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An analysis of early marital adjustment: The role of narcissism, cognitive, and family systems variables

Larry Stephen Armstrong
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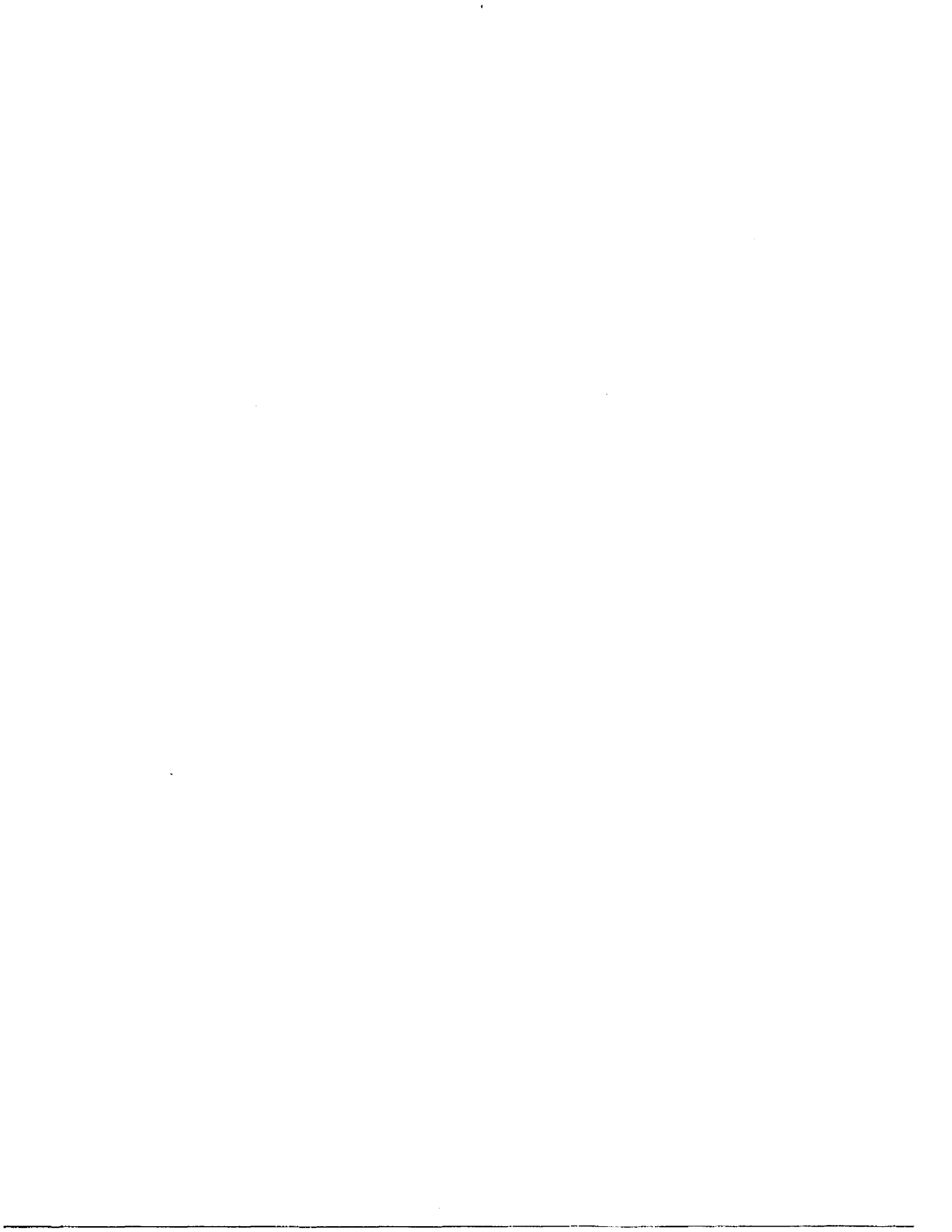
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The College of William and Mary, 1993

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AN ANALYSIS OF EARLY MARITAL ADJUSTMENT:

The Role of Narcissism, Cognitive,
and Family Systems Variables

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

L. Stephen Armstrong

November, 1993

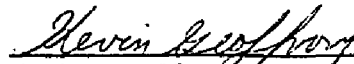
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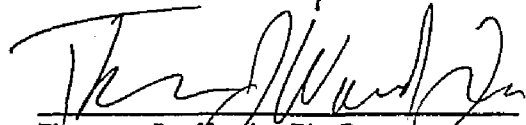
The Role of Narcissism, Cognitive,
and Family Systems Variables

by

L. Stephen Armstrong

Approved November, 1993 by


Kevin Geoffroy, Ed.D.
Chair of Doctoral Committee


Thomas J. Ward, Ph.D.


Charles Matthews, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Jack and Margaret Armstrong, whose love for each other remains anew after more than fifty-four years of marriage, and whose love for their three children has stood as a "constant object" for us in our lives.

