

SELF-ESTEEM, DIVERSITY OF BACKGROUNDS,  
AND CLARITY OF COMMUNICATION IN  
ENGAGED COUPLES

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HARVEY OAKLANDER

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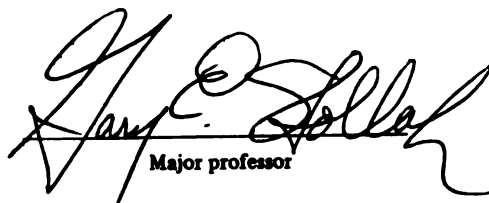
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HARVEY OAKLANDER

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## ABSTRACT

### SELF-ESTEEM, DIVERSITY OF BACKGROUNDS, AND CLARITY OF COMMUNICATION IN ENGAGED COUPLES

By

Harvey Oaklander

This study (1) examined whether meaningful differences between engaged couples in their communicative behavior could be found, (2) attempted to ascertain the interactive influence of a couple's degree of self-esteem and disparity of backgrounds on their communication, and (3) evaluated the usefulness of a dysfunctional communication coding system.

The Ss were 29 engaged couples who are or were attending college. They were solicited through an advertisement in the school newspaper and were paid \$10 for their participation.

In order to obtain samples of behavior, members of each couple individually completed ten revealed differences tasks (RDT's). Ss attempts to resolve differences and reach agreement on three of the ten tasks which revealed the greatest differences were tape recorded and coded according to a dysfunctional communication coding system.



This procedure yielded two different measures of a couple's communicative behavior. One type, the interaction measures, consisted of such scores as spontaneous agreement and choice fulfillment regarding their scores on the RDT's. The second type consisted of the clarity of the communication process between the couples and was derived from the taped discussions.

In addition all Ss also filled out two other inventories, the Interpersonal Comparison Test (a measure of diversity of background) and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (for self-esteem).

The design consisted of three independent variables, a couple's level of self-esteem (high or low), a couple's degree of diversity of background (high or low) and homogeneity (both high or both low) or heterogeneity (one high, one low) of level of self-esteem.

A major finding was that couples with similar levels of self-esteem communicated significantly more dysfunctionally, used more kinds of dysfunctional communication, and produced more dysfunctional-dysfunctional exchanges than couples with different levels of self-esteem. It was suggested that couples with similar levels of self-esteem had symmetrical (conflictual) relationships while "heterogeneous" couples had complementary (non-conflictual) relationships.

Also of interest was the finding that the higher a couple's diversity of background, the lower was their mutual choice fulfillment. Other results indicated that the more similar a couple's demographic background, the greater the degree of dysfunctional communication and the greater a male's choice fulfillment. Relating this to sex comparison results, which showed that males made significantly more incomplete messages and more covert requests than females and females more collusion and more requests for clarification and qualification, a somewhat stereotyped sex role pattern seemed to emerge for similar demographic background couples.

The need for longitudinal research with a wider sampling of engaged couples, taking into consideration their similarity of self-esteem as well as the relationship of such homogeneity to symmetry or complementarity of a relationship, was discussed. The possibility of using the tasks and procedures of this study for pre-marital screening and counseling was also discussed.

SELF-ESTEEM, DIVERSITY OF BACKGROUNDS,  
AND CLARITY OF COMMUNICATION IN  
ENGAGED COUPLES

By

Harvey Oaklander

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## DEDICATION

To the letter L, which has been Lucky for me  
as it has brought me my three Loves; Leo, Lillian, and  
especially Leah.

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## INTRODUCTION

Hora: To understand himself man needs to be understood by another. To be understood by another he needs to understand the other (in Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967, p. 36).

### Overview

The main purpose of this study is to examine whether meaningful differences between engaged couples, in the kinds of communications they exchange, can be found. It is hoped that by discovering meaningful differences in the quantity and quality of functional or dysfunctional communicative exchanges between engaged couples that a procedure can be developed that will be able to predict, with a high degree of probability, what sort of marital relationship the couple will have and what sort of difficulties they will be likely to experience.

Another purpose of the present study is to ascertain the interactive influence of degree of self-esteem and disparity of backgrounds or values on the communication process between the couples.

This study hopes to overcome some of the limitations of the methodologies of past research by using a

subject population whose behavior can be measured right at the inception of their marital relationship. This avoids the confounding effect of studying the interactive behavior of newlyweds whose married experiences together may have significantly altered their interactive behavior.

The coding system developed to study the communicative behavior of the couples is a direct application of the theoretical conceptions of Pemberton (1959) and Satir (1964). By putting these theoretical postulates into a form that can be empirically tested, the author of this study hoped to discover whether these communication theories have any validity.

The present study also combines two variables often studied in marital relationships independently, diversity of background and self-esteem, to see what their interactive influence is on a couple's interactions. Combining these two variables also is derived from Satir's (1964) theoretical notion of the interactive effect of "differentness" and self-esteem on a couple's communications.

Like many other studies, the present one focuses on the style or structure of communication between couples rather than the content of their communication. Unlike other studies, the present study concerns itself with the important communication theory concept of feedback. Rather than being interested in just one person's

communication, the unit of measurement that is most important in this study is the exchange of communications between couples.

It is also hoped that this study improves on other research designs in the study of marriage by having implications for a preventative approach. In past research, couples have been studied after they have already been married some time. This methodology appears to have certain pitfalls as viewed by the present author. For one thing, couples may have already experienced a great deal of disillusionment and unhappiness in their marriage and in addition may have had children who have suffered the consequences of such an unhappy marriage. The present author believes if procedures like the ones used in the present study have utility in predicting dissatisfactory relationships, corrective measures could be taken and therefore the couple and their offspring could avoid much unhappiness. In addition such an early "diagnosis" of a relationship could help the couple overcome maladaptive modes of interaction.

Finally, it is believed that such a longitudinal procedure conducted by a follow-up to the present study in five years is essential to the study of the etiology of an "unsatisfactory" marital relationship.

### Background

Today, more than ever, the traditional roles in a marital relationship are in a state of flux. Raush, Goodrich, and Campbell (1965) have talked of a shift in marriage from a closed system, in which the members of the marital relationship have to learn to adapt to the traditional roles set up for them or to adapt to what is, to an open system, in which the members of the marital relationship do not have prescribed answers to problems but rather have to work out what is to be.

The shift away from a closed system in marriage to an open one presumably requires much more effort on a couple's part to maintain marital harmony. An increase in marital disharmony and disruption which could be a factor in our increased divorce rate, has probably stimulated the changes in the kinds of investigations of marital relations. Among early investigators were Terman (1938), Burgess and Cottrell (1939), Burgess and Wallin (1953), and Locke (1951). These early investigators concentrated mainly on the question of mate selection for marriage, who selected whom and what kinds of characteristics of the mates were related to "marital adjustment," "marital success," or "marital happiness." The main method of investigation of these broad studies was the collection of data through self-report on questionnaires.

For example Burgess and Wallin (1953) first gathered background information of 1000 engaged couples and then administered a marital success schedule to 660 of these couples after they had been married at least three years. The schedule was developed to examine how satisfactory the couples considered their marriages to be.

A more recent approach is the study of interactions. The interaction approach emphasizes the desirability of observing actual behavior between spouses for the evaluation of a marriage. This approach is consistent with other attempts in the social sciences to conceptualize interpersonal and much of group behavior as a homeostatic system. The realization of the limitation of the intrapsychic viewpoint grew out of clinical observations showing how family members respond to the individual treatment of a family member. Summarizing such observations, Satir (1964) pointed out that:

- a) other family members interfered with, tried to become part of, or sabotaged the individual treatment of the "sick" member, as though the family had a stake in his sickness.
- b) the hospitalized or incarcerated patient often got worse or regressed after a visit from family members, as though family interaction had a direct bearing on his symptoms.
- c) other family members got worse as the patient got better, as though sickness in one of the family members were essential to the family's way of operating (p. 2).

Thus, the family can be seen as a homeostatic system, with a change in one member changing the balance of the system

and therefore influencing all the other members of the system. In order really to understand a family, one must observe how they interacted with one another and what effects these interactions had upon each other. At any one point in time when one member tried to change, there would be a pull by the rest of the family to restore the typical patterns of interaction and thus restore the balance of the system. Such a system analysis of a family is called "family homeostasis" (Satir, 1964).

Haley (1962a) also expressed the disenchantment with the intrapsychic point of view and the importance of the interactional approach. According to Haley, "when- ever the individual therapist would announce that a patient has changed, it is when the patient manifests a different type of interaction with his intimates" (p. 85).

### Synopsis of Communication Theory

#### Areas of Communication

The study of human communication can be divided into three areas: syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics (Watzlewick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967). Syntactics is concerned with the problem of transmitting the information, or the relationship of symbols to other symbols. Semantics involves the meaning component, or the relationship of symbols to the things they are supposed to represent. Pragmatics focuses on the relationship of symbols to the

people who interpret them, or how communication affects behavior. The pragmatics of human communication is the focus of this paper as it emphasizes the interactional aspect of communication. According to Watzlawick et al. (1967) by studying patterns of communication one can discover redundancies which actually carry information and thereby discover the rules of communication and predict behavior derived from these rules.

Communication in the pragmatic (behavioral) setting of this paper may be defined as the means by which interrelatedness and exchange takes place. Communication links person to person and is the mechanism by which one mind affects another. Communication takes place as soon as person A perceives that B has perceived his behavior. Thus, according to Haley (1963), Watzlawick et al. (1967), Ruesch and Bateson (1951) and Jackson and Lederer (1968), communication is interaction. A main postulate of communication theory is that all behavior in a social situation is communication and that one cannot not communicate in the presence of another person. All behavior in an interactional setting has message value. An interaction is defined as an exchange of messages. A message being a single communication unit.

### The Three Parts of Every Communication

According to Watzlawick et al. (1967) and Jackson and Lederer (1968) every communication or message has three parts: (1) the denotative or report aspect, (2) the connotative or command aspect, and (3) the contextual aspect or the cultural and situational influences. The report aspect of a message conveys information, and is, therefore, synonymous in human communication with the content of the message. The command aspect, on the other hand, refers to what sort of message it is to be taken as, and therefore ultimately to the relationship between the communications. The context aspect carries the cultural implications of the situation and therefore also influences how the message is to be taken. Thus, every communication not only conveys information, but at the same time it imposes behavior.

### Defining a Relationship

According to Watzlawick et al. (1967) people are always trying to define their relationships and thus establish the rules of communication appropriate to a certain relationship. This is considered quite normal in the establishment of a new relationship. Once the rules have been worked out, things may proceed quite smoothly. Relationships are only rarely defined deliberately or with full awareness. Watzlawick et al. state:



In fact, it seems that the more spontaneous and "healthy" a relationship, the more the relationship aspect of communication recedes into background. Conversely, "sick" relationships are characterized by a constant struggle about the nature of the relationship, with the content aspect of communication becoming less and less important (p. 52).

They also state that every communication has a content and a relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former and is therefore a metacommunication; a message about a message. According to Haley (1963):

When one person communicates a message to the other, he is by that act making a maneuver to define the relationship. By what he says and the way he says it, he is indicating, "This is the sort of relationship we have with each other" (pp. 8-9).

A basic rule of communication theory is that one cannot fail to indicate what behavior is to take place in a relationship; one cannot fail to define a relationship.

#### Working Out the Definition of a Relationship

According to Haley (1963) in those relationships that eventually stabilize, the two people have worked out a mutual agreement about what type of behavior is to take place between them. In unstabilized relationships, the couple has not agreed upon a mutual definition or rule in the relationship and thus the kind of messages sent that are likely to occur are those that place a

relationship in question. These kind of messages that place the nature of the relationship in question are called "maneuvers."

Watzlawick et al. mention that a person can respond to a message sent by another in any of three ways; agreeing with the definition of the relationship of the sender, rejecting the original sender's definition of the relationship, or disconfirming or disqualifying the original sender's definition of the relationship. Both affirmation and rejection of the original sender's statement implies some commitment by the receiver. A disqualification on the other hand occurs when a person feels he does not want to accept the commitment inherent in all communication but cannot get out of not communicating (feels obliged). A disqualification occurs when a person communicates in such a way that invalidates one's own communications or those of the other. A disqualification carries the relationship message in effect, "You do not exist." A disqualification actually acts as to deny or leave out any or all of the four parts of every message. These four parts are according to Bateson (1951):

I (the sender  
am saying something (the message)  
to you (the receiver)  
in this situation (the context).

Disqualifications usually lead to great difficulty in a relationship. For one thing without the proper feedback as to how the receiver takes the sender's message, the sender cannot adapt his behavior properly so to be in tune with the receiver. He does not gain any information about the possible errors he may be making in the relationship and even further, he may assume that the receiver has understood and accepted his message and thus the sender may continue to define the relationship in an erroneous way and build up expectations of the relationship that are false. The original sender may also experience self-doubt as to what he really meant to say and experience frustration at not being able to communicate effectively and thus not gaining information.

#### Summary of Communication Theory

There are three main areas of study in communication: syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics. The present study concerns itself with the pragmatic or behavioral aspect of communication.

Modern day communication theorists state that there are three parts to every message: the report or denotative aspect, the command or connotative aspect, and the context or cultural aspect. When a person communicates with another and he cannot not communicate with another person, he automatically is attempting to define

their relationship. Working out the definition of a relationship is an universal life problem as each member of a marital relation attempts to adjust to each other. In some cases where most of the messages are "maneuvers" though, defining a relationship can become pathological.

There are three ways of responding to a message: affirming, rejecting, or disqualifying it. The latter is most harmful as it does not allow for the proper feedback. According to communication theory, communication is made circular due to feedback and thus is self-corrective. If the proper feedback is lacking, as in disqualification, no information is exchanged and therefore no corrections of deviant behaviors are made.

### Theoretical Justification of the Study of Communication

#### Need for Exchange of Information

Ruesch (1958) states:

The human activity of communication links person to person, individual to group, and smaller social organization to larger structures. Human behavior is obviously influenced by what people think and feel, and it is evident that their transactions are guided by information acquired in the course of social contact. The scientific model of communication is especially applicable to the study of human relations. Data pertaining to the ways and means by which people exchange messages, to the correction of information through social contact, and to action undertaken as an outgrowth of communication are handled successfully within the scientific model of communication (p. 215).

Ruesch (1958) goes on to talk about the necessity of communication for man's survival:

It is well to remember that all information a person possesses about himself is derived from others. His impression of the impact he has upon others is what makes up the picture of himself; unless a person is in constant communicative exchange with others, his information becomes antiquated, and his chance of survival is lessened (p. 237).

Ruesch and Bateson (1951) support the contention of the need for communicating as a means of getting information. They state:

The human being's need for social action is the moving force which compels him to master the tools of communication. Without these, his ability to gather information is imperiled and gratification of needs is threatened (p. 38).

#### Need for Self-confirmation

According to Watzlawick et al. (1967) communication apparently serves a necessary function besides the exchange of information. It is used by man to confirm himself. They state:

It seems that quite apart from the mere exchange of information man has to communicate with others for the sake of his own awareness of self, and experimental verification of this intuitive assumption is increasingly being supplied by research on sensory deprivation, showing that man is unable to maintain his emotional stability for prolonged periods in communication with himself only (pp. 84-85).

Summary of Primary  
Functions of  
Communication

Ruesch (1958) sums up the primary functions that communication serves:

- (1) to maintain contact with other biological beings to avoid isolation--a tendency which is basic and inborn
- (2) to receive and transmit messages and to retain information
- (3) to reconstruct the past and to anticipate future events
- (4) to perform operations with the existing information for the purpose of deriving new aspects which were not directly perceived
- (5) to initiate and modify physiological processes within the body
- (6) to influence and direct other people and external events.

Relation of Poor Communication  
to Psychopathology

Ruesch, Block, and Bennet (1953) point out the relationship between psychopathology and poor communication and the utility of studying communication rather than intrapsychic processes:

In the narrower sphere of psychology and psychiatry, communication theory has enabled the clinician to reformulate questions probing into behavior. Ruesch (1952) for example, has called attention to the fact that the vast majority of terms used in psychiatry refer to the communicative behavior of patients, and that, in fact, all psychopathology can be viewed as a disturbance of communication. If this assumption should prove to be productive, then a first step has been taken to observe directly in clinical practice, those processes

which have both disruptive and therapeutic effects. By focusing upon communication, we describe observable ongoing events rather than end products or end stages of processes. We come closer to the relevant data and we free clinical concepts and terminology from some of the mentalistic encumbrances and reifications of the past (pp. 59-60).

Wynne (1965) mentioned the importance of considering intrafamilial interaction in the study of family pathology,

. . . most intrafamilial psychiatric crises appear to be a recurrent or continuing pattern, a patterning which may usefully be explored in conjoint family therapy (p. 294).

#### Theoretical Justification of Studying a Circular Model of Communication

An important part of communication theory is its reliance on a circular model of communication. To get the full picture of communication, messages cannot be viewed separately from the interaction. Watzlawick et al. state:

It is not in the nature of any of the statements as individual entities, but in the relation between two or more responses that the functions of communication are defined (p. 117).

A linear model of communication thus seems neither useful nor appropriate. According to Watzlawick et al. (1967) communication has the characteristic of being circular and having self corrective devices. They see it as meaningless to talk about a linear model of communication with a beginning and end. This is like human interaction where both person A and person B claim only to be reacting

to the other's behavior without realizing that they in turn influence the partner by their reactions.

According to Ruesch (1958) the study of communication is based upon acceptance of two theoretical notions:

First, that behavior is controlled by what is conveniently referred to as information and second, that information about the physical and social effects of action is fed back to the organism or to the group and that this relay of effects steers subsequent behavior (p. 37).

Ruesch goes on to say:

From the evidence we have today we must assume that successful participation in networks of communication which involve human beings is necessary if the individual is to survive. Subjectively, the individual experiences failure in communication as frustrating. If the frustration is very intense, of long duration, or repeated, the individual's thinking, feeling, and reacting become progressively more disorganized and inappropriate. In turn, such behavior is regarded by others as abnormal (p. 39).

Ruesch concludes that the basic hypothesis--that information and feedback direct human behavior--should be amplified to state that defective feedback involving interorganismic, interpersonal and group network is responsible for abnormal behavior. Disqualification is an example of defective feedback and leads to a "runaway" (Jackson and Lederer, 1968) as the self-corrective governing process of the system is deactivated. It is this governing process as stated by Haley's (1962b) first "law of relationships" (see below in section Haley's Studies) that prevents a runaway and eventual dissolution



of the relationship. Thus negative feedback is essential to the maintenance of a relationship. Feedback is therefore an important concept in the circular model of communication theory.

Ruesch (1958) goes on to state that when a receiver's reply to a sender's statement fits the initial statement, then the sender will experience pleasure and feels that he has been understood. If the reply does not fit the initial statement, various degrees of tension are experienced by the sender.

Dysfunctional communication may be conceived of in terms of messages that do not fit statements by others, and it is assumed that a high degree of dysfunctional messages will therefore lead to frustration in a relationship and dissatisfaction between the members of a relationship.

Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967) justify the idea of a circular model of communication when they point out that a series of communications cannot easily be divided into stimuli and responses and reinforcement. Every item can be all three; "B" item of communication is a stimulus for the next item. But it is also a response to the previous item "A"; likewise it is reinforcement for "A." Feedback from each partner makes communication a circular process where the behavior of each other person affects and is affected by the behavior of each other

person. No beginning or end can be discerned by the objective observer although each of the participants has his own "punctuation marks" for the sequence. One cannot merely look at the message as the result of the sender. It is a product of their interaction and past and present relationship. Each person tailors his message to the kind of response he has learned to expect from the other.

Ruesch (1958) describes the role of feedback in correction of information:

In a 2-person system, feedback and correction of information constitute the most important interpersonal experience. When person A emits a message person B usually replies by adding, subtracting, compensating, attenuating, or by reinforcing one part of the message or another. The effect produced on B is thus fed back to the first person, and in a continuous process messages travel forth and back until the intent of the sender and the effect achieved in the receiver have been clarified (pp. 236-237).

#### Summary of Utility of Studying a Feedback System of Communication

A simple cause-effect chain seems inadequate in communication theory as was pointed out by Watzlawick et al. (1967) that every message is a stimulus, a response, and a reinforcement. It is therefore artificial to "punctuate" a chain of statements as one causing the next.

Feedback is theoretically important as it is the process which clarifies the relationship between the intent of the sender of a message and the effect it has

had on the receiver. Without clear feedback the proper exchange of information fails to take place and the members of a relationship misinterpret where they stand with the other member of the relationship and also experience frustration due to inadequately adjusting to their environment and their inability to achieve confirmation.

The design of the present study improves upon previous research in communication by utilizing a feedback model of communication. The most important unit is the exchange, which takes into account how a receiver responds to the message of the original sender. Thus, although one statement may be functional, an exchange as a whole may be coded as dysfunctional.

### Theoretical Justification of the Study of Communication in Marriage

#### Exchanging Information

Riskin (1964) briefly states the assumptions of his work as follows:

We assume that the family is a system and that the behavior of its members is therefore patterned. We assume that these patterns are consistent over time and that a few minutes of a family's overt interaction will contain the family's basic style. We assume further that accurate description and conceptualization of the behavior of the family as a group will yield meaningful information about its members, including valid predictions about their future interpersonal relationships (p. 485).

Bateson (in Ruesch and Bateson, 1951) points out that:

negative entropy, value, and information, are in fact alike insofar as the system to which these notions refer is the man plus environment, and insofar as the man, both in seeking information and in seeking values, is trying to establish an otherwise improbably congruence between ideas and events (p. 179).

Thus it seems reasonable to assume that, when uninformed of each other's likes and dislikes, family members do not have the opportunity to attune their wants and harmonize their views. And the conclusion follows that when deprived of an adequate exchange of information, the members of families are condemned to lack of mutuality, emotional isolation, and estrangement.

The Relationship Between  
Poor Communication in  
Marriage and Psycho-  
pathology

Bardill's (1966) observation on the importance of communication is reflected in his description of problem marriages and families:

. . . communication between marital partners and in families is impoverished both quantitatively and qualitatively. Couples with marital problems tend to communicate progressively less as their conflict deepens. When communication does take place it is often ambiguous and contradictory. Even simple tasks often result in arguments because of the nature of the ambiguous communications and, on other occasions, there are contradictions between the different levels of communication (p. 70).

### Marriage as a System

Marriage may be thought of as a system too, according to Jackson and Lederer (1968). In marriage a couple works out rules to govern their interaction as in the defining of any relationship. Jackson and Lederer feel that the systems concept is of essence in marriage and when one is studying it, he must look at the whole interaction rather than the independent parts of the system. To quote from them: "The totality of marriage is determined by how spouses operate (behave) in relation to each other " (p. 90).

In describing the establishment of a relationship, Jackson and Lederer state that at first any two people entering into a relationship are not likely to have completely defined their relationship so what is likely to be the first action on each person's part in an interaction is an attempt to define the relationship. Again quoting from Jackson and Lederer (1968):

At first the man and woman randomly exchange a wide variety of behavior; eventually, they work out mutually acceptable ways of labeling and of interrelating their behavior, so that each individual feels he is an equal (p. 95).

### Communication Breakdowns in Marriage and Their Results

Good communication seems essential to a functional marriage. Jackson and Lederer (1967) state that ". . . faulty communication is one of the major causes of

breakdown in otherwise workable marriages" (p. 101).

Lederer and Jackson (1968) see two types of communication breakdown. The first is when the message sent is not received in the same context as it was sent. It would be useful here to mention the communication concept of equifinality. Equifinality means that a particular end result may arise from one of several different beginnings.

Jackson and Lederer (1968) mention an example:

. . . if a wife rubs her nose whenever she is getting angry at her husband, he will soon recognize the connection. But suppose she also rubs her nose when it itches? His immediate defensive behavior (when he believes she is angry) may set off in the wife a spark of annoyance that convinces him that indeed she was angry. Old patterns, unlike soldiers, don't die or fade away, they remain, unless clarified by the wisdom and experience of the spouses (pp. 102-103).

