions of one's positive, successful role performance and perceptions of positive spousal opinions between married partners were more important to satisfaction than the accuracy of those perceptions. The authors implied that positive perceptions are very important to adjustment, and congruency of perceptions between partners may not be. In other words, it may sometimes be better not to know what the other perceives if it is different.

It seems reasonable to conclude that the results of the little research conducted on multi-level perceptions as they relate to marital adjustment have been far from conclusive. First, there have been relatively few studies done on multi-levels of marital perceptions (especially as many as three levels). Those that have been done have produced mixed results. What seems to be consistent is that congruence on some level is important to marital quality. The current study attempted to shed new light on this ill-understood relationship between marital happiness and congruence of multi-level perceptions.

Multiple Levels of Perceptual Congruence Over the Length of Marriage and Marital Adjustment

While many studies have addressed the ways marital relationships change over time, little research has been done, specifically, on how spouses' perceptions of each other and of their marriages change over the years in terms of congruency. Most such studies have been done on couples who were rather newly married, and "longitudinal" studies have usually covered only 1-4 years of a marital career. Fried and Stern (1948) conducted interviews with late-life couples asking retrospective questions about their married life. Results indicated that satisfied couples had acquired similar habits and interests, but it was unclear whether perceptions of their marriage and each other had become more congruent or not as the couple grew old together.

Studies discussed in the previous sections indicated how congruence of perceptions on various levels might be related to marital adjustment or satisfaction. However, it has been unclear whether this congruence is greater, less, or no different than it had been earlier or would be later in the subjects' marriages.

Although circular-causal theorists would likely assert that a couple's beliefs about most things in general, including each other and their marriage, will become more congruent, this hypothesis has rarely been tested in a manner that compares different points along the marital

span. There have been even fewer studies which have attempted a comparison of perceptions at different points in a relationship at more than one level of perception. In an early cross-sectional study Kirkpatrick and Hobart (1954) administered the Family Opinion Survey (an instrument developed by the authors) to 62 "favorite date" couples, 66 "going steady" couples, 75 "engaged" couples, and 103 "married" couples. (These will be referred to as stages 1-4.) This survey contained questions which were to be answered on a 5-point Likert scale, inquiring about attitudes toward marriage. The authors compared all husbands' responses to wives' responses for each item, deriving <u>disagreement</u> scores by subtracting the numbers corresponding to the Likert scale values for each item, and obtaining the absolute difference. [This would be similar to Laing et al.'s (1966) and Cone's (1988) level I values.] <u>Nonempathy</u> scores were derived by finding the absolute numerical difference between one's answer and that imputed to him or her by the spouse. (These could be considered level II values.) The authors derived a third score labeled a <u>disagreement estimate</u> score, which is the comparison between one's response and that attributed to one's partner. This is similar to Creamer and Campbell's (1988) assumed similarity. According to the authors, the larger this score (or the more difference) the more disillusioned that individual is with his or her marriage.

Results indicated that disagreement scores at stage 1 were significantly higher than those at stage 4. Although there were no other significant differences between stages for disagreement scores, they represented a general decline over time and with increasing intimacy, except for a slight increase for the engaged group (stage 3). Nonempathy scores at stage 1 were significantly higher than those at stages 2, 3, and 4 for husbands, and significantly higher at stage 1 than stage 4 for wives. The nonempathy scores also represented a general decline with increasing intimacy except for a slight increase at stage 3. There was a significant difference between disagreement estimate scores at stage 1 and those at stage 3 and stage 4 for males, and between stage 1 and stage 4 for females (stage 1 being higher for both sexes). The authors pointed out that persons in all of the intimacy groups were unrealistically idealistic about their relationships, as disagreement estimate scores were significantly lower than the corresponding disagreement scores (the latter revealing actual differences in attitudes between spouses). One is reminded of Bocher et al.'s (1982) assertion that, sometimes, unrealistic positive perceptions may be healthy. It must be noted that all scores at each level of intimacy were significantly lower than scores from random pairings of subjects.

The authors concluded that, while there was not enough evidence to indicate a significant progressive trend toward lower scores between each progressing level of intimacy, there was a significant decline of disagreement scores in all cases between couples in the favorite date stage (stage 1) and married couples (stage 4), indicating increasing congruence. The authors also noted that different areas of relationship issues should possess varying degrees of pertinence for a couple depending on its stage of intimacy. Attitudes about some aspects of relating to one another may change more drastically than others. Kirkpatrick's and Hobart's (1954) study represented an important attempt to assess not only changes in a couple's attitudes, but also changes in the dyadic congruency of these attitudes over time.

Unfortunately, while this study was a crucial endeavor towards exploring changes in congruence over time, the points of measurement did not discriminate various points along the marital career beyond engagement. It also seems that Kirkpatrick and Hobart (1954) simply assumed that the married couples had achieved intimacy, and maybe even adjustment, without measuring these variables.

Allen and Thompson (1984) suggested that perhaps "...in later years....couples will have come to agreement on many issues....or will be comfortable with the lack of agreement" (p. 921). Perhaps, then, an added important

question is not only whether couples move towards congruence as time passes, but whether one level of congruence becomes more important than another at certain points in a marriage. If such a notion were valid, this may also shed new light on Bochner et al.'s (1982) seemingly logical argument that congruence may not, in some contexts, be beneficial to adjustment. However, while Bochner et al. maintained that <u>believing</u> congruence exists is crucial, Allen and Thompson suggested that perhaps adjusted couples do not <u>have</u> to assume congruence on all levels (i.e., they can tolerate and acknowledge differences as healthy), as long as there is a <u>deeper</u> understanding of the other. This seems compatible with the studies indicating that complementarity plays a role in marital satisfaction. One is reminded of Kerchoff and Davis' (1962) study, previously discussed, which indicated that couples' needs may change over the life span, with agreement becoming less important. Perhaps differences of beliefs add variety to a marriage, as long as a deeper understanding exists.

Allen and Thompson (1984) suggested that agreement (level I congruence) should be more important to marital adjustment in younger couples, while realization (level III) should be more important in later years. Perhaps agreement on everyday issues, sharing similar interests, and having things in common are more important in the early stages of marriage than the later stages. Behaviorists have reminded

us that verbal responses are reinforcers to verbal behavior. In a new relationship, and even in a new marriage, it would seem that couples are searching for positive attention from each other and making a greater effort than, perhaps, later in the relationship to please the other. Agreement, then, is perhaps more needed in a new, and possibly still slightly insecure relationship. If the two people feel they are similar in certain aspects, this may be the reinforcer needed to take further risks and steps toward a deeper relationship. One is reminded of the symbolic interactionist idea that confirmation and validation of one another, as agreement would provide, is reinforcing and promotes further exchange and interaction.

In contrast, in later marriages that are adjusted and seemingly secure, each member may feel freer to disagree with the other. We do know from such work as that of Safilios-Rothschild (1969) that satisfied husbands and wives do disagree about many things. It is understandable that with the passing years come various stressors, especially during the child-rearing years (e.g., Harriman, 1986; Rollins & Cannon, 1974). A couple will probably have more disagreements as other issues become more important than achieving approval from each other. However, a deeper understanding may develop becoming the real "glue" of a marriage, even if the two disagree about surface issues. This seems logical considering some existing evidence

suggesting that, as a general pattern, marital relationships seem to change over the life-span from that of a romantic attraction, with affection and passionate love being reported as the crucial elements, to more of a partnership or attachment, with companionship, respect, loyalty, and mutual caretaking being reported as the most important aspects (Belsky, Spanier, & Rovine, 1983; Stinnet, Carter, & Montgomery, 1972; Troll et al., 1979). According to Stinnett et al. "it is . . . logical that through the years the older couple may have developed a greater degree of understanding, acceptance, and better communication patterns" (pp. 668-669). They may feel freer to disagree because of their security in the relationship. However, in light of some evidence that many marriages experience a decline in happiness, even in areas such as companionate love (e.g., Hatfield, Traupmann, & Sprecher, 1984; Pineo, 1961), the present study contended that the above-mentioned pattern of couples' developing deeper understanding of one another is only true for those who have managed to maintain a high degree of adjustment.

Marital Adjustment Over the Length of Marriage

Before presenting the purpose of this paper, a brief overview of some general trends in the literature regarding marital quality is discussed; specifically, as it applies to marital adjustment over time.

In Ade-Ridder and Brubaker's (1983) review of the literature concerning late-life marriages the authors uncovered conflicting findings about how marital quality changes over the marital career. Ade-Ridder and Brubaker (1983) and later, Ade-Ridder (1985) discussed three trends in the literature. Earlier studies (mostly before 1970, such as those of Blood & Wolfe, 1960, and Luckey, 1966) were more likely to reveal a decline in marital quality over the marital span; however, Ade-Ridder contended that studies such as these either did not employ older couples, or if they did, the sample sizes were very small making inferences difficult. The second pattern found in the literature has been that there is no significant change across the marital span. An example of this trend is Clark and Wallin's findings (cited in Ade-Ridder & Brubaker, 1983) that adjusted couples who had high levels of marital satisfaction in their early years would maintain this high level over the life span (see Fried & Stern, 1948; Stinnett et al., 1972). The third trend, and a very frequent finding in recent studies, has been that marital satisfaction takes on a curvilinear, U-shaped pattern across time. There is an initial period of much happiness which declines during child-rearing years, followed by an increase in marital satisfaction once the children leave home (e.g., Rollins & Cannon, 1974; Schlesinger, 1983; Troll et al., 1979). There has also been evidence suggesting that wives have a more

difficult time than husbands have adjusting to the arrival of children (Harriman et al., 1986; Spanier & Lewis, 1980). Perhaps this is partly due to the fact that wives are still, for the most part, expected to carry most of the responsibility of child-rearing.

Lee (1988) maintained that the consensus of most researchers has been that marital satisfaction decreases in the middle years (up to about 20 years) but what happens to satisfaction after these years has been hotly debated. It is difficult to follow couples beyond 20 years in a longitudinal study, but many cross-sectional and retrospective studies have revealed an increase in satisfaction after the children have left the home (e.g., Rollins & Feldman, 1970; Stinnett et al., 1972). However, some researchers (e.g., Fried & Stern, 1948; Stinnet et al., 1972) have asserted that those who are satisfied in later years were probably satisfied earlier in the marriage. Fried & Stern stated that ". . . as a rule, the fate of a marriage is decided in its early years" (p. 50). Even though most studies have shown a decline in marital adjustment after childbirth (e.g., Belsky & Rovine, 1990; Wallace & Gotlib, 1990), those couples with higher initial adjustment can, perhaps, better weather such major changes and bounce back to their previously high level or even a higher level of adjustment after a stressor is removed, such

as children leaving the home (Ade-Ridder & Brubaker, 1983; Harriman, 1986).

There have been studies which have actually suggested a decline in marital happiness in later life. This phenomenon is usually conceptualized as disillusionment or disenchantment in expectations for marriage rather than an increasing dislike for one's mate (Hobart, 1958; Pineo, 1961). Hatfield et al. (1984) interviewed two groups of wives age 50-82. One group was married less than 33 years, and one was married more than 33 years. Not only was a decrease in passionate love over the years reported by these women, but a decrease in companionate love was also perceived.

Besides the arrival or departure of children, another major life event that affects later-life marriages is retirement. Results of studies regarding the effects of retirement on marital adjustment have been inconclusive (Ade-Ridder, 1985); however, some studies have helped to further our knowledge in this area. Ade-Ridder and Brubaker (1983) suggested that if two people are mutually supportive, and the retiree has a positive self-concept, retirement years should be positive for the couple. If the wife does not reinforce a positive self-concept towards her husband (who is the retiree in most studies), and the retiree possesses a negative opinion of himself, adjustment may decrease. Results of Fried and Stern's (1948) interviews

with older, mostly satisfied couples revealed that retirement was perceived as actually bringing some couples closer together, and promoting greater intimacy.

Although it would be beyond the scope of this paper to describe all of the variables in the literature related to marital adjustment, two important ones will be briefly mentioned. Romantic love, even though difficult to define, is one of the most important criterion, for all ages, in selecting a spouse (e.g., Hatfield et al., 1984; Stinnett et al., 1972; Troll, 1975). Stinnett et al. (1972), in their interview of 408 husbands and wives aged 60-89, found that being in love was most often reported as being the most important factor in achieving marital success.

Another major correlate to marital adjustment for all ages which seems especially important to the current study is communication quality. Communication has been described by Levinger and Senn (1967) as ". . .a basic requirement for the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships" (p. 237). Time after time, high quality of communication has been found to be related to marital happiness or adjustment (e.g., Bienvenu, 1970; Murphy & Mendelson, 1973; Navran, 1967). It is through effective communication that adjusted couples exchange ideas, meanings, beliefs, etc. as they grow in intimacy and, perhaps, congruence.

Methodological Considerations in the Study of Marital Adjustment

Because cross-sectional designs are so often used to assess marital adjustment over time (and because a cross-sectional design was used in this study to measure perceptual congruence over the length of marriage), the methodological problems inherent in such designs must be addressed. One major problem is that of attrition of subjects (Lee, 1988). Perhaps, one reason for the finding of a curvilinear pattern of marital adjustment over time is because unhappy couples have divorced and are not available for interview. Lee suggested that many parents who are unhappy stay together while the children are home, delaying divorce until after the children leave, thus contributing to the U-shaped curve. In addition, it has been reported by proponents of cognitive consistency theories (e.g., Schram, 1979; Spanier, Lewis, & Cole, 1975) that couples who have been married longer are less likely to admit to problems in their marriages. A cohort effect is also possible, in that older couples, perhaps being from more traditional backgrounds, are probably less likely to report problems out of a sense of privacy and convention.

The current study incorporated a cross-sectional stratification scheme of five categories of lengths of marriage. Most studies which have examined marital adjustment over the marital career have used family life

cycle categories corresponding to important milestones in a family's life. These categories have implied various roles and demands for the couple, especially with regard to children's presence at home. Many studies have employed 7-8 stages, patterned after Duvall's work in 1967. This number of stages seems to have face validity by corresponding to important family transition periods. However, it was judged that finding enough couples to fit such a category scheme would be too unwieldy for the scope of this project. Five categories of a 5-year duration (except for the last category) were judged sufficient to adequately represent a couple's progression over the years.

Moreover, to say that perceptual congruency changes with family life-cycle transitions as might marital adjustment is premature. Additionally, there has been little evidence to support the system of categorizing according to a family life cycle scheme as being any more useful than others. Spanier, Sauer, and Larzelere (1979) compared the approaches of family life cycle, marriage cohort, and age cohort stratification schemes and determined that no method was any better than the others at prediction or analytical utility. Rollins and Cannon, and Rollins and Galligan (cited in Spanier & Lewis, 1980) reported that only 4 to 8 percent of the variance in the marital satisfaction of their sample of couples could be explained by the marital career stratification scheme. In a later study, Anderson,

Russell, and Schumm (1983) found that the family life cycle and the total number of children were significant predictors of marital quality but the proportion of the variance accounted for was slight. Menaghan (1983) compared 259 respondents who were not experiencing any particular stage or transition in their lives (e.g., having a new child or seeing the youngest leave the home), to 639 individuals who were experiencing transitions regarding childrens' milestones. She found that changes in the transitional group in the areas of perceived equity and affection-fulfillment were not significantly different than such changes in the nontransitional groups. She made a plea for research to help develop more useful stratification schemes.

Another problem with research in the area of marital quality or adjustment, has been the lack of conceptual clarity. Many terms have been used to describe concepts related to marital quality, such as ". . .marital success, stability, satisfaction, functionality, adjustment, integration, consensus, role tension, personal development, love, and happiness" (Burr, cited in Spanier & Lewis, 1980, p. 831). One of the major arguments among marriage researchers, according to Spanier and Lewis, is whether or not it is important to measure more than the individuals' subjective feelings (or <u>satisfaction</u> to use Burr et al.'s choice term, as cited in Spanier & Lewis) when assessing the quality of marriage. Spanier and Cole (cited in Spanier &

Lewis, 1980) prefer the term marital adjustment, implying a more multi-faceted concept than simply a couple's subjective feelings about their marriage. They defined it as ". . .process, the outcome of which is determined by the degree of (1) troublesome marital differences; (2) interpersonal tensions and personal anxiety; (3) marital satisfaction; (4) dyadic cohesion; and (5) consensus on matters of importance to marital functioning" (p. 832). This concept of adjustment as a process seems quite fitting in light of the literature which has been discussed. Therefore, the concept of marital adjustment with its definition as stated above, has been used in this study.

