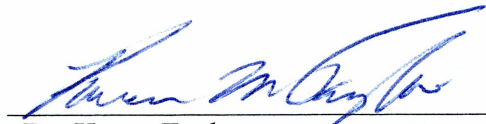


RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE, DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING, AND
DECISION AGREEMENT

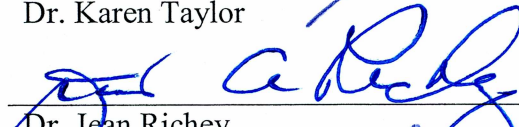
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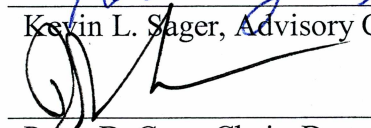
Dr. Karen Taylor



Dr. Jean Richey



Kevin L. Sager, Advisory Committee Chair




Peter DeCaro, Chair, Department of Communication

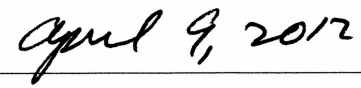
APPROVED:



Anita Hartmann, Interim Dean, College of Liberal Arts



Lawrence Duffy, Dean of the Graduate School



Date

RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE, DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING, AND
DECISION AGREEMENT

A
THESIS

Presented to the Faculty
of the University of Alaska Fairbanks
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By
Jenna M. Tucker, B.S.

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Abstract

Relationship maintenance uses different strategies to maintain a relationship at the desired level of intimacy. Democratic decision making is a practice through which each individual has equal rights in the decision-making process. The present study investigated connections among two areas of research. In particular, this study examined the correlations among relationship maintenance behaviors, democratic decision making, and decision agreement. Both hypotheses in the study were supported, which suggests relationship maintenance promotes democratic decision making, which in turn promotes decision agreement.

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Chapter 1 Theory and Research

1.1 Maintenance Communication

Relationship maintenance encompasses different types of behaviors or strategies designed to keep a relationship at a desired level of intimacy (Dindia, 2003). All maintenance behaviors can be performed strategically or routinely (Dindia, 2003). According to Dainton and Stafford (1993), strategic maintenance behaviors are done consciously whereas routine maintenance behaviors are done with a lower level of consciousness. “People use both strategic and routine interactions to maintain their relationships” (Canary & Stafford, 1994, p. 10). Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999) suggested that strategic maintenance behaviors are consciously planned, whereas routine maintenance behaviors are not consciously planned.

1.1.1 Strategic maintenance behaviors. Strategic maintenance behaviors are done with a purpose. An individual is aware that he or she is performing these behaviors in order to keep a desired level of intimacy in the relationship (Guerrero, Andersen, & Afifi, 2007). Examples of strategic behaviors can be seen in all different types of romantic relationships.

1.1.2 Routine maintenance behaviors. Routine behaviors are done more out of habit, they are displayed less consciously (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). Routine behaviors are less likely to be seen or noticed, but they do serve a purpose in a relationship (Guerrero, Andersen, & Afifi, 2007). Routine behaviors are commonly overlooked as relationship maintenance behaviors, but play a role in most relationships.

1.1.3 Five categories of maintenance communication. According to Stafford and Canary (1991), at least five types of maintenance strategies are used in romantic relationships. These strategies are (a) positivity, (b) openness, (c) assurances, (d) network, and (e) tasks (Stafford & Canary, 1991).

Guerrero, Andersen, and Afifi (2007) provided the following definitions for the five category types. Positivity is making sure interactions with the other individual in the relationship are nice and pleasant. Positivity can be performed by giving praise and being cheerful. Openness is disclosing personal content to a partner as well as listening to the partner's personal content. Examples include asking how the partner in the relationship slept or how their day went. Assurances are communicating about each other's dedication to the relationship. Examples of assurances are asking to talk about continuing the relationship and/or future plans with the individual. Network is spending time with each other's friends and relatives. Some instances of networking are going to each other's family or friend get-togethers. Tasks are everyday responsibilities, like washing the dishes and taking out the garbage (Guerrero et al. 2007). These five categories of relationship maintenance are used to maintain the relationship at the preferred level of intimacy of the partners in the relationship.