Jackson and Lederer go on to say:

This misunderstood nose rubbing illustrates once again the fact that the message sent is not always the message received--the lack of clarity of communication which is one of the major problems in marriage. It is inevitable that spouses will miscommunicate occasionally, perhaps even 20 per cent of the time. But when miscommunication begins to overpower clear communication, the marriage is in trouble, and probably will get worse. Poor communication tends to breed more of the same.

What happens between troubled spouses is that they do not communicate effectively. The spouses do not exchange clear, useful information (p. 103).

That poor communication breeds more of the same makes sense according to the circular model of communication.

Since this model is a feedback system, poor feedback will generate more poor feedback and further misunderstanding.

The second type of breakdown of communication is physical. A person does not listen to the speaker and therefore never gets much of a message at all. This type of breakdown is much easier to remedy, if the non-listener is interested in maintaining the relationship, than the previous communication breakdown. The latter communication breakdown can only be rectified by hard work on the part of both members of a couple to clarify their communication. The present study deals with this most important aspect in intimate relationships, clarity of communication. The present author intends to examine whether engaged couples who are about to enter into marriage, and all its potential trials and tribulations, can be differentiated as to how functionally they communicate with each other and what kinds of communications they exchange.

#### Summary

In an intimate relationship such as marriage, each partner depends on the other to gratify a great deal of his needs. In order to be able to do so, there has to be a relatively clear exchange of information so each spouse can understand what the other wants. Unfortunately, often due to "the romantic myth" and different

communication codes, there is a breakdown in communication in marriage. Either the other spouse is supposed to know what "he" the first spouse wants if she truly loves him, or both spouses misinterpret each other's messages.

What the present study is trying to determine is whether engaged or soon to be married couples can be distinguished in how functionally or clearly they communicate information. By studying the patterns of communication among couples, it is hoped that couples who are headed for serious communication breakdowns in marriage can be diagnosed and corrective measures taken by, for instance, pre-marital counseling. Such counseling could be designed to improve the functionality of the couple's communication and avert the possible effects of poor communication, psychopathology, dissatisfaction, or disruption.

It is believed that this study, by choosing couples before they have experienced too much disharmony, is a unique step forward in exploring the etiology of marital unhappiness.

#### Classification of Relationships According to Communication Patterns

##### Modes of Communicative Interaction

Jackson and Lederer (1968) speak of three modes of communicative interaction. The first is symmetrical



in which couples exchange similar behaviors. The second is complementary in which couples exchange different types of behavior. Third is parallelism in which both kinds of modes of interaction, symmetrical and complementary, occur between couples.

### Types of Marriages

Finally Lederer and Jackson (1968) speak of four different types of marriages. These types are (1) the stable satisfactory marriage, (2) the unstable satisfactory marriage, (3) the unstable unsatisfactory marriage, and (4) the stable unsatisfactory marriage. These types are in descending order from functional or satisfactory to least functional or satisfactory marriage. The present author hopes to demonstrate that couples exchange different types of communication exchanges and that the engaged couples who exchange predominantly one of the four possible communication exchanges--a functional message followed by another functional message: the functional-functional (F-F) exchange; a functional message followed by a dysfunctional message: the functional-dysfunctional (F-D) exchange; a dysfunctional message followed by a functional message: a dysfunctional-functional (D-F) exchange; or a dysfunctional message followed by a dysfunctional message: the dysfunctional-dysfunctional (D-D) exchange--will have relationships

that parallel one of the four types of marital relationships as described by Jackson and Lederer (1968), i.e.:

1. When there is a predominance of F-F exchanges, the relationship is likely to be a stable-satisfactory one.
2. When there is a predominance of D-D exchanges, the relationship is likely to be a stable-unsatisfactory one.
3. When there is a predominance of D-F exchanges, the relationship is likely to be an unstable-satisfactory one.
4. When there is a predominance of F-D exchanges, the relationship is likely to be an unstable-unsatisfactory one.

Predictions of Marital  
Relationships Based On  
Communicative Exchanges

It would be predicted that couples who exchange either predominantly functional-functional exchanges or dysfunctional-dysfunctional exchanges would have stable relationships. This would be because in both types of relationships the couples by their mutual types of communicative interchanges have agreed upon a certain definition of their relationship. In the functional-functional relationship, the couple have agreed to exchange functional messages and the metacommunicative message is "This is a relationship in which we communicate clearly." At a more abstract level the relationship can be said to be defined as "This is a relationship I commit myself to." The functional-functional relationship can be said to be a satisfactory one as information is

exchanged and harmful behavior to the relationship is corrected through clear feedback. In the dysfunctional-dysfunctional relationship, the couple have agreed upon a definition of the relationship in which they do not exchange clear messages with each other. The rule governing this relationship is "This is a relationship that I don't want to commit myself to." The dysfunctional-dysfunctional relationship could be said to be highly unsatisfactory. No information is exchanged and harmful behavior continues. Much worse, expectancies are built up about each other spouse that are false. These may be aptly described as Bach's (1967) "fight phobics" with the potential for violence always close by.

Both the relationship in which the couples exchange either predominantly dysfunctional-functional exchanges or functional-dysfunctional exchanges could be classified as unstable as the couples have not agreed upon a common definition of their relationship; rather there seems to be a great deal of "maneuvering." The two should be able to be differentiated as the functional-dysfunctional relationship ought to have a good deal of disqualifying statements, while the dysfunctional-functional relationship ought to be characterized by a high degree of requests for clarification and qualification. This can be explained by evoking the principle of feedback in communication. If a couple's exchanges are

predominantly functional-dysfunctional ones, there will be poor feedback and the dysfunctional response will serve to disqualify the originally functional message. For a couple whose communications are predominantly dysfunctional-functional exchanges, the functional responses to dysfunctional statements will act as negative feedback and will therefore help to clarify and qualify the intent of the message of the sender. The dysfunctional-functional relationship is also likely to be somewhat satisfactory because there is a good deal of negative feedback. Thus there is a good deal of information exchanged as negative feedback brings about the clarification and qualification of the meaning of messages, and the gaining of information is conceived of as satisfying in communication theory. In addition, negative feedback allows for at least some measure of self-confirmation which is also experienced as gratifying. Finally, negative feedback acts as a self-corrective device for the relationship and tends to keep the system somewhat in balance.

In the functional-dysfunctional relationship, the relationship is likely to be more unsatisfactory. In such a relationship there is little negative feedback. Without negative feedback, little information about the relationship is exchanged and the person who communicates functionally fails to receive confirmation when his

partner responds with a dysfunctional communication. Thus this couple is likely to experience a great deal of frustration due to their inability to obtain information and self-doubt as they fail to confirm each other. A "run-away" situation is likely to develop, as without negative feedback there is no governing device to keep the system in balance. Thus misconceptions of where each one stands with the other will be escalated and concomitantly so will each other's disappointments and frustrations when each discovers that his expectations of the other were erroneous.

#### Summary

To the present author's knowledge, this study is the first attempt at classifying couples who are about to embark upon marriage according to their styles of communication. It is hoped that, by being able to successfully differentiate these couples by their patterns of communication, a classification scheme can be developed from Jackson and Lederer's (1968) theoretical model. By developing such a classificatory scheme, it is further hoped that it can act as a tool in predicting what types of marriages couples will have. Thus the design of this study will allow for a follow-up study to see how valid the predictions are. By providing for a longitudinal follow-up, it is believed by the present author that the

results of this study will especially contribute to our knowledge of communication in marriage in its attempt to get at the etiology of different types of marital relationships.

Different Methodologies and S Populations  
Justifying the Study of Communication

With Families

Direct Observation:  
Criticism and  
Counter-criticism

This method of direct observation and/or recording of the interaction between marital partners seems to avoid some of the shortcomings of retrospective methods. Rather than dealing with faulty memories, selective forgetting, difficulty in comprehending the E's terminology, and social desirability, direct observation gets at ongoing behavior and to a great extent is not influenced by the just mentioned pitfalls of retrospective methods. However, Vidich (1956) disagrees with the utility of interaction studies. He discussed the influence of non-experimental conditions on the husband-wife interaction in an experimental situation. He talked of the necessity to recognize these non-standardized influences in understanding what is going on in an interaction. In a study to test this assumption out Vidich (1956) modified the Revealed Differences Task (RDT) by remaining with the

couple during the task and pointing out their differences as they occurred. During this experiment two observers were in the room, one to point out the differences and one to observe gestures and to operate the tape-recorder. Vidich observed that much of the interactions of the couples studied were influenced by the presence of the E. Much of the verbal interaction was expressed towards the E or made to impress him. Vidich also questioned the value of direct observations because of the artificiality of the situation. He also noted the tendency of couples to present a united, not necessarily accurate, and socially desirable front to the experimenter. This study lacked any control group, though, and thus failed to show that direct observations in a laboratory situation could not effectively discriminate different types of communication in couples. However, what did seem to be influenced most in this study was the content of couple's interactions.

Levinger (1963) countered Vidich's criticisms of the use of situational tests to get at family interaction, by stating that if one observes the manner or process of the interaction, it is much harder for a family to distort these than to distort the content. Levinger also lists the advantages of behavioral observations over introspective reports as: (1) by behavioral observation one gets a first hand sample of the interactions that prevail,

(2) one avoids the obvious distortions in introspective reports, (3) one gains an insight on the functioning of the total group, (4) one can record action as it occurs and predict more directly to future action, and (5) problems of the respondent's unawareness of, or unwillingness to report, the critical behavior are reduced. According to Levinger situational tests can provide a relatively constant backdrop on which family interaction can be pictured and observed; thus, when there exists a standard for comparison, even when S's distort their usual behavior, they will reveal a great deal more than they realize. Levinger's (1963) study, reported later in the section comparing self-report and interactional methodologies, supported his contention that behavioral observation is more reliable than self-reports.

However, Levinger (1963) reported that under certain circumstances, combining observation and report is useful. Along these lines Levinger gave families a revealed differences task and also had parents fill out Leary's ICL. From these tasks, the family discussion was coded according to Bales' IPA (Bales, 1950) and the degree of dissatisfaction with child's dominance was obtained from the ICL. A hypothesis was formulated that the more demanding the parents' reported standards for their child, as measured by parental dissatisfaction with the child's dominance, the greater would be their overall demands on



him during the performance session, as measured by requests of the child by the parents to participate during the performance session. This hypothesis was confirmed. Thus the interactional and introspective techniques can supplement each other.

#### Measuring the Interactive Process: Bales' IPA

There have been a wide array of studies of social interaction and also a number of novel ways of measuring the interactive process. Bales (1950) was one of the earliest researchers to devise a method of analyzing the verbal interaction of small groups. Research with his method, called the Interaction Process Analysis (IPA) has led to the identification of two leadership roles, the instrumental (task oriented) and the expressive (socio-emotional oriented) roles. Bachove and Zubaly (1959) have found, by analyzing the discussion of normal family triads (father, mother, and son) in response to hypothetical family situations and TAT cards, that the father emerged as the instrumental leader and the mother as the socio-emotional leader. Levinger (1963) compared normal and abnormal families in a similar experiment and reported a higher degree of maternal negative emotional behavior and a higher participation rate in clinic families. The results of this study were interpreted as "role reversal" in clinic families with a passive father

and a dominant mother. This study was followed by a number of other studies trying to find out whether a passive father and dominant mother were a characteristic of schizophrenic families (see Caputo, 1963; Farina, Storrs, and Dunham, 1963). Fontana (1966) after critically evaluating these experiments concluded, "There is no evidence for the proposed 'schizophrenogenic' pattern of dominant mother-passive father" (p. 225).

#### Criticism of the IPA

Although Bales' IPA was important in opening up the investigation of family interactions, it has its limitations. Ferriera and Winter (1967) tested the efficacy of the IPA by applying this method to the interaction of family triads in which the child fell into one of four diagnostic categories: delinquent, maladjusted, normal, and schizophrenic. The task was the same as in Ferreira, Winter and Poindexter (1966) (see below). The authors concluded from the results which did not differentiate the four diagnostic groups from one another very much that Bales' IPA is inadequate for dealing with families. Maladjusted families and Normal families were not differentiated at all. The authors suggest that there is a need for more sophisticated behavior categorization systems which are more unidimensional in meaning and based more on greater objectivity as

represented by scoring for interpersonal tactics instead of inferential as in the case of scoring for intrapsychic states.

The present study utilized categories for scoring the interactional process that minimize the need for inferring intrapsychic states and instead focus on the interpersonal aspect of a couple's communications. Communications and exchanges are scored either as functional or dysfunctional. An elaborately detailed set of rules has been established to enhance the objectivity in deciding whether a statement or exchange is functional or dysfunctional.

#### Summary of Family Studies

Despite some acute criticisms of the study of interactional behavior, there appears to be overwhelming evidence with a variety of different subject populations and of different methodologies of the validity of studying communicative behavior.

Families of schizophrenics have been differentiated from normal and other disturbed families by interactional measures; disturbed families have been differentiated from normal families; normal children can be discriminated from disturbed children by interactional measures; and even families of healthy adolescents can be effectively differentiated from each other by interactional measures.

Using quite different methodologies, ranging from Haley's sequential recording of communication and his coalition buttons to Ferreira et al.'s SA and CF and exchange of information, Bales' IPA, and various studies of clarity of communication, they all have found the study of communicative behavior a useful method to differentiate families from one another.

Ferreira et al.'s studies confirmed the need for an explicit exchange of information for a family to function effectively. Thus an important premise of communication theory, that the exchange of information is essential to satisfactory functioning, was supported.

The present study is also concerned with this most important aspect of communication, the exchange of information. Therefore a communication coding system has been developed to determine how clearly or functionally couples communicate, how clearly they exchange information. As the variety and intensity of needs a married couple depends upon each other for is especially great, it is believed by the present author that the need for an explicit exchange of information is an essential ingredient for the satisfactory functioning of a marital relationship. By expanding the study of the clarity of the exchange of information to engaged couples, it is hoped that these couples can be differentiated as to how clearly they exchange information and thus enable the

coding system to be utilized as a screening device for couples who need help in their relationship.

Of the many examples of studies showing the relevance of communication in families, only a few that more directly pertain in their methodologies to the present study will be cited.

#### Haley's Studies of the Importance of Studying Family Communications

Haley (1962b) also believes it is important to study the interaction between individuals to understand how to bring about change. He believes each family system acts as a homeostatic system. Haley feels that some governing process is at work which maintains the limits of variability of the family system. If one person in the system goes too far in any direction and exceeds the limits of tolerance of other family members, they will respond in such a way that the extreme behavior is corrected. From this governing process one can derive the 1st law of relationships: "When an organism indicates a change in relation to another, the other will act upon the first so as to diminish and modify that change" (p. 277).

Haley (1962b) has suggested that schizophrenic families have a rule that no member will permit another family member to set rules for his behavior. Thus members of these families would consistently disqualify

each other's messages. An hypothesis that follows from this type of patterning of communication by disqualifying each other's message would be that members of such families would have difficulty forming and maintaining coalitions in the family. Families made up of mother, father, and child were put into a game situation where different coalitions could be formed by pushing different buttons. Members could only communicate with each other by pushing buttons. Both families of normal and schizophrenic children were used in the sample. The results of the experiment confirmed the hypothesis. Schizophrenic families differed significantly from normal families in the percentage of time no member was in coalition with any other member (the percentage of time any two members were pressing each other's coalition button).

However, Haley (1964) felt that this kind of communication had its limitations. Families do not usually communicate in such a limited way, as by communicating by buttons, but usually communicate by conversing. He set out to see if family members follow repetitive patterns in interaction. Thus it had to be shown that family members are not behaving randomly in relation to each other. He also wanted to demonstrate that a "disturbed" family can be differentiated from a "normal" family on some scale and finally whether changes can be measured on some scale, if they occur as a result of

family therapy. Normal and disturbed families were given tasks to do to promote conversation. Measurements were taken on the sequence of who was speaking. The most elementary count which measured an interchange would be a sequence of two people speaking. This was the most simple interactional measure conceivable according to Haley (1964). The hypothesis tested was that when one examines the order in which family members speak, this order should differ from random if the family is following repetitive patterns. This was found to be so, supporting the idea that a family has a certain organization. The second main purpose for the experiment was tested in terms of the hypothesis that organization means limitation, and the more pathological, the more limited. Therefore the normal families should tend to use more of the possible sequences more often and the disturbed families will tend to use fewer of the possibilities and use some of them more often than others. This hypothesis, too, was supported as the groups differed significantly at the .00003 level of significance. Haley also feels that when a family falls in the disturbed range on the scale of deviation from random behavior and is then successfully treated by family therapy, the family will move toward a normal range. It would suggest that a measure of family change before and after therapy is possible as the sequence measure did differentiate

disturbed from normal families. Different families were also shown to have their own unique pattern of interaction.

Studies by Ferreira and His  
Associates on the Importance  
of Studying the Interactional  
Behavior of Families

Ferreira and his associates have done extensive work in the area of measuring interactional behavior. Detailed attention is paid to their studies because some of the interactional variables that they have developed for the study of family interaction will be used in the present study.

Ferreira (1963) carried out a study to see whether by investigating a particular aspect of the interaction among family members, as they were directed to make decisions that would effect the whole group, differences could be found between normal and pathologic families. The test consisted of ordering three choices for each of sixteen emotionally neutral items according to preference. (Example: If you had to order something to drink which would you choose: coffee, milk or tea?") Then the members of the family were to order their choices for each item jointly. Four different measures of decision making could then be scored comparing individual decisions with the group decision: (a) unanimous decision or spontaneous agreement--members agreed with previous decision;



(b) majority decision--joint answer was the same as the initial answer for two of three members; (c) dictatorial decision--joint answer was the same as the answer of one member; and (d) chaotic decision--joint answer different from all answers. The results corroborated the expectation of Ferreira, based on the assumption that pathology and openness of communication go hand in hand, that a greater agreement should be found among the individual members of normal than of abnormal families. The results also seemed to corroborate that schizophrenic families represent a greater degree of pathology than non-schizophrenic families as the ratio of the responses of complete disagreement (forced dictatorial) versus complete agreement (unanimous) was as follows: 0.33 for "normal" families, 0.46 for "abnormal non-schizophrenic" families and 0.51 for schizophrenic families ( $p < .05$ ).

Ferreira and Winter (1965) administered a revealed differences task to different diagnostically classified families. The measures were Spontaneous Agreement (SA) defined as the number of choices in common for any two members of the family before they jointly filled out the questionnaire. Decision Time (DT) defined as the length of time taken to complete the joint questionnaire, and Choice Fulfillment (CF) of the family as a group and of its individual members defined as the number of instances where what the individual wanted became what the family

decided for. The results of this investigation seem again to indicate that normal families differ, in demonstrable ways, from abnormal families. Normal families, when contrasted with abnormal families, were shown (1) to have a much greater agreement in what their members liked or disliked, prior to any exchange of information, (2) to spend less time in the reaching of family decisions, and (3) to arrive at more appropriate decisions in terms of a better fulfillment of the family member's individual chores.

An extremely relevant finding of Ferreira and Winter's (1965) study for the present research is that the amount of SA among family members is capable of differentiating normal from abnormal families, the normal families having significantly higher SA's. Two possible explanations for this phenomenon here put forth by the authors are as follows: (1) The normal families, or better, the parents in these families might have had, since the beginning of the relationship, a higher agreement with each other in their attitudes, values, etc., than that to be found in abnormal families. This would mean of course a greater homogamy in the selection of a mate among would-be members of normal families than of abnormal ones. However, this explanation fails to account for the observation that measures of SA in the dyads with children are also higher in normal than abnormal families.

(2) The observed difference in SA reflects differences in communication, in exchange of information among family members. This view would indeed conform with clinical impressions of impaired communication in psychopathological relations. Relating Newcomb's (1953) finding that accurate information leads to attitudinal similarity, Ferreira and Winter (1965) feel that the lack of attitudinal similarity expressed in lower SA in abnormal families may be conceived of as a consequence of less accurate, or simply less, communication. It would seem to the present author that both these possibilities could be in effect and that instead of viewing the lower SA in abnormal families as a simple cause-effect relationship, the main thesis of this research actually concerns itself with the circularity or feedback of these two possibilities on to each other; i.e. persons who marry who have different attitudes, values, backgrounds, etc. will have a greater likelihood of communicating less clearly with each other and their SA scores will become even lower and/or persons who originally communicate poorly will become more disparate in their attitudes and values and thus obtain lower SA scores. Thus a vicious circle due to poor feedback is created.

Ferreira, Winter, and Poindexter (1966) studied four groups, a normal group--consisting of normal families--and three groups of abnormal families--

schizophrenic, delinquent and maladjusted. All families who participated performed the task of telling three TAT stories jointly. The most significant finding was that normal families spent relatively less time in silence than abnormal families. This relative amount of silence was greatest for the schizophrenic-producing and delinquency-producing families. It was also found that the relative amount of silence appeared more related to the diagnostic category than to the specific set of TAT cards used. The relative amounts of silence remained relatively constant from story to story for the diagnostic groups. The schizophrenic and delinquent families had the highest correlation from story to story for silence, the normal families the lowest and the maladjusted families in between. These findings emphasize the importance of silence as an interactional variable sensitive to and associated with family pathology as the correlations seemed to increase with pathology. Abnormal families, when compared to normal ones, tended to operate with greater rigidity in regard to some important interactional variables such as silence. It was also found in this study that families that spent more time in silence were often the same families that required extensions of time. This relationship was statistically significant and points to a possible cause of the abnormal families' lower efficiency: these families were prevented from arriving

at a story in the allotted time period because they spent too much time in silence; i.e. they talked less and interchanged less information per unit of time than normal families.

Ferreira's and Winter's (1968) experiment seems to support the conclusion that lack of transmission of information, resulting from poor communication, is related to family pathology and inadequate need fulfillment. In this study they tabulated the amount of information exchanged within normal families and within abnormal families while doing an unrevealed differences task. The unit of scoring of exchange of information was whether a member of a family made his likes or dislikes of choices explicit and whether these explicit choices matched his private choices. The results showed that the amount of information exchanged among family members was significantly less for abnormal families. It was also interesting to note that this was not due to a decrease of information exchanged by one member of the family but that the decrease in explicit information observed in abnormal families appeared to be a function of the whole family. The study also confirmed the greater the amount of information exchanged among family members, the greater the choice fulfillment the family is likely to derive from their family decision making. In other words, the more family members explicitly tell each other about their

likes and dislikes, the greater their likelihood of arriving at family decision which better represent and fulfill the wishes of everyone concerned. The conclusion thus reaffirmed by the data is that individual satisfaction with family decisions are a function of the quantity of information exchanged among family members. According to the authors, not only are family decisions in abnormal families quasi-random, inappropriate, and "chaotic" and therefore, provide inadequate expression of the preferences and choices of its individual members, but the lower informational state must interfere with the long-range acquisition of common values and views among the family members. This long term effect of insufficient exchange of information explains, according to Ferreira and Winter (1968), their finding of lower SA in abnormal families.

Ferreira and Winter (1968) go on to state that a vicious circle is characteristic of communication in abnormal families:

The positive correlation observed between the variable choice-fulfillment and SA indicates that this effect of inadequate informational exchange upon choice-fulfillment may be self-amplifying inasmuch as the long-range lowering of SA will tend to reduce further the abnormal family's choice-fulfillment in decision-making (p. 269).

## Possible Explanations of Ferreira et al.'s Results

Newcomb's (1953) theory of communicative acts can be used to explain Ferreira and Winter's (1968) results. Newcomb initially makes the assumption that communication among humans performs the essential function of enabling two or more individuals to maintain simultaneous orientation toward one another as communicants and toward objects of communication.

Newcomb states:

The degree that A's orientation toward X is contingent upon B's orientation toward X, A's co-orientation will be facilitated by similarity of his own and B's orientation toward X. The first advantage of symmetry is that of ready calculability of the other's behavior, the more similar A's and B's cognitive orientations, the less the necessity for either of them to "translate" X in terms of the other's orientations, the less the likelihood of failure or error in such "translations" and thus the less difficult and/or the less erroneous the co-orientation of either. Second, there is the advantage of validation of one's own orientation toward X. If these advantages hold, then it is likely that communicative acts resulting in increased symmetry are likely to be rewarded and symmetry is likely to acquire secondary reward value (p. 395).