Military Couples

Because couples in which one or both spouses were active duty or retired Air Force members were employed in this study, it seems important to briefly discuss some aspects of military families. There seems to be a common perception that military families may represent a very different population and may even be at a disadvantage compared to their civilian counterparts due to the unique strains of a military lifestyle (Williams, 1976).

It is true that military families must endure many stressors that do not face civilian families. Kohen (1984) claimed that the military has not appropriately responded to family needs, and still operates in many ways as it did when most troops were single males. (In 1953, only 38% of all

active duty military troops were married, according to Goldman, cited in Kohen (1984), but by 1976, 56% were married, according to Carr et al., cited in Kohen.) Indeed, there are many stressors that are unique to a military lifestyle. According to Kohen the most salient ones are commitment to the mission on a 24-hour basis, constant mobility, and a feeling of isolation from the civilian community. Keith and Whitaker (1984) pointed out that there is often hesitancy on the part of families to ask for help, especially from a mental health clinic, for fear that it will have a negative impact on the active duty member's career. Others have described the stress of military life in a similar fashion (i.e., Lagrone, 1978; Rosen & Carpenter, 1989; Williams, 1976).

It has also been perceived by many that personalities of military members and their families are of a certain type, and in some ways this may be accurate. Keith and Whitaker (1984) gave general descriptions of military husbands and their wives, as well as some of their roles, taken from the authors' own experience in the military. (For the purpose of this discussion, the active duty military member is presumed to be the husband with a nonactive duty wife. Although an increasing number of active duty members are female, some of whom marry civilian husbands, most of the research has been conducted on traditional military families as described.) According to

Keith and Whitaker, military husbands have been described as quite loyal to the service, proud, and often rigid. It is not unusual for a military husband to put his family second priority when duty calls, which can easily be more than just eight hours a day, five days a week. The military wife usually has the prime responsibility for the children. Although she may have a job, in many ways she is forced to be "dependent," such as often having to give up her job when her husband is moved to a new station, having little control over the services available (for much depends on the husband's rank), and feeling an implicit and often explicit pressure not to speak out "against the system" (Keith & Whitaker, 1984; Kohen, 1984). Others have offered similar descriptions of military families (e.g., Lagrone, 1978).

Even though experience and descriptions such as the above might lead one to believe that military family members are unique in certain ways, there also exists a presumption by many that military families are more dysfunctional than their civilian counterparts. This may be a prejudicial belief.

Lagrone (1978) presented a very bleak picture of military life and its stresses. He claimed that factors from seven problem areas were common to the families of the 792 military dependent children and adolescents he saw for psychiatric treatment over a two-year period. These factors were the following: military expectations, frequent father

absence, transiency, authoritarian child rearing methods, scapegoating on the job and in the family, changing roles of husband and wife, and the stigma of requesting mental health treatment. Lagrone suggested that these factors have predisposed military families to producing children with conduct disorders, and he called this phenomenon "the military family syndrome." He claimed that such conduct disorders occurred more frequently than in children seen in a civilian mental health center.

However, Morrison's 1981 study pointed out that Lagrone (1978) did not address the wide variability in the two clinics. For example, differences in ages of patients, number of patients seen, and other demographic data were not accounted for. It is not even known whether the differences Lagrone found were statistically significant.

When Morrison (1981) compared 140 military dependent children and adolescents (from mostly Navy and Marine families) to 234 nonmilitary children and adolescents, all seen in his clinic, he found no support for the oft-assumed military family syndrome. In fact, these children were surprisingly similar, with only a few differences. For example, military children were more likely to have an alcoholic father, but civilian children were more likely to have divorced parents.

Morrison (1981) went on to accuse most other reported studies of suffering from methodologic difficulties or

actual lack of data to support a military family syndrome. Having once served as an Army medical officer, Morrison stated ". . .I wonder whether the 'military family syndrome' exists largely in the minds of frustrated military physicians" (p. 356). He asserted that the assumption still exists that psychiatric illnesses of all types are more common in a military population; and, although the existing data does not definitely counter this belief, any data that supports it is quite tenuous. "Statistics are the best antidote to prejudice" (p. 356), according to Morrison. There are many factors which have precluded a fair, objective comparison of military families and civilian families when it comes to medical (including mental health) care. For example, more frequent referral for care likely exists in the military by way of the close-knit, interlocking military system. More frequent referral does not necessarily equate to a higher rate of illness or mental health problems. People from military jobs, schools, social organizations, and medical environments are probably much more likely to communicate with each other about military members than in the civilian sector. Morrison warned researchers not to assume a military family syndrome, or any other prejudicial belief about psychiatric illness in military families, without data.

With regard to military marriages, specifically, Williams (1976) gathered data on the divorce rate of Air

Force officers during the period from 1960 through 1970. Results indicated that only about one percent of Air Force officers were divorced at any given point. This rate was significantly below the average divorce rate in the United States for this period of time. It must be recognized that Air Force officers are a select group, and other factors associated with officership, such as a high level of education and relatively high socioeconomic status, tend to be correlated with a low divorce rate. Nevertheless, the results argue against the notion of military couples being more dysfunctional than civilian couples.

Schumm and Hammond (1986) tested the oft-assumed expectation that marital adjustment is lower among military couples due to the unique hardships of military life. The authors used two separate samples. The first consisted of 210 wives living near Fort Riley, Kansas, 24 of whom were military wives and 24 of whom were student wives, all possessing similar demographic characteristics. The second sample, gathered approximately one year later, consisted of 79 married couples living in the same area and having similar demographic traits. Of these couples, five were military couples and six or seven were student couples. All subjects filled out various instruments related to marital satisfaction and communication. The three groups (from both samples) were then compared using discriminant analyses. Results from the first sample indicated no differences

between any of the groups on any variable. Results from the second sample revealed that military and student husbands reported significantly higher emotional intimacy than the other group, and military husbands reported the lowest apprehension about marital communication than husbands in the other groups. One might hypothesize a greater social desirability factor at play with military respondents who are sensitive about their reputation. However, an abbreviated version of Edmond's Marital Conventionalization Scale revealed no differences in marital social desirability among all three groups. No differences for any variable were found among wives in either sample.

Admitting to some limitations of the study (e.g., the small N for military and student wives and couples), Schumm and Hammond (1986) still concluded that their results did not support any notion that military marriages were any more dysfunctional than civilian couples. In fact, the authors asserted the possibility that military couples possess special strengths that armor them from the stresses of military life.

Rodriguez (1984) reviewed special advantages and strengths of military families. For example, they have a common identity with their family and military community with a shared sense of mission and purpose; and they enjoy a predictable, stable, and orderly lifestyle. Wives and children expect father's absence at times (on temporary

assignments) and have probably adapted to life without him. Due to frequent moves, family members learn how to assimilate into many new communities and make new friends easily, expanding their awareness of other people from various geographical locations, even overseas. Contrary to the assumption that these individuals are dependent, they may have developed much resourcefulness and self-reliance in the face of a bureaucracy that often does not provide all that it promises.

In sum, there are some differences in a military lifestyle, and perhaps some differences in personal characteristics of military family members from their civilian counterparts. However, the belief that military marriages are somehow more dysfunctional than civilian marriages has likely been derived largely from speculation, faulty assumptions, and prejudice that are not based on statistical evidence.

Purpose

An attempt was made to integrate the fixed-sequence and circular-causal theories of mate-selection and relationship development with principles of exchange theory and symbolic interactionism in order to lay the groundwork for the current study. According to the fixed-sequence theory, when two people meet, each is looking for certain characteristics they desire. Research has suggested that demographics, values, beliefs, etc., act as filter variables in a young

marriage and similarity is quite important for satisfaction. It was this study's contention, however, that from the time of the first meeting and throughout the relationship, mutual exchange of ideas and communication occurs and a circular-causal process is set in motion. As part of this circular-causal process, two people confirm, reject, and reconfirm the others' interpretation of reality such that the couple becomes more interdependent. Dynamic processes of exchanging symbols, ideas and meanings, and reinforcing similar concepts was thought to create a shared world view that becomes more homogeneous as the couple ages together.

However, for this study, it was predicted that this circular-causal process would flourish only in couples who managed to maintain a high level of marital adjustment. For those who could not maintain high adjustment, the dynamic process of forming a conjoint reality would come to a halt, and these marriages would simply stagnate or dissolve.

It was anticipated that an adjusted couple would grow towards a shared world view, with a similar framework of life, and similar overall values and attitudes. However, this may not mean that the spouses would agree on every issue. Couples who had been married for some time and who were satisfied would feel secure in disagreements. As pointed out earlier some differences may be beneficial to a good marriage. The present study contended that, while a certain degree of similarity of beliefs, or agreement on

issues, would develop between adjusted mates, what was even more representative of a shared world view, or conjoint reality, was the congruence that might develop between two people on deeper levels of perception.

For all couples, similarity of views about most things was anticipated to grow as marriage progressed. It was thought that this dynamic process of forming similar beliefs at the first level would be more prominent for adjusted couples, but couples who were not adjusted would also move towards greater similarity even though to a lesser extent. It was speculated that maladjusted couples would grow to possess some similar beliefs simply by virtue of their being around each other. However, the extent of this growth was predicted to be smaller than for adjusted couples without an incentive to become similar, hence, no ever-deepening shared world view or congruence.

It was anticipated that adjusted couples would maintain some moderately increasing degree of congruency on level I, but would also develop congruency on even deeper levels of perception. In fact, it was this study's proposal that, for adjusted couples only, congruence as related to understanding the other's point of view and realization of being understood or misunderstood (levels II and III) should grow to an even greater degree than congruence on level I, or simple agreement.

Therefore, in line with Allen and Thompson's (1984) proposal, the prediction for this study was that level I congruence (agreement) would more related to marital adjustment in the early years of marriage, while levels II and III congruence (understanding and realization of being understood) would be more related to marital adjustment in the later years of marriage. (Laing et al.'s, 1966, perceptual level described as feeling understood was not used in the current study.)

This study had three broad purposes:

(1) to extend the exploratory research on congruence of multi-level dyadic perceptions and their relationship to marital adjustment. The existence of dyadic perceptions on different levels, their congruence, and their association with marital satisfaction has been described in several studies (e.g., Laing et al., 1966). However, because these studies are relatively few in number, especially those which deal with more than two levels, it seemed important to examine this fertile area further.

(2) to examine congruence of multi-level dyadic perceptions of marriage at various points over the length of the marital career. Few studies have explored whether congruency of couples' perceptions about their marriage change over the course of the lifespan; and even fewer have addressed these perceptions on various, progressive levels.

(3) to explore the possibility that different levels of congruence are more crucial to marital adjustment at different points over the marital career.

Considering the above review and purpose, the following hypotheses were offered:

(1) Across marriage life spans, adjusted couples would show significantly greater level I congruence (i.e., lower actual congruence scores) than would nonadjusted couples.

(2) Across marriage life spans adjusted couples would show significantly greater level II congruence (i.e., lower actual congruence scores) than would nonadjusted couples.

(3) Across marriage life spans adjusted couples would show significantly greater level III congruence (i.e., lower actual congruence scores) than would nonadjusted couples.

(4) For adjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level I congruence scores and length of marriage.

(5) For nonadjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level I congruence scores and length of marriage.

(6) For adjusted couples there would be a significant negative relationship between level II congruence scores and length of marriage.

(7) For nonadjusted couples there would be no relationship between level II congruence scores and length of marriage.

(8) For adjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level III congruence scores and length of marriage.

(9) For nonadjusted couples, there would be no relationship between level III congruence scores and length of marriage.

(10) For adjusted couples married 18 years or more, level II and level III congruence would each be significantly greater (i.e., lower actual scores) than level I congruence.

(11) For nonadjusted couples married 18 years or more, level I congruence would be significantly greater (i.e., lower actual scores) than level II congruence and greater than level III congruence.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 164 volunteer married couples. Because of the easy accessibility to the population and to help maintain homogeneity, one or both members of each couple was an active duty Air Force member or a retired Air Force member. The subjects were chosen to represent various periods along the length of the marital career and various degrees of marital adjustment. They were solicited from the outpatient mental health clinics and a variety of other work settings on several U.S. Air Force bases, as well as from churches and other community settings and clinics in Texas. Data were collected only from spouses in their first marriage to keep the group more homogeneous.

The length of marriage for these subjects ranged from less than one to 42 years, with a mean of 14.7 years. The ages of all subjects ranged from 19 to 63, with a mean age of 36.4. The mean age of the husbands was 37.1 years, while that of the wives was 35.7 years. All but 25 couples had children. The couples had an average of two children, while the average number of children actually living in the household was 1.5. With regard to race for males, 87% were

Caucasian, 6% Black, 5% Hispanic, and 2% Asian or Other. For females, 90% were Caucasian, 4% Black, 4% Hispanic, and 2% Other. The average husband had attended two to four years of college, and the average wife had attended almost two years of college. Forty-one percent of the subjects labeled themselves Protestant, 34% were Catholic, 13% were Other Christian, 5% Other, and 3% Agnostic or Atheist. One husband and one wife were Jewish. With regard to the role religion played in the couples' lives, 40% of the husbands and 48% of the wives rated religion as being "very important," 33% of the husbands and 33% of the wives rated it "important," 21% of the husbands and 17% of the wives rated it "minimally important," and 5% of the husbands and 2% of the wives rated it "unimportant." (One husband did not answer this question.)

Most of the couples represented traditional military marriages, wherein the husband was the military member and the wife was the dependent spouse. Such active duty couples made up 60% of the sample, and the traditional retired couples made up 21% of the sample. Couples of which both spouses were active duty Air Force were 12%. The cases in which the female was active duty and her husband either a dependent or retired were 7%. There were no retired females. Military rank of all Air Force members ranged from E-2 (Enlisted Airman) to 0-6 (full Colonel). Sixty-six percent of the male active duty or retired Air

Force members were of the enlisted ranks, and 34% were officers. Fifty-eight percent of the female active duty members were of the enlisted ranks, and 42% were officers. Air Force active duty and retired respondents worked in a wide variety of Air Force occupations. All couples had spent an average of 12 years in the service. The mean combined earnings of the couples was slightly over $35,000 with a range from under $10,000 to $100,000 (see Appendix A).

Instruments

Perceptions. The instrument that was used to measure perceptions in a dyad was designed by Allen and Thompson (1984) and was modeled after Laing et al.'s (1966) Interpersonal Perception Method (IPM). The IPM was designed as a technique to relationally analyze dyads. It is based on the assumption that the behavior of each partner toward the other is mediated by the experience each has of the other. Thus, in order to understand the behavior of one partner, it is necessary to know, not only about both partners' behavior, but also what each believes about how the other partner perceives his or her behavior.

The IPM assesses each participant's behavior from three perspectives:

Person's view of X	Direct Perspective (level I)
Person's view of the spouse's view of X	Metaperspective (level II)
Person's view of the spouse's view of the person's view of X	Meta-metaperspective (level III)

Laing et al. (1966) proposed that the following relational perspectives were helpful in understanding dyads:

(1) Comparison between one person's direct perspective and the other person's direct perspective on the same issue yields agreement or disagreement.

(2) Comparison between one person's metaperspective and the other person's direct perspective on the same issue yields understanding or misunderstanding.

(3) Comparison between one person's meta-metaperspective and the other person's metaperspective on the same issue yields realization or failure of realization of being understood or misunderstood.