1.1.4 Determinants of relationship maintenance. What are the determinants of the relationship maintenance strategies used in romantic relationships? Researchers have identified various sources of variation in relational maintenance behavior, such as type of romantic relationship, biological sex and gender roles, and marital types.

1.1.4.1 Types of romantic relationships. Stafford and Canary (1991) found that romantic relationship type (dating, seriously dating, engaged, or married) was significantly related to perceptions of maintenance behaviors. More specifically, Stafford and Canary (1991) found

that engaged and seriously dating individuals perceived greater partner positivity and openness than married or dating persons did. Married, engaged and seriously dating participants also saw more use of assurances and sharing tasks than did those who had just begun dating. Lastly, married persons reported [the] greatest perceptions of partner's use of social networks to maintain the relationship. (p. 234)

Other determinants of relationship maintenance include biological sex and gender roles.

1.1.4.2 Biological sex and gender roles. Aylor and Dainton (2004) investigated how relationship maintenance behaviors are related to biological sex and gender roles. They found that men reported using routine openness less than women. In addition, Aylor and Dainton (2004) found that masculinity was positively related to the strategic use of two maintenance behaviors: openness and tasks. In contrast, femininity was positively related to the routine use of three maintenance behaviors: openness, conflict management, and advice.

Stafford, Dainton, and Haas (2000) also investigated associations between maintenance behavior, biological sex, and gender. They discovered that being female was positively associated with networks, shared tasks, and openness. In addition, they found that femininity was positively related to (a) advice, (b) assurances, (c) conflict

management, (d) networks, (e) openness, (f) positivity, and (g) shared tasks. Similarly, they found that masculinity was positively related to (a) advice, (b) assurances, (c) conflict management, (d) openness, and (e) positivity.

1.1.5 Maintenance Communication as an Independent Variable. What are the effects of maintenance communication in romantic relationships? Researchers have identified various outcomes of relational maintenance behavior, such as satisfaction, commitment, and liking.

Dainton (2000) investigated the association between relationship maintenance and satisfaction in romantic relationships. She found that “the more an individual perceived his or her partner as using maintenance behaviors relative to his/her own expectations, the more satisfied the individual was with the relationship” (Dainton, 2000, p. 831). Moreover, Stafford, Dainton and Haas (2000) found that except for advice, the remaining six maintenance behaviors identified by (Canary & Stafford, 1992) were all significantly positively correlated with commitment, satisfaction, and liking.

1.2 Linking Maintenance Communication to Democratic Decision Making

1.2.1 Democratic Decision Making. According to Gastil (1993), small group democracy has five main elements: (a) power, (b) inclusiveness, (c) commitment to the democratic process, (d) relationships, and (e) deliberation. Sager and Gastil (2002) argued that confirming interaction in the small group promote democratic decision making. How do romantic dyads make decisions? Compared to small groups, romantic dyads are more limited in how decisions are made, since there are only two members

present. Romantic dyads can make a decision jointly, or one partner can be responsible for the decision.

1.2.1.1 Personality, Confirming Interaction and Democratic Decision Making.

Sager and Gastil (2002) examined relationships between group member personalities, confirming interaction, and democratic decision making. In support of their claim that healthy relationships promote democratic group decision making, they found a positive correlation between scores on the Perceived Confirming Interaction Scale and group members' perceptions of consensus decision making.

1.2.1.2 The Social Consensus Model of Group Decision Making. In a later study, Sager and Gastil (2006) developed and tested the Social Consensus Model of Group Decision Making, which links personality to supportive communication, supportive communication to consensus decision making, and consensus decision making to group outcomes. In support of their model, they found that supportive communication was positively correlated with extraversion, agreeableness, and openness. In addition, they found that supportive communication was positively related with consensus group decision making. Finally, they found that consensus group decision making was positively related to satisfaction, fairness, self-representation, and other representation.