A study by Back (1951) supports these premises in which he found that SS who started with different interpretations of the same material and who were given an opportunity to discuss the matter were influenced by each other as a direct function of attraction. Festinger and Thibaut (1951) varied "pressure toward uniformity" and "perceptions of homogeneous group composition,"

and found actual change toward uniformity following a discussion to be a function of both these variables, but some change toward uniformity took place in every group, under all conditions.

The one qualifier, though, is a communicative act is defined as one in which the message sent is the message received. It is exactly this clarity of communication that the present study is concerned with. People who communicate functionally with each other should be more alike than people who communicate dysfunctionally because they understand each other's communications in the first place, as they are sending and receiving messages in similar contexts. In addition Newcomb's postulation may operate in that the more people communicate with each other, the more they become alike. Thus Ferreira and Winter's (1968) results can also be explained, according to the present author, by the spouses in abnormal families coming from different backgrounds and therefore originally having low SAs. A major thesis of the present study is that these diverse backgrounds and value systems would be more likely to lead to poor communication than similar backgrounds, as the couples with diverse backgrounds would have a greater tendency to interpret messages in different contexts and thus misunderstand each other. Due to the misunderstandings that arise from discussion of differences, couples with



diverse backgrounds will be more reticent in talking over differences, since such discussion leads to frustration, and will therefore tend to avoid any commitment to a conversation involving a disagreement by communicating dysfunctionally.

In contrast to Newcomb's (1953) theory, a study by Udry, Nelson, and Nelson (1961) did not find that frequency of interaction was related to agreement on values or attitudes among married couples. In addition, frequency of interaction was not shown to be related to understanding. Understanding in this study was defined as the ability of a spouse to predict his spouse's score on different values from the Allport-Vernon-Landsay Study of Values. Frequency of interaction was measured by asking the couples how many working hours they spent together during the preceding week and how much during an average week. A serious flaw in such a study lies in the fact that the quality of interaction was not accounted for. The emphasis of the present study is on clarity of information exchanged and functionality of communication and not quantity of interaction.

Sojit's (1969) Study:  
Similarity to the  
Present Design

The purpose of a study by Sojit (1969) was to see if parents of ulcerative colitis children (UC) and

delinquent (D) children interacted differently from parents of controls. A method for scoring dyadic interaction in response to the task given the parents was developed. This method, similar to the one used in this study, was to develop both a quantitative system which would classify dyadic interchanges and a qualitative system which would differentiate one type of verbal interchange from another. The working hypothesis was that the method would serve to detect differences in quality and quantity in dyadic transactions, and that these differences would be related to certain kinds of behavior or pathology in the children. The method took into consideration the content of each message to that of previous messages by the same or the other speaker. The task given the parents was to place them in a double bind situation by asking them to arrive at a common meaning of a proverb and then teach their children this meaning. The method consisted of seven sets of categories. Each set constituted a scale. Every message can be classified simultaneously in more than one scale but the categories within each scale are mutually exclusive. The sets were (a) Metacommunication Other, (b) Metacommunication "Self," (c) Meaning of Proverb, (d) Continuity, (e) Number of Meanings of Proverbs, (f) Scale F (avoiding defining their relationship). The groups in the study were found to differ significantly on a number of the variables in

the coding system. Differences in patterns of communication indicated a severe restrictiveness on the part of the UC group while the D parents used significantly more communication maneuvers such as dual messages, disaffirmations, and disqualifications, than did the other groups. The D parents also encouraged indiscriminating action, had difficulty in assigning value judgments, and made many more invalid interpretations than the other groups.

### Different Methodologies Justifying the Study of Communication

#### With Marriages

##### Self-report Methods

There have been a number of studies that have measured communication via the self-report method. Locke, Sabagh, and Thomes (1956) found a significant positive correlation between primary communication (as measured by the Primary Communication Inventory) and marital adjustment (as measured by a forerunner of Locke's Marital Relationship Inventory). A statistically significant correlation of .39 was found between marital adjustment and effective communication.

In a Swedish study Karlsson (1963) gave couples an adaptation of Locke's Marital Adjustment Test and divided them accordingly into a high satisfaction and low satisfaction group. Two measures of communication

were used; a self-estimate and an index of communication which was derived by how accurate an idea a spouse had of his mate's wishes and expectations. The self rating score was found to be clearly associated with marital satisfaction; however, these ratings may show a "halo" effect in that they are a carry-over of the person's degree of marital satisfaction. The communication index was found to correlate positively with marital adjustment (.48 for husbands and .56 for wives).

Navran (1967) hypothesized that couples with good marital adjustment are those whose communication skills have been developed to deal effectively with the problems that arise. Conversely he reasoned that the couples who make a poor marital adjustment have developed communicative methods that make for poor problem solving, need frustration, and anxiety, and anger. He used the Locke-Sabagh-Thome's Primary Communication and the Locke's Marital Relationship Inventory (MRI) to measure marital adjustment. Navran's sample was a more heterogeneous one than Locke et al.'s was. He chose couples whose marriages were breaking up and seeking marital counseling and those couples who scored at the highest range for the MRI. He found a significant correlation (.82) between the MRI and the PCI. Good verbal communication was more strongly discriminating (a correlation of .91)

for satisfactory marital adjustment than was non-verbal communication (.66 correlation).

Hobart and Kalusner (1958) compared three measures of communication derived from Locke et al.'s (1956) PCI with the Locke Marital Adjustment Test for 59 married student couples. The results found that a highly communicative marital relationship is significantly related to marital adjustment. A significant relationship was not found between marital role disagreements and marital adjustment. This seems to be explicable as different role opinions of one's spouse need not necessarily be related to one's background. In addition the sample was of married, full-time students at a sectarian college and therefore likely to be of a homogeneous sample as far as backgrounds and values are concerned.

Shipman (1960) using a questionnaire to get at the process of communication found a significant relationship between voice tone and marital happiness, the absence of irritation in voice tone being related to marital happiness. The validity of Shipman's measuring device seems somewhat questionable as the questionnaire was administered to students in a family life class and all data obtained were their perceptions of such variables as parental happiness, voice tone, and thresholds of verbalization--the amount of social stimulus necessary to produce a speech response in a person. There were no

standard criteria to guide these students in their judgments of these variables and there was a possible "halo" effect in which, if the students saw their parents as happy, they probably also saw them as having desirable speech patterns.

Levinger and Senn (1967) administered a self-disclosure questionnaire to 32 couples. Fifteen of the couples were clients of a family agency and 17 were non-agency couples. Each couple's degree of marital satisfaction was measured by a composite of 15 indices of marital satisfaction. The results indicated a positive correlation between a spouse's satisfaction and the communication of feelings to his partner.

It is apparent that all the studies utilizing questionnaires to measure communication have the same weakness. They do not measure the communication process directly but depend on couples' self-reports of their communication. Thus a couple's self-report of their interactive behavior would not seem to hold as much validity as direct measurement of the interactive behavior.

#### Interaction Methods

Strodbeck's RDT.--Strodbeck (1951) was one of the first to study marital interaction in a laboratory setting. Spouses were instructed to nominate three families with whom they were familiar. After agreement

had been reached on three families whom they knew best, spouses were instructed to rank these families on a number of dimensions such as ambitiousness, happiness of children, etc. This initial ranking was done separately and independently by each of the two spouses. When these rankings were complete, spouses were brought together and informed of each other's rankings and instructed to resolve any differences. The discussion which ensued was analyzed using Bales' interaction categories (Bales, 1950). Strodbeck (1951) reported that spouses who talked most also "won" most decisions or had the most influence in final answers. This Revealed Differences Task (RDT) was used in a number of later experiments.

Card sorting method.--Ruesch, Block, and Bennet (1953) developed a method of analyzing interactions by having S's do reciprocal sortings of cards describing different levels of communication, intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup. The degree of agreement and the areas of disagreement furnish an index of the type and efficiency of the communication which took place in previous interactions. Thus an "I - him" set can be compared to a "He - me" set for a husband and wife's interactions, and whether the message sent was the message received can then be assessed. This method

seems to have the same weaknesses of other indirect assessments of the communication process.

Roman and Bauman's Interaction Testing technique.--

Roman and Bauman (1960) developed a technique to study interaction called Interaction Testing. This method consisted of two phases: (a) standard administration of individual psychological tests (both projective and intelligence), followed by (b) administration of the same test to both spouses where only the mutually agreed upon response was recorded. Most of their research used the Wechsler-Bellevue Comprehension and Similarities Subtests. This procedure yielded four sets of data: (a) individual protocols, (b) joint protocol, (c) comparison of individual and joint protocols, and (d) the interaction process (Bauman and Roman, 1966).

A comparison of individual and joint protocols led to four scoring categories: (a) dominance--joint response contains one individual's response in the absence of other's response; (b) combination--joint response contains elements of both individual responses; (c) emergence--joint response contains a new idea or concept not present in either individual answer; and (d) reinforcement--joint response is same as both individuals' response. In addition, the quality or appropriateness of the response from individual to joint protocol was evaluated.



A plus was scored if the joint response was better (appropriate) than either individual's response. A minus was given if the joint response was poorer (inappropriate) than at least one of the individual responses, and a zero reflected no change in quality of response. Bauman and Roman (1966) used this interactional technique which compared couple performance with individual performance on the Wechsler-Bellevue. Hypotheses were made in relation to the dominance interaction process. The sample consisted of couples of whom one spouse had been admitted to a psychiatric ward. The authors concluded from the results that marital decision making is significantly influenced not only by competence, but also by social role assignments and expectations, as well as by prior operating decisions by the couples. The relevance of studying interactional processes for clinical work was also pointed out by Bauman and Roman (1966). They stated that observation of instances of negative dominance (or any other of the processes) offered specific, objective, and reliable instances of inefficient and often pathological spouse interaction. They also felt that nonrational dominance can be defensive in that it may reflect spousal submissiveness as a means of avoiding anticipated hostility generated by competitiveness, or submissiveness related to the need to support a false image of a person.

The concept of an Intellectual Efficiency score grew out of Bauman and Roman's (1966) study. The Intellectual Efficiency score was actually a decision efficiency concept. The "intellectual efficiency" of a marital relationship was defined as the difference between a couple's potential joint I. Q. (i.e. the "best score" which a couple would obtain if they consistently selected, in interaction, the better of their two individual responses) and their actual I. Q. In Bauman, Borello, and Meltzer's (1965) study, three diagnostic groups of couples were compared on intellectual efficiency. The degree of intellectual efficiency was found to be inversely correlated with the degree of individual pathology. The three groups were couples having a psychotic spouse, couples having a non-psychotic but hospitalized or formerly hospitalized spouse, and normals. The most efficient of the three groups were the normals. These groups being differentiated in marital efficiency did not appear to be related to the individual I. Q. measures which did not vary with diagnosis.

The color matching technique (CMT).--Using a

Using a color matching technique (CMT), administered to 50 couples, Goodrich and Boomer (1963) tried to assess whether there were meaningful differences in styles of interpersonal conflict resolution with marital pairs. The authors stated,

Differences in perception and evaluation tend to occur naturally when any two people are faced with a new or strange situation; the first pregnancy or the first-born infant present a number of such new and ambiguous situations. The style of coping observed in an experimental situation may be characteristic and hence may have predictive power for the couple's adequacy or inadequacy when confronted with other puzzling or ambiguous natural situations. Thus by means of such techniques it may become possible to predict a couple's ability to cope with ambiguous situations which occur naturally with developmental changes (p. 16).

The color matching technique is one in which the husband and wife are seated opposite each other with a two-sided easel between them. Neither subject can see the other, but both can see the E. Each S has on his side of the easel a numbered display of small colored paper squares arranged in five vertical columns of six squares each. The six squares in each column are varying shades of one basic color. The task is ostensibly a test of the S's ability to discriminate slight gradations of color. According to the instructions, in order for the S's to get a score, they both have to agree on one color. The E has rigged the colors so that some of the colors are numbered differently for each S and so would lead to disagreements. The CMT was devised to control for past attitudes and values and so therefore the disagreements and ensuing coping would be limited as much as possible to the present ambiguous situation. A profile of conflict resolution could be expressed for

each couple in terms of such dimensions as activity level, involvement in discussion of color, effectiveness of communication, perspective on the situation, capacity to reach agreement, dominance-submission, and maintenance of esteem. Thus this method provided for a way of differentiating couples.

Implications of "denial of differences" for the present study.--The purpose of a study by Ryder and Goodrich (1966) was to study the different ways couples argue, fight, or otherwise respond to differences of opinion. An interesting result was that there was a striking tendency to avoid conflicts in the S's by giving wrong answers. When spouses were faced with apparent discrepancies between answers, they tended to interpret their answers in order to demonstrate that there was "really" no disagreement. The E's did not find any untoward effects related to this denial. They did mention, though, that their sample was made up of newlyweds, married 3-4 months. This finding has relevance to the present study. It may be assumed that the newlyweds are still trying to keep alive the romantic love of their courtship days and therefore are minimizing or denying their differences as differences do not fit the romantic myth which equates true love with total agreement according to Jackson and Lederer (1968). The present author

feels that the more newlywed and engaged couples deny or minimize their differences through poor or dysfunctional communication, the greater is the likelihood that such couples will experience dissatisfaction and disruption. It is not to be denied that most engaged and newlywed couples will tend to minimize their differences to some extent, but those that have a greater disparity in backgrounds and do not communicate clearly or functionally will have a greater likelihood of marital or perhaps even premarital difficulties than those couples less disposed to denial of differences and more homogenous in background and values.

Evidence relating marital happiness to similarity of backgrounds and clear communication.--A number of studies support the contention that the greater the similarity in a couple's background, the less the chance of marital dissatisfaction and disruption. For instance, Murstein (1961) correlated scores on the Edwards Personal Preference Scale and the Wallace Marital Adjustment and the Basc Famous Saying Test of newlywed couples and of non-newlywed couples (married at least ten years). Correlations were also computed for randomly paired newlyweds and non-newlyweds and compared to the non-random couples. The results favored a homogenous theory of need pattern for non-newlyweds. For newlyweds the results

were inconclusive. These results are important to the present study because it suggests that those couples who stay together for a long time are basically those couples who have similar needs or values and thus probably can communicate more clearly with each other than couples with complementary needs. A possible explanation for the inconclusive results of the newlyweds is that, unlike the non-newlyweds, who may be considered by their long relationship as having a relatively "functionally stable" relationship, the newlyweds who have been married less than two years may consist of a more heterogeneous population. Some of the relationships may be in flux and headed for divorce while others due to their similar values may be very stable as the non-newlyweds who have similar values and long-lasting relationships.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) tested the hypothesis that the greater the similarity in the cultural backgrounds of husband and wife, the greater the probability of marital success. An index of similarity was made by including the degree of similarity on items answered by the couples involving religious preference of parents of husband and wife, their degree of active participation in church, their formal educational attainment, occupation of father, the social and economic status in the community. This index of similarity was correlated with a marital adjustment score derived from a self-report

checklist, and it was found that the greater the similarity in family background, the larger was the proportion of couples in the very high adjustment class. An interesting additional result in this study was that differences in a couple's own religious preference or educational status were not related to marital adjustment. This result along with the previous one seems to magnify the importance of one's past cultural background to one's adjustment in marriage.

Roth and Peck (1951) reanalyzing Burgess and Cottrell's (1939) data found that married couples who came from different social classes were significantly more poorly adjusted, as measured by Burgess and Cottrell's marital score, than couples who had similar social class backgrounds.

Weeks (1943), Monahan and Chancellor (1955), and Landis (1949) found similar results when they compared the divorce rates of inter-faith with intra-faith marriages. In all three studies the divorce rates of inter-faith marriages were found to be higher than in intra-faith marriages. Using a checklist for community of interests and ratings of marital adjustment by people who knew the couples, Kilpatrick (1937) found that community of interests was significantly related to marital adjustment. In a study by Burgess and Wallin (1953) utilizing 1000 engaged couples, background information

was gathered by a questionnaire administered during courtship. Burgess and Wallin tested two of several factors that they grouped together under divergencies in background and viewpoints--differences in leisure time interests. They found that these factors occurred considerably more often in broken than unbroken engagements. They went on to infer that cultural differences may be taken as a valid reason for the breaking of an engagement. Scanzoni (1968) studied the backgrounds of existing versus dissolved marriages to see what factors may have contributed to success or divorce in marriage. The sample consisted of 160 existing marriages and 110 divorced couples. Scanzoni obtained his data by conducting one-hour face to face interviews with the wife from each household. Some of the conclusions were that, in terms of their relations to their family of orientation, husbands and wives from dissolved marriages tend to find mates from across social class lines, while couples in existing marriages tend to come from similar families of orientation as measured in terms of the father's level of occupation. The same relationship was also found for educational levels of the spouses, existing marriages tending toward educational homogamy and dissolved marriages toward educational heterogamy.

Jackson and Lederer (1968) state that, "In general, the degree of consonance between the value systems of the



spouses is of major importance in determining marital compatibility" (p. 376).

A plethora of studies already mentioned such as Navran's (1967) study, Locke, Sabagh, and Thomes (1956), Karlsson's (1963), Hobart and Klausner's (1958), Levinger and Senn's (1967), and Shipman's (1960) all support the relationship between good communication and marital satisfaction.

Various other methodologies studying interactional behavior.--Kenkel (1961) wanted to see if differences could be observed in the type of spousal interaction and the kinds of choices they made. The results of the study showed that spousal interactions such as proportion of total talking of the spouses, who was the main idea man and who was the socio-emotional leader, could be differentially related to the pattern of choices the ss made, the categories being items for children, wife-personal, wife-household, husband, or joint family. It was thus concluded that the decision making role pattern of the couple, as measured by their interaction in a problem situation, has a demonstrable effect on the way in which they choose a certain outcome, in this particular case on the way in which they spend, or intend to spend, their money. For instance, couples who talked proportionately more evenly chose wife-household items and less

husband and children items than other couples who talked proportionately unevenly. In couples where the husbands out-talked their wives they would be more likely to select items for the entire family. For wives who were the socio-emotional leaders of the marriage these couples chose significantly less for her personal use, more frequently for the family as a whole, for the children, and for the household, than when the husband was the socio-emotional leader.

In another study, Katz, Goldstein, Cohen, and Stucker (1963) tested for the relationship between need satisfaction and cooperation in marital couples. Mates were either classified as high or low on need satisfaction in marriage. The cooperative task involved a motor coordination task, and the second task was devised to measure a person's willingness to accept the spouse's suggestions when making decisions. The results showed that for men, those who interacted with their spouses in a highly cooperative manner tended to have greater need satisfaction than the less cooperative males. No such significant difference was found for females however. According to Katz et al. (1963), the results showed the feasibility of using behavioral interaction situations as a means of validating marital satisfaction questionnaires and of assessing different aspects of the husband-wife relationship.

Raush, Goodrich, and Campbell (1965) examined the patterns of communication of two newlywed couples. They were interested in how couples cope in an open system. In such a system effectiveness of coping does not involve adapting to what is, but requires working out what is to be. If the solution to a problem is not prescribed, adaptive ego functions and interpersonal factors can take a larger role. In an experimental situation, in which the couple was requested to improvise in playing out the resolution to a series of four standard interpersonal conflicts, the two couples' patterns of communication differed markedly. The couple who were the more efficient at the experimental tasks used their communication to enhance mutual awareness and specified and limited the discussion to the issue at hand. On the other hand, the couple who did poorly on the experimental task used the problem to touch off a whole range of sensitivities and used communication for manipulation and defense.

#### Summary

In sum, a variety of different techniques of both the self-report and interactional approaches have found meaningful differences among the communicative behavior of marital couples.

Among the self-report measures there have been communication inventories correlated with marital adjustment tests as well as a questionnaire developed by

Shipman (1960) to get at the "process of communication" and its relationship to marital happiness.

Among the interactional methods is Strodbeck's (1951) RDT utilizing Bales' IPA to code the behavior; the CMT, Roman and Bauman's (1960) Interaction Testing technique; a card sorting method, and other techniques including cooperative non-verbal tasks.

The present study is planned to go beyond the studies mentioned in this section by choosing a subject population who are preparing to marry and conducting a longitudinal follow-up to get at the possible etiology of different marital relationships. It should be mentioned that Ryder and his associates are also doing a longitudinal study, but they started with their couples already married for a number of months. It is expected that some proportion of the Ss in the present study will not get married or will be divorced within several months after marriage.

It should also be noted that this study attempts to correct, as Ryder and Goodrich (1966) point out in their study, an important methodological flaw in past research. They mention that in order to avoid disagreement couples were often defensive and gave wrong answers. It is just this defensiveness and avoidance of disagreements by making ambiguous statements that the present study is designed to control for. By adding such

variables as level of self-esteem and diversity of backgrounds, it is further hoped to see whether couples can be discriminated from each other as to how defensive or ambiguous their messages are, the greater their disparity in backgrounds are and the lower their self-esteem.

#### Studies Comparing the Methodologies of Self-Report and Interaction

Bowman (1956) felt that researchers should abandon the questionnaire method in the study of marriage dynamics and marital adjustment. He challenged the assumption that the dynamics of family roles and relationships are simple, uncomplicated phenomena or that informants possess an articulate understanding of these phenomena. Bowman (1956) discussed how cultural influences can distort answering on a questionnaire. For instance, marital happiness is a common American value and may very well influence responses to a marital adjustment scale.

Fontana (1966) compared three research approaches toward identifying etiological factors in schizophrenia: (1) clinical observations and psychiatric impressions of family members in treatment, (2) retrospective accounts of child-rearing practices and attitudes obtained from family members' responses to interviews and questionnaires and (3) current patterns of interaction among family members directly recorded and systematically coded by

the investigator to see how well they differentiated normal from disturbed families. Of the three approaches Fontana feels that the interaction approach is the most methodologically sound.

Jackson, Block, Block and Patterson (1958) had twenty well-known psychiatrists, who had considerable experience with schizophrenics and their families, perform two Q-sorts on 108 statements according to their conceptions of the schizophrenogenic mother and father. A factor analysis was done yielding three factors for each parent. None of these factors, when correlated with descriptions of parents of twenty autistic and twenty neurotic children which had been made by Q-sorts of the same 108 items, differentiated the two groups of parents.

In reviewing the retrospective studies Fontana (1966) stated that they assume:

- (1) People conceptualize their lives in terms of the language used by the investigator so their understanding of the question is similar to that of the investigator;
- (2) People can accurately recall events and feelings of many years past with minimal forgetting;
- (3) People will report unpleasant events without selective forgetting, defensive distortion and justification of actions by inaccurate elaboration;
- and (4) People will report past events unaffected by social desirability or other response sets (p. 215).

Fontana (1966) noted the paucity of studies which challenge the validity of all of these points. Fontana feels that of the three methods, the studying of the current interaction patterns of families of schizophrenics has been

the most productive and the best hope for further understanding of the etiology of schizophrenia. He states that interactional studies are superior to the other approaches because if the etiological assumption, that certain patterns of interaction lead to psychopathology, is granted, and if the behavior sample is characteristic of the families' usual behavioral repertoire, he can find no apparent, intrinsic methodological inadequacies which would disqualify this approach as unscientific as he has found the retrospective and clinical methods to be. He adds that the greatest value of current family interaction seems to be in the guidelines the findings might provide for longitudinal research. Fontana feels that truly appropriate etiological conclusions can only be drawn from careful longitudinal studies. It should be noted that the present author hopes to conduct a follow-up predicting how couples with different styles of communication at the threshold of marriage will adjust to each other after a number of years of marriage.

Several research studies provide for the lack of utility with self-report measures. For example, Levinger (1963) used two behavioral measures of family interaction and one self-report measure in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of these three methods. Although he found almost complete agreement between the two behavioral measures--the judge's rating and Bales' (1950)

IPA ratings--there was little agreement between them and the self-report data from Leary's ICL. He concluded "the Checklist data corresponded only grossly with the observational data in total group comparisons" (p. 364).

Similarly, Kenkel and Hoffman (1956) instructed couples to assume a gift of \$300 and to discuss how they might spend it. Before and after the actual discussion spouses were instructed to characterize their own role in the discussion in terms of (a) total number or ratio of initiated actions, (b) number or percentage of actions initiated consisting of giving ideas and suggestions and (c) those actions which contributed to the smooth functioning of the session. The actual discussion was recorded and analyzed using Bales' interaction categories (Bales, 1950). The authors reported low accuracy of spouses in predicting or postdicting their roles. This indicated that self-report was a poor method for ascertaining a couple's interactions.