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AN ANALYSIS OF EARLY MARITAL ADJUSTMENT:
The Role of Narcissism, Cognitive,
and Family Systems Variables

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the relevance of both intrapsychic and family systems variables for early marital adjustment. The intrapsychic variables included marital locus of control and narcissism. The family systems variables included six factors which have been found to be correlated with early marital adjustment. These six factors were:

1. Whether the couple married within a year of a significant loss for either spouse;
2. Whether either spouse wished to get more distance from his/her parents/family when they married;
3. Whether the wife became pregnant either before or within the first year of marriage;
4. Whether either spouse reported less than a good relationship with his/her parents at the present time;
5. Whether either spouse reported that his/her childhood was less than happy; and
6. Whether either spouse reported having parents who were divorced.

These variables were used in six research hypotheses exploring areas relevant to the marital adjustment of 71 couples in their twenties, living in central Virginia, who were married approximately two years at the time of the study.

The first hypothesis predicted a curvilinear (u-shaped)

relationship between a) subjects' levels of narcissism and subjects' scores on four marital outcome measures, and b) subjects' spouses' levels of narcissism and subjects' scores on four marital outcome measures. Neither of these predictions were supported. However, there were small, negative correlations between subjects' narcissism and two marital outcome measures (indicating a mild relationship between low narcissism in subjects and marital dissatisfaction), and there were small, negative correlations between subjects' spouses' narcissism and three marital outcome measures (indicating a mild relationship between low narcissism in subjects' spouses and marital dissatisfaction and marital problems). Despite the negative implications for relationships attributed to pronounced narcissism described in the clinical literature, no association was found between high narcissism and marital difficulties, and hence, a curvilinear relationship was not found between narcissism and marital difficulties.

The second hypothesis explored differences between two groups of subjects as to their marital locus of control. It was hypothesized that subjects with low to moderate scores on narcissism who were married to spouses with high narcissism scores, and who score low to moderate on two of three marital outcome measures, would be more internal on marital locus of control than the rest of the sample. This prediction was not supported, however.

The third hypothesis predicted no departure from chance as to couple combinations by narcissism level of each spouse. This hypothesis was supported. Hence, the theoretical literature hypothesizing psychological complementarity between couples is not supported.

The fourth hypothesis predicted differences between subjects with

high scores on narcissism and the rest of the sample as to a) their variability on marital locus of control and b) their locus of control on items reflecting acceptance of responsibility for marital problems. This hypothesis was not supported.

The fifth hypothesis predicted a positive correlation between external marital locus of control and marital difficulties as measured on four outcome measures. Moderate correlations were found between externality on locus of control and the four marital outcome measures. Hence, the hypothesis was supported.

The final hypothesis called for a multiple regression analysis including subjects' marital locus of control, both subjects' and subjects' spouses' narcissism scores, and the six family systems variables as the predictor variables, and the four marital outcome measures as the dependent variables. It was found that marital locus of control was the strongest predictor variable, and when combined with significant loss, childhood unhappiness, current relationship with parents, and subjects'/subjects' spouses' narcissism, yielded moderately strong correlations with the outcome measures. As such, these findings gave support to the object relations family systems perspective of James Framo, which was utilized in theoretically framing this study.

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA

**AN ANALYSIS OF EARLY MARITAL ADJUSTMENT:
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and Family Systems Variables**

Chapter 1

Introduction

Marital difficulties have been found to be the most frequently cited reason for which people seek therapy or psychological help (Veroff, Kulka, and Douven, 1981). Further, the effects of marital conflict and distress on physical and emotional well-being have been reliably demonstrated (Bloom, Asher, and White, 1978; Segraves, 1982). These findings reflect the human suffering which results from dysfunctional marriages and the causes underlying the high divorce rate, which represents many couples' ultimate attempt to escape a distressing marital relationship. As one writer has noted recently, "If the rates of divorce remain fairly steady, as they have throughout the 1980's, a half of all marriages in America today, and over a third in England, will end in the divorce court rather than the funeral parlor" (Stone, 1989).

Perhaps an even more alarming statistic is that it has been estimated that one out of four first-time marriages ends in divorce within two years after the wedding (Lobsenz, 1985). The first year of marriage appears to be particularly crucial in terms of how well a couple is able to establish workable patterns of problem-solving, separation-individuation, intimacy and sexuality, and separation from each spouse's family of origin, etc., tasks which are crucial to later stages of marital development (Ables and Brandsma, 1978; Kovacs, 1983; Meissner, 1978; Rapoport and Rapoport, 1967; Solomon, 1973; Tamashiro, 1978). Longitudinal studies of the first year and a half of marriage (Goodrich,

1968, Goodrich, et al, 1968; Rausch, Barry, Hertel, and Swain, 1974; Ryder, 1970 a, b) have shown that marital conflict and disagreements are common during the newlywed stage, but that most couples develop strategies to maintain cohesion and harmony. However, the development of disillusionment with one's mate, or disenchantment with marriage itself, has been described as a normal, predictable phase of marriage (Ables and Brandsma, 1978; Huston, McHale and Crouter, 1986; Kovacs, 1983; Waller, 1938), which one researcher has observed tends to occur most visibly after three to five years of marriage (Pineo, 1961).