1.3 A model linking maintenance communication, democratic decision making, and decision agreement in romantic dyads

Drawing on the work of Sager and Gastil (2002, 2006) I devised a model, which holds that maintenance communication promotes democratic (i.e., joint) decision making, which in turn promotes decision agreement. This model is presented in figure 1

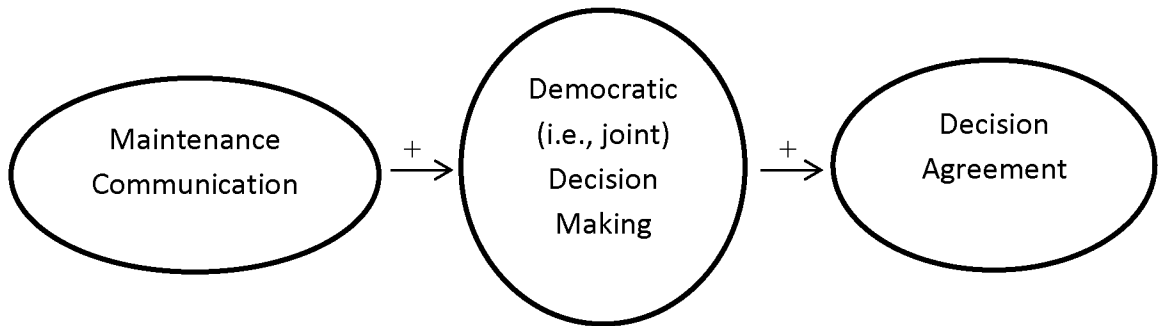


Figure 1. Illustration of the hypothesized relationships between Maintenance Communication, Democratic Decision Making, and Decision Agreement

1.4 Hypotheses

In the present study, I considered relationship maintenance to be a type of supportive communication. According to Sager and Gastil (2002, 2006), supportive communication promotes democratic decision making. Therefore, I argue that relationship maintenance promotes democratic (i.e., joint) decision making in romantic dyads:

H1: In romantic dyads, relationship maintenance is positively related to democratic (i.e., joint) decision making.

In the present paper, a democratic (i.e., joint) decision making process involves both partners sharing and taking into account each other's preferences. I argue that compared to partners not taking into account each other's preferences, the active "consideration" (Gastil, 1993, p.14) of partner preferences will likely lead to the discovery of decisions that both partners can agree upon. On this basis, I advance the following hypothesis.

H2: In romantic dyads, democratic (i.e., joint) decision making is positively related to decision agreement.

Chapter 2 Research Methodology

2.1 Participants

The sample consisted of 330 student participants enrolled in various undergraduate social science and humanities courses at a midsize Northern University. All of the participants were at least 18 years old, and ranged in age from 18 to 64 years old ($M = 22.38$, $SD = 7.19$). In addition, 46.1% of the participants were male and 53.4% were female. The participants reported themselves to be Native American 7.5%, Asian 1.4%, Black/African-American 3.2%, Hispanic 3.2%, Multi-Racial 3.4%, Pacific Islander .9%, White non-Hispanic/Caucasian 70.3%, and other 5.5%. The surveys were administered Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters. In order to participate in the survey study, the students needed to be in a current romantic relationship or have been in a previous romantic relationship. Students who were not or who had never been in a romantic relationship were instructed to complete a different set of survey items, which were part of a different survey study.

2.2 Procedures

Instructors of undergraduate social science and humanities classes were contacted informally (through spoken word) and asked whether they would be willing to give their students the opportunity to voluntarily complete the survey. It was left up to each instructor to decide whether he or she would be willing to let his or her students receive extra credit points for participation in the study. Informed consent forms were given with each survey, for participants to read. The surveys were administered during regular class

periods. Survey responses were subsequently entered in to SPSS data file and statistically analyzed.