Perspective	Husband	Wife
Direct	"I do not spend money wisely"	"My spouse spends money wisely"
Meta	"She will say 'My spouse spends money wisely'"	"He will say 'I spend money wisely'"
Meta-meta	"She will say that I will say 'I spend money wisely'"	"He will say that I will say 'My spouse spends money wisely'"

In the above example, there is disagreement at the direct perspective level on the issue of the husband's spending habits. As further levels are analyzed, both the husband's and wife's perspectives must be taken separately. The husband understands his wife (H's meta vs. W's direct), and realizes that he is misunderstood by her (H's meta-meta vs. W's meta). The wife, however, misunderstands her

husband (W's meta vs. H's direct) yet she realizes she is understood by him (W's meta-meta vs. H's meta).

In the construction of the present instrument (which will hereafter be referred to as the AT), the authors gave an open-ended pilot questionnaire to 15 married couples, the results of which indicated 16 important areas in the marital relationship: ". . . finances, household tasks, sexual activity, religious beliefs, affection, plans for the future, respect for each other's views, openness, decision-making, presenting gifts, cooperativeness, work and/or academics, spare time, trustworthiness, social life, and children" (Allen & Thompson, 1984, p. 917). Sexual activity was deleted from the questionnaire, as pretested couples were not willing to disclose such information. Again, these questions are related mostly to a couple's own marriage vs. attitudes or opinions about general topics.

The AT is composed of 32 questions concerning the 15 areas mentioned above. The first 29 questions are answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from very little or no extent to a very great extent. The last three questions are answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from very dissatisfying to very satisfying. The second part of the questionnaire consists of the same 32 items; however, each person answers them according to how she or he thinks the spouse would respond. The third part of the questionnaire is made up of the same items and each person is asked to

answer according to how she or he thinks the spouse would say the person would answer. Allen and Thompson (1984) found their instrument to be highly reliable, with the coefficient alpha for husbands being .94 and that for wives being .92.

Marital Adjustment. The Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Spanier, 1976) was used to assess marital adjustment. The scale is a 32-item paper and pencil measure that was designed to measure the adjustment of married or unmarried cohabiting couples. Early and recent evaluations of the scale indicated an overall reliability ranging from .91 (Spanier & Thompson, 1982) to .96 (Spanier, 1976). Spanier reported that content validity was confirmed by three judges; criterion-related validity was obtained in that a divorced sample differed significantly from the married sample on all items ($p < .001$); and construct validity was .86 among married subjects and .88 among divorced subjects using the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. The factors of the four subscales (dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and affectional expression) were found to be robust accounting for 94% of the covariance among the items according to Spanier and Thompson, 1982.

Marital Conventionalization: Edmonds (1967) defined conventionalization as ". . . the extent to which the appraisal of a phenomenon is distorted in the direction of

social desirability" (p. 682). Studies (see Ellis, cited in Edmonds) have revealed that married couples tend to respond to questions in such a socially desirable manner. Edmonds suggested that people may have ". . . a normal tendency [often unconscious] to pretend that things, their marriages in this case, are 'better' than they really are" (p. 682). Other studies (e.g., Schram, 1979; Spanier et al., 1979) have suggested that this tendency may grow with increasing age. For these reasons the Marital Conventionalization Scale (MC), short form, devised by Edmonds was administered. The MC reveals to what extent a subject responds to questions concerning his or her marriage in an unrealistically positive fashion.

The MC, short form, is a 15-item paper and pencil instrument set up in a True-False format. With regard to validity, Edmonds (1967) explained that the items were, by definition, instances of marital conventionalization. As determined by correlating them with total score values, all items in the scale possessed positive validity. The other validity issue had to do with sampling representativeness of the population of marital conventionalized behaviors. This issue was addressed by the fact that the short form of 15 weighted MC items correlated over .99 with the original longer form of 50 items. The longer form consists of 34 MC items, and 16 items taken from the Burgess-Wallin Marital Happiness Scale. The additional 16 items were added to aid

in disguising the purpose of the instrument). Items were weighted in direct proportion to their contribution to social desirability.

Edmonds (1967) suggested that some disguise items should be included when using the short form of the MC (even though he did not specify how many should be included). Therefore, 5 questions relating to marital interactions, taken from the Burgess-Wallin Marital Happiness Scale (and included on the long form), were chosen arbitrarily for this study to be interspersed among the 15 MC items, making this a 20-item questionnaire. The 5 additional items were not included in any statistical procedure.

Demographic Data: A questionnaire was included in the assessment packet to obtain demographic data on the subjects. Questions inquired about each subject's age, sex, race, education, religious affiliation, income, length of marriage, and number of children. Subjects were also asked to report their military status, rank, specific job or specialty (AFSC), and time in service.

Procedure

Packets were given to each individual containing the following: a letter of introduction and general instructions, an informed consent form, the demographic data sheet, the AT, the DAS, and the MC (see Appendices B, C, and D). Couples reported that it took approximately 20-60 minutes to complete the entire packet. Each subject was

instructed to complete his or her questionnaire independently of the spouse's input. Because of the large number of participants needed, and the variety of jobs and work schedules represented, arranging monitored group-testings (which, it was originally hoped, would prevent couple collaboration) proved unwieldy. Subjects were allowed to complete their questionnaires at home with explicit instructions that packets were to be answered independently. Packets were collected directly by the experimenter, or assistants, or returned through the mail. A self-selection effect was thought possible if the packets' return was not facilitated for those subjects who completed their questionnaires at home (i.e., those who promptly returned test packets may have been different in some ways from those who procrastinated or did not return packets). In order to help eliminate such an effect, stamped, self-addressed envelopes were provided to those subjects from whom direct collection of the packet was difficult or impossible. Also, care was taken to obtain phone numbers of subjects, or their supervisors or some contact person so that couples could be reminded to return their packets if they had not done so within a reasonable period of time. Subjects were invited to request results of the study by including their addresses in the packet envelope, and the results were later sent to them.

Scoring of the instruments proceeded as follows:

(1) Marital adjustment scores were obtained using the DAS (Spanier, 1976). A couple score was derived by adding the husband's score and the wife's score together and dividing by two. The distribution of DAS scores for the original sample of 225 Air Force couples was divided into thirds. The lower limit score for the uper third was 118. The upper limit score for the lower third was 108. Median scores were determined separately for husbands and wives. The husbands' median was 112, and the median for wives was 116.

In order to be designated as "adjusted," the couple had to score at or above 118 and the husbands and wives had to score above their respective medians (i.e., husbands above 112, and wives above 116). To be designated a "nonadjusted," the couple had to score at or below 108, husbands had to score at or below 112, and wives had to score at or below 116.

After the initial cut, all 10 cells were not filled with an appropriate number of subjects. Therefore, packets continued to be distributed and collected until the cells were filled with at least 14 couples. Application of the procedures ultimately resulted in a sample of 164 couples.

The DAS mean for all adjusted couples was 126.51 with a standard deviation of 6.23; the mean for adjusted husbands was 125.22 with a standard deviation of 8.49; and the mean

for adjusted wives was 127.80 with a standard deviation of 7.85. The DAS mean for all nonadjusted couples was 96.72 with a standard deviation of 9.69; the mean for nonadjusted husbands was 97.09 with a standard deviation of 10.76; and the mean for nonadjusted wives was 96.37 with a standard deviation of 14.64. These means were well above those of Sapnier's (1976) original samples. In Spanier's study, the mean for the married group was 114.8 with a standard deviation of 17.8, and the mean for the divorced group was 70.7 with a standard deviation of 23.8. (See Appendix E, Table E-1, for a summary of the above scores.)

(2) Three congruence scores were obtained for each couple, one for each level of perception. Item order on husband's and wife's versions of the AT were arranged for easy comparison between spouses' perspectives. Congruence scores were derived from the AT and calculated in the following way:

An agreement score was obtained for each couple by taking the absolute difference between the husband's and wife's numerical responses on each of the 32 items (using parts 1 of the AT), then adding the difference scores together. The resulting score was then doubled to include both husband's and wife's perspectives, and to make this score comparable to those of the other levels requiring a sum of both spouses' perspectives.

An understanding score was derived for each couple by taking the absolute difference between the husband's metaperspective and the wife's direct perspective for each item (using parts 2 and 1 of the AT), then adding the difference scores together from all of the items; and, likewise, by taking the absolute difference between the wife's metaperspective and the husband's direct perspective for each item and adding the difference scores from all of these items. Resulting difference scores for both spouses were summed for one understanding score for each couple.

Finally, a realization score was obtained for each couple by taking the absolute difference between the husband's meta-metaperspective and the wife's metaperspective for each item (using parts 3 and 2 of the AT), and adding the differences from all of these items; and, in turn, by taking the absolute difference between the wife's meta-metaperspective and the husband's metaperspective on each issue and adding the differences from all of these items. Resulting difference scores for both spouses were then summed for one realization score for each couple.

(3) Couple scores were derived from the MC, short form (Edmonds, 1967) in the same manner as from the DAS. That is, the score for the husband and the score for the wife were added together and divided by two.

(4) This design was cross-sectional in nature. Groups were formed on the basis of marital adjustment (adjusted or nonadjusted) and length of marriage (5 categories). The categories of lengths of marriage were the following (in years): 0-5, 6-11, 12-17, 18-23, and 24+. If a couple's length of marriage fell anywhere between two categories (e.g., 5 years and 7 months) they were instructed to classify themselves by rounding downward to the lower year. The 10 cells were eventually filled with at least 14 couples per cell.

Data Analysis

The following statistical procedures were applied to the data:

(1) Each of the hypotheses 1-3 was tested using a 2 X 5 (level of adjustment by length of marriage) analysis of variance (one ANOVA for each of the three levels of perception). The dependent variable was couple congruence scores. This procedure was chosen to determine whether adjusted couples would have significantly higher congruence scores (on all 3 levels) than nonadjusted couples, and at which stages of marriage. Following the analyses of variance, t tests were performed between adjusted and nonadjusted groups to determine any significant points of difference along the length of marriage.

A Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC) was calculated between congruence scores and each of the

following factors: MC scores, number of children, and age. These variables have been found to play a role in marital adjustment (e.g., Schlesinger, 1983) and could quite likely have influenced congruence of perceptions. If any of these three should have been found to correlate at a value of .5 or above, the factor would have served as a covariate and analyses of covariance would have been used to test hypotheses 1-3 instead of analyses of variance.

(2) Each of hypotheses 4-9 was tested by obtaining two Pearson product-moment correlations. The first PPMC was between congruence scores of adjusted couples (on that level) and their years of marriage; and the second was between congruence scores of nonadjusted couples (on that level) and their years of marriage. If any of the three variables mentioned in procedure 1 (MC scores, number of children, and age) should have been found to be significantly correlated with congruency (.5 or above), partial correlations would have been used.

(3) A one-way analysis of variance with repeated measures was performed for hypothesis 10, and the same for hypothesis 11. Only scores of couples married 18 years or more were included. The procedures compared the congruence score means of the three levels for the adjusted, and again for nonadjusted couples. Again, the three variables mentioned above (MC scores, number of children, and age) would have been covaried if found to be significant.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Before presenting the results a note must be made regarding congruence scores. Difference scores were used to obtain couple congruence scores; therefore, the lower the congruence score (the AT score), the greater the congruence between couples.

Hypothesis 1 stated that across marriage life spans adjusted couples would show significantly greater level I congruence (agreement) than nonadjusted couples. Results of the 2 X 5 (levels of adjustment by length of marriage) analysis of variance showed no main effects for adjustment or for years of marriage. There was, however, a significant interaction effect, $F(1, 4) = 4.26$, $p < .01$ (see Table 1).

In order to determine all possible significant points of interaction, t tests were performed between adjusted and nonadjusted groups across all lengths of marriage. The results are presented in Table 2.

As may be seen in Table 2, the adjusted and nonadjusted groups differed at year levels 0-5, 18-23, and 24+. At year level 0-5, adjusted couples possessed significantly greater congruence ($M = 12.81$) than nonadjusted couples ($M = 22.38$), $t(36) = 2.11$, $p < .05$. At year level 18-23, also, adjusted

Table 1

Analysis of Variance of Couple Congruence Scores for Agreement (Level I)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Main Effects	1621.93	5	324.39	1.15	.34
Adjustment Level	164.27	1	164.27	.58	.45
Length of Marriage	1386.82	4	346.71	1.23	.30
2-Way Interaction (Adjustment Level X Length of Marriage)	4796.54	4	1199.14	4.26	.00
Residual	43043.32	153	281.33		
Total	49461.79	162	305.32		

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations and t Values of Agreement (Level I) Congruence Scores for Adjusted and Nonadjusted Groups

Length of Marriage		Mean	SD	t-value	DF	Prob.
0-5	Adj	12.82	10.97	2.11	36	.04
	Nonadj	22.38	16.96			
6-11	Adj	20.71	15.20	-.93	30	.36
	Nonadj	15.73	14.81			
12-17	Adj	21.00	14.59	.20	29	.84
	Nonadj	22.42	25.86			
18-23	Adj	16.67	12.78	3.18	28	.00
	Nonadj	34.14	17.00			
24+	Adj	28.80	21.07	-2.33	22	.03
	Nonadj	14.13	12.22			

couples possessed significantly greater congruence (M = 16.67) than nonadjusted couples (M = 34.13), t(28) = 3.18, p < .05. However, at year level 24+ nonadjusted couples possessed greater congruence (M = 14.13) than adjusted couples (M = 28.8), t(28) = 2.33, p < .05. Figure 1 shows the results graphically. Hypothesis 1, therefore, was partially confirmed.

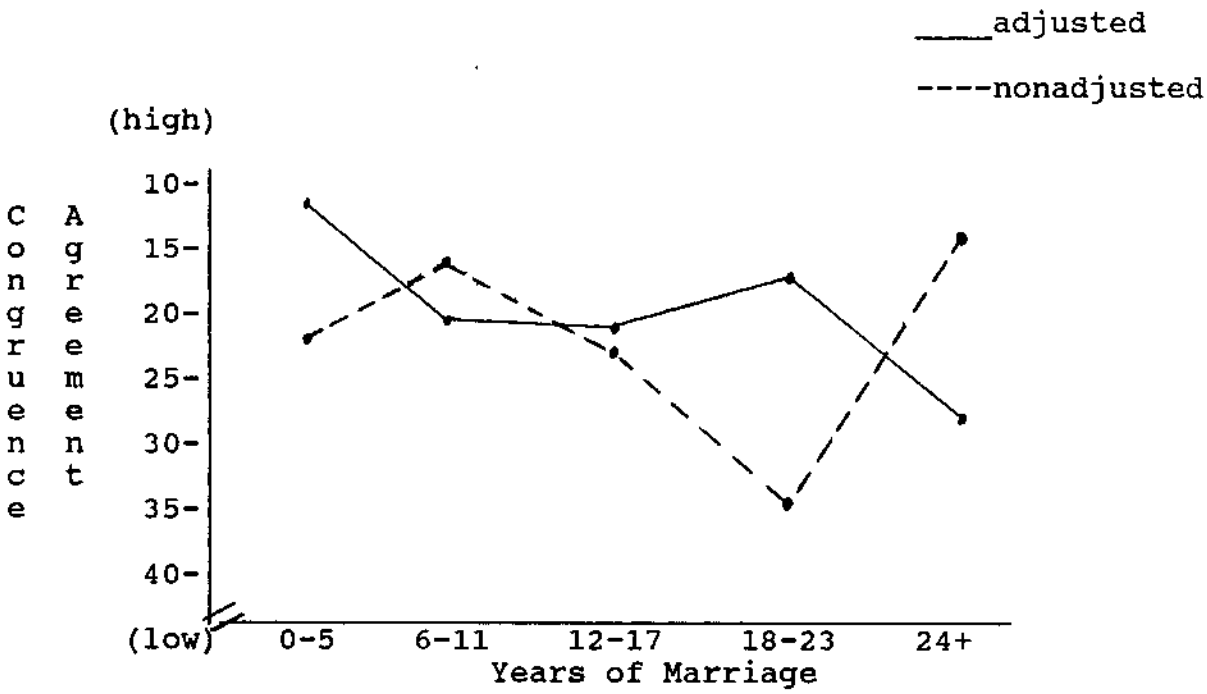

Figure 1. Congruence Scores for Couples' Agreement (Level 1)

Note. The numbers along the ordinate have been inverted to reflect the inverse relationship between congruence and congruence scores.

