Dyadic preference questionnaire: Exploring attribution prediction accuracy and perceived similarity in distressed and nondistressed married couples

Robert H. Bodholdt

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DYADIC PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE: EXPLORING
ATTRIBUTION, PREDICTION ACCURACY, AND PERCEIVED
SIMILARITY IN DISTRESSED AND NONDISTRESSED
MARRIED COUPLES

By
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B. S., University of Oregon, 1981
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Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts
University of Montana
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Approved by:

Chairman, Board of Examiners

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ABSTRACT

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Dyadic Preference Questionnaire: Exploring Attribution, Prediction Accuracy, and Perceived Similarity in Distressed and Nondistressed Married Couples (160 pp.)

Directors: Herman A. Walters, Ph.D. and James A. Walsh, Ph.D.

The present investigation explored differences between distressed and nondistressed married couples on dimensions of perceived similarity of desires, prediction accuracy of partner desires, self-reported desirability of engaging in positive valence and negative valence relationship activities, and perceived desirability for partner of engaging in these same relationship activities. The study predicted that, compared to nondistressed couples, distressed couples would: demonstrate dissimilarity between personal desires and desires attributed to partner; be inaccurate in their predictions of their partner’s reported desirability of engaging in positive valence activities; rate engaging in positive activities as less desirable; perceive their partners as finding engaging in positive valence activities as undesirable; rate engaging in negative valence activities as desirable; and perceive their partners as finding engaging in negative valence activities as desirable.

For these purposes, a new research instrument, the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ), was developed which depicts 75 positive valence and 75 negative valence relationship activities that were judged by clinical psychology doctoral students as important to marital functioning. DPQ scales were shown to possess adequate internal consistency as gauged by Cronbach’s coefficient alphas. Subjects were 40 married couples, 20 of which were assigned to the distressed group and 20 of which were assigned to the nondistressed group based on their scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Results indicated an absence of unequivocal results on measures of perceived similarity. Distressed couples were not shown to be inaccurate in their predictions of their partners desires. Nondistressed couples tended to be inaccurate in their predictions of partner desires on positive and negative valence item types. Compared to nondistressed couples, distressed couples rated positive valence items as lower in desirability and rated negative valence items higher in desirability. Similarly, distressed couples rated their partners as finding positive valence activities relatively undesirable and positive activities relatively desirable. Possibilities for future research using the DPQ are presented.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his gratitude and appreciation to committee members Dr. Herman A. Walters, Dr. James A. Walsh, Dr. David Schuldberg, and Dr. Rhea Ashmore for their extensive assistance and practical advice in completion of this project. Sincere thanks are extended to Dr. Joyce Hocker, Dr. Shan Guisinger, and Dr. Philip Bornstein for their help with acquiring assessment forms and their useful feedback on assessment interpretations. Special thanks are made to Robert H. Bodholdt, Sr., Jane Bouthilet, Dr. Dudley Dana, Dr. Herbert Gray, Tom Konefes, Dr. Michael Wm. Marks, Dr. Paul Moomaw, Dr. Robert Shea, Dr. Samuel Talley, Scott Todd, and Dr. Robert L. Weiss for their unique help and inspiration.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Behavioral Contributions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity, reactivity, and escalation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Cognitive Contribution</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributions, impact, and intent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prediction accuracy and marital adjustment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived similarity and marital adjustment</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Measurements</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment Scale</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms and cutoff criteria</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Similarity</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prediction Accuracy</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reported Desirability and Desirability Attributed to Partner</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Dyadic Adjustment Scale</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: Demographics Questionnaire</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D: Consent Form</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E: Instruction and Debriefing Protocol</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F: Sample DAS/DPQ Assessment Interpretation</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G: Modified Spouse Observation Checklist (MSOC)</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H: Codes for Income and Education</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I: Preliminary DPQ Content Analysts</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J: DPQ Reciprocal Item Location Sheet</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix K: Correspondence</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sample Items from the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Group Characteristics on Demographic Variables and Breakdown of Dyadic Adjustment Scale Scores</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Adjustment Scale Scores by Distress Level and Gender</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Major Scale Characteristics for Distressed and Nondistressed Couples</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Internal Consistency Parameters of Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Subscales for Distressed and Nondistressed Spouses</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pearson Product-moment Correlations on Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Subscales for Distressed and Nondistressed Spouses</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Correlation Differences on Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Subscale for Distressed and Nondistressed Couples Using a Normal Curve Test based on Fisher's Transformation</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Means and Standard Deviations of Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Major Scales by Gender and Distress Level</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Perceived Similarity: Intraindividual Disparity between Means on Major Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Scales</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Prediction Accuracy and Interindividual Comparison of Mean Scores on Major Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Scale</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Means and Standard Deviations for We Agent Subscales by Distress Level and Gender</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means and Standard Deviations for Partner Agent Subscales by Distress Level and Gender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means and Standard Deviations for I Agent Subscales by Distress Level and Gender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire for Self/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire for Self/Negative Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire for Partner/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>142</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire for Partner/Negative Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire We/For Self/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire We/For Partner/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire We/For Self/Negative Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire We/For Partner/Negative Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>147</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Partner/For Self-Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>148</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Partner/For Partner/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Partner/For Self/Negative Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Partner/For Partner/Negative Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>151</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire I/For Self/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire I/For Partner/Positive Scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

viii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire I/For Self/Negative Scale</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment Scale Scores by Gender and Distress Level</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>For Self-Positive Scale Mean Sum Desirability Scores as a Function of Gender and Distress Level</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Partner/For Self/Positive Scale Mean Sum Desirability Scores as a Function of Gender and Distress Level</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I/For Self/Positive Scale Mean Sum Desirability Scores as a Function of Gender and Distress Level</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I/For Self/Negative Scale Mean Sum Desirability Scores as a Function of Gender and Distress Level</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, cognitive variables associated with couple distress and satisfaction have received increasing recognition from marital researchers (e.g., Arias & O'Leary, 1985; Eidelson & Epstein, 1982; Fincham, 1985; Fincham, Beach, & Baucom, 1987; Fincham, Beach, & Nelson, 1987; Jacobson, McDonald, Follette, & Berley, 1985; Margolin, Talovic, & Weinstein, 1983; Schachter & O'Leary, 1985). The cognitive or semantic trend is now looking more closely at attributions, beliefs, expectancies, and other cognitive phenomena that mediate the impact of partners' overt behaviors. That is, overt behavior per se is being questioned as the sole or even primary source of marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Before moving on to the cognitive trend in marital research, some of the major contributions of earlier behavioral approaches are outlined. These approaches emphasize the importance of overt behavior, and cognitive approaches can be seen as elaborations and extensions of behavioral approaches. As Kazdin (1978) noted, behavior therapy has always made implicit cognitive assumptions, e.g., that attitude change follows behavior change. Of course, the opposite could also be true, and many marital therapists are emphasizing the importance of modifying couples' beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, and expectations as a possible prerequisite to successful behavioral
interventions with distressed couples (Huber & Milstein, 1985; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979; Weiss, 1980).

Following discussion of the contributions of behavioral exchange approaches, recent cognitively-oriented research bearing directly on this present study is examined. Included here is research investigating attribution of intent, prediction accuracy, and perceived similarity in distressed and nondistressed couples. A marital adjustment measure used to assess degree of distress, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Spanier, 1976), is then reviewed. A new and innovative research instrument, the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ), was conceived for the present study to examine dimensions of perceived similarity, prediction accuracy, self-reported desirability of engaging in a wide variety of potentially pleasing and displeasing relationship activities, as well as attributions of desirability to partner of engaging in these same activities. The development and proposed properties of the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire are presented, linking scoring procedures with potentially informative analyses of couple responses. The paper continues to do preliminary reliability assessment and validation of the DPQ and relates findings to hypotheses about differences between distressed and nondistressed couples on the DPQ. Potentially informative future analyses of DPQ responses are presented also.
Review of Literature

Major Behavioral Contributions

Behavior exchange approaches. Cognitive or semantic approaches can be seen as complimentary extensions of earlier negativity of exchange models of couple interaction (Schachter & O'Leary, 1985). Negativity of exchange or behavior exchange models are largely based on Stuart's (1969) operant-interpersonal model which emphasizes the proposition that couple distress is caused and maintained by (a) a disproportionally high exchange of displeasing behaviors relative to pleasing behaviors and (b) reliance on coercive cycles of punishment and negative reinforcement to effect compliance or behavior change (Patterson, Weiss, & Hops, 1976; Weiss & Margolin, 1977).

Indeed, several self-report and observational studies have demonstrated that, when compared to nondistressed couples, distressed couples emit a much higher frequency of displeasing behaviors relative to pleasing behaviors (Birchler, Weiss, & Vincent, 1975; Jacobson, Follette, & McDonald, 1982; Margolin et al., 1983; Vincent, Weiss, & Birchler, 1975; Wills, Weiss, & Patterson, 1974). Using a self-report measure, Birchler et al. (1975) found very large differences between distressed and nondistressed couples in the exchange of pleasing and displeasing behaviors. The 5-day mean frequencies of pleasing and displeasing behaviors were 259.67 and 13.63 for nondistressed couples compared
with 131.67 and 41.38 for distressed couples, respectively. Thus the ratio of reported pleases to displeases was 29.66 for nondistressed couples but only 4.40 for distressed couples ($p < .001$; Birchler et al. 1975).

Reciprocity, reactivity, and escalation. Several studies have demonstrated that distressed spouses are more likely than nondistressed spouses to reciprocate negative behaviors (Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Revenstorf, Hahlweg, Schindler, & Vogel, 1984). In addition, Jacobson et al. (1982) showed that distressed spouses are more reactive or hypersensitive to negative behaviors. Moreover, Robinson and Price (1980) have suggested that distressed spouses may selectively attend to negative behaviors and, as Stuart (1980) has proposed, negative behavior may be promoted by expectancies that serve as self-fulfilling prophecies.

A scenario can be imagined in which a behavior exchange with even mildly negative overtones would be a source of apprehension and alarm for both partners. Not only do distressed couples appear hypersensitive to negative behaviors, they may selectively attend to them and, in turn, reciprocate negative behavior, with resulting escalation. A complimentary process to escalation, proposed by Satir (1967), involves constriction of expression. Perceiving differences in desires, expectations, and opinions, and wanting to avoid setting off a chain of aversive exchanges, spouses may avoid, for example, sharing thoughts and
feelings that might be taken negatively by their partners, thus encouraging a build-up of unspoken resentment. This process shuts down potentially valuable communication and problem solving channels which, in turn, may set the stage for even more destructive exchanges.

Recent Cognitive Contributions

Attributions, impact, and intent. Extrapolating from attribution studies in social psychology, Jacobson and Margolin (1979, p. 287) wrote that "many spouse-provided stimuli in a marriage are reinforcing only when they are accompanied by certain attributions on the part of the recipient." Similarly, Weiss (1980, p. 133) suggested that reward devaluation and discrepancies between impact and intent might be usefully explored from a cognitive perspective: "Discrepancies between impact and intent, similar to our concern with reward devaluation suggests that for distressed relationships, the receiver filters out the intentional positiveness and replaces it with a self-generated negativity."

Several studies have supported the hypothesis that distressed spouses are prone to interpret their partners' behaviors unfavorably (e.g., Fincham, 1985; Floyd & Markman, 1984; Gottman, Notarius, Gonso, & Markman, 1976; Jacobson et al., 1985; Schachter & O'Leary, 1985). Rather than solely responding to overt behavior per se, partners' preformed beliefs, attributions, expectations, and overriding negative
feelings about the relationships may lead them to depreciate positive behaviors and be hypersensitive to negative behaviors.

A recent study examining attribution of intent elucidates the nature of the current cognitive trend in that area and is explored in greater depth here. Studying internal (traitlike) and external (situational) attribution styles, Jacobson et al. (1985) randomly assigned distressed and nondistressed couples to an "act positive" or "act negative" group. Only one spouse was given the positive or negative instructional set. Subsequently, the uninformed spouse answered a series of Likert-type attribution questions to ascertain whether they attributed their partners' behaviors to internal factors (e.g., "That's the way he/she always is during a discussion") or external factors (e.g., "He/she wanted to put on a good performance for the camera") (pp. 38, 39). Despite tendencies to favor internal attributions across distress level and instructional set, the distressed group was more likely to attribute their partners' negative behaviors to internal factors whereas nondistressed couples were more likely to interpret their partners' positive behaviors as due to internal factors.

Although only suggesting how distress may be maintained (or worsened), Jacobson et al. (1985) discussed implications of this pattern of attribution of intent for distressed
couples:

Distressed couples, by attributing their partners' negative behavior[s] to internal factors, may be ensuring that such behaviors will have maximal negative impact. These attributional tendencies may explain why distressed couples are highly reactive to negative behavior. . . . Conversely, by their relative disinclination to attribute their partners' positive behavior[s] to internal factors, the otherwise positive impact of such behaviors may be minimized. (p. 46)

Thus derogatory attributions of intent may intensify intrapersonal distress (e.g., the person feels hurt, angry about partner's behavior, feels pessimistic about the possibility of the partner's behavior changing over time or across situations) and may intensify interpersonal distress (e.g., the hurt or angry partner may reciprocate with hostile behavior).

The current status of research investigating the role of attributions in distressed marriages has recently become a subject for review (Baucom, Epstein, Sayers, & Sher, 1989; Thompson & Snyder, 1986). General findings suggest that distressed spouses appear to perceive negative partner behavior as more global and stable, whereas nondistressed spouses may be biased to perceive positive partner behavior as more global and stable. Distressed couples may be predisposed to make more traitlike attributions for their
partners' negative behavior and may be prone to interpret otherwise positive behaviors in unfavorable and disbelieving ways. Distressed spouses seem inclined to focus on negative aspects of the partner and relationship, and appear more likely to make unfavorable attributions regarding their partners' motivations such as selfishness, lack of love, and negative intent. Not surprisingly, distressed spouses also appear more inclined to view their partners as causal agents of distress, and hence, as blameworthy.

Prediction accuracy and marital adjustment. A general ability to predict a partner's response, for example whether a partner's reaction to a particular behavior might be positive or negative, would seem very important for the development and maintenance of a satisfactory and stable relationship. Some authors (e.g., Eidelson & Epstein, 1982; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979) have suggested, however, that the belief that partners should be able to mindread each other's thoughts and feelings can lead to a general breakdown in communication that encourages the development of erroneous assumptions and inferences about one's partner and creates a climate for disappointment and resentment when unspoken desires and expectations go unsatisfied; such beliefs are often a focus for interventions in couples treatment. Some research does suggest that maritally well-adjusted couples are actually better able to predict their partners' responses. Distressed couples would appear to run
into greater difficulties over expectations that their partners would "read their minds" regarding thoughts, desires, and feelings if, indeed, their partners were less capable of doing so.

A recent study by Arias and O'Leary (1985) found that, when compared to their distressed counterparts, nondistressed couples were significantly better at predicting their partners' definitions of marriage-related concepts. Most of these concepts had positive connotations such as trust, love, friendship, and understanding. Similarly, Christensen and Wallace (1976) found that nondistressed couples were significantly more accurate at predicting how rewarding (on a 7-point scale) pleasing behaviors would be for their partners. Another study by Murstein and Beck (1972) found a significant correlation between marital satisfaction and couples' abilities to predict their partners' self-rating responses on a trait adjective checklist.

A qualification to other prediction accuracy research comes from a study by Margolin et al. (1983) who compared scores of distressed and nondistressed couples on the Areas of Change (AC) questionnaire. The first section of the AC asks couples to rate how much change they desire of their partners on 34 behaviors commonly recognized as sources of conflict in distressed relationships. Degree and direction (increase or decrease in behavior) are rated on a
7-point bipolar Likert scale. The second section asks spouses to predict how much change is desired of them by their partners. Results showed that distressed spouses desired more change, perceived more change was desired of them, and were also more accurate at predicting the magnitude of change desired of them by their partners. Margolin et al. (1983) suggested that prediction accuracy regarding desired change may be enhanced in distressed relationships because partners may air complaints more often. An interesting hypothesis would be that nondistressed couples are more accurate on test items associated with marital satisfaction, pleasure, and accord because these qualities comprise a greater part of their relationship experiences.

Perceived similarity and marital adjustment. Premarital studies have not demonstrated that couples initially high in perceived similarity of needs, desires, values, personality, and expectations are inoculated against the later development of marital distress (Markman, 1981). Nonetheless, several studies have shown that immediate indices of perceived similarity are associated with greater levels of marital satisfaction. In the sense that a "healthy couple," broadly conceived, might be considered a social unit within which one partner's desires are not at odds with or defeating to the other partner's desires, it would almost appear self-evident that certain
types of perceived and actual similarity would be associated with marital adjustment.

Buss (1984, 1985) proposes that there exists a strong bias in human mate selection to choose partners similar to ourselves, and that spouse-partner similarity may reinforce elaboration and continuity of preexisting dispositional personality characteristics over time. Buss (1984) found considerable correspondence between spouses on measures of personality attributes such as extraversion, dominance, quarrelsomeness, and ingenuousness, but also found more divergence than convergence of personality attributes associated with duration of contact with the partner; especially on dimensions of dominance, submissiveness, and agreeableness. Thus, prospective partners may be attracted to one-another based in part on similarity of interpersonal behavior and personality style, but may become more complementary to one-another on these dimensions as a part of relationship development.