Hence, from the initial romance, infatuation and euphoria of the early months of marriage, a couple must eventually move to a more mature level of love, respect, and intimacy if the marriage is to develop and grow (Rhodes, 1977, Scherz, 1971; Startz and Evans, 1981). Unfortunately, numerous factors may impede such development. For instance, in his classic study of mate selection, Waller (1938) noted that courting or engaged couples have strong needs to downplay and misperceive each other's faults, and, even when aware of them, minimize their affective impact. Kelley (1979) found that dating couples only begin to explore the causes of their difficulties as they reach later stages of their relationship, usually attributing problems to misunderstandings and external circumstances that would supposedly change after marriage.

However, when such difficulties do not diminish after marriage, each spouse may begin to attribute them to incompatibility or faults in their partner, etc., leading to diminished positive feelings about the relationship. Similarly, Markman (1979, 1981) has described a "sleeper effect", in which couples experience serious conflict prior to the marriage, but do not report disenchantment at that point, only to have

unresolved deficits in problem-solving severely erode marital happiness after only 2-3 years into the marriage. Kelly, Huston and Cate (1985), also found conflict resolution and problem-solving skills to be crucial to the maintenance of marital satisfaction after two years of marriage. As found by Shulman (1974) dating couples who are the most "idealistic" in their expectations tend not to recognize conflicts early in their relationships as compared to couples rated as "realistic" or "pessimistic" in their orientations.

Further complicating this process is also the fact that marriage joins not only two individuals, but two entire families of origin. As noted by McGoldrick (1988), "Becoming a couple is one of the most complex and difficult transitions of the family life cycle" (p. 209). Further, on a somber note, McGoldrick (1988) comments that, "It is possible that if couples could fully appreciate the emotional complexity of negotiating marriage right at the start, they might not dare to undertake the proposition" (p. 210). A number of factors involved in early marital adjustment enumerated by McGoldrick will be further delineated later in this study.

The statistic noted above -- that one fourth of all first marriages end within the first two years -- indeed suggests that "the honeymoon is over" early on for some couples. The question which could be posed is what is it about some couples, in addition to those factors already noted, that leads to such early disillusionment and dissatisfaction with what usually begins with great hope and dreams of emotional fulfillment? Again, part of the answer undoubtedly lies in the formation of high levels of expectation, idealization of mates, and the dreams of having all of one's emotional needs met by a loving, ever-attentive partner, all of

which generally characterizes newlywed couples. As noted by Dicks (1967), the marital relationship is "the nearest adult equivalent to the parent-child relationship" (p. 127), and further, there usually exists, at some level, an assumption that one's spouse, like a parent, can and should make certain that one's life is pleasurable and rewarding (Wexler, 1978).

Obviously, such expectations or assumptions cannot realistically be met indefinitely in any relationship, and for some couples, the result of "reality setting in" may be chronic, unresolved disillusionment and dissatisfaction. The problem focused on in this study concerns the question of what differentiates couples who report lower marital satisfaction and quality from those with average or higher satisfaction and quality in terms of their individual, demographic, and family systems characteristics. The purpose, therefore, of this research is to investigate the relationship between two psychological constructs (narcissism and locus of control), demographic variables, and variables relating to extended family relationships, and marital satisfaction and quality after 19-27 months of marriage. It is hoped that a study of such variables as to their impact upon early marital satisfaction and quality will contribute to a greater understanding of why some young marriages may result in destructive behavior patterns, or flounder and dissolve, while others adequately respond to the challenges and difficulties of this beginning stage of marital development. The specific relationships between the variables noted above will be set forth in the research hypotheses to be noted below.

Before outlining the research hypotheses to be investigated, however, we might first note the overall theoretical rationale of this study. As the present study includes both intrapsychic constructs (i.e.,

narcissism and locus of control) as well as family systems constructs, it was concluded by the author that the most relevant theoretical perspective to be used to guide such an investigation should include referents to both individual and systems levels of abstraction. Hence, the work of James Framo (1970, 1972, 1973, 1976, 1981, 1992), which has been described as a form of object relations family therapy, was chosen for this purpose. Framo, who has been described as an "integrationist" by Foley (1974), sought to bring together object relations or intrapsychic constructs and family systems constructs into an integrated, intergenerational perspective. The intrapsychic object-relations theory of Fairbairn (1954), the marital interaction theory of Dicks (1967) (also an object relations theorist), and the family systems theory of Bowen (1978) relating current family difficulties to multigenerational patterns and processes, are all noted by Framo (1981) as providing the basis of his theoretical perspective. Further elaboration of Framo's theory will be offered in Chapter 2.

Some specific terms which may require some initial clarification or definition include narcissism, locus of control, marital quality, and family systems and demographic variables. These terms will be elaborated upon in some detail in Chapter 2 with regard to descriptive variables and in Chapter 3 in regard to instrumentation. Hence, only brief definitions will be offered here in the order noted above.

Narcissism has been described in the psychodynamic theoretical and clinical literature as a pathological degree of self-absorption, sense of entitlement, grandiosity, lack of empathy, overdependence on external admiration and acclaim, and incapacity for long-term intimate relationships, etc. It should be noted, however, that this degree of

narcissism far exceeds what would be considered "normal" narcissism, which is described as a healthy investment in the self. The other intrapsychic construct -- locus of control -- has been described in social-learning theory as a generalized expectancy or belief that outcomes are more under one's own control (internal locus) or more under the control of external forces such as chance, luck, fate or powerful others (external locus). In terms of the theoretical rationale noted above, narcissism has been mentioned by Framo (1992) as an important concept in understanding human behavior, while locus of control (i.e., external locus) appears to relate closely to Framo's concern with projection of responsibility, regressive expectations, and cognitive distortions of one's intimates, etc.