Hypothesis 2 stated that across the marriage life span adjusted couples would show significantly greater level II congruence (understanding) than nonadjusted couples. Results of the 2 X 5 analysis of variance showed no main effects for adjustment nor for years of marriage. However, there was a significant interaction effect, $F(1, 4) = 3.30$, $p < .05$ (see Table 3).

Table 3

Analysis of Variance of Couple Congruence Scores for Understanding (Level II)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Main Effects	2704.43	5	540.89	2.01	.08
Adjustment Level	610.31	1	610.31	2.27	.13
Length of Marriage	1945.62	4	486.40	1.81	.13
2-Way Interaction (Adjustment Level X Length of Marriage)	3551.91	4	887.98	3.30	.01
Residual	41219.20	153	269.41		
Total	47475.55	162	293.06		

In order to determine all possible significant points of interaction, t tests were performed between adjusted and nonadjusted groups across the lengths of marriage. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations and t Values of Understanding (Level II) Congruence Scores for Adjusted and Nonadjusted Groups

Length of Marriage		Mean	SD	t value	DF	Prob.
0-5	Adj	15.09	11.95	1.72	36	.09
	Nonadj	21.88	12.11			
6-11	Adj	22.65	14.08	-.59	30	.56
	Nonadj	19.33	17.57			
12-17	Adj	22.43	12.95	.39	29	.70
	Nonadj	24.89	22.98			
18-23	Adj	18.27	10.96	3.75	28	.00
	Nonadj	38.93	18.34			
24+	Adj	27.87	22.55	-1.03	28	.31
	Nonadj	20.60	15.44			

As may be seen in Table 4 the adjusted couples differed from the nonadjusted couples at 18-23 years. Adjusted couples were significantly more congruent at this point (M = 18.27) than nonadjusted couples (M = 38.93), $t(28) = 3.75$, p = .001. See Figure 2 for a graphical representation. Hypothesis 2 was therefore confirmed at only one point on the marital span.

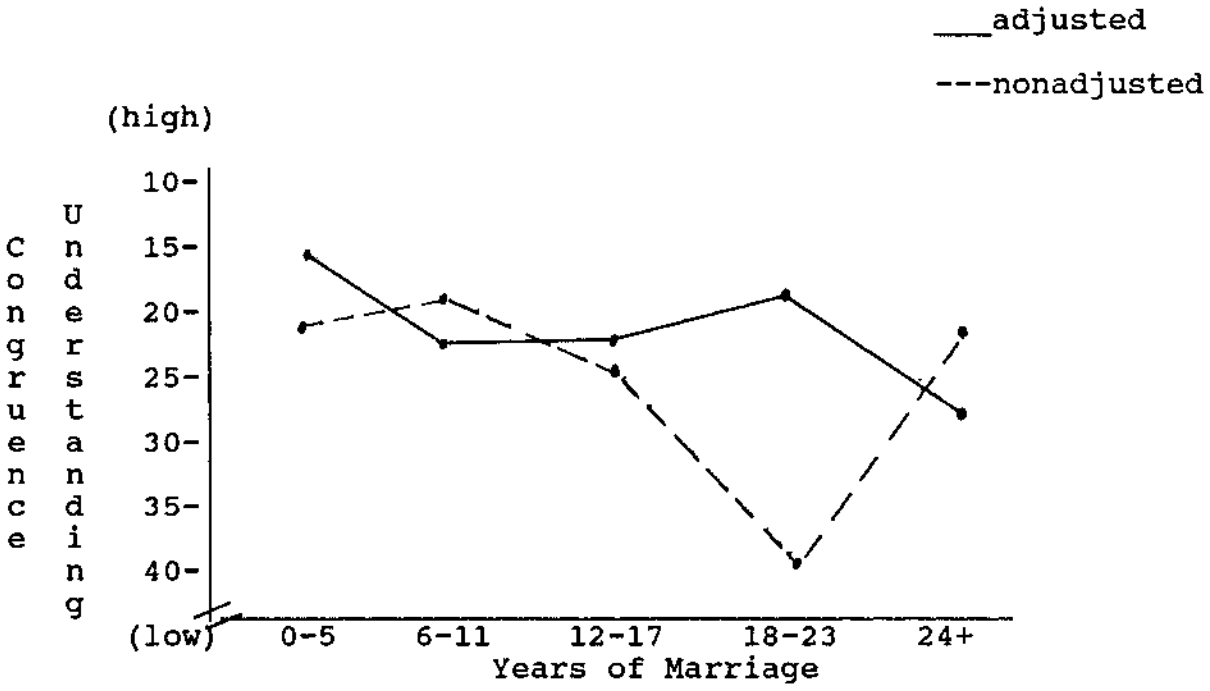

Figure 2. Congruence Scores for Couples' Understanding (Level II)

Note. The numbers along the ordinate have been inverted to reflect the inverse relationship between congruence and congruence scores.

Hypothesis 3 stated that across marriage life spans, adjusted couples would show significantly greater level III congruence (realization) than nonadjusted couples. Results of the 2 X 5 analysis of variance showed no main effects for adjustment nor for years of marriage, and no interaction effect (see Table 5).

Table 5

Analysis of Variance of Couple Congruence Scores for Realization (Level III)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Main Effects	2236.70	5	447.34	1.68	.14
Adjustment Level	350.82	1	350.82	1.32	.25
Length of Marriage	1788.06	4	447.02	1.68	.16
2-Way Interaction (Adjustment Level X Length of Marriage)	1617.53	4	404.38	1.52	.20
Residual	40723.40	153	266.17		
Total	44577.63	162	275.17		

Although no main effects or interactions were found, previous findings suggested that the effect might be masked. Therefore, *t* tests were still run between adjusted and nonadjusted groups across all lengths of marriage (see Table 6).

The two groups did differ at the 18-23 year point of marriage, the adjusted couples showing greater congruence (M = 18.80) than the nonadjusted couples (M = 33.93), $t(28) = 2.47$, $p < .05$. See Figure 3, also.

Table 6

Means, Standard Deviations and t Values on Realization (Level III) Congruence Scores for Adjusted and Nonadjusted Groups

Length of Marriage		Mean	SD	t value	DF	Prob.
0-5	Adj	16.76	14.56	.81	35	.43
	Nonadj	20.19	9.95			
6-11	Adj	19.88	16.37	-.29	30	.77
	Nonadj	18.33	13.36			
12-17	Adj	22.29	11.15	.32	31	.75
	Nonadj	24.00	19.54			
18-23	Adj	18.80	11.38	2.47	22	.02
	Nonadj	33.93	20.84			
24+	Adj	27.93	24.43	-.50	28	.62
	Nonadj	24.27	14.87			

It should be noted that, although the differences were not statistically significant, adjusted couples appeared to be more congruent than nonadjusted couples at several additional points along the marital span. These were the following: the 12-17 year mark for level I, the 0-5 and 12-17 year marks for level II, and the 0-5 year mark for level III (see Figures 1-3).

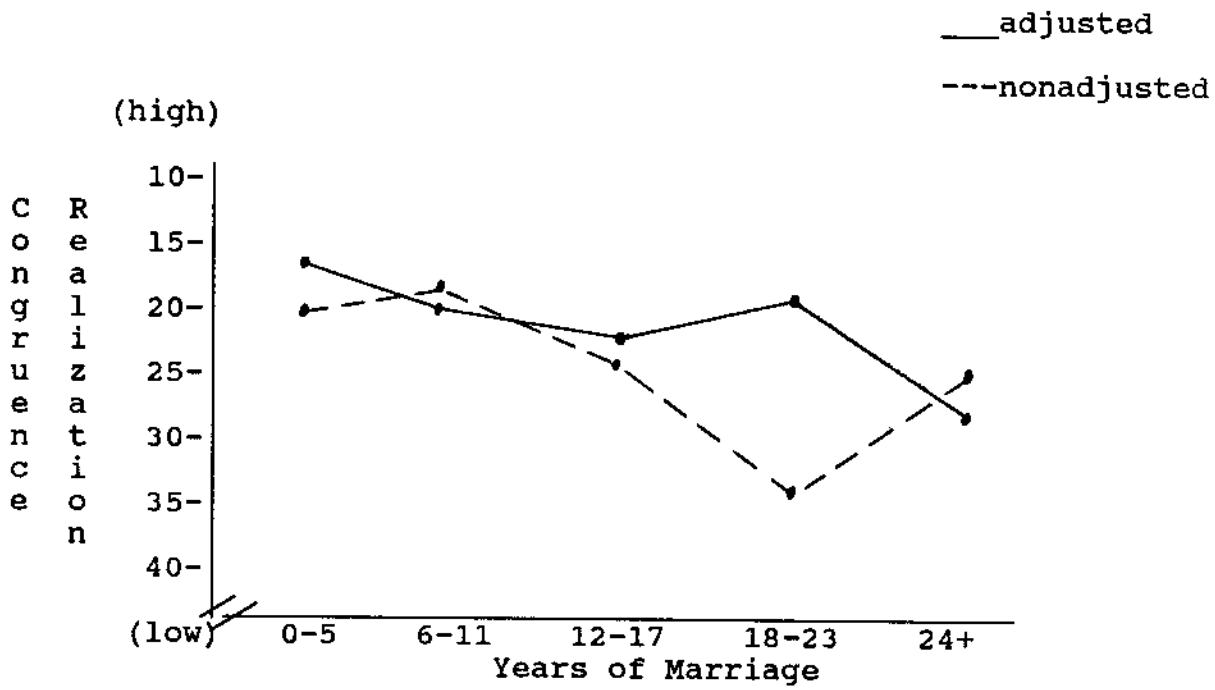

Figure 3. Congruence Scores for Couples' Realization (Level III)

Note. The numbers along the ordinate have been inverted to reflect the inverse relationship between congruence and congruence scores.

Hypothesis 4 stated that, for adjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level I congruence (agreement) scores and length of marriage. (Recall that the higher the congruence, the lower the actual AT score.) A relationship opposite that predicted occurred, as a Pearson product-moment correlational (PPMC) analysis

revealed a significant positive relationship between these two variables, $r(83) = .33$, $p \leq .01$ (see Table 7). Hypothesis 4 was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 5 stated that, for nonadjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level I congruence (agreement) scores and length of marriage. Correlational analysis produced no relationship between these two variables, thereby disconfirming hypothesis 5 (see Table 7).

Table 7

Correlation Coefficients Between Couple Congruency Scores and Length of Marriage

	Agreement	Understanding	Realization	Years Married
		Adjusted		
Agree	--	.92**	.75**	.33**
Unders	--	--	.89**	.27*
Realiz	--	--	--	.24*
Yrs Mar	--	--	--	--
		Nonadjusted		
Agree	--	.83**	.59**	-.00
Unders	--	--	.79**	.09
Realiz	--	--	--	.14
Yrs Mar	--	--	--	--

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Hypothesis 6 stated that, for adjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level II congruence (understanding) scores and length of marriage. This hypothesis was also disconfirmed, as a correlational analysis showed a significant positive relationship between adjusted couples' level II congruence scores and length of marriage, $r(83) = .27$, $p \leq .05$ (see Table 7).

Hypothesis 7 stated that, for nonadjusted couples, there would be no relationship between level II congruence (understanding) scores and length of marriage. A correlational procedure showed no relationship between these two variables, supporting the hypothesis. Results are shown in Table 7.

Hypothesis 8 stated that, for adjusted couples, there would be a significant negative relationship between level III congruence (realization) scores and length of marriage. Correlational analysis showed a significant positive relationship between these two variables, $r(83) = .24$, $p \leq .05$ (see Table 7). Therefore, hypothesis 8 was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 9 stated that, for nonadjusted couples, there would be no relationship between level III congruence (realization) scores and length of marriage. As seen in Table 7, correlational analysis confirmed this hypothesis.

Figures 1-3 show a general decline in congruence for nonadjusted couples over the length of marriage up to the 24 year mark. At this point congruence scores sharply changed.

Hypothesis 10 predicted that, for adjusted couples married 18 years and more, level II congruence and level III congruence (understanding and realization) would each be significantly greater than level I congruence (agreement). (Recall that greater congruence would produce lower scores.) A one-way analysis of variance for repeated measures indicated no difference between congruence scores for the levels of agreement, understanding, and realization, thus the hypothesis was not confirmed. Results are presented in Table 8, and the means are presented in Table 9.

Table 8

Analysis of Variance[a] Between Three Levels of Congruence Scores for Adjusted Couples Married 18+ Years

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Prob
Between People	28000.06	29	965.52		
Within People	1892.67	60	31.54		
Between Levels of Perception	6.02	2	3.01	.09	.9117
Residual	1886.64	58	32.53		
Total	29892.72	89	335.87		

[a]For Repeated Measures.

Table 9

Mean Congruence Scores of Couples Married 18+ Years

Group	Level	Mean	SD
	Agreement	22.73	18.20
Adjusted	Understanding	23.07	18.09
	Realization	23.37	19.29
	Agreement	24.13	17.75
Nonadjusted	Understanding	29.77	19.09
	Realization	29.10	18.45

Hypothesis 11 stated that, for nonadjusted couples married 18 years and more, level I congruence (agreement) would be significantly greater than level II congruence and greater than level III congruence (understanding and realization). Another one-way analysis of variance for repeated measures revealed this to be true, $F(2, 58) = 3.06$, $p = .05$ (see Tables 9 and 10). Thus hypothesis 11 was confirmed.

Although not put to a statistical analysis, it appears from the values shown that adjusted couples married 18 years or more were more congruent on all three levels than nonadjusted couples at the levels of understanding and realization. Results can be found in Table 9.

Table 10

Analysis of Variance[a] Between Three Levels of Congruence Scores for Nonadjusted Couples Married 18+ Years

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Prob
Between People	24184.67	29	833.95		
Within People	5963.33	60	99.39		
Between Levels of Perception	568.47	2	284.23	3.06	.05
Residual	5394.87	58	93.01		
Total	30148.00	89	338.74		

[a]For Repeated Measures.

Correlations between length of marriage and marital conventionalization scores, age, and number of children were performed. All were below .5 (see Appendix F, Table F-1).

Supplemental Analyses

It was deemed necessary to run further analyses to explain how congruence operated over the length of marriage for these couples. The following procedures were performed to determine the role that gender may have played in the results, and to more closely examine the influence of marital adjustment.

Pearson product-moment correlational analyses were performed between marital adjustment (DAS) scores of all couples, husbands, and wives, and congruence scores on each

of the three levels of perception. Results revealed that, for all couples, there was a significant negative correlation between DAS scores and congruence scores for agreement, $r(164) = -.16$, $p \leq .05$, understanding, $r(164) = -.24$, $p < .01$, and realization, $r = -.20$, $p < .01$ (see Table 11). That is, as couple marital adjustment increased, so did couple congruency on all three levels of perception.

Table 11

Correlation Coefficients Between Couples' DAS Scores and Couple Congruence Scores

	DAS-Couple	Agree	Unders	Realiz
DAS-Couple	--	-.16*	-.24**	-.20**
Agree	--	--	.86**	.66**
Unders	--	--	--	.84**
Realiz	--	--	--	--

*$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$

When DAS scores of husbands, only, and couple congruence scores were correlated, a significant negative correlation was found for agreement, $r(164) = -.20$, $p \leq .01$, understanding, $r(164) = -.28$, $p \leq .01$, and realization, $r = -.24$, $p \leq .01$ (see Table 12). As marital adjustment for husbands increased, so did couple congruency on all three levels of perception.

Table 12

Correlation Coefficients Between Husbands' DAS Scores and Couple Congruence Scores

	DAS-Husb	Agree	Unders	Realiz
DAS-Husb	--	-.20**	-.28**	-.24**
Agree	--	--	.86**	.66**
Unders	--	--	--	.84**
Realiz	--	--	--	--

*$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$.

When DAS scores of wives, only, and couple congruence scores were correlated, a significant negative value resulted only for the level of understanding, $r(164) = -.17$, $p \leq .05$ (see Table 13). Therefore, wives' marital adjustment and couple congruence were correlated only at the understanding level.