Most studies thus far have concentrated on perceived similarity of personality traits (cf. Arias & O'Leary, 1985) and not perceived similarity of a couple's desires. Using a 20-item bipolar adjective checklist, Murstein and Beck (1972) found that perceived similarity was significantly correlated with marital adjustment whereas actual similarity on the checklist was less clearly associated with marital adjustment. In a similar study, Byrne and Blaylock (1963)
found that perceived similarity of personality factors also correlated more strongly with marital satisfaction than did actual similarity.

From a communications theory perspective, Arias and O'Leary (1985) examined perceived and actual similarity of distressed and nondistressed couples' definitions of 14 marriage-related concepts such as love and understanding. A communication skills approach to marital therapy emphasizes the importance of a couple's ability to clearly express information about their needs and, accordingly, the importance of accurate interpretation of this information (Epstein, 1984). Interestingly, however, perceived similarity of marriage-related terms was more correlated with marital satisfaction than was actual similarity of definitions. Indeed, perceived similarity discriminated distressed from nondistressed couples whereas actual similarity did not (Arias & O'Leary, 1985). It thus appears that perceived similarity, even if partly unfounded, may be associated with greater levels of marital adjustment.

Purpose of the Study

Research Questions

The present study is concerned with whether distressed and nondistressed couples differ in terms of desirability ratings they assign for themselves and attribute to their partners on 75 relationship-enhancing couple activities and 75 relationship-impairing couple activities. For this
purpose, a marital research instrument called the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) was developed to assess: 1. Whether distressed couples differ from nondistressed couples in degree of correspondence between self-reported desires and desires attributed to their partners; 2. Whether distressed and nondistressed couples are accurate in their predictions of their partners desires; 3. Whether distressed couples differ from nondistressed couples in self-reported desirability ratings of engaging in relationship-enhancing and relationship-impairing couple activities; and 4. Whether distressed couples differ from nondistressed couples in their predictions of how desirable they believe their partner would find engaging in these same relationship activities.

**Hypotheses**

Nondistressed spouses may perceive greater similarity between themselves and their partners than do distressed couples. Several prior investigations have examined relationships between perceived similarity on variables such as personality traits and couple definitions of interpersonally-relevant concepts (Arias & O'Leary, 1985). The format of the DPQ allows for comparison between distressed and nondistressed couples on the dimension of perceived similarity of desires. Comparison of degree of correspondence of desirability for self ratings and desirability for partner ratings between distressed and
nondistressed couples provides a measure of differing
degrees of perceived similarity (or, conversely, perceived
discrepancy) of desires for these two groups.

Hypothesis 1: Distressed couples will demonstrate less
correspondence between self-reported desires and desires
attributed to their partners than will nondistressed
couples.

Ability to anticipate whether the partner might find a
certain type of relationship activity desirable or
undesirable has a basis in the couples learning history.
Margolin, Talovic, and Weinstein (1983) found that when
compared to nondistressed couples, distressed spouses
reported that they wanted more change in their partner's
behavior, perceived that greater change in their own
behavior was desired by their partner, and, that distressed
spouses were more accurate in predicting the magnitude of
change desired of them. Areas of desired relationship
change would appear to be a more salient topic for
distressed couples. Research conducted by Birchler et al.
(1975) indicates that distressed couples have more
experience with displeasing relationship interactions and
less experience with pleasing relationship interactions than
do nondistressed couples. For these reasons it might be
expected that distressed couples would demonstrate
prediction inaccuracies on positive valence or relationship-
enhancing item types and that nondistressed couples would
demonstrate prediction inaccuracies on negative valence or relationship-impairing item types.

Hypothesis 2: Distressed spouses will overestimate or underestimate their partner's self-reported desirability ratings on positive valence items.

Hypothesis 3: Nondistressed spouses will overestimate or underestimate their partner's self-reported desirability ratings on negative valence items.

Distressed couples emit a higher frequency of negative relationship behaviors and a lower frequency of positive relationship behaviors than do nondistressed couples (Birchler et al., 1975). Distressed couples also appear prone to discount evidence that their partners intend to interact with them in a positive way, and appear prone to interpret negative behavior as an indication of their partner's intent to behave in a negative way (Fincham, 1985; Jacobson et al., 1982; Jacobson et al., 1985). Thus, distressed couples appear to devalue positive behavior and magnify negative behavior. Corresponding hypotheses are that distressed couples, compared to nondistressed couples, will report finding positive relationship activities less desirable, will report finding negative relationship activities more undesirable, will predict that their partners find positive relationship activities less desirable, and will predict that their partners find negative relationship activities less undesirable.
Hypothesis 4: Distressed couples will rate engaging in positive valence relationship activities as less desirable than will nondistressed couples.

Hypothesis 5: Distressed couples will rate engaging in negative valence relationship activity as more undesirable than will nondistressed couples.

Hypothesis 6: Distressed couples will rate their partners as less desirous of engaging in positive valence relationship activities than will nondistressed couples.

7. Distressed couples will rate their partners as less undesirous of engaging in negative valence relationship activities than will nondistressed couples.
Chapter 2

Methods

Procedure

All couples individually completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS, Appendix A), the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ, Appendix B), and Demographics Questionnaire (Appendix C). Couples participating through the University for extra class credit completed a consent form (Appendix D). A standardized instruction and debriefing procedure was used for couples participating through University classes and is presented in Appendix E. Couples participating from their involvement in marital therapy were instructed to complete the assessment package without assistance from their partner, not to share their responses to test items with their partner while completing the instruments, and to return the assessment packages in the envelopes provided when done.

Subjects

The sample of 40 married couples was gathered from couples in treatment recruited with the assistance of clinical psychologists engaged in marital therapy, conflict resolution, or divorce mediation, and from married students taking university psychology classes. Couples from university classes received extra class credit for their participation. Therapists were given written scoring and interpretation of the DPQ and DAS (Spanier, 1976). A
sample assessment interpretation is provided in Appendix F. The DAS, a measure of global marital satisfaction, is discussed along with the DPQ in the following sections.

In order to be included in the study, both spouses needed to obtain scores of 100 or above (nondistressed group) or both had to obtain scores of 99 or below (distressed group) on the DAS. Higher scores on the DAS signify higher levels of global marital satisfaction (Spanier, 1976). One exception to the sampling rule was made due to time constraints, and one couple was admitted to the distressed group with a combined couple average of less than 99 on the DAS (DAS scores for husband and wife were 102 and 95, respectively). The remaining 19 couples who were the first to score 99 or below on the DAS were assigned to the distressed group. The first 20 couples to score 100 and above on the DAS were assigned to the nondistressed group.

As a result of this sampling procedure, all couples in the nondistressed group came from university psychology classes and all couples in the distressed group were engaged in treatment for some form of relationship dysfunction. All couples completed a demographics questionnaire as a check for homogeneity on several variables including age, number of times married, duration of current marriage, number of children, yearly combined family income, and level of education.

Thirty-one couples' assessment packages were not
included in data analysis for the following reasons: 4 couples acknowledged that they were not married; 1 couple did not bring evidence of marriage such as a driver’s license; 5 couples produced incomplete assessment packages; 3 couples produced illegible assessment packages; 3 couples reported that they did not understand the testing instructions; 2 couples produced incompatible demographic information and thus were considered unreliable participants; 6 couples produced Dyadic Adjustment Scale scores that violated selection rules (i.e. both partners did not score 100 points and above or 100 points and below on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale) and; 7 couples were omitted from the study because of a surplus of couples in the nondistressed group.

Major Measures

Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The DAS (Spanier, 1976, (Appendix A)) was used in this study for the purpose of selecting and classifying couples as distressed or nondistressed. The DAS is a widely used 32-item self-report paper-and-pencil test designed to assess quality, global satisfaction, and level of adjustment in marriages and similar dyadic relationships. In addition to its wide use as an assessment instrument in marital research and therapy, the DAS has been the subject of considerable reliability and validation work.

Norms and cutoff criteria. Spanier (1976) provided no
cutoff criteria for distressed versus nondistressed couples on the DAS. Spouses can be considered to vary along a continuum of marital adjustment. The range of possible DAS scores is 0-151, with higher scores indicating higher levels of marital adjustment.

Sampling from the general population, Sharpley and Cross (1982) obtained mean scores on the DAS of 108.5 (SD = 19.7). Spanier (1976) obtained a mean DAS score for divorced persons (asked to respond within the context of their last month with their former partners) of 70.7 (SD = 23.8), and married persons obtained a mean score of 114.8 (SD = 17.8).

Several recent studies have used a DAS score of less than 100 as a criterion for classifying couples as distressed. Biglan (Biglan, Hops, Sherman, Friedman, Arthur, & Osteen, 1985) required that the mean score of both spouses be less than 100 for a couple to be classified as distressed, whereas Jacobson et al., 1985, required that only one spouse score less than 100 for the couple to be classified as distressed. Jacobson et al., 1985, page 36, write, "Although this criterion for defining a couple as distressed is not very stringent, the end result is to provide a more stringent test of the attribution hypothesis."

Reliability. Internal consistency reliability for the full scale of the DAS has been evaluated several times.
Using Chronbach's coefficient alpha, Spanier (1976) obtained a reliability coefficient of .96; the same number was obtained by Sharpley and Cross (1982). In a confirmatory analysis, Spanier and Thompson (1982) obtained a coefficient alpha of .91.

Validity of the DAS

1. **Test construction and content validity.** To aid in the construction of a test that adequately sampled behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics relevant to marital adjustment, the initial pool of approximately 300 items was drawn from all known previously published marital adjustment or satisfaction scales, including the Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; Locke & Wallace, 1959). Dyadic adjustment was defined "as a process, the outcome of which is determined by the degree of (a) troublesome dyadic differences; (b) interpersonal tensions and personal anxiety; (c) dyadic satisfaction; (d) dyadic cohesion, and (e) consensus on matters of importance to dyadic functioning" (Spanier, 1976, p. 17).

Using these criteria to define dyadic adjustment, three independent judges examined content validity of the item pool. Items were eliminated when considered, by consensus, as inappropriate measures of dyadic adjustment, as defined above, as not relevant to dyadic adjustment in contemporary relationships, or not carefully worded with appropriate fixed choice responses (Spanier, 1976). In addition,
duplicate items were eliminated.

The remaining 200 items were administered to over 300 married, divorced, and cohabitating persons, and all items with low variance or a high degree of skewness were eliminated. Further refinement and revision of the remaining items included elimination of items that did not discriminate divorced from married persons at the .001 level of significance. Of the remaining 40 items, 8 were eliminated due to low loadings on the 4 factors described below. The final form, containing 32 items, loaded on four factors: dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and affectional expression (Spanier, 1976). In a follow-up study, Spanier (Spanier & Thompson, 1982) found that these four factors accounted for 94% of the covariance among items although there was some item deflection from the factor structure of his previous study (Spanier, 1976). Sharpley and Cross (1982) were unable to replicate Spanier's (1976) factor structure but concluded that the overall scale was a reliable measure of dyadic adjustment.

2. **Construct validity.** As mentioned, all 32 items on the DAS were shown (Spanier, 1976) to differentiate partners according to marital status (divorced or married) at the .001 level of significance. Recently divorced subjects were "asked to respond to each item in the context of the last month they spent with their 16 former spouse[s]" (Spanier, p. 20). The difference in group means on the full scale of
114.8 and 70.7 for married and divorced subjects, respectively, was significant at the .001 level.

The DAS also has been compared with the Locke-Wallace MAT (Locke & Wallace, 1959), a generally accepted and frequently used marital adjustment scale. Correlations between these scales were .86 and .88 for married and divorced respondents, respectively ($p < .001$) and .93 for a pooled sample of married, divorced, and cohabitating individuals ($p < .001$) (Spanier, 1976). Spanier acknowledged the possibility that the DAS and MAT are partly redundant and include very similar items, but argues that the DAS has several advantages over the MAT, including recent and extensive reliability and validity evaluations using contemporary subject samples (Spanier, 1976; Spanier & Thompson, 1982).

The DAS was derived from a pool of all items used on any scale the author could find that measured marital adjustment (Spanier, 1976). Items retained in this pool conformed to the theoretical framework of the conceptualization of marital adjustment as described in the section on content validity. High correlations between the DAS and MAT lend further support to the construct of marital adjustment and the ability of the DAS to discriminate divorced from married persons also suggest that the DAS is a measure of marital adjustment.

It is unclear how many factors may underlie the
construct of marital adjustment or how few items may adequately tap the construct. Sharpley and Cross (1982) found one overall dyadic adjustment factor that accounted for 73% of the variance among items; a second factor accounted for only 7%. Discriminant analysis of all items for high versus low scorers revealed that use of only 6 of the 32 items enabled correct classification of 92% of cases (Sharpley & Cross, 1982). Whereas debate exists over the adequacy of the DAS subscale factors (Sharpley & Cross, 1982; Spanier & Thompson, 1982), there appears to be general consensus that the DAS overall scale continues to be an adequate and appropriate measure of dyadic adjustment.

**Dyadic Preference Questionnaire**

The DPQ (Appendix B), designed especially for this study, was derived largely from items on the Spouse Observation Checklist (SOC) (Weiss & Perry, 1979). The DPQ contains 150 items. Seventy-five items depict activities or behaviors expected to have a positive impact on a dyadic relationship (positive valence), and 75 items depict behaviors expected to have a negative impact on a dyadic relationship (negative valence). The DPQ also is balanced on agent of activity: 50 items each are of the form "We did X," "Partner did X," and "I did X." Also, 25 items of each agent type (we, partner, I) are negative valence and 25 are positive valence. Furthermore, all "Partner did X" items are reciprocals of the "I did X" items (the reciprocal of "I
Two responses are required for each item on the DPQ. The first response asks partners to self-report how desirable the particular behavior would be for themselves and the second response asks partners to predict how desirable the behavior would be for their partners. The DPQ format allows for considerable analysis of partners' responses, including prediction accuracy, perceived similarity, analyses of self-reported desirability of positive and negative valence behaviors, as well as analyses of predicted desirability for partners of positive and negative valence behaviors.

Rationale of the DPQ. In contrast with the SOC, the DPQ is not a spouse-monitoring behavioral assessment inventory. The behaviors and activities on the DPQ need never have occurred or even been imagined by the respondents before encountering the questionnaire. Desirability ratings surely have a basis in knowledge gained from past experience, but partners are instructed to expect or anticipate from prior experience how desirable particular behaviors would be for themselves and for their partners. For self ratings, responses should tap self-perception processes because respondents must anticipate how desirable a behavior would be to them (e.g., "I would probably like this behavior to occur"). Similarly, predicting how desirable a behavior would be for one's partner should tap
attributional processes (e.g., "I bet my partner would like to do this").

Definition of terms for the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire. Dyadic Preference Questionnaire items were selected from a larger pool of items according to how important they were judged to be as signs of either a distressed relationship or a nondistressed relationship, as described below. Items selected as signs of a distressed relationship are termed negative valence or relationship-impairing items. Items selected as signs of a nondistressed relationship are termed positive valence or relationship-enhancing items. DPQ item types are based on agent (we, partner, I), valence (positive, negative), and recipient (for self, for partner). The term agent refers to the initiator(s) of the hypothetical activity depicted by the item. The term valence refers to the quality of the relationship activity depicted and can be either positive (relationship-enhancing) or negative (relationship-impairing). The term recipient refers to whether desirability ratings are being made for self (self-reported desirability) or predicted for the partner (attribution response). The term perceived similarity refers to correspondence between self-reported desires and desires attributed to the partner on the DPQ. The term prediction accuracy refers to correspondence between desires attributed to the partner and the partner's self-reported desirability.
ratings on the DPQ. The term *attribution* is reserved for responses that involve rating or predicting desirability for the partner on DPQ items.

Generating an item pool. One hundred twenty-five of the 150 DPQ items were drawn from the SOC (Weiss & Perry, 1979). The SOC is a self-report spouse-monitoring inventory consisting of over 400 rewarding and punishing behaviors expected to occur with some frequency across marital relationships. Although the SOC can only be assumed to approximate the universe of regularly occurring marital behaviors, a partner’s endorsement of items that occur as either pleasing or displeasing can provide rough estimates of the frequency, area of functioning (e.g., communication, sex, finances), and valence (positive, negative) of behavior exchanges within the marriage (Patterson, 1976; Weiss, Hops, & Patterson, 1973; Weiss & Margolin, 1977; Wills, Weiss, & Patterson, 1974). The DPQ was distilled from an item pool composed of the SOC items plus 30 additional we/negative valence items. The SOC is composed of approximately 300 items of the form "Spouse did X" and 100 items of the form "We did X." All 100 we items had been classified a priori as pleasing whereas the 300 spouse items were classified approximately 50-50 as pleasing and displeasing (Christensen & Nies, 1980). In order to create a more balanced pool of items from which to select, the author generated 28 we/displeasing items (e.g., "We stopped sleeping together.")
and added them to the SOC to form the Modified Spouses Observation Checklist (MSOC) (Appendix G).

