Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014

1-1-1985

The characteristics of the actualized marriage : an exploratory study.

Georgia Noble
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ACTUALIZED MARRIAGE:

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

A Dissertation Presented

By

Georgia Noble

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February   1985

Education

Georgia Noble

©

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ACTUALIZED MARRIAGE:
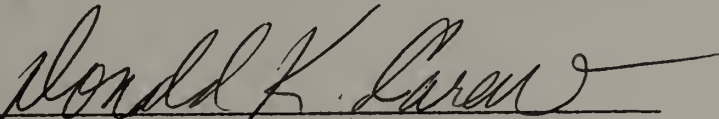
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

A Dissertation Presented

By

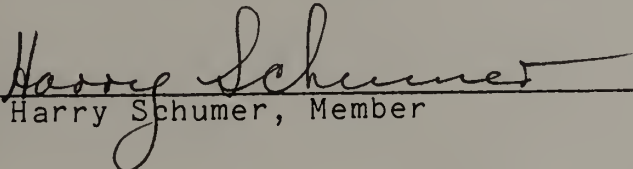Georgia Noble
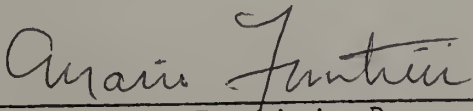
Approved as to style and content by:

_____

Dr. Alfred Alschuler, Chairperson

_____

Dr. Donald Carew, Member

_____

Dr. Harry Schumer, Member

_____

Dr. Mario Fantini, Dean
School of Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Characteristics of the Actualized Marriage:

An Exploratory Study

(February 1985)

Georgia Noble, B.A., University of South Folrida

M. Ed., University of Massachusetts,

Ed. D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Dr. Alfred Alschuler

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the
characteristics of the actualized marriage.

The literature on marital health was reviewed and
Maslow's theory of self-actualization used as a base for
developing a theory of marital development.

The first phase of research explored some longitudinal
evidence for the plausibility of the proposed theory
through the biographical study of four couples with
reportedly happy marriages. The analysis of the case
studies produced some evidence to support the theory of
marital development with some modifications. The common
sequential pattern manifested by these couples began with
a love stage when the couples were concerned with building
a basic sense of trust, and fulfilling love needs. This
was followed by the esteem stage when the primary concern

became establishing strong individual esteem within the boundaries of the love relationship. As the couples resolved the "individual esteem versus couple love crisis", they were better able to devote their energies to a shared purpose and other concerns of the following marital actualization stage.

The purpose of the second phase of research was to answer the following questions: How regularly does the esteem versus love crisis occur? Does it occur after a love stage? How is it experienced by the man and the woman? What facilitates and what hinders its resolution? To explore these questions, ten married couples were interviewed with one group of five being newlyweds and the other group of five being couples married for at least five years.

The results gave further evidence for the theory, especially the sequence of the two stages of love and esteem. The coders agreed that the individual esteem versus couple love crisis was a prepotent issue of concern for all five of the older couples and none of the newlyweds. There were indications that the individual esteem versus couple love crisis did occur after an initial love stage and that it was experienced by the men and the women somewhat differently. The men tended to be

more focused on their work and esteem needs, the women on
love and relationship, with each having difficulty
including the opposite dimension. To manage the esteem
versus love crisis successfully, couples suggested that
both partners devote energy and time to whichever side was
out of balance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure

LIST OF TABLES

C H A P T E R   I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Significance

The purpose of this study was to identify the charac-
teristics of the actualized marriage. The actualized
marriage goes beyond mere adjustment or mutual coping to
enrichment, high levels of satisfaction, or optimal
health. To borrow from Maslow's definition of self-
actualization, it is a marriage relationship that is
developing and utilizing all of its unique capabilities
and potentialities. The intention of this study was to
contribute to our understanding of the optimally healthy,
satisfying marital relationship and provide some clues
about how to improve the quality of marriages in general.

The need for useful information on the marital
relationship has never been greater. People at all socio-
economic levels of society are being affected by the
increasing instability of marriage. The incidence of
marital separation and divorce in this country has
increased dramatically in the past several decades. An
estimated 1,219,000 divorces were granted in 1981, triple
the national total in 1962. This represents the nintenth
consecutive increase in the annual divorce total.

1

Demographers project that half of first marriages now taking place will end in divorce and that nationwide, 41 percent of all people now of marriagable age will at some time experience a divorce (Blumstein, & Schwartz, 1983).

Not only is the stability of marriage crucial but the quality of marriage as well. Virginia Satir has referred to the marital dyad as the "axis" on which the family turns (Satir, 1972). The health of the family affects the health of children. Much of the pathology of individuals has been traced to dysfunctional families and in particular to the parents' marital dyad (Westley and Epstein, 1969; Haley, 1971; Bowen, 1978; Kleiman, 1981).

The increasing political, social and economic freedom of our post-industrial society has affected the structure and function of marriage and the nuclear family. Marriage has evolved from a union designed principally for survival, security, and convenience to one based more and more on the viability of the subjective interpersonal relationship (Regula, 1975; Campbell, 1980; Resnick, 1983). This transition has been described as a movement from the Institutional Marriage to the Companionship Marriage (Burgess & Locke, 1950; Mace & Mace, 1975). As survival and convention become less of an issue, the quality of the marital union has become more and more important as a cause of marital success or failure. As

James (1970), a well known marriage and family counselor, has put it:

Today many couples are free from the old dawn-to-dusk jobs that left them too physically exhausted to pursue much else. They now have freedom to design their own lives, to use their leisure time in creative ways, to be "couple-actualized" as well as self-actualized. (p. 25)

People are, in general, expecting more of marriage: love, companionship, friendship, intellectual stimulation, mutual growth and fulfillment (Rogers, 1972, Fiore & Swensen, 1977). As expectations have risen, too often married couples find they are not getting what they expected, and are at a loss as to how to get it.

In response to the need for useful information and treatment of marital and family relationships, the last several decades have seen the emergence of the field of marriage and family therapy with an outpouring of research, theory and practice. Understandably, the major thrust of the research and treatment has been on the psychological and social dynamics that contribute to problem relationships. In an attempt to balance the focus on the dysfunctional marriage there has been a recent shift from remedial intervention to the active development of marital health and enrichment, with an emphasis on the facilitation of growth and the development of untapped potential (Mace, 1975; Otto, 1975). This new focus has

resulted in eductaional-interactional programs for the
enrichment of basically healthy unions, for families and
couples preparing for marriage. In a study of the
marriage and family enrichment movement, Otto (1976)
stated that the field is growing rapidly and that the
professionals conducting such programs who responded to
his questionnaire were merely the tip of the iceberg.

Implicit in the focus on marital health and enrichment
is the idea that the marriage relationship can undergo
development in depth, that growth toward some potential is
possible. If the developmental and educational procedures
are to be effective, there is a need to know what marital
potential is (Mace, 1975; Travis & Travis, 1975).
Unfortunately the concept of marriage potential has had
very little attention. The majority of research has
focused on why marriages fail. As one group of experts on
communication put it:

> We are aware of the danger of applying insights
> learned primarily from pathological relationships to
> developing relationships. What is needed is research
> on "enriched couples" from various social strata to
> discover more about the ingredients of enriched
> marriages. (Miller, Corrales, & Wackman, 1975,
> p. 150)

Clearly the pathological approach has limits. The
question then becomes, in what areas do we explore in
order to find the components of an "enriched" or
actualized relationship? Most researchers and clinicians

agree that one of the most important variables in healthy relationships is effective communication (Haley, 1963; Satir, 1967, 1972; Rogers, 1972; Waltzlawick, 1978). Training couples in communication skills is the central and sometimes the sole goal of marriage enrichment programs (Olson, & Sprenkle, 1976). As important as effective communication is to a healthy relationship, other variables may be equally important.

Health is in all probability, a multifaceted phenomenon. The questions which naturally arise from this supposition are: How good can a marriage be? What does it look like? What behaviors, attitudes and skills do members of an optimally healthy relationship demonstrate? How do they communicate and interact? How do they resolve conflict and work with differences? A closer look at other aspects of the optimally healthy relationship should contribute to our understanding and vision of what is possible in loving relationships and what can be deliberately developed. Furthermore, what is true for the healthy, actualized marriage may also be true for other relationships where quality is an important factor, e.g., parent/child, teacher/student and employer/employee.

The general approach of this study was exploratory in nature. The empahsis was on the discovery of new theory and the integration of existing theoretical concepts as

they emerged from qualitative data. In the following
chapter Maslow's theory of self-actualization will be used
as a base for developing a model of marital-actualization.
His characteristics of the love relationships of self-
actualizing people will be synthesized with the literature
on marital health and satisfaction into the primary
characteristics of optimal marital health. Evidence for
the plausability of the theory will then be gathered and
the theory revised.

C H A P T E R   I I
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A Review of Maslow

In looking for models of the optimally healthy
marriage relationship, Maslow's theory of self-
actualization seemed particularly fruitful. Extrapo-
lating from his work one can ask such questions as: Is
there a hierarchy of needs in relationships? Can such a
parallel be made? Does the growth and development of
healthy marriages follow Maslow's principles of the growth
and development of the healthy individual? If so, there
are obvious implications for diagnosis, treatment and
training.

Central to Maslow's concept of self-actualization is
his theory of motivation with its paradigm of a
biologically based hierarchy of needs. His theory was
predicated on the assumption that neurosis seemed to be,
at least in part, a deficiency disease, which is the
result of insufficient satisfaction of basic needs such as
safety, love and esteem. Maslow proposed that these basic
needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative
prepotency. The behavior of the individual is motivated
or organized by the most basic unsatisfied needs. When a

7

particular need is dominant, the necessary capacities of
the organism are devoted to satisfying that need. As the
need is met it "disappears" or recedes into the back-
ground, and the next (and higher) need emerges. Growth of
the individual is defined as a progressive gratification of
basic needs, with a motivational movement up the hierarchy
toward self-actualization (Maslow, 1970). Maslow's
hierarchy consists of five needs:

1. Physiological Needs

The physiological needs are the foundation of the
hierarchy and, for the most part, have a somatic base:
the needs for food, water, sex, rest and activity. These
are needs most closely related to the physical dimension,
and probably also include various sensory pleasures such
as tastes, smells, and physical touch.

2. Safety Needs

If the physiological needs are relatively gratified
the next needs to emerge are the safety needs. These in-
clude the need for security, stability, dependency,
protection; the need to be free from fear, anxiety and
chaos; the need for structure, order, law, limits,
strength in the protector, and so on. Maslow suggests
that we can understand the adult's need for safety by
observing its more obvious demonstration in infants and
young children. The infant's reaction to being startled,

dropped, or otherwise endangered is automatic and total.
Young children seem to thrive on a certain amount of
rigidity and routine that provides a sense of predict-
ability about their world, and often act severely
threatened by unpredictable events such as illness, death,
verbal or physical abuse, separation, and divorce.

3. Love and Belonging Needs

The need for love and belonging is experienced as the
desire for friends, family, a sense of belongingness and
affectionate relations with people in general. It is felt
as a need for human contact, intimacy and affection, for a
place in a group, and for affiliation. The person moti-
vated by the need for love and belonging will feel the
need to both give and receive love, and will feel
intensely the pangs of friendlessness, rejection, or
rootlessness.

4. Esteem Needs

The esteem needs include both the need for self-esteem
and the esteem of others. Self-esteem includes the desire
for strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery, competence,
confidence in face of the world, independence and freedom.
Esteem from others includes the desire for status, fame,
glory, recognition, attention and appreciation. While
being esteemed by others is important, the individual must
feel it is based on deserved respect for real capacity and

competence rather than external fame or unwarranted
adulation. Opinions from others are notoriously fickle and
not safe ground for a solid sense of self-esteem (Maslow,
1970).

Maslow categorized the above needs as deficiency needs
because their deprivation seemed to be at the core of much
neurosis. Their successful satisfaction appeared to be
the foundation of the healthy personality. Growth of the
individual is linked with a progressive gratification of
these basic needs with a concomitant shift in motivation
as they are satisfied.

So far as motivational status is concerned, healthy
people have sufficiently gratified their basic needs for
safety, belongingness, love, respect, and self-esteem so
that they are motivated primarily by the desire for self-
actualization. (Maslow, 1968, p. 25)

5. Self-Actualization Needs

The need for self-actualization is the need to fulfill
one's potential, to actualize capacities and talents, to
become what one is capable of becoming. It often carries
with it the sense of fulfilling one's mission, calling, or
vocation (Maslow, 1970). Maslow gave a great deal of time
and attention to describing individuals at the level of
self-actualization. One such description by Maslow (1970)
included the following characteristics:

1. More efficient perception of reality and more
    comfortable relations with it

2. Acceptance of self, others, and nature

3. Spontaneity, simplicity, and naturalness

4. Problem centering, focused on problems outside of
    self

5. Detachment and the need for privacy

6. Freshness of appreciation

7. Autonomy, independence of culture and environment,
    will, active agents

8. More mystic and peak experiences

9. Identification with the human species, brotherly
    love

10. Deeper, more profound interpersonal relationships

11. Democratic character

12. Discrimination between means and ends, good and
    evil

13. Philosophical, unhostile humor

14. Creativeness

15. Resistance to enculturation; transcendence of
    culture (p. 149)

Maslow stresses that the conception of the hierarchy
of needs and the stepwise motivational progression toward
self-actualization is not a rigid or fixed process but a
dynamic and fluid one. The normal person is partly

satisfied and partly dissatisfied in all the needs of the hierarchy at the same time. It is more accurate to think in terms of increasing percentages of satisfaction. For example, a person might be satisfied 85% in physiological needs, 70% in safety, 50% in love, 40% in self-esteem, and 10% in self-actualization. The emergence of a new need is not sudden but increases in strength as the percentage of satisfaction of the lower need increases.

Increasing levels of basic need gratification are parallel with increasing levels of health. Increasing levels of need gratification can be seen as steps or levels of growth toward self-actualization (Maslow, 1970).

An Integrated Theory of Marital Development

Just as the stepwise progression toward self-actualization is not a rigid process for the individual, the same is true for the couple who is normally partly satisfied and partly dissatisfied in all the needs of the marital hierarchy at the same time. Again it is more accurate to think in terms of increasing percentages of satisfaction. Increasing levels of marital need gratification define increasing levels of marital health. Increasing levels of need gratification can be seen as steps or levels of growth toward marital-actualization.

Healthy relationships provide an environment for the growth and fulfillment of individuals in the relationship (Rogers, 1972; Satir, 1972; May, 1969; Jourard, 1974). Using Maslow's paradigm, the ideal environment for growth is one that provides for the satisfaction of basic needs in interpersonal relationships:

> We should inevitably in the course of an analysis of human relations find ourselves confronted with the necessity as well as the possibility, of differentiating good from poor relationships. Such a differentiation can very fruitfully be made on the basis of the degree of satisfaction of the basic needs brought about by the relationship. A relationship -- friendship, marriage, parent-child relation, -- would then be defined (in a limited way) as psychologically good to the extent that it supported or improved belongingness, security, and self-esteem (and ultimately self-actualization) and bad to the extent that it did not. (Maslow, 1970, p. 248)

Theoretically it would follow that neurotic, dysfunctional relationships, like neurosis in the individual, are based in part, on the insufficient satisfaction of the basic needs of the individuals in the relationship. Growth of the relationship can be seen as the ability to gratify progressively the basic relationship needs with a movement up the hierarchy toward marital-actualization. The following is an interpretation of what Maslow's need hierarchy means when applied to love relationships rather than to individuals.

1. Physiological

To be satisfied at the physiological level in rela-
tionship means having the question of physical survival
resolved to the extent that it is not the predominant
focus of the relationship. The primary concern is to
establish a basic sense of trust that physiological needs
can be gratified. This would include satisfaction of the
needs for food, water, sex, etc. It probably includes
physical touch, contact, and mutual orgasm. Roth (1977)
mentions the "libidinal refueling" that occurs for people
through physical contact, cuddling, touching, and
affection. Ammons and Stinnett (1980) in their study of
vital marriages found that sex was extremely important to
vital marriages.

Sexuality, like other behaviors, probably has dif-
ferent meanings and functions at each motivational level.
Maslow (1970) states that most behavior is multimotivated,
that is, any behavior may be a channel through which
various impulses flow. Any specific behavior may be
determined by several or all of the basic needs simulta-
neously rather than by only one of them. He uses as an
example behavior that seems to be physiologically moti-
vated such as eating or sexual play. A person may eat
partly to alleviate hunger and partly for comfort and
other needs. One may make love not only for sexual

release but to insure physical safety, to win affection,
to prove one's masculinity, feminity or to express love.
Theoretically one could find in a single act the expres-
sion of all the levels of need from physiological to
self-actualization. Any single act would also be a
representation or microcosm of where the person was on the
need hierarchy at that moment in time. There would tend
to be a predominant motivation that would arise from the
prepotent need level.

According to this theory, at the initial stage of
marital development physiological concerns are primary.
They dominate, "color", or give meaning to other behaviors
or concerns that are primary at subsequent stages. For
instance, at this first stage, marital esteem may be
defined primarily by such physical satisfactions as a good
sex life. Later, when esteem needs are primary, satis-
fying sexuality may be one of several routes to mutual
esteem. At the physical stage, it is an end. At the
esteem stage, sexuality is a means.

Even though each concern is perhaps present in some
form at every stage, only the primary concern or goal of
each stage will be given.

2. Safety

Marriage as a cultural institution can provide the
couple with a sense of safety because of the structure and

stability it tends to provide. Safety needs in relation-
ship would perhaps include physical and psychological
safety. The line between the two is thin. On a physical
level it may include relative freedom from physical threat
both from the outside environment and from each other. It
is also the need to be free from psychological attack. To
be satisfied at the safety level in relationship may
mean establishing mutual trust that the relationship is
physically and psychologically safe. Even if there are
difficulties, the partners have the overall experience
that they are "for" and not against each other.

Maslow states that to speak and to act are precon-
ditions for meeting basic needs. Secrecy, censorship,
dishonesty, or blocking of communication threaten all the
basic needs (Maslow, 1970). This is perhaps most obvious
on the level of safety needs in relationship. Open
communication is key.

The experience of safety and trust in the relationship
grows as people have the experience of risking exposure of
themselves (i.e., thoughts, feelings, and behaviors) and
are not judged or rejected but accepted. In a relation-
ship dominated by safety concerns, there may be limits on
the degree of openness in communication especially with
the expression of "weaknesses" and less "positive"
responses. The expression of such things would tend to be

experienced as threatening to the relationship and its safety. For example, Raush (1974) observed that some couples experience adjustment and satisfaction in their relationships while utilizing a closed style of communication including avoidance and denial. It seemed that it was the deemphasis on feelings that enabled the couple to perceive themselves as happy. Therefore, according to the model, these couples' need for safety and security may have been prepotent.

3. Love, Belonging, and Affection

In our culture the fulfillment of the need for love, belonging and affection is seen as one of the most important purposes of marriage. Satisfaction at this level in relationship might include the experience of companionship, friendship, emotional closeness, mutual support, trust and empathy with greater levels of intimacy and self-disclosure. This would include the expression of love and affection through sex, cuddling and touching. The quality of love at this level may begin to go beyond these means, and focus on unconditionality and acceptance. The couple learns increasingly to let go of ideal images and expectations of each other. The individuals may experience a sense of "coupleness", of being a unit, which provides a sense of belonging and a boundary between themselves and the rest of the world. This boundary

gives, them a new place within their own family and the larger culture as a whole. The couple at the love, belonging and affection level are concerned as a unit with establishing a place within the culture, making friends, and having their own children.

In Erikson's theory of adult development (1950, 1963) he states that the crisis of young adulthood is intimacy vs. isolation and that it is during this stage that true genitality can fully develop. Erikson also refers to the "utopia of genitality" and the elements that he maintains should be included in it are very similar to the stage of love and belonging as presented in this theory. Erikson's "utopia of genitality" include:

1. mutuality of orgasms
2. with a loved partner
3. of the other sex
4. with whom one is able and willing to share a mutual trust
5. and with whom one is able and willing to regulate the cycles of
   a. work
   b. procreation
   c. recreation
6. so as to secure to the offspring, too, all the stages of a satisfactory development (p. 266).

4. Esteem

The satisfaction of esteem needs in relationship may
include, but go beyond, respect for oneself and for one's
mate. Couple gratification at this level includes the
experience of the relationship as being good for both, as
increasing each individual's sense of self-worth and as
having inherent worth. "I value you. I value me and I
value our relationship." Satir (1967) considers esteem
one of the most important dimensions of the healthy
relationship. This includes confidence in the relation-
ship and the capacity as a couple to overcome difficul-
ties. Each experiences being responsible for the quality
and care of the relationship. They have developed com-
petence in interpersonal skills and are capable communi-
cators and problem solvers.

The primary concern at the esteem level is perhaps
developing and balancing individual and couple identity.
Lawerence (1982) in his study of happily married couples
states, "... a solid and growthproducing individual
identity and identity as a couple are the foremost
characteristics of these couples" (p. 106). People may
feel pulled by the needs to differentiate, to respect each
other's need for individuality and to remain secure and
interconnected. There is, in general, a need for more
"space" in the togetherness, with less symbiosis,

dependence or counterdependence. While this is an ongoing
issue in relationships, it comes to the foreground at
this level.

5. Marital-Actualization

Marital actualization would include those levels of
relating in marriage that exist in basic need gratifi-
cation; but now, function as means toward the prepotent
goal of the partners and the relationship becoming all of
what they are capable of becoming. The partners at this
level may be relatively gratified in their basic needs,
focused on actualizing their potential as individuals and
devoted to some common cause, ideal, or ultimate values.

One of Maslow's characteristics of the self-actualizing
person is deeper, more profound interpersonal relation-
ships. In fact, he first developed his ideas on peak
experiences by observing the love relationships of self-
actualizing people and considered the capacity for
B-Loving (love for the Being of the other) to be one of
the most fundamental characteristics of the self-
actualizing person. He looked for what self-actualizers
might teach us about love between the sexes and described
some of the characteristics of this love relationship.
Interestingly, the nine characteristics of actualized
relationships that Maslow delineated incorporate the 15

characteristics of self-actualizing individuals (Maslow, 1970). As with the 15 characteristics, they are like facets on a diamond, each reflecting a different aspect of the same whole:

1. dropping of defenses

2. care, responsibility, pooling of needs

3. fun, gaiety

4. sex and love fused

5. love as end experience

6. the ability to love and be loved

7. acceptance of the other's individuality, respect

8. detachment and individuality

9. greater taste and perceptiveness

In light of a literature review, it seems that Maslow's characteristics include much of what has been written on the optimally healthy marriage with some characteristics getting more attention than others, and some not mentioned elsewhere. At the same time there are several characteristics that can be gleaned from the literature that, while not mentioned by Maslow, are consistent with his theory. It thus becomes possible to synthesize Maslow's characterristics with information from the literature into five categories or aspects of an actualized marriage:

1. trust

2. love

3. commitment

4. strong individual and couple identity

5. shared purpose

In the process of exploring the characteristics of the actualized marriage and working with the concept of a hierarchy of needs, it seems possible that the various characteristics of the actualized marriage develop over the course of marriage and have a different meaning, function and importance at each marital need stage. In addition, it seems likely that the development of each characteristic becomes a major focus of concern at one or another level of marital development. The emergent paradigm which best portrays this complex development is a matrix, the details of which will be delineated later. The basic dimensions are presented here in Figure 1.

The various levels of marital development (physio-logical through marital-actualization) form the vertical axis, with the fully developed characteristics of marital-actualization across the top. The dotted lines which change at various levels to solid lines are meant to indicate that all the dimensions of marital-actualization are present to some degree or in some form at all levels of development. There is a point, marked by the change to

a solid line, where the development of the character-
istic emerges as a primary concern. Each dimension of
marital-actualization exists on a continuum of maturity
within which the characteristic develops as it moves
toward marital-actualization.

The integration of the existing literature will be
presented in terms of this matrix. The five aspects will
be described along with how they may develop from the
physiological stage to the level of marital-actualization.
Where and how they may emerge as a primary concern and in
what apparent sequence will also be explored. Research
supporting this theory of marital-actualization will be
presented including how the matrix explains some of the
literature on love relationships.

Figure 1   The Dimensions of the Marital-Actualization Matrix

1. Trust

The actualized marriage is characterized by the
presence of trust and the almost total absence of fear and
anxiety. The couple at the actualized stage of marital
development trust themselves, each other, the process of
relationship and life as a whole. This trust manifests as
the lovers' willingness to drop their roles and defenses
and to be authentically present with each other. They
feel safe to express openly their "less lovable" aspects,
as well as their loving, playfulness, and spontaneity.
This heightened level of trust leads to an openness and
freedom of expression that is the basis of good communi-
cation and deep experiences of intimacy. (Maslow, 1970;
Rogers, 1972; Jourard, 1974; Resnick, 1983.)

The actualizing couple also trust in the process of
change in relationship and are open to growth, in fact,
they actively seek it. This openness to change is one of
the most salient features of the healthy marriage (Satir,
1967; Rogers, 1977; Levy, 1976; Lawerence, 1982).

As we look at the possible stages of marital develop-
ment, establishing a basic sense of trust is perhaps the
first task of the physiological and safety levels. It
would appear that some level of trust needs to exist for
any of the basic needs to be satisfied. With the focus
on survival and the need for safety and security being

foreground, fear tends to be high. Therefore, people
may experience a greater need to control themselves, each
other, the environment and their circumstances in an
attempt to assure basic need gratification. The
challenge, then, is to overcome the fear at this level and
to establish a foundation of positive intentionality; the
sense that they are "for" each other and can trust each
will not intentionally hurt the other, physically or
psychologically.

As the couple is able and willing to open up and be
vulnerable the trust grows and expands. Jourard (1974)
describes how open self-disclosure tends to elicit more
and more open self-disclosure. In the same way, trusting
usually leads to more trusting. As we move up the hier-
archy of needs in relationship we find there is less fear
with greater trust.

The various aspects of marital-actualization tend to
intertwine and feed each other. To understand this, let
us look at the level of love and belonging. As the couple
learns to be more unconditionally loving as an act of free
will, the safety is created for the partners to risk
greater levels of openness and authenticity with each
other. They learn to let go of images of how they, the
other, or the relationship "should be" and accept each
other as they are. The fear of change lessens, and the

couple become more flexible and adaptable. As the partners have the experience of being safe and loved as they are, the degree of trust expands, communication becomes more open and intimacy deepens. It becomes easier to reveal thoughts, feelings and behaviors that may have previously seemed too threatening. There is more room for humor, spontaneity and childlike behavior with each other. At this level the couple begin to feel that the relationship is a haven of love, warmth, and affection where they receive "libidinal refueling" (Roth, 1977) for their sojourns back into the world.

At the esteem level, once the couple develops a strong individual and couple identity, their trust in themselves and the relationship may expand even further. The partners become more autonomous and secure inside themselves and acquire an even higher level of trust in the relationship. Through the process of overcoming difficulties together they develop the experience that they can trust the other to be there, and to support and stand by them even in the tough times. They have confidence in their future and trust their ability to respond creatively and successfully to change. At this level the partners may have a hard time imagining anything that might separate them.

As they move into the realm of marital-actualization

the relationship becomes relatively free from fear and anxiety. Trust in themselves and the process of relationship is an accomplished characteristic of the couple's interaction. They respond to each other and life circumstances with fluidity and flexibility, unbound by preset rules and structures that no longer fit the situation of the moment. They create a context of growth and discovery in the relationship that allows it to become a vehicle for their individual and couple growth.