Olson (1969) compared self-report and behavioral measures in measuring power in marriages. He instructed 35 couples, all expecting their first child in the near future, to answer a questionnaire consisting of 27 items dealing with issues which needed to be decided soon after the child was born. For each issue Ss were instructed to (a) predict who would make the decision, (b) state who had the legitimate right to make the decision,



(c) rate how well they understood spouse's preference on that item and (d) state how relevant the item was to them as a couple. The questionnaire was followed by a Revealed Differences Task for the same items. There were no significant relationships between predicted and actual power. Actual power was operationally defined as an individual's ability to persuade the spouse during the discussion session to accept a particular decision which was contrary to the spouse's personal preference as indicated on the questionnaire administered separately to the couples.

Weller and Luchterhand (1969) obtained ratings of family functioning for 39 families from two separate sources. The same categories were used in both ratings. One rating was made by a family case-worker who had worked with the family a median of 31 times. The case-workers had not been informed in advance that these ratings would be expected. A second rating was made by a social worker who interviewed the same families specifically to gather the necessary information for these ratings. A comparison of the two ratings showed significant correlations in only two of the eleven aspects of family functioning rated. These results show the inadequacy of retrospective reports of family interaction made even by trained professionals such as social workers.

### Summary of Self-report Versus Interaction Methodologies

Self-report measures of interactional behavior have been shown to be faulty in their ability to yield a significant relationship to the actual ongoing interactional behavior. The assumptions of self-report measures for studying interaction such as minimal forgetting of past events, reporting of unpleasant events without selective forgetting, reporting of events uninfluenced by social desirability, and conceptualization of events understood by subjects in the same terms of the experimenter, are tenuous at best. The present study has therefore been designed to overcome such shortcomings by using a coding system to measure ongoing interactional behavior.

### Variables Effecting the Communication Process

#### Diversity of Backgrounds: Theoretical Significance

Similarity of backgrounds and value systems seems to be an important factor in establishing clear communication in a relationship. The more similar a couple's cultural backgrounds and value systems, the more likely they will interpret messages in the same context and the less the chance of their misunderstanding each other.

Rabkin (1967) states:

Different sociocultural systems generate different speech systems. These systems or "codes" are expressed, not in particular words in the sense of their established meanings, but in the way groups of words that could convey essentially the same meaning are combined to have more than that meaning. . . .

To the extent that they are closed, all sociocultural systems tend to develop unique communication codes, in addition to unique slang and word meanings, whether in prisons, combat units, families, or adolescent gangs, or among close friends, or siblings. Bernstein (1964) has worked with communication codes as they apply to a system as large as that of class structure. Members of the British working class have, as he shows, a unique way of coding their speech; and when they meet therapists from a different class, there is almost insurmountable difficulty in mutual understanding, or what we might more formally call coordinating speech systems.

In family or couple therapy, even when husband and wife have similar class backgrounds, one discovers communication codes that are indigenous to individual family systems. Since husband and wife come from different families each having different communication codes in the sense already defined, they frequently get into trouble (pp. 10-11).

In Bernstein's (1964) research he distinguished between two types of families, the person-oriented families whose members have elaborate communications codes and status-oriented families whose members have more restricted codes. Persons brought up in person-oriented families are more concerned about defining things in terms of personal feelings in contrast to status-oriented people who define things in terms of social or group norms. Thus it seems high disparity couples who

communicate clearly would tend to be person-oriented in contrast to high disparity, highly dysfunctionally communicating persons who would probably more likely be status-oriented.

Bernstein's description of a restricted code follows:

The code is generated in social relationship where the intent of others may be taken for granted. This sharing or expectation of common intent simplifies the structure of the speech and so makes it predictable. It removes the need in the speakers to elaborate verbally their unique experience. Hence the reduction of qualifiers of various kinds. The speech is relatively impersonal and serves to transmit similarity rather than differences in personal experience. . . .

Finally the code is not generated by I. Q. but by the culture acting through the family relationships (p. 63).

Haley (1963) states the importance of one's family of orientation in a marital pair's adjustment to each other:

Couples find themselves struggling with great intensity over minor matters in a most irrational way. This intensity of feeling about who is to set rules in the marriage would seem to have several sources. A major cause is the fact that any marital partner was raised in a family and so given long and thorough training in implicit and explicit rules for how people should deal with each other. When a person gets married, he attempts to deal with a spouse who was given training in a different institution. The couple must reconcile long-term expectations which have all the emotional forces of laws of life. . . . The transition to a person's own family from a previous one requires considerable compromises with inevitable conflict (p. 124).

Ruesch (1951) mentions the relationship between values, defined as a preference for one alternative response to a stimulus over other possible responses, and communication.

We state simply that a value premise is a generalization made by the observer about another person's perceptions and actions. The observer imputes or "projects" these generalizations upon the other person. Conversely, the person who engages in some action--be it speech, gesture, or other movement--does so in order to become accessible to the observer. In doing so, a person expresses his preference system. A actually causes B to make inferences about his, A's intrapersonal process which would otherwise be inaccessible. The observer is encouraged to fill in the other's meaning from his own reservoir of information. It is only by means of this filling-in that the observer is able to understand the message. These "fill-ins" are, of course, derived from cultural mass communication to which an individual has been exposed. Persons who have been raised within the same cultural system speak more or less the same language and possess more or less the same values. They may differ or even argue about preference, but they do understand each other and by and large they will agree as to which items can appropriately be compared (p. 47).

Contrawise it may be concluded that people from different cultural systems possess different values and thus would have difficulty understanding each other. The "fill-ins" the observer uses to understand the message is more likely not to fit the original intent of the message of the sender. It can thus be concluded by what has been stated in the previous paragraph that when people in a relationship communicate ineffectively this enhances the possibility of the gratification of their needs being

frustrated and thus is likely to lead to disharmony in the relationship. The conclusion is exemplified in the marital relationship which is obviously formed for the gratification of a variety of important needs for the members of the relationship.

Ruesch (1951) also stated that an important determinant of cultural mass communication that influences our interpretation of other people's messages

is found in the system of symbolization and language which a person must learn if he wishes to participate within a given group. Not only the systems of symbolization but also the subtle shadings in the meanings of symbols have to be mastered. Every citizen learns through the impact of mass communication how to interpret the meaning of messages not only by assessing the content, but above all by watching certain cues related to the manner of presentation. Punctuation, emphasis, attention-getting, assignment of roles, and the expression of emotion can all be seen as messages about communication, which guide the recipient in his understanding--his decodification and evaluation of messages. One's family of orientation must certainly be considered one of the most important of such groups (p. 43).

#### Diversity of Backgrounds: Research Evidence

Ferreira and Winter's (1968) results in the context of the previous paragraphs seems to bear out the conclusion that different backgrounds may lead to poor communication and the poor communication to a further disparity of values. Ferreira and Winter's interpreted their results as a vicious circle being created with

poor communication leading to a low SA leading to more poor communication. This study attempted to discern whether couples with initially diverse backgrounds are more likely to be poor communicators than couples from homogenous backgrounds. By choosing engaged couples for our sample, we hope to minimize the possible confounding effects of the possible value convergence caused by close association in a marriage, and also of the vicious circle effects of poor communication breeding diverse attitudes. The implications of communicating ineffectively is an inability to gratify one's needs and frustration and dissatisfaction with the marriage. It is the hope of this author that such poor communication patterns can be recognized and their causes discerned so as to act as a preventative for such dissatisfying relationships. With such knowledge possible corrective measures may also be taken to make a "love" relationship a successful and functional one.

Another study by Hofman (1969) also seems to lend credence to the importance of cultural similarity to clear communication. In Hofman's (1969) study he found that on two of three interaction tasks, the interaction measures did not discriminate clinic from non-clinic couples. A third revealed difference task, though, did discriminate clinic from non-clinic





families on interactional variables. On this task the mean SA was 35 for clinic couples compared to 63 for non-clinic couples. Hofman concludes, "interpersonal processes as measured by the present interaction indices are to a significant degree dependent on task content (abstract)." What seemed to be occurring was that of three tasks, one had tapped a more meaningful value to the clinic couples. This task concerned the highly controversial area of methods of birth control and may be more sensitive to picking up diversities in cultural backgrounds than the other two tasks.

A study by Bach (1967) seems to relate marital incompatibility to poor communication. Bach's sample consisted of 74 spouse murderers. His method of data collection consisted of individual and group interviews. The first samples of Ss were interviewed in depth, but in a relatively non-structured manner. Later on a structured interview was constructed from which came the I.A.Q., the Intimate Aggression Questionnaire, with 250 items, which, in principle, could be answered by Ss without the direct aid of the interviewer. These data were scanned by two assistants and they found that "spouse murderers" were overwhelmingly "fight phobic." Their partners did not meet their expectations of what a spouse was supposed to be. It is suggested here that the disparity between the spouse murderer's expectations

of how his spouse should behave and how the spouse thought he or she should behave was due to a disparity between their backgrounds. The importance of the spouse murderers being fight phobic is that it led to a non-transparency of expectations and thus poor communication as each partner did not know where he really stood with the other. It is inferred, at this point, that poor communication developed because, either due to the disparity of backgrounds, the couples did not understand each other's signals and/or they did not bother to clarify communication for fear of discovering these discrepancies from their own values or expectations in the other spouse which might lead to the conclusion that because the spouse is different, he does not love me.

### Self-esteem

Satir (1964) talks about "differences" as an important factor in making communication go underground or become covert in couples with low self-esteem. She feels couples with low self-esteem equate love with total agreement. These people married in order "to get." They wanted to get (1) the other's esteem of him, (2) the other's qualities which they lacked, (3) an extension of themselves and (4) an omnipotent, omniscient selfless, "good" parent in the other, and wanted to avoid the omniscient, omnipotent, "bad" parent. After marriage they discover their "differences" due to their everyday

interaction, and they are disappointed. According to Satir (1964), "differences" look bad because they lead to disagreement and disagreement reminds both members of a couple with low self-esteem that the other is not an extension of the self but is separate. These spouses cannot tolerate differences because they feel cheated in that they did not "get" what they thought they were getting. When they discover they are different, this leads to each one accusing the other because they are disappointed and hurt as they expected total agreement. They cannot accuse each other openly though because this would lead to rejection by the other and they need their spouses to maintain their fragile self-esteem. Each spouse also believes that the other would fall apart by open criticism. Therefore the disagreement process goes underground and thus most of their communication becomes covert. Any message which might call attention to the self as a private agent, with likes and dislikes, desires and displeasures of its own, is suppressed and changed.

While differences alone do not bring on poor communication according to Satir (1964), they do drive communication underground for low esteem couples and thus lead to a dysfunctional relationship. Unfortunately, as talked about in Jackson and Lederer (1967), due to the "romantic myth," differences are hardly ever discussed

during courtship and invariably there is some degree of disappointment after marriage due to deviations from expectations. The greater the "differences," the more likely the disappointment over unfulfilled expectations.

### Summary

The literature seems to suggest that the greater the difference in backgrounds, the more difficult it is to understand another person, as people from different backgrounds develop different communication codes. There have been a few studies that have indirectly dealt with the relationship of diversity of backgrounds and functionality of communication. Of these studies, the relationship between diversity of backgrounds and clarity of communication has been supported inferentially. The present study is designed to directly study this relationship.

Self-esteem has also been purported to be an important factor in the functionality of communication according to Satir (1964). She believes self-esteem interacts with "differences," as measured in the present study by diversity of background, to have an effect upon a couple's communications. The present study is intended to test out this theoretical conceptualization of this interactive effect. To date, this interactive effect on communication has not been researched according to the present author's knowledge.

### Summary of Introduction

The study of communication has been found to be a valuable tool in differentiating families, children, and married couples in meaningful ways.

It is the purpose of this study to extend the study of communicative behavior to engaged couples. In the process of doing so, this study has been uniquely designed to study the interactive effects of diversity of backgrounds and self-esteem on a couple's styles of communication.

The present study is also designed so as to include a circular model of communication and thus, unlike other studies before it, includes the exchange as the main unit of measurement.

Also by studying couples at the inception of marriage, this study plans to avoid some of the pitfalls of past studies in determining the etiology of dissatisfactory marital relationships. Such a determination of etiology is planned for by conducting a follow-up study and a classificatory scheme. By developing such a classificatory scheme, predictions can be made about a couple's future marriage and by following up these couples, the validity of the predictions can be tested. It is also hoped that the procedure, if successful, could be useful as a possible preventive measure to avert and help unhappy marriages.

### Hypotheses

- 1: The higher the dysfunctional-functional exchange ratio (D/F ratio) of the DCCS, the greater the Interpersonal Comparison Test (ICT) total scores for engaged couples and also the lower the spontaneous agreement (SA) scores for these couples.
- 2: The greater the diversity of background (DB) in a couple as measured by either SA scores or ICT scores, the greater the tendency for members in those couples to use fewer subcategories of dysfunctional communication as coded in the DCCS and to use these subcategories more often than couples with less diverse backgrounds.
- 3: That couples with high self-esteem (S-E) scores (Total P) who have high disparity of backgrounds as measured by SA and ICT scores, will have lower DCCS scores as measured by D/F ratios than couples with low S-E scores (Total P) and high diversity of background scores.
- 4: That couples with high S-E scores (Total P) and similar backgrounds as measured by SA and ICT scores, will not differ significantly on their DCCS scores as measured by D/F ratios from couples with similar backgrounds (SA and ICT scores) and low self-esteem (Total P).
- 5: That in general couples with high S-E scores (Total P) will have lower D/F ratios than couples with low S-E scores (Total P).
- 6: That couples will differ significantly in the kinds of communication exchanges they make as measured by the DCCS.
  - a. Couples falling in the lower half of the S sample for diversity of backgrounds as measured by the SA or ICT and the upper half for self-esteem as measured by total P will make proportionately, significantly more functional-functional (f-f) exchanges than the other couples in the sample.
  - b. Couples falling in the upper half of the S sample for diversity of backgrounds and the lower half of the sample for self-esteem

will make proportionately, significantly more dysfunctional-dysfunctional (d-d) exchanges than the other couples in the sample.

- c. Couples falling either in both the lower halves or both the upper halves of the S sample for diversity of backgrounds and self-esteem will make proportionately, significantly more functional-dysfunctional (f-d) and dysfunctional-functional (d-f) exchanges than the other couples in the sample.
  - d. Couples falling in the lower halves of the S sample for both diversity of backgrounds and self-esteem will significantly differ from couples in the upper halves of the S population for both diversity of backgrounds and self-esteem in the proportion of I:E (Collusion), G (disqualification) and H (non-response evasion) statements that the couple make and also in the proportion of II:B (Asking for Qualifying and clarifying), C (Qualifying and Clarifying) and D (Asking and giving acknowledgment) statements than the couples in both upper halves.
- 7: That mutual choice fulfillment as measured by (CF) will be directly correlated with similarity of attitudes and backgrounds as measured by SA and ICT scores.
- 8: That mutual choice fulfillment as measured by (CF) will be inversely correlated with dysfunctionality of communication as measured by the D/F ratio.

## METHOD

### Instruments

The instruments used in this study were the following.

#### The Interpersonal Comparison Tests (reproduced in Appendix A)

These tests were devised by Jackson and Lederer (1968) to assess how far apart couples are in their repertoire of values. Of the three tests devised in their book, the present study utilizes two, Test A and Test B. A score of one is given to each item of both tests if each member of the couple answered the items differently and no score if the couple answered the item similarly. Scores are then added across items and across tests and a total score is given for each couple. The total score represented a couple's "degree of diversity of background" or disparity of values systems. The higher the score, the greater the disparity of values.

#### (DCCS) Dysfunctional Communication Coding System

A coding system for dysfunctionality of communication derived from Satir (1964) and Pemberton (1959) was used.



According to Pemberton (1959) there are three types of distortion in verbal communication. The first are distortions due to lack of specificity with respect to person (who), object or situation (what), place (where), and time (when). Second, we take note of the distortions due to a lack of questioning of common assumptions such as "universality" (assuming that we perceive and evaluate identically), "allness" (assuming that any perception or evaluation is necessarily complete), "sameness" (assuming that what we perceive or evaluate will not change), and "dichotomy" (assuming that there are only two, mutually exclusive alternatives to be used in assessing any perception or evaluation). Third, there are distortions due to mis-allocations of referents such as failure to designate value characteristics abstracted from person, object, or situations as reactions of the evaluator. Under this category will be over-generalization, over-simplification, and mis-interpretation of "is."

Satir (1964) adds four more types of distortion in verbal communication. A fifth type of distortion of communication she mentions, congruency of levels of communication, will not be dealt with in this study as it involves non-verbal communication as well as verbal and is an extremely complex variable with which it would be difficult to achieve scorer reliability. The four

other types used are (1) incomplete messages, (2) affirming or rejecting a dysfunctional communication, collusion, (3) covert requests, and (4) disqualifying of messages to clarify or qualify.

The units of measure in this coding system are statements and exchanges. According to Lennard and Bernstein's (1969) definition, a "statement" would be considered one or more propositions spoken by one person without interruption for more than 15 seconds. A silence of 15 seconds may also be considered a statement. A proposition is defined as having a subject and a predicate. An "exchange" according to Lennard and Bernstein (1969) is two successive statements. Each statement or exchange may be coded as either functional or dysfunctional. More than one subcategory within either the functional or dysfunctional categories may be scored for one statement but a statement may not be coded as in both a functional and a dysfunctional subcategory. An exchange was coded as dysfunctional whenever two successive dysfunctional statements occur or a functional statement followed by a dysfunctional statement. An exchange was coded as functional whenever two successive functional statements occur or a dysfunctional statement is followed by a functional statement. Thus, in a dialogue between a couple where four statements are

made--a, b, c, and d--there will be three codable exchanges, ab, bc, and cd. A short example from Satir (1964) follows:

- a. 1st person: "That picture is ugly." (IC1-dysfunctional statement)
- b. 2nd person: "What do you mean when you say that picture is ugly?" (IIB-functional statement)
- c. 1st person: "I'm giving my impression. Maybe you don't share it. How do you see it?" (IIC-functional statement)
- d. 2nd person: "I don't share your experiences I guess." (IIA-functional statement)

The first exchange (ab) is a D-F exchange and is therefore coded as functional as are bc and cd. Therefore, this couple has made three functional exchanges and no dysfunctional ones.

Scores for each couple were derived by the ratio of dysfunctional to functional exchanges in their discussions as well as the proportions for each of the four types of exchanges. In addition, scores for each subcategory were derived by the percentage of classifications in each subcategory to the total number of classifications in either the functional or dysfunctional categories made by each couple. A description of the dysfunctional coding system follows. The first three categories, I:A-C, are excerpted from Pemberton (1959) and the next four. I:D-G are from Satir (1964). All

examples from these seven categories are excerpted from Satir (1964). Category I:H was derived by the present author. Categories II:A-C are also derived from Satir (1964) while II:D was created for this study.

### Dysfunctional Communication Coding System

#### I. Dysfunctional Communications (Statements)

##### A. Distortions due to lack of specificity

Statements coded in this category will be one's in which the sender assumes that one instance is an example of all instances. He will be unclear, particularly in his use of who, what, where, and/or when.

1. Lack of specificity with respect to person (Who). Assertions by people which indicate a lack of specificity of person (who) tend to be in the polar extremes. Some of the symptomatic terms are "everybody," "nobody," "people," "women," and "mankind."

Ex: "Everybody is like that."

"Nobody likes me."

"All women are . . ."

"Men are . . . ." (Satir, 1964, p. 65)

2. Lack of specificity with respect to object or situation (What). Similarly assertions by people expressing lack of specificity or situation (what) tend to be given in terms of reference to "everything" or "nothing."

Ex: "Nothing turns out right."

"Everything is all fouled up." (Satir, 1964, p.66)

### 3. Lack of specificity as to place (Where).

Assertions by persons due to lack of specificity of place (where) are generally indicated by "everywhere" or "nowhere."

Ex: "Everywhere I go, that happens."

"Nowhere is it any different." (Satir, 1964, p. 66)

4. Lack of specificity as to time (When). Assertions by persons due to a lack of specificity of time (when) contain such terms as "always" or "never."

Ex: "Never is it any different."

"Always this happens to me." (Satir, p. 66)

## B. Distortions due to a lack of Questioning Common Assumptions

1. Universality. The assertion that assumes a "universality" takes it for granted that the objects of perceiving and valuing are common to all men. The person making the assertion is shocked to discover that other's views are different. When he makes the discovery, he often finds it necessary to influence, or to guard against being influenced by, others who perceive or value in ways different from him.

Ex: "How can you like fish!"

"Why didn't you do it the right way?"

"Of course he wouldn't want that!" (Satir, p. 66)

2. Allness. Those who employ the "allness" assumption have characteristics in common with those who appear to live by the "certainty" principle. He will assume that his perceptions or evaluations are complete.

Ex: "Yes, I already know that." (Satir, p. 66)

3. Sameness. Those who use the assumption of "sameness" seem to exhibit contradictory characteristics. On the one hand, they tend to resist change. On the other hand, they are intolerant of sameness. He will thus assume that what he perceives or evaluates won't change.

Ex: "That's the way she is."

"I've always been that way."

"That's life." (Satir, p. 66)

4. Dichotomy. The assumption of "dichotomy" means that for the user there are only two ways to perceive, to value, to think, or to behave.

Ex: "She either loves me or she doesn't."

"You're either for me or against me." (Satir, p. 66)

#### C. Distortions due to Mis-allocation of Referents

1. Assumption of equivalence. The sender assumes that characteristics which he attributes to things or people are part of those things or people.

Ex: "That picture is ugly."

"She is hostile." (Satir, p. 67)

2. Mindreading other. He assumes that he can get inside the skin of another. He operates as if from a "crystal ball," and he acts as a spokesman for others, or interrupts and assumes he knows what the sender is saying, except in circumstances in which a person responds to a functional statement by showing he understands what the sender has said. e.s. "I see what you mean."

Ex: "I know what you're thinking."

"I know what she really means."

"I will tell you what she was feeling."

"This is what he was going through." (Satir, p. 67)

3. Mindreading self. He also assumes that the other can get inside his skin. He assumes that the other also has a crystal ball. He allows the other to be a spokesman for him.

Ex: "She knows what I think."

"You know what I really mean."

"He can tell you what I went through." (Satir, p. 67)

#### D. Distortions due to incomplete messages

1. Incompletion. A communication is dysfunctional when the sender does not complete his message, but relies on the receiver to fill in.

Ex: "He isn't very . . . you know."

"As you can see . . . well, it's obvious."

(Satir, p. 71)

2. Vagueness of pronouns. A communication is dysfunctional when pronouns are used vaguely.

Ex: "We went and they got upset." (Satir, p. 71)

3. Missing connections. A communication is dysfunctional when connections in a person's messages are left out.

Ex: Th: (to wife) "I'm sorry I was late to our appointment today.

W: "Oh that's all right. Mark was running around the block."

Filled in such a message becomes:

"Oh that's all right. My dog got out of the house (my dog's name is Mark) and was running around the block. I had to run after him. It took some time to catch him. So I was late to our appointment, too." (Satir, p. 71)

4. Incomplete message due to self-blocking.

Does not complete or, "I think . . ." or some other rationale. This does not include false starts.

#### E. Collusion

Dysfunctional communication also occurs when the receiver of a dysfunctional communication responds to this message by either agreeing or disagreeing with it.

1. Positive collusion. If he agrees or accepts clear communication will not have taken place, since he



cannot be sure what it is to which he is agreeing. He may say:

"That picture is ugly, isn't it."

"She is selfish, isn't she."

"Yes, she was feeling such and such."

"Yes, women are like that."

"That certainly is the right way."

2. Negative collusion. If he disagrees, or ignores, he still cannot be sure with what he is disagreeing. He may say:

"That picture is not ugly. It is beautiful."

"She is not selfish. She is very generous."

"No, she was not feeling that. What she was feeling was . . . "

"No, women aren't like that. They're . . . ."  
(Satir, p. 67)

#### F. Covert requests

Dysfunctional communication occurs when a sender makes requests in covert ways without acknowledging that he is making a request.