**Item selection for the DPQ.** Using procedures similar to those in the Christensen, Sullaway, and King study (1983) of the SOC, four clinical psychology graduate students (two males and two females) independently rated all items on the MSOC in terms of their importance as signs of a distressed versus nondistressed relationship. Items were rated on a 5-point scale from "Not Important" to "Very Important" as signs of either a distressed or nondistressed marital relationship (instruction set for the MSOC is presented with the instrument in Appendix G).

Items that were not consistently rated by all judges as signs of either a distressed or nondistressed relationship were eliminated from the item pool. To increase applicability of the DPQ items to the general population, all items referring to child care or parenting were also eliminated. The judges' scores for the remaining items then were totaled and the 25 most important ones were retained for each of four item types: we/distressed, we/nondistressed, spouse/distressed, spouse/nondistressed. Where ties existed for the top 25 items, a clinical psychologist specializing in marital studies selected the most important to round out the four item categories to an even 25. A total of 75 items were borrowed from the Spouse Observation Checklist (Weiss & Perry, 1979) for use on the
Dyadic Preference Questionnaire: 25 we/positive valence items, 25 spouse/positive valence items, and 25 spouse/negative valence items.

Next, for each of the 50 spouse items, a reciprocal item was created. For example, the reciprocal item for "Spouse complimented me on my appearance" was "I complimented spouse on his/her appearance." Furthermore, the term spouse was changed to partner in order to make the DPQ more universally applicable.

Item types and subscales on the DPQ. The result was a questionnaire with 25 items for each of six item types—
we/positive valence (We/+), we/negative valence (We/-),
partner/positive valence (P/+), partner/negative valence (P/-), self/positive valence (S/+), and self/negative valence (S/-) — which correspond, respectively, to items 1 through 6 in Table 1.

Subjects were asked to respond to all 150 DPQ items twice (desirability for self as recipient and desirability for partner as recipient) based on a 7-point Likert scale:

Greatly Moderately Somewhat Somewhat Moderately Greatly
-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3
Undesirable Desireable

Thus the DAS has 12 subscales composed of 25 items each for each respondent based on agent (we, partner, I), valence
Scoring the DPQ. Four major scales can be derived from the DPQ based on valence (+ or -) and recipient (desirability for self or for partner). For example, summation of response scores in the For Self column across the 75 positive- or relationship-enhancing items yields a measure of how desirable engaging in positive activities is for the self. Summation of scores in the For Partner column yields a measure of how desirable the spouse predicts these same items would be for the partner. The same procedure is accomplished for the 75 negative valence items. The range of possible scores for the four major scales based on valence and recipient is -225 to +225.

The four major DPQ scales are referred to as For Self/Positive (SP), For Self/Negative (SN), For Partner/Positive (PP), and For Partner/Negative (PN). Comparison of sums on these scales gives an indication of how desirable the distressed spouses find relationship-enhancing activities for themselves relative to their nondistressed counterparts. The same type of comparisons are made for relationship-impairing (negative valence) activities. Furthermore, comparisons are made between distressed and nondistressed spouses on predicted desirability for the Partner scales to assess how these groups differ in their perceptions of their partners. For example, a lower mean sum for distressed spouses relative to
nondistressed spouses on the For Partner/Positive (PP) scale could be interpreted as the distressed group viewing their partners as less interested in engaging in relationship-enhancing activities.

Comparison of the predicted For Partner means can be made with desirability For Self means to provide an indication of prediction accuracy. For example, distressed husbands, as a group, may underestimate how desirable their wives find relationship-enhancing activities. Comparison of means from the husbands' For Partner/Positive scale and the wives' For Self/Positive scale would reveal this. Two-way analysis of variance is performed to check for gender by distress interactions.

Another scoring procedure involves breaking scales down further according to agent (we, partner, self). The 12 subscales are partitioned and summed within cells based on agent (we, partner, self), valence (positive, negative), and recipient (self-reported desirability, desirability rating attributed to partner). Each subscore represents the summation of its 25 component items. The range of possible scores for each of these 12 subscales is -75 to +75. The same comparisons mentioned above for the four DPQ major scales for distressed and nondistressed couples are used to determine the extent of discrepancy between For Self and For Partner scales for these groups. For example, significantly lower correlations between For Self and For Partner scales
for the distressed group could be interpreted as greater "at oddness" or divergence of personal desires from those attributed to the partners.

Thus, the DPQ can be used to assess perceived similarity and prediction accuracy, as well as pointing to the particular areas that spouses value for themselves and for their partners. Further potential applications of the DPQ are presented following a review of results of the present study.
Chapter 3

RESULTS

Group Differences on Demographic Variables

Two-tailed Student's t tests were calculated on the demographic variables. Results are presented in Table 2. Coding schemes for education level and income level are presented in Appendix H. No significant differences were found for number of children, number of times previously married, education, or income level. A trend toward slightly higher level of income was found for the distressed couples ($t = 1.96, df = 38, p = .06$).

Significant differences were found between groups based on age and number of years married. Distressed males were an average of 5.80 years older than males in the nondistressed group ($t = 2.46, df = 38, p = .02$) and females in the distressed group were an average of 5.15 years older than their nondistressed counterparts ($t = 2.19, df = 38, p = .04$). Distressed couples had been married an average of 5.15 years longer than nondistressed couples ($t = 2.49, df = 38, p = .02$).

Group Differences on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale

As expected, there were significant differences between groups based on the DAS as an independent subject variable. A breakdown of DAS scores by distress and gender is presented in Table 2. Average DAS scores for distressed and nondistressed males are 87.45 and 116.75, respectively ($T = $33
8.80, \( df = 38, p < .01 \)). Average DAS scores for distressed and nondistressed females are 78.50 and 118.45, respectively (\( t = 10.67, df = 38, p < .01 \)).

A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), performed on DAS scores to check for distress \( \times \) gender interaction, is presented in Table 3. The interaction is depicted in Figure 1. As gauged by DAS scores, results indicate that wives in the distressed group were significantly more distressed than husbands in the distressed group, while there was essentially no difference in the nondistressed group (\( F = 4.52, df = 1 \) and 76, \( p = .04 \)). Thus, a competing hypothesis for any observed gender differences on the DPQ may involve severity of marital distress.

**Internal Consistency of the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire**

To assess the internal consistency of the DPQ, Cronbach's coefficient \( \alpha \) was computed for the major scales and subscales of the DPQ. Major scale characteristics for distressed and nondistressed couples, including scale means and standard deviations, are presented in Table 4. In these computations, husband and wife were considered as a single case to enhance data management capabilities. Values for negative valence items were reflected to achieve consistency in computations. Because husband and wife were considered as a single case, the number of items is effectively doubled. Cronbach's alphas range from .94-.98 on the major scales.
Major scales were broken into subscales according to gender, agent (we, partner, I), recipient (for self, for partner), and item valence (positive, negative). Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alphas for these scales are presented in Table 5. Alphas ranged from .73-.95, with a mean of .88 and standard deviation of .05.

**DPQ Subscale Intercorrelations and Perceived Similarity**

Pearson product-moment correlations between the DPQ subscales for distressed and nondistressed couples are presented in Table 6. Correlations between corresponding For Self and For Partner scales are underlined. Greater correlations between corresponding For Self and For Partner subscales can serve as one index of perceived similarity between personal desires and those predicted for one's partner. Conversely, lower correlations can serve as an index of competing desires or perceived discrepancy between desires.

Correlation differences between distressed and nondistressed couples on corresponding For Self and For Partner scales are presented in Table 7. Nondistressed couples obtained significantly higher For Self and For Partner correlations on the We/Negative scale ($z = 3.64, p < .01$), the We/Positive scale ($z = 2.58, p < .01$), the I/Positive scale ($z = 3.13, p < .01$), and the Partner/Positive scale ($z = 2.41, p < .01$). Differences on the I/Negative scale and the Partner/Negative scale did not
reach significance. A more straightforward procedure of summing and comparing absolute value differences between For Self and For Partner columns for distressed and nondistressed couples was not undertaken because of practical limitations in the scope of this study.

**Perceived Similarity and Prediction Accuracy on Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Scales**

Student's t tests were performed on means of distressed and nondistressed couples for corresponding major scales on the DPQ. Table 8 contains means and standard deviations by distress level and gender for the four DPQ major scales: For Self/Positive, For Self/Negative, For Partner/Positive, and For Partner/Negative. Comparison of corresponding means on For Self and For Partner scales can provide an index of perceived similarity, or how spouses rate personal desires relative to ratings they attribute to or predict for their partners. Comparison of means of the attribution response (desirability for partner) with the partners' corresponding response (desirability for self) were performed to provide an index of prediction accuracy.

Two-tailed Student's t probabilities assessing disparity between means on For Self and For Partner scales are presented in Table 9. The term *intraindividual disparity* is used to underscore that comparisons are made without consideration of the other partners' responses. Significant results were not obtained on these attribution
or perceived similar measures; however, trends toward significance were found on four of the eight comparisons and are mentioned below.

On the Self/Partner/Positive dimension, males in the distressed group obtained a slightly higher mean desirability for self rating on relationship-enhancing items compared with ratings attributed to their spouses ($t = 2.02$, $df = 38$, $p < .10$). Distressed males tended, therefore, to endorse relationship-enhancing activities as more desirable for themselves than for their partners. In much the opposite direction, nondistressed males tended to endorse relationship-enhancing activities as more desirable for their partners than for themselves ($t = 1.47$, $df = 38$, $p < .20$). On the Self/Partner/Negative dimension, distressed males tended to rate relationship-impairing activities as more undesirable for themselves than for their partners ($t = 2.05$, $df = 38$, $p < .10$).

Prediction accuracy can be described in terms of divergence of predicted desirability for partner ratings from the partner’s self-report of desirability for self. Mean scores on major scales can be compared in a similar manner as presented above. Two-tailed Student’s $t$-tests for this type of prediction accuracy are shown in Table 10. The term interindividual comparison is used to emphasize that means on For Partner scales are compared with means on For Self scales of the partners. While none of these
comparisons reached statistical significance at the $p < .05$ level, some interesting trends emerged. On the Partner/Self/Positive dimensions, distressed females tended to underestimate how desirable their partners would find relationship-enhancing activities ($t = 1.19$, $df = 38$, $p^{2T} < .10$). Nondistressed males also tended to underestimate how desirable their partners actually endorsed relationship-enhancing activities ($t = 1.70$, $df = 38$, $p^{2T} < .10$). In contrast, nondistressed females tended to overestimate how desirable their partners actually rated these activities ($t = 1.32$, $df = 38$, $p^{2T} < .20$). On the Partner/Self/Negative dimension, nondistressed males tended to underestimate how undesirable their wives rated relationship-impairing activities ($t = 1.86$, $df = 38$, $p^{2T} < .10$). In contrast, nondistressed females tended to overestimate how undesirable their husbands might find relationship-impairing activities ($t = 1.68$, $df = 38$, $p < .20$).

A more thorough item-by-item analysis of prediction accuracy was not undertaken due to limitations in scope of the present study. In reference to a similar scale, Margolin et al. (1983) noted that item-by-item analysis has greater utility in assessment of the individual couple as compared to nomothetic analyses.
Analyses of Variance:

Dyadic Preference Questionnaire Scales

Four 2 X 2 analyses of variance were performed on the four DPQ major scales based on distress level and gender. Means and standard deviations for these scales are available in Table 8 (p. 38). Similarly, 12 2 X 2 analyses of variance were performed on the 12 DPQ subscales. Means and standard deviations for the 12 subscales are presented in Tables 11, 12, and 13.

Major scales on the DPQ include For Self/Positive, For Self/Negative, For Partner/Positive, and For Partner/Negative scales. Analysis of variance tables for these scales are presented in tables 14, 15, 16, and 17, respectively. On the For Self/Positive scale (Table 14), distressed couples rated relationship-enhancing activities as significantly less desirable than nondistressed couples ($F = 7.40$, df = 1 and 76, $p < .01$). A distress by gender interaction was observed on this scale and is depicted in Figure 2. This interaction suggests that females in nondistressed relationships find positive activities more desirable, and that females in distressed relationships find positive activities less desirable than their respective partners ($F = 4.64$, df = 1 and 76, $p = .03$).
On the For Self/Negative scale (Table 15), distressed couples appear to find negative activities more desirable than do nondistressed couples ($F = 9.69$, df = 1 and 76, $p < .01$). On the For Partner/Positive scale (Table 16), distressed spouses rated their partners as finding positive activities less desirable as compared to the nondistressed group ($F = 25.91$, df = 1 and 76, $p < .01$). Similarly, analysis of the For Partner/Negative scale (Table 17) indicates that distressed spouses viewed their partners as less averse to engaging in relationship-impairing activities than do nondistressed spouses ($F = 29.12$, df = 1 and 76, $p < .01$).

Analysis of variance tables for the 12 DPQ subscales are presented in Tables 18 through 29. A trend toward significance was found on the We/For Self/Positive scale (Table 18), with mutually initiated relationship-enhancing activities rated as less desirable by distressed couples ($F = 2.69$, df = 1 and 76, $p = .08$). Significant differences were noted on the We/For Partner/Positive scale (Table 19) with distressed couples viewing their partners as less interested in engaging in mutual relationship-enhancing activities ($F = 17.65$, df = 1 and 76, $p < .01$).

Differences between distressed and nondistressed couples on the We/For Self/Negative scale (Table 20) indicate that distressed couples rate negative valence items as less undesirable or disturbing than do nondistressed...
couples ($F = 16.91$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$). Results on the We/For Partner/Negative scale (Table 21) indicate that compared to nondistressed couples, distressed couples viewed mutual negative valence behavior as less undesirable for their partners ($F = 17.74$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$).

Partner-agent type items refer to partner-initiated relationship behaviors. On the Partner/For Self/Positive scale (Table 22), distressed couples as a group rated partner-initiated positive behavior as less desirable than did nondistressed couples ($F = 7.84$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$). The distress X gender interaction showed a trend toward significance suggesting that females in the distressed group find relationship-enhancing behavior initiated by their partners less desirable, whereas females in the nondistressed group find the same behaviors more desirable relative to their respective spouses ($F = 3.56$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .06$).

Results on the Partner/For Partner/Positive scale (Table 23) suggest that distressed spouses viewed their partners as relatively uninterested in initiating relation-enhancing activities ($F = 21.70$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$). Results on the Partner/For Self/Negative scale (Table 24) did not reach significance, although a trend appeared based on gender suggesting that males may find partner-initiated negative valence behavior less undesirable than females ($F = 3.81$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p = .06$). On the
Partner/For Partner/Negative scale (Table 25), results indicate that distressed couples viewed their partners as less averse to initiating negative valence behavior than nondistressed couples ($F = 17.09$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$).

I-agent type items refer to self-initiated relationship behaviors. These items possess the same content as partner-agent items. On the I/For Self/Positive scale (Table 26), a significant distress X gender interaction suggests that females in distressed relationships find initiating relationship-enhancing activities less desirable and that females in nondistressed relationships find initiating relationship-enhancing activities more desirable compared to their respective spouses ($F = 7.28$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$). This relationship is depicted in Figure 4.

Results on the I/For Partner/Positive scale (Table 27) indicate that distressed spouses viewed their partners as less responsive to or desirous of relationship-enhancing behavior ($F = 25.59$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p < .01$).

Results on the I/For Self/Negative scale (Table 28) suggest that distressed couples as a group find initiating negative valence behavior less undesirable than distressed couples ($F = 6.23$, $df = 1$ and 76, $p = .02$). There was, however, a trend toward significance for the distress X gender interaction on this scale suggesting that females in the distressed group may find initiating negative valence
behavior less undesirable, and that females in the nondistressed group may find initiating negative valence behavior more undesirable when compared to their respective spouses ($F = 3.52, df = 1$ and $76, p = .07$). This relationship is depicted in Figure 5. On the I/For Partner/Negative scale (Table 29), results suggest that distressed couples rated initiating relationship-impairing behavior as less undesirable for their partners than did nondistressed couples ($F = 13.08, df = 1$ and $76, p < .01$).

**Summary of Results**

**Perceived Similarity**

Hypothesis 1 anticipated that distressed couples would rate personal desires as diverging from desires attributed to their partners. In other words, distressed spouses were expected to perceive less similarity between their own desires and desires attributed to their partners than would nondistressed couples. Support for this hypothesis was found on 4 of the 6 comparisons of For Self by For Partner scale correlations presented in Table 7. Compared to nondistressed couples, correlations between For Self and For Partner scales were significantly lower for distressed couples on the scale dimensions We/Negative ($p < .01$), We/Positive ($p < .01$), I/Positive ($p < .01$), and Partner/Positive ($p < .01$).

Two-tailed Student's t comparisons of DPQ major scale means did not reach statistical significance at the $p = .05$
level. Trends toward significance were found for distressed and nondistressed couples in terms of disparity between For Self and For Partner desirability ratings (see tables 8 and 9). Distressed males tended to rate relationship-enhancing items as more desirable for themselves than for their partners ($p < .10$), and tended to rate relationship-impairing items as less desirable for themselves than for their partners ($p < .10$). Nondistressed spouses also tended to rate their partner's desires as dissimilar from their own. Nondistressed males tended to rate relationship-enhancing items as more desirable for their partners than for themselves ($p < .20$). Nondistressed females tended to rate relationship-enhancing items as more desirable for themselves than for their partners ($p < .20$).