Marital quality, as conceptualized in this study, includes a separate but related focus on marital satisfaction, marital disagreements and problems. While these components may be significantly related, they are not interchangeable terms, as will be delineated in Chapter 2. Marital satisfaction refers to individual subjective feelings regarding one's happiness or global satisfaction with one's mate or marriage, while marital disagreement refers to the relative absence of consensus about marital and individual goals or other problems which may be either internal or external to the marriage. Marital problems is the opposite of marital satisfaction and indicates to what extent either personal behaviors or traits of either spouse have led to marital problems.

Family systems variables refer to measures of a couple's quantity and quality of contact with each spouse's family of origin. Included in these variables are assessments of dependency and quality of involvement with family of origin, both past and present. Also included among family systems variables are factual data relating to the duration and

circumstances of the couple's relationship with one another prior to and during the first twelve months of marriage (i.e., how long the couple knew one another prior to the wedding, whether the wife was pregnant prior to or during the first year of marriage, etc.). Demographic variables include measures of factors such as each spouse's age, educational level, racial or ethnic identity, and whether or not the couple cohabitated prior to marriage.

o Research hypotheses

The present study will test six hypotheses. They are as follows:

1. When considering all subjects (husbands and wives in the study), there will be a curvilinear relationship between subjects' levels of narcissism, as well as subjects' spouses' levels of narcissism, and marital dissatisfaction, marital disagreements, and marital problems (i.e., subjects scoring either high or low on narcissism, or subjects with spouses who are either high or low on narcissism, will have high marital dissatisfaction and high levels of marital disagreements and problems, while those with moderate levels of narcissism or whose spouses are moderate on narcissism, will have lower marital dissatisfaction and lower levels of marital disagreements and problems).

2. When considering subjects who are a) moderate on narcissism, but whose spouses are high on narcissism, and b) who also score moderate to low on at least two of three marital outcome measures relating to marital dissatisfaction, disagreements and problems, the locus of control of such subjects will be significantly more internal than for remaining subjects in the sample.

3. Subjects with high levels of narcissism will more likely be coupled with spouses who are either high or low on narcissism, while

subjects with moderate narcissism will more likely be coupled with spouses also with moderate narcissism.

4. a) Subjects scoring high on narcissism will show greater variability in terms of their locus of control orientation (internal vs. external) and b) subjects scoring high on narcissism will more likely tend toward an external locus of control whenever situations call for acceptance of responsibility or blame for various negative outcomes in the marriage (but without a compensating sense of having control over improving outcomes) than will subjects with moderate or low narcissism.

5. There will be a positive relationship (correlation) between external locus of control and marital dissatisfaction, marital disagreement, and marital problems.

6. A number of variables taken together should account for subjects' differences in terms of marital dissatisfaction, disagreement, and problems, including: 1) subjects' narcissism; 2) subjects' spouses' narcissism; 3) subjects' marital locus of control; 4) whether the couple married within a year of a significant loss; 5) whether either spouse wished to get more distance from his/her parents when they married; 6) whether the wife became pregnant either before or within the first year of marriage; 7) whether either spouse reports less than a "good" relationship with his/her parents at the present time; 8) whether either spouse reports that his/her childhood was less than "happy"; and 9) whether either spouse has parents who are divorced.

Limitations of the Study

As with all research, this study contains limitations as to the extent one may be able to generalize from its findings. First, when

considering the numerous factors which may impact early marital adjustment, one is forced to limit the number of potential variables to be included in the study. Hence, while considerable thought has been put into both the theoretical and empirical rationales for including variables such as narcissism, locus of control, and family systems influences into the present study of early marital adjustment, undoubtedly other very relevant variables, such as gender attitudes, could have also been included. However, as with all research, this study will have to delimit its focus while attempting to present a tight theoretical and conceptual argument tying in together those constructs utilized as being particularly relevant in explaining the phenomenon under study. Hence, a number of variables will remain extraneous and uncontrolled, thus limiting the internal validity of this study.

Next, the participants in the study will be volunteers and will include only subjects who have shown a willingness to invest the time and energy to read through and respond to several pages of a questionnaire which probes a range of personal questions about their attitudes toward self, their marriage and mate, and their relationship and feelings toward their family of origin. Additionally, a few questionnaire items refer to issues such as sexual adjustment within the marriage, physical abuse, and substance abuse, all personal areas, to which a number of potential respondents may decline to answer, although the study will be strictly confidential in nature. Hence, the issue of differential selection of participants results. The question of representativeness of the sample under study raises serious questions of external validity and generalizability of the findings to the population at large. As noted by Donahue and Ryder (1982) and Noller and Fitzpatrick (1990), much of the

research on marital satisfaction and communication has resulted from samples limited to middle-class, college-educated respondents and obtained from convenience samples. The present study hopes to overcome these deficits through the use of random sampling, as well as close attention to comparison of those who participated with those who either declined participation in the study altogether or failed to complete and return the questionnaire.