Table 13

Correlation Coefficients Between Wives' DAS Scores and Couple Congruence Scores

	DAS-Wives	Agree	Unders	Realiz
DAS-Wives	--	-.10	-.17*	-.14
Agree	--	--	.86**	.66**
Unders	--	--	--	.84**
Realiz	--	--	--	--

*$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$.

Level II (understanding) was thought to be a particularly important level of perception for couples. The understanding score indicates to what degree spouses understand the way each other perceives issues. Heretofore, couple scores, only, had been derived for the three levels of perception. However, it was decided to examine the level of understanding for husbands only, and wives, only, to determine differences according to gender. A 2 X 5 (adjustment by length of marriage) analysis of variance was performed for level II (understanding) for husbands, and another for wives.

Results for husbands revealed a significant main effect for adjustment level, $F(1, 4) = 4.11$, $p < .05$, but none for length of marriage, and no interactions (see Table 14). A main effect indicated that adjusted husbands taken together at all lengths of marriage understood their wives better than did nonadjusted husbands.

Subsequently, t tests were performed on understanding scores between adjusted and nonadjusted husbands over the length of marriage (see Table 15). As may be seen in Table 15, the adjusted and nonadjusted groups differed significantly at year level 18-23. Figure 4 represents the results graphically.

Table 14

Analysis of Variance of Husbands' Understanding (Level II)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Main Effects	818.99	5	163.80	1.74	.13
Adjustment Level	387.41	1	387.41	4.11	.00
Length of Marriage	375.74	4	93.94	1.00	.41
2-Way Interaction (Adjustment Level X Length of Marriage)	763.84	4	190.96	2.02	.09
Residual	14529.53	154	94.35		
Total	16112.36	163	98.85		

Table 15

Means, Standard Deviations and t Values of Understanding (Level II) Scores for Adjusted and Nonadjusted Husbands

Length of Marriage		Mean	SD	t value	DF	Prob.
0-5	Adj	8.95	6.88	1.06	36	.30
	Nonadj	11.56	8.23			
6-11	Adj	10.82	7.72	.33	30	.74
	Nonadj	12.00	12.02			
12-17	Adj	10.43	6.89	1.29	31	.21
	Nonadj	14.70	12.28			
18-23	Adj	9.47	5.69	3.46	22	.00
	Nonadj	20.13	10.51			
24+	Adj	14.47	11.89	-.71	28	.48
	Nonadj	11.33	12.20			

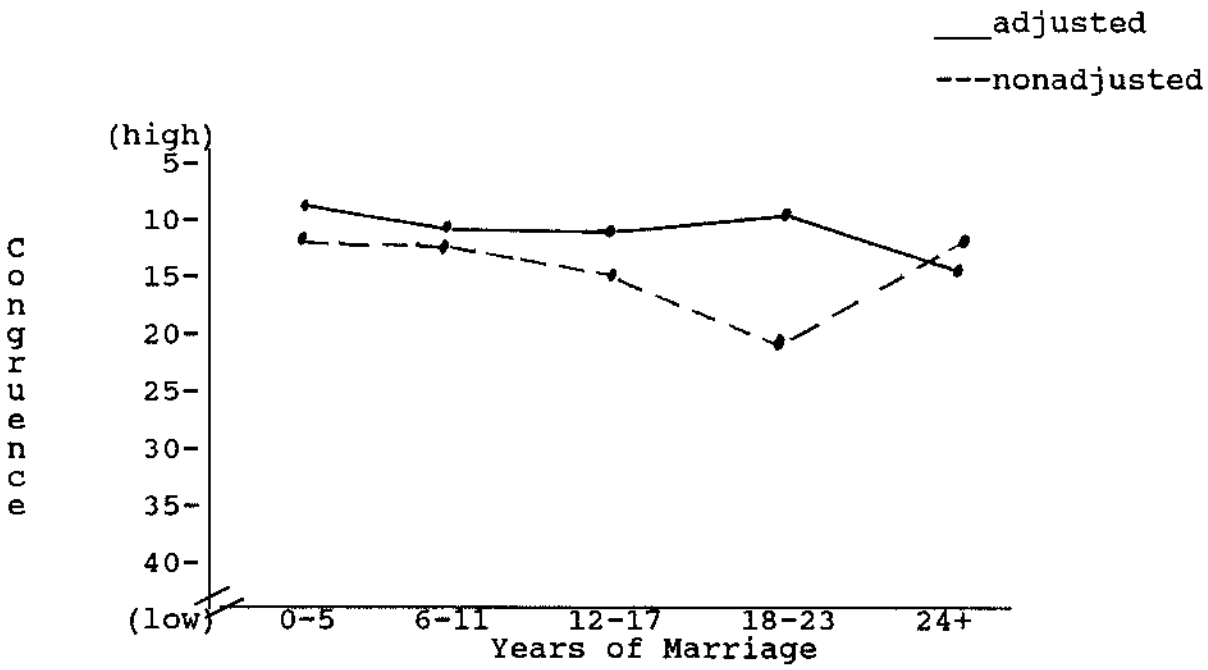

Figure 4. Congruence Scores for Husbands' Understanding (Level II)

As Figure 4 shows, even though adjusted husbands generally understood their wives more than did nonadjusted husbands, the difference was significant at only the 18-23 year point.

Results of the 2 X 5 analysis of variance for wives revealed no main effects for adjustment level nor for length of marriage. However, a significant interaction was found, $F(1, 4) = 4.02$, $p < .05$ (see Table 16).

To determine points of interaction along the length of marriage, t tests were performed on understanding scores between adjusted and nonadjusted wives. Table 17 contains the results, and Figure 5 presents them in graphic form.

Table 16

Analysis of Variance of Wives' Understanding (Level II)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Main Effects	654.22	5	130.84	1.75	.13
Adjustment Level	24.83	1	24.83	.33	.57
Length of Marriage	612.20	4	153.05	2.04	.09
2-Way Interaction (Adjustment Level X Length of Marriage)	1204.46	4	301.11	4.02	.00
Residual	11472.96	153	74.99		
Total	13331.63	162	82.29		

Table 17

Means, Standard Deviations and t Values of Understanding (Level II) Scores for Adjusted and Nonadjusted Wives

Length of Marriage		Mean	SD	t value	DF	Prob.
0-5	Adj	6.14	6.50	1.82	36	.08
	Nonadj	10.31	7.63			
6-11	Adj	11.82	6.89	-1.91	30	.07
	Nonadj	7.33	6.33			
12-17	Adj	12.00	7.63	-.51	29	.62
	Nonadj	10.11	13.59			
18-23	Adj	8.80	6.61	3.42	28	.00
	Nonadj	18.80	9.21			
24+	Adj	13.40	11.61	-1.19	22	.25
	Nonadj	9.27	6.72			

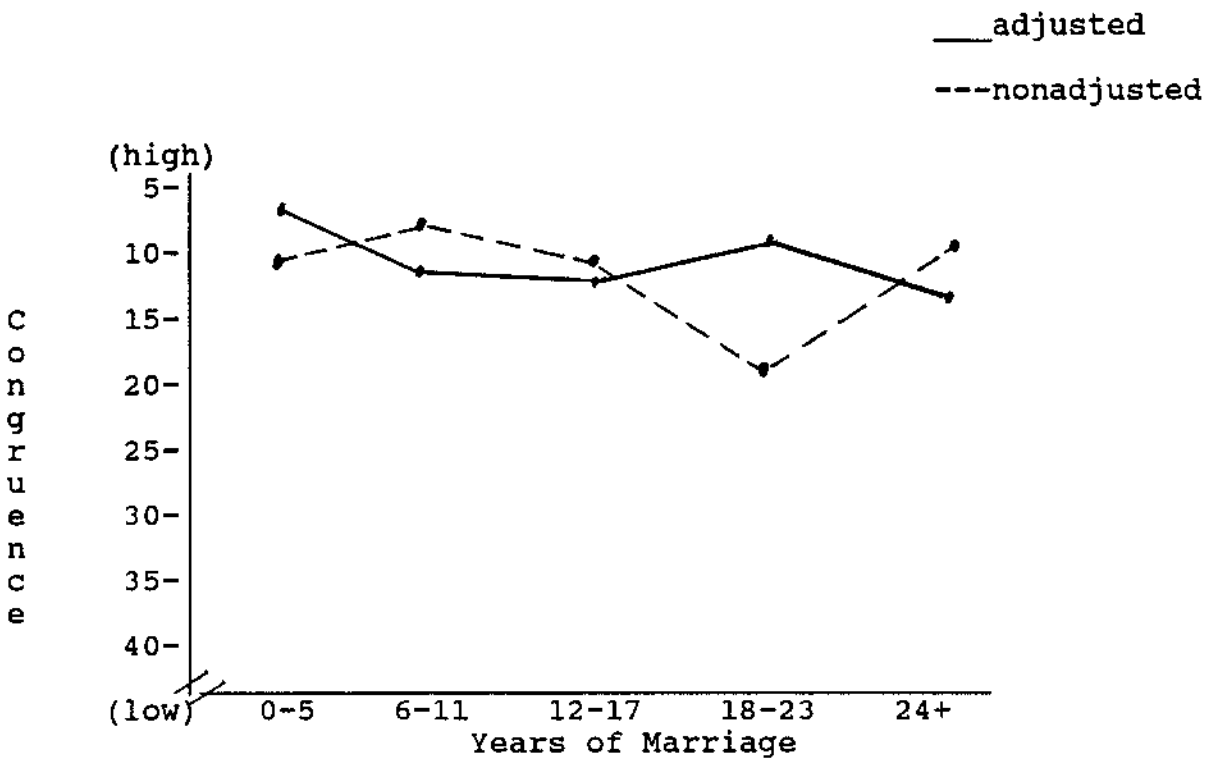

Figure 5. Congruence Scores for Wives' Understanding (Level II)

As may be seen from Table 17, scores of the adjusted wives differed significantly from those of nonadjusted wives at the 18-23 year mark, only. At this point, adjusted wives' scores were lower than those of nonadjusted wives. These results indicated that, only at one point in the marital span did adjusted wives understand their husbands more than did nonadjusted wives.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

It was hypothesized that adjusted Air Force spouses would be significantly more likely than nonadjusted spouses to agree with their partners (level I congruence), understand their partners (level II congruence), and predict how they would be perceived by their partners (level III congruence) across the marital life span. However, statistically significant differences exist only for couples married for certain lengths of time.

Adjusted couples agree more than nonadjusted couples only at the 0-5 and 18-23 year points. Adjusted couples agree significantly less than nonadjusted couples after being married 24 years and over. Adjusted couples understand each other more than do nonadjusted couples at the 18-23 year point. At no point do nonadjusted couples understand each other more than do adjusted couples. Adjusted couples are better able to predict how each will be understood than are nonadjusted couples at the 18-23 year point of marriage. At no point are nonadjusted couples better at predicting than adjusted couples.

Although there is another point along the marital span for the first and third levels of congruence, and two other points for the second level, at which adjusted couples are

more congruent than nonadjusted couples, these differences are not statistically significant.

When examining each gender separately for level II, all adjusted husbands, taken together, understand their wives better than all nonadjusted husbands understand their wives. Therefore, although adjusted couples are not consistently higher in congruence across the marital span, adjusted husbands, as a whole, seem to be more understanding than nonadjusted husbands. There is not such a difference with wives, which is somewhat surprising considering the rather consistent finding in the literature of the particular importance of wives' understanding to marital adjustment.

There are several possible explanations for the lack of a consistent, significant difference between adjusted and nonadjusted couples across the marital span. The subject samples employed in this study possessed DAS scores that are higher than those in Spanier's (1976) original study and those in some other studies comparing adjusted and nonadjusted couples (e.g., Creamer & Campbell, 1988). The high scores may be due to several factors. First, the current study depended on an all-volunteer subject pool. Those with unhealthy marriages were probably less prone to volunteer for such a study than those with healthy marriages. Although clinic couples were solicited, their participation was more difficult to obtain. Additionally, military marriages do not seem to be as maladjusted as some

have suggested (Schumm & Hammond, 1986). Indeed, military marriages may have advantages unavailable to others, and may be even more adjusted than others; although further research must be conducted to determine if this is the case. Nevertheless, it could be that an all-military sample is more adjusted than a nonmilitary sample. These rather high marital adjustment scores might help explain the lack of a consistent difference in congruency found between adjusted couples and nonadjusted couples.

An interesting finding is the large difference at the point of 18-23 years of marriage. This finding seems plausible, however, in light of the marital research suggesting an increase in marital satisfaction after the children leave the home, which for most couples would probably occur at about 18-23 years of marriage. [Only at the initial stage of marriage (0-5) might congruence be higher for adjusted couples, according to the current findings.] More striking, however, than the slight increase in congruency for adjusted couples is the sharp decline in congruency for nonadjusted couples at this point, appearing to account for most of the difference. Although the number of children living at home was not analyzed for each stage of marriage in this study, children leaving the home could be a detriment to those couples who were perhaps less adjusted in the first place. Whereas much of the research suggests that marital satisfaction increases after the

children leave home (e.g., Rollins & Cannon, 1974), Lee (1988) maintained that the fate of later-life marriages is still a debatable topic. One is reminded of Fried and Stern's (1948) assertion that the extent of happiness later in a marriage depends on the degree of earlier satisfaction. Results of the current study and those of past studies have rather consistently demonstrated positive relationships between multilevel congruence and marital adjustment (e.g., Cone, 1988; Luckey, 1960a). Positive relationships have also been found between multi-level congruence and quality of communication (e.g., Allen & Thompson, 1984; Cone, 1988). In light of such studies, perhaps the poor quality of communication and the lower marital adjustment become more apparent for the nonadjusted couples, after their children leave, exposing and exacerbating the couples' lower abilities to be congruent with each other on the various perceptual levels. When their children leave the home after many years, life with each other may be especially difficult for the nonadjusted couple.

Another major consideration is that many military couples face retirement at this point in their lives. (One can retire with full benefits after 20 years of service.) Ade-Ridder and Brubaker (1983) suggested that retirement can be a very positive or very negative experience for couples, depending on the degree of spousal mutual support. Perhaps the nonadjusted couples have been negatively impacted by the

stress of retirement, affecting their quality of communication, and ultimately their perceptual congruence. The apparent increase in congruency for nonadjusted couples at the last point on the marital span (24+ years) may represent a recuperation from the stress of retirement, or a readjustment to life without the children.

Not only does congruency fail to increase for adjusted couples over the length of marriage as was predicted, but congruency actually decreases for these adjusted couples on all three levels of congruence. The data suggest that adjusted couples' agreement, their abilities to accurately understand each other, and their capacities to predict how they are understood all decline as time progresses in the marriage.

There are no statistically significant relationships between congruency of nonadjusted couples and length of marriage on any perceptual level; however, results seem to suggest a general decline in congruency for these couples on all levels up to the 18-23 year point. From the current data, it appears that this is a tremendously significant point for couples, at which time major changes occur, especially for nonadjusted couples.

The finding of declining congruency for adjusted couples over the length of marriage is interesting. Although many studies have pointed to the association of congruency and marital adjustment (e.g., Luckey, 1966a),

some authors (e.g., Bochner et al., 1982; Kirkpatrick & Hobart, 1954; Lasswell, 1985) have maintained that positive perceptions of one another may be more important than the accuracy of those perceptions. The adjustment scores of the subjects in this study were higher than in most studies. Although the marital conventionalization measure does not reveal subjects to have answered in an excessively socially desirable manner, the measure was taken on all subjects, not just the adjusted ones. It is possible that this particular sample of adjusted couples holds what Lasswell referred to as illusions of marital happiness. That is, as these couples go through time, they remain happy with one another, even though in reality they may not perceive aspects of their marriage in a similar fashion. One is also reminded of the findings of Byrne and Blaylock (1963) and Levinger and Breedlove (1966) suggesting that the assumption of agreement may be more important in a marriage than actual agreement.

It may be that, because of the continuing development of a positive relationship in adjusted couples, the need for such accurate perceptions of the other decreases. There may be less anxiety for the relationship and each partner may grow individually--safely. This explanation was originally proposed for the level of agreement, only, but it may apply to the deeper levels of perception, as well.