Prediction Accuracy

Expectations from hypotheses 2 and 3 were that distressed couples would demonstrate prediction inaccuracies on relationship-enhancing item types whereas nondistressed couples would demonstrate prediction inaccuracies on relationship-impairing item types. Two-tailed Student's $t$ probabilities did not reach statistical significance at the $p = .05$ level on prediction accuracy comparisons. Results presented in Table 10 suggest that nondistressed couples tended to be inaccurate in their predictions of their partner's desirability ratings on both relationship-enhancing and relationship-impairing item types. In the
distressed group, females tended to underestimate their partner's self-reported desirability ratings on relationship enhancing item types. Overall, no patterns emerged to support hypotheses 2 or 3.

**Self-reported Desirability Ratings**

Expectations from hypothesis 4 were that distressed couples would rate engaging in relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable than would nondistressed couples. This hypothesis received support, although several gender by distress level interactions were noted. Distressed couples rated engaging in relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable than did nondistressed couples on the For Self/Positive DPQ major scale (table 14, $p < .01$), the We/For Self/Positive scale (table 18, $p = .08$), the Partner/For Self/Positive scale (table 22, $p < .01$), and the I/For Self/Positive scale (table 26, $p = .01$). Distress x gender interaction effects were noted where females in the nondistressed group rated engaging in relationship-enhancing activities as more desirable, and females in the distressed group rated engaging in relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable, than their respective partners. This type of interaction was seen on the For Self/Positive scale (figure 2, $p = .03$), the Partner/for Self/Positive scale (figure 3, $p = .06$), and the I/For Self/Positive scale (figure 4, $p < .01$).
Expectations from hypothesis 5 were that distressed couples would rate engaging in relationship-impairing activities as less desirable than would nondistressed couples. This hypothesis did not receive support. Nondistressed couples rated engaging in relationship-impairing items as less desirable than did nondistressed couples on the For Self/Negative DPQ major scale (table 15, \( p < .01 \)), the We/For Self/Negative scale (table 20, \( p < .01 \)), the Partner/For Self/Negative scale (table 24, \( p = .11 \)), and the I/For Self/Negative scale (table 28, \( p = .02 \)). A gender by distress level interaction was obtained on the I/For Self/Negative scale suggesting that females in the nondistressed group may find initiating relationship-impairing activities less desirable, and females in the distressed group may find initiating relationship-impairing activities more desirable, than their respective partners (figure 5, \( p = .07 \)). A main effect by gender approached significance on the Partner/For Self/Negative scale suggesting that females found partner-initiated relationship-impairing activity less desirable than did males (table 24, \( p = .06 \)).

**Desirability Ratings Attributed to Partner**

Hypothesis 6 anticipated that distressed spouses would rate their partners as less desirous of engaging in relationship-enhancing activities than would nondistressed couples. Support for this hypothesis was obtained for the
For Partner/Positive DPQ major scale (table 16, \( p < .01 \)), the We/For Partner/Positive scale (table 19, \( p < .01 \)), the Partner/For Partner/Positive scale (table 23, \( p < .01 \)), and the I/For Partner/Positive scale (table 27, \( p < .01 \)). Compared to nondistressed spouses, distressed spouses appeared to view their partners as relatively uninterested in engaging in positive or relationship-enhancing activities.

Hypothesis 7 anticipated that distressed spouses would rate their partners as more desirous of engaging in relationship-impairing activities than would nondistressed couples. Support for this hypothesis was found on the For Partner/Negative DPQ major scale (table 17, \( p < .01 \)), the We/For Partner/Negative scale (table 21, \( p < .01 \)), the Partner/For Partner/Negative scale (table 25, \( p < .01 \)), and the I/For Partner/Negative scale (table 29, \( p < .01 \)). Distressed spouses appeared to view their partners as less averse to engaging in negative or relationship-impairing activities than did nondistressed couples.
Chapter 4
DISCUSSION

Group Differences on Demographic Variables

Compared to nondistressed couples, distressed couples were older, had been married longer, and reported a slightly higher combined family income. All distressed couples participated through privately practicing psychologist they were seeing for marital difficulties, whereas all nondistressed couples had one partner attending introductory level college psychology classes. A number of variables may account for age and income differences between distressed and nondistressed couples. Distressed couples were drawn from a population having greater financial access to private psychological services, while nondistressed couples were drawn from a population where one partner might be committed to pursuing an education rather than necessarily providing an income. Age and income might be viewed as related in terms of job experience and earning power. Decline in level of reported marital satisfaction coincident with length of marriage has been reported by other researchers (cf. Christensen et al., 1983) as reflecting a diminishing "honeymoon" effect or a tendency for spouses to become more critical, blaming, and frustrated with one-another as a result of repeated failures to resolve marital conflict. Although the present study did not specifically address the relationship between number of years married and marital satisfaction ratings, it is interesting to note that
distressed couples had been married longer than nondistressed couples. Future studies may wish to examine whether attributional styles undergo change as a function of relationship development or duration of marriage, and how this may impact on general relationship satisfaction. A possible effect of being married longer on prediction accuracy scores is discussed in a later section.

**Gender Differences on the DAS and DPQ**

As gauged by Dyadic Adjustment Scale scores, results indicate that wives in the distressed group were significantly more distressed than their husbands, while there was essentially no difference in the nondistressed group (see Table 3 and Figure 1). Greater distress observed in females in the distressed group may reflect the observed tendency of marriage to predispose women to depression and to buffer men from same (Biglan et al, 1985; Jacobson, N. S., Holtzworth-Monroe, A., & Schmaling, K. B., 1989). Perceived similarity comparisons did not reveal differences between distressed females and distressed males. In terms of prediction accuracy, the finding that distressed females tended to underestimate their partner’s self-reported desirability ratings on relationship-enhancing items could partly reflect a process of attribution of negative intent associated with greater marital distress. That is, females in the distressed group may have devalued their partner’s interest in engaging in positive activities partly as a
result of experiencing greater distress within the relationship than their partners.

Several distress level by gender interactions were noted on self-reported desirability ratings. The general finding was that females in the distressed group rated engaging in relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable, whereas females in the nondistressed group rated engaging in relationship activities as more desirable, than did their respective partners. A possibility exists that females in the distressed group rated relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable than did their partners as a function of severity of marital distress. This interpretation would be consistent with findings that distressed couples rated relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable than did nondistressed couples. Another possible explanation for gender differences observed on the DPQ is that wives may process pleasing and displeasing relationship interactions with greater cognitive and or affective intensity. Some research suggests that wives may be more expressive of their feelings about relationship disagreements, whereas husbands may be more conciliatory and prone to engage in more rationalistic explanations (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Margolin & Wampold, 1981). Gottman & Krokoff (1989) have suggested that wives may play a greater role in the management of relationship disagreements and that encouraging the husband to acknowledge and address
disagreement and anger may be beneficial to relationship satisfaction if confrontation does not result in withdrawal or other defensive maneuvers. A possibility exists as well that wives in nondistressed relationships may be more prone to express feelings of satisfaction and pleasure as this relates to the marriage.

**Perceived Similarity**

Higher correlations between For Self and For Partner scales for nondistressed couples offered some support for the hypothesis that distressed couples perceive greater disparity between their own desires and desires attributed to their partners. This result would be consistent with the proposition that one feature of marital distress involves a perception that personal desires are in conflict with desires held by one's partner. Student's t comparisons of means on For Self and For Partner scales did not consistently demonstrate that distressed couples perceived less similarity between personal desires and desires attributed to partner. Trends toward significance were found however, suggesting that distressed males view themselves as more desirous of relationship-enhancing activities and less desirous of relationship-impairing activities than they view their partners. This result can be interpreted in terms of a bias on the part of distressed males to view themselves, or perhaps portray themselves, as more sensitive and well-meaning relative to their partners.
Hence, perceived dissimilarity in distressed males may reflect an egocentric or self-serving bias to view themselves as well-intentioned relative to their partners. From another perspective, perceived dissimilarity in the case of distressed males may be associated with attribution of negative intent involving perception of their partners as possessing desires that are malevolent or defeating to the relationship. A trend toward significance was also found whereby nondistressed males appeared to view themselves as less desirous of engaging in relationship-enhancing activities than their partners. It is interesting to note that perceiving one’s partner as more interested in engaging in relationship-enhancing activities can be interpreted in terms of attribution of positive intent. Hence, perceived dissimilarity for nondistressed couples may involve a comparatively favorable evaluation of the partner relative to the self, whereas perceived dissimilarity in distressed couples may involve a comparatively unfavorable evaluation of the partner relative to the self.

A possible confounding factor to assessing perceived similarity involves the finding that DPQ mean scores for distressed couples deviated less from the neutral point of "zero desirability", whereas nondistressed couples appeared to respond to items with more extreme ratings. That is, distressed couples appeared to be more neutral in their responses than did nondistressed couples. A possibility
exists therefore, that response style may have partly obscured expected differences between distressed and nondistressed couples on perceived similarity measures. Another possibility is that whereas distressed spouses may view themselves as similar to their partners, and nondistressed spouses may view themselves as similar to their partners, that the quality of perceived similarity may be quite different for these two groups. For example, distressed couples generally rated themselves and their partners as less desirous of engaging in relationship-enhancing activities and as more desirous of engaging in relationship-impairing activities, relative to nondistressed couples. Hence, perceived similarity for distressed couples may involve rather unfavorable self-perceptions in concert with negative evaluations of their partners. In contrast, perceived similarity for nondistressed couples may involve comparably favorable partner-perceptions and self-perceptions.

The present results indicate that a more sensitive measure of perceived similarity may be in order. Future item-by-item analysis of perceived similarity might reveal greater indications of "at oddness" for distressed couples. The DPQ format also allows for comparison of actual similarity of desires between partners which, if compared to perceived similarity measures, might shed light on the relative importance of attributions of similarity as
compared to actual similarity of desires. Arias and O'Leary (1985) found that perceived similarity in definitions of marriage-related concepts was a more potent factor in differentiating distressed and nondistressed couples than was actual similarity. Results of this study suggest that posing the question in terms of perceived similarity per se may be too simplistic, and perhaps misleading. Whereas discrepancies between personal desires and desires attributed to the partner may offer an index of potential conflict within the couple, it is important to understand the affective quality of perceived differences. Distressed spouses may view themselves as fairly similar to their partners in terms of relationship desires, while viewing their partners, and prospects for the relationship, in negative terms. In contrast, perceived similarity among nondistressed couples appears to involve more favorable self-partner comparisons. Future studies may benefit from asking couples to rate direction and magnitude of change they desire of themselves and their partners to assess the extent to which perceived differences are undesirable, and to assess for the predominant locus of desired change (i.e. within self to mutual change to within partner) to help determine the couples perception of the onus of responsibility for improvement in the relationship. The latter comparison might prove useful in assessing the adequacy of the establishment of a positive collaborative
set in therapy. Also of interest would be to ask couples to give their impressions of the likelihood that change can occur, either in themselves or their partners to assess for efficacy and outcome expectations of therapy and to provide an index of perceived stability of conflict.

**Prediction Accuracy**

Student's $t$-test comparisons of predicted desirability for partner means and the partner's self-reported desirability means did not produce statistically significant results at a $p < .05$ level of probability. Distressed couples were anticipated to be inaccurate in their predictions of how desirable their partners might find relationship-enhancing activities due to lessened familiarity with relationship-enhancing activities, whereas nondistressed couples were expected to show prediction inaccuracies on relationship-impairing items for the same reason. A trend toward significance was found on one of four comparisons within the distressed group whereby wives underestimated how desirable their husbands rated relationship-enhancing activities. This result suggests that wives in the distressed group may view their husbands as less interested in engaging in positive or pro-relationship activities than may be the case. Another interpretation is that distressed males may have exaggerated their interest in participating in relationship-enhancing activities. Within the nondistressed group, trends toward
significance were found on all four prediction accuracy comparisons. Nondistressed spouses tended to be inaccurate in their predictions of their partner's desirability ratings on both relationship-enhancing and relationship-impairing items. Nondistressed males tended to underestimate how desirable their partners rated relationship-enhancing activities and tended to underestimate how undesirable their partners rated relationship-impairing activities. In contrast, nondistressed females tended to overestimate how desirable their partners rated relationship-enhancing activities and tended to overestimate how undesirable their partners rated relationship-impairing activities. One possible interpretation of these findings is that nondistressed males view their partners as less responsive to positive and negative relationship events than is actually the case whereas nondistressed females rate their partners as more responsive to positive and negative relationship events than is actually the case. Another possible interpretation is that males in the nondistressed group may have adopted a more subdued response set relative to their partners.

The DPQ format requires couples to perform the complex task of predicting their partner's desires on a variety of hypothetical relationship activities. Fincham and Baucom (in press) found that attribution styles may be essentially the same whether spouses are asked to rate actual or
hypothetical relationship events. Whereas a capacity to empathize and perceive a partner's needs and desires may be of great importance in the maintenance of a mutually satisfying relationship, a possibility exists that certain attribution styles or biases that impair perceptual accuracy may indeed promote marital satisfaction. Taylor and Brown (1988) have proposed that self-enhancing evaluations of the self, such as exaggerated perceptions of control and mastery and optimism about the future, may be generally adaptive in terms of increasing life satisfaction, increasing capacity to care about others, and in encouraging greater receptiveness to negative feedback.

Extended to perceptions in marital relationships, prediction inaccuracies in nondistressed couples may involve perceptual distortions that enhance the couple's sense of well-being. Tendencies for nondistressed females to overestimate how desirable their partners found relationship-enhancing activities and to overestimate how undesirable their partners found relationship-impairing activities could be interpreted in terms of attribution of positive intent. That is, nondistressed females may view their partners as more sensitive to and desirous of engaging in pleasing behaviors and avoiding destructive behaviors, than is actually the case. This possibility would be consistent with findings suggesting that nondistressed
couples may be inclined to make more positive, favorable, or idealized attributions for their partner's behavior (Fincham, Beach & Baucom, 1987; Lavin, 1987). In contrast, nondistressed males tended to underestimate how desirable their partners found relationship-enhancing activities and tended to underestimate how undesirable their partners found relationship impairing activities. This finding is similar to the trend found in distressed females to underestimate how desirable their partners rated relationship-enhancing activities. It is possible to speculate that nondistressed males may be biased to view their partners as less sensitive than is actually the case, thus affording a greater sense of ease or assurance in their interactions with their partners. Another possibility is that nondistressed males may be less sensitive to the quality of marital interactions than their partners and that comparative insensitivity is not fully appreciated by nondistressed wives because of tendencies to view their husbands in a generally favorable light. It is conceivable that nondistressed males may be less inclined to make positive, favorable, or idealized attributions for their partner's behavior than are nondistressed females.

Prediction accuracy comparisons were not designed to test whether or not distressed couples were less accurate in their predictions than nondistressed couples. Future analyses might employ an item-by-item subtraction method to
address this issue. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that distressed couples did not demonstrate significant inaccuracies in their predictions. This finding would be consistent with Margolin et al.'s (1983) finding that distressed couples were more accurate than nondistressed couples in predicting the magnitude of change desired of them by their partners. A possibility exists that distressed couples make their desires and dissatisfaction known more often and with greater immediacy than do nondistressed couples. Distressed couples appear to be more reactive than nondistressed couples to immediate relationship transactions (Jacobson, Follette & McDonald, 1982) and hence may provide more salient feedback to one another about likes and dislikes. Spouses may also engage in more attributional activity in response to negative partner behaviors (Camper, Jacobson, & Holtzworth-Monroe, 1988). Given that distressed couples engage in more frequent negative interactions than do nondistressed couples, distressed couples may have greater occasion to evaluate their partner's behavior and hence may become more adept at identifying their partner's likes and dislikes. A related factor is that all couples in the distressed group were participating in some form of marital therapy and that perhaps this experience helped spouses become more aware of their partner's desires than would otherwise be the case. Another factor that may have contributed to the difficulty
identifying prediction inaccuracies in the distressed group relates to length of time married. Couples in the distressed group had been married for an average of approximately 11 years (approximately 5 years longer than couples in the nondistressed group), and thus, tendencies to misread the partner's desires may have been overridden by extended duration of contact with the partner.

Trends toward significance were observed for prediction inaccuracies in nondistressed couples on relationship-enhancing and relationship-impairing item types. It is possible to speculate that greater variability in specific day-to-day relationship desires interfered with prediction accuracy in nondistressed couples. For example, nondistressed couples may select from a more diversified repertoire of relationship interactions based on the couple's needs at the time. In contrast, members of distressed couples may be characterized by a certain amount of rigidity, inflexibility, and constriction of their behavioral repertoires such that prediction of their partners' desires is less problematic for them. Hence, apparent prediction inaccuracies in nondistressed couples may partly reflect tendencies for nondistressed couples to incorporate a larger number of situational factors into their evaluations of their partners' needs and desires. A potential means of assessing variability in desires in the relationship would be to ask couples to assign values
indicating a range of desirability for each item on the DPQ rather than asking for a fixed number. Larger ranges may indicate greater flexibility within the relationship. On the other hand, larger ranges could be related to instability within the marriage. Several studies have suggested that distressed couples rate the causes of negative partner behavior as more global and stable whereas nondistressed rate the causes of positive partner behavior as more global and stable (Baucom, Epstein, Sayers, & Sher, 1989). It is conceivable that positive or negative attribution biases may interfere with attempts to measure variety or flexibility within the marriage as well as attempts to measure the extent that couples rely on situational variables in evaluating their partners' behavior.