Since the design of the study is a one-shot, cross sectional survey study, there will be no way to infer causality regarding the variables under study (which a longitudinal design might allow for, via study of changes of time-ordered associations). Additionally, since this study will use correlational statistics, inferences as to causality are further limited. However, as noted by Borg and Gall (1989), "As is the case with most research, the quality of correlational studies is determined not by the complexity of the design or the sophistication of the correlational techniques used, but by the depth of the rationale and theoretical constructs that guide the research design" (pp. 575-576). Hence, it is posited here that the theoretical and conceptual rationale offered next in Chapter 2 reflects a degree of depth and thoughtfulness which should go a long way toward improving the quality of the present study despite the inherent limitations noted above.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

A. Historical and Theoretical Development

As noted earlier, Framo has been described as an "integrationist" (Foley, 1974) among family therapy theorists because of his efforts toward bringing together object relations theory and family systems theory into a consistent, cohesive theoretical model which addresses marital dysfunction. Framo's object relations family therapy has been acknowledged as an important contribution to the development of psychodynamically-oriented family therapy (Luepnitz, 1988, Slipp, 1984). However, in terms of empirical support for his approach, Framo admits, with some apology, in the chapter on his model in Gurman and Kniskern's *Handbook of Family Therapy* (1981) that despite "not being oblivious to research needs," he cannot provide "concrete, hard data ...as evidence for the effectiveness" of his "conceptual approach to psychotherapy" (p. 154).

He does, on the other hand, elsewhere (1976) offer what he terms "some preliminary results" regarding his use of family-of-origin sessions with spouses in marital therapy (where parents and siblings of each spouse are directly involved with that spouse in family-of-origin sessions of several hours duration, but without the other spouse present). He states that, "This procedure can only be evaluated clinically and impressionistically at this stage of development; systematic research is badly needed" (1976, p. 202). He does, however, offer two case examples

in this particular paper outlining the use of family-of-origin sessions with spouses (which follow conjoint couples sessions and couples groups sessions), thereby highlighting the significance of such sessions in assisting individual spouses in clarifying their internal introjects from their original families, gaining new information, correcting "old misunderstandings and misinterpretations based on childhood perceptions, and the clearing away of the magical meanings that the family members have for each other" (1976, p. 200). Additionally, clients have an opportunity through this method to "get to know their parents as real people rather than as fantasy figures who have to be idealized or denigrated" and to establish "an adult-to-adult relationship with one's parents" (1976, p. 200).

The implications of such work in terms of assisting couples in their struggles toward greater individual autonomy and adequate emotional separation from their families of origin relates back to Framo's seeing unresolved, "insoluble" intrapsychic conflicts and introjects as being at the crux of attempts to use present relationships to heal such conflicts by forcing them to fit internal role models. In other words, as Framo states, "Dealing with the real, external figures loosens the grip of the internalized representations of these figures and exposes them to current realities," which allows for changes in perceptions and transferences (1981, p. 138). Most importantly, in terms of the creation of marital relationships with minimal contamination by projection of old introjects, Framo adds, "Having gone backward in time, the individual can then move forward in behaving toward the spouse and children in a more appropriate fashion, as persons in their own right, since their transference meaning has changed" (1981, p. 138).

To return to the issue of what research evidence exists to support what at least appears "impressionistically" (to borrow Framo's term) to be a convincing theoretical perspective regarding marital functioning, Framo is certainly not alone among intergenerational family therapists in terms of not offering empirical support for his approach. As noted by Brown and Christensen (1986), "There is little empirical evidence that supports the effectiveness of transgenerational family therapy" (p. 137). In addition to a general resistance by psychoanalytically oriented therapists toward empirical evaluation of therapy (Brown and Christensen, 1986, p. 137), there is also the issue that psychodynamically oriented therapists do not generally regard the reduction or elimination of symptoms as a primary criterion of success (Nichols, 1984). In general, the use of clients' ratings of satisfaction with treatment and therapists' self-reports as to treatment efficacy have been used in evaluating transgenerational family therapy, which, as noted by Brown and Christensen (1986), is fraught with problems regarding validity and reliability, lack of adequate research controls, and a general failure to look directly at changes in clients' lives or therapists' difficulties in being objective about improvements in clients.

One follow-up empirical study of Framo's approach does exist, however. The study, by Frances Baker (1982), collected data on clients' experiences during therapy, treatment outcome, marital adjustment, and relationships with family of origin. A specific goal of this study was to assess whether clients who had been involved in a family-of-origin session in addition to couples therapy had any better outcomes than those who had only been through the couples therapy. No significant advantage was shown by those who had received the family-of-origin sessions. Baker did find,

however, an overall success rate of 84% as measured by clients' ratings of improvements following therapy. Unfortunately, as noted by Brown and Christensen (1986), "Although these are promising findings, conclusions are drawn about effectiveness without reference to specificity of treatment, and the study has inherent design problems relating to external validity" (p. 137).