2. <u>Loving</u>

The actualized marriage is characterized by a quality of loving that is unconditional, unpossessive, and non-needful, what Maslow called B-loving, or love for the Being of the other. In B-loving the other is seen and loved as they are and not for what they might give or what needs they might fulfill. There is a genuine concern for the growth and well being of the other apart from the effect on one's own needs.

Maslow differentiated between B-love (un-needing) and D-love (needing). D-love is an emptiness that needs to be filled. B-love comes from a place of fullness. It is a "... free giving of oneself, wholly and with abandon, without reserve, withholding or calculation" (Maslow, 1970, p. 182). Loving is experienced as flowing outward from within, and as an end in itself.

At the lower levels of marital development, love and acceptance of the other tend to be conditional and dependent on need fulfillment. Those aspects of one partner that are related to the other's need gratification are accepted, and those not related to need gratification are more easily overlooked and rejected if experienced as threatening to basic needs.

While B-loving may be present at the earlier stages of development, it would tend to show up as a temporary peak experience, for example, during the romantic stage of a relationship when two people first "fall in love." Often new lovers are capable of seeing the best in each other and are unconditional in their loving, but the couple usually has difficulty maintaining this type of loving in the face of day-to-day living. At the higher level of marital-actualization the couple expereince this quality more as an ongoing norm along with new and heightened peak expereinces of loving.

A couple operating from the physiological and safety levels would probably be primarily focused on self-gratification. Giving tends to be quid pro quo, (i.e., giving in order to get.) As a couple moves up the hierarchy to the level of love and belonging, a major shift in the nature of caring begins to take place. The development of the capacities to move beyond self and to

balance and harmonize the needs of both partners begins to emerge. The primary concern of this level is to establish the experiences of loving, intimacy, and companionship, as well as mutuality and belongingness.

The couple is working to expand their love identification to include each other. Maslow (1970) defines love indentification as "a merging into a single hierarchy of prepotency of the needs of two or more people...indeed the other's needs is his own need" (p.99). At this stage, the needs of the loved one and of the relationship are for the first time experienced as equally important as their own, and on occasion, even more important.

The fundamental task for the couple is learning to love as a conscious act of will, as something they can choose and not just something that "happens" to them. This often occurs for couples who successfully navigate and survive the romantic phase of their relationship.

Characteristic of the romantic stage is seeing the partner as the ideal other, the perfect complement and need gratifier, the one who will come in to fill all the gaps and make one whole and happy. Gradually one's Prince or Princess Charming begins to turn back into a frog as they invariably fail to live up to one's idealized expectations and fantasies. The challenge and opportunity is learning to love the person as they are, not as one would

like them to be, to see and relate to them beyond the filter of personal needs. If the challenge is met the couple's love begins to mature and become more uncon- ditional, giving becomes easier, more pleasurable, and more for its own sake. The awareness of love as choice becomes the foundation of a solid commitment to each other and the relationship.

As we move up the hierarchy toward marital- actualization, the couple's love boundaries gradually expand until the needs of humanity and the planet are felt as their own. The couple have made a major shift from deficiency to growth motivation. Now that they are gratified in their love needs they tend to operate from a place of fulfillment. Expressions such as sexuality become a vehicle for expressing love rather than a means to gratifying one's physical needs. The maritally actualizing couple experience peaks of loving, joy, and fulfillment together as a bonus to the ongoing experience of mutual love and support.

3. Commitment

The actualized-marriage is characterized by a clear and strong commitment to each other, to the relationship, and to higher values. Historically, commitment, whether legally, religiously or personally based, has been fundamental to the institution of marriage to the point of

being almost synonomous with it. While the nature of
marriage is changing, it is probable that some kind of
commitment will continue to remain a core element of
marriage in the future (Bernard, 1972). In a review of
the literature on commitment Seymour (1977) developed the
following constructs basic to commitment:

1) Commitment is optional. It is a voluntary act. It
   is an expression of free will (Fromm, 1956; Masters
   & Johnson, 1970; Shostrom, 1976).

2) Commitment is intentional. It is a decision, a
   promise or pledge to do something (Fromm, 1956;
   Masters & Johnson, 1970).

3) Commitment is attitudinal. It is essentially the
   desire to be concerned for, and care for the needs
   of another (Foot & Cottrell, 1955; Clinebell &
   Clinebell, 1970; Masters & Johnson, 1970; Powell,
   1974).

4) Commitment is longitudinal. It is meant to have
   permanence, loyalty and generally exclusivity
   (Fromm, 1956; Blood, 1969; Cline & Clinebell, 1970;
   Bernard, 1972; Rogers, 1972).

5) Commitment is behavioral. It requires involvement
   and some dynamic activity (Blood, 1969; Masters &
   Johnson; Rogers, 1972; Shostrom, 1976 Seymour,
   1977, p. 47).

The partners of the actualizing marriage are very much in touch with their capacity to choose freely and to honor the choices they make through appropriate action. Whatever vows or promises they make to each other (to love, to support unconditionally, to help grow, to be honest) they take seriously as an outgrowth of their commitment to ultimate values. They know there will be ample opportunity to honor their vows and make them real in the process of relationship, and they see this as part of the challenge and opportunity for growth in their marriage (Leonard, 1983).

At the physiological and safety levels of marital development commitment may tend to come out of the need for survival and safety. Commitement at this level is characterized by more fear and a greater reliance on external authority, perhaps religious rules or other cultural expectations. It would not have the quality of free will characterstic of higher stages. Because of the greater tendency at the lower levels to feel trapped or not "at choice", there would be less ability and willingness to honor commitments, especially under difficult circumstances. The partners tend to withdraw from participation and commitment or become symbiotic and "clingy". Commitment honored at this level, however, would provide the experience of some safety and security

in the relationship and allow for higher levels of development to occur.

At the level of love and belonging a new dimension adds to commitment: learning to love as a choice. Fromm (1956) and May (1969) both maintain that love is not just a strong feeling, but a decision and a promise. A feeling comes and goes, but love is an act of will, a voluntary commitment. The essence of commitment at this level is a commitment to caring, to loving and to supporting each other.

As we move into the esteem level, the strength and stability of the commitment tend to grow as the partners develop and balance individual and couple identity. Often the partners will feel pulled by the desire to individuate and to separate, and at the same time, to remain close, fused and safe. The differentiation required at this stage is supported by the love and commitment that has already been established. As the couple achieve this differentiation and greater autonomy it "stretches" their commitment to each other, and in the process makes that commitment even stronger.

As the partners begin to individuate, they develop confidence in their ability to make and keep commitments. They take on more responsibility for the quality of their relationship. Commitment is no longer something imposed

from the outside but is freely chosen. Lawerence (1982) found that his happily married couples had what he called a "work ethic" attitude toward their marriages. They felt that a good marriage required effort. It had to be "worked at" to be successful.

4. Strong Individual and Couple Indentity

The ability that the actualized couple have to pool their needs, transcend their individual egos and cooperate together has already been emphasized. At the same time the partners of the actualized marriage are independent, separate, and autonomous. They have the capacity to be extremely close and yet separate when necessary without losing strength (Maslow, 1970). Erikson (1950, 1963), among others, noted that the capacity for intimacy is dependent on a clear sense of personal identity. Without it people tend either to merge with the other and lose a sense of themselves, or to isolate themselves and avoid intimate contact because they fear such a loss of the self.

A common theme frequently talked about in the literature on healthy marriages is that human beings have two conflicting forces within them. One is the desire for safety and security, the urge to fuse and belong to something outside oneself, to be undifferentiated and merged. The other is the desire for growth and discovery,

individuation, the urge to differentiate and establish
an independent sense of self, (Maslow, 1968; Sheehy, 1974;
Roth, 1977; Bowen, 1978). Angyal (1965) called it
respectively, the tendency to homonomy and autonomy. Both
forces are complementary and operate together in the
growth process. From a place of safety and security we
can step into the unknown and grow forward and become more
individuated. One's intimate relationship is a primary
arena where this ongoing issue can play itself out. The
task of developing and balancing intimacy and individu-
ality is one of the most basic challenges the couple must
face in their development (Roth, 1977; Bowen, 1978;
Lawerence, 1982; Resnick 1983). While this task seems to
be present at every level of development it emerges as a
major concern at the esteem level. Let us look at how it
may develop over time.

At the lower levels of marital development the
partners would tend to be more deficiency-need motivated
and thus less autonomous. Since they would be more
dependent on the environment and especially each other
for the gratification of their basic needs, there would
be a lack of clear individual and couple identity, with
more fusion, symbiosis, and mutual or counter-dependency.
One would expect the couple to feel more "at the effect
of" each other and life's circumstances, with greater

expectations for the other to fulfill their personal needs and "make them happy". There would be a concomitant tendency to blame each other or circumstance for their difficulties.

At the level of love and belonging the couple learns to love as a choice and to establish a sense of commitment. As they do, they begin to experience having some control over their lives and their relationship. As the trust level expands and the loving is internalized, the partners become more secure, more autonomous, and more confident in themselves and their relationship. Thus, when the esteem level is reached, the need to become more individuated may emerge. Theoretically, the couple who have been satisfied in their safety and love needs will become more independent and better equipped to tolerate separation and to take the risks necessary for further individuation.

With the emerging need to differentiate, elements of fusion or symbiosis that have been comfortable in the past may now be experienced as limiting or constricting. The couple may become sensitive to imbalances of power and seek to create greater equality in their interaction. If the couple risk becoming more individuated and authentic, they discover whether they are truly compatible. The challenge is for the partners and the relationship to expand: to accommodate the changes that may want to

occur. As they accomplish this expansion, the partners develop and balance individual and couple identity.

At the level of marital-actualization the couple have established a clear individual and couple identity. Being secure within themselves they more fully support their partner's growth and success, which at earlier stages may have been a threat. While the balancing of individuality and intimacy probably remains as an ongoing issue (Roth, 1977), the actualizing couple have a high degree of synergy in their relationship. As both partners honor their individualtiy and seek to become more of who they uniquely are, they simultaneously serve and enrich their partner and the relationship.

5. Shared Purpose

Shared purpose is a dimension of relationship that has had little attention in the literature. Shared purpose at the level of marital-actualization is a common involvement in self-actualizing values. The shared focus and reason for being together becomes the realization of higher values. If the couple share a religious framework, shared purpose may be conceived in terms of a common spiritual journey, of "being on the same path".

The partners of an actualized marriage have become reasonably gratified in their basic needs and may now become metamotivated. Maslow first used the term

"metamotivation" to designate a basic shift in motivation from the gratification of deficiency needs to the gratification of metaneeds. Metaneeds include the need to grow, the need to actualize one's potential and the need to make real through action one's possibilities, talents, and gifts. Metaneeds also include what Maslow called the B-Values or values of Being. These are final ultimate values such as beauty, justice, excellence, and truth. In other words, the B-Values become what the individual needs, and seeks as the most valued. They become what provides gratifcation (Maslow, 1971).

As partners become metamotivated, growth and the realization of the B-Values concern them foremost. This focus becomes the context that gives their lives and their relationship meaning and significance. As this shift in motivation occurs the content of their lives, their work and relationship become a channel and vehicle for the meeting of metaneeds--just as previously they served as a channel for the meeting of D-needs. This shared purpose manifests itself in at least two ways:

1. The partners in the actualized-marriage are each involved in and devoted to some task, calling or beloved work bigger than themselves that becomes a vehicle for B-Values. The relationship is experienced as a place for rest, nurturance, and support for this individual work or

calling. In some cases the couple may be involved in the same work together. Shared purpose in marriage acts as a unifying force around which the couple's energies can combine and synthesize. When two come together around their shared purpose and become involved in creative work, they have the opportunity to express the harmony and synergy of their relationship in new and potentially powerful ways.

2. In addition to supporting the outward manifestation of shared purpose, the relationship itself is a vehicle or arena for growth and the realization of B-Values. Doing "the work" of creating a healthy marriage stretches the partners toward greater self-actualization and marital-actualization. The couple cherish the experience of the relationship in part because it embodies the B-Values. It is a context for love, joy, and humor. The partners thus experience the gratification of their meta-needs in the relationship. These gratifications would include: the enjoyment of loving and nurturing, of serving each other and providing for the other's well being; great pleasure in having children and helping them grow; and the enjoyment of taking on responsibility.

The marriage relationship is a channel for the gratification of needs at all levels of motivation. In any given relationship all levels of need gratification may be

present in varying degrees. Maslow did not conceive of a
sharp line between self-actualizing people and others.
He postulated that all people are perhaps metamotivated to
some degree.

At previous stages of marital development shared
purpose would be related to mutual fulfillment of D-needs.
Hence at the physiological level shared purpose would
perhaps manifest as a concern for mutual physical sur-
vival. At the safety level it may surface as a mutual
concern for security. At the level of love and belonging,
shared purpose would relate to the mutual satisfaction of
love and belonging needs. At the esteem level it may
emerge as a commitment to each other's individuality. As
we move up the hierarchy, in addition to mutual fulfill-
ment of D-needs, the purpose of the relationship begins to
include the need for growth and ultimate values. The
relationship becomes more metamotivated. At the level of
marital-actualization the couple is relatively gratified
in their basic needs. Their foreground concern is
actualizing their potential as individuals and actively
striving for and being motivated by some common values,
vision or cause dear to them.

The following matrix illustrates the stages of marital
development and the prime concerns as they emerge.

Figure 2   The Marital-Actualization Matrix

In summary, it seems that there may be a hierarchical
sequence of primary concerns in the development of
marital-actualization. The first primary concern is to
establish a basic sense of trust and positive intention-
ality. The couple need to experience that they can trust
each other not to hurt one another intentionally physi-
cally or psychologically, that their basic intention is to
support each another.

When the couple have established a basic sense of
trust the next emergent concern is the creation of a
loving bond and sense of commitment. The couple need to
develop the capacity for mutuality, the ability to take
each other's needs into account and the skills with which
to be intimate and close. They need to learn to let go of
images of how each other "should" be, and to love and
accept each other "as is". The couple need to learn that
the experience of loving is more than a temporary feeling
that comes and goes. Love also involves a choice and a
commitment to care for each other's well-being over time.

The next concern to emerge is the development and
balancing of individual and couple identity. They are
ready to test the love and commitment they have estab-
lished together. As the partners express their need to
individuate, they stretch the capacity of the relation-
ship to incorporate change and growth. If the couple

meets the challenge, the relationship is strengthened, the couple identity develops, and the relationship becomes an even stronger support for further individuation. If the couple makes it through this stage of balancing individual and couple identity, the partners know that they are basically compatible and that they share similar life goals and values.

At the next level of development the primary concern becomes the pursuit and manifiestation of their life goals and ultimate values--the establishment of a shared purpose. The predominant focus is realizing their capacities and talents as individuals and as a couple as well as seeking and manifesting the B-Values they both cherish.

Supporting Research

The marital matrix provides a way to conceptualize and organize much of the research on healthy marriages. Most research focuses on one or two dimensions, or one or two stages at most. Overall the research is not so much inconsistent as it is partial. Not only can the matrix be used to organize the research, but to the degree that the research fits into the chart, it also gives empirical support to the theory. (See Figure 3)

Figure 3   A Summary of the Literature on the Characteristics of Healthy Marriages

	TRUST	LOVE	COMMITMENT	INDIVIDUAL & COUPLE IDENTITY	SHARED PURPOSE
Goodman and Ofshe (1969) Norton (1972)		empathy			
Fiore and Sevensen (1977)		more affect, moral support, encouragement			
Navran (1967)	discuss feelings, talk more	share events, personal language			
Bienvenu (1970)	good conflict skills	good listening affectionate tone, more understanding,			
Haley (1964)	humor, laughter,	positive affect support,			
Kleiman (1981)	trust	intimacy		parental coalition, clear generational boundaries,	
Maslow (1979, 1968)	dropping of roles and defenses, fun, gaiety, humor	care, responsibility, pooling of needs, acceptance, respect, awe, sex & love fused,	will, active agents	detachment, individuality, greater taste & perceptiveness	B-Values meta-motivation
Rogers (1972)	non-role, risking openness, marriage as process, open to change	standing by each other, support other's growth, non-judgment, accept as is,	commitment, wanting it to work,	being own person, self responsibility	

	Trust	Love	Commitment	Identity	Shared Purpose
Jourard (1974)	self-disclosure, authentic communication,	reasonable demands, concern for other's growth, respect, liking,		individualty, autonomy, pleasure in each other's autonomy	
Satir (1967,1972)	open to change	see other as is not image of how want to be		equal power, high esteem	
Ammons & Stinnett (1980)		mutual giving, good sex	determination, commitment	ego strength,	
Lewis et.al. (1976)	honest clear communication, humor,	empathy, warmth, strong affilia-tive atmosphere,		parental coali-tion, equal power, clear boundaries, close & separate negotiated decisions,	
	skillful problem solvers.....	....	....	....	
Strauss (1974)	open honest communication, adaptability, humor,	love as choice, understanding, acceptance, mutual respect, support,	"work ethic", commitment to making it work,	balance individual and couple indentity	
Roth (1977)	open to change, adaptability, no fear	mutual support, open affection,	positive intention	strong identity equal power, balance individ-ual & couple,	
Roberts (1981)	open to change, open honest communication, good conflict skills.....	....		equality, inner security, respnsibility,	
Lawerence (1982)	free expression, honesty, humor,	empathy, help each other grow	positive inten-tion, faith in relationship, equal investment	respect, bolster esteem, equal power, respons-ibility, balance alone & together	shared values

The first dimension of the matrix to be considered
is the five aspects of marital actualization. The five
characteristics presented in the matrix incorporate a
great deal of the theroetical and empirical research on
the characteristics of the healthy, satisfying marriage.

The five characteristics are listed across the top of
the chart. Some of the major researchers reviewed are
listed with brief descriptive statements of the variables
which they considered characteristic of healthy marriages.
These are placed under one or another of the five aspects
of marital-actualization. On occasion the variable may be
placed under more than one characteristic.

The second dimension of the marital-actualization
matrix presented here is the possible developmental and
heirarchical aspect of the characteristics. There are
several implications from this aspect of the matrix which
help to make sense of other literature on both good and
poor marriages.

Implication One - The higher the level of self-
actualization (SA) the greater the potential for marital-
actualization. For example, if partners are concerned
with safety needs and establishing trust they are less
likely to have an actualized marriage. People lower on
the need hierarchy who are D-motivated (i.e., seeking to

meet physiological, safety, love and belonging, and esteem
needs) would have a different kind of relationship than
those who move into the realm of self-actualization.
People lower in self-actualization would have a more
difficult time meeting the basic needs of the
relationship.

Roth (1977) studied the relationship between the level
of partners' self-actualization and couple interaction.
Using the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI), Roth
compared a group of 25 high and low self-actualizers. The
couples' interactions were compared using the Osborn and
Pitcher Improvisation Test for Couples (Impro-C). The
Impro-C is a battery of ten structured improvisations the
couple enact in the present that are then evaluated in
terms of communication patterns, and overall relational
style of the system and the individuals. The study
confirmed the hypothesis that people at differing stages
of their personal growth interact differently with their
mates.

Table 1
Summary of Roth's (1977) Findings
On High And Low SA Couples

Low SA Couples	High SA Couples

Physiological

Safety
 fear and distrust,
 symbiotic, dependent,
 difficulty cooperating,
 closed, lacking sensitive
   communication

better communication
  open, honest,
  tactful, sensitive

Love
 reject support,
 unequal investment in
   the relationship

give and receive
  support,
equal investment,
capacity to be close
  and to separate,
open to change

Actualization

Dietch (1978) administered a battery of questionnaires

including the POI, a questionnaire requesting general

information about love relationships, and an inventory

designed to assess healthy love (Maslow's B-love) to 126

college students. Subjects who had been involved in at

least one love relationship scored significantly higher in

self-actualization than individuals who had never been in

love. As Dietch explains, this result is open to two

interpretations. It is possible that psychologically

healthy individuals may be more capable of engaging in

romantic involvement. On the other hand, involvement in a love relationship may facilitate self-actualization. In fact both of these processes may be occurring, i.e., self-actualizers are better able to love; involvement in a love relationship promotes self-actualization. Either interpretation is consistent with Maslow's theory of self-actualization and the hierarchy of basic needs.

In addition Dietch found that the level of self-actualization correlated directly with the degree of Maslow's B-love among individuals who had been involved in a romantic relationship. In other words, the love of people at lower levels of self-actualization tends to be of the D-type.

The theoretical expectation that maturity in both husband and wife contribute to marital satisfaction and successful interaction was supported in a study done by McClelland, Colman, Finn, & Winter, (1978). A group of 41 couples were rated for marital success based on the result of a self-report marital satisfaction questionnaire and thier scores in an interpersonal competitve game which revealed the success with which they interacted. In addition, the couples were scored for social-emotional maturity on the Stewart Scale of Maturity. The measure developed by Stewart is patterned after the Freud-Erikson scheme of psychosexual stages. The results of the study

concluded that young husbands who score more mature on the Stewart measure of psychosocial maturity tend to belong to more successful marriages, as do college-educated wives who show less immaturity and more phallic adventurousness (McClelland, et. al., 1978, p. 163).

Studies by Rogers, Young, Cohen, & Dworin (1970) lend further support to the proposition that there is a positive relationship between psychological maturity and marital satisfaction. In a comparison of stable and unstable marriages the stable group scored significantly higher on four subtests of emotional stability.

Implication Two - When a marital need is not satisfied, the couple will not experience satisfaction at a higher level of need.

Using a self-designed instrument, Roberts (1981) studied healthy and neurotic marital relationships, and found that the neurotic relationships were characterized by unfulfilled lower level needs. For example, they were fearful of loss, frightened of change, and were dependent on each other; they avoided conflict, kept secrets from each other, lacked a sense of humor, and felt unworthy of their partner. They did not experience the higher level satisfactions of the "healthy" couples who were open to change, possessed good conflict skills, utilized inde-

pendent egalitarian decision making, possessed ego
strength, had a good sense of humor, and were good
partner "pickers". The categorization of differences in
terms of need levels in Table 2 is this author's.

Table 2
Summary of Robert's Findings on
Healthy and Neurotic Marriages

Neurotic	VS	Healthy
SAFETY		
give in,		
avoid conflict,		
frightened of change,		
fearful of loss		
LOVE		
dependent on partner,		
avoid conflict		
ESTEEM		
dependent decision making,		accept sexuality,
unworthy of partner,		open to change,
lack humor		good conflict skills,
		egalitarian decision making,
		healthy selfishness,
		inner security,
		ego stremngth
ACTUALIZATION		good partner picker

Maslow has noted that when a basic need is partly
frustrated the need persists and "gets bigger" (Maslow,
1970). Presumably this is what happens with the neurotic

couple who are partly frustrated in the need for safety,
love and esteem. They tend to cling to each other in an
attempt to satisfy earlier unmet needs, while the
"largeness" of the need makes for instability in the
relationship. For example, keeping secrets may provide
some safety from possible rejection and loss of love but
it prevents the possibility of being loved "as one is",
which would meet the need for safety and love at a deeper
level.

Levinger (1966), in a study of 600 couples applying
for divorce, found that spouses in middle class marriages
were more concerned with psychological and emotional
interaction; lower income partners saw financial
problems and unstable physical actions of their partners
as more salient in their lives. These findings could be
interpreted as a manifestation of different levels of
marital need: the lower income partners are primarily
concerned with the physiological level; the middle-class
partners are more satisfied at the physiological level
and hence working with needs for love, belonging, etc.

Findings like this and other research from the 1950's
and 1960's tended to support the widely accepted hypoth-
esis that higher income, education and occupational
prestige are causally and linearly linked to greater
marital satisfaction. More recent studies from the 1970's

(supposedly of higher methodological quality) have not supported this hypothesis (Hicks and Platt, 1970; Glenn & Weaver, 1977; Brinkerhoff and White, 1978; Spanier & Lewis, 1980; Jorgensen, 1979). The inconsistencies in these findings can be explained through the notion of a hierarchy of needs in relationships.

The study by Brinkerhoff and White (1978) illustrates this point. They examined the effects of husbands' income and employment on reports of marital satisfaction in a sample of 89 marginally employed working-class couples who were subject to the hardship and economic uncertainty of seasonal occupations. They discovered that there was no direct additive effect of income level on marital satisfaction. There was, however, a significant positive relationship between reported satisfaction with current standard of living and marital satisfaction among those couples facing the highest levels of unemployment and economic marginality. The authors concluded that there was a threshold of economic stress below which income did become important to marital satisfaction. The important concept here is a threshold of economic stress. This threshold idea supports the notion of a hierarchy of needs. It is assumed that a couple operating under extreme economic stress would be primarily concerned with their needs of physiological survival and safety. Some

minimal but adequate satisfaction of these needs would allow higher needs for security, love, and esteem to emerge. In other words, there would not be a linear relationship between more and more money and satisfaction in marriage. The premise that greater levels of income and social status automatically lead to greater marital satisfaction was contradicted by other major studies as well (Glenn & Weater, 1977; Jorgensen, 1979).

In a study by Lawrence (1982) 25 couples were interviewed who were happily married. Lawrence found that the group divided naturally into two categories, those he called "stars" and "superstars". All the couples shared a common "core" of interactional behaviors. In parentheses are the corresponding levels of marital-actualization. (The categorization is this author's.)

1) Strong coalition (love)

2) Respond emphatically to spouse (love)

3) Mood tone warm, optimistic, humorous, affectionate (love)

4) Express selves freely (safety/love)

5) Equal distribution of power (esteem)

The groups differed on several dimensions:

1) The stars semed to have more conflict than they admitted to. (safety/love)

2) The stars had more problem with communication and problem solving. Example, more "mind reading" statements, sometimes less clarity, more

bottlenecks. (safety/love)

3) Stars had more blurring of boundaries with one member at times taking control of the relationship. (love)

4) Stars had somewaht less self-disclosure, less comfort with self and spouse emotionally. (love)

The differences between the two groups could be explained by a difference in the level of self-actualization and marital-actualization as well. The superstars could be operating primarily at the level of esteem and actualization. The stars may be working a little lower on the hierarchy, perhaps primarily at the level of love or even esteem with some still unmet safety needs. As stated earlier, the levels are not airtight compartments but have permeable boundaries. A couple would be partly satisfied and partly dissatisfied in all the needs of marital-actualization. Hence, for example, the stars may be satified 95% in physiological needs, 85% in safety, 65% in love, 40% in esteem and 20% in marital-actualization. The superstars would tend to have a higher percentage of satisfaction on all levels. The stars are working at a different level of concern and are therefore not freed yet to be like the superstars. As the marital needs of one level are more fully satisfied, the couple is open to experience satisfaction at higher levels. Conversely, when marital needs of one level are

not fully satisfied, the couple will not experience
satisfaction at higher levels. (See Table 3)

Table 3
Summary of Lawrence's Findings
On Happily Married Couples

STARS	shared	SUPERSTARS
SAFETY		
conflict covered-up,		
trouble communicating,		
"mind reading"		
LOVE		
blurred boundaries	strong coalition, empathy, warmth, affection, humor, express selves freely	
ESTEEM		
	equal distribution of power	clear boundaries, more open, responsible communication
ACTUALIZATION		
		less role rigidity

Implication Three - Historically marital needs in the
United States culture have moved up the hierarchy of
marital development.