Although analyses conducted in this study were not designed to assess whether distressed couples were more or less accurate than nondistressed couples in predicting their partner's desires, trends were found indicating that nondistressed couples were somewhat inaccurate in predicting their partner's responses. Results of the present study do not appear consistent with the findings of Christensen and Wallace (1976) that more distressed couples were less accurate in predicting behaviors that would be rewarding to their spouses. Comparison of mean scores may have obscured detection of prediction inaccuracies in nondistressed couples. Item-by-item comparison of prediction and self
-report responses might reveal differences between distressed and nondistressed couples not apparent in the present comparisons. Nonetheless, perceptual distortions occurring in nondistressed couples may lead these couples to evaluate their partner's behavior more favorably. In contrast, greater reactivity of distressed couples, and perhaps greater rigidity in their relationship interactions, may aid distressed couples in predicting their partners desires.

**Self-reported Desirability and Desirability Attributed to Partner**

Strong and consistent results are found in this study suggesting that distressed couples, compared to nondistressed couples, rate relationship-enhancing activities as relatively undesirable for themselves and for their partners. Distressed couples, compared to nondistressed couples, also rate themselves as comparatively more desirous of engaging in relationship-impairing activities and rate their partners as similarly inclined to participate in potentially destructive marital interactions.

A propensity for distressed couples to devalue potentially rewarding activities has been discussed by many researchers as an impediment to marital therapy, as have tendencies for distressed couples to anticipate negative outcomes (Huber & Milstein, 1985; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979; Jacobson, 1984; Weiss, 1980).
Distressed couples may have an exceedingly difficult time identifying relationship behaviors that are indeed rewarding, even though they report dissatisfaction with the partner and the marriage in general. That is, by self-report, distressed couples may find potentially rewarding activities inherently somewhat unRewarding. Hence, encouraging couples to increase "positive" activities, a common feature of more behaviorally-oriented approaches (e.g. Jacobson, 1981; Weiss, 1980), may be viewed with some skepticism and puzzlement by distressed couples. One difficulty may rest with motivating couples to expect positive change at points where they find their role in therapy awkward, hopeless, or perhaps more aversive than old patterns of relating to their partners. Reorienting the couple toward expectancies for positive change, increasing efficacy and sense of manageability through graded exposure to higher risk tasks involving greater collaboration between partners, and reframing conflict in terms that resist blameful attributions, have been described as useful in terms of eliciting desires and mutual commitment to work on the relationship (Doherty, 1981b; Huber & Milstein, 1985; Jacobson, 1981; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979). Doherty (1981a) speculated that "It appears that a lot of marital conflict is expressly concerned with disagreement over attributions about each other's behavior, especially attributions about motives and intentions" (p. 12).
Results of the present study suggest that distressed couples may need to overcome their own relative disinterest in attempting some form of relationship building or enhancing efforts, and may also benefit from adopting a more benign view of their partner's attempts to improve the relationship. Tracking of positive relationship events is used as a method of altering the couples tendency to focus on negative behavior (Jacobson, 1981), but research in this area has met with mixed results in terms of producing differences in marital satisfaction ratings (Price and Haynes, 1980; Robinson and Price, 1980; Volkin and Jacob, 1981). Initially, the potential benefit of this exercise may be lessened by the distressed couples' tendency to not find positive behaviors very rewarding and by tendencies to view their partners as undesirous of engaging in positive activities.

A potential sticking point in marital therapy is that couples may be limited by a negativity bias toward their partners. Helping members of distressed couples adopt a more benign view of their partners' attempts to improve the relationship, as in working to develop a positive collaborative set (Jacobson & Margolin, 1979), may be viewed as a way of reorienting the couple toward expectations for positive relationship change and away from blaming and attributions of malevolence. Several studies have implicated global attributions of internal and stable
negative intent as being a characteristic feature of distressed relationships (Fincham, 1985; Fincham, Beach & Nelson, 1987; Pretzer, Epstein, & Flemming, 1985). The findings that distressed couples, compared to nondistressed couples, rate relationship-enhancing activities low in desirability and rate relationship-impairing activities as relatively high in desirability for their partners is consistent with earlier studies suggestive of attribution of negative intent. A competing hypothesis however, is that nondistressed couples may, in comparison to distressed couples, make attributions involving idealization of their partners. Lavin (1987) found that when nondistressed married couples were asked to rate vignettes depicting hypothetical conflict, they rated positive behaviors as occurring with greater intensity than negative behaviors. Fincham, Beach, & Baucom (1987) found that nondistressed couples make more benign attributions for partner behavior as opposed to self-behavior, whereas distressed couples make less benign attributions for partner behavior as opposed to self-behavior. Hence, nondistressed couples may operate with a generally positive attribution bias toward their partners. It is possible to speculate that a positive attribution bias in nondistressed relationships may serve to maximize the subjective impact of positive behaviors, and serve to attenuate the negative impact of aversive behaviors. In contrast, a negative attribution bias on the
part of distressed couples may work against prospects for improvement.

It is interesting to note that distressed couples' attributions of partner disinterest in positive activities and attributions that the partner may not be particularly opposed to negative interactions appear to receive some support as gauged by the partner's self-reported desirability ratings. Although there appears to be a basis in reality for generally negative attributions about the partner in distressed relationships, negative attributions may serve to accentuate the subjective impact of negative behaviors and minimize the impact of positive behaviors. Whereas attributions of distressed couples may not necessarily be faulty or grossly at odds with reality, they may serve to increase the likelihood of destructive interchanges as well as pose obstacles for constructive change. Fincham, Beach and Nelson (1987) found that responsibility attributions may be of considerable importance in determining the affective impact of positive and negative behaviors as well as the spouse's response to these behaviors. Prediction accuracy and perceived similarity comparisons performed in this study suggest that although distressed couples score lower on desirability ratings of positive activities and score higher on desirability ratings of negative activities than do nondistressed couples, distressed spouses may be prone to
rate their partners even more unfavorably than they rate themselves. It may be possible to infer from these results that distressed spouses view their partner's behaviors as more responsible for relationship distress. Future analyses may use an ANOVA procedure to compare For Self and For Partner responses on positive and negative item types to determine whether members of distressed couples rated themselves higher in desirability of relationship-enhancing activities and/or lower in desirability of relationship-impairing activities relative to their partners. It would also be of interest to examine whether couples differ in terms of self-reported desirability and desirability attributed to partner on comparisons of responses to I agent (i.e. "I did X") items and corresponding partner agent (i.e. "Partner did X") items.

A related interest is to investigate whether distressed couples differ from nondistressed couples in their use of situational versus dispositional explanations for their partner's behavior. Revenstorf (1984) emphasizes reattribution techniques in marital therapy whereby couples are encouraged to attribute causes for problems to situational factors and to the couple's learning histories rather than to dispositional or trait-like characteristics of their partners. A possible method for investigating differential reliance on dispositional explanations for self versus partner behavior would be to have distressed couples
rate how "characteristic" or "like me" the DPQ item types prefaced by "I" are and to have the couples rate how "characteristic" or "like him/her" the mirrored items are of their partners. It might be expected that distressed couples would rate positive behaviors as more characteristic of themselves than their partners, with the inverse relationship applying to negative behaviors. Future research may also wish to address the disparity between self-concept and spouses' perceptions of their partners as a potential source of marital distress.

The possibility that distressed couples selectively attend to negative behaviors and that distressed couples may be more reactive to or prone to reciprocate negative behaviors has been cited in the literature (Jacobson et al., 1982; Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Revenstorf, Halweg, Schindler, & Vogel, 1984). Cognitive factors such as attributions color evaluations such that distressed couples may selectively attend to problem areas or discredit events that do not fit their attributions or expectations. On the other hand, results from the present study are somewhat surprising in that distressed couples did not rate relationship-impairing activities as negatively as did nondistressed couples. Indeed, distressed couples appeared somewhat numbed or anesthetized in their self-reported desirability ratings of engaging in negative interchanges with their partners. Doherty (1981b) has suggested that low
efficacy resulting from repeated failure at resolving marital conflict leads to a sense of helplessness and uncontrollability such that conflict escalation seems to occur "on its own". Perhaps the apparent inevitability of painful interactions leads distressed couples to expect such occurrences with some degree of indifference. Hence, distressed couples may be less motivated to avoid destructive behaviors. Distressed couples may have become rather desensitized to reciprocation and escalation of negative behaviors. Another possibility is that distressed couples are indeed impacted by and reactive to negative behaviors at the time of their occurrence but may view aversive interchanges as uncontrollable and positive behaviors as unlikely or as selfishly motivated. The term "desirability" may be more useful in assessing motivation and attribution of intent rather than assessing impact and reactivity to positive and negative exchanges. For example, distressed couples may be somewhat numbed to the prospect of engaging in negative interchanges, but nonetheless may experience negative events with greater intensity than might be expected from reports of how desirable or undesirable they rate the behavior to be. Future research may wish to address this question by asking couples how they are likely to feel or react toward their partners when engaging in positive and negative valence activities with them. Distressed spouses may be less inclined to avoid negative
interactions but still may experience significant distress, and perhaps greater impetus to respond in kind, with the occurrence of negative relationship events.

**Future Research**

The DPQ is an unusually versatile research instrument. Several possibilities for future research have been introduced thus far. An item by item approach toward perceived similarity might prove to be a more sensitive measure of sense of competing desires and of perceptual distortions in distressed and nondistressed couples. The DPQ format also allows for comparison of perceived similarity and actual similarity of responses. The current data set could be used for more direct comparison of prediction accuracy between rather than within groups. Asking couples to rate desired agent of change (i.e. self or partner) and level of dissatisfaction associated with perceived divergence of desires could be used to gauge the extent to which marital distress is internalized, perhaps as reflecting unfavorably on the self, or externalized as blame of the partner. Between group comparisons indicate that distressed couples find positive activities less desirable and find negative activities more desirable than do nondistressed couples. Additional analyses could reveal that distressed spouses rate their partners as even less desirous of engaging in positive activities and more desirous of engaging in negative activities than they rate
themselves. A related interest is to investigate whether differences between partners on personality measures correspond with reports of marital dissatisfaction. Asking couples to indicate ranges of desirability on DPQ items could serve as an indirect measure of assessing reliance on trait-like versus situational variables in making causal attributions for behavior, and might also be used to assess the degree of variability of needs or desires in the marriage. Comparison of how spouses rate their partners on personality or dispositional variables with how these partners rate themselves might increase understanding of the influence of diverging self-perceptions and partner-perceptions on marital satisfaction.

Categorization of item types (such as communication, leisure, expression of sexuality, etc.) and selecting a more limited number of items found useful in discriminating distressed from nondistressed couples may provide a more clearly defined and time-effective means of assessing attributions in component aspects of marital functioning. A crude guide for content analysis of DPQ items and a reciprocal item identification chart are provided in Appendices I and J to assist such efforts. Relationship desires may change or fluctuate as a function of relationship development, and it may prove useful to examine more circumscribed content areas to help understand whether certain aspects of marital functioning are more
important to couples at different points in their marriage. Similarly, it may prove useful to examine whether attributions differ on dimensions such as globality and stability over the course or duration of the marriage. Retrospective accounts of perceived change in distressed and nondistressed relationships may provide insight into different types of attributions that couples make in evaluating relationship development. The DPQ might also be useful as a pre-post treatment measure to assess changes in perceived similarity, prediction accuracy, and desirability of engaging in relationship-enhancing and relationship-impairing activity types.

Overview

Differences were noted between the distressed group and the nondistressed group on variables of age, income, and number of years married. Distressed couples were older, had been married longer, and reported a slightly higher level of income. Extended duration of marriage in the distressed sample may have enhanced ability to predict partner desires and hence may have obscured differences between groups on measures of prediction accuracy.

On the DAS measure of marital satisfaction or distress, wives in the distressed group were significantly more distressed than husbands. Several distress X gender interactions were observed, with the general finding that wives in the nondistressed group reported engaging in
relationship-enhancing activities as less desirable than did their partners. Rather than reflecting a gender-based phenomenon, decreased interest in positive relationship activities could reflect greater marital distress on the part of wives in the distressed group.

Correlations between For Self and For Partner scales were smaller in the distressed group as compared to the nondistressed group. This finding is taken as an indication that distressed couples perceive greater disparity or dissimilarity between personal desires and desires attributed to the partner than do nondistressed couples. In another approach to assessing perceived similarity, or perceived disparity, comparison of mean sum scores of For Self and For Partner scales produced trends toward significance suggesting that distressed spouses may be biased to rate their partners as less interested in engaging in relationship-enhancing activities and more interested in engaging in relationship-impairing activities relative to themselves. Hence, perceived dissimilarity for nondistressed couples may involve tendencies to view the partner as possessing desires that are defeating to the marital relationship. In contrast, perceived dissimilarity in nondistressed couples may involve tendencies to view the partner in more favorable terms relative to the self. Future approaches to assessing perceived similarity may benefit from item-by-item analysis of responses on the DPQ.
On prediction accuracy measures, a trend toward significance was found whereby wives in the nondistressed group underestimated how desirable their partners rated engaging in relationship-enhancing activities. This finding lends support to the proposition that distressed couples may be prone to view their partners as deficient in the desire to improve the relationship. Nondistressed males, however, tended to underestimate how desirable their partners rated positive activities and how undesirable their partners rated negative activities. This type of prediction inaccuracy is difficult to account for in a nondistressed population as it appears to reflect a lessened sensitivity to partner desires on the part of nondistressed males. In contrast, nondistressed females tended to overestimate how desirable their partners rated relationship-enhancing activities and how undesirable their partners rated relationship-impairing activities. Hence, females in the nondistressed group appear to view their partners as more sensitive to positive and negative relationship activities than may actually be the case. An item-by-item summation comparison of discrepancies between predicted responses and self-report that directly compares differences between distressed and nondistressed couples on positive and negative item types is intended as a future project. An item-by-item approach is anticipated to be more sensitive to differences between distressed and nondistressed couples on measures of
prediction accuracy and perceived similarity.

Compared to nondistressed couples, distressed couples consistently rated relationship-enhancing activities lower in desirability and rated relationship-impairing activities as relatively higher in desirability by self-report and in predicting their partner's responses. These findings suggest that distressed couples are less than enthusiastic about initiating relationship-enhancing activities and that they view their partners as similarly disinclined. It can be speculated that distressed spouses view their partners as relatively averse to participating in negative interchanges, and that distressed spouses may themselves be partly desensitized to the occurrence of unpleasant relationship events. Future analyses may reveal whether distressed spouses rate either themselves or their partners as more extreme in their disinterest in relationship-enhancing activities or apparent insensitivity to relationship-impairing activities. As gauged by self-reported desirability ratings, results of the present study suggest that distressed spouses' ratings of their partners may be well-founded.

Several options for future research using the DPQ were presented, some of which are possible with the current data set. Item-by-item analyses of perceived similarity and prediction accuracy, as well as self-partner desirability contrasts are examples. Future modification of the DPQ may
allow for assessment of attribution dimensions such as perceived globality and stability of positive and negative relationship behaviors, locus of responsibility and subjective impact of activities depicted on the DPQ, as well as desire for relationship change and sense of efficacy in this regard. Categorization of items may provide greater insight into the values couples place on various types of relationship activities at different levels of marital satisfaction or distress.
Chapter 5

SUMMARY

The present investigation was designed to explore attributional processes in distressed and nondistressed married couples along dimensions of perceived similarity of relationship desires, prediction accuracy of relationship desires, self-reported desirability of engaging in relationship-enhancing and relationship-impairing activities, as well as predictions made by spouses of how desirable they believed their partners might rate engaging in the same positive and negative valence relationship activities. A research instrument, the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire, was developed in this study and employed to assess differences between distressed and nondistressed couples in their ratings of desirability for self and desirability for partner of engaging in 75 positive valence and 75 negative valence relationship activities.

Items from the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire were selected from a larger pool of items present in the Spouse Observation Checklist (Weiss & Perry, 1979) based on their importance to marital functioning as judged by a team of doctoral psychology students. Internal consistency measures of DPQ scales suggest that the instrument possesses adequate inter-item reliability. Cronbach's coefficient alpha ranged from .98 on larger scales to .73 on smaller scales.

Couples were assigned to either the distressed or the
nondistressed group based on their scores on a global measure of marital satisfaction, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). As a result of sampling procedures, all couples in the nondistressed group were obtained through their involvement in introductory psychology classes, whereas all couples in the distressed group were participating in some form of marital therapy. Group differences on demographic variables such as age, income, and number of years married were attributed to those sampling procedures. Couples in the distressed group tended to be older, had been married longer, and reported a higher level of combined income.