2.3 Measures

After obtaining permission from survey authors, two surveys were adapted from their original forms in order to measure the variables of interest in this study. The two survey instruments were Stafford and Canary's (1991) Relationship Maintenance survey and the Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

2.3.1 Maintenance Communication. Stafford and Canary's (1991) Relationship Maintenance strategy has been the most commonly used measurement in relationship maintenance research (Stafford, 2003). The two items with the highest factor loadings within each subscale (i.e., positivity, openness, assurances, network, and tasks) were selected for modified use in the present study. Using these items in adapted form (i.e., with minor word changes and measurement along 9-point Likert-type scales), participants rated their own maintenance behavior in one set of items (see Appendix A), and rated their partner's maintenance behaviors in another set (see Appendix B).

The internal consistency reliability coefficient (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) for respondents' ratings of their own maintenance behaviors was .83. Similarly, the internal consistency reliability coefficient (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) for respondents' ratings of their partner's maintenance behaviors was .88. Thus, the two adapted maintenance scales appeared to be sufficiently reliable.

The following computational procedure was used to arrive at an average maintenance communication score for each romantic dyads. First, a respondent's ratings

of their own maintenance behaviors were averaged together. Second, the respondent's ratings of their partner's maintenance behaviors were averaged together. Lastly, average maintenance scores for both self and partner were averaged together. Scores on this variable range at 7.95, $M = 6.82$, $SD = 1.22$.

2.3.2 Democratic (i.e., joint) Decision Making. A set of survey items (see Appendix C) was created to measure the process by which decisions were arrived at in the romantic dyad. Participants reported how decisions were typically made in 13 specific subject areas suggested by Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale. For each designated subject area, three answers were provided: (1) "I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences," (2) "My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences," (3) "My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions."

In order to analyze participant responses to the 13 items, their responses were coded in the following way. Response options (1) and (2) were both assigned a value of zero, and response option (3) was assigned a value of one. A participant's total score on this 13-item scale was computed by adding up his or her scores on the 13 items. A total score of zero would indicate that none of the decisions in the romantic dyad were made jointly, whereas a total score of 13 would indicate that all of the decisions in the romantic dyad were made jointly (i.e., democratically). Scores on this variable range at 13, $M = 10.00$, $SD = 2.80$.

2.3.3 Decision Agreement. Unlike the previous set of items, which were designed to measure partners' decision-making processes in each of 13 subject areas, the next set of items measured the actual extent of mutual agreement attained as a result of those decision-making processes. Thirteen, 9-point Likert-type items (1=We have always disagreed, 9=We have always agreed) were devised to measure the extent to which the respondent and his or her partner had typically agreed on decisions made in each of the 13 subject areas. These 13 items are shown in Appendix D.

The internal consistency reliability coefficient (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) for respondents' ratings of the extent of self and partner decision agreement in each of the 13 subject areas was .89, which suggested that the 13-item Decision Agreement scale was sufficiently reliable. Scores on this variable range at 7.31, $M = 6.52$, $SD = 1.34$.

Chapter 3 Results

3.1 Correlational Analysis

Pearson correlations were calculated to test both H1 and H2. Correlations were tested with two-tailed alpha set at .05.

3.1.1 Linking Maintenance Communication to Democratic (i.e., joint)

Decision Making. H1 was supported. There was a significant positive correlation between relationship maintenance communication and democratic (i.e., joint) decision making ($r = .50, p < .001$).

3.1.2 Linking Democratic (i.e., joint) Decision Making to Decision

Agreement. H2 also received support. There was a significant positive correlation between democratic (i.e., joint) decision making and decision agreement ($r = .61, p < .001$).

Chapter 4 Discussion

4.1 Rationale

There is a lack of research in factors that facilitate democratic decision making in romantic dyads. The factors in this study, relationship maintenance, democratic decision making, and decision agreement have been researched, but the links among all three in a romantic dyad has not been investigated.