The notion of a hierarchy of needs in relationships

can be seen in the movement of the culture as a whole.
There is general agreement in the literature that modern
marriges can be put into two categories: institutional
and companionship, with a general movement toward more and
more companionship marriages (Burgess & Locke, 1950; Mace
& Mace, 1975). The institutional marriage's success is
measured by how well the individuals in it conform to
their prescribed cultural roles and expectations. The
variables of happiness are related to things such as
occupational status and income of the husband, similarity
in educational levels, age, cultural background, etc. In
other words, if the couple live up to the cultural expec-
tations of the happy marriage (e.g., the good provider
husband or nurturing caretaker wife) the marriage is
successful. These cultural constructs can be seen as
aspects of the physiological and safety level needs.
The companionship marriage is based primarily on the
subjective interpersonal dimension, and success is
measured by variables such as love, affection, sex, and
communication (Hicks, & Platt, 1970).

If we look at the movement toward companionship
marriage through the paradigm of the hierarchy of needs,
it can be seen as a general movement of the culture from a
major concern with physiological and safety needs to the
higher needs for love, belonging, esteem, and self-

actualization. The image and function of marriage is changing, because the level of people's needs is changing. Historically, marriage has been one of the institutions of the culture designed to meet primarily the needs for survival and security. As more and more people are freed from economic concerns, higher needs are emerging in relationships.

This review of the literature serves to provide a context for understanding the present research project. Using Maslow's theory of self-actualization as a base, the author has put forward a theory of marital-actualization that includes hypothesized characteristics of marital-actualization and the possibility of the sequential and hierarchical development of these characteristics. This theory was presented in the form of a marital-actualization matrix. Theoretical and empirical evidence was cited that tends to support the construct validity of the matrix, enough at least to warrant further investigation.

Many questions arise for possible exploration. How does individual development affect marital development? Are the stages universal or cultural? What influence does the culture have on the stages of marital development? Is it possible to assist a couple who may be stuck in one stage or may be carrying unsatisfied needs from previous stages?

Of the many questions possible, what seems most important now is more in-depth exploration to test the plausability of the theory presented here. The major question that emerges to foreground is: What longitudinal evidence is there that these stages of marital development occur sequentially, and approximately as described?

This will be the question addressed in the remainder of this study. The results will be used to refine the theory presented here and to generate foci for further research about the nature of the optimally healthy marriage. The implication of this study for theory development, research, training, and program development will also be explored.

C H A P T E R   I I I
HISTORICAL CASE STUDIES

Methodology for Historical Studies

The study has occurred in two phases. The first phase involved the biographical examination of couples who seem to have had healthy marriages. The purpose of this first phase was to explore some longitudinal evidence, to see if stages of marital development occurred in a way that approximated the description outlined previously. The results of this exploration were then integrated with the theory of marital development, and the second phase of research was undertaken.

Subjects

Four couples were selected to represent a wide range of socio-cultural and historic differences so that if similarities were found in spite of these differences, the findings would be strengthened. The cases were selected through a process of trial and error. Persons within various departments of the academic community (Man/Woman Studies, Literature, History) were consulted for suggestions. The suggested couples were then investigated to see if they met the following criteria:

1) Reportedly happily married for a long enough period
of time to have undergone some significant changes
in their relationship.

2) Possessing the characteristics of marital-actuali-
zation. They had achieved a stage of relationship
together in which they a) were relatively gratified in
their basic needs, b) were involved in developing their
individual potential, and c) seemed to share a common
purpose, cause, or commitment to ultimate values.

3) Adequate sources of data on the couple.
Biographies and correspondence needed to be sufficient in
quantity and quality to track significant events and
turning points in the relationship. In terms of quality,
the data needed to be sufficiently revealing of the
subjective, personal dimension of the marriage.

Not all of the couples finally chosen met all of the
criteria perfectly. They were the couples out of
approximately seventy-five investigated that best met the
criteria.

Data Analysis

In the collection and analysis of the data, special
attention was given to the notion of developmental stages
and to a hierarchical sequence of primary concerns. The
inquiry focused on turning points, significant periods
or special events in the couple's relationship. Such

events were likely to signify a change in primary concern and stage of marital development, or demonstrate a characteristic of marital-actualization. The intention was to see if such turning points and special events could be explained by the theory of marital-actualization and the hierarchical sequence of primary concerns, or whether modifications of the theory were needed.

The intention of this initial probing was to gather evidence for the plausability of stages of marital development. The investigation of these four cases was not meant to be a complete analysis of each couple's entire marriage, nor was it intended to be a complete analysis of the stages and characteristics of marital development. This initial probe helped to clarify some of the objective criteria for stage occupancy and provided guidance in the development of the interview schedule for the second phase of research.

The Case Studies

Case Study One - Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell

Lucy Stone (1818-1893) and Henry Blackwell (1825-1909) were happily married for almost forty years, from 1853 to 1893.

The sources of data on the couple included three biographies on Lucy Stone and one on the Blackwell family.

One of the biographies was by Lucy and Henry's daughter, Alice Stone Blackwell. One was by Eleanor Rice Hays, who also wrote a biography on the Blackwells. The most recent biography, by Wheeler, was especially useful because it focused on Lucy and Henry's relationship and included 221 of their letters to each other over the forty years of their marriage. The number of biographies was adequate to overcome any one biographer's bias. The quality of the data was personal enough to get some sense of the inner dynamics of Lucy and Henry's relationship.

When Henry and Lucy began their courtship in 1853, Henry was twenty-seven and Lucy was thirty five. Henry had been working to help support his family since his father's death when he was thirteen. When he met Lucy, he was in the hardware business with his brother Samuel; and like his father before him, was active as a reformer and abolitionist. Lucy was unusually independent for a woman of her time. Having worked her way through Oberlin college by teaching, she was the first woman from Massachusetts to earn a college degree. Oberlin was one of the first colleges to open its doors to both blacks and women. After being graduated, she took up public lecturing despite the fact that it was considered scandalous for women to speak to a mixed audience. In addition, she earned a reputation as one of the most

gifted orators of the anti-slavery and women's movement—
both exceedingly unpopular causes.

Henry was attracted by Lucy's clarity of purpose and
after a brief encounter, began to court her for
marriage. Lucy, however, was a confirmed spinster. While
she apparently longed at times for love and marriage, it
seemed an impossible notion to her to marry and maintain
her individual identity. Around the time of her meeting
Henry, she wrote to her good friend, Antoinette Brown, who
had been with her at Oberlin College:

> My heart aches to love somebody that shall be all its
> own.... It is horrid to live without intimate
> companionship and gentle loving influences which are
> the constant attendant of a true love marriage... It
> is a wretchedly unnatural way of living.... [but] I
> shall not be married ever. I have not seen the person
> whom I have the slightest wish to marry, and if I had,
> it will take longer than my lifetime for the obstacles
> to be removed which are in the way of a married woman
> having any being of her own. (Hays, 1961, p.98)

The obstacles had some substance in reality. Lucy
was, after all, on a personal crusade for women's rights.
She knew that marriage would subjugate and subsume her
legal identity to that of her husband's:

> Now, Harry dear, I wish you were here, for an hour, &
> I would tell you why, in this letter, I ask you to
> come east, and in the last, said I did not think it
> best. I said to myself, "it will cost Harry $50 to
> come east. It is not likely that he will get that
> value in return, for however much I love him (and he
> is very dear to me), the horror of being a legal wife,
> and the suffocating sense of the want of that absolute
> freedom which I now possess, together with the
> revulsions of feeling which continually recur, and the

want of certainty that we are adapted, will never
allow me to be his wife. And if he were sure that I
would not be, he would not desire to come." Now
Harry, I have been all my life alone. I planned and
executed, without counsel, and without control. I
have shared thought, and feeling, and life, with
myself alone. I have made a path for my feet which I
know is very useful; it brings me more intense &
abundant happiness by far, than comes to the life of
the majority of men. And it seems to me, I cannot
risk it by any change. And when I ask, "can I dare
change," it rings an everlasting "no"... (Wheeler,
1981, p. 80)

Henry was patient and persistent. For almost two

years he argued, persuaded and reassured Lucy:

I have set out with the determination that my love
shall never fetter you one iota--that I will never
directly or indirectly impair your activity, but that
I will compel you ten years hence to acknowledge "My
acquaintance with Harry has been an advantage to me in
every way." (Wheeler, 1981, p. 84)

Gradually Lucy's resolve not to marry Henry weakened.

When she finally did agree to marry, however, it did not

end her fears and inner struggle. In the months before

her marriage, she suffered from severe headaches and

depression and even lost some of the zeal for her work.

They did finally marry and in the first year or two of

marriage the love and trust between Henry and Lucy grew

enormously. Henry was evidently very attentive and loving

with Lucy, and her fears began to fade. Lucy apparently

was learning to trust Henry's love. In a letter to her

mother nine months after her marriage she wrote:

I know you felt a little badly at our wedding,
because Henry was a stranger, and you did not know

what I was risking, nor what future I might be making. But I have learned to love, and trust him vastly more than at the wedding. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 137)

To Lucy's great relief, she found that she did not lose any of her personal freedom in marrying and that she survived with her identity intact. In a letter to her co-worker, Susan B. Anthony, she said:

> Of my husband (since the honeymoon is over) I can speak truly now, if I please, but will only tell you how he treated me last evening when after reading your letter, I asked him if I might go to the Convention at Saratoga. Only think of it, he did not give me permission, but told me to ask Lucy Stone! I can't get him to govern me at all. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 141)

And in another letter to Susan, she confided:

> Let me tell you as a secret that if you are ever married, you will find that there is just as much of you, as before. You won't even miss the shadow of the old identity, nor will anybody else. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 142)

Lucy's headaches and depression disappeared, and as she continued with her work, her old zest began to return. In a letter to Henry nine months after her marriage she wrote:

> I gave them a good lecture. At times the house rang with cheers, and then again, was still as the grave, with a deeper feeling...it was such an infinite blessing to feel again the old inspiration & faith in myself... I would not write this, even to you my own dearest Love, only you know how I have feared, and because you will love to rejoice with me. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 150)

It seems that Lucy even got over her "revulsions of feeling" over physical intimacy. In a letter to Henry who

was on a business trip with his partner she exclaimed:

> I quite envy Mr. Ostrom, his privilege by your pillow!
> Every night, when I lie down, I do so miss the
> sheltering love of your arms and the near personal
> presence! (Wheeler, 1981, p. 151)

In September of 1857 she and Henry became parents to a
baby girl they named Alice Stone Blackwell. With her
arrival came a shift in their lives. For a time, Lucy
attempted to continue her career in a more limited way;
but she took the duties and responsibilities of motherhood
very seriously, and she turned more and more of her energy
to full-time mothering and homemaking. As Lucy
withdrew from her stimulating and lucrative career, the
responsibility of providing for the family increased for
Henry. Lucy shared her feelings about this far-reaching
change in her life with her friend Antoinette in
February, of 1859:

> I wish I felt the old impulse & power to lecture, both
> for the sake of cherished principles & to help Harry
> with the heavy burden he has to bear--but I am afraid,
> & dare not trust Lucy Stone. I went to hear E. P.
> Whipple lecture on Joan d'Arc. It was very inspiring,
> & for the hour I felt as though all things were
> possible to me. But when I came home & looked in
> Alice's sleeping face & thought of the possible evil
> that might befall her if my guardian eye was turned
> away, I shrank like a snail into its shell, & saw that
> for these years I can only be a mother--no trivial thing
> either. (Wheeler, 1981, p.185)

Antoinette, who herself managed to combine her career with
mothering six girls, later would describe Lucy as "an
almost too careful and self-sacrificing mother" (Wheeler,

1981, p. 185).

It is interesting that in this letter there seems to have been not just an outward change in Lucy's circumstances with motherhood, but an inner change in her motivation as well. When she says, "I can't trust Lucy Stone", it is as if with the emergence of her caretaking mother-self, her rebellious reformer-self retreated along with her sense of power and competence. This was the beginning of the loss of Lucy's separate sense of identity. At this stage, while it was certainly present as an issue, it was not of primary concern.

During the first years of their marriage, Henry and Lucy were focused primarily on their relational needs for love and belonging. While their physiological needs were more foreground than they had been, their complaints were related to the frustration of their relational needs. For example, during Lucy's pregnancy and for the first year after the baby's birth, Henry's work required him to be away from home for extended periods of time. These separations were difficult for both of them. Henry wrote to Lucy in May of 1958: "As the thought of you & baby comes over me I am seized with a perfect despair at being separated from you...." (Wheeler, 1981, p. 179) And in June of the same year he wrote: "As I lay last night in bed, the time seemed years & I fairly bemoaned myself,

it seems so <u>inexpressibly sad</u> to be thus severed from all
I love." (Wheeler, 1981, p. 183) Lucy replied:

> Now that your exile is so nearly over, dear Harry, I
> want to tell you, that in no other absence have I ever
> felt your loss so much, never longed so for you, never
> needed you, as I have during these 4 weary months.
> (Wheeler, 1981, p. 184)

These early years of marriage and parenthood were
periodically difficult for both Henry and Lucy. Henry was
occupied with supporting Lucy and Alice, contributing also
to the support of his mother and one of his sisters, and
trying to get himself out of debt. His dream was to make
a fortune quickly so that he could dedicate himself to
reform, or if this were not possible, to make his living
in some enterprise that would improve the human condition.
Henry was, at the same time, restless and impatient and
found it difficult to stay with any one enterprise for
long.

Lucy was suffering from periodic headaches and
depression, at least partly brought on from her conflict
between her valued role as wife and mother and her valued
role as reformer. She wanted to return to her work in the
world, but felt fearful and lacked confidence in her self.
By 1864, she was as depressed as she was the months before
her marriage.

There were several factors contributing to Lucy's
state of mind. She was forty-seven and dealing with the

onset of menopause. Her daughter was growing up, and her years of being exclusively a mother were coming to an end. She wanted and needed to be out in the world again, but in her exclusive devotion to Alice, she had lost much of her self-confidence and her strong sense of identity. The idea of going forth and expressing herself as she once had filled her with dread, and she was temporarily immobilized. In response to Susan B. Anthony's proddings Lucy defended her need for retreat:

> And if I can only survive the inevitable change of constitution and be right side up, at the end of it, I shall pray again for the return of that great impulse that drove me into the world, with words that must be spoken. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 194)

Henry was going through his own changes as well. Although he had not achieved his dream of making a fortune, he was out of debt and had accumulated some savings. Thinking of supporting his family with interest income, he was considering quitting work and dedicating himself more fully to reform work, at least for a time.

The stress of the situation and particularly Lucy's difficulties had an effect on Henry and Lucy's relation-ship. They spent most of 1864 separated and their mar-riage seemed to be in trouble. Henry stayed in the city with his work, while Lucy took Alice with her to the country, first to be with her dying father and then with her sister's family. The primary purpose of the

separation seemed to be for Lucy to heal herself. In a

letter to Henry, Lucy wrote:

> Here, with fewer cares, & almost nothing to vex me, I
> hope to get back, somewhere near to the state of soul
> & spirit, in which I was, when you first found me.
> And then, when we meet, to begin new. We shall
> perhaps come nearer our ideal of what a wedded home
> life ought to be. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 196)

This brief excerpt indicates that Lucy had lost her

confidence and sense of identity, and was seeking to

regain her former strength. Lucy's need to separate

physically seems directly related to her need to separate

psychologically as well.

> I _need_ to be hidden, and shielded, and comforted by
> the large silence of the country. And if all our
> future is made rich, by this separation we shall be
> glad, when it is past, that we braved it through, or
> if not, we shall at least feel that we tried to get
> over a bridge that, after all broke. (Wheeler,
> 1981, p. 197)

Lucy's sense of identity, her sense of personal power

and competence were connected in part to her identity as

Lucy Stone, the courageous, rebellious, uncompromising

reformer. In her role as lecturer and activist she had an

outlet for her more assertive energies, and was able to

channel her creativity and self-expression. Lucy's work

gave her a strong sense of purpose and meaning, partly fed

by the fact that she was competent, successful and highly

esteemed by her co-workers and audiences. She was also

financially independent, which probably further

contributed to her sense of independence and autonomy.

When Lucy withdrew from her public career and turned her energies to fulfilling her relational needs through full-time mothering and homemaking, she also gave up an important means of meeting her needs for self-expression, autonomy and self-esteem. She became physically and perhaps psychologically more dependent on Henry, and therefore began to lose her separate sense of self. It could be that her work gave her the forum in which to express herself and to receive feedback about her competence, and that without this arena she began to lose her confidence. Underlying feelings of inadequacy, helplessness, and doubt hence emerged to the foreground.

As much as Lucy desired to be an independent, autonomous, assertive, decisive public crusader, she was also a child of her time. The internal and external pressure to fulfill the role of wife and mother was great. The impact of this conflict appears to have had both physical and emotional ramifications: headaches, depressions, the need for emotional independence within their marriage, and a lengthy separation.

The following excerpt from a letter to Henry during this time illustrates another example of Lucy's perceived need to separate herself from him in order to regain her individual strength:

If you buy 10-40's [government bonds] I wish you would
buy the amount of my mortgage, in my name, let the
interest be paid to me. I will return the bond. It
is more important to me than you have ever known, that
I should have the income of my property. Now that
there is no reason why I should not, I greatly prefer
to arrange so that our properties may be separate.
(Wheeler, 1981, p. 198)

It is interesting that while Lucy apparently felt the

need for greater separation from Henry, it was not because

of a lack of love for him. Her letters to him during this

time were often very loving. For example:

I have felt very near to you all day, darling dear,
and have wandered around, with a dreamy peace in my
soul, glad that in all the world, no one is so dear to
me as you--and thankful for this strange union, which
draws me by pleasant, tender ties to you. (Wheeler,
1981, p. 196)

Henry, in the mean time, was unhappy about the

separation. He apparently felt that Lucy needed to take

action and involve herself again in her beloved work in

order to get back to her "better self". Henry, who was

now thirty-nine, was ready to give up working and devote

himself to reform. They had both dreamed of the two of

them together working for the "great moral causes of the

time" and Henry was eager to begin.

While Lucy was not ready to act ("I must keep in some

quiet 'Cleft of the Rock' till the Angels of healing make

me whole again"), it is interesting that she supported

Henry in the path of public speaking and reform. It is

almost as if she was encouraging Henry to do what she was

not yet willing to do herself. In a letter to Henry she
wrote:

> If you could work for true principles in the pending
> election [for Lincoln], and after that, as a mission-
> ary at large, I should like it.... I wish I felt in
> myself, the power to do anything. Perhaps I shall--
> who knows? (Wheeler, 1981, p. 193)

Henry quit his job and campaigned for Lincoln's re-
election. He then turned his attention to Lucy and to
supporting her back into the world.

After about six months of separation the tone of
Lucy's letters began to change. She seemed more ready for
them to be together:

> We shall be _very glad_ to welcome you here, Harry
> dear, at any time, when _you wish_ to come. Alice
> danced first on one foot, and then on the other, and
> ended with a vigorous clapping of hands when I told
> her, that _perhaps_ you would come (Wheeler, 1981,
> p. 198).

Henry did visit with Lucy, and although they continued to
live separately, she began speaking in terms of "we" and
making plans for their future: "We will take up our abode
either at Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, or Labrador. We
will fish, learn to boat, & swim, read, study, think, and
grow _together_." Lucy went on in this same letter to
discuss the times, lamenting that there was no true
democracy in America because women were disenfranchised.
She now seemed more ready to take action. "Harry, you and
I, will work together (Moses, and Mrs. Moses) to make this

country a democracy without sham or humbug." whereas she

had so vehemently sought seclusion, she now looked forward

to contact with the world again:

> I am anticipating with a great deal of satisfaction,
> our stay in Boston this winter. It will be like a
> perpetual benediction to be in the society of those
> with whose labors and sympathies, I have so long
> shared. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 205)

It appears that the worst of Lucy's personal crisis

was over and that the "Angels of healing" had made her

better. However, she came out of her seclusion with its

exclusive focus on her family slowly and apparently with

some ambivalence. Henry joined forces with Lucy as a

means of support for her. He made her cause for women's

rights his own, and they went together to various

activities and conventions. Gradually Lucy's confidence

began to return. He proposed that they go on a lecture

tour together. He would make all the arrangements:

> You shall speak _first_ in all cases, but if you prefer
> only for a short time, or as long as you feel like. I
> will follow filling up all gaps & weaving in any
> [things] you may omit. Then, if you choose, you shall
> close--or not. In short, I will act as your _supporter_
> & _aid_ we will see whether we cannot do your great work
> a _real_ service. Lucy dear--I am sure that if you feel
> able & willing to make the trial, good will come of
> it! If your head aches & you don't find the spirit
> move you will see that I will come up _well_ to the
> rescue, & if you are in _good mood_ I will _gladly_ make
> myself _brief_ & _witty_ in a ten minutes speech you
> taking _the whole_ time. Let us try to sing the New
> Song of Humanity _together_.
> Don't let this suggestion vex you. If the hour for
> its accomplishment is not yet come--we can afford to
> wait.... Meanwhile my dear _wife & sweet heart_ I am

counting the days till we meet again & have the <u>holy &
pure</u> joy of feeling our unity of soul--for we now <u>know</u>
that we are <u>one</u>-- forever--in sickness or in health in
joy & in sorrow & our love will grow in the future as
it has in the past. Kiss our dear little Alice &
realize that I am

<div align="right"><u>Ever your own Harry</u></div>

(Wheeler, 1981, p. 214)

It seems clear from the last lines that their marriage

had been severely tested during this period, and that they

had weathered the storm. As mentioned in the theory, when

a couple goes through the process of greater individuation

within the boundaries of the relationship, it can put a

great deal of stress on the marriage. As they move

through a crisis, their love and commitment can be

strengthened along with their faith in their ability to

overcome difficulties as a couple.

Lucy took another nine months before she acted on

Henry's proposal. Finally, she and Henry went on a three

month tour of Kansas, holding meetings and giving talks in

every county seat. It proved to be a great boost to her

self-confidence. An excerpt of a letter from Lucy to

Susan B. Anthony reveals the effect of the tour on Lucy's

esteem:

We have crowded meetings everywhere. I speak as well
as ever, thank God! The audiences move to tears or
laughter, just as in the old time. Harry makes
capital speeches, and gets a louder cheer always than
I do, though I believe I move a deeper feeling.
(Wheeler, 1981, p. 219)

As Lucy's confidence returned, she became more and more

involved in the women's movement and seemed to be finally on her feet again. In 1869 she and Henry raised enough money to start a journal that would speak for issues related to women's rights. The journal was called The Woman's Journal, and became the longest lived suffrage paper in the country. Lucy seems to have found a resolution to the conflict she felt between her responsibility to her family and to her cause. To her friend Antoinette she explained:

> I shall try and work through the paper, for the future and quit this lecturing field altogether. It is not consistent with any home life, or any proper care of my family. I feel it more and more, and shall certainly not continue this mode of work--tho' it is my natural way. But I long for a snug home, by myself from which I can send out what I think in some shape, not so effective for me perhaps, but on the whole better, under the circumstances. If I were only a ready writer I should be glad! (Wheeler, 1981, p. 230)

Henry and Lucy moved to Boston to start the journal. They bought a home in Dorchester with a view of the Harbor and enough land for Lucy to have a large garden, a cow and chickens. Now that they were again settled in a home of their own and Lucy was launched on a new career, Henry sought an outlet for his own restless energies. Henry may have been needing to separate himself a little from Lucy. For the past several years, he had been devoting himself primarily to supporting Lucy and giving his time and energy to the women's movement. While he was devoted to

the cause, he had many other interests as well, including politics, real-estate, and sugar manufacturing. Shortly after they moved into their new home, Alice wrote to her friend Kitty: "Papa has really gone to Santo Domingo. He has engaged to write enough letters to various newspapers to pay his passage, and has also, I believe, an eye to some private speculations there" (Wheeler, 1981, p. 235).

Lucy evidently did not want Henry to go. While the exact reasons are not given, it is speculated that Lucy may have come to rely on Henry's support and was unsure that she could manage without him. She also, in general, did not approve of Henry's pursuit of money and his lust for adventure and change. In excerpts from Henry's letters, we can get a sense of his guilt and concern over his absence: "I am horribly homesick. I think of you as tired & worried & feel ashamed not to be helping you" (Wheeler, 1981, p. 240).

Lucy's response to Henry's concern was significant. Whatever doubts she initially had about his going away were gone. In their separation she found she could manage on her own, and this marks an important juncture in this turning point in their relationship. Lucy had developed a new level of strength as an individual which allowed her to stay strong even when separate. With the awareness of her own capabilities without Henry, she was more loving

and understanding of Henry's need for his own individual
expression. Lucy was more accepting of differences in
their characters than she had been in the past:

> The Journal has gone on very well. I am so glad to
> find that I can do it. Now you shall never have the
> drudgery of it again. I never wanted you to, and
> always felt that it was too bad that my work should
> burden & chafe your shoulders, but I did not know how
> to prevent it. You shall be as free Harry darling,
> when you come home, as you have always needed to be.
> I hope you have accomplished all you wanted by this
> trip, and that you found a great deal of rest &
> comfort, and health. It has not been hard for me....
> When you are back, I want you to feel that you are not
> bound & limited by this place, and by us. You NEED
> change, variety, sunshine & birds. I have not always
> known it. But now I DO know it, it shall not be my
> fault, if you do not have all the freedom & variety
> you want. We will both of us give you the warmest
> welcome when you choose to stay with us, and we will
> cheerfully second any of your plans that will give you
> the the larger sphere your nature needs. I have been
> so glad that you did really take this little bit of
> change, and have taken solid comfort, thinking that
> the man in all the world whom I love, and care for,
> was getting health and rest, and for a little while,
> at least, doing what gave him pleasure. So Harry
> darling, here is a kiss for you, and larger love than
> often falls to the lot of any man, either to have or
> to endure. (Wheeler, 1981, p. 243)

Henry having returned from Santo Domingo, continued to
work diligently with Lucy for the women's movement, and
also pursued his own sphere of interests much more than he
had previously. At this point, the transition was for
the most part, complete. They both had achieved a greater
strength of individual identity within the boundaries of
their relationship.

What emerged in the following years had begun during

the transition itself. More of their energy became focused outwardly into the world in the pursuit of their individual work and shared purpose, a commitment to equal rights and freedom for all human beings. This shared purpose was manifested primarily in their dedicated work in the women's movement for the rest of their lives.

Even though Henry and Lucy had achieved some of the characteristics of the actualization stage, such as a focus on shared purpose, their relationship continued to reflect concerns at the esteem level as well. In a description of her mother, Alice wrote the following: "She had no vanity, and was even unduly lacking in self-esteem. She was always·more conscious of her deficiencies than her strong points." (Blackwell, 1930, p. 264). Throughout Henry's letters there was often a tendency for him to be self-effacing, guilty, and apologetic for his "imperfections", and in his old age he considered himself largely a failure.

It was stressed earlier in the theory, that the hier-archy of marital needs is not a rigid stepwise progression of stages toward marital-actualization. The normal couple are probably partially satisfied and partially dissatisfied in all the needs of the hierarchy at the same time. It is more accutate to think in terms of an increasing percent-age of satisfaction. The needs and issues of one stage of

development are not necessarily totally resolved before the needs and issues of another stage are experienced.

In theory, shared purpose in the fullest sense occurs when two autonomous people are interdependent and share a common vision without sacrificing the individuality of either partner. It seems that re-establishing individual identity and esteem within the relationship is a precondition for this kind of interaction.

In conclusion, there seems to be some evidence that Henry and Lucy's marriage relationship moved through stages of marital development similar to the theory, in particular, the stages of love, esteem and marital-actualization. There appeared to be a period at the beginning of their relationship when the concerns of what has been called the safety and love stage were prepotent. During this time they worked to establish the experience of companionship, friendship, mutual support and empathy. This included the expression of love and affection through sex, cuddling and touching, and parenthood. Establishing a basic sense of trust seemed to be particularly important to them. They were focused on establishing a bond with one another, with achieving a sense of "coupleness", and of belonging together.