Measures of perceived similarity of relationship desires were obtained by correlating DPQ self-reported desirability scales and DPQ scales that required spouses to predict their partner's desirability ratings. Significantly lower correlations between self-reported desirability and desirability attributed to partner in the distressed group was taken as an indication that distressed spouses perceive conflicts between personal desires and desires attributed to partner. Student's t comparisons of summed means on DPQ For Self and For Partner scales did not yield significant results. Item-by-item contrast of desirability for self and desirability for partner responses is recommended for future studies of perceived similarity.

Measures of prediction accuracy indicated that
nondistressed couples tended to be inaccurate in their prediction of their partner's desires on positive and negative valence item types. In contrast, prediction inaccuracies in the distressed group were generally not observed. It is proposed that distressed spouses may air complaints more frequently, and although they may choose to ignore requests, are more familiar with their partner's desires than spouses in the nondistressed group. Couples in the distressed group were also found to have been married longer than couples in the nondistressed group, and hence prediction accuracy may have been aided as a result of greater familiarity. Item-by-item analysis that allows direct comparison between distressed and nondistressed couples on prediction accuracy is recommended for future investigations.

Distressed couples were found to rate relationship-enhancing activities higher and relationship-impairing activities lower in desirability than was the case for nondistressed couples. The same relationship obtained where spouses were asked to predict their partner's desirability ratings on these same items. Distressed couples appear, therefore, to depreciate positive activities and to view their partners as similarly disinterested in participating in activities that might have a potential for relationship enhancement. Distressed couples also appear somewhat desensitized to the possibility of negative interactions and
may view their partners as inclined to behave negatively toward them. Future studies may benefit from exploring whether distressed couples view their partners as more or less desirous of participating in positive and negative encounters than they rate themselves.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE
# Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list. (Place a check mark to indicate your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Always agree</th>
<th>Almost always agree</th>
<th>Occasionally disagree</th>
<th>Frequently disagree</th>
<th>Almost always disagree</th>
<th>Always disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handling family finances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matters of recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious matters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstration of affection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy of life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims, goals, and things believed important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time spent together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making major decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure time interests and activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you confide in your mate?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you ever regret that you married (or lived together)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you and your partner quarrel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you and your partner &quot;get on each other's nerves?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you kiss your mate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
<td>Every day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of them

Most of them

Some of them

Very few of them

None of them

Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than once or twice</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Once</th>
<th>More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never a month</td>
<td>a month</td>
<td>a week</td>
<td>a day</td>
<td>often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

Laugh together

Calmly discuss something

Work together on a project

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree.

Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no.)

Yes No

29. Being too tired for sex.

30. Not showing love.

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

Extremely unhappy Fairly unhappy A little unhappy Happy Very happy Extremely happy Perfect

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

I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.

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

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

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

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

My relationship never can succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.
APPENDIX B

DYADIC PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE
DYADIC PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Dyadic Preference Questionnaire is a list of 150 behaviors that occur in relationships.

You will be asked to rate each item twice. First rate how desirable or undesirable the behavior would be for you. Next, predict how desirable or undesirable the behavior would be for your partner.

Ratings are made on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greatly Undesirable</th>
<th>Moderately Undesirable</th>
<th>Somewhat Undesirable</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Desirable</th>
<th>Moderately Desirable</th>
<th>Greatly Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To illustrate the completion of the questionnaire, consider the behavior, "We went to a club or organizational meeting." If going to a club or organizational meeting might be Somewhat Desirable for you, put a +1 under the column For Self. If, however, you think the behavior would be Moderately Undesirable for your partner, put a -2 under the column For Partner.

The question then would be answered as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desirability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We went to a club or organizational meeting.

Another example: Consider the behavior, "I dressed nicely." If dressing nicely is Moderately Desirable for you, put a +2 under the column For Self. If your partner also finds it Moderately Desirable for you to dress nicely, put a +2 under the column For Partner.

This question then would be answered as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desirability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I dressed nicely.

Now try the last example yourself. Consider the behavior "Partner dressed nicely" and that you would find it Moderately Desirable for your partner to dress nicely. Your partner, however, might find it Somewhat Desirable to dress nicely. Please mark the appropriate responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desirability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Partner dressed nicely.

Please answer all the questions carefully and refer to the scale as necessary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desirability</th>
<th>For Self</th>
<th>For Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greatly undesirable</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately undesirable</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat undesirable</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat desirable</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately desirable</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatly desirable</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Partner confided in me._
2. I got angry and wouldn't tell partner why._
3. We stopped sleeping together._
4. I made no effort to get a job._
5. Partner admired my body._
6. I told partner that I love him/her._
7. Partner made no effort to get a job._
8. I showed interest in partner's school/work._
9. I admired partner's body._
10. Partner lectured me rather than listened to me._
11. Partner complained about my sexual behaviors._
12. I wouldn't talk to partner about my special interest._
13. Partner initiated sexual advances._
14. Partner criticized me in front of others._
15. I insisted on sexual practices that partner dislikes._
16. We discussed future employment opportunities._
17. We had a humorous conversation._
18. Partner asked for my opinion._
19. I initiated sexual advances._
20. Partner wouldn't accept my apology._
21. I did not respect partner's opinion._
22. Partner showed interest in my work/school._
23. We sarcastically insulted each other's personal habits._
24. We were both sexually satisfied._
25. We went out for a nice meal or dinner._
26. We tried some new sexual behaviors that we liked._
27. We hit each other in anger._
28. I did not give partner the attention he/she asked for._
29. We had a constructive conversation about family management._
30. I caressed partner with hands._
31. Partner showed no interest in my work/school._
32. I was tolerant when partner made a mistake._
33. Partner greeted me affectionately when I came home._
34. I read a book or watched TV and wouldn't talk to partner._
35. We stopped speaking to each other for a few days._
36. We fought in front of friends or in public._
37. I ignored partner when he/she asked for some attention._
38. We talked about personal feelings._
39. We had a fancy candlelight dinner at home._
40. We enjoyed petting and other sex play._
41. We stopped having sexual relations._
42. I helped partner to reach orgasm._
43. Partner called just to complain about something I did._
44. We flirted with other people to make each other angry/jealous._
45. Partner rejected my sexual advances._
46. We talked about personal day-to-day happenings._
47. I refused to listen to partner's feelings._
48. We decided that our relationship wasn't worth improving._
49. I told partner that I like him/her._
50. I talked to partner when he/she asked for some attention._
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greatly Undesirable</th>
<th>Moderately Undesirable</th>
<th>Somewhat Undesirable</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Desirable</th>
<th>Moderately Desirable</th>
<th>Greatly Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Desirability**

For Self | For Partner
--- | ---

51. We held hands.
52. I cuddled close to partner in bed.
53. I consulted partner about an important decision.
54. I went to bed early while we had company.
55. Partner embarrassed me in front of friends or relatives.
56. I asked partner about his/her feelings.
57. I refused to talk about a problem we share.
58. We exchanged a gift.
59. Partner asked about my feelings.
60. I was pleasantly responsive to partner's sexual advances.
61. Partner consulted me about an important decision.
62. We intentionally started avoiding each other.
63. We accused each other of sabotaging the relationship.
64. I complained about partner's sexual behaviors.
65. I left partner frustrated at end of sexual session.
66. Partner hurt me or made me uncomfortable during sexual activities.
67. I lectured partner rather than listened to him/her.
68. Partner listened sympathetically to my problems.
69. Partner helped me to reach orgasm.
70. I called partner just to say hello.
71. Partner was tolerant when I made a mistake.
72. Partner expressed feelings and thoughts to me.
73. I turned off in the middle of making love.
74. I embarrassed partner in front of friends or relatives.
75. We were able to work successfully on a problem.
76. We stopped spending leisure time together.
77. We were unable to resolve a long-standing problem.
78. Partner touched me affectionately.
79. Partner left me frustrated at end of sexual session.
80. We threatened each other with separation or divorce.
81. I criticized partner's body.
82. Partner wouldn't talk to me about his/her special interest.
83. Partner refused to talk about a problem we share.
84. I rejected partner's sexual advances.
85. I commanded partner to do something.
86. We labeled each other as mentally ill during an argument.
87. Partner ignored me when I asked for some attention.
88. We separated or divorced.
89. I told partner I see his/her work as important.
90. Partner was pleasantly responsive to my sexual advances.
91. Partner went to bed early while we had company.
92. I hugged or kissed partner.
93. We verbally threatened each other.
94. I wouldn't accept partner's apology.
95. I showed no interest in partner's work/school.
96. Partner made an important decision without consulting me.
97. I expressed feelings and thoughts to partner.
98. I made an important decision without consulting partner.
99. Partner caressed me with hands.
100. Partner comforted me when I was upset.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greatly undesirable</th>
<th>Moderately undesirable</th>
<th>Somewhat undesirable</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat desirable</th>
<th>Moderately desirable</th>
<th>Greatly desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Desirability for Self and Partner

101. Partner read a book or watched TV and wouldn't talk to me.  
102. We held each other.  
103. We kept interrupting each other during an important discussion.  
104. Partner criticized my body.  
105. We hugged and kissed passionately.  
106. We refused to accept each other's apology after an argument.  
107. I listened sympathetically to my partner's problem.  
108. Partner did not give me the attention I asked for.  
109. Partner cuddled close to me in bed.  
110. I hurt partner or made him/her uncomfortable during sexual activities.  
111. We laughed together.  
112. We went to a dance or party.  
113. We engaged in sexual intercourse.  
114. We screamed at each other.  
115. We hurtfully mocked each other's philosophy of life.  
116. We worked on the budget.  
117. We both were sexually responsive to each other.  
118. We talked affectionately.  
119. I comforted partner when he/she was upset.  
120. Partner hugged or kissed me.  
121. Partner said he/she likes me.  
122. We had a good talk about our relationship.  
123. I let partner know that I enjoyed intercourse with him/her.  
124. Partner let me know that he/she enjoyed intercourse with me.  
125. Partner commanded me to do something.  
126. I confided in partner.  
127. Partner showed he/she was glad to see me.  
128. Partner refused to listen to my feelings.  
129. I showed partner I was glad to see him/her.  
130. We hurtfully made fun of each other's goals or achievements.  
131. Partner insisted on sexual practices that I dislike.  
132. Partner did not respect my opinion.  
133. We warmed each other in bed.  
134. I asked partner for his/her opinion.  
135. I criticized partner in front of others.  
136. We distrustfully withheld our true feelings from each other.  
137. I greeted partner affectionately when he/she came home.  
138. We refused to listen to each other's feelings.  
139. I called just to complain about something partner did.  
140. I touched partner affectionately.  
141. Partner talked to me when I asked for some attention.  
142. Partner called me just to say hello.  
143. Partner got angry and wouldn't tell me why.  
144. We went out for coffee, coke, or ice cream.  
145. We ignored each other during a meal.  
146. Partner said he/she loves me.  
147. Partner told me he/she sees my work as important.  
148. Partner turned off in the middle of making love.  
149. We had sexual affairs in order to hurt each other.  
150. We made a major financial decision.  

93
APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE
DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your age? _____ years

2. What is your gender? _____ male _____ female

3. How many times have you been married? _____ time(s)

4. How long have you been married to your present partner? _____ years

5. How many children do you have? _____ child(ren)

6. What is your yearly combined family income? $________

7. What is your highest level of education? (Circle highest level completed.)

   High school 1 2 3 4 years
   College 1 2 3 4 years
   Graduate school 1 2 3 4 years
   Other education beyond high school (such as Vo-Tech, etc.) 1 2 3 4 years
APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM
CONSENT

I consent to serve as a subject in this research investigation.

The nature and general purpose of this experiment have been explained to me by the experimenter. Namely, I have been informed that I will be answering written questions regarding my beliefs, attitudes, preferences, or behavior on several dimensions associated with marriage. I will respond anonymously to the questions. I understand that I may terminate my services as a subject in this research at any time I so desire.

I also understand that my answers to these questionnaires will be used only for scientific research purposes, and without identification of individual participants. Although all questionnaires are anonymous and confidential, I realize that group results of the research will be made available to me upon request.

_________________________  __________________________
Date                     Subject                     Witness
APPENDIX E

INSTRUCTION AND DEBRIEFING PROTOCOL
Instructions to Subjects and Debriefing Protocol

Thank you for coming today. The title of this research study is marital preferences. Soon you will be asked to complete a consent to participate form, a demographics questionnaire, a scale assessing general relationship functioning, and a questionnaire asking you to rate how desirable or undesirable 150 different relationship activities would be for yourself and for your partner. The entire session should take about one hour to complete and is worth 4 experimental credits. You will receive experimental credit whether or not you decide to participate.

In order to participate in the study, you need to have brought with you some evidence that you and your partner are married to each other. Drivers licenses with the same last name will suffice as proof of marriage. I will be coming around the room to check identification and to record names for experimental credit. If you have not brought identification with you or are not married to the partner you brought with you then let me know as I come around. Be sure to get your credit slips from me before you leave.

(Check identification and distribute assessment materials).

Each of you should have before you a numbered assessment package. Check to see that the number on your packet is the same as your partner’s number. Do not write your name anywhere on assessment materials. Numbers are used to protect the anonymity of your responses.

To participate further, you and your partner will need to read and sign the form titled consent. I will pick consent forms up before you begin completing the assessment packages. First, let me tell you the general purpose of the study. One purpose is to determine how desirable or undesirable couples might find engaging in a number of varying relationship activities. This provides a measure of couple preferences for the relationship activities listed. Another purpose is to compare your form with your partner’s form to see how good you are at estimating or predicting your partner’s responses.

All responses are anonymous and confidential. The purpose of the study is to look at group results. Data will be assigned an arbitrary number and analyzed by computer. It is not possible to make individual results available to anyone. If anyone is interested in learning more about the experiment in general after we are done, please feel free to stop and chat or to contact me through the Psychology Office.

Please take this time to read the consent form and sign
it if you so decide. You remain free to stop participating for whatever reason and at any time and you still will receive experimental credit. (Pick up consent forms and distribute experimental credit slips).

Before proceeding, I want to ask everyone to move at least one chair length away from their partner and neighbor. Do not look on someone else's form. If you are having difficulty completing the form please let me know rather than asking for help from someone else. It is very important that you be entirely honest in making your responses and that you try to answer all questions. A cover sheet is provided to assist you in aligning questions with response blanks. I want to thank you for your contribution to this important area of marriage research. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Please begin by answering questions on the demographics questionnaire and reading instructions for the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire. Please stop after reading the instruction page for the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire. (Pause).

Responses to the last example on the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire should have been +2 for self and +1 for partner. Take time to confirm this by rereading the example. (Pause). Please continue by completing each page of the assessment package. Packages can be deposited face down in the box provided when done. Do not hesitate to reread instructions or to let me know if you are having difficulty. Please begin.
Assessment Interpretation

DAS: Both partners score in the moderate to severe clinical distress range (H=75, W=73). The couple responded similarly to most of the questions on the DAS which means they are acknowledging the existence of conflict in similar areas. For H, areas of significant disagreement include handling family finances, household tasks, decision making (including making career decisions) and, more globally, philosophy of life, aims, goals, and things believed important. W concurs that frequent disagreement occurs around decision making and household tasks, and identifies demonstration of affection, friends, and amount of leisure time spent together as areas of frequent disagreement. The couple assesses extent of conflict differently in a few areas (items 15, 26, 27, 29, 30). H perceives more disagreement on career decisions and about being too tired for sex. W reports that calm discussions and laughing together occur with less frequency than that reported by H and identifies not showing love as a problem area. Both report that they are fairly unhappy with the relationship and rarely confide in one another, but considering the couples level of distress they both endorse item 32 indicating a high level of commitment to working on the relationship.

DPQ: H has a moderate to high number (23) of perceived discrepancy items with an average intensity of approximately 3 discrepancy units. W has a high number (46) of perceived discrepancy items with an average intensity of approximately 3 discrepancy units. A tentative hypothesis that can be made from this is that W feels more at odds with H on a wider variety of relationship issues. Another hypothesis, one that can be drawn directly from the very high frequency of zeros in the "desirability for partner" column of W's form is that she views H as neutral or indifferent to many of the conventionally positive and negative relationship activities listed on the DPQ. Indeed, a response set, a response set that may be associated with indifference, aloofness, or perhaps insensitivity. In contrast to what appears to be a chilled response style by H, another tentative hypothesis is that W may feel frustrated and in response has adopted a more vigorous, intense, and perhaps a hypersensitive and reactive response style. Moving from more global hypotheses to item analysis, perhaps the most important finding is that both partners would find separation or divorce greatly undesirable (item 88) although W perceives that H is indifferent or neutral about this option. W also views H as less committed to working on the relationship (e.g., items 48, 75, 122), as disinclined to accept apologies or make amends (e.g., items 20, 106), as withholding confidences (e.g., items 1, 136), as less
interested in opening channels of communication and sharing thoughts and feelings (e.g., items 46, 53, 56, 57, 59, 61, 70, 72...), as comfortable with withdrawal and avoidance (e.g., item 62), etc. Perhaps surprisingly, several items indicate that W is still interested in expression of sexuality and perceives H as similarly inclined (e.g., items 3, 19, 26, 69, 92, 113, 133). Review of H's form suggests that he views W as less interested sexual expression and physical demonstrations of affection than he is (e.g., items 24, 30, 40, 41, 52, 109) and a possibility exists that he would like to assume a more passive role with W taking more initiative (e.g., item 19). H reports conflict about both partners jobs/occupation. Again, H has a more neutral response style which makes specific conflict areas more difficult to identify. A possibility exists that H's style of relating with W also is characteristically neutral/withdrawn/noncommittal and is a source of relationship dysfunction in itself.
APPENDIX G

MODIFIED SPOUSE OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

(MSOC)
Enclosed is a list of about 400 behavior items. Some typically characterize distressed marital relationships (typically destructive behaviors) and some typically characterize nondistressed or well-functioning relationships.