Considerable research has been done on maintenance communication in romantic dyads (e.g., Aylor & Dainton, 2004; Dainton, 2000; Stafford & Canary, 1991; Stafford, Dainton, & Haas, 2000; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). Studies in this line of research have treated relationship maintenance as both an independent and a dependent variable. Although relationship maintenance has been studied in relation to satisfaction, gender, sex, liking, and marital types, maintenance had not been studied in relation to democratic (i.e., joint) decision making in romantic dyads.

The present study drew upon theory and research on democratic decision making in small groups (e.g., Gastil, 1993; Sager & Gastil, 2002; Sager & Gastil, 2006). Based upon their work, I theorized that a necessary condition for democratic decision making in romantic dyads is maintenance communication.

Although decision agreement in romantic dyads has been researched in multiple studies that used Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the relationship between such agreement and decision-making processes in romantic dyads had been an understudied area. To increase the generalizability of the study's findings, associations

between democratic (i.e., joint) decision making and decision agreement were studied across 13 different subject areas suggested by Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

4.2 Objectives

The model advanced in the present paper holds that in romantic dyads, maintenance communication promotes democratic (i.e., joint) decision making, which, in turn, promotes decision agreement. The hypotheses stated that there would be positive relationships linking the three variables together.

4.3 Study Findings

Both of the hypotheses presented in this study were supported. The first hypothesis asserted that there was a positive relationship between maintenance communication and democratic (i.e., joint) decision making. Supporting this hypothesis, a significant positive correlation was found between these two variables.

The second hypothesis asserted that there was a positive relationship between democratic (i.e., joint) decision making and decision agreement. Once again, a significant positive correlation was found these two variables.

4.4 Theoretical Implications of Findings

Sager and Gastil (2006) researched supportive communication and democratic decision making in groups. In the Social Consensus Model of Group Decision Making, supportive communication promotes consensus decision making (Sager & Gastil, 2006). Similarly, the model in the present study holds that maintenance communication promotes democratic (i.e., joint) decision making.

4.5 Practical Implications of Findings

The results of this study can be applied to couples counseling. For example, if partners reveal that they are having difficulty making decisions democratically (i.e., jointly), then the counselor should suggest that partners increase their maintenance communication. If partners reveal that they are having difficulty agreeing on decisions, then then the counselor should suggest that they practice democratic (i.e., joint) decision making.

4.6 Limitations of Study

Although both hypotheses in the present study were supported, this study has limitations. One of the limitations is that both partners were not surveyed. Each survey instructed one of the partners to answer from his or her perspective as well as from the perspective of his or her partner, which, in turn, could decrease the validity of the study. For example, one partner could report a much more favorable pattern of maintenance communication than what the other partner would report.

Another limitation to this study is that it was administered through self-report. The use of self-report measures can promote bias in participants' answers. For example, a participant could report using maintenance communication more frequently than he or she actually does.

4.7 Suggestions for Future Research

Future research could examine the relationships among the variables in this study at a more micro-level. For example, researchers could examine how each of the five categories of maintenance communication is related individually to democratic (i.e.,

joint) decision making. Another area to look into is the role of maintenance communication in small groups. “Healthy relationships” in small groups has previously been operationalized as confirming communication (Sager & Gastil, 2002) and supportive communication (Sager & Gastil, 2006). The research question here would be whether maintenance communication promotes democratic decision making in small groups to the same extent as confirming communication and supportive communication.

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Appendix A
Relationship Maintenance Items: Self-Report

The following items contain a list of various behaviors that a person may exhibit in order to maintain his/her relationship with a romantic partner.

For each behavior listed, indicate how often you exhibit (or exhibited) that behavior to maintain your current (or most recent) ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP.