This inquiry focused on a crisis and its subsequent turning point in their relationship that seemed to mark a

movement into the esteem stage. It was stated in the theory that the focus of this stage is the achievement of a strong individual and couple identity. This is the capacity to be both strong and autonomous as separate people as well as strong and intimate as a couple. Based on this study of Henry and Lucy, the definition of this stage needs to be elaborated and redefined to some degree.

It does seem that the task of developing and balancing a strong individual identity with love, intimacy and coupleness was a basic challenge for Henry and Lucy. For Lucy it was a particularly difficult challenge. Having apparently lost her sense of autonomy and self-esteem while performing the mothering, caretaking role, Lucy subsequently, needed to re-establish her individuality and esteem within the boundaries of her marriage. Henry was very supportive of Lucy's need for greater individuation, and they successfully stretched the boundaries of their coupleness to accomodate the changes. Henry also went through a period of re-establishing his autonomy following his exclusive devotion to supporting Lucy and her cause. Along with the re-establishment of their autonomy, Lucy and Henry became more focused on their shared purpose, the primary focus of the marital-actualization stage.

From this case study it appears that the progression

from lower to higher stages consist of a cycle of
integration-differentiation-integration again. At first
there is a merging and bonding that occurs in the love
stage. Next, moving into the esteem stage, the couple
work to establish or re-establish individual esteem within
the context and boundaries of their relationship. Then
finally, as two autonomous and esteemed individuals in
loving partnership, they are able to devote their energies
to a shared purpose and other concerns of the marital
actualization stage.

The analysis of this case study raises several
questions: Did Lucy's need for individual esteem and
external recognition occur because she had acheived it to
some degree prior to her marriage and then lost it? Or is
this need for individuation within relationship something
that occurs regardless of the prior degree of individual
actualization and accomplishment? The next case study
will explore these questions.

Case Study Two - Elizabeth and Leon Stern

In the book titled, I am a Woman and a Jew, Elizabeth
G. Stern, (pseudonym, Leah Morton), tells the story of her
life and her growth, primarily through her work, career
and relationship with her husband and children. The book
highlights some of the changes Leah went through,

particularly in terms of her self-esteem, sense of
personal identity, and the impact of those changes upon her
relationship with her husband. The pseudonym "Leah
Morton" will be used, because that is how Stern refered to
herself in her autobiographical story.

Leah begins her story with her childhood and early
struggles for autonomy, acted out largely against her
father and his orthodox Jewish proscriptions. Her
father's plan was that she would marry a pious Jew and
fulfill her role as a Jewish wife and mother. Her plan
was: "To make my life beautiful. I did not know how, but
I meant to make it rich and--free" (Stern, 1969, p. 11).
She chose to go to college, pursue a career, and finally,
to marry a Gentile. For this final act of rebellion, her
father disowned her and never spoke to her again.

It was during her first job that Leah met Leon, her
supervisor, who became her husband. For the first year of
their marriage Leah was fulfilled and happy in her love.
Then she became somewhat restless and discontent. "I did
not know whether I wanted to be a wife, living in my
husband's love, or a woman building her career. (Stern,
1969, p. 75)

Leah was apparently not totally comfortable with her
husband's culturally prescribed role as sole protector and
provider and wanted "to work just as he did" (Stern, 1969,

p. 76). Underneath her desire to work, one can see her emerging need for esteem, for autonomy, for a sense of competence and mastery, and for a greater sense of equality with her husband:

> My husband was modern. He said I must not give up my writing, that I must do anything I wanted to do, just as he did what he chose. Only, he added, he must earn our living. Whatever I did I could do without thinking whether it was successful or not; only whether it made me happy.
> I took his hands in mine, I recall, and put his palms against my cheek. But he did not feel how hot my cheeks were against his palms. I kissed him. But as I kissed him then, I know I wished he had said that my work was as practically a need to me, as his - that it was as essential to our life as his. If work was to be judged by him by its practical value to his life and mine, I would have wanted him to see that which I chose to do, too, as practical, and helpful as his own. (Stern, 1969, p. 78)

Leah's need for self-expression and self-esteem emerged for her, as with Henry and Lucy, after an initial period of emmersion in the love stage. Unlike Lucy, however, this need occurred without much individual accomplishment prior to her marriage.

In the first several years of marriage Leah and Leon had two children. Leon was the primary provider in the family while Leah brought in extra income by writing articles for magazines at home in her spare time. Leon was supportive of her writing and they were happy together. Then a crisis arose that was to have an enormous impact on their lives. Leon became ill with

influenza and was bedridden for over fourteen months
She initially borrowed money while she nursed him back to
health. "And then one day I knew I must get work. Not
now, work to fill the time, or to 'express myself,' but to
earn the living of my family." (Stern, 1969, p. 150)

Leah found a job being a personnel director in a large
department store. She enjoyed the responsibility that
came with her job. The fact that she was providing for
her family added to her sense of accomplishment. While
the necessity of survival compelled her into her work, the
benefits seemed to satisfy her a great deal on the esteem
level:

> I was to get $2,000 a year to give "class" to the
> sales people, keep the labor turnover down. I knew
> that the buyers would have looked aghast at the
> pittance. But--$40 a week. My husband's assistant
> earned $35 a week. I had never earned so much before.
> My own desk. My own telephone. My own letter tray.
> I was a woman with a career for certain now. (Stern,
> 1969, p. 162)

While Leon's point of view is presented only through
her eyes, it seems that he was struggling with his own
sense of self-worth because of his inability to fulfill
his role as provider:

> He lifted his head, grown gray these past months of
> illness. "I am getting well," he said then. "It
> won't be long you'll have to do this."
> My heart sank then. Didn't he know, didn't he see,
> that I wanted this to be--not something I did just
> because he had to drop the burden of our support, but
> because I was as capable as he of assuming that
> burden?

"Little woman," he whispered. "Forgive me."

I cried then. I cried because he asked me to forgive him because he was sick. But, yes, I cried too because he felt it necessary to ask that of me; because he did not feel that I was as hungry for the full measure of human responsibility as he was.

"I like to work," I said then, quietly. "I enjoy--being important," I said with a half laugh.

He laughed then, relieved. He was delighted that I spoke like a child about my work. He kissed me and held me close. How thin and tired, how frail his arm was about my shoulder! (Stern, 1969, p. 164)

Leon recovered from his illness, changed careers, and was offered a job in a new city. He was provided with a staff and asked Leah to work with him as his assistant:

My husband offered me not just an opportunity to assist him in his work, but to be his assistant in it. He made the stipulation in his letter of acceptance. There is a distinct difference between the two!

"As a paid employee?" I asked, my arm tightening in his.

He smiled down then: "As assistant, on my staff." (Stern, 1969, p. 199)

Leah writes revealingly of her feelings at the time:

How false it would be to say, though, I was not thrilled, as if birds were flying in my breast, the day I and my husband walked to the office together. This was, after all, what we had planned from the day we met. We were married, had our children and we were doing his work together. I think that I danced along that day as I used to do when we were just young lovers newly married. I was a "new woman"; I'd just read a paper at our club on the "right of the girl-child to her own personality"--and yet I was happy to lose mine in my husband's. My husband was well. He was well enough to get to work "at once"-- to-day. The months that had stretched so long in prospect were over. He could command not only his body now, but his mind. He believed in himself again. My feet seemed to move as if they had wings.

I was very modern. I believed in my equal rights as a woman. But I was happy that day because he was head again of our life and of our home. That was

> something I yielded to him as I gave my love to him.
> It was a gift I gave to him.... It was good to be
> living, to feel that I had found my real place in
> life, to be friend, comrade and helper, as well as
> sweetheart, mother and wife. (Stern, 1969, p. 260)

Taking on this new job together marks an important transition in their relationship. In the beginning, Leah immersed herself in her love and role as caretaker. Both of them considered her work as something of a frill, done primarily for her own enjoyment and growth. Leah had grown more autonomous with the necessity and responsibility of working. Now as her husband's assistant, their relationship took another step in mutual respect and esteem. Leah's remarks indicate, though, that they were still not fully equal, autonomous partners. As much as she enjoyed supporting her family, she was once again very happy to step back and let Leon take the lead.

After some time of contentment, Leah again became restless as her need for autonomy reemerged. She was offered a new job and tells of her reaction:

> In the dark of our room at night, I lay beside him
> thinking not of helping him in his career, but of my
> own. I was ashamed to realize that I was consider-
> ing how interesting this new work would be. I could
> even earn a real salary at it. I could--that I
> thought of now, as a recurrent hope--I could, perhaps,
> save some of the money I earned, enough to "finance"
> myself, so to speak, for a year, and in that year,
> whenever it would come, I could do at last what I
> wanted above everything else to do. I wanted to
> write. (Stern, 1969, p. 206)

She seems both attracted to the possibility of

greater independence and uneasy about it also. She writes
of how important it had been for her to know that she was
not a burden on her husband:

> I was--and it was precious to me to know it was
> so--his comrade, his love and his friend, above all.
> It was for that we had come together in marriage. I
> earned my own living; it was not for that I needed him
> .... I had done nothing that the average man work-
> ing did not do as well. I had not sought to make a
> place, to find a splendid success. I only wanted to
> be, in truth--yes, a helpmeet to him.
> But this work was utterly apart from him . . . .
> (Stern, 1969, p. 208)

This new job would demand much more of her time and
energy and consequently would require a bigger career
commitment. Leah additionally would be stepping outside
of the cultural norms for a married woman with children.
"What would folks say if I left my children--to do work
that was not my husband's, but my own entirely?" (Stern,
1969, p. 208)

Her conflict is a good example of the pull between the
need for greater differentiation, autonomy, and indepen-
dence, and the need for safety, love and belonging. Leah
appears to have been experiencing both the emerging need
for greater personal independence and the fear of losing
the love relationship, safety and comfort she and Leon had
established. She had grown a great deal in the course of
her marriage, and a new level of individuation was
coming forward.

Leah was afraid to talk to Leon about the job offer
and her desires, but she finally mustered the courage and
showed him the letter:

> He smiled, his face thin and fine in the revealing
> light, and turned my pillow as I came over. Sitting
> beside him, I slipped my hand into his when he opened
> it. He read it through, his fingers pressing mine
> close as he read.
> His face turned to me, and it was grave. "You're
> grown up, Little Boy," he said. "What did you tell
> them?"
> I was grown up. I was no longer the young girl of
> eight years before. I had not known I was growing and
> my husband, too, with me.
> "Do you want me to do this?" I asked.
> He sat thoughtful, silent, a while. "I do not
> know," he said finally. "It means a great
> responsibility. It means a real opportunity. It's a
> really excellent salary." His grave eyes came to
> mine, worried then. "It is so big a salary that I am
> troubled by it. It will mean that you must give
> yourself completely to your work. You'll have to work
> so hard! I've hoped that after--that store work--
> you'd never do anything except what you felt you might
> drop at your wish. I want you to feel that you are
> free, to do anything you like. Do you want to give up
> writing?"
> I think, if he had not said that, I should never
> have answered the letter. But I understood what he
> wished to tell me. He wanted me to have a sheltered
> life, with the responsibility of our income on him and
> the pleasure of economic freedom for me--the fun of
> writing whenever I should feel I wanted to stop
> working, instead of the serious job of the daily task,
> the concrete thing, with monthly salary and hourly
> duties.
> "I'd like to do--this," I said. (Stern, 1969, p.
> 215)

Leon's respect for her as a separate individual and
support of her personal growth is evident. His respect
and support seem to conflict, however, with his desire
to protect her within the safety of his love. Leah needed

to reject that protection for her own growth and increased autonomy.

Leah did take the job, and over the course of the next few years she grew a great deal in her sense of competence, autonomy, and self-esteem. In the beginning she relied on Leon for advice and support. With his encouragement she came to lean on him less, and as she did, her perception of him in relation to herself changed:

> He was so much like a big boy now, and when we met for lunch he always seemed to me like a boy who had persuaded a girl to come with him for a holiday.
> Was this the man who used to seem to me so--well, so much older? I had before thought of my husband not as four years older than myself but at least a generation. He was so much wiser than I, I had felt. He could do things I could not.
> He could still do things I could not do. He had a mind of a keen brilliance which mine did not possess. I could not even try to think as he did--incisively, in a sort of long flash that saw principles in details.
> I had only a knack to manage people and the ability to use that knack. I did not feel that it was particularly wonderful. I felt that to be a thinker was greater than to be an "executive." That was not what had made him seem to grow younger to me. The reason was another.
> It was that I no longer felt I must depend on his judgment. I was once afraid to think, to decide, unless he said I should think or decide. I had simply passed from the mental protection of my father, to his.
> Now I had to make decisions each day which affected not only one life, but hundreds. I thought about life according to my own vision. I had been a wife, a mother, a writer--but I had been a child all along.
> I was a woman, grown up, now.... (Stern, 1969, p. 272)

Leah had achieved mastery, competence, and respect. She

had also largely satisfied her esteem needs. With Leah's
growth, the dynamics of their relationship changed. In
the beginning the lack of satisfaction of her esteem
needs manifested in their relationship as her assuming a
one-down position. As she fulfilled her personal esteem
needs, she grew stronger in her individual identity and
their roles changed to that of equals:

> Our growth was side by side. It was natural that I
> should now grow up--to his maturity; not away from
> him, but closer to him. I only grew up to understand
> and to honor and to love him more deeply. (Stern,
> 1969, p. 274)

With Leah's individual esteem needs more fully gratified
and the greater equality within her relationship, they
were both able to turn their energies toward the higher-
level needs of the marital-actualization stage.

While their sense of shared purpose did not take the
form of shared work, Leah and Leon supported each other in
achieving greater levels of personal fulfillment. For
example, with Leah working full-time, Leon had the
opportunity for study and for "finding the real task of
his life". Once Leah had fulfilled her esteem needs
through her work, she began to feel that her work was
"just a job" and that she was not really that happy with
it. With her husband's suppport she quit her job and
pursued her life-long dream of writing. She continued to
write and lecture until her death.

Another shift that occurred subsequent to Leah's "success in the world" was that they both refocused and reconnected as a family. She and Leon had stretched the boundaries of their relationship, and felt the need to balance more equally their work with their love. They began to take more time to re-cultivate their intimacy and sharing.

Leah and Leon's relationship seems to follow a similar pattern as that noted with Henry Blackwell and Lucy Stone. There was first merging that occurred in a love stage, then a differentiation within the relationship that took place in the esteem stage, followed by a remerging with a greater focus on the concerns of the marital-actualization stage. As noted, Leah's need to individuate within the boundaries of their relationship seems to have manifested regardless of her lack of inidividual achieve-ement prior to marriage.

The common theme in both of these studies is a recur-ring tension and conflict between relational loving and individual esteem. It seems that each tends to threaten the other, and the primary issue of the esteem stage is balancing the two.

The next case study also illuminates these esteem stage issues. It demonstrates how another couple achieved a high degree of individual esteem within the

boundaries of a loving relationship, and how they then focused on a common purpose.

Case Study Three - Simone de Beauvoir and Jean Paul Sartre

In Adieux: A Farewell to Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir stated:

> His death does separate us. My death will not bring us together again. That is how things are. It is in itself splendid that we were able to live our lives in harmony for so long. (de Beauvoir, 1984, p. 127)

Although never legally married, Simone and Jean-Paul enjoyed a truly extraordinary relationship from the time they met in their early twenties until Sartre's death in 1980, a period of fifty-one years. Perhaps to a greater degree than the previous case studies, their relationship exemplified the characteristics of marital-actualization. They trusted each other. Their deep love and respect for one another permeated their relationship. Their commitment to each other withstood the severe tests of over fifty years. They had a common vision and shared purpose as thinkers and writers from the beginning of their relationship that continually blossomed and bore fruit. An interview with Sartre in 1965 gives a glimpse of the level of intimacy and companionship they shared:

> When we're both asked a question at the same time, we usually give the same answer. It's really quite curious. We have such a large stock of common

> memories that ultimately we react to a situation in the same way--I mean with the same words, words that are conditioned by the same experiences. People who live together share lots of experiences, and they eventually come to have a common memory. (Vogue, 1965)

There was a quality of interdependence combined with a proud independence that was the hallmark of their relationship.

This inquiry will delve into some of Simone and Jean-Paul's struggles to develop and balance a strong individual identity along with intimacy and interdependence as a couple. The focus will be a period during their early years together, which illustrates a similar movement as the previous case studies from the love to the esteem stage of marital development. The exploration will then turn to the nature of their shared purpose and how they maintained both their independence and their loving relationship.

Since the primary sources of data are Simone's memoirs, the story will be told chiefly from her point of view. The one-sidedness of the material should not bias this inquiry, as the following quote from an interview with Jean-Paul demonstrates that he supported her account:

> I'm completely in agreement with what she said about me and about our relationship, I read her books several times and made suggestions, but I never commented on what she said about me. This ought to be regarded as absolute proof. Not only is she the person who knows me best, but I think that everything

she says about the mutual importance of our
relationship is quite true. (Vogue, 1965)

In Simone's first autobiographical book, <u>Memoirs of a
Dutiful Daughter</u>, she reconstructs the first twenty-one
years of her life during which she struggled for freedom
and authenticity. At this stage of her life, freedom
meànt freedom from the Church and the middle-class values
of her family. It also meant freedom to pursue her own
credo to: "perfect myself, enrich myself, and express
myself in a work that will help others to live."
(de Beauvoir, 1959, p. 265) Her dream was to be a famous
writer.

Despite some parental displeasure, Simone enrolled in
the Sorbonne in 1927. Within two years she took her
degree in philosophy and was ranked second in her class.
Her friend of a few months, Jean-Paul Sartre, was placed
first. The final stages of her liberation coincided with
her meeting Jean-Paul, and in many ways Simone had met her
match. In expressing her initial feelings about Sartre
she wrote:

> Sartre corresponded exactly to the dream companion I
> had longed for since I was fifteen: he was the double
> in whom I found all my burning aspirations raised to
> the pitch of incandescence. I should always be able
> to share everything with him. When I left him at the
> beginning of August, I knew that he would never go out
> of my life again. (de Beauvoir, 1959, p. 366)

In Simone's second volume of memoirs, <u>The Prime of</u>

<u>Life</u>, she is on her own for the first time, living in
Paris and absolutely delighted with her new-found freedom
and relationship with Sartre. From the beginning they
shared a great deal together:

> I realized that even though we went on talking till
> Judgement Day, I would still find the time all too
> short.... We would meet each morning in the
> Luxembourg Gardens, where carved stone queens gazed
> blindly down at us amid a dapple of gray and gold: it
> was late at night before we separated. We walked the
> streets of Paris, still talking--about ourselves and
> our relationship, our future life, our yet unwritten
> books. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 13)

They had a common vision and a shared purpose. They both
dreamed of being writers and helping others through their
work:

> Sartre lived for his writing. He felt he had a
> mission to hold forth on any subject, tackling it as
> best suited him in the light of circumstance. He had
> exhorted me to open my eyes to the manifold glories of
> life; I too must write, in order to snatch that vision
> from obliteration by time. The self-evident obvious-
> ness of our respective vocations seemed to us to
> guarantee their eventual fulfilment.... So we put our
> trust in the world, and in ourselves. Society as then
> constituted we opposed. But there was nothing sour
> about this enmity: it carried an implication of
> robust optimism. Man was to be re-moulded, and the
> process would be partly our doing. (de Beauvoir, 1960,
> p. 14)

Simone and Jean-Paul idealized freedom, and while
their conception of it changed a great deal over the
years, it remained a central value to them both philosoph-
ically and personally. Simone writes of the early
agreements they made regarding freedom and the guidelines

they established for their relationship:

> Sartre was not inclined to be monogamous by nature; he
> took pleasure in the company of women, finding them
> less comic than men. He had no intention, at
> twenty-three, of renouncing their tempting variety.
>   He explained the matter to me in his favourite
> terminology. "What we have", he said, "is an
> essential love; but it is a good idea for us also to
> experience contingent love affairs." We were two of a
> kind, and our relationship would endure as long as we
> did: but it could not make up entirely for the fleet-
> ing riches to be had from encounters with different
> people. How could we deliberately forgo that gamut of
> emotions--astonishment, regret, pleasure, nostalgia--
> which we were as capable of sustaining as anyone else?
> We reflected on this problem a good deal during our
> walks together. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 22)

Their plan was to be together fully and at the same

time to retain their independence as separate people.

They firmly believed this "together but separate" policy

was necessary to keep their relationship vital and alive.

They began to establish a sense of commitment and made a

"two year contract" with each other. They planned to live

"more or less together" for two years and then live apart

for two or three years and then rejoin again.

> We would never become strangers to one another, and
> neither would appeal for the other's help in vain;
> nothing would prevail against this alliance of ours.
> But it must not be allowed to degenerate into mere
> duty or habit; we had at all costs to preserve it from
> decay of this sort. I agreed. The separation which
> Sartre envisaged caused me some qualms; but it lay
> well in the future, and I had made it a rule never to
> worry about anything prematurely. Despite this I did
> feel a flicker of fear, though I regarded it as mere
> weakness and made myself subdue it; I was helped by
> the knowledge, based on previous experience, that
> Sartre meant what he said. With him a proposed scheme
> was not mere vague talk, but a moment of actuality.

If he told me one day to meet him exactly twenty-two
months later on the Acropolis, at five o'clock in the
afternoon, I could be sure of finding him there then,
punctual to the minute. In a more general way I knew
that no harm could ever come to me from him--unless he
were to die before I died.
   We intended to give ourselves wholeheartedly and
without reservation to this new relationship of ours.
(de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 23)

Although by conventional standards their agreements

may appear unusual, the sense of commitment they estab-

lished with one another was clear and strong: "My trust

in him was so complete that he supplied me with the sort

of absolute unfailing security that I had once had from my

parents, or from God." (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 26)

They consciously nurtured a high level of intimacy and

trust in the relationship by deciding to be completely

open with each other.

We made another pact between us: not only would we
never lie to one another, but neither of us would
conceal anything from the other... we therefore
agreed to tell one another everything. I was used to
some reserve, and at first this rule of ours
embarrassed me. But I soon came to realize its
advantages. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 24)

This habit of sharing openly remained with them

throughout their lives together and sustained a deep

friendship which provided a rock for them to stand on when

their lives periodically took them in different

directions:

The comradeship that welded our lives together made a
superfluous mockery of any other bond we might have
forged for ourselves. What, for instance, was the

point of living under the same roof when the whole
world was our common property? Why fear to set great
distances between us when we could never truly be
parted? One single aim fired us, the urge to embrace
all experience, and to bear witness concerning it.
    At times this meant that we had to follow diverse
paths--though without concealing even the least of our
discoveries from one another. When we were together
we bent our wills so firmly to the requirements of
this common task that even at the moment of parting we
still thought as one. That which bound us freed us;
and in this freedom we found ourselves bound as
closely as possible. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 25)

During the first two years of their relationship they

were focused on the concerns of the love stage of marital

development. They were establishing a sense of commitment

and "coupleness," and immersing themselves in their sense

of love and companionship. For Simone there seemed to be

the danger of losing herself in her new love.

In the first year or so of their relationship, Jean-

Paul was the center of Simone's life: "The only moments

that mattered to me were those I spent in Sartre's

company." (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 51) During that time

Simone's vocation and personal vision faded into the back-

ground. "Meanwhile, remembering my previous resolutions--

not that Sartre would ever let me forget them--I decided

to start work on a novel." (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 59) But

she gave up after three chapters.

My work lacked all real conviction. Sometimes I felt
I was doing a school assignment, sometimes that I had
lapsed into parody. But in any case there was no
hurry. I was happy, and for the time being that was
enough. Yet after a while I found it wasn't enough.

I had hoped for something very different from myself. I no longer kept a private diary, but I still scribbled things down in a notebook from time to time: "I cannot reconcile myself to living if there is no purpose in my life," I wrote, in the spring of 1930, and a little later, in June: "I have lost my pride--and that means I have lost everything."

What, you may ask, did I reproach myself with? In the first place, there was the over-easy tenor of my life. To begin with, I had revelled in this, but very shortly it began to disgust me. The scholar in me began to revolt against such feckless truancy. My random reading was for amusement only, and led me nowhere. I did no work apart from my writing, and that I undertook without any deep conviction, because Sartre was adamant that I should. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 60)

Simone explained that in her encounter with Sartre and

his world she had surrendered her hard won identity a

little too completely. She had lost herself in Jean-Paul.

So fascinated was I by [Sartre] that I forgot myself, so much so indeed that no part of me remained to register the statement: I am nothing. Yet this voice did raise itself fitfully; and then I realized that I had ceased to exist on my own account, and was now a mere parasite. [Sartre] compared me to those heroines of Meredith's who after a long battle for their independence ended up quite content to be some man's helpmeet. I was furious with myself for disappointing him in this way. My previous distrust of happiness had, after all, been justified. However attractive it might appear, it dragged me into every kind of compromise. When I first met Sartre I felt I had everything, that in his company I could not fail to fulfill myself completely. Now I reflected that to adapt one's outlook to another person's salvation is the surest and quickest way of losing him. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 61)

Their "two year contract" was almost up and their

plans had been to separate for a couple of years. They

both began to look for teaching jobs that would necessar-

ily take them apart. Sartre had applied for a lectureship
in Japan that did not come through.

They were, however, offered jobs at opposite ends of
the country: Sartre, a philosophy post at Le Havre not
too far from Paris; Simone a position in Marseilles. She
was frightened of the separation:

> I had envisaged worse exiles than this, but I had
> never really believed in them. Now, suddenly, it was
> all true. On 2 October, I would find myself over five
> hundred miles from Paris. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 75)

In view of Simone's state of panic, Sartre proposed that
they change their plans and get married. If they married
they could acquire a double post, and he did not think in
the long run that the formality would seriously affect
their way of life.