Along the same lines, it was hypothesized that adjusted couples married 18+ years would be more congruent on deeper levels of perception than on the simple agreement level. The theory behind this prediction was that adjusted spouses married many years do not need to agree about issues and feel safer disagreeing; yet, it is especially important for them to accurately perceive the other on deeper levels. It was also predicted that, for nonadjusted couples married 18+ years, agreement on issues would grow somewhat, only because after living together 18 years these couples should have established some similar viewpoints. However, they probably would not have established deeper levels of congruence. Contrary to predictions the data show congruence scores to be very similar for adjusted couples on all three levels. However, nonadjusted couples at the 18 year point produced expected results as they seem better able to agree on issues than to either understand each other or to predict how they are perceived by the other. At face value, this difference seems more related to a relative increase in agreement at the 24+ point than a relative decrease in understanding and realization for these nonadjusted couples. Perhaps after the stress of family changes and retirement, nonadjusted couples are able to recuperate and come to agreement on issues. They, perhaps, even have a need to establish similarity. However, they can never quite achieve the same level of congruency at deeper levels. It also seems from

the data that congruency at all three levels for the adjusted couples married 18+ years is significantly greater than congruency at levels II and III for the nonadjusted couples married 18+ years. As previously discussed, adjusted couples may not be as accurate in their perceptions later in life as they were earlier, but they may be more accurate than unhappy couples when it comes to understanding their spouses and predicting how they are perceived.

Although congruency may decrease for adjusted couples over time, the finding of a significant correlation between couple congruence scores and marital adjustment scores reaffirms that adjustment for couples, in general, tends to be positively related to congruency. Adjustment scores for all husbands, alone, are also significantly related to couple congruency at all levels. However, adjustment scores for wives relate to couple congruency only at one level (understanding). It may be that congruence of the sort mentioned in this study is more important for the marital adjustment of husbands than it is for the marital adjustment of wives.

In conclusion, the basic purpose of this study was fulfilled. The research on congruence of multi-level dyadic perceptions and its relationship to marital adjustment at different points over the marital span was further extended by this study. Although Allen and Thompson (1984) called for a longitudinal study to assess the importance, or lack

thereof, of congruence at different points along the marital career, the current study attempted to address this call with a cross-sectional design. This represents the first study to assess multi-levels of congruence at different stages of marriage. The prediction that adjusted couples would be more congruent than nonadjusted couples over the marital span is only supported at certain points of the marriage at certain levels of perception. The notion that adjusted couples form an ever-growing shared world view by way of a circular-causal process is not supported by the data. Contrary to original speculation, the current data suggest that adjusted couples may, in fact, show a decline in congruence over the marital life span, not just concerning opinions about their marriage, but also at deeper levels of understanding of each other. The data suggest that nonadjusted couples may not gradually grow to see even surface issues more similarly over time. Even though congruency may decline for adjusted couples, the current data show that adjustment, in general, is related to congruence on all three levels. Overall, adjusted men are more understanding than nonadjusted men; and adjusted couples are more congruent than nonadjusted couples on the two deeper perceptual levels at the 18-23 year mark, and perhaps beyond.

The slight increase in congruency for adjusted couples and the sharp decline in congruency for nonadjusted couples

at the 18-23 year mark suggest that this may be a much more significant time for couples than was previously thought. It seems especially difficult for nonadjusted couples. Nonadjusted couples may later recuperate from this phase, by seeing more "eye to eye" on surface issues; however, they may still find this easier to achieve than corectly perceiving each other on deeper levels. The adjusted couple's abilities to communicate and understand each other seem undisturbed at the 18-23 year point, but may continue to gradually decline later.

Further research in this area should address the following limitations of the current study. First, although adjusted and nonadjusted couples were defined in terms of their scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, subjects produced higher scores than those previously seen in adjustment research. In order to represent more unhealthy marriages, future researchers should endeavor to include more clinic couples. In addition, even though couples were told to complete their instruments independently, and not to discuss the questionnaires with each other, this directive could not be ensured. Future investigators may wish to devise a time-efficient way for couples to complete their packets, separately, in the experimenter's presence to be certain that couple collaboration, discussion, and fears that the other might discover marital secrets are prevented. The questionnaire assessing congruence is also somewhat

lengthy, requiring much concentration to think of relational issues from three different perspectives. The current study used only military couples, and Caucasians were over-represented. Additional studies might employ couples representing different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Our understanding about the importance of congruence to marital adjustment is still unclear. It is apparent that more studies need to be conducted addressing the changes in couple congruence over time, especially on different levels. In light of the significant change in congruency at the 18-23 year mark and again, at the 24+ year mark, it would be interesting to follow couples in discrete five-year categories beyond the 24 year point. More studies need to be performed examining late-life marriage.

Results of the current study entice one to focus on other factors, as well. For example, Bochner et al's (1982) position that positive perceptions of each other are more important than congruence, should be further explored and tested along the marital span. Along this line, future studies might examine the value of the responses, as well as the difference scores. Additionally, assumed similarity vs actual similarity could be analyzed over the course of marriage. A challenge made by Allen and Thompson (1984) to future researchers was for the development of a more sophisticated instrument or set of measures to obtain this variable called congruence. Allen and Thompson's

questionnaire used for this study addresses only a limited number of relational issues. Studies in the past have used a variety of types of questions to obtain congruence. Perhaps an instrument that includes different types of issues could be used to ascertain whether congruence regarding some issues are more important to a good marriage than congruence about other issues.

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Demographic Data

	Couples	Husbands	Wives
		Means	
Length of Marriage	14.7		
Age	36.4	37.1	35.7
Number of Children	2		
No. of Children at Home	1.5		
Education		2-4	2
Income	$35,000+		
		Percentages	
Race			
Caucasian		87	90
Black		6	4
Hispanic		5	4
Asian		.5	0
Other		1.5	2
Religion			
Protestant	44		
Catholic	34		
"Other Christian"	13		
"Other"	5		
Agnostic/Atheist	3		
Jewish	1		

	Couples	Husbands	Wives
Religious Importance			
"Very Important"		40	48
"Important"		33	33
"Minimally Important"		21	17
"Unimportant"		5	2
Military Status			
Active Duty		70	18
Retired		23	0
Dependent of Active Duty		7	60
Dependent of Retired		0	22
Rank (Active Duty & Retired)			
Officers		34	42
Enlisted		66	58
Years in Service	12		

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

I, _____, agree to participate in this study of marital relationships. The purpose of this study is to discover more about how married couples view aspects of their marriages, and how these perceptions change over time. With data from myself and others, researchers can hopefully discover more about how marriages work, and maybe help couples improve their relationships.

I understand that I am being asked to complete several questionnaires inquiring about my attitudes toward my marriage and my spouse. The questions should not be embarrassing and only call for my honest responses. Except for the demographic data questionnaire, I will work independently of my spouse. My name will appear on this form only, and the form will be kept in a private location, separately from the questionnaires. Therefore, my answers to the questionnaires will be completely confidential. The whole packet should take about 50 minutes. I realize that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

I have seen a clear explanation of and understand the purposes of the study and the procedures to be followed. I understand that the procedures are for research purposes, and I voluntarily give my consent for my answers to be used in this study. I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I also understand that this project is in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force.

If I should have any questions at all about this project, or should I desire to obtain the overall results of this study, I understand that I should contact Capt. Cone at the following address and/or phone number:

Captain Diane Cone
Mental Health Department/SGHMA
USAF Regional Hospital Sheppard
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-5300

Work: (817) 676-6155

Date:_____

Subject Signature:_____

Witness Signature:_____

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR HUSBANDS

Dear Participant:

As part of my work on my doctorate at the University of North Texas, I am conducting research into marital relationships. I would greatly appreciate your help by completing the attached questionnaires. It is my hope that with your help, we will learn more about marital relationships and how they develop.

At the outset, let me make it clear that even though I am a Captain in the Air Force and assigned to the Sheppard AFB Regional Hospital, this study is not an Air Force project, nor is it in any way connected with the U.S. Government. It is simply a private study. Your participation is ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY. The answers you give on these questionnaires will be CONFIDENTIAL. As part of the University's research requirements, I will ask you to complete an informed consent form requiring that you sign your name. This gives me your permission to use your responses for my study. However, these forms will be kept SEPARATELY from your questionnaires in a private location (and your name is not requested on the questionnaires). This means there will be no way to identify your questionnaires. You may withdraw from the study at any time if you so choose.

It is possible that you will find some of the following questions difficult because I will be asking you what your spouse might say about some issues. Please do your best by trying to "put yourself in your spouse's shoes" when answering these questions. For these and all other questions it is important that you answer <u>every</u> question so that the statistics can be accurate. I also ask that you answer as honestly as possible.

In order to ensure accuracy, you may find it necessary to discuss the first questionnaire (the demographic data sheet) with your spouse. However, because I am interested in each spouse's <u>individual</u> beliefs, DO NOT discuss the remaining questionnaires with your spouse until <u>after</u> they have been completed and returned to me.

This questionnaire should take about 50 minutes of your time. Please try to complete it in one sitting.

Thank You!
Diane Cone, Captain, USAF

Demographic Data

Directions: On the line to the left of each statement, place the number that corresponds to the answer that best describes you. In cases where no choices are given, please write in the most appropriate response. Please read the entire question to make sure which response applies to you. Each question has an answer. Do not skip any. (Note: If this is not your first marriage, please discontinue this questionnaire.)

___ 1. Sex
   1. Male
   2. Female

___ 2. Age

___ 3. Race
   1. Caucasian
   2. Black
   3. Hispanic
   4. Asian
   5. Other (please specify) _____

___ 4. Formal Education
   1. Less than high school
   2. High school/GED
   3. Some college or tech school
   4. Associate's degree
   5. Bachelor's degree
   6. Master's degree
   7. Doctorate or more

___ 5. Religious Affiliation
   1. Jewish
   2. Catholic
   3. Protestant (if so, which?)
   4. Other Christian (please specify) _____
   5. Atheist or Agnostic
   6. Other (plese specify)

___ 6. How important are your religious beliefs to your life?
   1. Very important
   2. Important
   3. Minimally important
   4. Unimportant

___ 7. How regularly do you attend religious services?
   1. once or more per week
   2. 2-3 times per month
   3. once per month
   4. once every 2-3 months
   5. less than once every 3 months
   6. never

___ 8. How many years have you been married? (roung down to the nearest year, even if it is almost your anniversary)

___ 9. How many children do you and your spouse have, total?

___ 10. How many children are currently living in your home? (e.g., this would not include children away at college living in another dwelling)

___ 11. What is the age of your youngest child still living in the home? (round down, even if the child is almost in the next category, such as 5 years 8 months of age)
1. N/A all the children are out of the home
2. N/A we have no children
3. less than 2 years old
4. 2-5 years old
5. 6-12 years old
6. 13-19 years old
7. 20-25 years old
8. 26 yrs. or over

___ 12. Counting what you and your spouse get from all sources, what was your total income last year?
1. Under $10,000
2. $10,000-$14,999
3. $15,000-$19,999
4. $20,000-$24,999
5. $25,000-$29,999
6. $30,000-$34,999
7. $35,000-$39,999
8, $40,000-$44,999
9. $45,000-$49,999
10. $50,000-$74,999
11. $75,000-$100,000
12. Over $100,000

___ 13. Please answer the following 3 questions about the woman you mostly consider to be your mother. Is she. . .
1. your biological mother
2. your stepmother
3. other (please specify)_____

___ 14. Is she. . .
1. living
2. deceased

___ 15. If she is deceased how old were you at her death? (round down)
1. N/A she is not deceased
2. less than 2 years old
3. 2-5 years old
4. 6-12 years old
5. 13-19 years old
6. 20-25 years old
7. 26 years or over

___ 16. Please answer the following questions about the man you mostly consider to be your father. Is he . . .
1. living
2. deceased

___ 17. If he is deceased how old were you at his death? (round down)
1. N/A he is not deceased
2. less than 2 years old
3. 2-5 years old
4. 6-12 years old
5. 13-19 years old
6. 20-25 years old
7. 26 years or over

For questions 18 and 19, if either (or both) parent is deceased, indicate their marital status (with each other) at the time of death.

___ 18. Are your biological parents . . .
1. currently married
2. divorced
3. separated
4. never married

___ 19. Are the two people you mostly consider to be your parents . . .
1. currently married
2. divorced
3. separated
4. never married

___ 20. Are the two people mentioned in question #18 the same as your biological parents?
1. yes 2. no

___ 21. If your biological parents are divorced, how old were you when they divorced? (round down)
1. N/A my biological parents are not divorced
2. less than 2 years
3. 2-5 years
4. 6-12 years
5. 13-19 years
6. 20-25 years
7. 26 years or over

___ 22. If the two people you mostly consider to be your parents are not your biological parents, and if they are divorced, how old were you when they divorced? (round down)
1. N/A the two people I mostly consider to be my parents are: my biological parents and/or they are not divorced
2. less than 2 years
3. 2-5 years
4. 6-12 years
5. 13-19 years
6. 20-25 years
7. 26 years or over

___ 23. What is your current military status?
1. Active duty Air Force
2. Dependent spouse of active duty Air Force
3. Retire Air Force (20 years or more)
4. Dependent spouse of a retired Air Force

___ 24. What is your spouse's current military status?
1. Active duty Air Force
2. Dependent spouse of active duty Air Force
3. Retire Air Force (20 years or more)
4. Dependent spouse of a retired Air Force

___ 25. Are you and your spouse both currently active duty and/or retired Air Force?
1. yes 2. no

___ 26. What is your current or retired Air Force rank? (Note: If you are a dependent spouse, please indicate answer #20)

1. E-1	5. E-5	9. E-9	13. O-4	17. O-8
2. E-2	6. E-6	10. O-1	14. O-5	18. O-9
3. E-3	7. E-7	11. O-2	15. O-6	19. O-10
4. E-4	8. E-8	12. O-3	16. O-7	20. N/A I am a dependent spouse

_ _ _ _ _ 27. _____ What is your current/retired AFSC? (Please designate the 5-digit code and write out the title. If your AFSC has/had only 4 digits, place a "0" in the first blank, followed by the 4-digit code, e.g., 0 9 1 8 1. If you are a dependent spouse, fill all 5 blanks with "0", e.g., 0 0 0 0 0.)

___ 28. How many years have you spent in <u>active</u> <u>duty</u> military service? You may count previous duty in another service. (If you are a dependent spouse, how many years have you been married to your spouse while he/she was on active duty?) Round up or down to the nearest year.

AT (H)

Instructions for Part I of this questionnaire (questions 29-60): For each question, place the number in the blank to the left which best indicates your response in view of your marital relationship. Use the following answer guide.

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 29. My spouse spends money wisely

___ 30. I spend money wisely

___ 31. We are financially stable

___ 32. Household tasks should be shared by both spouses

___ 33. In our relationship, the wife should do more household tasks than the husband

___ 34. My spouse and I share the same religious beliefs

___ 35. Affection is displayed in our relationship

___ 36. My spouse is comfortable with expressing affection

___ 37. I am comfortable with expressing affection

___ 38. My spouse is satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 39. I am satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 40. My spouse and I make plans for the future together

___ 41. My spouse respects my viewpoints

___ 42. I respect my spouse's viewpoints

___ 43. My spouse is open with me

___ 44. I am open with my spouse

___ 45. My spouse is satisfied with the degree to which she is involved in decision-making

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 46. I am satisfied with the degree to which I am involved in decision-making

___ 47. My spouse is aware of the types of gifts I like

___ 48. I am aware of the types of gifts my spouse likes

___ 49. My spouse is generally cooperative with me

___ 50. I am generally cooperative with my spouse

___ 51. My spouse shares her work (career) and/or academic experiences with me

___ 52. I share my work (career) and/or academic experiences with my spouse

___ 53. My spouse is interested in my job and/or academic studies

___ 54. I am interested in my spouse's job and/or academic studies.

___ 55. My spouse and I like to spend our spare time engaging in the same things

___ 56. My spouse and I agree as to how children should be disciplined

___ 57. My spouse and I agree as to when children should be disciplined

Note: Use the following guide to answer the next three questions.