100) Acting cheerful and positive when with my partner

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

101) Acting very nice, courteous and polite when with my partner

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

102) Talking periodically about our relationship

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

103) Seeking to discuss the quality of our relationship

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

104) Showing that I am loyal to my partner

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

105) Implying that our relationship has a future

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

106) Spending time with mutual friends

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

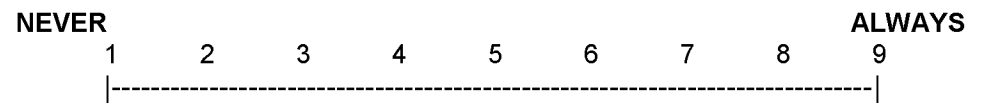
107) Interacting with common friends and affiliations

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

108) Helping equally with tasks that need to be done

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

109) Sharing in joint responsibilities



Appendix B

Relationship Maintenance Items: Self-Report of Partner's Behavior

For each behavior listed, indicate how often your current (or most recent) romantic partner exhibits (or exhibited) that behavior to maintain your ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP.

110) Acting cheerful and positive when with me

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

111) Acting very nice, courteous and polite when with me

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

112) Talking periodically about our relationship

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

113) Seeking to discuss the quality of our relationship

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

114) Showing that he/she is loyal to me

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

115) Implying that our relationship has a future

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

116) Spending time with mutual friends

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

117) Interacting with common friends and affiliations

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

118) Helping equally with tasks that need to be done

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

119) Sharing in joint responsibilities

NEVER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ALWAYS

Appendix C

Democratic (i.e., joint) Decision Making Items

For each of the following subject areas of decision making, indicate how decisions are typically made (or were typically made) in your current (or most recent) ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP by placing a check in only one of the boxes.

87) Area: Financial (money) matters

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

88) Area: Matters of recreation

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

89) Area: Religious matters

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

90) Area: Choice of friends

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

91) Area: Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

92) Area: Philosophy of life

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

93) Area: Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

94) Area: Aims, goals, and things believed important

I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.

My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.

My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

95) Area: Amount of time spent together

I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.

My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.

My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

96) Area: Major decisions

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

97) Area: Household (e.g., cleaning) tasks

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

98) Area: Leisure time interests and activities

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

99) Area: Career decisions

- I typically make (or made) the decisions without taking into account my partner's preferences.
- My partner typically makes (or made) the decisions without taking into account my preferences.
- My partner and I typically discuss (or discussed) our preferences in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon decisions.

Appendix D

Decision Agreement Items

The following survey items pertain to your CURRENT or MOST RECENT ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP. For each item shown below, indicate the extent to which you and your partner have typically agreed or disagreed on each subject area (i.e., issue or matter). Indicate your answer to each item by circling a single number along each scale.