The prospect took Simone unawares. She states une-
quivocally: "I may say that not for one moment was I
tempted to fall in with his suggestion." (de Beauvoir,
1960, p. 77) She was afraid that any alteration of the
relationship they had with the outside world would have
"fatally affected that existing between the two of us."
She was concerned that the sacrifice for Jean-Paul would
be too great and there would be regrets:

> The task of preserving my own independence was not
> particularly onerous; I would have regarded it as
> highly artificial to equate Sartre's absence with my
> own freedom--a thing I could only find, honestly,
> within my own head and heart. But I could see how
> much it cost Sartre to bid farewell to his travels, his

own freedom, his youth--in order to become a
provincial academic, now finally and forever grown-up.
To have joined the ranks of the married men would have
meant an even greater renunciation. I knew he was
incapable of bearing a grudge against me; but I knew,
too, how vulnerable I was to the prick of conscience,
and how greatly I detested it. Mere elementary
caution prevented my choosing a future that might be
poisoned by remorse. I did not even have to think it
over: the decision was taken without any effort on my
part--no hesitations, no weighing the pros and cons.
(de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 77)

Although forgoing marriage as a means to avoid separating,

Jean-Paul and Simone revised their initial plans to sepa-

rate for years at a time and made a deeper commitment to

each other:

Our relationship had become closer and more demanding
than at first; it could allow brief separations, but
not vast solitary escapades. We did not swear oaths
of eternal fidelity; but we did agree to postpone any
possibility of [a lengthy] separation until the
distant time when we reached our thirties. (de
Beauvoir, 1960, p. 78)

Despite (or possible as a result of) this deeper com-

mitment, Simone felt that what she needed was a little

more space in their togetherness and the opportunity to

satisfy her needs for independence and autonomy: "At the

time it seemed to me that the danger existed [surrendering

her autonomy to Sartre], and that by agreeing to go to

Marseilles I had begun to exorcise it." (de Beauvoir,

1960, p. 80) They took their respective jobs, which

separated them except for holidays and long weekends, and

began to focus much more on their own work. Sartre poured

himself into his writing and Simone began to find
"herself" in Marseilles:

> My arrival in Marseilles marked a completely new turn
> to my career.... I was in Marseilles--alone, empty-
> handed, cut off from my past and everything I loved.
> I stood staring at this vast unknown city, where I now
> had to make my own way, unaided, from one day to the
> next. Hitherto I had been closely dependent upon
> other people, who had laid down rules and objectives
> for me; and now this wonderful piece of luck had come
> my way. Here no one was aware of my existence.
> Somewhere, under one of those roofs, I should have to
> teach for fourteen hours a week, but there was nothing
> else arranged on my behalf--not even what bed I should
> sleep in. It was up to me to decide my own way of
> spending the time. I could cultivate my own habits
> and pleasures. (de Beauvoir, 1960, p. 88)

Simone consciously cultivated her autonomy, independence,
and sense of competence. After a year in Marseille she
reflected on her life:

> I thought back over the past year with great satis-
> faction. I hadn't read much, and my own novel was
> worthless; on the other hand I had worked at my chosen
> profession without losing heart, and had been enriched
> by a new enthusiasm. I was emerging triumphant from
> the trials to which I had been subjected: separation
> and loneliness had not destroyed my peace of mind. I
> knew I could now rely on myself. (de Beauvoir, 1960,
> p. 112)

This period in Simone and Jean-Paul's relationship
seems to demonstrate a similar pattern as that observed in
the first two case studies. In the first two years of
their relationship there was merging in a love stage.
During this time they were concerned with establishing the
experiences of loving, intimacy and companionship along
with a sense of "coupleness" and of belonging together.

They established a sense of deep trust in and commitment to one another and their relationship. As with Lucy and Leah, Simone seemed vulnerable to surrendering her individuality during this stage and she subsequently felt the need to establish her individual esteem. Once Simone had established her autonomy within the boundaries of their relationship, the shared purpose that she and Jean-Paul shared began to blossom.

One of the primary ways their shared purpose manifested was in their mutual commitment to making a difference in the world through their work. They were each devoted to their own vocations as writers and thinkers but often pursued different interests. At the same time they were intimately bound by a shared vision and philosophy of life, and were each deeply integral to the other's self-expression. In describing their interdependence and the role Simone played in his life, Sartre remarked:

> In a way, I owe her everything. On the other hand, I would obviously have written even if she hadn't existed, since I wanted to write. But why is it that my complete confidence in her has always given me complete security, a security which I couldn't have had if I'd been alone...? When I show her a manu-script, as I always do, and when she criticizes it, I get angry at first and call her all kinds of names. Then, I accept her comments, always. Not as a matter of discipline, but because I see that they're always pertinent. They're not made from the outside, but with an absolute understanding of what I want to do and, at the same time, with an objectivity that I

can't quite have.

She's very severe, and so am I. After reading the
first version of The Respectful Prostitute, she
exclaimed: "Oh, it's disgusting! I now see all your
tricks. It hasn't a leg to stand on."

I revised the play within twenty-four hours, and
she finally said it was very good. Once she gives me,
as it were, the "imprimatur", I have complete
confidence in her. Other people's criticism has never
made me change my mind about what I've written.
(Vogue, 1965)

Jean-Paul was equally integral to Simone's work. While

neither of them was dependent on the other for their

creative expression, their individual work was always a

collaboration and manifestation of their shared purpose.

Simone and Jean-Paul are especially illuminating

because of the degree to which they seem to have resolved

the issues of the esteem stage and nurtured both their

individuality and their intimate union. In the previ-

ous cases, some of these behavior strategies were used,

but perhaps not as consciously or thoroughly. For

example, the strategies chosen during the esteem stage to

develop greater individual esteem, have   included:

1) The creation of some distance physically and/or

psychologically, such as living separately having one's

own space, or taking some time to be alone. 2) The

development of individual talents and capacities through

devotion to some career, work or cause. 3) The

development of one's own personal interests, passions and

pastimes.

It is easy to see how such independent action might threaten the intimacy of a couple relationship. The strategies for maintaining the couple bond through such differentiation have included: 1) Developing open, honest, authentic communication. Sharing thoughts, feeling, desires, fantasies, hopes, and fears, Talking and thinking together. Giving expression to differences. 2) The development of a shared vision, cause, or calling. 3) Developing interests, passions and pastimes together. Simone and Jean-Paul, perhaps to a greater degree than the two previous cases, consciously chose to develop their own separate lives. At the same time, they shared very intimately on many levels and were truly interdependent.

The recurring theme in these studies is the conflict between love and individual esteem. One of the things notable about these couples was their success in resolving this issue to the degree that they did. It seems that this conflict may be a major issue for many couples, and failure to resolve it may cause marital break-ups. An obvious question is, what attitudes and behaviors facilitate the resolution of this conflict and what ones exacerbate the situation? Further exploration will be given to this question in the last case study.

Case Study Four - Aldous and Laura Huxley

The final case study to be considered is that of
Aldous and Laura Huxley, who were married from March, 1956
until Aldous' death due to cancer in November, 1963. Prior
to their marriage, Laura had been friends for approxi-
mately eight years with Aldous and his first wife, Maria.
Maria died in 1955.

While their marriage was not as long in duration as
the other case studies, it is germane to the question of
what facilitates resolution of the love versus esteem
conflict. The source of data is a book by Laura Huxley,
This Timeless Moment/A Personal View of Aldous Huxley.
The book is a collection of vignettes from their life
together which aptly illustrate aspects of Aldous'
character. Several of the stories illuminate the quality
of their relationship and show how exceptionally support-
ive Aldous was of Laura in her process of individuation
within their relationship.

Laura and Aldous seem to have been further along in
their individual development when they began their
marriage than the couples of the previous two case
studies. Laura was thirty-five and well established in
her career as a psychologist. She had never married and
led a quite autonomous and independent lifestyle. Aldous
was almost sixty. He had been happily married for thirty-
five years. He had had a rich, productive, creative life

and was somewhat of a celebrity as a philosopher, lecturer, and writer. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy, it seems likely that Aldous was relatively satisfied at the individual esteem level and was operating primarily from the level of self-actualization; Laura probably somewhere between esteem and self-actualization.

Even though Laura had a high level of autonomy entering their marriage, the issue of establishing and maintaining her separate identity and esteem within the relationship was still an issue for her. Laura made several references to her need for autonomy and independence. In explaining why she had waited so long to marry, she writes, "I valued freedom in an almost obses-sive way." (Huxley, 1968, p.53). Aldous' response to her needs was always the attitude of an "open hand". He did not cling to her or try to possess her. Laura wrote of one instance during the anxious hours before their wedding ceremony was to take place.

> "Now they are going to marry us at once."
> Suddenly a new anxiety, different from that of the night before, came over me. Aldous was used to such a different person in Maria. I wasn't like her--Aldous knew this better than I--but the preposterous thought flashed through my mind that he might expect from me the same total dedication. I loved him and did not want to disappoint him, but now it was too late to discuss this. So I only said, "You know, darling, I love others, too."
> Instantaneous, crystal-clear, and tranquil was Aldous' answer: "It would be awful if you didn't."
> Silence. Wonderful silence, in which to love and

be grateful. As throughout our life together, Aldous
had dissolved my doubts and uncertainty in tenderness
and gratefulness. (Huxley, 1968, p. 40)

Laura maintained that Aldous was selfless and giving

with her even through his exhausting illness. She related

an occurrence a few years after the ceremony when she had

evidently become restless and impatient with home life:

> After a while the inner pressure became too great--
> I had to do something about it. I went upstairs and
> stood near Aldous, who was seated at his typewriter.
> I knew what I wanted to say but I was so afraid of
> hurting him, although part of me must have wanted to
> hurt him.
> "Aldous, something is wrong, I don't know what,
> certainly not you. It must be that I am not the type
> to be married." I took a deep breath. "I believe we
> should divorce." What pain in pronouncing that word!
> Aldous looked at me with such deep love, with such
> dissolving tenderness. He took my hand and kissed it.
> "I caught a nymph," he said. "I must let her go," and
> released my hand.
> My breath stopped; I burst into tears and fell into
> his arms.
> "But I don't want to go! I don't want to leave you
> --it is just this peculiar married life...." I was
> trying to understand myself--crying--wondering.
> Aldous consoled me, teased and caressed me, and
> said that I was only half a creature of this world--
> the other half belonged to some other world; that it
> was difficult to be both human and a nymph. Maybe I
> should go away alone for a few days.... (Huxley,
> 1968, p. 119)

She did retreat to the Sequoia forest and soon called

Aldous to tell him, "everything was marvelous".

Not only with his words but with his actions, Aldous

was unpossessive. His honoring of her individuation

process is clear. He automatically chose her freedom over

his own desires, (which were perhaps satisfied independent

of her) and supported her in doing whatever she needed to
do. In a choice between the form of their relationship
and her freedom and autonomy, he supported her freedom.
It is easy to imagine someone with less inner clarity,
self-confidence or strength responding with hurt, fear,
threats, or attempted restrictions.

Placing a high value on "Being" was an integral part
of Aldous' philosophy of life and one that he apparently
lived. Laura described a conversation they had while
walking in Manhattan:

> I was complaining about myself--how little I achieved
> in spite of hard work. I was elaborating on this,
> trying to prove to him that I really had achieved very
> little in comparison to the amount of work I put into
> my varied careers. He listened intently, than
> abruptly he stopped walking.
> "But what do you mean?" he exclaimed. "What you
> have accomplished is this," and made a vague gesture
> toward me.
> "This...what?" I did not understand.
> Aldous was silent for a moment; he was trying to
> convey something to me that was not easy to convey. I
> was standing in front of him, completely attentive.
> Then Aldous made a beautiful gesture, a creative
> circular gesture that included my whole person and
> whatever emanates from it. As his long arms returned
> to their normal position, he said, with enormous
> conviction and definition: "This--what you are."
> I understood, to a point, what he meant then; I
> understood increasingly in the following years.
> Aldous was expressing the importance of being--of
> what you are. He did not depreciate material accom-
> plishment and success, but as I realized more and
> more, he meant that the most important achievement in
> life is to be "the best of what we are." (Huxley,
> 1968, p. 255)

Aldous supported Laura not only in her Being but also in

her material achievement and self-expression.

As both Lucy, Leah and Simone, external accomplishment in the world through work seemed to be an important vehicle for Laura in establishing a sense of autonomy and individual esteem. One important accomplishment for Laura during their time together was the writing of her first book, <u>You Are Not The Target</u>:

> [Aldous'] attitude as he helped me through that book was enchanting; he made me feel he had such fun in doing it. He was so delighted when he found a quotation that crystallized my thought that he would literally come running with it, like a child with a new gadget. (Huxley, 1968, p. 190)

Aldous' support was freely and joyously given. This quality of support probably came out of his strength of individual identity, esteem and the abundance of his own existence.

Because of the episodic nature of Laura's account, it is difficult to construct a clear picture of stages in Aldous' and Laura's marriage. It does seem evident, though, that like the previous cases the task of establishing individual esteem within the boundaries of their relationship was an issue of concern for them, albeit mostly for Laura. Aldous was able to give Laura a quality of love and support that provided a kind of ideal model of how one partner can facilitate the other in achieving greater individual esteem within the relationship.

To summarize, some of the attitudes and behaviors that appear to be facilitative during the esteem stage crisis are the characteristics of healthy, actualized marriages outlined in theory. Foremost are trust, love, commitment, and strong individual identity. It does seem clear that the need to differentiate during the esteem stage follows the love stage. During the love stage, the characteristics of trust, love and commitment intertwine to create a foundation of support for the changes of the esteem stage.

With all of these couples were varying degrees of trust in themselves, each other and their relationships. Openness in communication and a sense of commitment in the relationship seem to have built on the level of trust present. The higher the trust level, the greater the flexibility and openness to change. When there were fearful struggles with trust there was a tendency to try controling themselves, their partner or the circumstances, either through disapproval or by instilling guilt and fear. At the highest levels, trust manifested as an ability to respond to circumstances with a fluidity, and a flexibility which melted preset rules and inappropriate or conventional structures. There was an overall willingness to allow roles, rules, and behaviors to change.

One of the primary attitudes that seems to be

facilitative is one of unconditional, non-possessive, non-needful love--what Maslow called B-Loving. This attitude seems to have included the ability and willingness to at least allow, or at best to support meeting each other's needs actively. It encompassed a care and active concern for the growth and well being of the other. On the one hand, if the need was for more space, separation, freedom of expression or independent action, the other partner gave support to the best of their ability. On the other hand, if the need was for love, intimacy, reassurance or closeness, the other gave as much as possible. There was an ability to respond to the other's needs without taking excessive responsibility for them. The key appears to have been the positive intention to support the other's best interest over one's own personal needs. Conversely, the attitude that seems to have been non-facilitative was a tendency to perceive and to want the other to be a certain way in order to fulfill one's own needs. This desire manifested again as attempts to control the other through disapproval or non-acceptance of certain behaviors or characteristics.

Another characteristic that stands out as facilitative during this crisis was a willingness to take personal responsibility for feelings, behaviors and their conse-quences. By the same token it seems to have been counter-

much credit for the other's experience, regardless of its outcome. This ability and willingness to take personal responsibility appears to have been connected to strength of personal identity. Inner insecurity, self-doubt and feelings of unworthiness tended to create fear and defensiveness.

Results of Case Studies

Despite the limited sample size the analysis of these
case studies did produce some evidence supporting a stage
theory of marital development that approximates this
authors description. The initial theory outlined the
existence of five stages of marital development. These
stages were speculated to be roughly parallel to Maslow's
hierarchy of needs for individuals which, starts with the
physiological, and then proceeds to safety, love and
belonging, esteem, and finally, to marital-actualization.

In the case studies explored, the couples seemed to
fall primarily into the top three stages of love, esteem,
and marital-actualization. There was some evidence that
the concerns of the safety stage, were present, i.e.,
establishing a basic sense of trust and positive inten-
tionality. Physiological level concerns were not primary
for these couples, hence evidence for the plausability of
this stage was not found. There was no evidence to
suggest, however, that physiological level concerns are
not prepotent over all others, just that in these
particular cases they were not primary.

The pattern that emerged from these couples was that
of a period of time in the beginning of the relationships
when the concerns of the safety and love stage were

prepotent. This was a period when the couples were working to establish the foundation for companionship, friendship, intimacy, mutual support, trust, empathy, and often, a family. This included the expression of love and affection through sex, cuddling and touching. The couples were concerned with the mutual fulfillment of their needs for love and belonging. They were focused on establishing a strong tie to one another, in order to experience a sense of "coupleness", of being a unit, and of "belonging together". It is as if during the initial union a bonding was occurring which would in turn support the greater growth and individuation of the esteem stage.

The primary concern at the esteem stage became re-establishing their individual esteem needs within their coupleness. A common theme at this stage was for the couple to break up their unity, and oneness to some degree, and to focus on their separateness, and individuality.

With resolution of some esteem stage concerns, movement toward the marital-actualization stage took place. The couples seemed to be more focused on developing their potential as both individuals and as a couple. They focused more of their energy outward towards realizing their shared purpose.

One outstanding commonality all the couples experi-

enced during the esteem stage was the issue of achieving

individual esteem within the boundaries of a loving

relationship. This issue seemed to precipitate a crisis

for all, and some resolution of it seemed necessary in

order to develop the potential shared purpose. Indeed if

this is a common issue or stage that all couples face,

this conceptualization of marital development may be

useful in understanding and assisting couples who are

experiencing difficulty. A primary set of questions that

arises is: How frequently does this individual esteem

versus couple love crisis occur? Does it follow an

initial love stage? and How does the resolution of this

crisis set the stage for the potential development of

shared purpose?

Another common thread with these couples is that the

conflicts of the esteem stage seem to have been

experienced most acutely by the women. Granted, these

relationships were observed and reported primarily from

the women's point of view. Nonetheless, it was the women

who seemed more susceptible to losing themselves in a

relationship and who felt more strongly the conflict

between the loving relationship and individual esteem.

The men in these case studies (with the possible

exception of Henry Blackwell) do not appear to have had

the same degree of difficulty. They do not seem to have

experienced the loss of self in relationship or the conflict between being in relationship and being an autonomous person to the same extent as their partners.

The obvious set of questions this discrepancy raises is: Does this crisis occur primarily for women? How are the conflicts of the esteem stage experienced by men? How is the man's experience related to the woman's experience of this crisis?

These questions momentarily aside, one of the most noteworthy characteristics of these couples is the degree to which they successfully resolved the issues of the esteem stage. There has been some attempt to extract what seemed useful, in analyzing these couples' facilitation of this stage, however, conclusions are incomplete and speculative. If this is a common issue of concern for couples, an important question to ask is, what attitudes and behaviors facilitate and/or inhibit the resolution of this crisis?

In conclusion, the four areas of inquiry that seem most important to carry this study forward are:

1) How frequently does this individual esteem versus couple love crises occur?

2) Does it occur after an initial love stage?

3) How is this crisis experienced by both the man and the woman.

4) What attitudes and behaviors facilitate and/or
     inhibit the resolution of this crisis?

These questions will be the foci of the next chapter
and phase two of this study.

C H A P T E R   I V
INTERVIEWS WITH COUPLES

Methodology for Interviews

The purpose of this second phase of the study was to
explore the following questions:

1) How regularly does the individual esteem versus
    couple love crisis occur?

2) Does it occur after an initial love stage?

3) How is this crisis experienced by both the man and
    the woman?

4) What attitudes and behaviors facilitate the
    resolution of this crisis? What attitudes and
    behaviors inhibit the resolution of this crisis?

The research methodology used belongs within the genre
of sociological studies which move away from hypothesis
testing and theory verification (as discussed by Galzer
and Strauss, 1967). Rather than analyzing quantitative
data, the emphasis in this type of study is on the
discovery of new theory and the integration of existing
theoretical concepts as they emerge from qualitative data.
Galzer and Strauss call this "grounded theory", or theory
grounded in data. The method of study to achieve this
objective needs to be more flexible and idiosyncratic

than the more traditional approach. It allows for more "subjectivity" from the researcher. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) describe the researcher's approach:

> The field researcher views the substance or reality of his field in creative, emergent terms: it is neither fixed nor finite, nor independent of human conception and subsequent redefinition; therefore, it is not "all there", needing only to be located, measured and then rendered as "findings". He assumes reality to be infinitely complex--certainly MORE complex than any current rendering of it--and that he as an observer holds the key to an infinitely varied relation with the objects of his inquiry. Therefore, the researcher's developed understanding of his object is not necessarily or merely "true" or "untrue"; rather it is to be evaluated according to its usefulness in furthering ideas about this class of object and according to whether the understanding is grounded in data.(p.7)

The results of this grounded development of theory should increase understanding of some of the changes that married couples go through, and in particular the individual esteem versus couple love crisis. Even if the evidence from this study does not support the developmental theory being explored, the analysis and integration of the evidence should generate valuable hypotheses for further research. In addition, the information on what is facilitative and/or inhibitive in the successful navigation of such difficullties will have direct application for this researcher (and potentially for others) in devising educational enrichment programs for couples.

The case study approach and interview methodology were chosen because they fit the purposes of this study which was exploratory in nature. The intention was to gather evidence for the plausability of this theory of marital development and to generate foci for further research, rather than to test specific hypotheses in a rigorous, large-scale study.

Because of the small number of subjects and the narrow focus of the study the ability to generalize beyond the population studied is limited. There is a need to do follow-up research with specific hypotheses and a large sample for valid generalization. For example, the question of developmental stages may require a longitudinal study with the same couples over time. The time and resourses necessary for such a study were beyond the scope of this research.

Another limitation was the vulnerability of the case study and interview approach to subjective biases. For example, the selection of subjects and the interview process may have been influenced by the researcher's preconceptions. This limitation is inherent in the approach and does not outweigh its appropriateness for the purposes of this study. Careful design of the interview schedule assisted in balancing this limitation.

Sample

Ten married couples were interviewed. One group of
five couples was selected to meet the following
criteria:

1) Married for the first time and within the last six
   months.

2) Total time living together in a committed
   relationship or marriage not to exceed one year.

3) Both partners in their twenties.

These criteria were chosen to assist in identifying a
sample of young couples who were inexperienced with
marriage and still likely to be in a "honeymoon stage".
Couples of approximately the same age and level of marital
experience were selected because it seemed important to
have people at roughly similar stages, both in terms of
personal and relationship development. The time spent
living together was included because people who have been
living together in a committed relationship are likely to
have experienced similar issues as those people whose
union is societally and legally recognized. One of the
couples included in the newlywed group did not meet the
criteria exactly: the husband had been married previously
for three months to a childhood sweetheart; the wife had
just turned thirty at the time of the interview. These
discrepancies seemed minor, and the couple was included in

the study.

Two couples were acquired through a lay minister who performs weddings for people who don't want a church wedding, but who do want more than a legal ceremony. The sources for three of the couples was the wedding announcements taken from three newspapers in the Los Angeles area dated March through September, 1984. A total of seventy-six couples were contacted by phone, when possible. Out of the seventy-six, twenty-one had moved or were not reachable, twenty-nine did not meet the criteria, and twenty-one were not interested in participating.

A second group of five couples were selected to meet the following criteria:

1) Married or in a committed, monogamous relationship together for at least five years.

2) First marriage for both partners.

3) Both partners agreed that they are "past the honeymoon stage".

4) Both partners at least twenty-five years old.

These criteria were chosen to assist in identifying couples who are more experienced in marriage and thus likely to be working with different developmental issues than the younger couples. The criteria of being in their first marriage and in a monogomous one was chosen to

mitigate extraneous variables in comparing the two groups.

This group of older couples was slected through personal referral. Two of the couples chosen for this group did not meet the criteria of first marriages for both partners. In both of these cases, the wives had been married once previously, one for four years, the other for nine. These two couples were known by the researcher and thought to be working with the esteem versus couple love crisis. They were chosen because potentially they would reveal more about the problem being studied than other couples would who fit the criteria more exactly or who were selected randomly. Because the type of analysis being used was intended to be theoretical, rather than statistical, the discrepancies with the criteria did not seem as important as the selection of illustrative cases.

Pilot interviews with three couples were conducted and the interview schedule revised. Both groups of couples were asked questions from the revised Interview Schedule after their informed consent was obtained.

Interview Schedule

Introduction

The purpose of these interviews is to increase understanding of some of the changes that married couples go through, along with the attitudes and behaviors that facilitate and/or inhibit their successful navigation. I would like to remind you that the contents of the interview are confidential. You have the option of not answering any question, and you may terminate your participation at any time. The interview should take one to one and a half hours.

Name_____Date_____

Age_____

Education_____

Present Occupation_____

How long have you known your partner? _____

How long have you been married or living together?_____

Is this your first marriage? _____

Questions

1) Would you describe the "honeymoon stage" of your relationship?

Probe: What is or was it like?

Has it ended?

When?

How did you know?

2) All relationships go through changes, some of them are gradual and easy and some are difficult. They often come with the experience of crisis or conflict. Looking back over your relationship from the beginning, I would like you to remember and describe, if you can, at least three important turning points, crises, or difficulties in your relationship.

Probe: What was the issue problem or conflict?

What led up to it?

What was going on for you, what was your experience?

What was going on for your partner?

How intense or serious was it?

Did you resolve it? How?

What did you do that helped?

What did you do that didn't help?

What did your partner do that helped?

What did they do that did not help?

How is your relationship different now?

These same probing questions were asked for each change that was described. Some couples were not able to describe three major changes, especially the newlyweds. If there was difficulty describing changes in the

relationship, the following questions were asked:

2a) Have you personally gone through changes or
difficult times?

Probe: Example?

What led up to it?

How did it effect your relationship?

What was going on for your partner?

How intense or serious was it?

How was it resolved?

What did you do that helped?

What did your partner do that helped?

What did you do that hindered?

What did your partner do that hindered?

How are you different now?

How is the relationship different?

2b) Has your partner gone through changes or difficult
times?

3) All relationships have strengths and weaknesses,
some aspects work really well and others that don't work
as well as we might like them to. What aspects of your
relationnship don't work as well as you would like?
What issues, problems or conflicts are you working on?

Probe: When you experience conflicts or difficulties,
          what are they about?

Can you give me an example?

How do you experience it?

How does your partner experience it?

How intense or serious an issue is it for you?

How frequently does it occur?

How likely are you to resolve it?

What are the likely consequences if it is not resolved?

What do you do that helps the situation?

What do you do that hinders the situation?

What does your partner do that helps?

What does your partner do that hinders?

The interviewer probed for at least two areas of conflict. Regardless of whether the conflict between individual esteem and couple love was brought up, the following statement and questions were presented:

4) Many couples at various points in their relationship experience some conflict between the need to be a separate, strong, independent individual and the need to be close, intimate and united as a couple. It seems at times that our needs for individual fulfillment, careers, self-expression, and self-esteem are in conflict with our need for intimacy, love, togetherness and family life. Is this an issue for you now? Has it ever been?

Probe: Can you give me an example?

How do you experience it?

How does your partner experience it?

How intense or serious an issue is it for you?

How likely are you to resolve it?

What are the likely consequences if it is not resolved?

What do you do that helps the situation?

What do you do that hinders the situation?

What does your partner do that helps?

What does your partner do that hinders?

5) Do you ever feel, or have you ever felt, that you have given up too much of yourself in order to be in the relationship?

 Probe: If yes, can you give me an example?

         How did or do you handle it?

6) If one of you wants more space, freedom or separateness is this ever a problem?

Probe: If yes, can you give me an example?

        What do you do that facilitates your resolving the problem?

        What do you do that hinders your resolving the problem?

        What does your partner do that helps?

        What does your partner do that hinders?

7) Do you ever feel, or have you ever felt that you have

given up too much of your relationship, love and intimacy
for other things such as personal achievment and success
in the world?

Probe: If yes, can you give me an example?

How did or do you handle it?

8) If one of you wants more closeness, intimacy, or
togetherness is this ever difficult?

Probe: What do you do that helps? Hinders?

What does your partner do that helps? Hinders?

9) How do you expreience the balance of power in your
relationship? Is this ever a problem?

10) What is going well for you now in your relationship?

Probe: What is best?

What aspects please you the most?

What are you most greatful for?   .

11) Is there anything important about your relationship
that I have not asked you about?

Each question is related to one or more of the four
research questions as described below:

Question One asked the individual to describe
the "honeymoon stage" of their relationship. The
reason for this question was to determine where the
couple was in terms of the "honeymoon stage": Have they
finished it? Are they in the love stage of the theory?

Have they moved into the issue of individual esteem versus couple love? Did a love stage come first? How prepotent are the esteem stage issues?

Question Two asked the individual to describe three to five important turning points, crisis or changes in their relationship. The premise behind these questions was that the nature of the crises and/or turning points in a marriage are related to the prepotent need level and stage of marital development. The analysis focused on whether such reported events demonstrated a sequence of primary concerns, and what specifically that sequence was. Could the turning points be placed into the various stages of marital development? What facilitates and/or inhibits the resolution of change? How does each partner experience the conflict?