1 = Very Dissatisfying
2 = Dissatisfying
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfying
4 = Neither Satisfying nor Dissatisfying
5 = Somewhat Satisfying
6 = Satisfying
7 = Very Satisfying

___ 58. I view the amount of trustworthiness between my spouse and me as...

___ 59. I perceive the social life we share as...

___ 60. I perceive the degree of openness between my spouse and me as...

Instructions for Part 2 of this questionnaire (questions 1-32): For each question, place the number in the blank to the left which best indicates the response that you think "your spouse" would give. In other words, how would YOUR SPOUSE answer the following? Use the following answer guide.

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

How would YOUR SPOUSE answer the following?

___ 1. I spend money wisely

___ 2. My spouse spends money wisely

___ 3. We are financially stable

___ 4. Household tasks should be shared by both spouses

___ 5. In our relationship, the wife should do more household tasks than the husband

___ 6. My spouse and I share the same religious beliefs

___ 7. Affection is displayed in our relationship

___ 8. I am comfortable with expressing affection

___ 9. My spouse is comfortable with expressing affection

___ 10. I am satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 11. My spouse is satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 12. My spouse and I make plans for the future together

___ 13. I respect my spouse's viewpoints

___ 14. My spouse respects my viewpoints

___ 15. I am open with my spouse

___ 16. My spouse is open with me

___ 17. I am satisfied with the degree to which I am involved in decision-making

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 18. My spouse is satisfied with the degree to which he is involved in decision-making

___ 19. I am aware of the types of gifts my spouse likes

___ 20. My spouse is aware of the types of gifts I like

___ 21. I am generally cooperative with my spouse

___ 22. My spouse is generally cooperative with me

___ 23. I share my work (career) and/or academic experiences with my spouse

___ 24. My spouse shares his work (career) and/or academic experiences with me

___ 25. I am interested in my spouse's job and/or academic studies

___ 26. My spouse is interested in my job and/or academic studies

___ 27. My spouse and I like to spend our spare time engaging in the same things

___ 28. My spouse and I agree as to how children should be disciplined

___ 29. My spouse and I agree as to when children should be disciplined

Note: Use the following guide to answer the next three questions.

1 = Very Dissatisfying
2 = Dissatisfying
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfying
4 = Neither Satisfying nor Dissatisfying
5 = Somewhat Satisfying
6 = Satisfying
7 = Very Satisfying

___ 30. I view the amount of trustworthiness between my spouse and me as...

___ 31. I perceive the social life we share as...

___ 32. I perceive the degree of openness between my spouse and me as...

Instructions for Part 3 of this questionnaire (questions 33-64): For each question, place the number in the blank to the left which best indicates the response that "your spouse" would think you would give to each question. In other words, how would YOUR SPOUSE think YOU would have answered the following? Use the following guide.

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

How would YOUR SPOUSE think YOU would have answered the following?

___ 33. My spouse spends money wisely

___ 34. I spend money wisely

___ 35. We are financially stable

___ 36. Household tasks should be shared by both spouses

___ 37. In our relationship, the wife should do more household tasks than the husband

___ 38. My spouse and I share the same religious beliefs

___ 39. Affection is displayed in our relationship

___ 40. My spouse is comfortable with expressing affection

___ 41. I am comfortable with expressing affection

___ 42. My spouse is satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 43. I am satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 44. My spouse and I make plans for the future together

___ 45. My spouse respects my viewpoints

___ 46. I respect my spouse's viewpoints

___ 47. My spouse is open with me

___ 48. I am open with my spouse

___ 49. My spouse is satisfied with the degree to which she is involved in decision-making

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 50. I am satisfied with the degree to which I am involved in decision-making

___ 51. My spouse is aware of the types of gifts I like

___ 52. I am aware of the types of gifts my spouse likes

___ 53. My spouse is generally cooperative with me

___ 54. I am generally cooperative with my spouse

___ 55. My spouse shares her work (career) and/or academic experiences with me

___ 56. I share my work (career) and/or academic experiences with my spouse

___ 57. My spouse is interested in my job and/or academic studies

___ 58. I am interested in my spouse's job and/or academic studies

___ 59. My spouse and I like to spend our spare time engaging in the same things

___ 60. My spouse and I agree as to how children should be disciplined

___ 61. My spouse and I agree as to when children should be disciplined

Note: Use the following guide to answer the next three questions.

1 = Very Dissatisfying
2 = Dissatisfying
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfying
4 = Neither Satisfying nor Dissatisfying
5 = Somewhat Satisfying
6 = Satisfying
7 = Very Satisfying

___ 62. I view the amount of trustworthiness between my spouse and me as...

___ 63. I perceive the social life we share as...

___ 64. I perceive the degree of openness between my spouse and me as...

DAS

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list. Place the number in the blank at the left that best represents your answer. Use the answer key given.

5 = Always Agree
4 = Almost Always Agree
3 = Occasionally Disagree
2 = Frequently Disagree
1 = Almost Always Disagree
0 = Always Disagree

___ 1. Handling family finances

___ 2. Matters of recreation

___ 3. Religious matters

___ 4. Demonstrations of Affection

___ 5. Friends

___ 6. Sex relations

___ 7. Conventionality (correct and proper behavior)

___ 8. Philosophy of life

___ 9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws

___ 10. Aims, goals, and things believed important

___ 11. Amount of time spent together

___ 12. Making major decisions

___ 13. Household tasks

___ 14. Leisure time, interests, and activities

___ 15. Career decisions

For the next 7 questions, use the following key:

0 = All of the time
1 = Most of the time
2 = More often than not
3 = Occasionally
4 = Rarely
5 = Never

___ 16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation or terminating your relationship?

___ 17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?

___ 18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

___ 19. Do you confide in your mate?

___ 20. Do you ever regret that you married?

___ 21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?

___ 22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"

Use the following key for the next question.

Every day	Almost every day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
4	3	2	1	0

___ 23. Do you kis your mate?

Use the following key for the next question.

All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
4	3	2	1	0

___ 24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

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

0 = Never
1 = Less than once a month
2 = Once or twice a month
3 = Once or twice a week
4 = Once a day
5 = More often

___ 25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

___ 26. Laugh together

___ 27. Calmly discuss something

___ 28. Work together on a project

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinion or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks (Place a "0" in the blank for "Yes"; Place a "1" in the blank for "No").

___ 29. Being too tired for sex

___ 30. Not showing love

The following answer key represents different degrees of happiness in your relationship. Please indicate in the blank below the key the number which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship. The point "happy" represents the degree of happiness of most relationships.

0 = Extremely unhappy
1 = Fairly unhappy
2 = A little unhappy
3 = Happy
4 = Very happy
5 = Extremely happy
6 = Perfect

___ 31.

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

5 = I want desparately for my relationship to succeed and would go to almost any length to see that it does.

4 = I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do all I can to see that it does.

3 = I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do my fair share to see that it does.

2 = It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.

1 = It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.

0 = My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more than I can do to keep the relationship going.

___ 32.

MC

Directions: Read each statement and decide whether it is true as applied to you, your mate, or your marriage. If it is true as applied to you, your mate, or your marriage place the number "1" in the blank to the left of the statement. If it is false as it applies to you, your mate, or your marriage place the number "2" in the blank to the left of the statement.

Remember, 1 = True
2 = False

___ 33. I'm quite happily married.

___ 34. There are times when my mate does things that make me unhappy.

___ 35. My marriage is not a perfect success.

___ 36. I believe our marriage is reasonably happy.

___ 37. My mate has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.

___ 38. If my mate has any faults I am not aware of them.

___ 39. I think I could be much happier if I had married someone else.

___ 40. My mate and I understand each other completely.

___ 41. We are as well-adjusted as any two persons in this world can be.

___ 42. I have some needs that are not being met by my marriage.

___ 43. Every new thing I have learned about my mate has pleased me.

___ 44. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my mate.

___ 45. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my mate and I when we are with one another.

___ 46. My marriage could be happier than it is.

___ 47. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my mate and I.

___ 48. I think my marriage is neither more nor less happy than most marriages.

___ 49. My mate completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.

1 = True
2 = False

___ 50. I have never regretted my marriage, not even for a moment.

___ 51. If every person in the world of the opposite sex had been available I could not have made a better choice.

___ 52. My marriage is a happy one.

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR WIVES

Dear Participant:

As part of my work on my doctorate at the University of North Texas, I am conducting research into marital relationships. I would greatly appreciate your help by completing the attached questionnaires. It is my hope that with your help, we will learn more about marital relationships and how they develop.

At the outset, let me make it clear that even though I am a Captain in the Air Force and assigned to the Sheppard AFB Regional Hospital, this study is not an Air Force project, nor is it in any way connected with the U.S. Government. It is simply a private study. Your participation is ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY. The answers you give on these questionnaires will be CONFIDENTIAL. As part of the University's research requirements, I will ask you to complete an informed consent form requiring that you sign your name. This gives me your permission to use your responses for my study. However, these forms will be kept SEPARATELY from your questionnaires in a private location (and your name is not requested on the questionnaires). This means there will be no way to identify your questionnaires. You may withdraw from the study at any time if you so choose.

It is possible that you will find some of the following questions difficult because I will be asking you what your spouse might say about some issues. Please do your best by trying to "put yourself in your spouse's shoes" when answering these questions. For these and all other questions it is important that you answer <u>every</u> question so that the statistics can be accurate. I also ask that you answer as honestly as possible.

In order to ensure accuracy, you may find it necessary to discuss the first questionnaire (the demographic data sheet) with your spouse. However, because I am interested in each spouse's <u>individual</u> beliefs, DO NOT discuss the remaining questionnaires with your spouse until <u>after</u> they have been completed and returned to me.

This questionnaire should take about 50 minutes of your time. Please try to complete it in one sitting.

Thank You!
Diane Cone, Captain, USAF

Demographic Data

Directions: On the line to the left of each statement, place the number that corresponds to the answer that best describes you. In cases where no choices are given, please write in the most appropriate response. Please read the entire question to make sure which response applies to you. Each question has an answer. Do not skip any. (Note: If this is not your first marriage, please discontinue this questionnaire.)

___ 1. Sex
   1. Male
   2. Female

___ 2. Age

___ 3. Race
   1. Caucasian
   2. Black
   3. Hispanic
   4. Asian
   5. Other (please specify) _____

___ 4. Formal Education
   1. Less than high school
   2. High school/GED
   3. Some college or tech school
   4. Associate's degree
   5. Bachelor's degree
   6. Master's degree
   7. Doctorate or more

___ 5. Religious Affiliation
   1. Jewish
   2. Catholic
   3. Protestant (if so, which?)
   4. Other Christian (please specify) _____
   5. Atheist or Agnostic
   6. Other (plese specify)

___ 6. How important are your religious beliefs to your life?
   1. Very important
   2. Important
   3. Minimally important
   4. Unimportant

___ 7. How regularly do you attend religious services?
   1. once or more per week
   2. 2-3 times per month
   3. once per month
   4. once every 2-3 months
   5. less than once every 3 months
   6. never

___ 8. How many years have you been married? (roung down to the nearest year, even if it is almost your anniversary)

___ 9. How many children do you and your spouse have, total?

___ 10. How many children are currently living in your home? (e.g., this would not include children away at college living in another dwelling)

___ 11. What is the age of your youngest child still living in the home? (round down, even if the child is almost in the next category, such as 5 years 8 months of age)
1. N/A all the children are out of the home
2. N/A we have no children
3. less than 2 years old
4. 2-5 years old
5. 6-12 years old
6. 13-19 years old
7. 20-25 years old
8. 26 yrs. or over

___ 12. Counting what you and your spouse get from all sources, what was your total income last year?
1. Under $10,000
2. $10,000-$14,999
3. $15,000-$19,999
4. $20,000-$24,999
5. $25,000-$29,999
6. $30,000-$34,999
7. $35,000-$39,999
8, $40,000-$44,999
9. $45,000-$49,999
10. $50,000-$74,999
11. $75,000-$100,000
12. Over $100,000

___ 13. Please answer the following 3 questions about the woman you mostly consider to be your mother. Is she. . .
1. your biological mother
2. your stepmother
3. other (please specify)_____

___ 14. Is she. . .
1. living 2. deceased

___ 15. If she is deceased how old were you at her death? (round down)
1. N/A she is not deceased
2. less than 2 years old
3. 2-5 years old
4. 6-12 years old
5. 13-19 years old
6. 20-25 years old
7. 26 years or over

___ 16. Please answer the following questions about the man you mostly consider to be your father. Is he . . .
1. living 2. deceased

___ 17. If he is deceased how old were you at his death? (round down)
1. N/A he is not deceased
2. less than 2 years old
3. 2-5 years old
4. 6-12 years old
5. 13-19 years old
6. 20-25 years old
7. 26 years or over

For questions 18 and 19, if either (or both) parent is deceased, indicate their marital status (with each other) at the time of death.

___ 18. Are your biological parents . . .
1. currently married
2. divorced
3. separated
4. never married

___ 19. Are the two people you mostly consider to be your parents . . .
1. currently married
2. divorced
3. separated
4. never married

___ 20. Are the two people mentioned in question #18 the same as your biological parents?
1. yes 2. no

___ 21. If your biological parents are divorced, how old were you when they divorced? (round down)
1. N/A my biological parents are not divorced
2. less than 2 years
3. 2-5 years
4. 6-12 years
5. 13-19 years
6. 20-25 years
7. 26 years or over

___ 22. If the two people you mostly consider to be your parents are not your biological parents, and if they are divorced, how old were you when they divorced? (round down)
1. N/A the two people I mostly consider to be my parents are: my biological parents and/or they are not divorced
2. less than 2 years
3. 2-5 years
4. 6-12 years
5. 13-19 years
6. 20-25 years
7. 26 years or over

___ 23. What is your current military status?
1. Active duty Air Force
2. Dependent spouse of active duty Air Force
3. Retire Air Force (20 years or more)
4. Dependent spouse of a retired Air Force

___ 24. What is your spouse's current military status?
1. Active duty Air Force
2. Dependent spouse of active duty Air Force
3. Retire Air Force (20 years or more)
4. Dependent spouse of a retired Air Force

___ 25. Are you and your spouse both currently active duty and/or retired Air Force?
1. yes 2. no

___ 26. What is your current or retired Air Force rank? (Note: If you are a dependent spouse, please indicate answer #20)

1. E-1	5. E-5	9. E-9	13. O-4	17. O-8
2. E-2	6. E-6	10. O-1	14. O-5	18. O-9
3. E-3	7. E-7	11. O-2	15. O-6	19. O-10
4. E-4	8. E-8	12. O-3	16. O-7	20. N/A I am a dependent spouse

_ _ _ _ _ 27. _____ What is your current/retired AFSC? (Please designate the 5-digit code and write out the title. If your AFSC has/had only 4 digits, place a "0" in the first blank, followed by the 4-digit code, e.g., 0 9 I 8 1. If you are a dependent spouse, fill all 5 blanks with "0", e.g., 0 0 0 0 0.)

___ 28. How many years have you spent in <u>active</u> <u>duty</u> military service? You may count previous duty in another service. (If you are a dependent spouse, how many years have you been married to your spouse while he/she was on active duty?) Round up or down to the nearest year.

AT (H)

Instructions for Part I of this questionnaire (questions 29-60): For each question, place the number in the blank to the left which best indicates your response in view of your marital relationship. Use the following answer guide.

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 29. I spend money wisely

___ 30. My spouse spends money wisely

___ 31. We are financially stable

___ 32. Household tasks should be shared by both spouses

___ 33. In our relationship, the wife should do more household tasks than the husband

___ 34. My spouse and I share the same religious beliefs

___ 35. Affection is displayed in our relationship

___ 36. I am comfortable with expressing affection

___ 37. My spouse is comfortable with expressing affection

___ 38. I am satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 39. My spouse is satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 40. My spouse and I make plans for the future together

___ 41. I respect my spouse's viewpoints

___ 42. My spouse respects my viewpoints

___ 43. I am open with my spouse

___ 44. My spouse is open with me

___ 45. I am satisfied with the degree to which I am involved in decision-making

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 46. My spouse is satisfied with the degree to which he is involved in decision-making

___ 47. I am aware of the types of gifts my spouse likes

___ 48. My spouse is aware of the types of gifts I like

___ 49. I am generally cooperative with my spouse

___ 50. My spouse is generally cooperative with me

___ 51. I share my work (career) and/or academic experiences with my spouse

___ 52. My spouse shares his work (career) and/or academic experiences with me

___ 53. I am interested in my spouse's job and/or academic studies.

___ 54. My spouse is interested in my job and/or academic studies

___ 55. My spouse and I like to spend our spare time engaging in the same things

___ 56. My spouse and I agree as to how children should be disciplined

___ 57. My spouse and I agree as to when children should be disciplined

Note: Use the following guide to answer the next three questions.