Please seriously consider each item and rate its importance as typically a sign of a distressed or a nondistressed relationship:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Minor Importance</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly Important</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, if an item is a fairly important sign of a distressed relationship, put a 4 in column d (distressed) for that item. If, however, the item is a fairly important sign of a nondistressed relationship, put a 4 in column nd (nondistressed) for that item. Please briefly review the items before beginning in order to help you anchor your scoring (that is, briefly scan the items before beginning so that you can more consistently score them). Also, please keep these instructions handy to make scoring easier. Thanks!
Modified Spouse Observation Checklist (MSOC)

**AFFECTION**
- We held each other .................................................................
- We took a shower or bath together ........................................
- We warmed each other in bed ..................................................
- We tickled and rough-housed together ....................................
- We held hands ............................................................................
- Spouse hugged or kissed me ......................................................
- Spouse gave me a massage, rubbed lotion on my back, etc. .......
- Spouse cuddled close to me in bed ...........................................
- Spouse warmed my cold feet .....................................................
- Spouse greeted me affectionately when I came home ..............
- Spouse touched me affectionately ..............................................
- We had sexual affairs in order to hurt each other ...............
- We intentionally started avoiding each other .....................
- We distrustfully withheld our true feelings from each other ...

**COMPANIONSHIP**
- We listened to music on the radio or stereo ............................
- We sat and read together ........................................................
- We watched TV (½ hour or more) ............................................
- We read aloud to each other ...................................................
- We worked together on decorating our home .......................  
- We played musical instruments together (sang together) .......
- We read the newspaper together ...........................................
- We gardened ............................................................................
- We played with our pets ...........................................................
- We baked bread or pastries .....................................................
- We played chess, monopoly, scrabble, etc. (any board game) ...
- We played cards .................................................................
- We got high on drugs or alcohol ............................................
- We hunted for interesting things to photograph ...................
- We took a walk ........................................................................
- We went for a ride ...................................................................
- We did exercises together ......................................................
- We sunbathed together ...........................................................
- We played volleyball, basketball, etc. together ....................
- We went bowling, skating or played pool ............................
- We cant swimming or diving ............................................... 
- We played frisbee ..............................................................
- We attended a sporting event .................................................

**Affection Total**
COMPANIONSHIP - continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We went jogging or bicycle riding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We played golf, tennis, badminton or ping pong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went shopping for new clothes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a dance or party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had a fancy 'candlelight' dinner at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went out for a nice meal or dinner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went out for coffee, coke, or ice cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ate at an inexpensive restaurant or drive-in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a bar or tavern</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a movie (play, concert, ballet, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a club or organizational meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We worked on a community project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a class or lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to the library together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went folk dancing or square dancing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We worked together on an art or craft project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We discussed or worked on a project that one of us is responsible for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We worked together on a hobby (stamp collecting, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We participated in religious activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a church service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We took a nap together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We exchanged a gift</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We watched the sunset (sunrise)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We laughed together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had a pillow fight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We stopped sleeping together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We decided that our relationship wasn't worth improving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We accused each other of sabotaging the relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONSIDERATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We talked affectionately</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse thanked me for doing something</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse said he/she loved me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse asked me how my day was</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse complimented me on my appearance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse said he/she likes me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse acted patient when I was cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse showed he/she was glad to see me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse listened sympathetically to my problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse skillfully calmed me down when I was being unreasonable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse agreed strongly with something I said</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse complimented something I made</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Companship Subtotal

Consideration Subtotal
### CONSIDERATION - continued

| Spouse talked to me when I asked for some attention |  
| Spouse tried to cheer me up |  
| Spouse apologized to me |  
| Spouse forgave me for something |  
| Spouse expressed approval of me or something I did |  
| Spouse was tolerant when I made a mistake |  
| Spouse comforted me when I was upset |  
| Spouse complied in a friendly manner to a request |  
| Spouse called to tell me where he/she was |  
| Spouse called me just to say hello |  
| Spouse waved goodbye to me when I left and/or wished me a good day |  
| Spouse smiled at me or laughed with me |  
| Spouse laughed at my jokes |  
| Spouse answered my questions with respect |  
| Spouse was tolerant of me when I was late |  
| Spouse was tolerant of my friends |  
| Spouse was careful not to wake me when I was asleep |  
| Spouse met me on time |  
| Spouse answered the phone while I was busy |  
| Spouse cut my hair |  
| Spouse patched my clothes |  
| Spouse packed a lunch for me |  
| Spouse prepared a favorite food or dessert |  
| Spouse got up and made breakfast for me |  
| Spouse brought me a cup of coffee, tea, etc |  
| Spouse prepared a snack for me |  
| Spouse prepared breakfast-in-bed |  
| Spouse prepared a food or dessert I especially like |  
| Spouse bought some food item especially for me |  
| Spouse did some of my chores so I could finish a rush job |  
| Spouse asked me if I needed anything at the store |  
| Spouse brought me home something to read |  
| Spouse went to bed when I did |  
| Spouse showed interest in my hobby |  
| Spouse told me he/she sees my work as important |  
| Spouse said something unkind to me |  
| Spouse failed to call when he/she was coming home late |  
| Spouse talked while I was trying to sleep |  
| Spouse woke me up when I was sleeping |  
| Spouse fell asleep while I was talking to him/her |  
| Spouse wouldn't accept my apology |  
| Spouse was sarcastic with me |  
| Spouse commanded me to do something |  
| Spouse lectured me rather than listen to me |  
| Spouse ignored me when I asked for some attention |  

**Consideration Subtotal**
**Consideration — continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse told me how to do something I already know how to do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did something for me instead of showing me how</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse said my jokes are stupid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did not respect my opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse disapproved of me or something I did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused my apology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did not give me the attention I asked for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did not pay attention when I was talking about something that interests me; he/she looked away or had a bored expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse complained about something I did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse criticized me in front of others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse criticized something I made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse criticized my body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse called me just to complain about something I did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse came home late when I needed the car</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse was late when I went to pick him/her up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse bothered me when I was concentrating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse bothered me when I was on the phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse mimicked me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did not come to a meal when asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse read the paper (or watched TV) rather than attending to me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse criticized me for smoking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse insisted we go somewhere I didn't want to go</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse showed no interest in my hobby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ignored each other during a meal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We flirted with other people to make each other angry/jealous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We stopped having sexual relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SEX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We engaged in sexual intercourse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We enjoyed petting and other sex play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We hugged and kissed passionately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We tried some new sexual behaviors that we liked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had oral-genital sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We both were sexually responsive to each other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We were both sexually satisfied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse admired my body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped me to reach orgasm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse set mood for sexual experience (music, wine, candles)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse wrote something that was provocative, enticing, etc. for me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse caressed me with hands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse caressed me with mouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse wore clothing I found sexually stimulating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse read something pornographic aloud</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Consideration Subtotal**

**Sex Subtotal**

---

**Note:** The table above contains a list of events and their corresponding options (d, nd), which likely represent different levels of consideration or sexual satisfaction. The table is structured to allow for multiple selections per category, indicating varying degrees of agreement or occurrence for each event described.
### SEX - continued

- Spouse engaged in other sexual behaviors that I especially like
- Spouse let me know that he/she enjoyed intercourse with me
- Spouse initiated sexual advances
- Spouse was pleasantly responsive to my sexual advances
- Spouse petted me
- Spouse participated in a sexual fantasy
- Spouse presented him/herself in the nude
- Spouse was uncommunicative during sexual activity
- Spouse left me frustrated at end of sexual session
- Spouse rushed into intercourse without foreplay
- Spouse complained about my sexual behaviors
- Spouse rejected my sexual advances
- Spouse turned off in the middle of making love
- Spouse fell asleep immediately after making love
- Spouse insisted on sexual practices that I dislike
- Spouse hurt me or made me uncomfortable during sexual activities
- We refused to listen to each other's feelings
- We hurtfully mocked each other's philosophy of life
- We criticized each other's health or appearance

### COMMUNICATION PROCESS

- We talked about something troubling, outside of our relationship
- We were able to work successfully on a problem
- We had a good talk about our relationship
- We agreed about something
- We talked about personal feelings
- We talked about personal day-to-day happenings
- We had a constructive conversation about family management
- We talked about a vacation
- We had an intellectual, philosophical or political discussion
- We talked about a show we had seen
- We had a humorous conversation
- Spouse asked about my feelings
- Spouse expressed feelings and thoughts to me
- Spouse confided in me
- Spouse consulted me about an important decision
- Spouse asked for my opinion
- Spouse showed particular interest in what I said by agreeing or asking relevant questions
- Spouse helped in planning an outing or social event
- Spouse suggested something fun or interesting that we could do for the evening
- Spouse refused to make a decision on a significant issue
- Spouse refused to talk about a problem we share
- Spouse brought up bad times from the past
- Spouse dominated the conversation
- Spouse interrupted me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>d</th>
<th>nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Subtotal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Subtotal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**COMMUNICATION PROCESS - continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse offered unsolicited advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse responded &quot;I don't know&quot; without considering the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse disagreed harshly with something I said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse didn't want to talk about his/her problem with me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We kept interrupting each other during an important discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We argued about sexual differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We refused to accept each other's apology after an argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COUPLING ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse got angry and wouldn't tell me why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused to listen to my feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse made an important decision without consulting me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse complained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse read a book or watched TV and wouldn't talk to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse wouldn't talk to me about an outing or social event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse planned an outing or social event without consulting me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused to help in planning an outing or social event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse wouldn't talk to me about his/her special interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went out for an evening with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We invited a couple of our friends over to visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We visited relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We met new people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We wrote letters to friends or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We telephoned friends or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to a party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We entertained a business/work associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We made plans for entertaining friends, associates, relatives, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We talked about friends or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse arranged to get together with relatives or in-laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse invited friends over to visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse invited company for dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse arranged for us to go to a party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse made a good impression on my friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse was unpleasant to people we had over for company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse went to bed early while we had company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse criticized my parents or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse made bad impression on my friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse embarrassed me in front of friends or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We hit each other in anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We fought over financial issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We fought in front of friends or in public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communication Subtotal**

**Coupling Total**
**CHILD CARE AND PARENTING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Opinions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We discussed the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We took the children on a family outing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We cared for the children when sick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We played with the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We disciplined the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse read a story to the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse played with the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse disciplined children appropriately: Specify:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse answered child's question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse took the children to school or elsewhere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse taught the children something</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped child with homework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse gave the children responsibility for a job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped resolve a fight between the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse comforted a baby, made him/her stop crying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse watched the children for a few minutes while I was busy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse took care of children while I did some work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped feed the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse gave child a bath</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse got up in the night to take care of child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse changed baby's diapers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped put the children to bed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse arranged for babysitting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse cleaned out dirty diaper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse criticized the way I handled children in front of them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse punished child too severely: Specify:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused to answer child's question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse was unkind to children by criticizing or humiliating them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse yelled at the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse was too permissive with child: Specify:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse was too protective towards child: Specify:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse hit child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse told child to leave him/her alone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse conspired with children to break rules</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse contradicted me in front of child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse favored one child over another</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused to help in babysitting arrangements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left dirty diaper in toilet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We stopped speaking to each other for a few days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We separated or divorced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We stopped spending leisure time together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ran some errands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went grocery shopping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped with shopping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We planned or prepared a meal together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse prepared an interesting or good meal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse carried groceries into the house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse had dinner ready on time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped with cooking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse set the table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse cleared the table and put the food away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did the dishes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse helped me do the dishes or other chores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse straightened up the house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse swept, dusted or did other light cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse mopped the floor, or did other heavy cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse cleaned the bathroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We straightened up the house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse made needed complaints to the landlord, utility companies, garbage collector, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse appropriately handled a minor household crisis without bothering me about it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did household repairs or arranged to have them done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse put dirty clothes in the hamper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse set the alarm clock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse put the newspapers outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse turned up the heat in the morning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did the laundry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse chopped wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse built a fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse turned the lights off, heat down, etc., before we went out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse fed the pets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse cleaned up after the pets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse mowed the lawn or took care of the yard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse took care of needed car repairs or maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse washed or cleaned the car</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse put gas in car</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse emptied the car ashtray</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse served leftovers from the night before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse fixed a food I dislike</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse forgot to buy food we needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left something out of the refrigerator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left a sink full of dishes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse prepared a tasteless meal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused to help with household chores when asked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse delayed in doing household tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse nagged or became angry about chores I hadn’t completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left a chore incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household Subtotal
### Household Management — continued

| Spouse left an appliance turned on when he/she left the house |  |
| Spouse did not take care of needed car repairs or maintenance |  |
| Spouse forgot to put gas in car |  |
| Spouse took car when I needed it |  |
| We threatened each other with separation or divorce |  |
| We were unable to resolve a long-standing problem |  |
| We sarcastically insulted each other's personal habits |  |

### FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING

| We made a major financial decision |  |
| We worked on the budget |  |
| We balanced the checkbook |  |
| We agreed on a purchase |  |
| We got a 'good buy' on something |  |
| Spouse paid the bills on time |  |
| Spouse helped in planning a budget |  |
| Spouse 'got a 'good buy' on something |  |
| Spouse agreed to splurge on something |  |
| Spouse gave me money to spend anyway I want |  |
| Spouse helped make a decision about a purchase |  |
| Spouse wrote a check without recording it |  |
| Spouse spent more than the budget allowed |  |
| Spouse bought something that could have been purchased for less at another store |  |
| Spouse did not pay the bills on time |  |
| Spouse bought something important without consulting me |  |
| Spouse borrowed money from a friend |  |
| Spouse wouldn't let me buy something I wanted |  |
| Spouse made a mistake in balancing the checkbook |  |
| Spouse wanted to know what I had spent money on |  |
| We screamed at each other |  |
| We labelled each other as mentally ill during an argument |  |
| We hurtfully made fun of each other's goals or achievements |  |

Household Subtotal

| Household Subtotal |  |

Financial Total

| Financial Total | d nd |
EMPLOYMENT-EDUCATION

We celebrated a success in work (advancement, completion of a project, end of term).
We discussed future employment opportunities.
We figured out ways to meet new job demands.
Spouse made significant achievement in his/her work/school.
Spouse assisted me with work I brought home.
Spouse helped me solve a problem I have in my work.
Spouse earned special recognition at work.
Spouse consulted me about a decision for work.
Spouse showed interest in my work/school.
Spouse read my paper (report, etc.).
Spouse showed no interest in my work/school.
Spouse interfered with me working on projects I brought home from work/school.
Spouse made bad decision or behaved inappropriately at work.
Spouse remained upset or angry about work after he/she came home.
Spouse talked too much about work.
Spouse made no efforts to get a job.
Spouse worked overtime or brought home work to do.
Spouse complained I spend too much time at work.

We verbally threatened each other.

PERSONAL HABITS AND APPEARANCE

Spouse paid attention to his/her appearance (shaved, took a bath, etc.).
Spouse dressed nicely.
Spouse hung up his/her clothes in the closet.
Spouse got a haircut or hairdo.
Spouse left clothes lying around.
Spouse left dirty dishes around the house.
Spouse missed the ashtray with cigarette ashes.
Spouse made a mess and didn’t clean it up.
Spouse left personal belongings lying around the house.
Spouse mumbled.
Spouse spoke in whining voice.
Spouse smoked during mealtime.
Spouse blew smoke (or coughed in my face).
Spouse slurped liquid or made other unpleasant noises while eating.
Spouse used poor table manners.
Spouse talked with mouth full of food.
Spouse belched.
Spouse was late in picking me up.
Spouse exceeded the speed limit or drove carelessly.
Spouse made us late for an appointment by not being ready on time.
Spouse hogged the covers.