1. Improper labeling of referent. He does not clearly label his wish which is behind his request, as his wish.

2. Denial of "request." Or, he may fail to label his wish as a wish. It becomes not a wish but a "must," which someone is commanded to do. (The commander

may be the other person or people in general, or "one's duty" or "voices" or something foreign inside of the self.)

3. Denial of "responsibility." Or, he may label his wish as not a wish but as "the lesser of two evils."

These are some examples of senders who communicate their requests in a dysfunctional (unclear) manner.

"You would like to see a movie tonight, wouldn't you."

"It would do you good to see a movie."

"If you want to see a movie, we'll see one."

"We might as well see a movie. It's Saturday night."

"There's a new movie house down the street."

"My voices are ordering me to see a movie."  
(Satir, p. 86)

#### G. Disqualification

Dysfunctional communication also occurs when a sender responds to requests to clarify or qualify (see IIB) in ways which tend to shut out feedback from the other, or in any instance of dysfunctional cut-off feedback.

1. Rebuffs. He may rebuff such requests:

"You know perfectly well what I mean."

"I couldn't be any clearer."

"You heard me." (Satir, p. 68)

2. Restatement. He may restate his case without altering it:

"As I said, women are . . . ." (Satir, p. 68)

3. Reemphasize. He may reemphasize his case without altering it:

"Women are not only X, they are also Y."

"That picture is not only ugly, it is positively revolting." (Satir, p. 69)

4. Accusations. He may accuse the questioner:

"Why get so picky?"

"You don't understand plain language."

"Must you 'peel and shred'?" (Satir, p. 68)

5. Evasion. He may evade the questions.

a. A person makes a dysfunctional communication when he may completely deny that he had a wish and also that the wish was expressed towards another person. He denies that he has made a request of the other. If the other person pursues his questions, the person who makes such a dysfunctional communication may go on to deny further. According to Satir (1964), Haley (1959) has said there are four parts of every message:

I (the sender)  
am saying something (message)  
to you (the receiver)  
in this situation (context)

All messages are requests, yet a person may deny this by denying any or all parts of his message.

Ex: "I didn't care one way or the other." (I didn't request anything.) "I just threw out a suggestion for what it was worth." (I didn't request anything.) "Whether or not you go to the movies is immaterial to me." (I didn't request anything of you.) "At one time, I might have wanted to go with you. But I know better now." (I didn't request anything of you just now.) (Satir, p. 87)

Other examples of denial are:

"No, I thought you wanted to go."

"No, I just thought we should."

"No, I don't necessarily want to go; I want to do what you want."

"There are times when I want to see a movie, but this isn't one of them."

"You can go or not. I don't care."

"If you want to be a stay-at-home, that's your business."

"If you go to the movies, you go to the movies."

"Nobody asked you to go. If you want to go, then go." (Satir, pp. 86-87)

There are also instances when a person asks for a response then disqualifies that response, e.g.:

1st person: "What do you want?"

2nd person: "#5."

1st person: "No!"

The second statement by the 1st person is coded IG5.

#### H. Non-acknowledgment

1. Non-responsiveness: silence. When a person doesn't respond to another's statement within 15 seconds.

2. Non-response collusion. When a person doesn't ask for acknowledgment for his message after such a pause but ignores the lack of response and continues as if he has been understood and acknowledged.

Ex: 1st person: "What do you think about going to the country with the kids?"

Silence

1st person: "I personally like the idea of staying at home and relaxing."

The second statement by the 1st person is scored as IH2.

3. Non-responsiveness: evasion. When a person doesn't respond to another person's request for acknowledgment by recognizing the first person's message but makes a statement irrelevant to their request for acknowledgment or interrupts the person before any clear message is sent.

Ex: 1st person: "Did you hear me?"

2nd person: "You know I just saw Mary Jane the other day and she was with . . ."

1st person: "Did you understand me?"

2nd person: "I think you ought to have your hair cut, Sam."

1st person: "Shall I repeat myself?"

2nd person: "Boy! I think it's hot here."

1st person: "How about choosing number 3 as our first choice?"

2nd person: "What do you think the Met's chances are this year?"

1st person: "My choice for three was --"

2nd person: "I thought I would put this next."

In all cases, the 2nd person's statements are scored as I:H3 statements.

4. Evasion collusion. When a person doesn't ask for acknowledgment after the receiver has evaded his message.

Ex: 1st person: "I would like to --"

2nd person: "Why don't we go out tonight?"

1st person: "That sounds like a good idea."

## II. Functional Communication

### A. Original functional

A functional statement is actually any statement not coded as dysfunctional, and not falling in any of the categories below.

A functional communication will include all four of the parts of a message as described above in section IG5.

Examples of originally clarified and clearly qualified messages are:

"Many people, at least the ones I have known, seem like that."

"This often happens to me, particularly at work."

"I find it hard to see how anyone could like fish."

"Maybe that's because I hate it."

"This way has worked for me. Maybe it would for you."

"I wouldn't expect him to want that; I wouldn't want it myself."

"I would call her selfish, but then she is probably different with other people. How is she with you?"

"To me, women are such and such. Do you agree?"

"I got the impression, from what you said, that you meant to do such and such. Did I size you up right?" (Satir, p. 69)

B. Requests for clarification or qualification

1. A communication is functional when in response to categories I:A-G the receiver does not stop to agree or disagree but first asks the sender to clarify or qualify.

2. It is also functional at other times when a person expresses he doesn't understand.

Ex: "What do you mean when you say that picture is ugly?"

"What does she do that strikes you as selfish?"

"How can you tell what I'm thinking? You aren't me."

"What do you mean 'everybody' is like that? Do you mean your wife, your boss or who?"

"Do you mean all women or just the women you have known?"

"What doesn't turn out right? What in particular?"

"Where, exactly, have such things happened to you? At home? At work?"

"Why does it surprise you that I like fish? You don't, but that doesn't mean I don't."

"What do you mean by doing something the 'right' way? Do you mean your way, or what?"  
(Satir, p. 68)

C. Senders clarifying and/or qualifying when requested by Receiver

1. In response to an originally dysfunctional communication.

A statement is a functional communication if the sender responds by trying to clarify his original statement to such requests to clarify and qualify by such statements as:

"Let me try to re-state that another way."

"Maybe I should give some examples."

"I operate from a certain assumption on this, I guess."

"Here's what I must be assuming . . . ."

"I overgeneralized, didn't I? I'll try to pin that down a bit more."



"I'm giving my impression; maybe you don't share it. How do you see it?"  
(Satir, p. 68)

2. Or in response to an originally functional communication that was misunderstood the sender responds in a similar way as in IIC1.

D. Acknowledging

1. Asking for acknowledgment. When after a silence such as is scored in IH2 or at other times, a person asks for acknowledgment of his message.

EX: "Did you hear me?"

"Shall I repeat what I said?"

"I would like an answer to what I asked."

"Did you understand what I said?"

Or: when after being interrupted as in I:H3 statements, a person asks for acknowledgment of his message, i.e.

"Wait a minute, I was saying . . ."

"Hold on, I haven't finished talking . . ."

2. Acknowledgment. In response to a II:D1 statement the receiver expresses he has been listening or has been trying to listen to the sender's message.

EX: "Oh, yes, I heard you and I think you are right."

"Oh, yes, please, I didn't understand you the first time."

"Of course, I think such and such . . ."

"Yes, I understood and I think that . . ."

"Um-hum, and I agree."

III. Exchange--an exchange is any two successive statements.

A. Dysfunctional exchanges occur:

1a. Dysfunctional-dysfunctional collusion.

When any statement coded in categories IA-G is followed by a statement being responded to by another dysfunctional statement.

1a. In general whenever any functional or dysfunctional communication is followed by a dysfunctional communication.

2a. Functional-dysfunctional: Disqualification. When II:B is followed by I:G. These are examples of a functional communication being followed by a dysfunctional communication and also:

2b. When II:A is followed by any dysfunctional communication.

B. Functional exchanges occur:

1a. Dysfunctional-functional: clarification.

When any statement coded in categories I:A-G is followed by a statement coded in IIB.

1b. Dysfunctional-functional: asking for acknowledgment. When any statement in IH is followed by a statement in II:D1.

2a. Functional-functional: functionality.

When a statement in II:B is followed by a statement in II:C. Or when a statement in II:D1 is followed by a statement in II:D2.

2b. Functional-functional: functionality.

In general whenever any functional statement follows another as for instance a statement categorized in II:D being followed by another statement in II:D or in II:C depending upon whether a return response is requested for clarification or qualification of a point.

Summary of DCCS--Notation System

I. Dysfunctional Communication

I:A (Distortions due to lack of specificity)

1. For who
2. For what
3. For where
4. For when

I:B (Distortions due to a lack of questioning common assumptions)

1. Universality
2. Allness
3. Sameness
4. Dichotomy

I:C (Distortions due to mis-allocation of referents)

1. Assumption of equivalence
2. Mindreading other
3. Mindreading self

I:D (Distortions due to incomplete messages)

1. Incompletion
2. Vagueness of pronouns
3. Missing connections
4. Self-blocking

I:E (Collusion)

1. Positive collusion
2. Negative collusion

## I:F (Covert requests)

1. Improper labeling of referent
2. Denial of request
3. Denial of responsibility

## I:G (Disqualification)

1. Rebuffs
2. Restatement
3. Reemphasize
4. Accusations
5. Evasion

## I:H (Non-acknowledgment)

1. Non-responsiveness: silence
2. Non-response collusion
3. Non-responsiveness: evasion
4. Evasion collusion

## II. Functional Communication

## II:A (Original functional)

## II:B (Requests for clarification or qualification)

1. Requests for clarification or qualification of dysfunctional communication
2. Requests for clarification or qualification of functional communication

## II:C (Senders clarifying and/or qualifying when requested by receiver)

1. In response to an originally dysfunctional communication
2. In response to an originally functional communication.

## II:D (Acknowledging)

1. Asking for acknowledgment
2. Acknowledgment

### III. Exchanges

#### III:A Dysfunctional exchanges

1. Dysfunctional-dysfunctional
2. Functional-dysfunctional

#### III-B Functional exchanges

1. Dysfunctional-functional
2. Functional-functional

Three judges were trained using this coding system with practice typescripts of marital dyads until they achieved at least 70% agreement on coding each statement. The judges met together with E twice a week for 2 hour training sessions for four months. They spent six more hours a week filling out the practice transcripts independently. These transcripts were then gone over together and consensual agreement reached for each statement after discussion. However see Table 1 for reliability of scoring for this study. The judges were all advanced undergraduate students majoring in psychology.

#### Revealed Differences Task

Ten RDT's were used. The first three are from Hofman's (1969) study. All ten are reproduced in Appendix A. These ten tasks deal with varying situations that could occur in a marriage or intimate relationship. Each task has a list of eight solutions. S's were instructed to individually rank these solutions in order of preference. After this had been done, S's were instructed to

answer three of the same tasks jointly (see procedure below). This procedure yields three rankings for these three RDT's, one by each of the spouses and one reflecting their joint decision. The discussion which ensued was tape recorded and type. After the first typing it was corrected twice by two different judges, who were among the 3 judges mentioned previously in the present study trained in the use of DCCS.

Two measures largely borrowed by Ferreira (1963) and Ferreira and Winter (1965) were used. Spontaneous Agreement (SA) is defined as the degree of agreement between spouses prior to any consultation. SA is obtained by a rank-order correlation between spouses' individual rankings. The average SA for all ten RDT's was used as a measure of attitudinal similarity; the higher the SA, the greater the assumed similarity. Choice Fulfillment (CF) was defined as the degree to which individual choices also became joint choices. CF was obtained by a rank-order correlation between Ss initial choices and joint choices. Normal families have been shown to have greater SA than abnormal families (see Ferreira, 1963; and Ferreira and Winter, 1965) and non-clinic families, compared to clinic families, also show a greater degree of CF (see Ferreira, 1963; Ferreira and Winter, 1965).

Tennessee Self Concept  
Scale (TSCS)

The TSCS was used to measure the level of self-esteem of members of couples. The TSCS, developed by Fitts (1965), is a short (100 items, average administration time is approximately 13 minutes) questionnaire designed to describe an individual's self-concept. Several scores are derived from the standardized procedure. The single most important one that was used in this study is Total P which reflects the overall level of self-esteem. This score is broken down by identifying different sources of esteem, both from an internal and external frame of reference. The scores Identity, Self-Satisfaction, and Behavior make up the internal frame of reference. Respectively, I describes or rates his basic identity (what he is as he sees himself), self-satisfaction or self-acceptance, and how he acts. The external frame of reference consists of physical-, moral-, personal-, family-, and social-self. A score was given each couple on self-esteem by averaging their total P's. It was believed that not too much information would be lost by combining a couple's score as Hofman (1969) showed that people with low self-esteem tend to be married to others who have low self-esteem and people with high self-esteem tend to be married to others with high self-esteem, thus supporting the homogamy principle that like attracts

like. Fitts (1965) has published correlations with other selected measures such as with the scales of the MMPI and the Edwards Personal Preference Test, which support the validity of the TSCS. In Hofman's (1969) thesis a table of mean scores (reprinted from Fitts, 1965) of a standardization group, a psychiatric group and a "personality integration group," show a significant difference among the groups for most of the TSCS variables.

### Subjects

Twenty-nine engaged couples were used in the study. The couples were recruited by placing an advertisement in the school newspaper (see Appendix A). The first 30 engaged couples to answer the advertisement were selected to be in the study. All the couples were paid \$10.00 apiece for their participation in the study. All the Ss in the experiment were either presently going to college or graduate school or had just recently graduated from college. Ss ranged in age from 19-23 years old and were all Caucasian. Of the 30 original couples, one was dropped from the data analysis of the study because they did not properly complete the procedures. The statistical analyses were conducted on data from 29 couples.



Procedure

All task completion took place in a room in the Psychology Building at Michigan State University. Ss were seated in a small room across from each other. The room was 8' x 12' and furnished with two chairs situated across from each other and a table off to the side of the chairs with a tape recorder, clearly visible on it. Ss, when seated, were presented with a booklet which included a general introduction and instructions followed by twelve tasks. Tasks 1 through 10 consisted of the 10 RDT's. Task 11 was the Interpersonal Comparison Tests, and Task 12 consisted of the TSCS. Ss were instructed to complete the tasks separately from each other without consulting each other, suggesting or discussing the answers. They were informed that the visible tape recorder would be used later. The E asked each spouse to turn in to him the first ten tasks upon their completion of them and then go on to complete Tasks 11 and 12. At that point E left the room informing Ss that he was available in the next room if problems arose. E also asked to be given the first ten tasks upon the couple's completion of them. Upon receiving the first ten tasks from both members of a couple, the E chose the three tasks in which the couple's answers were the most discrepant. This was done in order to maximize disagreement in the ensuing discussion that followed in the joint

session. After Ss finished all twelve tasks, they notified E who quickly checked their booklets to ensure that these had been completed properly. E then engaged the tape recorder and instructed Ss that they had disagreed considerably in their choices for three tasks and to again complete these three tasks, but to produce a ranking of solutions for each of these tasks which would be satisfactory or acceptable to both. After answering any questions E again left the room. Upon this joint completion of these three tasks, the Ss again notified E. This marked the end of the procedure.

## RESULTS

### Reliability of the Dysfunctional Communication Coding System (DCCS)

Table 1 shows the reliability coefficients and their level of significance for the D/F ratio and for each category of the DCCS. The reliability coefficients were derived by having each tape and its accompanying transcript of a couple's discussion rated independently by two of the trained judges. This double rating was done for each of the couples in the study. Two scores for the D/F ratio and each subcategory were thus obtained for each couple. Pearson product moment-correlations were then computed comparing both the judges' scores for each couple for the D/F ratio and for each subcategory. Thus 13 reliability coefficients and their level of significance were derived, one for the D/F ratio and one each for the 12 main subcategories of the DCCS. Of these measures the reliability coefficient of the D/F ratio was .81. The reliability coefficients for the DCCS categories ranged from a low of a nonsignificant -.09 to .52.

The results of the reliability tests for the DCCS measures indicate that coders were able to discriminate a statement as to its functionality versus its

TABLE 1.--Reliability coefficients of DCCS.

Categories	
Dysfunctional to functional statements ratio (D/F Ratio)	.81***
Distortions due to lack of specificity (I:A)	.52**
Distortions due to a lack of questioning common assumptions (I:B)	-.04
Distortions due to mis-allocation of referents (I:C)	.40*
Distortions due to incomplete messages (I:D)	.27
Collusion (I:E)	-.09
Covert Requests (I:F)	.50**
Disqualification (I:G)	.14
Non-acknowledgment (I:H)	.28
Original Functional (II:A)	.20
Requests for clarification or qualification (II:B)	.34†
Senders clarifying and/or qualifying when requested by receivers (II:C)	.10
Acknowledging (II:D)	.88***

†p < .10  
 \*p < .05  
 \*\*p < .01  
 \*\*\*p < .001

dysfunctionality. However, the reliabilities for the categories of the DCCS were in general much lower, only four out of the twelve subcategories attaining significance at the .05 level. Thus the D/F ratio of the DCCS was found to be a useful instrument in discriminating the degree of a couple's functional or dysfunctional communication. From the reliability results, though, further work seems to be needed on the DCCS in specifying exactly what kinds of dysfunctional or functional communications are made by different couples. Exceptions may be lack of specificity (I:A), misallocation of referents (I:C), covert requests (I:F), and acknowledging (II:D) which were found to be somewhat reliable.

Means and Mean Proportions  
of Main Variables

Table 2 contains the means of the main (non-communication variables. These means are for descriptive purposes and may act as reference points for the subject population used in the present study. It is interesting to note that the self-esteem measure was almost exactly identical for men and women in this study, both sexes falling 12 points below the standardized mean developed by Fitts (1965). Another interesting result was that on the average, a male's choice fulfillment was greater than a female's. Thus a male had a somewhat

TABLE 2.--Means of main variables.

Variables	Means
Spontaneous agreement (SA)	.59
Interpersonal Comparison Test Score (ICT)	23.07
Average choice fulfillment for both male and female ( $CF_{MF}$ )	.64
Average choice fulfillment for male ( $CF_M$ )	.67
Average choice fulfillment for female ( $CF_F$ )	.62
Average difference in choice fulfillment between males and females (Delta $CF_{MF}$ )	.27
Average self-esteem (Total P) for couples (Average P)	336.81
Average self-esteem for males ( $P_M$ )	336.86
Average self-esteem for females ( $P_F$ )	336.76
Number of dysfunctional categories used by a couple (#D,Cat.)	11.45

greater influence in getting his original choices fulfilled in the joint solution than his female partner.

Table 3 contains the mean proportions of the main communication variables. These proportional means indicate the average frequency of the different kinds of categories used by the couples in this sample. On the average an engaged couple in this study communicates dysfunctionally, as indicated by the D/F ratio, 37.5 percent of the time; the range was from a low of 20 percent to

TABLE 3.--Proportional means of communication variables.

Variable	Mean
D/F Ratio	.60
Lack of specificity (I:A)	.01
Assumptions of universality (I:B)	.06
Misallocation of referents (I:C)	.24
Incomplete messages (I:D)	.05
Collusion (I:E)	.41
Covert requests (I:F)	.11
Disqualification (I:G)	.01
Non-acknowledging (I:H)	.12
Original functional (II:A)	.92
Requests for clarifying and qualifying (II:B)	.04
Clarifying and qualifying (II:C)	.04
Acknowledging (II:D)	.00

a high of 52 percent of the time. (See Table 25, Appendix D for data on each couple.)

Of the categories, collusion (I:E) seemed to be the most frequent kind of dysfunctional communication. Other fairly frequent kinds of dysfunctional communication were misallocation of referents (I:C), covert requests (I:F) and non-acknowledging (I:H). For kinds of functional communication, original functional (II:A) predominates

with asking for and receiving clarification and qualification (II:B and II:C) only occurring 8 percent of the time and directly asking for acknowledgment of a message (II:D) almost never occurring (.0007 percent of the time).

#### Organization of the Data for Analyses of Variance

Analyses of variance were performed on the dependent variables by assigning each couple to one of eight subgroups according to their scores on the diversity of background measures, ICT and  $\overline{SA}$ , and on the self-esteem measure. Each couple was either put into the high diversity of background group or the low diversity of background group. A couple's grouping for diversity of background was determined by separately deriving the  $\underline{z}$  scores for both their ICT score and their  $\overline{SA}$  score and then adding both  $\underline{z}$  scores. These measures, ICT and  $\overline{SA}$  were found to be correlated  $-.54$ , which for 27 df is significant at the .01 level. This result is considered quite good as very different kinds of instruments were used to derive the ICT and  $\overline{SA}$  measures.

A positive  $\underline{z}$  score for the ICT measure was above its mean and for  $\overline{SA}$  below its mean. Those couples with positive combined  $\underline{z}$  scores were put in the high diversity of background group and those with negative combined  $\underline{z}$  scores were put in the low diversity of background group.



Each couple was also grouped according to their self-esteem scores. Z scores were derived for each member of a couple individually and then their z scores added together. Those couples with positive combined z scores were put in the high self-esteem group and those with negative combined z scores were put in the low self-esteem group. Thus at this point a couple could be in any one of four different cells, high diversity of background, high self-esteem; high diversity of background, low self-esteem; low diversity of background, high self-esteem; and low diversity of background, low self-esteem. In addition to these two main variables, diversity of background and self-esteem, a third variable was added. This variable, homogeneity versus heterogeneity in self-esteem (Ho-He), was added when the initial assumption that couples would have similar levels of self-esteem did not hold for this sample. Instead a non-significant correlation of .10 was found between the members of an engaged couple for level of self-esteem.

It was felt that such a result would mean that there would be two kinds of couples instead of one; one kind of couple would be close in their self-esteem and another kind would have disparate self-esteem levels. Thus another dimension, whether a couple did, indeed, have a similar level of self-esteem or whether their level of self-esteem differed, was added. Each couple

was either grouped into homogeneity or heterogeneity of self-esteem. A couple's grouping was determined by looking at each member's z score for self-esteem. If the z scores of both members of a couple were in the same direction for self-esteem, they were put into the homogeneous group; if the signs of their self-esteem z scores differed, they were put into the heterogeneous group.

Therefore the analyses of variance conducted on the data for each of the dependent variables consisted of a 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design with unequal cell frequencies. Thus, each couple was assigned to one of eight groups. These groups include:

high diversity of background (HDB), high self-esteem (HS-E), homogeneity (Ho), (4);

high diversity of background (HDB), high self-esteem (HS-E), heterogeneity (He), (5);

high diversity of background (HDB), low self-esteem (LS-E), homogeneity (Ho), (2);

high diversity of background (HDB), low self-esteem (LS-E), heterogeneity (He), (3);

low diversity of background (LDB), high self-esteem (HS-E), homogeneity (Ho), (3);

low diversity of background (LDB), high self-esteem (HS-E), heterogeneity (He), (4);

low diversity of background (LDB), low self-esteem (LS-E), homogeneity (Ho), (6); and

low diversity of background (LDB), low self-esteem (LS-E), heterogeneity (He), (2).

The number of couples in each cell is listed in parentheses after the cell name. As can be seen, the N in

each cell is low. The unequal cell frequencies were assumed to be due to population differences and thus a least squares solution was performed.

### Results of ANOVAS

#### Mutual Choice Fulfillment (Average $CF_{MF}$ )<sup>1</sup>

Analysis of the data for the variable Average  $CF_{MF}$ , choice fulfillment for a couple (Appendix B, Table 8), yielded a significant difference between level of diversity of background (DB) ( $F = 10.63$ ,  $df = 1,21$ ,  $p < .004$ ), the low DB group being significantly higher in average  $CF_{MF}$  (.70) than the high DB group (.58).

#### The Difference in a Couple's Average Choice Fulfillment (Delta $\overline{CF}_{MF}$ )<sup>2</sup>

Analysis of the data for Delta  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$ , the difference in choice fulfillment between members of a couple (Appendix B, Table 9), yielded a significant interaction between level of self-esteem (S-E) and level of diversity of background (DB), ( $F = 4.63$ ,  $df = 1,21$ ,  $p < .04$ ).