Question Three asked the individual on what areas of their relationship were they working. The assumption behind this question was that the areas of complaint would point toward areas of unfulfilled needs, and thus indicate the level of marital development. Maslow (1971), makes a distinction between what he calls low grumbles, high grumbles and meta-grumbles. He points out that it is the nature of human beings to complain, and that their complaints reveal the emergent prepotent need level. The data were analyzed to see if the two groups differ in the

nature of their complaints, and if that difference fit into the stages of marital development. What was the nature of the difficulties? Could they be categorized into stages? What is helpful? What is not? Do the issues of the esteem stage occur more for the older couples?

Question Four asked the individual directly about the individual esteem versus couple love crisis, if they experienced it and to what degree. The analysis searched for indications as to whether they were working with esteem issues; if so, how prepotent they were, and how they were experienced.

Question Five asked the individual if they have ever given up too much of themselves to be in the relationship. This question, along with the next four, was designed to probe for the presence of specific difficulties thought to be related to the esteem stage. In theory, during the love stage with its focus on unity and bonding, individual differences or preferences may be glossed over or ignored. One partner or both may temporarily "give up" aspects of their expression that may threaten the oneness and unity they need to establish. One indication of the esteem stage is the felt need by one or both partners to differentiate and to break up some of the fusion or symbiosis that was comfortable previously. The analysis

focused on whether the individual had experienced this
"giving up too much of self", and if and how they differ-
entiated again. How the person responded may be some
indication of whether esteem or love issues were present.

Question Six asked if wanting more space, freedom or
separateness was ever a problem. The analysis here looked
for whether the individual had expereinced the need for
greater individuation, and if so, was it problematic?
Again the response may indicate the couple's place in the
esteem or love stage.

Question Seven asked if the individual has given up too
much of the relationship for other things. One of the
primary indications of the esteem stage is the struggle to
balance work and career with love and the family. This is
the opposite side of "giving up too much of self", and the
response may indicate stage occupancy.

Question Eight asked if wanting more closeness and
intimacy was ever a problem. The focus of the love stage
is on the relationship and being together. One dynamic of
the esteem stage struggle is togetherness versus separate-
ness. How does the couple merge the individual's needs
for love and belonging with the needs for autonomy and
esteem? The thrust of this analysis was to see if the
couple were working with these issues. If they were, it
might indicate the esteem stage; if not, the love

stage.

Question Nine asked about the balance of power in the relationship. The focus of this queary was discovering how each partner experienced the balance of power in their relationship and if this was a problem area. A couple may have an imbalance of power such that one partner has more influence and control, but it is not a problem for either of them. Complaints or difficulties in this area may indicate that one or both partners are expanding their esteem, and as a result, seeking greater equality in the relationship--a primary change during the esteem stage.

Question Ten asked the individual what was going well for them in their relationship. The rationale behind this question was that understanding those aspects of the relationship within which the couples are satisfied would clarify the level of need satisfaction and thus point to the accomplished stage of marital development.

Analyzing the Data

The data needed to be coded and analyzed in ways that answered each of the four research questions. In order to move toward objectivity and reduce subjective biases, the interviews were reviewed independently by two people. As they listended to an audio tape of

each interview, each coder decided:

1) Whether or not the esteem versus love crisis had occurred; and if so, its degree of prepotency and the evidence supporting that evaluation.

2) Whether it occurred after the love stage, and the specific evidence for this judgment.

3) A summary description/list of how the crisis was experienced by the woman and by the man, and how it was seen by each partner.

4) A list of attitudes and behaviors reported as helping and as hindering resolution of the crisis.

Evaluations regarding the prepotency of issues and stage occupancy in questions one and two were guided by a synopsis/description of the stages which included a list of concerns for each. For example, some of the listed concerns for the love stage included: concern with establishing trust; concern with communication; concern with love, affection, and sex; etc. Some of the concerns for the esteem stage included: concern with balancing love and work; concern with strength, adequacy, achievment, mastery, competence, and self-confidence; concern with the balance of power in the relationship; (see Appendix A for complete description).

To assist in relating the interview questions to the four research areas, each coder had a series of questions

to ask themselves before evaluating each interview response (see Appendix B). Coders' answers and justifications were then compared, a record of "agreements" maintained and discrepancies resolved.

RESULTS

Table 4
Characteristics of Interview Couples

	Newlywed Couples	Older Couples
Partner Ages		
Mean	26.7	41.5
Median	26.5	39.0
Range	21-30	34-56
Education Level (Years)		
Mean	15.7	17.2
Median	16.5	18.0
Range	12-18	12-20
Length of Relationship (Months)		
Mean	24.4	270.4
Median	25.0	216.0
Range	18-30	128-420
Length of Living Together (Months)		
Mean	6.8	177.2
Median	6.0	180.0
Range	2-12	58-366

Figure 4
Number of Children

Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	1	0

Research Question One: How regularly does the individual esteem versus couple love crisis occur?

The two coders initially agreed in their analysis of nine of the ten couples interviewed. The exception was one newlywed couple. As we discussed the case, discrepancies were resolved and we agreed that while esteem issues were present for the couple, love stage issues were prepotent. We agreed that the esteem versus couple love crisis was a prepotent issue for all five of the older couples and none of the newlywed couples. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5
Results for Research Question One

"Is the Esteem vs. Couple Love Crisis Prepotent?"

Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

As stated in the theory being explored, the primary challenge of the esteem stage is to develop and balance indvidual esteem, autonomy, self-expression and career with love, intimacy, coupleness and family needs. During this stage the couple are working to establish or to re-establish individual esteem within the context and bound-aries of a love relationship. There is a recurring conflict between love with its relationship focus and esteem with its individual focus. The dynamic tension between these two needs creates what has been referred to as the individual esteem versus couple love crisis.

A useful distinction may be made at this point between the vehicle, or means for meeting a need, and the need itself. The evidence from the interviews as well as the case studies seemed to indicate that the need for love and belonging was satisfied primarily (although not exclusively) through the intimate relationships of the couple with each other and their family. For example, when asked what they enjoyed most about being married, all twenty of those interviewed spoke first about companion-ship, love and support. The need for a sense of personal esteem, competence and mastery appears to be satisfied primarily (although not exclusively) outside of intimate relationship, through work outide the home. For example, in the historical case studies work was an important key

for the women in establishing a sense of esteem, autonomy, and power. This same correlation also existed for the men and women in the interviews.

One primary indication of the esteem stage in all the older couples was an on-going concern about balancing love and family needs with work and careers; or said another way, balancing and integrating love needs with esteem needs. In all the sample couples, both partners worked. Although several individuals were going through career changes, work was still an important element in all their lives. In additon, four of the five older couples had children (See Figure 4). Given that both partners worked and most had children, the conflicting demands of family and work were foreground concerns for these older couples. The childless older couple had fewer needs to juggle, but the integration of love and work was still a foreground issue for them.

A common theme among the older couples but not the newlyweds which occasionally led to a crisis situation, was that of one partner (or sometimes both) getting "too involved with work" and neglecting the relationship with their partner and the family. For example, one couple talked about a crisis that occured for them when she was at home with two toddlers. He got involved in a difficult project at work and began to spend more time being pre-

occupied, and less being available for her and the family.
She remarked:

> The project was making him crazy and I was going
> crazy. It was the first time since our marriage that
> I had not worked. Here I was at home with kids and I
> felt like a single parent. I resented him getting to
> go out and work. I resented being shut out and not
> having him there more.... It was a very bad time for
> us.

When asked about what was going on for him at the time,

he explained:

> It was the biggest project I had ever done. Things
> started to go wrong, and I got obsessed with the
> thing.... I was trying to achieve in my career, to
> excell, to be recognized.... I wound up totally
> exhausted and depressed and shut off from my
> family...I decided never to do that again, I'm just
> not willing to pay the price.... I'm an integra-
> tionist now. I want to achieve a lot in my work and
> have lots of time-off with my family.

Even after resolving this crisis, balancing love with

their work was still an on-going issue for this couple, as

it was with all the other older couples. Even the child-

less couple complained of work at times competing, with

"quiet, alone time together".

Another common manifestation among the older couples

was the stress created as the level of esteem need

changed for one partner. For example, one woman had

recently quit working to focus on a career change. She

expressed her feelings about the transition:

> I feel funny not doing anything. I have never been
> home without a baby to take care of.... I have always
> done something on my own.... I have had my own circle

where I'm just me.... I came home and I had something
to bring to the relationship. I didn't feed on him.

Her work had provided her a vehicle for meeting her esteem

needs. She was temporarily without that vehicle and

feeling the lack. She also felt a need, perhaps even more

than normally, for his time and attention:

He is my best friend. He is my sounding board and
helps me make decisions, and he hasn't had time to
talk to me.... He just tunes us out, especially the
kids, when he gets so busy.

Three other people from the older couples were going

through career changes and were experiencing similar

challanges to their sense of esteem and competence, with

the concomitant desire for extra support from their mates.

Several of the women in this sample had experienced a

dramatic increase in their sense of individual esteem,

autonomy and power as they worked. As this occurred, the

homeostasis of the couple was often thrown out of balance,

and role expectations and inequities in the relationship

were challenged. For example, when asked about the

balance of power in their relationship, two couples said

the man had more in the beginning, but that they were

more equal now. They attributed this change directly to

the growth of the women's personal esteem through their

work. As one woman graphically explained:

Up until a year or so ago he was way up here
(gesture) and I was way down here. I acted powerful.
I had power in my job, but I felt helpless in my

relationship. I felt totally subservient and squashed a lot. Not anymore.

Another common phenomenon was that having the women taking some of their energy out of the caretaking role to focus on work, necessarily created a vacuum that required some adjustments in roles:

> She is persuing her own interests much more. Before she was always giving--to me, to others.... Now she wants more from me and she wants to give less.... It's hard at times.

As the esteem need shifted for one partner or the other, the couple as a system was forced to change in order to reach a new homeostatic state.

As mentioned above the evidence, indicated that none of the newlywed couples experienced the esteem versus love crisis to a prepotent degree. When they were asked to describe the issues with which they were currently working, all but one couple talked about an absence of issues: "nothing major, just little things" was a typical statement. The "little things" they did mention as issues were: adjusting to each other's habits; learning how to communicate openly; and learning how to trust each other more. When asked directly if they experienced or were currently working with the esteem versus love conflict, nine of the ten newlyweds said no. Three couples predicted that it may be more of a problem in the future. While three of the women said that at times they had given

up too much of themselves for the relationship, they all
emphasized that it was a free, conscious choice and not
problematic. Only one couple experienced giving up too
much of the relationship for work. The only complaint
about an imbalance of power was from one man who was
concerned that his wife did not take more power in
decision making. The clear focus for these couples was
being together and enjoying each other. Being separate
was the last thing on their minds.

In summary, the evidence from the interviews does seem
to indicate that the individual esteem versus couple love
crisis was a prepotent issue for all of the older couples.
In contrast to the newlyweds, each of them manifested the
concerns of this conflict. Some of the current issues
they complained-of included: difficulty in balancing love
and work; concern about making a contribution to others;
concern with experiencing esteem, competence, and confi-
dence; and concern about balancing interdependence and
autonomy. When asked directly if they experiecned the
esteem versus love conflict, they all said yes. Of the
four who talked about giving up too much of themselves,
three of them said it had been a significant problem.
Eight of the ten individuals admitted to having given up
too much of the relationship for work. Six of the ten
complained about wanting more love and intimacy. Two of

the couples expressed concern about the balance of power
in the relationship, with both women wanting greater
equality. A much larger sample would be needed for a
definitive conclusion, but the indications are that this
may be an important issue of concern for older couples.

Research Question Two: Does the individual esteem
versus couple love crisis occur after an initial love
stage?

The two coders agreed in their analysis that all five
of the older couples had a "honeymoon stage" in their
relationship during which love stage issues were pre-
potent, and that esteem stage issues occurred after this
stage. They also agreed that love stage issues were
prepotent for all five of the newlywed couples.
(See Figure 6)

Figure 6
Results for Research Question Two

"Was/is there an initial stage when love
issues were/are prepotent?"

Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

"Are they still in the initial stage
when love issues are prepotent?"

Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

"Have esteem stage issues become prepotent
following the initial love stage?"

Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
*	*	*	*	*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

* = Question does not apply.

According to the theory the esteem stage is preceeded by a love stage, which is a period of time in the beginning of the relationship when the partners are concerned with establishing a loving bond with one another, a sense of "coupleness" and belonging. The couple are focused on creating the experiences of companionship, friendship, intimacy and trust. This stage is followed by the esteem stage with its particular issues. The evidence from the interviews does seem to support this linear sequence.

The older couples described the "honeymoon stage" of their relationship as romantic and exciting. It was a time of exploring, getting to know each other, learning to live together harmoniously, and of building a foundation together. For three of the five older couples this stage lasted about two years. They noted that the shift from this stage was not dramatic but subtle, and that some elements of it were still present for them. For the other two couples, this stage seemed to end more decisively with the advent of the first child during their first year of marriage. For all of them, the pressure of day to day living and dealing with the responsibilities of work and/or children precipitated the shift from the concerns of the love stage to the esteem stage.

Four of the five newlywed couples said they felt they were still in a "honeymoon stage". The fifth couple

was divided, with the husband thinking they were, and the
wife not sure because of the difficulty they were
experiencing. The coders agreed that all of the newlywed
couples were working with love stage issues. When asked
to describe what this period was like, typical statements
included:

> It's very romantic. It is the happiest time of my
> life and I know it.

> I'm always thinking about her. At work even, I
> think of her and I get all goofy and silly.

These couples were clearly focused on being together,
exploring each other, and enjoying their love and
intimacy. This was true for the couple having some
difficulty, too.

There are three areas of change the newlyweds said
had occurred in their relationship. First there was a
deepening sense of commitment, a growing trust and
intimacy:

> I've opened up so much since we have been
> together, sometimes it scares me, I feel so
> vulnerable.

> I've always loved her, my trust has grown much
> slower.... Trust that she would not hurt me.

A second change involved making the transition from
dating to marriage. Each couple experienced varying
degrees of difficulty. Three couples mentioned differ-
ences in personal habits and styles that required adjust-

ments. For example, several individuals were neater than their partners; others had slower rhythmns. One couple was working to merge two very different previous life styles: she was country bred but they were living in the city now because of his work.

A third adjustment and another theme demonstrative of love stage issues was interpersonal communication. Several couples talked about their initial difficulties in learning what to do when they got upset with each other:

> I'm learning to listen and not assume I understand what she is saying.

> I used to withdraw when I was upset or my feelings were hurt. I'm learning to talk things out.

The primary focus for all of these couples was on merging and becoming a unified, balanced system, with some of them seeming to require more "sandpapering" in order to fit well together.

A further indication that esteem stage issues occur after an initial love stage was that several of the newlywed couples either had esteem issues present to some degree, or had signs that they may occur later despite their lack of current prepotency now. When asked if they experienced a conflict between their esteem and love needs, three couples stated that it was not a problem now but that it may be in the future. In response to the question about giving up too much of

themselves for the relationship, one of the women said she

did not think it was possible to give up too much of

herself. Three of the other newlywed women talked about

accommodations they had made and things they had given up

to be with their partners. For example, one woman was

working on a free lance basis and gave up a lot of assign-

ments to prepare for her wedding. While she did not

regret the choice, she did remark:

> I would rather be working more now. I don't feel as
> good about myself when I'm not working. I feel like a
> nebbish.... I start to loose myself then.... I an-
> ticipate it being more of a problem when we start a
> family because I probably won't work, but my marriage
> comes first.

There seems to be some evidence to indicate that esteem

stage issues may emerge as prepotent for some of these

newlywed couples who are now in a love stage. This evi-

dence combined with the fact that all the older couples

reported experiencing a "honeymoon stage" followed by the

emergence of esteem stage issues, lend further support to

this theory's sequencing of the first two stages.

The prepotency of love or esteem stage issues was

determined by looking at the issues the couples were

working with both as individuals and as a couple, and then

evaluating the nature of the underlying needs. Love stage

concerns were classified as relating to establishing

intimacy, mutual support, trust and empathy; fulfilling

the need for love and belonging; and establsihing a bond
and sense of "coupleness". Esteem stage concerns were
defined as those relating to satisfying the individual
need for esteem, autonomy and self expression within the
boundaries of a strong, loving relationship. There is a
quality of tension between the need for love and the need
for esteem, both within each individual and within the
couple system. The task of this stage is learning how to
balance and regulate these somewhat conficting needs.

Research Question Three: How is the individual esteem
versus couple love crisis experienced by the man and by
the woman?

The conclusion of Chapter III noted that there appears
to have been some differences in the way men and women
experienced the conflict between individual esteem and
couple love. Since the crisis had been viewed mostly from
the woman's perspective, more information on the man's
experience was desired. The interviews succeeded in
filling in some of the details of the man's and woman's
crisis experience and how they are interrelated.

Similar elements surfaced in both the men's and
women's experience of the conflict between love and
esteem needs. At the same time there were also
some significant differences between them.

One of the most obvious differences was that the men
tended to orient themselves towards work rather than love
and relationships, while the women tended to do just the
reverse. When there was a conflict for the men between
esteem and love needs, or between work and relationships,
it most often reflected an imbalance towards work at the
expense of the love arena.

For example, when the subjects were asked if they ever
experienced giving up too much of their intimate relation-
ships for things such as work and achievement, all of the
older couple men and one of the newlywed men said yes.
Three older woman replied yes; all the other women said
no. While neglecting love needs for esteem needs occurred
for both men and women, it occurred for the men at a
higher frequency. (See Figure 7)

Figure 7
Results for Reserch Question Three

"Have you ever given up too much of the relationship
for career and personal achievement?"

	Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Men	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Women	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES

These women seemed to have a more even dual focus,
love and relationships were definitely foreground,
especially while their children were small. When there
was a conflict for these women between love and esteem, or
work and relationships, it usually showed an imbalance
favoring the love side at the expense of the esteem arena.

One of the observations culled from the historical
data was that the women seemed more vulnerable to
"losing themselves" in love and to feeling the pull be-
tween love and esteem needs more acutely. The evidence
from the interviews supported this observation.

When individuals were asked if they ever experienced
giving up too much of themselves for relationships, seven
out of ten women replied that they had. As noted earlier,
one of these negative responses was a newlywed who said

she did not think it was possible to do so. It is inter-
resting that none of the ten men reported having given
up too much of themselves. Although the pattern of
neglecting esteem needs for love needs occurred in a
majority of the women, it did not occur at all for the
men. (See Figure 8)

Figure 8
Results for Research Question Three

"Have you ever given up too much of yourself
for the relationship?"

	Newlywed Couples					Older Couples				
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Men	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Women	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES

Not only were the men more likely to emphasize work
over relationship, but they generally had a different
attitude toward their work than the women. Even when both
worked, the man remained the primary provider and his
work seemed to be taken more "seriously" by both:

> She tells me that work comes first with me over her
> and the kids. It's true. I know it's not good, but
> that's how it is. I'm the provider, it has to be that
> way.

The women tended to see their work as something they did to provide additional financial support for the family and as something done for personal fulfillment. Two women talked about how working made them more interesting as people and therefore more appealing as a partner: "I was an interesting person when we met with a neat job. I feel an obligation to stay interesting for him." Their work was important to them in terms of fulfilling their need for esteem and autonomy, but it was not given as much importance as the man's work or the love needs of the family.

This pattern did seem to be changing for some of these couples. Three of the four women with children were putting much more time and energy into their careers as their children grew older. The fourth woman with children was doing the reverse. She had recently retired from fifteen years of teaching to do less demanding work in order to have more time with her family. With the childless couple, work seemed to be equally central and "serious" for both of them.

When either individual in the couple system went through a significant change which impacted on their work or relationship, the system was challanged and the crisis of esteem versus couple love emerged. The kinds of

changes that tended to produce or to be part of this crisis were events such as: a change in career, retirement, stopping work to have children, or leaving home and children in order to work. These are all changes that tended to affect the individual's needs for esteem and/or love, and thus have an impact on the couple system.

One of the most common precipitants of the esteem versus couple love crisis was the woman going into the paid labor force. The motivations that led these women to seek work outside the home were varied, but the common theme was a desire for greater esteem, independence and automony. "My work is really important to me. It gives me a sense of independence, competence." This occurrence put significant strain on the couple system because role expectations, invididual needs and behavioral expresions changed.

One effect of the women working was that they tended to de-emphasized their caretaking role:

> I decided I needed more time for me. I started thinking more about who I was, what I wanted and how I wanted to express myself.

For the women, the shift was toward a greater self-focus and away from taking care of others.

As the women took some of their time and energy out of the love arena, it created a vacuum that impacted upon the men in numerous ways. Each man's response to this

change varied over time as well. One common experience
was to interpret the shift of attention as a withdrawal of
love, especially initially:

> When we first got married she was home all the time.
> It was great.... Her career goals keep her away a lot
> now.... I'm not first anymore.

> Her work really interferes with our family life. She
> just doesn't have enough time for me and the kids.

These feelings of not being important enough to the other,
and of wanting more time and attention seemed to be essen-
ntially the same, regardless of which gender was experi-
encing it. Although both men and women reported giving up
too much of the relationship for career and achievement,
the differences were threefold: first, more men than
women admitted doing this; second, it seems to have been
much more acceptable (by both partners) for him to neglect
the love arena for work than her to do so; third, what
was considered" neglectful" was very different because
both perceived taking care of the love arena as more of
the woman's responsibility. When the woman turned toward
work, the man often experienced some sense of abandonment.

What often seems to have happened in these situations
was that new circumstances conflicted with old expecta-
tions. As traditional roles and rules were challenged, it
was easy for the men to feel threatned:

> I remember one conversation he and I had when I first
> started putting more energy into my career. He said,

"Don't you have your priorities mixed up." I told him
I didn't think so.

One man had very ambivalent feelings about his wife's

work. While he saw how much her work did for her sense

of esteem, he also wanted her home more. He seemed

threatened by her stepping into "his" territory, as well

as missed her being in her own territory.

> She makes a big deal out of working and contributing
> to our support. It's not a big deal--we don't need
> it, I can support us. But I couldn't tell her that.

Another order of change that occured, was that all of

these women experienced an increase in their personal

esteem, autonomy and sense of personal power as a result

of working:

> I'm feeling much more in control of my life. I know I
> can do whatever I want. I'm smart, attractive,
> talented. It's a great feeling!

This change in the women's self-image in turn had an

effect on the balance of power in their relationships,

especially the balance of giving and receiving. Part of

the phenomenon observed about women who tend to "give up

too much of themselves" is that they focus on their role

as giver, supporter and nurturer with its emphasis on

pleasing others instead of themselves. In this role,

individual boundaries, wants and desires can be easily

glossed over or ignored. In direct opposition to this

tendency towards self-sacrifice, these women were feeling

a need to focus on and define themselves more clearly,

to balance their giving with receiving. The following

quotes express the views of three different women:

> I'm working on not changing what I want because he
> wants something different; maintaining, not giving
> over my sense of self, my integrity, my sense of who I
> am. It gets easier and easier. I really get that I
> have to live with my choices. ·

> I used to do things that I really didn't like because
> they were important to him. I don't do that anymore,
> that was a big shift. I just don't want to do things
> that I don't like to do.

> I didn't want to do all the giving and caring anymore.
> I want him to treat me the way I have treated him; to
> think about me and what would make my life easier--
> to do little things for me.

And how are the men responding? As one man put it:

> I have mixed feelings. Sometimes I'm angry and
> resentful. Sometimes I'm real scared and insecure.
> Sometimes, when it gets hard, I think there must be
> something wrong with the relationship.... I see her
> being more powerful and strong, and I'm proud and
> delighted.

This mixed response was typical. There was delight in the

new person:

> I love her getting stronger. It makes us more
> powerful as a team. I don't have to pull her out [of
> herself] like I used to.

combined with nostalgia for the old person:

> Things aren't as smooth as they used to be. There is
> more conflict because she is expressing herself now.
> Sometimes I long for the good old days when she was
> more passive.

The men's anger and resentment seemed to be related to

unmet expectations: "You're not there for me like I want

you to be." The insecurity had to do with fears of loss
and separation: "Where are you going? Are you leaving?
Do you still love me?" There was also the fear of
inadequacy: "Now that you don't need me as much, am I
still a valuable person? Am I enough? If you are strong,
does that mean I'm weak?"

In summary, the evidence seemed to indicate that both
the men and the women in the older couples experienced the
individual esteem versus couple love crisis. The men
tended to be out of balance on the esteem side with the
women just the reverse. One of the major themes for
these couples was in the changes occurring in their roles,
rules and expectations as the women grew through their
work outside the home. Both partners seemed to have a need
for both love and esteem. When there was a felt need for
love, they turned to the relationship. When there was a
need for esteem, they focused on their work. When one
partner or the other either increased or decreased their
need levels, the couple system experienced pressure to
change.

Research Question Four: What attitudes and behaviors
facilitate and/or inhibit the resolution of the individual
esteem versus couple love crisis?

In the balancing act of individual esteem and couple
love the most general and obvious guideline from these
couples about what helped and what hindered was to remember
that each dimension is important for the well being of
both the relationship and the individuals. By definition,
the individual esteem versus couple love crisis is a time
of stress and tension between two levels of need. As
previously shown, when the focus moves to the esteem side
the love arena can be threatened and vice versa. What the
older couples said helped at those times was to nurture
the threatened side. Since the task of this stage is for
each individual to achieve a strong sense of personal
esteem and identity within the context and boundaries of a
loving relationship the key here is balance and
regulation.

The couples have provided ten attitudes or behaviors
which fall into three main areas: number one through five
nuture and support the couple love side; six through
eight, esteem; nine and ten, both couple love and
individual esteem. These first five seemed good advice,
particularly for men who tend to overemphasize the esteem
side.

1. Unconditional Loving

An important element of this esteem versus love
crisis is behaviorial change. One partner or the other

begins to express parts of themselves they are not used to expressing. One woman described her empowerment process and its beginning, turbulent stages:

> I started being crabby and bitchy all the time which was unheard of for me, I had always been so nice.... I really felt loved by him totally. I had been in relationships where the words were there, "I love you," but what I experienced was, "I love certain parts of you and other parts I won't tolerate." So I never allowed myself to experience these other parts of myself in a relationship. He loves all of me. I know no matter what, we will work it out.

This is the same non-possessive, and non-needful quality of loving that was mentioned in the initial stages of this research and in the case studies as characteristic of actualizing marriages. It is what Maslow referred to as B-Loving, or Love for the Being of the other. The other feels loved just for who they are and not for what needs they might fulfill.

One characteristic of the attitudes and behaviors which hindered the nuturing of the love dimension was just the opposite of unconditional loving. One partner sees and relates to the other for what they give and the needs they fulfill. The behaviors included: holding on rigidly to pre-conceived notions, and unrealistic expectations of how the other is supposed to be; judging, or making the other "wrong"; attempting to manipulate the other through blame, guilt, anger, or upset.

2. <u>Empathy And Active Support</u>

Most of these couples mentioned the importance of
empathizing with their partner and their needs, being
sensitsive to and caring about their point of view.

When I sense that he is feeling threatned I really try
to present my point of view, my differences in a way
that doesn't feel separate.

This empathy and sensitivity to each other's needs in-
cluded three key behaviors and attitudes. First, there
must be a willingness to respond to those needs, when pos-
sible but to do so without violating one's own integrity.
The second key is to be willing to change, to be affected
by the other, to take the other's needs into account.
Paying attention to what is really important to the other
and acting accordingly is the crucial third key. This is
similar to what Maslow refered to as the ability to pool
the needs of both individuals into a single hierarchy, so
that the other's need is experienced as one's own.   -

These couples talked about how valuable it was to feel
that their partner was really supportive of their growth
and well-being, even if it was hard for them to do so:
"We really care about each other's happiness and personal
fulfillment." One of the ways this manifested was for the
partners to take an active interest in each other's work:
"We support each other's goals and encourage each other to
take risks."