In regard to this last point -- regarding external validity, or to what segment of the population the finding may be generalized -- Framo (1981) notes that most of the couples he has treated were seen in his private practice and "therefore were, economically at least, upper-middle class" (p. 144). However, he also notes that he has used his approach in a community mental health center across the continuum of social classes. Further, he notes that, "I have seen couples conjointly, done couples group therapy, and had family of origin sessions with clients who were severely disadvantaged, poor, and nearly illiterate" (1981, p. 144). What makes his approach applicable across the spectrum of social classes and cultures, Framo notes, is the presence, in his opinion, of "certain universals of family and marital life that exist with all human beings, in all classes and cultures" (1981, p. 144). As examples of such ubiquitous problems among those seeking treatment, he offers the instances in which a spouse either has greater loyalty to his or her family of origin than to the spouse and children, or seeks either a partial or complete cutoff from the family of origin, as well as denoting the universal tendency toward "fusion", i.e., the desire to seek a sense of "wholeness" through merger with another, which is then followed by fears of being possessed, trapped, and losing one's identity, thereby leading to distancing, then fears of being alone, etc., with this sequence repeating in a circular process

indefinitely (Framo, 1970, 1976, 1981, 1992).

Framo (1976) notes that the goal of his treatment approach with couples is the "achievement of balance between the old and the new family systems, the inner and the outer worlds" (p. 208). He notes that among couples who report a successful therapy experience, there are several common denominators. These include: they appear to have become more autonomous, separate, or individuated as persons; they possess higher self-esteem; they evidence greater tolerance for each other's deficits, idiosyncrasies, and "regressive" (i.e., childish) features; they can discuss more comfortably issues which were previously anxiety-laden; they fight less destructively; they possess a greater sense of humor about previously loaded issues; they have more realistic expectations of each other and of marriage itself; they are in general less hostile toward one another; they are more affectionate with each other and enjoy sex more, they are more "accepting of the zigzag course that intimate relationships take; they have a greater empathic understanding of each other; and, finally, they are not deeply disappointed that they are not wildly, romantically 'in love' (At the end of marital therapy one woman said incredulously about her marriage relationship, 'You mean this is it?')" (1981, p. 152). By delineating the types of positive changes in couples who report successful therapy experiences, Framo further clarifies for which components of marital relationships his theory and approach have relevance. Such findings should also be heuristic in their implications for further elaboration and clarification of Framo's object relations family systems perspective (e.g., both cognitive and life-stress perspectives appear to have relevance in a number of instances).

In regard to the subject of the present study, i.e. newlywed

adjustment, much of Framo's theoretical perspective, especially as delineated in his most recent work, **Family-of-Origin Therapy: An Intergenerational Approach** (1992), relates specifically to the impact of internal object relations as formed during childhood upon later mate selection and the capacity to sustain a healthy, ongoing, intimate relationship. As an integrationist, however, Framo also brings into focus intergenerational patterns and relationships as they influence current marital functioning. Taken together, these elements represent Framo's "attempts to integrate dynamic and systems concepts, and intrapsychic and interpersonal dimensions, thereby providing a conceptual bridge between the personal and the social" (1992, p. 111). Hence, his perspective, which takes in the interplay between the intrapsychic and the interpersonal, may be particularly useful in conceptualizing early marital adjustment. The key independent variables to be used in this study (i.e., narcissism, locus of control, and family systems variables) can now be identified as they are specifically or indirectly discussed in Framo's work.

First, in his newest work, Framo (1992) specifically elaborates upon the role of narcissism in intimate relationships. He notes that "all human beings exist along a continuum of the capacity to love and to develop an intimate, trusting relationship (everyone's Achilles' heel)" (1992, p. 114). Relative to the concept of narcissism, he adds that "Even those at the mature level of development have some degree of narcissism, sense of entitlement, regressive expectations, symbiotic yearnings, primitive hostility, and difficulty reconciling ambivalence" (1992, p. 114). This is, as will be seen in the discussion of narcissism as a descriptive variable to follow, a fairly good summary of the components of

narcissism, while also noting that narcissism exists to some extent even within well-functioning individuals. Framo (1992) also notes how these individual proclivities may only be activated within close, personal relationships, and how they may carry a coercive power with them:

These characteristics require special conditions in order to be manifested, such as a marital relationship. To some extent everyone tends to view their intimates in terms of their own needs or as carrying their own denied, split-off traits. Life situations are not only unconsciously interpreted in the light of the inner object world, but active unconscious attempts are made to force and change close relationships into fitting the internal role models--the central problem in marital difficulties (emphasis in original) (p. 114).

The unconscious desire to mold one's relationship to conform to internal objects also plays a major role in mate selection according to Framo. Borrowing from the work of Dicks (1967), Framo (1992) notes that couples "select each other on the basis of rediscovering lost aspects of their primary object relations, which they had split off and which, in their involvement with the spouse, they re-experience by projective identification" (p. 115). He makes an interesting point that prospective mates must be able to stimulate feelings around what was once hoped for as well as what was once abhorred. This process again relates to unconscious attempts at mastering "unfinished business":

The partner chosen by the emotional radar must stimulate the re-creation of the childhood dream of unconditional love; at the same time, the prospective mate must be enough like the bad inner object to allow for the penetration of old hatreds. People usually do not select the partner they want; they get the one that they need. A partner is chosen who, it is hoped, will enable one to cancel out, replicate, control, master, live through, or heal, in a dyadic framework, what could not be settled internally. Consequently, one's current intimates, one's spouse and children, are, in part, stand-ins for old images, the embodiments of long buried introjects (emphasis in original) (p. 115).