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<sup>1</sup>Average  $CF_{MF}$  being the average of both members' of a couple average CFs.

$$\frac{\overline{CF}_M + \overline{CF}_F}{2} = \overline{CF}_{MF}$$

<sup>2</sup>This variable was derived by taking the absolute difference in average CF for both members of a couple  
 $\overline{CF}_M - \overline{CF}_F = \Delta CF_{MF}$ .

Table 4 contains the means for the different levels of self-esteem and diversity of background.

TABLE 4.--Means of  $\Delta\overline{CF}_{MF}$  for self-esteem X diversity of background (S-E X DB) groups.

	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
High Diversity of Background	.33	.22
Low Diversity of Background	.15	.34

A test of simple effects was performed (Appendix C, Table 16) and revealed no significant simple main effects.

The significant S-E X DB (self-esteem X diversity of background) interaction and the consequent simple effects analysis suggest that couples who have either a high degree of similarity of backgrounds and who have higher than average self-esteem for couples used in this study or who have a high diversity of background and lower than average self-esteem have a greater degree of equality in their mutual choice fulfillment than couples with either high diversity of background and high self-esteem or couples with low self-esteem and low diversity of background.

The Ratio of Dysfunctional  
to Functional Statements  
(D/F Ratio)

For the variable D/F ratio (Appendix B, Table 10) there was a significant difference between homogeneity versus heterogeneity ( $F = 5.47$ ,  $df = 1,21$ ,  $p < .03$ ), with the homogeneous couples being significantly higher in their D/F ratio (.71) than the heterogeneous couples (.50).

Contrary to prediction, however, no significant interaction effect was found between level of self-esteem and level of diversity of background.

Functional-Functional  
(F-F) Exchanges

Contrary to prediction, analysis of the data for the variable F-F (Appendix B, Table 11) yielded no significant differences.

Functional-Dysfunctional  
(F-D) and Dysfunctional-  
Functional (D-F)  
Exchanges

Contrary to prediction, analysis of the data for the variables F-D and D-F combined (Appendix B, Table 12) yielded no significant differences.

Dysfunctional-Dysfunctional  
(D-D) Exchanges

Analysis of the data for the variable D-D exchanges (Appendix B, Table 13) yielded a significant

difference between homogeneity versus heterogeneity of level of self-esteem ( $F = 7.86$ ,  $df = 1,21$ ,  $p < .01$ ), the heterogeneous group being significantly lower in the proportion of D-D exchanges (.21) than was the homogeneous sample (.28).

These results indicate that couples whose level of self-esteem is similar, as indicated by similar directions of their  $z$  scores, will produce a significantly greater proportion of dysfunctional-dysfunctional exchanges than couples whose level of self-esteem differs.

Contrary to prediction, no significant differences were found for the S-E X DB interaction.

Combined Categories of  
Collusion, Disqualifi-  
cation, and Non-  
responsiveness  
(I:E,G,H)

Analysis of the data for the combined variables I:E, G and H (Appendix B, Table 14) yielded no significant differences, including no significant S-E X DB interaction.

Combined Categories of Asking  
for and Giving Clarification,  
Qualification, and Acknowl-  
edgment (II:B,C,D)

Analysis of the data for the combined variables II:B, C, and D (Appendix B, Table 15) yielded no significant differences.

### t-Tests for Sex Differences

t-tests for correlated data were conducted to compare sex differences for the D/F Ratio and for each subcategory of the DCCS. Table 5 contains both the proportional means for sexes, their respective t values and their significance levels.

These results indicate that males significantly differed from females in their higher frequency of incomplete messages and clarifying and qualifying and lower frequency of collusion and requests for clarification and qualification. In addition, males differed from females in their somewhat higher frequency ( $p < .10$ ) of covert requests. All of these results must be interpreted with extreme caution, however, because of the low reliability of the categories.

### Pearson Product-Moment Correlations

A number of Pearson product-moment correlations were computed to test certain assumptions and look at different relationships that might be of interest. All significance tests for these correlations were two-tailed. It was hypothesized that both diversity of background measures would correlate significantly with mutual choice fulfillment ( $\overline{CF}_{MF}$ ). The results of the correlations between SA and  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  (.84) and ICT and  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  (-.39) confirm this hypothesis.

TABLE 5.--Sex comparisons on the DCCS variables.

Variable	Proportional Means		<u>t</u>	p
	Male	Female		
D/F Ratio	.611	.605	.506	not significant
Lack of specificity (IA)	.007	.009	-1.190	n.s.
Assumptions of universality (IB)	.061	.048	1.201	n.s.
Misallocations of referents (IC)	.247	.225	1.155	n.s.
Incomplete messages (ID)	.060	.042	2.166	p < .05
Collusion (IE)	.370	.446	-2.207	p < .05
Covert requests (IF)	.120	.092	1.913	p < .10
Disqualification (IG)	.015	.011	.875	n.s.
Non-acknowledging (IH)	.122	.124	.550	n.s.
Original functional (IIA)	.922	.920	.413	n.s.
Requests for clarifying and qualifying (IIB)	.033	.051	2.681	p < .02
Clarifying and qualifying (IIC)	.045	.025	2.855	p < .01
Acknowledging (IID)	.0005	.0008	-1.007	n.s.



An assumption of the study was that level of self-esteem and diversity of background were two unrelated variables. Both correlations between SA and Average P (-.08) and ICT and Average P (-.02) confirm that there is no significant relationships between these variables. Another assumption of the study, based on Hofman's (1969) findings was that a couple's level of self-esteem would be correlated. The low correlation of .10 found with this sample did not confirm previous findings.

Other hypotheses were that dysfunctional communication as indicated by the D/F ratio would be related to diversity of background measures and to self-esteem. None of these measures yielded a significant relationship to the D/F ratio, although homogeneity versus heterogeneity of self-esteem did ( $r = .46$ ), the couples with similar self-esteem having greater dysfunctional communication than couples with different self-esteem.

Another relationship of interest was the non-significant relationship between dysfunctional communication and choice fulfillment. In addition, as the Interpersonal Comparison Test includes a number of subtests, it was thought it would perhaps be of interest to break the ICT into its subtests and see the relationship of these subtests to various other variables. These relationships appear in Table 6.

TABLE 6.--Table of correlations.

Variables	r	Level of Significance
$\overline{SA}$ and ICT	-.54	p < .01
$\overline{SA}$ and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	.84	p < .001
ICT and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	-.39	p < .05
$\overline{SA}$ and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	-.43	p < .02
ICT and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	.40	p < .05
$\overline{SA}$ and $\overline{P}$	-.08	n.s.
ICT and $\overline{P}$	-.02	n.s.
$\overline{P}$ and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	-.05	n.s.
$P_M$ and $P_F$	.10	n.s.
$\overline{SA}$ and D/F Ratio	-.12	n.s.
ICT and D/F Ratio	-.18	n.s.
$\overline{P}$ and D/F Ratio	-.18	n.s.
D/F Ratio and #D,Cat.	.51	p < .01
D/F Ratio and Test A	-.46	p < .01
D/F Ratio and "Past life Experiences"	-.38	p < .05
D/F Ratio and "Present Life Experiences"	.17	n.s.
D/F Ratio and "Attitudes Preceding Marriage"	.12	n.s.
D/F Ratio and "Person Thinking of Marrying"	.07	n.s.

Variables	r	Level of Significance
D/F Ratio and "Marriage and the Future"	.25	n.s.
$\overline{SA}$ and #D,Cat.	-.11	n.s.
ICT and #D,Cat.	-.41	p < .05
D/F ratio and Average $CF_{MF}$	-.08	n.s.
D/F ratio and $\overline{CM}_M$	.15	n.s.
D/F ratio and $\overline{CF}_F$	-.23	n.s.
Test A and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	-.22	n.s.
Test A and $\overline{CF}_M$	-.54	p < .01
Test A and $\overline{CF}_F$	.25	n.s.
"Past Life Experiences" (PLE) and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	.03	n.s.
"PLE" and $\overline{CF}_M$	-.18	n.s.
"PLE" and $\overline{CF}_F$	.13	n.s.
"Person thinking of marrying" and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	-.45	p < .02
Ho-He and D/F ratio	.46	p < .01
Ho-He and #D,Cat.	.74	p < .001
Ho-He and Test A	-.34	p < .10
Ho-He and "PLE"	-.35	p < .10
Ho-He and $\overline{CF}_{MF}$	-.21	n.s.

## Summary of Results

### Hypothesis 1

The results indicated that neither the ICT total score nor  $\overline{SA}$  is significantly predictive of a couple's D/F ratio, the correlations being  $-.18$  between ICT and the D/F ratio and  $-.12$  between  $\overline{SA}$  and D/F ratio.

Further correlations were carried out between the D/F ratio and the ICT's subtests to see whether certain aspects of a couple's diversity of background were more relevant than others to the degree of a couple's dysfunctional communication. It was found that Test A of the Interpersonal Comparison Test and the section "Past Life Experiences" (PLE) both correlated significantly with the D/F ratio, Test A's correlation with the D/F ratio being  $-.46$  ( $p < .01$ ) and Past Life Experiences' correlation with the D/F ratio being  $-.38$  ( $p < .05$ ). All the other parts of the ICT had low, insignificant positive correlations with the D/F ratio (see Table 6, p. 129).

Test A appears to incorporate measures of demographic background. For example, it asks for such information as the parents' educational level, the father's highest annual income, how many children were there in the family, and whether the parents were divorced and how many times. The "Past Life Experiences" subtest

seems to consist of a person's recollection of his past family and personal experiences.

Thus it seems that the degree to which a couple come from the same demographic background and had similar family and personal experiences while growing up, the greater their dysfunctional communication will be. These results seem to be in direct contrast to the stated hypothesis and to the theory and research evidence previously cited in this study that the greater the similarity of a couple's background, the less they will communicate dysfunctionally as their values will be similar and thus they will experience less threat over perceived differences.

### Hypothesis 2

A prerequisite for the confirmation of this hypothesis is the validity of hypothesis one. Since the results do not confirm that the greater a couple's diversity of background, the greater their dysfunctional-ity of communication, the supposition that couples who do have more diverse backgrounds and therefore communicate more dysfunctionally will also use fewer kinds of dysfunctional categories cannot be confirmed.

The relationship solely between the amount of dysfunctional communication (the D/F ratio), regardless of a couple's diversity of background, to the number of kinds of dysfunctional communication (#D,Categories) is

opposite to the predicted direction. The greater the dysfunctionality of communication, the more the number of kinds of dysfunctional communication, the correlation between the D/F ratio and #D,Cat. being .51 ( $p < .01$ ).

Partial support for the relationship between diversity of background and number of #D,Cat. was found. While  $\overline{SA}$  and #D,Cat. do not correlate significantly, ICT scores and #D,Cat. do correlate significantly ( $-.41$ ,  $p < .02$ ) in the predicted direction, the greater the diversity of background as measured by the ICT score, the fewer the number of kinds of dysfunctional communication. Of the correlations between ICT subtests and #D,Cat., it was found that only two subtests had significant correlations with #D,Cat. These two were Test A with a correlation of  $-.54$  ( $p < .01$ ) with #D,Cat. and "Past Life Experiences" (PLE) with a correlation of  $-.45$  ( $p < .02$ ). All the other subtests had insignificant low positive correlations with #D,Cat.

Homogeneity vs. heterogeneity was found to be significantly related to the number of dysfunctional categories. The correlation between Ho-He and number of dysfunctional categories being  $.74$  ( $p < .001$ ), the more similar a couple's level of self-esteem, the greater the number of dysfunctional categories they use.

### Hypothesis 3

No significant interaction effect was found between S-E X DB groups as indicated by the ANOVA for the D/F ratio found in Appendix B, Table 10.

### Hypothesis 4

The results of the ANOVA for the D/F ratio shown in Appendix B, Table 10 support this hypothesis as no significant S-E X DB interaction occurred. The mean for the HS-E, LDB group was .57 as compared to a mean of .59 for the LS-E, LDB group.

### Hypothesis 5

The results of the ANOVA for the D/F ratio shown in Appendix B, Table 11 indicates that there was no significant difference between levels for the S-E main effect. A significant difference ( $p < .03$ ) for the homogeneity versus heterogeneity of self-esteem main effect was found for the D/F ratio as indicated by the ANOVA for the D/F ratio (Appendix B, Table 10). The results indicated that homogeneity of self-esteem for a couple produces significantly more dysfunctional communication than heterogeneity of self-esteem for a couple, the means for the D/F ratio being .71 for homogeneity and .50 for heterogeneity.

Hypothesis 6

a. The results of the ANOVA for F-F exchanges (Appendix B, Table 11) do not support this hypothesis as no significant S-E X DB interaction was found. A difference approaching significance at the .08 level of significance was found for the Ho-He main effect, the homogeneous group producing less F-F exchanges than the heterogeneous group.

b. The ANOVA for D-D exchanges found in Appendix B, Table 12 do not support this hypothesis as no significant S-E X DB interaction was found.

A significant difference in D-D exchanges was found, though, for the Ho-He main effect. This difference in Ho-He groups was significant at the .01 level of significance, the homogeneous groups producing significantly more D-D exchanges.

c. The data summarized in Table 12, Appendix B does not support this hypothesis as no significant S-E X DB interaction effect was found.

d. The data summarized in Tables 14 and 15, Appendix B, indicate no significant S-E X DB interaction effects. Thus this hypothesis is not supported by the results.



Hypothesis 7

Results of correlations between ICT scores and  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  and between  $\overline{SA}$  and  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  both support the hypothesis. The results indicate that the higher the diversity of a couple's backgrounds, the lower their mutual choice fulfillment. In addition Table 8 shows a significant main effect for DB in the predicted direction at the .004 level of significance.

Hypothesis 8

The results do not support this hypothesis as indicated by a non-significant correlation between  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  and the D/F ratio of -.08.

## DISCUSSION

### Hypothesis 1

A possible although highly speculative explanation of the unexpected result that the greater the similarity of a couple's demographic background and their past life experiences, the greater their dysfunctionality of communication may be gleaned from Bernstein's (1964) research. Bernstein describes two types of families, those who are person-oriented and those who are status-oriented. According to Bernstein, members of the person-oriented families have elaborate communication codes while members of the status-oriented families have more restricted communication codes. Bernstein's description of a restricted code is cited on page 76 of this study. The description includes:

It removes the need in the speakers to elaborate verbally their unique experience. Hence the reduction of qualifiers of various kinds. The speech is relatively impersonal and serves to transmit similarity rather than differences in personal experience. . . . Finally the code is not generated by I.Q. but by the culture acting through the family relationships (p. 63).

What may have occurred in the present study was that the more similar a couple's demographic background and past life experiences, the more likely that they would be exposed to similar cultural influences, and thus

when communicating with each other resort to a more restricted (and possibly more dysfunctional) communication code than couples from different cultural backgrounds who do not share similar values and thus may constantly have to clarify and qualify what they say. Such an inference would gain further support if it could be shown that the sample used in this study were status-oriented couples rather than more person-oriented. It may then be a possibility from Bernstein's postulations that status-oriented couples with similar backgrounds would use severely restricted communication codes and thus communicate more dysfunctionally, while those status-oriented couples from different backgrounds would have to qualify and clarify more to be understood and thus communicate more functionally.

There is evidence that both Test A and "Past Life Experiences" have marginally significant correlations with the homogeneity versus heterogeneity of self-esteem dimension. These results show that the more similar a couple's level of self-esteem, the more similar their demographic background and their past life experiences. This result along with the results that the average self-esteem score for both males and females was 336.8 or 12 points below the standardized mean for self-esteem (Total P) for the TSCS (Fitts, 1965) seems to lend support to the postulation that the couples in this

sample are status-oriented, although it should be noted that such reasoning is highly speculative. Such an inference may be drawn when it is seen that according to Fitts' (1965) standardized distribution of self-esteem scores, that both males and females in this study on the average, fall in the lowest one-third of the population for self-esteem. On the whole, then, it is possible that the sample used in this study has lower self-esteem than the population as a whole. (This is assuming that Fitts' (1965) standardization is still applicable which may not be so.) The results of two studies at Michigan State University question this standardization. Daly (1968) found, on a sample of 150 MSU freshman males, an average self-esteem of 318.98. Hofman's (1969) study indicated married couples judged as exceptionally healthy only had an average self-esteem slightly above Fitts' (1965) standardized mean. Future research is needed on a wider sampling of couples to see whether the Tennessee Self-Concept scale standardization is valid. If such a speculation is valid, to bolster their self-esteem, low self-esteem couples are more likely to be concerned with group or social norms than with personal feelings. Thus such couples would fit Bernstein's description of status-oriented family members. In addition such couples would be less likely to clarify or qualify what they say as to do so would be to accentuate their differences, something

that low self-esteem, norm-concerned individuals avoid according to Satir (1964).

Since the range of self-esteem may possibly be severely truncated in the present study's subject sample (only three couples having both members fall above the standardized mean for Total P and one of the members in each couple just barely above the mean; see Appendix D, Table 17), one may tentatively infer that if Fitts' (1965) standardization is valid the couples in this sample would be basically low self-esteem, status-oriented couples. Thus the members of couples who were grouped in the homogeneity of level of self-esteem category, in general, would have low self-esteem, tend to have similar demographic backgrounds and past life experiences [as indicated by the correlations between Ho-He and Test A ( $-.34, p < .10$ ) and Ho-He and "Past Life Experiences" ( $-.35, p < .10$ )] and would be status-oriented. Therefore they would possibly be more likely to use restricted communication codes than couples who, although status-oriented and having low self-esteem, come from more dissimilar demographic backgrounds and past life experiences as indicated by the correlation between Ho-He and the D/F ratio being  $.46 (p < .01)$ .

Such evidence as was found for the restricted range of self-esteem of couples raises an important question for future research. If a broader range of

self-esteem for couples was included would those couples whose members both had self-esteems higher than the standardized means also have different demographic backgrounds and past life experiences than low self-esteem couples? And would these couples, who should be more person-oriented, be less dysfunctional in their communication than both members of a couple whose level of self-esteem is similar but low or even members of a couple whose level of self-esteem differ, one being high and one being low? Such a sampling would thus be able to test whether it is similarity of level of self-esteem alone that produces greater dysfunctionality of communication, despite the absolute level of a couple's self-esteem, or whether there is an interactive effect between degree of similarity of self-esteem and a couple's absolute level of self-esteem. In the present study, the results lend credence to a significant relationship between homogeneity of level of self-esteem and dysfunctionality, but the possible truncatedness of the sample does not allow a testing of whether the absolute level of self-esteem makes a difference in dysfunctionality of communication.

Another, possibly simpler, explanation is that the homogeneity or heterogeneity of level of self-esteem main effect, regardless of absolute level of self-esteem, is the main determinant of a couple's dysfunctionality of

communication. Such an explanation would explain the lack of relationship of diversity of background to dysfunctionality of communication. In addition the results suggest that an individual's demographic background and past life experiences are related to self-esteem. Such results are congruent with such theories of self-esteem as Sullivan's (1953) in which he states that an individual's self-esteem is largely determined by the way others view him and by his interactions with significant others. A family's demographic background is an important determinant of how others see the members of a family. Couples with such similar backgrounds tend to have similar levels of self-esteem and produce greater dysfunctionality of communication than couples whose level of self-esteem and backgrounds are different. The above relationships possibly explain the incongruent results between this study and Hofman's (1969) study for relatedness of self-esteem in couples, in the following way:

In the present study the couples were engaged, and it is assumed that their demographic background is based on their family of origin's demographic background and the bulk of the past life experiences of an engaged couple are not shared, but have taken place before they have met. Thus the main determinants of the self-esteem of members of an engaged couple are largely independent. For married couples, as were studied by Hofman (1969),

the longer that they are married, the more shared experiences they have and also the more likely they are to base their demographic background on their present family of orientation. Thus the longer a couple is married, the more it is possible their married life would influence their individual levels of self-esteem.

In addition members of married couples, on the whole, regardless of length of marriage ought to have more related self-esteem than members of engaged couples as the married couples are likely to have more of a past history together than engaged couples (some who might split up before marriage), and are more likely to see their demographic background as a mutual one than engaged couples are.

Such a postulation may be tested by following engaged couple's over the course of their marriages. It is anticipated that over time a married couple's self-esteem would grow together and become more related.

### Hypothesis 2

A possible explanation for the diverse results for hypothesis 2 may be found when it is remembered the homogeneity versus heterogeneity of self-esteem (Ho-He) correlated significantly with the D/F ratio and also marginally significant with both Test A and "Past Life Experiences" (PLE). There was also a significant



relationship between Ho-He and number of dysfunctional categories. Homogeneity versus heterogeneity of level of self-esteem could be a common factor influencing a couple's dysfunctionality of communication and the number of kinds of dysfunctional communication they use.

A restricted communication code though does not explain why the greater the dysfunctionality of communication, the greater the variety of kinds of dysfunctional communications. A possible explanation for this result may come from Haley (1963). Haley talks about there being two major types of communication exchange; symmetrical and complementary. In a symmetrical exchange similar behaviors are exchanged, while when different behaviors are exchanged, it is termed complementary. In the symmetrical relationship both members are considered equal and a lot of "maneuvering" may take place to see who controls what in a relationship. In a complementary relationship, one member is in the "one up" position and one is "one down." The rules of the relationship are clearly defined along these lines and little "maneuvering" need take place to see who is in control of what aspect of the relationship.

It could be inferred that couples whose level of self-esteem are similar also perceive each other more as equals and are thus more likely to come into conflict over the definition of different areas of their

relationship than couples whose level of self-esteem differ and thus perceive each other as unequals. These "unequal" couples would more readily work out a definition of their relationship then, in the situation where the higher self-esteem member is "top banana" and the lower self-esteem member is the "underdog." Thus it is postulated that couples with similar levels of self-esteem generally have symmetrical relationships while couples with different levels of self-esteem adopt more complementary relationships.

If this inference is valid, then it would follow that those couples with similar levels of self-esteem, in general, have symmetrical relationships. In such a relationship there is a struggle for control. The increased conflict is likely to produce more dysfunctionality of communication. In such a relationship there would be more maneuvering, which places the relationship in question. As a couple (especially a young, engaged couple) struggle over gaining control of the different areas of the relationship, they are likely to utilize more and different kinds of maneuvers than members of an established, well-delineated relationship.

The significant relationship among similarity of socio-economic background, past life experiences, and similarity of self-esteem lend further support to the above idea that similar levels of self-esteem are related

to symmetrical relationships in couples. Bernstein (1964) states that the more similar a person's cultural background, the more likely they will exchange similar types of communications (behavior). This agrees with Haley's (1963) definition of a symmetrical relationship as one in which similar behaviors are typically exchanged.

#### Hypotheses 3 and 4

Satir (1964) believes that diversity of background (perceived differences) and self-esteem would have an interactive effect on a couple's dysfunctionality of communication. As shown in Table 10 (Appendix B) no such significant interactive effect was found. A possible explanation is that the strong Ho-He main effect may confound whatever smaller interactive effect a couple's degree of diversity of background and level of self-esteem may have on their degree of dysfunctionality of communication. Support for this contention is given by looking at Table 7 which contains the cell means for the D/F ratio for the Ho-He variable within each S-E x DB group.

Here it is seen that for each S-E X DB group, there is a wide deviation between homogeneity of level of self-esteem and heterogeneity of level of self-esteem, those couples with homogeneity of self-esteem regardless of S-E X DB group producing more dysfunctional

TABLE 7.--Cell means for D/F ratio for self-esteem x diversity of background x homogeneity-heterogeneity (S-E x DB x Ho-He) groups.

	High Self-esteem		Low Self-esteem	
	Homo-geneity	Hetero-geneity	Homo-geneity	Hetero-geneity
High diversity of background (HDB)	.71	.49	.76	.60
Low diversity of background (LDB)	.66	.48	.71	.46

communications. It is suggested that in future research couples be selected for their homogeneity of level of self-esteem to control for the influence of the Ho-He main effect.

#### Hypothesis 5

A possible explanation for the insignificant relationship found between the average self-esteem of a couple and their degree of dysfunctional communication may again be the result of the Ho-He main effect which cuts across both high and low levels of self-esteem and may confound any effect of the absolute level of a couple's self-esteem.

Another possible explanation is that the original hypothesis assumed that the members of a couple's self-esteem would be significantly related. As this was not found to be true for the sample used in this study, a

confounding may have taken place by utilizing a couple's average self-esteem.