Employment Total

Personal Subtotal
### PERSONAL HABITS AND APPEARANCE - continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spouse wore curlers when I was at home</th>
<th>( \text{d} )</th>
<th>( \text{nd} )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse violated his/her diet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse wore sloppy clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse neglected his/her appearance (did not shave, did not bath, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse used my toilet articles (razor, toothbrush, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left hairs in the sink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse monopolized the bathroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did not flush the toilet after using it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left her/his toilet articles laying out in the bathroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse used all of the toilet paper without getting a new roll</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left the cap off the toothpaste</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse did not clean the tub after using it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left the bathroom in a mess</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse used up all the hot water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### SELF AND SPOUSE INDEPENDENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We scheduled independent activities and responsibilities</th>
<th>( \text{d} )</th>
<th>( \text{nd} )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We both engaged in independent activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We went to different shows that we each wanted to see</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse agreed that we would spend a period of time by ourselves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse responded favorably to my desire for a night out without her/him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse supported an independent activity of mine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse went to a lecture (show, film, etc.) alone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse read a book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse is doing a physical activity alone (jogging, biking, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse had lunch (dinner) with a friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse is taking a night class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse went to a party alone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse complained when I wanted to spend time with friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse complained when I wanted time to myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse refused to let me have free time for a hobby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse left me behind to watch the children or work, while he/she went out for fun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse spoke positively about experience from which I was excluded</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse excluded me from an activity I would have liked to participate in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse opened my mail or went through my personal papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Personal Subtotal**

---

**Independence Total**
APPENDIX H

CODES FOR

INCOME AND EDUCATION
### Codes: Yearly Combined Family Income and Level of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yearly combined family income ($ amount)</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 7,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000-13,999</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14,000-20,999</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,000-27,999</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28,000-34,999</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35,000-41,999</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42,000+</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years of high school or G.E.D.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical beyond high school</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years of college</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some graduate school</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or more years of graduate school</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I

PRELIMINARY DPQ CONTENT ANALYSTS
Preliminary DPQ Content Analysis

Communication:  1,10,18,35,46,83,103

Sharing feelings:  1,6,38,49,56,59,72,97,121,128,136,143

Comfort, attention, and caring:  22,33,59,68,71,82,100,118,127,137,141,142,146

Decision making:  10,16,18,29,53,57,61,75,77,96,103,116,132,150

Sexual expression (heavy):  3,13,26,40,41,42,69,105,113,124

Sexual expression (lighter):  5,30,51,52,78,92,99,102,109,120,133

Coupling & leisure activities:  17,25,26,39,58,76,91,101,112,144

Insult:  14,23,43,44,45,55,63,86,87,115,130,132


Threat, aggression, violence, separation:  27,36,44,48,63,66,80,85,86,88,93,114,125,131,149
APPENDIX J

DPQ RECIPROCAL ITEM LOCATION SHEET
### Dyadic Preference Questionnaire:
#### Reciprocal Item Location Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reciprocal Item Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/126 74/55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/143 78/140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/7 79/65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/9 81/104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/146 82/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/4 83/57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/22 84/45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/5 85/125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/67 87/37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/64 89/147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/82 90/60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/19 91/54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/135 92/120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/131 94/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/8 99/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>28/108 100/119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/99 101/34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/95 104/81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32/71 107/68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33/137 108/28</td>
</tr>
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<td>34/101 109/52</td>
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<tr>
<td>37/87 110/66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42/69 119/100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43/139 120/92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45/84 121/49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47/128 123/124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49/121 124/123</td>
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<td>52/109 126/1</td>
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<td>53/61 127/129</td>
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<td>54/91 128/47</td>
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<td>55/74 129/127</td>
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<tr>
<td>56/59 131/15</td>
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<td>57/83 132/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>59/56 134/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60/90 135/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61/53 137/33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64/11 139/43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65/79 140/78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66/110 141/50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67/10 142/70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68/107 143/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>69/42 146/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70/142 147/89</td>
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<td>71/32 148/73</td>
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<tr>
<td>72/97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73/148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX K

CORRESPONDENCE
Date: 13 November 1985

To: Institutional Review Board

From: Robert H. Bodholdt, Phillip H. Bornstein (chairperson)

Re: Proposed project involving human subjects. Title of project: Behavioral Preference Inventory and Attributional Processes in Distressed and Nondistressed Couples

1. Brief Description of the Research
   The primary objective of the research is to gather information regarding self-reported desirability of 120 behaviors that often occur in distressed and nondistressed marital relationships as well as information regarding both partners' abilities to predict how desirable these behaviors would be for their partners. Each partner will be asked to rate how desirable (on a 7-point scale) behaviors would be for them as well as how desirable they think these behaviors would be for their partners. Sixty of the items depict behaviors that are more typical of a well-functioning relationship (e.g., "We worked together on a hobby") and 60 items depict behaviors that are more typical of distressed relationships (e.g., "Partner dominated the conversation"). In addition, both partners will be asked to complete the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (a widely used measure of global marital satisfaction) as well as to complete a basic demographics questionnaire. The 120 desirability items, called the Behavioral Preference Inventory, were derived from several marital interaction checklists especially for this study.

2. Benefits to Subjects and Scientific Knowledge
   The subjects in the present study will not benefit directly from participating. The results will be used to describe the extent to which distressed and nondistressed couples can accurately predict how desirable positive and negative behaviors are for their partners. The results will help determine what types of partner-perceptions (attribution) may contribute to distress as well as what types of partner perceptions may contribute to marital satisfaction. It is hoped that these findings can be extended to marital therapy.

3. Use of Experimental Subjects
   Each subject will be asked to complete the Behavioral Preference Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and a basic demographics questionnaire.

4. Description of the Subjects
   Subjects will be married or cohabiting couples where it is expected that one partner will be a University of Montana student and both partners will be 18 years of age.

5. Risks and Discomforts to Subjects
   N/A

6. Means to Minimize Deleterious Effects
   N/A

7. Means to Protect Privacy and Confidentiality
   To ensure confidentiality, all information will be gathered anonymously. Each subject will be assigned a number and instructed not to put names on the tests.

8. Written Consent
   The subjects will complete the attached consent form.
TABLES
Table 1

Sample Items from the Dyadic Preference Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person/valence</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Desirability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>For self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. We/+</td>
<td>We held hands.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We/-</td>
<td>We stopped sleeping together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. P/+</td>
<td>Partner complimented me on my appearance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. P/-</td>
<td>Partner refused to listen to my feelings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. S/+</td>
<td>I complimented partner on his/her appearance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. S/-</td>
<td>I refused to listen to partner's feelings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

Group Characteristics on Demographic Variables and Breakdown of Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group (n = 20 couples per group)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Two-tailed probability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>38.60</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>32.80</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>35.15</td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>7.26</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years married</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of times married</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined yearly income level</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAS SCORE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>87.45</td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>116.75</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>78.50</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>118.45</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>10.67</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. df = 38 throughout.
Table 3

ANOVA: Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Scores by Distress Level and Gender *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>23,977.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23,977.81</td>
<td>191.17</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>262.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>262.81</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
<td>567.11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>567.11</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>9,532.65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>125.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>34,340.38</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases.
### Table 4

Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Major Scale Characteristics for Distressed and Nondistressed Couples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For self +/-†</td>
<td>D/ND</td>
<td>677.55</td>
<td>100.54</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner +/-†</td>
<td>D/ND</td>
<td>643.25</td>
<td>123.85</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self +‡</td>
<td>D/ND</td>
<td>339.10</td>
<td>47.28</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self -‡</td>
<td>D/ND</td>
<td>338.45</td>
<td>63.98</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner +‡</td>
<td>D/ND</td>
<td>319.73</td>
<td>51.33</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner -‡</td>
<td>D/ND</td>
<td>323.53</td>
<td>79.02</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Number of cases = 40 throughout.

*For partner or for self denotes recipient; + denotes positive valence; - denotes negative valence; +/- denotes combination positive and negative valence items. Negative items were reflected to achieve consistency in computation.

† Number of items = 300.

§D/ND denotes distressed and nondistressed spouses considered as a single group (N = 40). Because husband and wife were considered as a single case for these computations, N reflects the number of couples per computation rather than number of spouses. Number of items per scale is, therefore, doubled.

‡Number of items = 150.
Table 5

Internal Consistency Parameters of Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Subscales for Distressed and Nondistressed Spouses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Valence</th>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>55.53</td>
<td>14.32</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>54.60</td>
<td>11.21</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>51.90</td>
<td>10.21</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>51.30</td>
<td>13.22</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>62.10</td>
<td>16.60</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>60.73</td>
<td>12.92</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>61.05</td>
<td>13.93</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>59.65</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>58.95</td>
<td>16.27</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>58.08</td>
<td>10.30</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>52.68</td>
<td>14.07</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>48.55</td>
<td>17.99</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>59.28</td>
<td>12.08</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>54.30</td>
<td>10.90</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>45.55</td>
<td>18.35</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>42.40</td>
<td>17.94</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>54.35</td>
<td>17.74</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>54.58</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>55.78</td>
<td>11.36</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>54.58</td>
<td>16.72</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>52.45</td>
<td>14.98</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For self</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>49.60</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>57.63</td>
<td>10.79</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>For partner</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>57.25</td>
<td>13.32</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Number of cases throughout = 40; number of items on each score = 25.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>Scale*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WPP</td>
<td>WPN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Correlations are underlined for corresponding For Self and For Partner scales.

* The first letter in the scale abbreviation denotes agent type: W = we agent, P = partner agent, I = I agent. The second letter denotes the recipient: S = self and P = partner. The third letter denotes the item valence: P = positive and N = negative.
Table 7
Correlation* Differences on Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Subscales for Distressed and Nondistressed Couples Using a Normal Curve Test Based on Fisher's Transformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales†</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WPN-WSN</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP-WSP</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPN-ISN</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP-ISP</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP-PSP</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPN-PSN</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pearson product-moment correlations performed separately for distressed and nondistressed couples between the For Self scales and the corresponding For Partner scales.

†The first letter in the scale abbreviation denotes agent type: W = we agent, P = partner agent, I = I agent. The second letter denotes the recipient: S = self and P = partner. The third letter denotes the item valence: P = positive and N = negative.
Table 8
Means and Standard Deviations of Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Major Scales by Gender and Distress Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For self/positive</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>164.90</td>
<td>39.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/positive</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>148.55</td>
<td>56.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/positive</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>169.60</td>
<td>18.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/positive</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>189.10</td>
<td>21.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/negative</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-157.45</td>
<td>36.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/negative</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-156.70</td>
<td>48.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/negative</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-171.80</td>
<td>28.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For self/negative</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-190.95</td>
<td>20.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/positive</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>134.20</td>
<td>53.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/positive</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>143.15</td>
<td>34.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/positive</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>178.35</td>
<td>18.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/positive</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>178.00</td>
<td>21.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/negative</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-140.55</td>
<td>41.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/negative</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>-142.50</td>
<td>40.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/negative</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-178.05</td>
<td>23.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For partner/negative</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>-185.95</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*n = 20 cases and 75 items per scale.
Table 9
Perceived Similarity: Intraindividual Disparity Between Means on Major Dyadic Preference (DPQ) Questionnaire Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale comparison*</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Two-tailed probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP/PP</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>&lt; .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP/PP</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP/PP</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>&lt; .20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP/PP</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>&lt; .20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN/PN</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>&lt; .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN/PN</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN/PN</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN/PN</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. df = 38 throughout.

*SP denotes the For Self/Positive scale, PP denotes the For Partner/Positive scale, SN denotes the For Self/Negative scale, and PN denotes the For Partner/Negative scale.
Table 10
Prediction Accuracy and Interindividual Comparison of Mean Scores on Major Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale comparison*</th>
<th>Gender†</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Two-tailed probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP/SP</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP/SP</td>
<td>F/M</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>&lt; .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP/SP</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>&lt; .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP/SP</td>
<td>F/M</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>&lt; .20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN/SN</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN/SN</td>
<td>F/M</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN/SN</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>&lt; .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN/SN</td>
<td>F/M</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>&lt; .20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. df = 38 throughout.

*PP denotes the For Partner/Positive scale, SP denotes the For Self/Positive scale, PN denotes the For Partner/Negative scale, and SN denotes the For Self/Negative scale.

†M/F denotes the male's For Partner mean is compared with the female's For Self mean; F/M denotes the female's For Partner mean is compared with the male's For Self mean.
Table 11
Means and Standard Deviations for We Agent Subscales by Distress Level and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>53.50</td>
<td>14.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50.25</td>
<td>17.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55.70</td>
<td>7.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60.80</td>
<td>6.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45.95</td>
<td>15.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47.35</td>
<td>11.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>56.65</td>
<td>6.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>56.45</td>
<td>6.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-55.90</td>
<td>15.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-54.45</td>
<td>20.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-65.55</td>
<td>8.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-69.75</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-51.75</td>
<td>16.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-52.95</td>
<td>15.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-67.55</td>
<td>6.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-69.15</td>
<td>5.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The first letter in the scale abbreviation denotes agent type*: W = we agent. The second letter denotes the recipient: S = self and P = partner. The third letter denotes the item valence: P = positive and N = negative. For each scale, n = 20 cases and 25 items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>56.75</td>
<td>13.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>19.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>59.50</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65.70</td>
<td>8.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40.55</td>
<td>21.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45.65</td>
<td>15.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>56.55</td>
<td>8.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59.70</td>
<td>8.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-52.90</td>
<td>12.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-56.50</td>
<td>14.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-55.70</td>
<td>8.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-62.05</td>
<td>7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-36.25</td>
<td>19.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-36.40</td>
<td>18.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-48.55</td>
<td>13.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-54.70</td>
<td>13.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The first letter in the scale abbreviation agent type: P = partner agent. The second letter denotes the recipient: S = self and P = partner. The third letter denotes the item valence: P = positive and N = negative. For each scale, n = 20 cases and 25 items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>Distress level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>54.65</td>
<td>13.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>46.10</td>
<td>20.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>54.50</td>
<td>8.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>62.60</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>46.15</td>
<td>19.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50.10</td>
<td>11.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>63.00</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61.45</td>
<td>7.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-48.65</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-45.75</td>
<td>16.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-50.55</td>
<td>14.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-59.15</td>
<td>9.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-52.55</td>
<td>15.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPN</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-53.15</td>
<td>11.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-61.95</td>
<td>8.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPN</td>
<td>Nondistressed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-62.10</td>
<td>7.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The first letter in the scale abbreviation denotes agent type: I = I agent. The second letter denotes the recipient: S = self and P = partner. The third letter denotes the item valence: P = positive and N = negative. For each scale, n = 20 cases and 25 items.*
Table 14
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) For Self/Positive (SP) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>10,237.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10,237.81</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>49.61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49.61</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
<td>6,426.11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,426.11</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105,205.35</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1,384.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>121,918.89</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 75 items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>11,809.88</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11,809.801</td>
<td>9.69</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1,692.80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,692.80</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
<td>1,980.05</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,980.05</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>92,639.30</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1,218.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>108,121.95</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 75 items.*
Table 16
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) For Partner/Positive (PP) Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>31,205.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31,205.00</td>
<td>25.91</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>369.80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>369.80</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
<td>432.45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>432.45</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>91,518.30</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1,204.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>123,525.55</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 75 items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>32,764.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32,764.51</td>
<td>29.12</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>485.11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>485.11</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
<td>177.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>177.01</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>85,525.85</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1,125.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>118,952.49</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 75 items.
Table 18
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) We/For Self/Positive (WSP) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>812.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>812.81</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>17.11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
<td>348.61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>348.61</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>11,742.15</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>154.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12,920.69</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 19
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) We/For Partner/Positive (WPP) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>1,960.20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,960.20</td>
<td>17.65</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>7.20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.20</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>111.07</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 20

ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) We/For Self/Negative (WSN) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>3,112.51</td>
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<td>37.81</td>
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<td>.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
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<td>159.61</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 21

ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) We/For Partner/Negative (WPN) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 22

ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Partner/For Self/Positive (PSP) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
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<td>1,304.11</td>
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<td>15.31</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
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<td>588.61</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 23
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Partner/For Partner/Positive (PPP) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Distress</td>
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<td>4,515.01</td>
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<td>19.01</td>
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<td>208.06</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 24

ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Partner/For Self/Negative (PSN) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>Significance of F</th>
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<td>Distress</td>
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<td>348.61</td>
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<td>37.81</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
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<td>129.89</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
<td>10,753.39</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 25
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) Partner/For Partner/Negative (PPN) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>4,681.80</td>
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<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 26

ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) I/For Self/Positive (ISP) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
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<th>Significance of F</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
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<td>1,336.61</td>
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<td>1.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
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<td>1,386.11</td>
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<td>190.29</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>17,185.89</td>
<td>79</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 27  
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) I/For Partner/Positive (IPP) Scale*  

<table>
<thead>
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<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Distress</td>
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<td>3,976.20</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Distress x gender</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 28
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) I/For Self/Negative (ISN) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1,170.45</td>
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<td>.02</td>
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</tr>
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<td>661.25</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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<td>187.95</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Totals</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
Table 29
ANOVA: Dyadic Preference Questionnaire (DPQ) I/For Partner/Negative (IPN) Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1,683.61</td>
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<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress x gender</td>
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<td>1.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
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<td>128.69</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Totals</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 80 cases, n = 25 items.
FIGURES
Figure 1. Dyadic adjustment scale (DAS) scores by gender and distress level; p interaction = .04.
Figure 2. For Self/Positive (SP) scale mean sum desirability scores as a function of gender and distress level; $p$ interaction $= .03$. 
Figure 3. Partner/For Self/Positive (PSP) scale mean sum desirability scores as a function of gender and distress level; $p_{interaction} = .06$. 
Figure 4. I/For Self/Positive (ISP) scale mean sum desirability scores as a function of gender and distress level; p interaction < .01.
Figure 5. I/For Self/Negative (ISN) scale mean sum desirability scores as a function of gender and distress level; p interaction = .07.