None of Framo's writings specifically suggest a complementarity between prospective spouses in terms of their "bad inner objects" which might compel individuals toward selection of particular mates based on the "goodness of fit" between internal objects. However, given that he does emphasize that spouses "collusively carry psychic functions for each other" once together and "reciprocally become a part of each other's psychology, forming a feedback system that regulates and patterns their individual behaviors" (1992, p. 111), it would seem to be a short theoretical step to do so. In fact, Bowen (1978), to whom Framo refers as a major theoretical influence on his own thinking regarding family systems and intergenerational influences upon couple functioning, postulates that individuals with similar levels of "differentiation of self" (irregardless of how it is manifested in cases of low differentiation) tend to couple with one another. Hence, following this line of suggestion, it may well be that individuals with either similar or perhaps extreme opposite levels of narcissistic leanings tend to join together (as either extreme on a continuum of narcissism would likely represent similar levels of differentiation).

This latter view is postulated by Solomon (1985), as well as by Lachkar (1992) in *The Narcissistic/Borderline Couple*, a psychoanalytic exploration of marital dysfunction. Both Solomon and Lachkar view the narcissistic partner as overly invested in self, while the borderline partner has a deficit in investment in self. They contend that these two types of impaired personalities are drawn toward one another and form a relatively stable, albeit unhealthy, bond with one another, whereas two individuals with similar types of impairment of self do not form a stable bond. Both Solomon's and Lachkar's perspectives, as well as Bowen's,

relate to the similarity or complementarity of mates' levels of maturity or emotional development and would seem to support Framo's own view regarding spouses carrying psychic functions for one another and becoming part of each other's psychology -- as in the case of a puzzle, the pieces need to fit together somewhat beforehand in order to "join" properly once together.

As noted in Chapter 1, locus of control has been defined as a generalized expectancy or belief that outcomes are under one's own control or more under the control of external forces such as chance, luck, fate, or powerful and/or significant others. Framo's inclusion of "regressive expectations" (1992, p. 114) as a feature associated with narcissism would seem to relate to the concept of locus of control, since it refers to generalized expectancies. One might thus expect that "regressive expectations" may result in extremes of either seeing outcomes as being beyond one's control or having a belief that one can or should control most if not all of the outcomes effecting oneself. Hence, this cognitive variable has some affinity with Framo's overall orientation. He also mentions "difficulty reconciling ambivalence" (1992, p. 114) as a problem associated with narcissism, a condition which has been related to "narcissistic cognitive style" (Bach, 1977) and information-processing style (Horowitz, 1975), which is noted in the discussion of narcissism to follow.

Finally, much of Framo's theory relates to both past and present family-of-origin influences effecting marital functioning. Among the family systems' influences he discusses are: deaths and losses; the quality of each spouse's parents' marriage; the circumstances under which each spouse left home; each spouse's past and current relationship with

parents and siblings; and traumatic events during childhood effecting the individual and/or family (1992, p. 17). Many newlywed couples may undoubtedly believe that once they have married and formed their own nuclear family system, they are somehow "beyond" the influence of their families of origin. Obviously, Framo, as well as a number of other intergenerational theorists such as Bowen (1978), Norman and Betty Paul (1975), Carl Whitaker (Neil and Kniskern, 1982), and Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy (1973), would clearly disagree that one can so easily escape the influence of intergenerational patterns, past debts, loyalties and emotional ties to one's family of origin, which, to a large extent, plays a very significant role in shaping one's current relationships despite individualistic protests to the contrary. Hence, family-of-origin and intergenerational influences upon early marital adjustment will be included among the variables in this study.

Critique

Several points regarding the shortcomings of Framo's theoretical model may be noted at this time. First, Framo himself (1981) recognized the absence of and need for systematic empirical research regarding the effectiveness of his approach. Hence, the usefulness of an integrative model bringing together object relations theory and an intergenerational family systems perspective remains largely unsupported. Given that the present study utilizes constructs from both of these theoretical orientations, an empirical test of such an integrative model will hopefully result. Further, this study will go beyond simply looking at results on marital satisfaction scales, as was the case in the single follow-up study done regarding Framo's model (Baker, 1982), but will

include a correlational analysis of a number of variables hypothesized to be related to marital adjustment.

Secondly, as noted by Mallouk (1982), "A legitimate criticism of object relations theory is that it is too dependent on inferential processes and lacks systematic empirical documentation" (p. 429). Framo's use of object relations concepts can be similarly criticized as too global or without specific operational referents. A primary example of such a construct is Framo's oft-repeated reference to "insoluble intrapsychic conflicts," which he sees as "being acted out, replicated, mastered, or defended against with the current intimates, via some very complicated processes that are poorly understood" (1981, p. 137). While such interactions undoubtedly are quite complicated and not well understood, the absence of operational definitions of major concepts does little to clear up the complication and confusion regarding these processes, not to mention how this also impedes the implementation of much needed empirical research as noted earlier.