Attitudes and behaviors that hindered in this dimen-

sion included: not empathizing; being insensitive,
overly self-involved, or uncaring about the other's needs;
being aloof and unresponsive; being unwilling to change
or be affected by the other.

3. Forgiveness

An important element of loving was the willingness to
accept each other's faults, to forgive, and then to let go
of hurts and resentments. These couples talked about the
need to be vulnerable, to acknowledge deeper feelings, and
to risk being "wrong" and saying "I'm sorry." Of course,
what hindered was holding onto hurt and resentment; being
prideful, and being unwilling to say "I'm sorry."

4. Taking Time Out

All of these couples mentioned the importance of
taking time out to be alone and intimate together. They
talked of the need to spend weekends away and evenings out
alone, as well as to take time to be with the family. The
purpose of having alone time was to provide the opportu-
nity for intimacy, cuddling, love-making, talking, laugh-
ing, playing--just being together to nurture the loving
connection. Along the same lines, these couples talked
about the helpfulness of day-to-day loving and appreci-
ating of each other: touching, saying nice things, doing
little things for each other to express love. When the
couple did not take the time for intimacy or make the

effort to love and appreciate each other actively, the relationship suffered.

5. Picking Up The Ball

On the nitty-gritty level, who picked up whose socks seemed to be important. The concensus was that when both people work, both need to attend to the duties of home life. Role flexibility, especially from the man who may be used to being indulged is requried here. When there was an imbalance of energy in the couple system with one giving more or having more power, what helped was to do whatever was necessary to equalize the situation. Very simple, seemingly insignificant things such as dirty socks become symbolic of deeper issues and of changes that want to occur. If these things are left unattended, they can be sources of great difficulty and conflict. The under-lying idea was that each partner needed to express their loving care and concern very concretely for the other to experience it fully.

On the personal esteem side is the need for a strong sense of personal esteem, autonomy, power and competence. All of these couples spoke about the importance of this dimension and things that helped balance this level. Reminiscent of the literature review and the initial formulations of the theory, this advise is

most often mentioned as characteristic of healthy
marriages. It includes qualities such as inner security,
esteem, autonomy, individuality, and ego strength. It is
particularly relevant for women who tend to be
overbalanced on the relationship side. (See points six
through eight below.)

6. "A Room of One's Own"

One of the things most often mentioned as helpful was
each person having their own sphere of influence, some
place where they could experience their own individual
expression and make their own mark. One major vehicle for
these couples was work and careers. They also spoke about
the importance of friends, personal interests, community
involvement, hobbies, causes, sports, alone time and of
other activities that contributed to their own personal
fulfillment outside of the relationship. Expecting one
intimate relationship to bring personal fulfillment puts
an enormous amount of stress on the relationship and
truly does not work. This expectation is not only too
much for one other person to bear, but it is also the
wrong place to fulfill certain needs. As mentioned
previously for example, individuals meet their esteem
needs much more fully outside of the relationship in the
world of work and personal achievement.

7. Personal Responsibility

An integral part of nourishing the esteem dimension for these couples was each partner taking personal responsibility for their own well being and the quality of the relationship. This meant not waiting and expecting the other to take charge, and then resenting and blaming them when they did not. "Knowing that the source of my loving is internal is very reassuring and freeing." Several individuals talked about how important it was for them, when things got difficult, to sit down quietly with themselves and "think things through." This was a time for them to try to see things clearly, and to take responsbility for their piece of the difficulty:

> The greatest learning for me during this time has been that I may be upset, but things don't upset me--I upset myself.

8. Commitment

A sense of commitment was present for all of these couples and reportedly helped them a great deal. What seemed useful was not just the commitment to stay together but the commitment to make the marriage work, to keep it juicy, loving and alive.

Of the two suggestions for enhancing both the esteem and the love dimensions, most often mentioned was communication.

9. Communication

Some of the techniques that created better
communication included:

a) <u>Doing It</u> - Taking the time to "talk things through"
was very important. Upsets needed to be dealt with as
soon as possible. Some couples found that a "cooling
off" period was helpful if there was a great deal of
emotional upset. They were unanimous in stating that
withdrawing, avoiding or "allowing a cold war to go
on" were all detrimental.

b) <u>Honesty and Openness</u> - Communicating as openly,
honestly and sensitively as possible were key. An
important aspect of this openness was communicating
wants and needs, likes as well as dislikes. Sometimes
couples expect their partners to "read their minds"
and know what they want without asking. According to
these couples, this never works. Equally important
for them was sharing appreciation. Several individ-
uals mentioned the necessity of beomg willing to com-
municate deeper feelings, attitudes, and thoughts that
may be difficult to share. Holding onto resentments,
hurt feelings, or keeping secrets also interfered with
closeness.

c) <u>Sensitivity</u> - One important theme was making
sure that "I love you" is an integral part of all com-
municatiion, especially if the message is difficult

for the other to hear and accept.

d) <u>Listening</u> - Sending clear messages is half of communication, receiving them is the other.

10. <u>Context of Growth and Discovery</u>

Another area that couples talked about as helping was the context, framework or "growth philosophy" within which they held their relationship. Several of these couples consciously operated out of this philosophy in their lives. Within this context, part of the purpose of life (and relationships in particular) is to grow personally and to expand the capacity to love and relate. From this point of view, difficulties are seen as opportunities for growth and discovery:

> We both have such a deep commitment to our own growth, to life, to love.... It really is a great relief. No matter what is going on I know we will get through it. We will learn from it, grow together.

The attitudes and behaviors which these couples recommended can also be arranged according to the five characteristics of marital-actualization contained in the initial formulations of the theory of marital development. Figure 9 illustrates the five characteristics of marital-acutalization along with the helpful attitudes and behaviors of the esteem versus love crisis.

Figure 9
Characteristics of Marital-actualization
Integrated with the Helpful Characteristics
for Esteem Versus Love Crisis

Trust	Love	Commitment	Strong Identity	Shared Purpose
high trust drop roles vulnerabil ity open comm- unication open expre ssion all parts	uncondi- tional B-loving concern for well- being unpossess- ive, non- needful pooling of needs	love as choice personal respons- ibility for qual- ity of re- lationahip	independent separate, autonomous, individuals able to be both close & separate	both self- actualiz ing meta-moti- vation each devot ed to work shared purpose
Helpful Characteristics for Esteem VS. Love Crisis				
open, honest, sensitive communica- tion vulner- ability	uncondi- tional love empathy, active loving support of growth & well-being forgive- ness Picking up ball take time	commitment personal respons- ibility for qual- ity of re- lationship take time	"room of one's own" each own sphere	growth or spiritual context

Summary

The purposes of this second phase of the study were to refine further the theory of marital development; to discover what evidence there may be to support the notion that love stage issues directly precede esteem stage issues; and to gather more information on the individual esteem versus couple love crisis, which was defined as the primary issue of the esteem stage. The results will be summarized within the four research questions asked.

1) How regularly does the individual esteem verus couple love crisis occur? This question arose out of the observation made in Chapter III, that this crisis was common in all of the historical case studies. The intention of the interviews was to see just how common an issue this was for contemporary couples.

The analysis of the data showed that the individual esteem versus couple love crisis was a prepotent issue for all of the older couples interviewed. This crisis manifested most commonly in the struggle all of them experienced when trying to balance their relationship and love needs with their work and esteem needs. The evidence from the interviews indicate that this may be a central issue that most couples face in marriage.

2) Does the individual esteem versus couple love

crisis occur after a love stage? Based on the pattern
that emerged from the historical case studies it was
theorized that the sequence of development in marriage
was first, a love stage; second an esteem stage; and
finally a marital-actualization stage. The intention of
this question was to see what evidence there was for the
sequence of the first two stages. The analysis of the
data showed that all of the older couples had experienced
love stage followed by esteem stage issues. In addition,
several of the newlywed couples, (all of whom were still
in the love stage) showed some indications that esteem
stage issues which were currently background might emerge
to prepotency in the future. This evidence lends further
support to the stage sequence put forward in the theory.
The tentative conclusion is that the individual esteem
versus couple love crisis does occur directly and
regularly after a love stage.

3) How is the individual esteem versus couple love
crisis experienced by the man and by the woman? This
question was born of the observation made at the con-
clusion of Chapter III that the conflicts of the esteem
stage seemed to be experienced most acutely by the women.
The task of the esteem stage, to establish a strong sense
of personal esteem and identity within the context of a
loving relationship, seemed to be more troublesome for

them than for the men. The intention behind this queary
was to gain more understanding of what both men's and
women's experiences of this crisis are.

The data seemed to indicate that the men tended to be
more work oriented and the women oriented more toward love
and relationships. Both men and women reported sacri-
ficing love for work at times; however all of the men
interviewees experienced it, whereas only three of the
five older women experinced it. On the other side of the
dynamic, seven of the ten women admitted that at times
they had given up too much of themselves for the relation-
ship, whereas none of the men did. The tentative picture
that emerged is that the task of the esteem stage, is
equally troublesome for men as it is for women, but from
opposite directions. The women seemed to struggle more
with establishing esteem, while the men fought to main-
tain and reinforce the loving relationship--the founda-
tion which gave them the strength and sustenance to face
their work and responsibilities.

4) What attitudes and behaviors facilitate the reso-
lution of this crisis? The individual esteem versus
couple love crisis is a time when there is ongoing tension
between the need for love and the need for esteem. The
strategies for what helped and what hindered the regu-
lation of this crisis were delineated into three

categories: those attitudes and behaviors which promoted the esteem dimension, those which promoted the love dimension, and those which promoted both. In general, what was helpful in managing this crisis was putting time and energy into whichever dimension was lacking. What hindered was failure to do what was helpful, and an unwillingness to take care of whichever dimension was lacking.

Update of Theory

This discussion will look briefly at the theory of marital development as it now stands as a preface to examining the implications of this study for clinical application and further research in the last chapter.

The initial theory outlined the existence of five stages of marital development roughly parallel to Maslow's hierarchy of needs for the individual, i.e., physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and marital-actualization. The primary concern of the first two stages was seen as establishing a basic sense of trust, first at the physiological and second at the psychological level. The task of the third stage was seen as establishing a loving bond and sense of commitment. The fourth stage was focused on establishing and balancing strong

individual indentity with couple identity. The primary
concern of the marital-actualization stage was the
manifestation of shared purpose.

The evidence from the case studies and the interviews
in general, tended to support the plausability of the
theory as initially presented, especially the sequence of
the love and esteem stages. There was also some evidence
for the presence of safety level concerns and the concerns
of the marital-actualization stage. Physiological level
concerns were not prepotent for the couples studied, hence
plausability for this stage was not found. There was not
evidence to suggest that this stage does not exist, only
that it was not a primary concern for these couples. As
the study progressed the focus became the transition
between the love and esteem stage and the individual
esteem versus couple love crisis. The primary modifica-
tions of the theory thus occurred within these two stages.

In the formulation of the theory at the conclusion of
Chapter III, the initial love stage was postulated as a
period of time in the beginning of the marriage
relationship when the couple were focused primarily on
meeting their mutual needs for love and belonging. During
this time the partners were establishing a sense of
"coupleness", and were intent on bonding together.
Establishing a family was also seen as part of this stage.

Based primarily on the observation of the women, it was
concluded that often a certain degree of identity loss
occurred, which in turn precipitated the esteem stage
crisis. The task of the esteem stage, then, was to
establish (or re-establish) individual esteem within the
boundaries of the couple relationship by attending more to
those particular needs. The common theme observed at this
point was that the couple thus focused more on their
individuality.

While the picture that emerged from the interviews
supported this view for the women, the new data on the
men changed and expanded the formulation to some extent.
There does seem to be an initial love stage when both
partners are engrossed primarily in each other and in
establishing a bond together. This love stage seemed to
change gradually due to the pressures and responsibilities
of day-to-day living, but abruptly with the birth of
children. Without children, the love stage seemed some-
what extended, but the turning outward towards work still
occurred. With children, the man's focus turned more
exclusively to his role as provider, while the woman's
became almost exclusively her role as caretaker. What
often seemed to happen during this stage was an imbalance
for both individuals in their esteem and love needs, with
the man more involved in the esteem dimension and the

woman in the love dimension.

In these traditional roles, a kind of symbiotic rela-
ionship exists, in which the man relys on the woman to
take care of his love needs, and the woman fulfills her
esteem needs through her indentification as supporter
of his success and achievement. In this situation they
are both vulnerable to dissatisfaction, with the woman's
position perhaps the more precarious. The man has two
arenas for meeting his needs, work and family. As a
result, he seems to be generally more satisfied in both
the love and esteem dimensions. The woman has but the
single arena of family. This leaves her more susceptable
to failure in meeting her esteem needs.

What seemed to occur next, especially, for the couples
with children , was the esteem stage as initially
described. As their children got older, the women began
to put more energy and time into work outside the home.
This tended to stir up the couple system on two levels.
First, with the withdrawal of energy from caretaking, the
symbiotic balance was disturbed as regards the man's love
needs. Second, as the woman's esteem level increased
through her own work, the man's emotional support
decreased. His own imbalance toward work became a greater
problem. The task of this stage does seem to be the
achievement of strong individual esteem within the

boundaries of a strong loving relationship, with the men and women approaching the task from opposite directions. The resolution of this stage seemed to be in the direction of both individuals becoming more equally balanced and learning to regulate their esteem and love needs.

It is interesting that even when there were no children involved, (as with Simone and Jean-Paul, and Laura and Aldous and one of the older couples from the interviews) many elements of the stage patterns remained the same, but with some significant differences. The men still seemed to be more work oriented; the women more relationship oriented and prone to losing themselves in the initial stage of the relationship. For these women without children involving themselves in their work happened sooner and appeared to facilitate achieving strong individual esteem much easier.

The esteem stage is perhaps more accurately described as the esteem versus love stage. It seems to begin when the couple first start to experience some conflict or tension between their needs for love and their needs for esteem. The conflict between these two needs does not seem to be one that is resolved, but one that remains an issue to process continually. The couple's challange is to develop the capacity to regulate and balance their individual needs and the needs of the couple system.

In the initial formulations of this theory it was remarked that Erikson's concept of the "utopia of genitality" had elements in common with the love stage of of the theory. Erikson's (1963) "utopia of genitality" include:

1. mutuality of orgasms

2. with a loved partner

3. of the other sex

4. with whom one is able and willing to share a mutual trust

5. and with whom one is able and willing to regulate the cycles of

   a. work

   b. procreation

   c. recreation

6. so as to secure to the offspring, too, all the stages of a satisfactory development (p. 266)

The first four of these characteristics do fit with the love stage of the theory. The fith stage is also descriptive of the dynamic being defined here. There is a continual shifting and balancing of the couples' love and esteem needs throughout their life together, as one leaves home to work, or takes time to raise a family, or retires and turns to relational needs the balance is effected and needs regulation. As the couple develop in

marital-actualization their ability to do this kind of
on-going balancing increases.

It was theorized that following some resolution of the
esteem stage issues the couple would refocus their
energies to the concerns of the marital-actualization
stage. This stage was initially, characterized by high
levels of trust, love, commitment, strong individual
identity and shared purpose. Each person would be
devoted to some vocation or calling. The couple may
even share the same work. The relationship would become
not only an arena for meeting basic needs, but a context
for growth and the realization of ultimate values. This
stage was not a direct focus of the research design, but
the evidence lends itself to some observations.

One observation is that while all of the older couples
interviewed were working with the esteem versus love
crisis, they seemed to be working with it at different
levels with varying degrees of difficulty. Each couple's
ability and willingness to do more of what helped and less
of what did not, seemed to vary to a great extent, and may
have been connected to their level of individual and
couple development. It is speculated that if there were
an instrument to measure the dimensions of marital-
actualization, (i.e., Trust, Love, Commitment, Identity,
and Shared Purpose) their scores would be directly pro-

portional to their capacity to resolve the on-going esteem versus love crisis.

Couples from both the historical case studies and the interviews seemed to demonstrate the characteristics of marital-actualization to varying degrees. One couple who appeared to be working with the esteem versus love crisis most successfully also seemed to demonstrate the characteristics of marital-actualization at a relatively high level. They had a shared commitment to the same profession and in fact worked together. They were conscious of their careers having that quality of vocation or calling of which Maslow spoke. They seemed to have what has been referred to in theory as a "shared purpose".

Although they were working together successfully, the imbalance of power in their relationship had impacted on their potential as a team. They both spoke of how her growing sense of power had in turn empowered them as a couple and impacted positively on their work together. They felt they were becoming much more co-creative.

The husband described his reciprocal growth in loving as his wife grew in esteem:

> As she gets stronger, more assertive, my challange is to get softer, to back off and give her room. It is good for me. It is what I need to do. I have become a lot softer, much more loving and vulnerable.... I love her getting more powerful, it makes us better as a team.

The indications are that a stage of marital-actualization may follow the esteem versus love stage with its own developmental challanges and opportunities.

The vision of the optimally healthy marriage that emerges from this study is characterized by: high levels of trust and an absence of fear; an abundance of unconditional love and a genuine concern for each others' growth and well-being; a clear, freely chosen commitment to love, support and stand by one another; a strong sense of personal esteem and identity from both partners, which includes taking personal responsibility for the quality of one's life and relationship; and a shared purpose, a common involvment in growth and the realization of higher values.

This is not to say that couples who do not have all of these characteristics fully developed have unhealthy relationships. A couple may be at any particular stage of development and have a relationship that supports the individuals in meeting their current level of need. As long as this was occuring, movement toward greater levels of health and wholeness would be possible. This picture of marital health is predicated on the assumption that marriages may undergo development in depth and that growth toward some potential is possible. The purpose of this study has been to look toward what the highest potential

might be in order to inspire and expand our vision and inform our behavior.

In the final chapter we will explore some of the implications of this theory for research and clinical practice.

C H A P T E R V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

<u>Summary of Study</u>

The purpose of this study was to identify the
characteristics of the actualized marriage; to contribute
to our understanding of heathly, satisfying marital
relationships; and to provide clues about how to improve
the quality of marriage in general.

Maslow's theory of self-actualization was used as a
base for developing a model of marital-actualization. His
characteristics of the love realtionships of self-
actualizing people were synthesized with the literature on
marital satisfaction into five characteristics of optimal
marital health: 1) Trust 2) Love 3) Commitment 4) Strong
Invididual and Couple Identiy 5) Shared Purpose. It
was then postulated that these characteristics may have
a sequential and hierarchical development by stages,
roughly parallel to Maslow's hierarchy of needs for the
individual. The primary concern of the first two stages
was seen as establishing a basic sense of trust at first
the physiological level and second at the psychological
level. The task of the third stage was seen as estab-
lishing a loving bond and sense of commitment. The

fourth stage was theorized as focusing on establishing and balancing a strong individual identity with the couple identity. The primary concern of the marital-actualization stage was viewed as the manifestation of shared purpose.

The research design occurred in two phases. The first phase explored some longitudinal evidence for the plausability of the proposed theory of marital development. This was done through the biographical study of couples with reportedly happy marriages. Four couples were selected as case studies to represent a wide range of socio-cultural and historic differences. In the collection and analysis of the data, special attention was given to the notion of developmental stages and to the idea of a hierarchical sequence of primary concerns. The inquiry centered on turning points in the couples' relationships to see: 1) if such changes signified a shift in primary concern; 2) if they could be explained by the theory; and 3) if modifications of the theory were required.

The analysis of the case studies produced some evidence supporting the stage theory of marital development with some modifications. The changes that the couples went through did seem to reflect the top three stages of love, esteem and marital-actualization. There was some

evidence that the concerns of the safety stage (i.e., establishing a basic sense of trust) were also present. The evidence lent no support to the nonexistence of the physiological stage or its lack of prepotency, rather it merely indicated that this was not a primary level of concern for these couples.

The common sequential pattern manifested by these couples began with an initial love stage when the couples were concerned with building a basic sense of trust, intimacy, mutual support, empathy, and fulfilling love and belonging needs. They were intent on creating a bond and sense of "coupleness". It was noted that during this stage of merging with one another, the women were particularly vulnerable to surrendering some of their individuality. For these women there was commonly a temporary loss of self, which led to a subsequent need to re-establish strong individual esteem within the boundaries of the love relationship. This concern was conceptualized as the primary dynamic of the esteem stage. During this stage, a common experience was for the couple to break their monolithic unity in order to focus on developing their individuality--all of this while maintaining a strong, loving bond. As the couple achieved this balancing of unity and individuality they were better able to devote their energies to a shared purpose and

other concerns of the marital-actualization stage.

The task of establishing and balancing individual esteem within the boundaries of a strong loving relation-ship seemed to be a challange for all four of these couples. The recurring theme was some degree of tension and conflict between the need for relational loving and individual esteem. Each area of need seemed to threaten the other and the primary issue of the esteem stage was how to have both. This conflict seemed to precipitate some kind of crisis for all of these couples and was renamed the "individual esteem versus couple love crisis". This observation led to speculation on the possible importance of this issue for couples in general. It seemed likely that it would be a significant issue to contemporary couples, and that it was therefore worthy of further investigation.

The other observation, that the conflicts of the esteem stage seemed to have been experienced most acutely by the women led to speculation on how the individual esteem versus couple love conflict was experienced by men. The men did not seem to have the same degree of difficulty with loss of self in relationshhip or conflict between being in relationship and being an autonomous person. This speculation greatly informed the interview schedule used in the next phase of the study, the results

of which will be discussed later in this chapter.

It was concluded that if the individual esteem versus couple love crisis is a common concern for couples, understanding more about what is facilitative and what is inhibitive of this crisis' resolution would be useful. Some initial observations were made of how these four couples seemed to work successfully with these issues. For example, in order to establish a greater sense of individual esteem, one common strategy was to focus on the development of individual talents, capacities and interests through devotion to work of some kind. Some of the strategies these couples used to maintain the couple bond included open, honest communication, and a genuine unselfish loving concern for each other's growth and well-being.

The conclusions reached at the end of this phase of study were incomplete and speculative. The purpose of the second phase of research was thus to gather more information on the individual esteem versus couple love crisis. Specifically, the questions explored were the following: How regularly does the esteem versus love crisis occur? Does it occur after a love stage? How is it experienced by the man and the woman? What facilitates and what hindered its resolution?

To explore these questions, an interview schedule was

designed and revised based on pilot interviews with three couples. Then ten married couples were interviewed with one group of five being newlyweds and the other group of five being couples married for at least five years. The data from the interviews were coded and analyzed to answer the four questions. The interviews were reviewed independently by two people. Guided by a description of the stages, the coders decided: (1) whether or not the individual esteem versus couple love crisis had occurred (its degree of prepotency and the evidence supporting that decision), (2) whether it occured after the love stage (the evidence for this decision), (3) a summary description/list of how it was experienced by the man and by the woman, and (4) a list of attitudes and behaviors reported as helping and as hindering resolution. Answers and justifications were then compared, a record of "agreements" maintained, and discrepancies resolved.

The coders agreed that the individual esteem versus couple love crisis was a prepotent issue of concern for all five of the older couples and none of the newlyweds. Each of the older couples reported that this conflict was an issue of concern for them. Some of the manifestations of this concern included: difficulty in balancing love and work; concern about giving up too much of self for relationship; and concern about the balance of power in

the relationship. In contrast, the newlyweds reported
that the esteem versus love crisis was not a current issue
for them. The concerns they reported were related to the
love stage, and included such issues as: adjusting to
each other and married life; learning how to communicate
openly; and learning how to trust each other more. Their
clear focus was on being together as a couple and enjoying
each other.

There were indications that the individual esteem
versus couple love crisis did indeed occur after an
initial love stage. The coders agreed that all five of
the older couples had a "honeymoon stage" in their
relationship during which love stage issues were pre-
potent, and that esteem stage issues occurred after
this stage. As stated previously, the coders also agreed
that the newlywed couples were working with love stage
issues. Another indication that esteem versus love issues
take place after an initial love stage was that several of
the newlywed couples either expressed these issues in
nascent form or gave signs that they may occur later.
For example, three couples predicted that these issues may
be a concern in the future. Thus there was some evidence
for the plausability of the hypothesized developmental
sequence, especially the sequence of the two stages of
love and esteem (or individual esteem versus couple love).

The evidence seemed to indicate that the esteem versus couple love crisis was experienced by the men and the women somewhat differently. The men tended to be more focused on their work and esteem needs and were struggling to include their relationship and love needs. The women tended to be more focused on love and relationship, and were having difficulty including their esteem needs. A common theme for these couples was stress and change in roles and rules of the couple system, as both partners adapted and changed in order to mutually balance these conflicting needs.

To manage the esteem versus love crisis successfully, couples suggested that both partners devote energy and time to whichever side is out of balance. The strategies that the older couples recommended were categorized into ten areas, which were in turn placed into the five hypothesized characteristics of marital-actualization as conceptualized in the beginning of the study:

1) Trust

2) Love

3) Commitment

4) Strong Individual Esteem/Identity

5) Shared Purpose

In the Trust dimension these couples emphasized the importance of open, honest, clear, communication; sharing

needs, wants, feelings and thoughts in a sensitive way;
listening and being heard. They also talked about the
importance of vulnerability and of the willingness to be
seen completely "as one is". Fear and lack of trust
generated behaviors which hindered this dimension such as:
withdrawing; expecting the other to know what one wants
without asking; hiding parts of oneself, and keeping
secrets.

To nourish the Love dimension, (which was particularly
useful to men) these couples recommended: unconditional
loving of the other as they are, not as one would like
them to be; empathizing and actively supporting each
other's growth and well-being; forgiving; being willing to
to say, "I'm sorry"; taking time out to nourish
the relationship; and sharing household duties. Things
that hindered this dimension were the opposites of what
were helpful: being aloof, having unreasonable demands
and rigid role expectations; making the other person
wrong; being prideful and judging.

In terms of Commitment these couples recommended
taking personal responsibility for the quality of one's
life and for making the relationship work well.

To nourish the esteem dimension, which is in alignment
with the characteristic of Strong Individual Esteem/
Identity, these couples recommended that each partner have

their own sphere of influence or "A Room of One's Own".
Behaviors which hindered this dimension were: being too
dependent on the other for personal fulfillment; not
developing one's own sphere of influence; and in general,
not taking responsibility for one's own well-being.

In the last dimension, Shared Purpose, having a
growth context or spiritual framework within which the
couple created and maintained their relationship was
reported as helpful. In fact, the existence of this
dimension itself was reported as giving perspective to all
the other dimensions and their difficulties.

DISCUSSION OF THE THEORY

One of the most interesting findings of this study was
the difference between the men and the women in the esteem
versus love stage. There is a reversed order of pre-
potency for the love and esteem needs of men and women.
Women tend to have problems with losing themselves in the
relationship, whereas men have problems being intimate.

Some relevant insights into these differences can be
gleaned from the research of Gilligan (1982) on psycho-
logical theory and women's development. She held that
because of biological and cultural conditioning, men and
women tend to have a different internal frame of

reference, a different way of perceiving moral problems and of experiencing the relationship between self and other. Gilligan used the research of Chodorow to illuminate the difference: "The feminine personality comes to define itsef in relation and connection to other people more than the masculine personality does." (Gilligan, 1982, p. 7).

Gilligan explained that this difference begins with the young child's establishment of gender identity. Since the female child is biologically similar to her mother, her identity formation occurs in an on-going context of relationship. There is a fusing of the experiences of attachment with the process of identity formation. Because children in this culture are usually parented by women, girls come to experience themselves as less dif- ferentiated, more continuous with and related to the external object world than boys. The male identity formation entails a more emphatic individuation and thus necessitates firmer ego boundaries. For boys, separation and individuation from mother are critical to gender identity. Gilligan pointed out that it is not so much that girls have weaker ego boundaries, as it is they have "empathy" built into the primary definition of self.