A third possible explanation could be the restricted range of self-esteem in the sample used in this study. A wider range of average self-esteem of couples could possibly increase the correlation of dysfunctionality of communication to average self-esteem as the variability between couples for self-esteem would be increased.

To test this postulation future research should include couples with a wider range of average self-esteem.

#### Hypothesis 6

The results for hypothesis 6 seem to further support the postulation that the homogeneity of level of self-esteem couples in this study seem to have established mainly symmetrical relationships. That they produce somewhat less F-F exchanges than heterogeneity of level of self-esteem couples and significantly more D-D exchanges than these couples can possibly be explained by the relatively undefined nature of their relationship. As it is postulated, homogeneous couples are in conflict over who is to be in control of their relationship and will make many more maneuvers than heterogeneous couples. If symmetrical couples consider each other equals, and each member responds with similar behavior to the other then

the significantly higher proportion of D-D exchanges found in homogeneous couples as compared to couples differing on level of self-esteem is supportive of such a contention. These latter couples do not perceive such a need to "jockey for position" by using dysfunctional maneuvers. That no significant difference was found between F-D and D-F exchanges might also be explained by the attempts of the symmetrical couples to one-up their partner, being balanced by the complementary or collusive behavior on the part of heterogeneous couples. Thus a member of a symmetrical couple may respond to a functional statement by making a dysfunctional maneuver to avoid his partner's attempt at defining a relationship while a member of a complementary couple may respond to a dysfunctional statement by colluding.

Unfortunately due to the limits of the reliability of categories of the present study, it was not possible to discriminate such maneuvers from collusion. The dysfunctional communication coding system needs to be further refined to be able to make such discriminations.

#### Hypothesis 7

The results support the hypothesis that the less a couple's diversity of background and attitudes, as measured by SA and ICT separately and combined, the greater a couple's mutual choice fulfillment as measured by Average  $CF_{MF}$ .

Looking at the subtests of the ICT, the only one that has a significant correlation ( $-.45$ ) with  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  is the one, "Person Thinking of Marrying." Thus it seems that the single most important influence in a couple's achieving high mutual choice fulfillment is the degree to which they each perceive the other similarly. In other words, the more they see each other as similar the greater will be their mutual satisfaction in making decisions (as measured by  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$ ). This is the converse of Satir's (1964) postulation that the greater the perceived differences, the more the disappointment of couples and lack of need satisfaction. In this case, the less the perceived differences, the less the disappointment and the greater the need satisfaction. Such a postulation is given support from a study by Hurley and Silvert (1966) in which the greater the degree to which a mate's image was congruent with his partner's, the higher the couple's marital adjustment.

When one looks at the S-E X DB interaction for the variable delta  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$ , it is seen that both the high self-esteem, low diversity of background and the low self-esteem, high diversity of background groups have mean delta  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$ 's significantly smaller than the other two groups.

When these results are compared with the significantly higher average  $CF_{MF}$  for the low diversity of

background group than the high diversity of background group, some very interesting relationships start to appear.

First it can be seen that those couples, in the HS-E, LDB group, who have high average choice fulfillment also are close together in their choice fulfillment as indicated by a delta  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  of only .15. Apparently the couples with both high self-esteem and similar backgrounds are able to work out solutions equally and highly satisfactory to both, at least for the kinds of tasks involved in this study. In contrast if a couple had high self-esteem but diverse backgrounds, their mutual choice fulfillment is impaired and one partner gets his way over the other. For a couple who have low diversity of background and low self-esteem, their average choice fulfillment is also high due to the strong relationship of diversity of background with choice fulfillment, but they are unable to arrive at mutually satisfactory decisions, but rather they seem to work out a solution in which one person's needs predominate.

For the high diversity of background, low self-esteem couples, their average difference in choice fulfillment is also low. Apparently, a LS-E, HDB couple share fairly equally in their decisions, but have a low degree of average choice fulfillment. Thus a LS-E, HDB couple could be described as reaching solutions in which



they both have equal influence but are mutually unsatisfactory to both.

Such a description might be comparable to Jackson and Lederer's (1968) categorization of married couples. A high self-esteem, low diversity of background couple resembles the description of a stable-satisfactory relationship, both members sharing equally in making satisfying decisions to both. The stable-unsatisfactory relationship of Jackson and Lederer also resembles low self-esteem, high diversity of background couples as their relationship consists of relatively mutually unsatisfactory decisions but they have worked out a rule to share equally in the decisions so one partner would be less likely to resent the other for getting all the "goodies." The unstable-satisfactory relationship seems best represented by the low self-esteem, low diversity of background couples. Here the mutual choice fulfillment is relatively high and thus satisfactory, but unequal. The inequality of need satisfaction is likely to create instability as the less influential decision-making partner would more likely feel deprived in contrast to his partner and thus feel resentful towards his partner and want to change the relationship. The unstable-unsatisfactory relationship seems to best fit the high self-esteem, high diversity of background couples. Here need satisfaction is generally low with

one partner being much more influential than the other in decision-making. The less influential partner would thus be more likely to opt for change in the relationship, making it unstable.

Such a classification system could be tested by following a sample of engaged couples throughout their marriages and administering marital satisfaction tests and keeping a record of divorces. For example it could be predicted that stable satisfactory relationships would have high marital satisfaction and a low amount of separations or divorces. A stable-unsatisfactory relationship would also have a low percentage of divorces and separations but also low marital satisfaction while divorces and separations would be higher for both unstable groups. Marital satisfaction would also probably fluctuate more in the unstable groups while the stable groups' marital satisfaction would probably be fairly consistent over time. Such a research project is being planned by the present author for the present sample.

#### Hypothesis 8

Mutual choice fulfillment was not found to correlate significantly with the D/F ratio. A possible explanation for this is that couples did not differ that greatly on either factor, self-esteem and diversity of

background, and so the relationship between choice fulfillment and dysfunctional communication only shows up when the two extreme ends of both variables are compared.

Another possible explanation for these results can be gleaned when comparing Test A (a measure of similarity of demographic background) with  $\overline{CF}_F$  and  $\overline{CF}_M$ , the correlations are in similar directions as a comparison of  $\overline{CF}_F$  and  $\overline{CF}_M$  with the D/F ratio. The correlation between Test A and  $\overline{CF}_M$  was  $-.54$  ( $p < .01$ ) and with  $\overline{CF}_F$   $.25$  (not significant). This difference is significant at the  $.001$  level of significance (two-tailed  $t = 3.88$ ). Therefore the greater the difference in a couple's demographic background, the lower a male's choice fulfillment. When this result is paired with the significant relationship existing between Test A and The D/F ratio, one may possibly state that the more similar a couple's demographic background (measured by Test A), the greater their dysfunctional communication (D/F ratio) and the greater a male's choice fulfillment.

Looking at sex comparisons (Table 5, p. 127) for kinds of dysfunctional communication, males were found to produce significantly more vague and incomplete messages (I:D), make more covert requests (I:F) and make significantly less collusive (I:E) statements than did females.

An overall conclusion can then be drawn for this sample that the more similar a couple's demographic background (Test A), the more likely couples will communicate dysfunctionally, with the males using vague and covert messages and the females colluding with these covert wishes. Females are more likely to permit the males to achieve greater need satisfaction by such collusion. It would seem that differences in a couple's perceived demographic background benefit the female, since much more clarification takes place in such couples than in couples with similar backgrounds. This is probably true since couples with differences in background tend not to adhere to the same cultural myths. In all probability couples in this study from similar demographic backgrounds seem to adhere to a certain degree of sex typing, which is characteristic of our American culture. This myth involves the female not expressing her individuality and own needs in order for her to "get" her man. It seems that for couples in this study from different demographic backgrounds, this sex typing does not hold up. Perhaps in being liberal enough to cross social class lines, these couples are also liberal enough to disregard stereotyped sex roles. The increased clarification seems to benefit the female by allowing her to more clearly know the male's position and then be free to challenge it. When it is seen that women ask for significantly more

clarification and qualification than males, it is better understood how for more functional couples females can get the male's position clear as males do clarify significantly more than females and better fulfill their choices. For highly dysfunctionally communicating couples such a premise does not hold as the requests for clarification or qualification by females are probably an artifact of the high proportion of vague, incomplete, and covert requests by males.

Therefore the more similar a couple's demographic background, the more likely the male's vagueness and covert requests will go unchallenged and the higher his choice fulfillment. While the more dissimilar a couple's demographic background, the more likely a male's covert messages will be challenged by the female and the more likely she will get more of a say in the decisions.

#### External Validity

Before concluding, it is necessary to discuss the restrictions on the external validity for this study.

It is, first of all, limited to a small sample of engaged couples who are or recently were college undergraduates or graduate students and participated for a small financial reward. The age range for this sample was between 19 and 23. In addition, the subjects were Caucasian and basically all middle class and thus

the results cannot be extended to other social classes or races.

Another possible limitation on the external validity of this study is the small N used per cell. Due to the small N's, some of the results may have been due to chance. For future research much larger N's per cell are suggested to test whether the results found in this study hold up.

Another important restriction is that the range of the self-esteem in the engaged couples was truncated, the couples, on the average, falling in the lower third of Fitt's (1965) sample.

Another important question is how valid are the relationships found in this experimental situation to a couple's real life decisions and relationship outside of the experimental setting? Do the interactions in this experimentally-induced minimally stressful situation reflect how a couple would generally interact under "real-life" stressful conditions? The E's subjective impression from listening to the tape recordings of the couples' discussions was that the overwhelming majority of the couples were extremely involved in the experimental situation and were quite serious about what was going on.

An example of the seriousness of a couple and their degree of involvement is excerpted, from a tape,

below. This particular couple (couple 22) spent over a half-hour trying to work out a solution to the tasks, but were unable to come to an appropriate solution; instead, they just relisted their original solutions next to the others. They did make up a couple of solutions of their own for each task but these solutions were not among those of the choices given to them. From the tape it was clear that this couple understood the instructions.

21. S. I'd like to know why, if you're living with the kids all the time, you'd want to take a vacation with them.

22. H. Yeah, well, I guess it's a family thing, you know. Pretty close. And this is the way I feel. Uh, I don't want kids for a while. Which you know that. I don't want kids for a while and uh, when I do have them, I want them, you know. And I'm interested in them. And if they want to go, I'd like to do it as a family, because of that sort of, perhaps background. That sort of good feeling that I have, plus I come from a smaller family so it's not as much of a hassle for me. You know, or it wasn't when I was a kid. Much of a hassle for our family to pick up stakes and move everybody as it was for yours. So, well, I guess what I'm saying is, when I'm a father I want to be a father. (Don't you think having kids around . . .)

23. S. Ok. And then having kids around, it's not going to, on your vacation, its not going to limit you to what you can do? Cause you've got a five year old. That means you can't go out at night when you're away, unless you can really depend on that fourteen year old to take care of him. Or you had the money for a babysitter, and if you've been saving money (Yeah) for college all the time, that's going to be rough.

24. H. Yeah, that's a point. I guess, for one thing, one thing that was involved with my choice, were the choices there were sort of family choices. Go on a vacation in the country, you know.
25. S. Mm hm.
26. H. Ok, if you're going on a vacation in the country, uh, you'd take the kids. If I was going to go to New York and booze it up for a weekend, I wouldn't take the kids. You know. (Yeah.) But if I was going to the country, even if I was going to Europe, I'd want to take the kids. Because I'd want them to see it.
27. S. Mm hm. But there's another consideration then, too.
28. H. All right.
29. S. In that, if it's a, um, you've been saving money so the kids could go to college. Um, it's like you were saving money so that they would be able to do what they wanted to do as far as vacation themselves one day. Isn't that true? I mean, look at it that way.
30. H. Well, I'm saving money to give them an opportunity. Let's put it that way.
31. S. Ok.
32. H. To spend their lives . . . I guess it would depend on what you were doing with me. I guess it would depend on what you were doing and how much you had done with your kids. Like, if you were going to Europe for the first time or if I was, if we were, and uh, the kids had never had that chance, I'd want to take them. And when I think about vacation right now, I think about Europe or Mexico. Uh, if I was going to the country, I'd take them because what the hell else is there to do in the country, you know.
33. S. Right. That's why I chose three. (Yeah.) And you chose one for that. We're closest on that.



34. H. Yeah, cause I wanted to go somewhere, see, and I didn't want to leave the kids behind and that was the only opportunity I was given. I would have much rather have said go to Europe with the kids.
35. S. Then why don't we say that?
36. H. Ok.
37. S. That could be an alternative.
38. H. Yeah.
39. S. But, that would presuppose we'd have an awful lot of money. That's the only problem.
40. H. Well, we'll just have to get rich.
41. S. I don't know.
42. H. I don't know if you have to have an awful lot of money to. . . . I guess you would. (But that's all. . . .)
43. S. I guess it depends on. . . . (Depends on your kids.) depends on what we've done before too.
44. H. Yeah.
45. S. Like, if this is our first trip to Europe I sure wouldn't want to take the kids with me.
46. H. You wouldn't.
47. S. No.
48. H. I would. See there's the difference. If it was our second trip to Europe I might not take the kids with me. The kids have never been. See what I mean? But, ok, maybe this is it. Maybe this is our difference. I don't want kids until I've had the chance to take a trip to Europe with you. So it wouldn't be our first with me.
49. S. Ok.
50. H. See, I want to go where I want to go with you, and see what we want to see before we have kids. If possible. Cause I think that's important. So

this wouldn't be our first trip to Europe. It would be their first opportunity. Maybe that's the difference.

51. S. And you said that the desire to go away was probably the biggest thing for both of us, but, your second choice was stay around the house, and spend much more time with the kids.
52. H. Yeah, I figure if I've been working hard all this time to send them to college I probably haven't seen enough of them.
53. S. Ok.
54. H. I'm talking from the standpoint, my biggest thing was the kids. Ok, I'm a father now. You know. Fathers don't spend enough time with their kids today. You know. And so kids get left alone, especially boys. They just don't have anything to identify with. Uh, so I probably would, given those alternatives, because like I said, I want to be a young married man with you for a long time before I have kids. And I want to do things. Do the things we want to do as a couple. Get that out of our system before we have them, because I don't want to feel tied down by the kids.
55. S. Yeah, but does it ever completely go, the desire to . . . .
56. H. Oh I don't . . . no, I don't think it completely goes. But I think that you get a lot of these needs worked out before you have them. And like I said, I'd go to New York for a weekend and leave the kids with the grandparents. But that wouldn't be a vacation for me.
57. S. I guess I have a hard time understanding. I say, I'm having a hard time understanding, uh, why parents would want to spend their free, leisure time with kids.
58. H. Cause they dig them, and I love them.
59. S. If they haven't . . . if they have . . . do that most of the year.

60. H. If. But when you're working, you don't really get that much time with your kids. Especially when your kids are in school and running around and . . . with their friends, and . . .
61. S. Yeah, but the kids aren't going to particularly sit around the house waiting for you to talk to them.
62. H. No, they're not and that's the point. Neither are you going to sit around the house waiting for your kids to get in to talk to you.
63. S. Why don't we just catch up on some odds and ends that fell behind while we were working.
64. H. No.
65. S. The closest one we came to . . . .
66. H. See that's something I was doing when I first met you. Or right after I met you. Loafing around and catching up on odds and ends, see. I don't want to do that.
67. S. Well you had that as your third choice.
68. H. That's a third choice.
69. S. Ok.
70. H. I'd rather do that than loaf around and do nothing. See. But I don't dig that too much anymore.
71. S. So what would you do? So what shall we do?
72. H. What I would say. . . . Well none of the answers are good for us. See?
73. S. All right. So let's make up some of our own.
- Toward the end of their discussion, the following interchange occurred:
242. H. Ok, let's just go to Europe. Hell. That's an improvement on your mind anyway. We'll pay it off when we get back.
243. S. Pay off what?
244. H. The thousand bucks.

245. S. Oh, well, we're not considering. . . .
246. H. Or what we owe on the car. If we don't owe anything, we'll go to Europe. Let's go to Europe. To hell with this madness.
247. S. What if we owe everything?
248. H. It's not in there. We go to Europe.
249. S. Go to Europe. Oh, just put it on a honeymoon. Maybe we won't want to go there.
250. H. Besides, you're running out of tape. Tonight I'd like to go to a bar and drink beers. How about you? Speaking of trips.
251. S. Hm?
252. H. Speaking of trips, tonight I'd like to go to a bar and drink beers. Beers and mixed drinks.
253. S. Smoke grass, it's got less calories.
254. H. We pretty well set?
255. S. Yeah. I guess. I'd like to look at some of these other ones too. Turn it off.

#### Concluding Remarks

Many interesting questions have been raised by this study that can only be answered by future research. Among these are the question of whether a couple's degree of mutual choice fulfillment in the experimental situation would generalize to their degree of marital satisfaction. Will the classificatory schema proposed in this study accurately depict an engaged couple's marital life? Future research, studying those engaged couples who marry, is planned for the future. By so doing, one might be able to see how such measures as average choice

fulfillment and the difference in average choice fulfillment are predictive of the course of a couple's marital relationship. Such longitudinal research could also yield information concerning whether a couple's self-esteem does grow together over the course of their marriage as was postulated earlier.

In addition, it is believed important to do further research with a wider range of engaged couples, especially for self-esteem. Such an increased range of sampling would then be able to test out how critical a couple's degree of dysfunctional communication is to their mutual choice fulfillment.

Additional research to compare measures of symmetry or complementarity of a relationship to homogeneity or heterogeneity of level of self-esteem is needed to confirm whether the type of relationship a couple has influences their degree of dysfunctional communication.

An extremely important finding in this study was that the higher a couple's diversity of background, regardless of their level of self-esteem, the lower their mutual choice fulfillment in the experimental situation. Further research needs to be done to determine whether a couple's diversity of background also influences their mutual choice fulfillment in their married life. If this is so, then such a finding has important implications

for premarital counseling. In such a case, engaged couples who have a high diversity of background could be screened and offered premarital counseling. The premarital counseling would need to focus on the acceptance of perceived differences between the couple and thus lessen the adverse effect of a high diversity of background as the couple's "romantic myth" is shattered.

Another interesting question raised is, do college students who get engaged in college have lower self-esteem than those students who marry later and if so, why? Do those couples who get engaged and married earlier do so because they are insecure over their future and choose the first person who comes along and hence have lower self-esteem than those individuals who are more confident in their ability to meet someone and wait until the "right" one comes along and hence have higher self-esteem? The lower average self-esteem in the sample in the present study may be either a result of a change in the normalization standards of self-esteem for the general population or a real difference between engaged college students and the general population. One way to test this out would be to compare engaged and randomly selected "unattached" college students and also try and get a sampling of the general population.

Finally, the interaction measures developed in this study, such as a couple's degree of dysfunctional communication, need to be tested against other measures of clarity of communication to validate the utility of such measures. Future research should also include replication using the same communication variables and the same sample to test out the stability of such measures over time.

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## APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS AND TASKS

ADMINISTERED TO SUBJECTS

### Advertisement for Subjects

Attention: "LOVING" (Unmarried) and ENGAGED COUPLES ARE NEEDED

As participants in a study to determine what attracts people to each other. Those selected to participate will receive \$10 for approximately 1-1 1/2 hours of their time. Please contact Mr. Harvey Oaklander at 355-1039 on Monday-Friday 7-9 P.M.

## DIRECTIONS

Psychologists have studied and tried to understand the individual person for a long time. Some important discoveries and gains in helping people who somehow find life difficult have been made. It is now realized that a person's interpersonal relationships and his family background have a great deal to do with how he acts. This procedure, in which you have been asked to participate, is designed to help us understand what are the elements that make up a successful intimate relationship like your own and how such intimates relate to each other.

There are several tasks which you will be asked to complete in this procedure. Most are contained in this booklet. The blue booklet, also on your desk, you will not need till later. Read the directions for each task as you are ready to complete that task. Do not read ahead in the directions for the other tasks; instead, do them one at a time in the order presented in this booklet. Upon completion of task ten, turn in these ten tasks to the assistant and wait to continue tasks eleven and twelve until your fiancée has also turned in the first ten tasks.

It is important that you do not help each other except in case one of you does not understand the directions of a task. It is also important that you follow the directions carefully and answer all of the questions without leaving any blank spaces. It is not necessary to work as fast as possible, so take your time and consider each question carefully.

All information will be held strictly confidential.

## Revealed Differences Tasks

This task consists of ten different situations. They most likely will never occur in your life, but they do happen to some people. Please imagine that the situations described actually are happening to you. Your task is to try to imagine how you would feel in each situation and how you would most likely react or try to solve the problem. To make it somewhat easier, each situation includes a list of possible solutions or preferences. Your task is to rank these preferences; i.e., put a number 1 by your first preference which you feel you most likely would do, a number 2 by the next preference, etc. until all possible solutions have a number.

Do these one at a time; do not read ahead in the directions before you have finished each task.

Also, please remember that the more seriously you do each of these tasks, the more value it will have.

Imagine that you have been married five years and that one day you come home and find a letter in your mailbox which informs you that you have won ten thousand dollars cash in a sweepstakes. You are of course elated and very excited, especially since you had already forgotten that you had entered the contest. Below you will find a list of what people might do with ten thousand dollars. Your task is to put a number 1 by the item most attractive to you, a number 2 by the next most attractive, etc., until all items have a number indicating your order of preference. Imagine that your general financial situation, living quarters, and bank account is similar to the standard of living that you have been accustomed to all your life. Be sure that each item has a number from 1 to 8, where 1 is the most and 8 the least attractive item.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Take a vacation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Invest the money
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pay overdue bills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Buy sporting equipment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Buy a boat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Redecorate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Build a den in your basement
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use it for a downpayment on a new house

Imagine that you have been married for 15 years and have 2 children, a boy and a girl aged 12 and 10 respectively. Both of them have been receiving some information about human reproduction in the classroom as well as from other children. You accidentally overhear them discussing it and you realize that their information is quite incorrect and misleading. They are not aware that you overheard them. How would you handle this situation? Please answer this question by ranking the possible alternatives listed below. Place a number 1 by the alternative you feel would be the best way to handle it, a number 2 by the next best way, etc., until all 8 items have a number from one to eight.

\_\_\_\_\_ Do nothing; ignore it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reprimand them, and forbid them to talk about such subjects.

\_\_\_\_\_ Walk away, but tell your spouse and ask him/her to talk to them later.

\_\_\_\_\_ Attempt to find out which teacher gave them the incorrect information and report it to the principal.

\_\_\_\_\_ Walk away but later talk to your son/daughter and ask your husband /wife to talk to the other child.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ignore it but tell your spouse what you heard.

\_\_\_\_\_ Buy some books on the subject and leave them where the children could easily find them, so that they could get better information on their own.

Imagine that you have been married for 10 years and have 3 children. There were some complications with the last birth and your doctor, after having taken a number of tests, advises you that if you have another child the chance is very high that it will be physically deformed or mentally retarded. He advises strongly that you not have anymore children. A list of methods of birth control and other possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the method you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable method, etc., until you have rated all eight choices in terms of how likely you would be to use it.

\_\_\_\_\_ An intra-uterine device, or "loop," or "coil" (an artificial device installed by your doctor in the female and must be removed by him.

\_\_\_\_\_ Birth control pills (to be taken almost every day by the female for the rest of her years--or until past menopause).

\_\_\_\_\_ Surgery on the female (sterilization).

\_\_\_\_\_ Refuse his advice and continue in a normal sexual relationship and take the chance of another pregnancy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Go to another doctor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use contraceptive jelly or foam.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use prophylactics (also known as "rubbers" or "condoms").

\_\_\_\_\_ Relatively minor surgery for the male (sterilization).

Imagine that you have a close friend whose wife is dying of cancer. A druggist has just discovered a new drug that, while it doesn't cure cancer, prolongs the life of the individual a few years. The druggist can only manufacture a limited supply and so, because he is out for a profit, he sells the drug to only very rich people who can afford to pay a lot for it. You overhear your friend saying to his wife that he is going to steal the drug for her. What would you do? A list of alternate possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the alternative you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 8 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Warn the proper authorities of a possible burglary attempt.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sit down with your friend and discuss with him all the sides to the story to see if he has carefully thought out the possible consequences of breaking the law.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Not say anything, but if he goes ahead with the robbery, inform the police of what you overheard.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Offer your life savings to help buy the drug for your friend's wife.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inform your friend that you overheard his plans and advise him against breaking the law.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Warn your friend that you overheard his plans and will have to inform the police if he goes ahead with the crime.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pretend you didn't hear anything and not get involved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Offer to help your friend steal the drug for his wife.