1 = Very Dissatisfying
2 = Dissatisfying
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfying
4 = Neither Satisfying nor Dissatisfying
5 = Somewhat Satisfying
6 = Satisfying
7 = Very Satisfying

___ 58. I view the amount of trustworthiness between my spouse and me as...

___ 59. I perceive the social life we share as...

___ 60. I perceive the degree of openness between my spouse and me as...

Instructions for Part 2 of this questionnaire (questions 1-32): For each question, place the number in the blank to the left which best indicates the response that you think "your spouse" would give. In other words, how would YOUR SPOUSE answer the following? Use the following answer guide.

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

How would YOUR SPOUSE answer the following?

___ 1. My spouse spends money wisely

___ 2. I spend money wisely

___ 3. We are financially stable

___ 4. Household tasks should be shared by both spouses

___ 5. In our relationship, the wife should do more household tasks than the husband

___ 6. My spouse and I share the same religious beliefs

___ 7. Affection is displayed in our relationship

___ 8. My spouse is comfortable with expressing affection

___ 9. I am comfortable with expressing affection

___ 10. My spouse is satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 11. I am satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 12. My spouse and I make plans for the future together

___ 13. My spouse respects my viewpoints

___ 14. I respect my spouse's viewpoints

___ 15. My spouse is open with me

___ 16. I am open with my spouse

___ 17. My spouse is satisfied with the degree to which she is involved in decision-making

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 18. I am satisfied with the degree to which I am involved in decision-making

___ 19. My spouse is aware of the types of gifts I like

___ 20. I am aware of the types of gifts my spouse likes

___ 21. My spouse is generally cooperative with me

___ 22. I am generally cooperative with my spouse

___ 23. My spouse shares her work (career) and/or academic experiences with me

___ 24. I share my work (career) and/or academic experiences with my spouse

___ 25. My spouse is interested in my job and/or academic studies

___ 26. I am interested in my spouse's job and/or academic studies

___ 27. My spouse and I like to spend our spare time engaging in the same things

___ 28. My spouse and I agree as to how children should be disciplined

___ 29. My spouse and I agree as to when children should be disciplined

Note: Use the following guide to answer the next three questions.

1 = Very Dissatisfying
2 = Dissatisfying
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfying
4 = Neither Satisfying nor Dissatisfying
5 = Somewhat Satisfying
6 = Satisfying
7 = Very Satisfying

___ 30. I view the amount of trustworthiness between my spouse and me as...

___ 31. I perceive the social life we share as...

___ 32. I perceive the degree of openness between my spouse and me as...

Instructions for Part 3 of this questionnaire (questions 33-64): For each question, place the number in the blank to the left which best indicates the response that "your spouse" would think you would give to each question. In other words, how would YOUR SPOUSE think YOU would have answered the following? Use the following guide.

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

How would YOUR SPOUSE think YOU would have answered the following?

___ 33. I spend money wisely

___ 34. My spouse spends money wisely

___ 35. We are financially stable

___ 36. Household tasks should be shared by both spouses

___ 37. In our relationship, the wife should do more household tasks than the husband

___ 38. My spouse and I share the same religious beliefs

___ 39. Affection is displayed in our relationship

___ 40. I am comfortable with expressing affection

___ 41. My spouse is comfortable with expressing affection

___ 42. I am satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 43. My spouse is satisfied with the amount and types of affection displayed within our relationship

___ 44. My spouse and I make plans for the future together

___ 45. I respect my spouse's viewpoints

___ 46. My spouse respects my viewpoints

___ 47. I am open with my spouse

___ 48. My spouse is open with me

___ 49. I am satisfied with the degree to which I am involved in decision-making

1 = To a Very Little Extent or No Extent
2 = To a Little Extent
3 = To Some Extent
4 = To a Great Extent
5 = To a Very Great Extent

___ 50. My spouse is satisfied with the degree to which she is involved in decision-making

___ 51. I am aware of the types of gifts my spouse likes

___ 52. My spouse is aware of the types of gifts I like

___ 53. I am generally cooperative with my spouse

___ 54. My spouse is generally cooperative with me

___ 55. I share my work (career) and/or academic experiences with my spouse

___ 56. My spouse shares his work (career) and/or academic experiences with me

___ 57. I am interested in my spouse's job and/or academic studies

___ 58. My spouse is interested in my job and/or academic studies

___ 59. My spouse and I like to spend our spare time engaging in the same things

___ 60. My spouse and I agree as to how children should be disciplined

___ 61. My spouse and I agree as to when children should be disciplined

Note: Use the following guide to answer the next three questions.

1 = Very Dissatisfying
2 = Dissatisfying
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfying
4 = Neither Satisfying nor Dissatisfying
5 = Somewhat Satisfying
6 = Satisfying
7 = Very Satisfying

___ 62. I view the amount of trustworthiness between my spouse and me as...

___ 63. I perceive the social life we share as...

___ 64. I perceive the degree of openness between my spouse and me as...

DAS

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list. Place the number in the blank at the left that best represents your answer. Use the answer key given.

5 = Always Agree
4 = Almost Always Agree
3 = Occasionally Disagree
2 = Frequently Disagree
1 = Almost Always Disagree
0 = Always Disagree

___ 1. Handling family finances

___ 2. Matters of recreation

___ 3. Religious matters

___ 4. Demonstrations of Affection

___ 5. Friends

___ 6. Sex relations

___ 7. Conventionality (correct and proper behavior)

___ 8. Philosophy of life

___ 9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws

___ 10. Aims, goals, and things believed important

___ 11. Amount of time spent together

___ 12. Making major decisions

___ 13. Household tasks

___ 14. Leisure time, interests, and activities

___ 15. Career decisions

For the next 7 questions, use the following key:

0 = All of the time
1 = Most of the time
2 = More often than not
3 = Occasionally
4 = Rarely
5 = Never

___ 16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation or terminating your relationship?

___ 17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?

___ 18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

___ 19. Do you confide in your mate?

___ 20. Do you ever regret that you married?

___ 21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?

___ 22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"

Use the following key for the next question.

Every day	Almost every day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
4	3	2	1	0

___ 23. Do you kis your mate?

Use the following key for the next question.

All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
4	3	2	1	0

___ 24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

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

0 = Never
1 = Less than once a month
2 = Once or twice a month
3 = Once or twice a week
4 = Once a day
5 = More often

___ 25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

___ 26. Laugh together

___ 27. Calmly discuss something

___ 28. Work together on a project

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinion or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks (Place a "0" in the blank for "Yes"; Place a "1" in the blank for "No").

___ 29. Being too tired for sex

___ 30. Not showing love

The following answer key represents different degrees of happiness in your relationship. Please indicate in the blank below the key the number which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship. The point "happy" represents the degree of happiness of most relationships.

0 = Extremely unhappy
1 = Fairly unhappy
2 = A little unhappy
3 = Happy
4 = Very happy
5 = Extremely happy
6 = Perfect

___ 31.

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

5 = I want desparately for my relationship to succeed and would go to almost any length to see that it does.

4 = I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do all I can to see that it does.

3 = I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do my fair share to see that it does.

2 = It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.

1 = It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.

0 = My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more than I can do to keep the relationship going.

___ 32.

MC

Directions: Read each statement and decide whether it is true as applied to you, your mate, or your marriage. If it is true as applied to you, your mate, or your marriage place the number "1" in the blank to the left of the statement. If it is false as it applies to you, your mate, or your marriage place the number "2" in the blank to the left of the statement.

Remember, 1 = True
2 = False

___ 33. I'm quite happily married.

___ 34. There are times when my mate does things that make me unhappy.

___ 35. My marriage is not a perfect success.

___ 36. I believe our marriage is reasonably happy.

___ 37. My mate has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.

___ 38. If my mate has any faults I am not aware of them.

___ 39. I think I could be much happier if I had married someone else.

___ 40. My mate and I understand each other completely.

___ 41. We are as well-adjusted as any two persons in this world can be.

___ 42. I have some needs that are not being met by my marriage.

___ 43. Every new thing I have learned about my mate has pleased me.

___ 44. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my mate.

___ 45. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my mate and I when we are with one another.

___ 46. My marriage could be happier than it is.

___ 47. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my mate and I.

___ 48. I think my marriage is neither more nor less happy than most marriages.

___ 49. My mate completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.

1 = True
2 = False

___ 50. I have never regretted my marriage, not even for a moment.

___ 51. If every person in the world of the opposite sex had been available I could not have made a better choice.

___ 52. My marriage is a happy one.

APPENDIX E

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FROM DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Table B-1

DAS Means and Standard Deviations of the Current Sample and the Original Normative Sample

	Current Sample		Spanier's (1976)	
	Adjusted (N = 164)	Nonadjusted	Married (N = 218)	Divorced (N = 94)
		Couples		
M	126.51	96.72	114.8	70.7
SD	6.23	9.69	17.8	23.8
		Husbands		
M	125.22	97.07		
SD	8.49	10.76		
		Wives		
M	127.80	96.37		
SD	7.85	14.64		

Note. DAS = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976).

APPENDIX F

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

Table F-1

Correlation Coefficients Between MC Scores, Number of Children, Agreement, Understanding, and Realization

	MC	Age	No. Child	Agree	Unders	Realiz
MC	--	-.04	-.17*	-.08	-.17*	-.14
Age	--	--	.52**	.15	.15	.17*
No. Child	--	--	--	.05	.07	.06
Agree	--	--	--	--	.86**	.66**
Unders	--	--	--	--	--	.84**
Realiz	--	--	--	--	--	--

Note. MC = Marital Conventionalization Scale, Short Form (Edmonds, 1967).

*$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF FIGURES

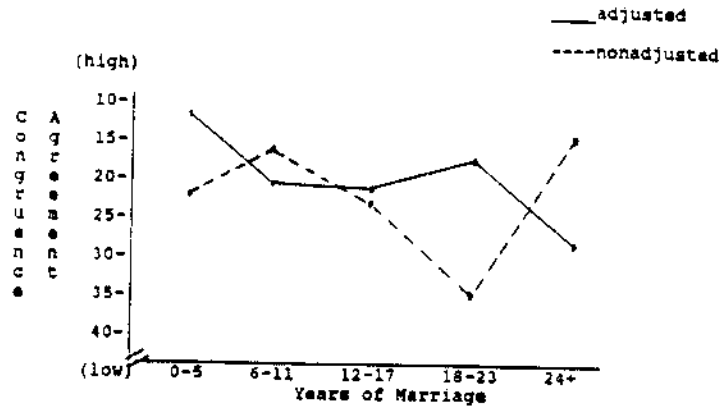

Figure 1. Congruence Scores for Couples' Agreement (Level I)

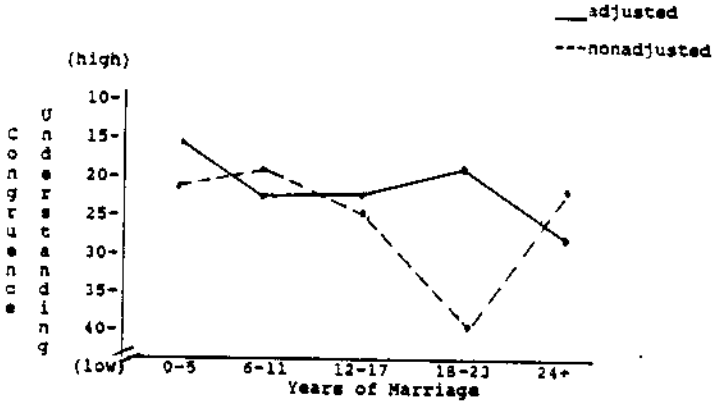

Figure 2. Congruence Scores for Couples' Understanding (Level II)

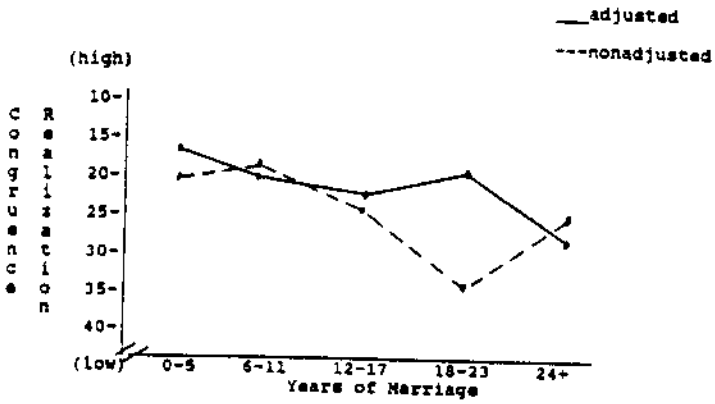

Figure 3. Congruence Scores for Couples' Realization (Level III)

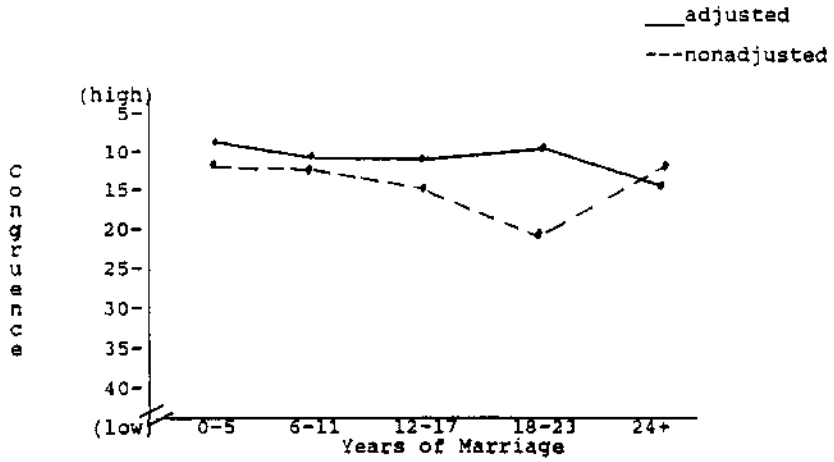

Figure 4. Congruence Scores for Husbands' Understanding (Level II)

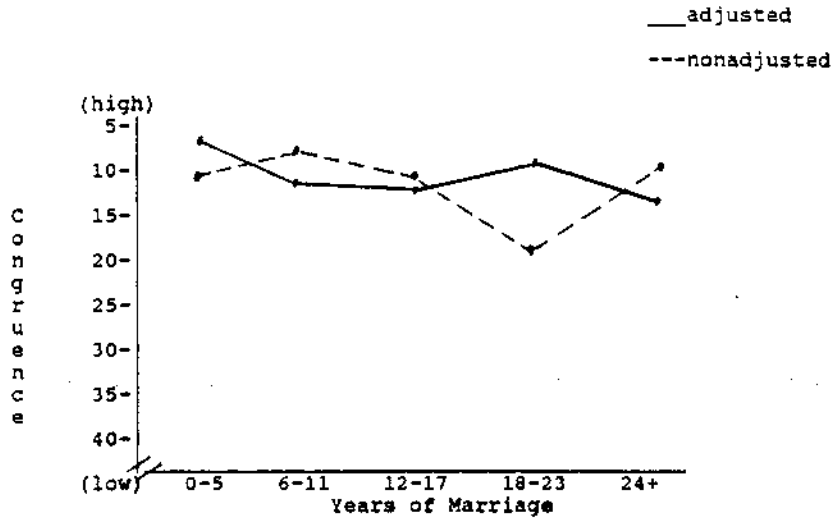

Figure 5. Congruence Scores for Wives' Understanding (Level II)

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