Consequently, relationships and issues of esteem are experienced differently by men and women. Since

masculine identity is defined through separation (while female identity is defined through attachment) male gender identity tends to be threatened by intimacy; female identity by separation. Thus males tend to have difficulty with relationship. Females tend to have problems with individuation.

The standard of moral judgment which informs a woman's assessment of herself is a standard of relationship, an ethic of nurturance, responsibility and care. Women tend to measure their strength in the activity of attachment, (e.g., "giving to" "helping out", "being kind", "not hurting"). The standard of moral judgment that informs the male assessment of self is a standard of individual achievement.

It's clear how these different standards manifested in this study. For example, in the case of Henry and Lucy, her dilemma was one of self-expression (quite literally in her career as a lecturer) versus the care and responsibility of her family. It was noted that it was motherhood, not marriage itself, which precipitated the crisis for Lucy. Gilligan's contention that motherhood enforces dependence and responsibility for care, sheds light on Lucy's dilemma. Henry considered himself a failure, though, because he did not meet his standard of individual achievement and success in the world. He also discounted

his marital success, which was clearly a significant accomplishment.

Gilligan hypothesized that there are different culturally-constructed prescriptions for and definitions of maturity for men and women. For men on the pathway to adulthood, the focus is be on separation, self-expression and individual achievement. Relationships are seen as either a support for personal achievement or as a hindrance to be overcome. For women, the focus is on care and responsibility for others, self-sacrifice, and the relinquishing of self-expression. In a choice between self-expression and preservation of relationships, the male choice consistent with this formula would be self-expression; the female choice the relationships.

Gilligan refuted the portion of Erikson's model of adult development in which identity precedes intimacy and generativity. She held that this is true for men, but that for women, identity and intimacy are fused. Females tend to know and describe themseves through their relationships with others. Erikson's description of male identity as forged in relation to the world and female identity as awakened in a relationship of intimacy is the stuff fairy tales are made of. (To wit: the Prince slays the dragon, conquers the world and awakens the princess

with a kiss. The cloistered Princess marries the Prince.)

One of Gilligan's main themes is that traditional models of adult development have been based on the males' pattern. The disparity between women's experience and the representation of human development has generally been interpreted to signify a problem in women's development. Perhaps, as she observed, the failure of women to fit existing models of human growth signifies a limitation in these models. Gilligan made the important point that men and women tend to operate from different complementary contexts. Real maturity for both occurs through dialogue, because each perspective needs the other to balance and counteract its weaknesses and pitfalls. Women need to learn about autonomy and self-expression. Men need to learn about intimacy and human connection. This seems to be what is occurring during the esteem versus love crisis. The "lesson" for each is to become more like the other. The resolution seems to lie in the direction of greater mutuality and equality in the satisfaction of love and esteem needs.

The picture of the relationship between men and women gleaned from this study seems to be reflective of a larger change that is occurring in the traditional pattern of marriage. There have been numerous contributing factors in changing the structure and function of the American

family and the marital dyad. The first major catalyst was
the Industrial Revolution and the disappearance of the
interdependent farm couple. Second was the easy availa-
bility of birth control. The third was (and still is)
the Women's Movement. The final major contributing
factor has been the steady post-World War II increase, in
the number of women in the paid labor force. As more and
more women have moved into the work world, some of the
fundamental ideas about what is fulfilling for men and
women have been challenged.

In Lifeprints, a recent study about what makes women
happy, sociologists found that doing and achieving are at
least as important to women as relationships (Baruch,
Barnett and Rivers, 1983). Cultural folk wisdom has
always held that women are happiest in the domain of
relationship and feeling, and work is not really central
to their overall sense of well being. For the Lifeprints
study the researchers developed a two-dimensional concep-
tualization of well-being. One dimension they called
Mastery, which included self-esteem, doing, achieving, a
sense of control over one's life, and an absence of
anxiety and depression. The other dimension they called
Pleasure. This included feelings of happiness, joy,
delight, satisfaction, and optimism. This dimension was
linked with the quality of one's intimate relationships

and depended upon loving connection to others.

Their "Mastery" and "Pleasure" dimensions are clearly
similar to this study's love/relationship and esteem/work
dichotomy. Using their model they studied over 300 women
in six different combinations of work, children, and
marriage in order to see what different "lifeprints"
produced in these two dimensions. Their findings are
supportive of the conclusions of this study:

> Our study documents the fundamental importance of both
> love and work--what Sigmund Freud saw as the twin
> pillars of a healthy life--to a woman's mental and
> emotional well-being. When either is ignored, a
> person's development becomes lopsided. The man who
> shuts off the emotional side of life and throws
> himself entirely into activity becomes the workaholic.
> But we hear less about the other side of that coin--
> the woman who only pays attention to the feeling side
> of her life, and who becomes what might be called a
> "lovaholic." (Baruch, Barnett, Rivers, 1983, P. 15)

Their findings also support the observation of this
study that marriage can be expected to satisfy love needs,
but that esteem needs are met primarily outside of the
relationship through work and achievement.

For example they found that the symptoms of depression
and low self-esteem were much more closely related to the
Mastery dimension, and that marriage affected only the
Pleasure dimension. While marriage seems to provide the
opportunity for intimacy and loving connection equally
for both men and women, it doesn't seem to satisfy the
esteem needs.

Individuals (and those in the helping professions) may be conditioned to look in the wrong place when they are unhappy. Women tend to look to their relationships with their husband and children. When depressed, the professional might more fruitfully ask, "What do you do all day? Are you fully using your talents and capacities?" On the other side, the man in a midlife crisis who is asking "Is this all there is?" might be encouraged to examine the quality of his relationships rather than to entertain a career change.

The Lifeprints researchers concluded that more and more women are moving into the Mastery dimension for greater fulfillment; as they do, they want supportive partners. The marriages that the women in this study as well as in Lifeprints described as rewarding have more characteristics reminiscent of a partnership between loving friends then of the old pattern of male dominance.

The trend seems to be toward greater mutuality and equality. In a recent study, published as the book American Couples, (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983) the researchers gave some explanation for how this equalization occurs. They found a correlation between money and power in relationships. The person who made more money tended to have more power. Men and women have more respect for the making of money then the making of a

home: when women work, they gain respect from their
husbands, as well as personal fulfillment and esteem. A
common pattern with the couples interviewed, in this
study was also found in American Couples. Men have been
indulged to some degree, and find it easier to give up the
sole provider role, but more difficult to give up its
deferential privileges. For example, Blumstein and
Schwartz found that even when both the man and the woman
worked, and believed in equal responsibility for household
chores, the women still did much more of the housework.
Men are changing, however. As women become more work
oriented, men are becoming more relationship oriented.
Four of the five newlywed men interviewed herein, talked
about the importance of their relationships to them and of
them being more important than work. This may be a
symptom of early marital bliss, and/or the sign of a shift
in priorities for men in general.

It seems to be important for men and women to recog-
nize the importance of both love and esteem for overall
well-being. One message that emerges clearly from this
study is that focusing exclusively on either dimension on
a long-term basis is hazardous to overall well-being. The
old sex roles too often act as a straight jacket,
preventing men and women from developing their full human
potential. People need to be assertive and tender, goal

oriented and nurturing. Developing the capacity for one
quality does not eliminate or guarantee the development of
the other.

This is a time of transition. With the instability of
changing roles, also comes greater freedom of choice and
opportunity for wholeness. The theory of marital devel-
opment in this dissertation also places these findings in
perspective. However important the problems of the
individual esteem versus love couple are, they
occur after the love stage and before the actuali-
zation/shared purpose stage. Successful resolution of the
esteem versus love stage crisis is crucial. There may,
however, be further challenging developmental tasks
facing couples, ones to which much research should be
devoted.

Implications

Research

Little has been written or researched on the
longitudinal development of intimate couples. This study
was a beginning in the conceptualization of a theory of
marital development. The intention was to gather evidence
for the plausability of the theory and to generate foci
for further research.

Because of the small number of subjects and their non-random selection, the ability to generalize beyond the population is limited. For example, the couples were predominately upper middle-class , white, two-career families. Recommendations for further research would include a larger, randomly chosen sample in order to make more valid generalizations.

Further examination of the on-going couple relationship is needed. A longitudinal study geared to defining more precisely the stages of the couple relationship is recommended. Observing couples at various chronological ages of marriage over an extended period of time would not only yield more information, but would also control for differences that may or may not exist between generations. Of particular interest in such a study would be an examination of the proposed sequence of stages, and how couples experience and successfully resolve the esteem versus love crisis. An investigation of couples at the higher end of marital-actualization would also be useful in understanding more about healthy marriages and the patterns which generate satisfaction. Virtually none of the current or past research defines the nature, problems and solutions of this set of stage-related problems.

Along with further clarification of the theory, the development of an instrument which would measure the level

of marital-actualization or the level of need satisfaction
would be useful. Such an instrument could be based on the
descriptions of the characteristics of marital-actuali-
zation (i.e., trust, love/couple identity, commitment,
strong individual esteem/identity and shared purpose).
For example, trust levels would be indicated by such
things as the degree and quality of open, honest, com-
munication; the willingness to express hidden parts of the
personality--both playfull, spontaneous parts, as well as
"darker" aspects; the sense of security in the other's
intention not to inflict physical or psychological hurt
consiously; and so on. A person's score in each dimen-
sion would give information on the level of need satis-
faction and the level of marital development. For
example, establishing trust, love, and commitment are
central concerns of the love stage. If a person measured
low in these dimensions it would be an indication that
they may be working with love stage issues.

Another alternative for the design of an instrument
would be to formulate it using the description of the
various stages and their concerns. A simple description
of the stages and their concerns was used to assist in the
coding process (See Appendix A). Such an instrument
would be useful in diagnosing a couple system, iden-
tifying areas of need, planning treatment, and measuring

the effectiveness of such treatment.

Clinical

The developmental stages themselves could be used to help diagnose the clients' situation, set goals for treatment, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment clinically.

With an awareness of the various stages and need levels, the clinician could assess in what stage the individual or couple is primarily occupied. Are they working with issues of the love, esteem versus love, or actualization stage? How much energy is being taken up at each level, and how much is available for goals at higher levels? How are their needs being satisfied, and are there obstacles to satisfaction? This kind of assessment would provide guidance in selecting appropriate goals and interventions based on the predominance of the client need systems.

In working with couples, the overall goal would be to support the system's functioning so that individuals' needs are being met either within or with the support of the system. The clinical decision to work individually or as a pair would be made easier by knowing where the partners are developmentally, both individually and as a couple. For example, if they were complaining about poor

communication and a lack of mutual support, working with
the couple to develop communication skills and sensitivity
to each other's needs would be appropriate. On the other
hand, if the level of satisfaction at the love level
seemed to be good but the wife was depressed and anxious,
the clinician may look at how she is (or is not) fulfil-
ling her esteem needs. The effectiveness of the treatment
could be assessed by the amount of progress made in terms
of greater need satisfaction.

Another clinical implication of the findings is for
the development of marital enrichment and educational
programs. Many such program focus only on one or two
dimensions of marital satisfaction, such as communication
skills. These findings indicate that other dimensions are
equally or even more important, depending upon the stage
of marital development. The appropriateness of various
programs could be assessed based on the stage-related
needs of the couple. Some of the dimensions that could be
part of such programs include:

1. Increasing awareness of gender socialization, and
the resultant differing contexts and frameworks for men
and women. Awareness of both the blessings and potential
pitfalls of inculturated roles could provide greater
freedom of choice for couples, as well as further under-
standing of these differences.

2.   Teaching the dynamics of the individual esteem versus couple love crisis, and techniques to work with it successfully. Teaching, for example, how to nurture both the love and the esteem dimensionss, as was learned from the couples in this study.

3.   Training in the five dimensions of marital-actualization: trust, love, commitment, strong individual esteem/identity, and shared purpose. Awareness of these stages could provide couples with needed signposts and perspectives which would in turn support further growth.

In this time of change and transition for the couple relationship, there is both great turmoil and great opportunity. The traditional roles, prescriptions and proscriptions for how men and women should relate to each other have provided a sense of stability and security that is now crumbling. At the same time, the potential for rich, satisfying, relationships which contribute to our growth and well-being has never been greater. This author in particular heralds the continuation and deeping of this evolution, and looks forward to further changes in American marriages.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alderfer, C. P. Existence, relatedness, and growth. New York: The Free Pres, 1972.

Ammons, E., & Stinnett, N. The vital marriage: A closer look. Family Relations, 1980, 29, 37-42.

Angyal, A. Neurosis and treatment. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; The Viking Press, 1965.

Baruch, G., Barnett, R., & Rivers, C. Lifeprints: New patterns of love and work for today's women. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1983.

Bernard, J. The future of marriage. New York: Bantam Books, 1972.

Blackwell, A. S. Lucv Stone. Norwood, Ma: Plimpton Press, 1930.

Blumstein, P., & Schwarts, P. American couples. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1983.

Bowen, M. Family therapy in clinical practice. New York: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1978.

Brinkerhoff, D., & White, L. Marital satisfaction in an economically marginal population. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1978, 40, 259-267.

Burgess, E. W., & Locke, H. J. The family: From institution to companionship. New York: American Book Company, 1950.

Campbell, S. The couples journey: Intimacy as a path to wholeness. San Luis Obispo, California: Impact Publishers, 1980.

Clinebell & Clinebell. The intimate marriage. New York: Harper and Row, 1980.

de Beauvoir. Simone. The prime of life. New York: Penguin Books, 1965.

de Beauvoir, Simone. Force of Circumstance. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1964.

de Beauvoir, Simone. Adieux: a farewell to sartre.
    Translated by Patrick O'Brian. New York: Pantheon
    Books, 1984.

de Beauvoir, Simone. The second sex. Translated by H. M.
    Parshley. Alfred A. Knopf. New York: 1952.

de Beauvoir, Simone. Memoirs of a dutitful daughter.
    Translated by James Kirkup. Cleveland: World
    Publishing Co., 1959.

Dietch, J. Love, sex roles, and psychological health.
    Journal of Personlaity Assessment, 1978, 42, 6,
    627-634.

Erikson, E. Childhood and society. New York: W. W.
    Norton & Company, Inc., 1950, 1963.

Fiore, A., & Swensen, C. Analysis of love relationships
    in functional and dysfunctional marriages.
    Psychological Reports, 1977 40, 707-714.

Fromm, E. The art of loving. New York: Bantam Books,
    1966.

Galzer, B. G.& Strauss, A. L. The discovery of grounded
    theory, strategies for qualitative research. Chicago:
    Aldine Publishers Company, 1967.

Gilligan, Carol. In a different voice: Psychological
    theory and women's development. Cambridge: Harvard
    University Press, 1982.

Glenn, N., & Weaver, C. A multivariate, multisurvey study
    of marital happiness. Journal of Marriage and the
    Family, 1978, 40, 269-282.

Goodman, N., & Ofshe, R. Empathy, communication
    efficiency, and marital status. Jouranl of Marriage
    and the Family, 1968, 30(4), 597-603.

Gurman, A. S. Dimensions of marital therapy: A comparative
    analysis. Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling,
    1979, 5(1), 5-16.

Gurman, A., & Kniskern, D. Family therapy outcome research:
    Knowns and unknowns. In Gurman, A., & Kniskern, D., eds.
    Handbook of family therapy. New York: Burnner/Mazel,
    Inc., 1981.

Haley, J. <u>Strategies of psychotherapy</u>. New York: Grune and Stratton 1963.

Hays, E. R. <u>Those extraordinary Blackwells</u>. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1967.

Hays, E. R. <u>Morning Star: A biography of Lucy Stone</u>. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961.

Hick, M. W., & Platt, M. Marital Happiness and stability: A review of the research in the sixties. <u>Journal of Marriage and Family</u>, 1970, November, 533-574.

Huxley, L. A. <u>This timeless moment: A personal view of Aldous Huxley</u>. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1968.

Isaac, S., & Michale, W. <u>Handbook in research and Evaluation</u>. San Diego: EDITS Publishers, 1971.

James, M. <u>Marriage is for loving</u>. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979.

Jorgensen, S. Socioeconomic rewards and perceived marital quality: A re-examination. <u>Journal of Marriage and the Family</u>, 1979, 41(4), 825-835.

Jourard, S. <u>Healthy Personality</u>. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company Inc., 1974.

Kleiman, J. Optimal and normal family functioning. <u>The American Journal of Family Therapy</u>, 1981, 9(1), 37-44.

Lacoursiere, R. B. <u>The life cycle of groups</u>. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1980.

Lawrence, L. T. A phenomenological investigation of professed marital satisfaction: Interviews with happily married people. <u>Dissertation Abstracts</u>, 1981, 41(10-B), 3896.

Leonard, G. <u>The end of sex</u>. Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, Inc., 1983.

Levinger, G. Source of marital dissatisfaction amoung applicants for divorce. <u>American Jouranl of Orthopsychiatry</u>, 1966, 36, 803-807.

Levy, C. The experience of married love we-ness: An
     emperical existential-phenomenological study.
     Dissertation Abstracts, 1976, 37(4-B), 1910.

Lewis, J., Beavers, W., Gossett, J., & Phillips, V. No
     single threat: Psychological health in family
     systems. New York: Brunner/Mazel Publishers, 1976.

Mace, D. R. Marriage enrichment concepts for research.
     The Family Coordinator, 1975, April, 131-135.

Mace, D., & Mace. V. Marriage enrichment - Wave of the
     future. The Family Coordinator, 1975, April, 131-135.

Maslow, A. Toward a psychology of being. New York:
     D. Van Nostrand Company, 1968.

Maslow, A. Motivation and personality. New York: Harper
     and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1970.

Mc Clelland, D., Colman, C., Finn, K., & Winter, D.
     Motivation and maturity patterns in marital success.
     Social Behavior and Personality, 1978, 6(2), 163-174.

May, R. Love and will. New York: Dell Publishing Company
     Inc., 1969.

Miller, S., Corrales, R., & Wackman, D. Recent progress in
     understanding and facilitating marital communication.
     Family Coordinator, 1976, April, 143-151.

National Center for Health Statistics. Annual summary of
     births, deaths, marriages, and divorces: United States,
     1981. Monthly Vital Statistics Report, 31, 13,
     December 20, 1982.

Norton, W. Empathic ability and adjustment in marrige.
     Dissertation Abstracts, 1972, 32(11-A) 6571.

Olson, D., & Sprenkle, D. Emerging trends in relationship.
     Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling, 1976, 2,
     October.

Otto, H. Marriage and family enrichment: New perspectives
     and programs. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1976.

Otto H. Marriage and family enrichment programs in north
     america - report and analysis. Family Coordinator, 1975,
     April.

Preston. S. Estimating the proportion of american
     marriages that end in divorce. Sociological Methods and
     Research, 1975, 3, 435-460.

Raush, H. Communications conflict and marriage. San
     Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1974.

Regula, E. Marriage encounter: What makes it work?
     Family Coordinator, 1975, 24, 2, 153-159.

Resnick, B. Workshop lecture. February 18, 1983.

Roberts, B. Comparative study of healthy and
     neurotic-symbiotic marital relationships. Dissertation
     Abstracts, 1982, 42(7-A), 3019.

Rogers, C. Becoming partners. New York: Dell Publishing
     Company, 1972.

Rogers, L., Young, H., Cohen, I., Dworin. J., & Lipetz, M.
     Marital stability, mental health and marital
     satisfaction. Journal of Consulting and Clinical
     Psychology, 1970, 35, 3, 342-348.

Roth, J. R. The intimacy/individuation conflict: A study
     of the relationship between level of self-
     actualization and couple interaction. Dissertation
     Abstracts, 1977, 38(6-B), 2880.

Satir, B. Conjoint family therapy. Palo Alto, California:
     Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1967.

Satir, B. Peoplemaking. Palo Alto, California: Science
     and Behavior Books, Inc., 1972.

Schatzman, L. & Strauss, A. Field research. Englewood
     Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973.

Seymour, T. Effectiveness of marriage encounter couple
     participation on improving qualitative aspects of
     marital relationships. Dissertation Abstracts, 1977,
     39(11-B), 5587.

Sheehy, G. Passages. New York: Bantam Bopoks, 1974.

Spanier, G., & Lewis, R. Marital quality: A reveiw of the
     seventies. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1980,
     825-839.

Stern, Elizabeth G. I am a woman and a Jew. New York: Arno Press, 1969.

Strauss, E. Couples in love. Dissertation Abstracts, 1974, 35(5-B), 2450.

Travis, R., & Travis, Y. The pairing enrichment program: Actualizing the marriage. The Family Coordinator, 1975, 161-165.

Watzlawick, P. The language of change. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978.

Westly, W., & Epstein, N. The silent majority. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1969.

Wheeler, Leslie. Loving Warriors. New York: Dial Press, 1981.

A P P E N D I X

A P P E N D I X   A
DEFINITIONS FOR CODING

Love Stage

The love stage is characterized by a focus on the
relationship. It is a period when the couple is working
to establish the experience of companionship, intimacy,
mutual support, trust, and empathy. The couple is
concerned with the mutual fulfillment of their needs for a
sense of security, love and belonging. The focus is on
establishing a bond, a sense of "coupleness" and includes
the expression of love and affection through sex, cuddling
and touching. Below are indications of the love stage.
Concern in an area may indicate either lack or
satisfaction. For example, concern about love and
affection might manifest as satisfaction in the love and
affection in the relationship or disatisfaction. The key
is where the energy is focused.

- Concern with establishing trust and security in
    the relationship; having confidence in the
    ability to overcome difficulties, and that the
    other will be there when needed.
- Concern with commitment.

- Concern that the other is truely loving and can be trusted to not intentionally hurt physically or emotionally.
- Concern with communication; the degree of openness and honesty of expression.
- Concerns about unconditional loving of more hidden parts, and expressing those parts.
- Dependency, difficulty with separation.
- Low tolerance of differences, ignored or glossed over, focus on harmony over self-expression.
- Concern about love, affection, and sex; about giving to each other and taking each other's needs into account.

Esteem or Esteem Versus Love Stage

The primary challenge of the esteem stage is developing and balancing individual esteem, autonomy, self-expression and careers with love, intimacy, coupleness and family needs. During this stage the couple is working to establish or re-establish individual esteem within the context and boundaries of a love relationship. There is a recurring tension and conflict between love, (with a focus on relationship) and esteem (with a focus on the individual). It appears to the

couple that each of these aspects threatens the other and the primary concern is how to have both. Indications of the esteem stage include the following:

- Concern with balancing love and work or family and career.

- Concern with being successful in fulfilling ones own expectations and the expectations of loved ones.

- Concern for strength, achievment, mastery competence, and confidence in face of the world.

- Concern around having more space, independence, autonomy, and self-expression. Often combined with ambivalence and fear of it.

- Concern about overdependence and need for autonomy.

- Concern about adequacy and fear of taking action.

- Concern about partners independent action, fear, posessivenes, attempts to control, and jealousy.

- Concern with the balance of power in the relationsip, desire for greater equality and respect; redefining roles, rules, etc.

- Concern with having given up too much of self for the relationship.

- Concern with not giving enough of self to the relationship.

- Concern with expressing and integrating aspects of personality that have been on hold; breaking up symbiosis in the relationship.
- Concern with being and expressing self and maintaining the relationship at the same time.

Marital-Actualization Stage

The primary concern of the marital-actualization stage is with the realization of individual potential and the potential of the marriage. The couple's energies are turned outward into the world in the manifestation of a shared purpose, vision, cause or calling. Indications of the Marital-Actualization stage would include:

- Concern with the development of talents, capacities, and potentials, of self and partner.
- Concern with a shared purpose.
- High level of trust, low levels of fear.
- High level of freely chosen commitment.
- High level of unconditional love.
- Two strongly individual people who are also interdependent and intimately bound together.
- High level of personal responsibility for the quality of one's own life.

A P P E N D I X   B
ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CODER

Interview Questions

#1 Did they have a honeymoon stage?

    1) Was there a love stage? Evidence?

    2) Are they still in a love stage? Evidence?

    3) Did they move into esteem stage issues?

    4) Did a love stage come first? Evidence?

    5) If the esteem stage issues have been present, how
       prepotent is/was it?

#2 What are important turning points? As the person
describes each change or crises can you determine what
stage it is related to?

    1) Love stage? Evidence?

    2) Esteem stage? Evidence?

    3) Other?

    4) If esteem stage issues are or have been an issue

       a) how prepotent is/was it? Evidence?

       b) did it occur after a love stage? Evidence?

       c) How was it experienced by the man?

       d) How was it experienced by the woman?

       e) What helps resolution?

#3   What are they working on now?

      1) Are they love stage issues? Evidence?

      2) Are they esteem stage issues? Evidence?

      3) Other?

      4) If esteem stage how prepotent?

         a) How experienced by man?

         b) How experienced by woman?

         c) What helps?

         d) What hinders?

#4   Do they have difficulty with esteem issues?

      1) Are they working with esteem stage?

      2) How prepotent?

      3) How experienced by man?

      4) How experienced by woman?

      5) What helps/hinders?

#5   Have they ever given up too much of self? If yes, may be evidence of esteem stage.

      1) How important an issue?

      2) How experienced by man? woman?

      3) What helps?

      4) What hinders?

#6   Is taking space ever a problem? If yes, may indicate esteem stage.

      1) How important an issue?

2) How experienced by man? woman?

3) What helps?

4) What hinders?

#7 Ever given up too much of relationship for other
things? If yes, may be evidence of esteem stage.

1) How important?

2) How experienced by man?

3) How experienced by woman?

4) What helps/hinders?

#8 Is one wanting more closenesss ever a problem?
If yes may be evidence of esteem issues.

1) How prepotent?

2) How experienced by man/woman?

3) What helps/hinders?

#9 How do they experience the balance of power?
If a problem, may indicate esteem issues?

1) How prepotent?

2) How experienced by man/woman?

3) What helps/hinders?

#10 What grateful for? Answer may indicate what stage
satisfied in.

1) Love level?

2) Esteem?

3) Marital-Actualization?

A P P E N D I X   C
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the research study currently
entitled, "The Characteristics of the Actualized
Marriage: An Exploratory Study", conducted by Georgia
Noble, to fulfill the requirements for a doctoral
dissertation for the School of Education of the University
of Massachusetts. I understand that this research will
explore evidence for stages of marital development and the
attitudes and behaviors that facilitate and/or inhibit the
successful navigation of crises or turning points in
marriage.

I understand that my participation in this study will
be treated anonomously. Information acquired from me will
be kept strictly confidential, including from my partner.
The choice to share the contents of this inquiry with my
partner will be mine.

I understand that participation in this study may
raise some issues for me and/or my spouse which have
previously been unrecognized, and that this might be
uncomfortable and create some tension and stress.

I understand that while my participation in this study
may be a rewarding learning experience, it is not for the
purpose of marital counseling or psychotherapy.

I understand that the principle investigator, Georgia Noble, will provide, upon request, up to two sessions of counseling beyond the interview for any additional support and/or exploration of any of the issues that may be raised in this process.

I understand that I will receive, upon request, verbal feedback from the researcher at the completion of this study as to the nature and results of the research.

I understand that I will receive, upon request, a brief written summary of the study at its completion.

I understand that I may terminate my participation in this study at any time.

I understand that I am not compelled to answer any questions.

I understand that I will not be paid for my participation in the research.

_____
signature   date

_____
Georgia Noble, M.Ed., researcher
University of Massachusetts