Imagine that you have been married 20 years and have a 19 year old son. You and your husband/wife have been out of town on vacation but have suddenly cut it short and returned home. Upon returning home you discover that your son is having a "pot" party. You are shocked as you had no idea that your son smokes marijuana. Your son owns up to it and says he smokes marijuana all the time and loves it. What would you choose to do in such a situation? A list of alternate possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the alternative that you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 5 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Let him continue to do what he wants as he is old enough to decide for himself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take away any special privileges, such as driving the car, till he stops.

\_\_\_\_\_ Seek help by taking him to a school counselor or a psychologist.

\_\_\_\_\_ Cut off his allowance so he won't be able to afford it anymore.

\_\_\_\_\_ Turn him over to the police for his own sake before he starts to take the hard narcotics.

\_\_\_\_\_ Try to explain the possible ill-effects of taking drugs to him.

\_\_\_\_\_ Try to understand his side of the story and try smoking marijuana yourself to see what it is like.

\_\_\_\_\_ Throw him out of the house.

Imagine that you have been married 20 years and have an 18 year old daughter who is going to an out of town college. By accident you come across a contraceptive (birth control) device in her drawer while visiting her at college. She has been dating this "hippie" college student a lot recently. What would you do in such a situation? A list of alternate possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the alternative you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 8 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take her home immediately.

\_\_\_\_\_ Admonish her for her promiscuousness.

\_\_\_\_\_ Sit down and listen to her side.

\_\_\_\_\_ Pretend you didn't find anything.

\_\_\_\_\_ Offer her your advice as to what you think is best, but leave the choice up to her.

\_\_\_\_\_ Talk to both the boy and her about what are their plans.

\_\_\_\_\_ Force your daughter into getting married to someone else right away.

\_\_\_\_\_ Try to bribe the boy into breaking off with your daughter.

Imagine that for your wedding present your parents give you \$1000. What would you do with this money? A list of alternate possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the alternative you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 8 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Put it in the bank and save it for a rainy day.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use it on a down payment on a car.

\_\_\_\_\_ Spend it on fixing up your apartment (house).

\_\_\_\_\_ Use it as a down payment on a house.

\_\_\_\_\_ Spend it on an exciting honeymoon.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use it to buy the major appliances, such as a television, washing machine, and refrigerator, for your home.

\_\_\_\_\_ Invest the money in either stocks or bonds.

\_\_\_\_\_ Thank your parents for the thought but not take the money as you want to make it on your own.

Imagine that it's your first wedding anniversary. What would you choose to do on this day? A list of possible alternatives is below. Please place a number 1 by the alternative you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 8 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Go out to a fancy restaurant and then to a show.

\_\_\_\_\_ Pay your spouse something he/she has really wanted for a long time.

\_\_\_\_\_ Spend the evening home alone with your spouse.

\_\_\_\_\_ Go out with friends to celebrate the occasion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Throw a big party and invite all your friends and relatives.

\_\_\_\_\_ Spend a quiet evening together with your immediate family.

\_\_\_\_\_ Treat your spouse extra nice the whole day.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ask your spouse what he/she would like to do and do whatever he/she chooses.

Imagine that you have been married for 15 years and have 3 children, ages 14, 10, and 5. You and your spouse have been working very hard to save up some money to send the kids to college and haven't been able to take a vacation together in a number of years, but now you both have some time off together. What would you do? A list of alternate possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the one you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 8 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Just loaf around the house so as not to spend much money and to relax.

\_\_\_\_\_ Go for a vacation to the country with the kids.

\_\_\_\_\_ Go for a vacation but leave the kids with their grandparents.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take a part time job to earn a little extra money.

\_\_\_\_\_ Stay around the house but send the children off to their grandparents.

\_\_\_\_\_ Consult the children as to what they would like to do.

\_\_\_\_\_ Catch up on some odds and ends that you fell behind on while busy working.

\_\_\_\_\_ Stay around the house and spend much more time with the children than normally.

Imagine that you have just gotten married and have to decide where to live. Money is no problem as you have just received a large inheritance from a long lost uncle that will keep you comfortable for a very long time. Where would you choose to live? A list of alternate possibilities is below. Please place a number 1 by the alternative you would most likely pick, a 2 by the next most acceptable alternative, etc., until you have rated all 8 choices in terms of how likely you would be to choose it.

- \_\_\_\_\_ In your hometown. (Assume you, your fiancée, both your families, and your friends come from the same town.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ As far away from your hometown as possible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In a penthouse in a big city like New York.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Off in the country on a remote farm, in a quiet, peaceful setting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In the suburbs of a big city in a ranch.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In a small town where everyone knows everyone else.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In a house, with a beach, near the sea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Out west somewhere on a big ranch.

This task is somewhat different. It is called the Interpersonal Comparison Tests. There are two tests, Test A and Test B. Be sure to answer every question in both tests. Each question has a number of possible choices. Please answer every question by making an X in the appropriate space next to your choice. Select only one of the choices for each question. Choose the answer which is most similar to your experience or background.

TEST A

1. I was born
  - a. on the Eastern seaboard. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. in the Southern United States. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. in the Midwestern United States. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. in the Southwestern United States. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. in the Western United States. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. outside the United States. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. My place of rearing was
  - a. a metropolis. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. suburbia. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. a medium-sized town. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. a small town. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. a rural area. \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. My religious background is
  - a. Catholic. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Jewish. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Protestant. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Moslem. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. None. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. other. \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. My parents are
  - a. first-generation Americans. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. second-generation Americans. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. third-generation Americans (or earlier). \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. not American citizens. \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. The highest annual income earned by my father was
  - a. over \$30,000. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. over \$20,000. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. over \$15,000. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. over \$10,000. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. over \$5,000. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \$5,000 or less. \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. The highest educational level reached by my father was
  - a. grade school. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. high school. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. college. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. graduate school. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. a doctoral degree. \_\_\_\_\_



(TEST A cont'd.)

7. The highest educational level reached by my mother was  
a. grade school. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. high school. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. college. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. graduate school. \_\_\_\_\_  
e. a doctoral degree. \_\_\_\_\_
8. My position in the family was  
a. oldest child. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. middle child. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. youngest child. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. only child. \_\_\_\_\_  
e. one of several in middle. \_\_\_\_\_
9. The number of children in my family was  
a. very large (seven or more). \_\_\_\_\_  
b. large (five or six). \_\_\_\_\_  
c. average (three or four). \_\_\_\_\_  
d. small (two). \_\_\_\_\_  
e. only one. \_\_\_\_\_
10. My parents were  
a. very close in age. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. less than five years apart. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. less than ten years apart. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. less than fifteen years apart. \_\_\_\_\_  
e. fifteen or more years apart. \_\_\_\_\_
11. My parents' experience with divorce was that  
a. neither was ever divorced. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. one had been previously divorced. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. both had been previously divorced. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. they were divorced when I was a child (12 or under). \_\_\_\_\_  
e. they were divorced when I was in my teens or older. \_\_\_\_\_
12. In my parents' families (including grandparents and parents' siblings)  
a. there have been no divorces. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. there has been one divorce. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. there have been two divorces. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. there have been three or more divorces. \_\_\_\_\_

(TEST A cont'd.)

13. In my family rearing the person who seemed most in charge was
- a. my mother. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. my father. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. neither parent. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I never thought about who was in charge. \_\_\_\_\_
14. In our community my parents were
- a. considered important people. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. included among the people of some standing. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. just average socially. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. below average socially. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. considered outsiders. \_\_\_\_\_

TEST B

I. EARLY LIFE EXPERIENCES

1. My family situation consisted of
- a. living with both of my biological parents. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. living with just my mother. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. living with just my father. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. living in foster homes or with stepparents. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. living with my real mother and a stepfather. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. living with my real father and a stepmother. \_\_\_\_\_
2. My own family experience was
- a. warm and pleasant. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. pleasant but not intimate. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. nothing I can particularly remember. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. unpleasant. \_\_\_\_\_
3. As clearly as I can remember my earliest days were
- a. extremely pleasant. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. neither pleasant nor unpleasant. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. pleasant, though I was nervous. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. unpleasant. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The most pleasant aspects of my childhood are associated with experiences
- a. with both parents. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. with the parent of the same sex. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. with the parent of the opposite sex. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. with my siblings. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. unconnected with members of my immediate family. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. I do not recall any particularly pleasant experiences. \_\_\_\_\_

(TEST B Cont'd.)

5. As a child I was fond of  
a. reading, solitary hobbies, and daydreaming. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. sports and outdoor activities. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. being around other people socially as much as possible. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. no particular interests which I can recall. \_\_\_\_\_
6. During my growing up period  
a. I had many close friends. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. I had one or two close friends. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. I had no friends whom I particularly recollect. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. I was a very solitary person. \_\_\_\_\_
7. In my family, my dating  
a. was something I could easily discuss with my parents. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. was mentioned rarely, or only in a kidding manner. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. was something I did not care to discuss. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. aroused considerable conflict. \_\_\_\_\_
8. When I was in high school  
a. my major interest was in getting good grades as well as maintaining an active social life. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. my major interest was in maintaining an active social and sports life rather than in getting high grades. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. I did not want to go to school any longer, and wanted to make money. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. I felt confused and did not know what I wanted to do. \_\_\_\_\_

II. PRESENT LIFE EXPERIENCES

1. Financially and socially I feel the next five years  
a. will be reasonably successful. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. will consist of two steps forward and one back. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. are impossible to predict at present. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. The future scares me. \_\_\_\_\_
2. About my health at the present time, I would say that  
a. I have always had perfect health, and I am certain I'll stay that way. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. for the last few years, my general condition has been below par, but I believe I'll regain excellent health in the near future. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. for some time now I have had a chronic illness (or disability) which is serious, and the probability of improvement is small. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. I don't know for sure. I guess I'm healthy as anybody, but I haven't had a physical for years. \_\_\_\_\_

(TEST B cont'd.)

3. About my psychological adjustment, I would say that  
a. I feel fairly secure emotionally. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. I am happiest not living alone. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. I probably do best living alone. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. I do not think about my emotions. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Like many people I am  
a. sometimes uneasy when I am alone. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. sometimes uncomfortable when in a crowd. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. sometimes concerned about dying. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. hardly ever concerned with such matters. \_\_\_\_\_
5. With regard to children  
a. I have doubts about how good a parent I would be (am). \_\_\_\_\_  
b. I very much want (am very glad I have) a child of the same sex as I am. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. I am not sure I want children (like having children). \_\_\_\_\_  
d. I do not care what sex the child is, but I do want to have one (or perhaps two or three). \_\_\_\_\_  
e. I would like to have at least four or five children. \_\_\_\_\_  
f. as far as I am concerned, my marriage would be most successful without any children. \_\_\_\_\_
6. With regard to getting married (being married) at this particular time, I feel that  
a. since most of my friends are already married, I would like to be (am glad to be) too. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. marriage would be (is) an important stabilizing influence in my life. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. the person I wish (wished) to marry will not wait if we do not get married now (would not have waited if we had not married when we did). \_\_\_\_\_  
d. there is (was) no special reason for marrying now (when I did) but I do (did) not wish to disappoint my friends and relatives. \_\_\_\_\_  
e. it is (was) as good a time as any to marry. \_\_\_\_\_

III. THE PERSON I AM THINKING OF MARRYING (AM MARRIED TO)

1. My prospective mate (my spouse)  
a. is extremely attractive physically. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. is not unusually attractive physically, but is likeable. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. is someone I do not think of in terms of physical beauty or good looks. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. embarrasses me because of his (her) looks. \_\_\_\_\_

(TEST B cont'd.)

2. My prospective mate (my spouse)
  - a. comes from a family I greatly admire. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. comes from a family I feel very much a part of.' \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. has so little family closeness I feel sorry for him (her). \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. has very irritating parents, but I can overlook them. \_\_\_\_\_
3. With regard to the family of my intended mate (my spouse)
  - a. I am worried that she may become too much like her mother (or he like his father). \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. I am concerned that she may become too much like her father (or he like his mother). \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I do not feel his (her) parents will (do) play any significant role in our marriage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I do not think he (she) is like either of his (her) parents. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I feel that my intended mate's (my spouse's) parents
  - a. are better educated than my family. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. have considerably more money than my family. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. are not as socially acceptable as my family. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I do not think about them in this way. \_\_\_\_\_
5. In the relationship with my intended mate (my spouse)  
I feel that
  - a. he (she) is more in charge than I am. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. we are equally in charge. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I am more in charge than he (she) is. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. neither of us is in charge. \_\_\_\_\_
6. With regard to companionship, my intended mate (my spouse)  
and I
  - a. have many interests in common. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. have independent interests, but are tolerant and supportive of each other's activities. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. expect to develop interests in common. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. seem to have relatively little in common when we are not busy with social activities. \_\_\_\_\_
7. With regard to the question of marriage, my intended mate (my spouse) and I
  - a. have discussed our doubts and fears of marriage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. have had some doubts, but have not mentioned them. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. may be afraid of hurting each other by bringing up the question of whether we are making (have made) a mistake. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. do not have any doubts whatsoever. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. used to have doubts but overcame them. \_\_\_\_\_

(TEST B cont'd.)

8. With regard to our contemplated (present) marriage
- a. I would like to postpone (leave) it, but am afraid of the consequences. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. despite my doubts I prefer to go ahead (stay) with it. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I feel I can overcome any doubts since my love is great enough for two. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I would have doubts no matter whom I was marrying (had married) and should therefore not let these doubts stand in the way now. \_\_\_\_\_
9. With regard to religion
- a. we are of the same faith and there are no conflicts. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. neither of us has had serious religious training, and we do not intend to become involved with any church. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. we are of different faiths, but have agreed to rear our children in one of them. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. we would have no problems about religion if other people would stay out of our business. \_\_\_\_\_

IV. ATTITUDES PRECEDING MARRIAGE (FOR ENGAGED COUPLES)

1. My plans for marriage include
- a. a wish to travel as soon as possible. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. a desire to move from our present area and establish a home elsewhere. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. a desire to settle down where we are as quickly as possible. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I have no plans beyond wishing to get married. \_\_\_\_\_
2. With regard to traveling and establishing a home
- a. my intended mate's plans include nothing that is incompatible with my own wishes. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. we have not discussed this topic fully. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I am leaving the decisions to him (her). \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. he (she) is leaving the decisions to me. \_\_\_\_\_
3. With regard to sex
- a. my intended spouse has had experience, but I have not. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. I am more experienced than he (she). \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. It is important to me that he (she) has had sexual experience before marriage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. we have both had premarital sex experience. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. we are limiting our sex activity until after marriage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. we do not agree on our sex life at present. \_\_\_\_\_

(TEST B cont'd.)

4. With regard to having children
- a. I would like to have children as soon as possible. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. I would leave the decision about when to have children to my intended spouse. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I would prefer to wait several years before having children. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I don't feel this is an important consideration. \_\_\_\_\_

V. MARRIAGE AND THE FUTURE

1. With regard to my occupational or avocational interests
- a. I feel I have the courage to pursue both my marriage and my interests, even when they conflict. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. I feel I could sacrifice almost anything in order to have a happy marriage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I see no reason for conflict between marriage and my other interests. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. my intended mate (my spouse) has no ambitions or professional commitments which will jeopardize or interfere with our marriage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. my intended mate's (my spouse's) devotion to his (her) career interest is something I can easily admire and support. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. my intended mate's (my spouse's) devotion to his (her) career is something I hope I can get more enthusiastic about as I understand him (her) better. \_\_\_\_\_
2. With regard to the future with my intended mate (my spouse)
- a. I sometimes think he (she) may become ill. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. I fear that he (she) will become ill. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I fear that he (she) will become superior intellectually or more important than I can become. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I never have had any doubts. \_\_\_\_\_
3. With regard to the future of our marriage
- a. I am worried about becoming poor. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. I am worried about the influence of our in-laws upon us. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. I am troubled about the question of how many children we should have. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. it sometimes occurs to me that my intended mate (my spouse) might have an affair. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. I prefer not to worry about things until they happen. \_\_\_\_\_

This task is in the blue booklet with Tennessee Self-Concept Scale printed on the front page. Please do not write anything in this booklet. Other people will have to use it also. Inside the booklet you will find a form which is to be used for your answers. Along the right hand side of the form you will find a space for your name, age, and education. Please fill in these spaces. There is also a space for timing but you need not time yourself on this task. The directions are on the inside of the front cover of the test booklet; please read these carefully. When you have completed this task, please wait until your fiancée is finished and then signal the assistant.



APPENDIX B

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR

MAIN VARIABLEES

TABLE 8.--ANOVA for average  $CF_{MF}$ .

	Squares	Deg. of Freedom	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0083	1	.0083	1.8791
DB	.1010	1	.1010	10.6330*
Ho-He	.0229	1	.0229	2.4138
S-E X DB	.0018	1	.0018	.1932
S-E X Ho-He	.0072	1	.0072	.7624
DB X Ho-He	.0199	1	.0019	2.0976
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0073	1	.0073	.7717
Error	.19942558	21	.00940646	

\* $p < .004$

TABLE 9.--Summary of ANOVA for  $\Delta\overline{CF}_{MF}$ .

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0092	1	.0092	.2777
DB	.0048	1	.0048	.1457
Ho-He	.0298	1	.0298	.8954
S-E X DB	.1542	1	.1542	4.6259*
S-E X Ho-He	.0081	1	.0081	.2428
DB X Ho-He	.0151	1	.0151	.4527
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0057	1	.0057	.1701
Error	.6999	21	.0333	

\*p &lt; .043

TABLE 10.--Summary of ANOVA for D/F ratio.

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0172	1	.0172	.3433
DB	.0242	1	.0242	.4835
Ho-He	.2741	1	.2741	5.4689*
S-E X DB	.0078	1	.0078	.1553
S-E X Ho-He	.0003	1	.0003	.0058
DB X Ho-He	.0008	1	.0008	.0167
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0079	1	.0079	.1569
Error	1.0542	21	.0501	

\* $p < .03$

TABLE 11.--Summary of ANOVA for F-F exchanges.

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0007	1	.0007	.0739
DB	.0034	1	.0034	.3627
Ho-He	.0325	1	.0325	3.4342*
S-E X DB	.0003	1	.0003	.0332
S-E X Ho-He	.0016	1	.0016	.1736
DB X Ho-He	.0037	1	.0037	.3884
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0001	1	.0001	.0148
Error	.1990	21	.0095	

\* $p < .10$

TABLE 12.--Summary of ANOVA for F-D and D-F exchanges combined.

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0001	1	.0001	.0674
DB	.0001	1	.0001	.0478
Ho-He	.0012	1	.0012	.8976
S-E X DB	.0005	1	.0005	.3954
S-E X Ho-He	.00001	1	.00001	.0081
DB X Ho-He	.0031	1	.0031	2.1982
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0036	1	.0036	2.5920
Error	.0293	21	.0014	

TABLE 13.--Summary of ANOVA for D-D exchanges.

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0023	1	.0023	.5654
DB	.0017	1	.0017	.4300
Ho-He	.0319	1	.0319	7.8545*
S-E X DB	.0014	1	.0014	.3544
S-E X Ho-He	.0010	1	.0010	.2535
DB X Ho-He	.0003	1	.0003	.0727
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.00002	1	.00002	.0040
Error	.0853	21	.0041	

\* $p < .01$

TABLE 14.--Summary of ANOVA for I:EGH.

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0006	1	.0006	.2623
DB	.0007	1	.0007	.3062
Ho-He	.0014	1	.0014	.6405
S-E X DB	.00001	1	.00001	.0031
S-E X Ho-He	.0084	1	.0084	3.7988*
DB X Ho-He	.0004	1	.0004	.1960
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0012	1	.0012	.5354
Error	.0465	21	.0022	

\* $p < .10$



TABLE 15.--Summary of ANOVA for II:BCD.

	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
S-E	.0013	1	.0013	.3317
DB	.0019	1	.0019	.4701
Ho-He	.0023	1	.0023	.5650
S-E X DB	.0039	1	.0039	.9723
S-E X Ho-He	.0009	1	.0009	.2132
DB X Ho-He	.0041	1	.0041	1.0108
S-E X DB X Ho-He	.0003	1	.0003	.0857
Error	.0848	21	.0040	

## APPENDIX C

### ANALYSIS OF SIMPLE EFFECTS

1

TABLE 16.--Summary of simple effects of Delta  $\overline{CF}_{MF}$  for  
S-E X DB interaction.

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Simple Effects for S-E

level 1 (HDB)	F = 1.06
level 2 (LDB)	F = 4.00*

Simple Effects for DB

level 1 (HS-E)	F = 4.05*
level 2 (LS-E)	F = .140

---

\* $p < .10$



## APPENDIX D

### RAW DATA OF ENGAGED COUPLES

#### USED IN STUDY

$\overline{SA}$	=	average spontaneous agreement
ICT	=	Interpersonal Comparison test scores
$\overline{CF}$	=	average mutual choice fulfillment
$\overline{CF}_M$	=	average male choice fulfillment
$\overline{CF}_F$	=	average female choice fulfillment
$\Delta\overline{CF}$	=	average deviation in choice fulfillment
$\overline{P}$	=	average self-esteem
$P_M$	=	male's self-esteem
$P_F$	=	female's self-esteem
D/F Ratio	=	the ratio of dysfunctional to functional communication

TABLE 17.--Raw data for engaged couples in study.

Couples	$\overline{SA}$	ICT	$\overline{CF}$	$\overline{CF}_M$	$\overline{CF}_F$	$\overline{CF}$	$\overline{P}$	$P_M$	$P_F$	D/F Ratio
1	.538	22	.678	.753	.603	.150	326.5	340	313	.448
2	.323	30	.363	.263	.483	.220	316.5	328	309	.587
3	.776	22	.840	.753	.926	.173	312.0	294	330	.805
4	.556	21	.648	.883	.413	.470	324.0	352	296	.341
5	.598	23	.605	.906	.303	.603	302.0	272	332	1.116
6	.560	25	.710	.636	.783	.147	357.5	385	330	.528
7	.559	18	.593	.423	.763	.340	375.5	349	402	.576
8	.632	21	.666	.556	.776	.220	311.0	309	303	.527
9	.721	22	.7615	.770	.753	.017	337.0	347	327	.274
10	.659	19	.5245	.723	.326	.397	335.0	341	329	.442
11	.630	26	.686	.736	.636	.100	349.0	320	378	.436
12	.397	25	.491	.816	.166	.650	354.0	338	370	.746
13	.596	24	.650	.696	.603	.093	311.5	323	300	.938
14	.461	25	.651	.533	.770	.237	330.5	308	353	1.056
15	.466	19	.403	.450	.356	.094	346.5	354	339	.913

16	.672	22	.776	.933	.620	.313	349.0	363	335	.547
17	.744	18	.800	.760	.840	.080	295.0	269	321	.650
18	.505	25	.575	.470	.680	.210	342.5	338	347	.464
19	.698	23	.744	.886	.603	.283	336.0	331	341	.593
20	.533	28	.508	.826	.190	.636	342.0	357	327	.693
21	.595	18	.731	.800	.663	.137	358.0	365	351	.945
22*	.384	28	--	--	--	--	307.0	305	309	.741
23	.566	28	.643	.460	.826	.366	343.5	359	328	.371
24	.664	17	.714	.793	.636	.157	339.5	327	352	.525
25	.552	24	.633	.556	.710	.154	365.5	383	348	.698
26	.780	21	.776	.793	.760	.033	353.0	370	336	.586
27	.592	28	.646	.403	.890	.487	349.5	367	332	.402
28	.746	19	.736	.760	.713	.047	351.5	350	353	.447
29	.442	35	.531	.310	.753	.443	332.0	311	353	.292
30	.544	21	.593	.806	.380	.424	320.5	319	322	.470
Averages	.59	23.06	.64	.67	.62	.27	336.80	336.85	336.75	.60

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\*Dropped from study



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