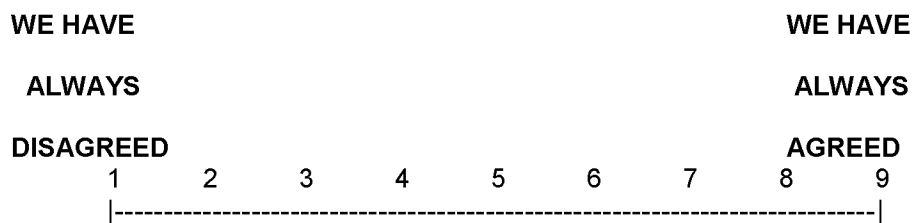
74) Handling financial (money) matters

WE HAVE	WE HAVE
ALWAYS	ALWAYS
DISAGREED	AGREED
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9

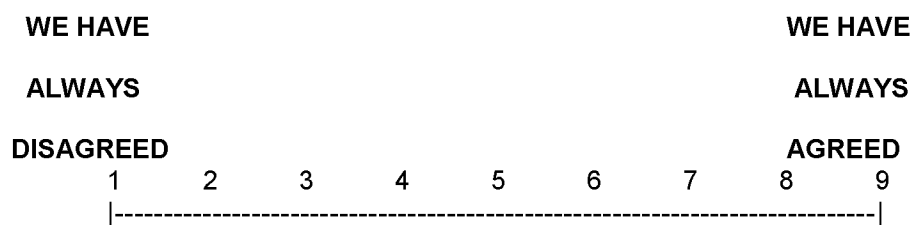
75) Matters of recreation

WE HAVE	WE HAVE
ALWAYS	ALWAYS
DISAGREED	AGREED
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9

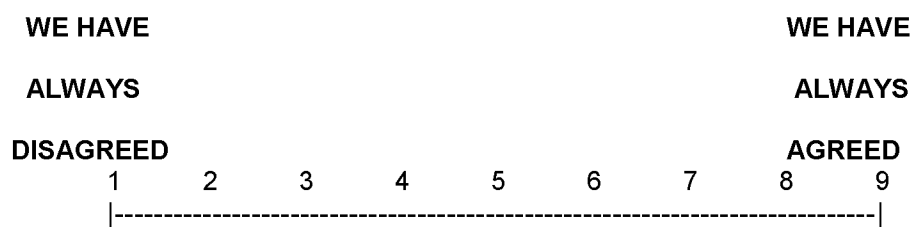
76) Religious matters



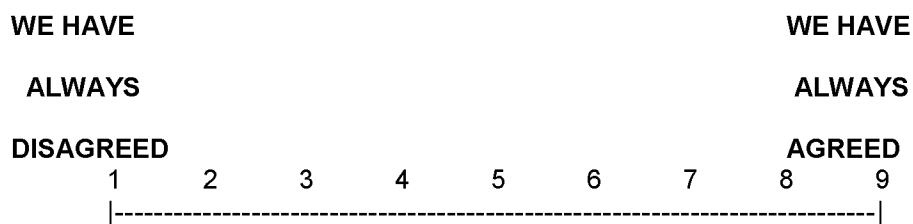
77) Choice of friends



78) Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)



79) Philosophy of life



80) Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws

WE HAVE									WE HAVE
ALWAYS									ALWAYS
DISAGREED									AGREED
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

81) Aims, goals, and things believed important

WE HAVE									WE HAVE
ALWAYS									ALWAYS
DISAGREED									AGREED
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

82) Amount of time spent together

WE HAVE									WE HAVE
ALWAYS									ALWAYS
DISAGREED									AGREED
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

83) Major decisions

WE HAVE									WE HAVE
ALWAYS									ALWAYS
DISAGREED									AGREED
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

84) Household (e.g., cleaning) tasks

WE HAVE	WE HAVE
ALWAYS	ALWAYS
DISAGREED	AGREED
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9

85) Leisure time interests and activities

WE HAVE	WE HAVE
ALWAYS	ALWAYS
DISAGREED	AGREED
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9

86) Career decisions

WE HAVE	WE HAVE
ALWAYS	ALWAYS
DISAGREED	AGREED
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9

Appendix E
IRB Approval Form

November 14, 2011

To: Kevin Sager, B.A., M.S. Ed., Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

From: University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re: [286653-1] Communication in Friendships and Romantic Relationships

Thank you for submitting the New Project referenced below. The submission was handled by Administrative Review. The Office of Research Integrity has determined that the proposed research qualifies for exemption from the requirements of 45 CFR 46. This exemption does not waive the researchers' responsibility to adhere to basic ethical principles for the responsible conduct of research and discipline specific professional standards.

Title: Communication in Friendships and Romantic Relationships
Received: November 14, 2011
Exemption Category: 2
Effective Date: November 14, 2011

This action is included on the November 17, 2011 IRB Agenda.

This protocol, consent and survey have been administratively reviewed and it has been determined that the project is exempt and does not require further IRB committee review. It is suggested that if the survey is to be given for extra credit a page should be included that can be removed and given to instructors to identify people earning the extra credit.

Prior to making substantive changes to the scope of research, research tools, or personnel involved on the project, please contact the Office of Research Integrity to determine whether or not additional review is required. Additional review is not required for small editorial changes to improve the clarity or readability of the research tools or other documents.