Third, as noted above, the evaluation of Framo's approach has suffered from inadequate external validity, given that the largest proportion of the couples he treated were seen in his private practice and were upper-middle class in socioeconomic status. Although he posits that he has applied his approach in community mental health settings with couples from the range of social classes and racial/cultural backgrounds, etc., a lack of empirical evidence remains in terms of adequate external validity beyond Framo's own clinical assessments of the broad applicability of his approach. Hence, a study which includes couples from the general, non-clinical population which includes representative proportions of various social classes, races, and educational levels,

etc., which tests the relevance of object relations/family systems concepts is badly needed.

Finally, although Framo (1976, 1981) does refer to characteristics and categories of healthy or well-functioning versus pathological or dysfunctional marriages and families, he does not offer much comment as to the importance of the family life cycle in terms of its impact upon marital adjustment and change. As has been noted by a number of authors (Kovacs, 1983; McGoldrick, 1988; Startz & Evans, 1981), the timing of marriage within the individual life cycle and subsequent stages of marriage are very significant in terms of evaluating marital issues, interactions and satisfaction. Given that the present study focuses on newlywed adjustment while applying intrapsychic and family systems variables, hopefully some implications for integrationist approaches such as Framo's and others' (e.g., Dicks, 1967; Feldman, 1979, 1982; Gurman, 1981; Sager, 1981) may be drawn regarding early marital development, thereby highlighting the significance of this marital stage more specifically.

B. Descriptive Variables

1. Narcissism

Recent works in the area of marital relationships and theory have highlighted the importance of narcissism as a core concept in understanding dysfunctional marital conflict (Feldman, 1982; Lachkar, 1985, 1992; Solomon, 1985, 1989). Narcissism was originally conceptualized by Freud (1914) as a phase of normal development that would follow an autoerotic phase, which eventually matures into object love. Unreliable and erratic caretakers during infancy, or parents who

overvalued their children, were seen as causing disruption of the development of object love, resulting in a fixation at the narcissistic phase of development. Narcissistic individuals were thus seen as incapable of forming lasting attachments as a result of fixation at a stage of self-involvement (Davis, 1990). Further elaboration of narcissism as a clinical entity has been based primarily on psychoanalytic (Fenichel, 1945; Ferenczi, 1923; Freud, 1931; Jones, 1913; Olden, 1946; A. Reich, 1960; W. Reich, 1933, Tartakoff, 1966; Waelder, 1925), self psychology, and object relations theories (Akhtar & Thomson, 1982; Frances, 1985; Kernberg, 1970, 1975; Kohut, 1966, 1971; Masterson, 1981, 1985; Stolorow, 1975; Svrakic, 1985), and more recently on social learning theory (Millon, 1969) and cognitive theory (Davis, 1990).

Regardless of which theoretical orientation is used to explain the etiology and course of narcissistic development, there is a generally agreed-upon set of features for clinical narcissism which have obvious implications for the development of attachments and ongoing, intimate relationships. However, it has been noted that a great deal of subjectivity and inference are typically involved in determining the absence or presence of the diagnostic criteria for pathological narcissism and that diagnostic reliability is therefore low (Spitzer, Forman, & Nee, 1979; Stangl, Pfohl, Zimmerman, Bowers, & Corenthal, 1985; Widiger & Frances, 1985; APA, 1980, p. 7). While further research is needed to increase diagnostic reliability and demonstrate conceptual validity (Davis, 1990), narcissism as a clinical entity was nevertheless included into the American Psychiatric Association's third edition of the **Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders** (1980) and included a number of specific indicators or clinical features. Clinical narcissism

(or narcissistic personality disorder), as described in DSM-III-R (1987) is a "pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behavior), lack of empathy, and hypersensitivity to the evaluation of others, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts."

It has been stated (Solomon, 1982) that Kernberg offers the clearest description of the narcissistic personality. Kernberg (1975, p. 264) notes eleven prominent features of narcissistic personality. As summarized by Solomon (1982), these include: "excessive self-absorption; superficially smooth, appropriate, and effective social adaptation covering profound distortions in internal relations with other people; intense ambitiousness; grandiose fantasies existing side-by-side with feelings of inferiority; overdependence on external admiration and acclaim; feelings of boredom and emptiness; endless search for gratification of strivings for brilliance, wealth, power, and beauty; incapacity to love, to be concerned, or to be empathic toward others; chronic uncertainty and dissatisfaction about oneself; exploitiveness and ruthlessness toward others; chronic, intense envy, and defenses against such envy, e.g., devaluation, omnipotent control, and narcissistic withdrawal" (p. 463). Other features noted for narcissistic personality include unrealistic expectations for "perfect mirroring" (Klein, 1989), as well as hypersensitivity, narcissistic rage and anxiety when expectations are thwarted, projective identification and cognitive distortion via overgeneralization and denial (Feldman, 1982).

These clinical features of narcissistic personality would undoubtedly make for difficulties in interpersonal relationships, which are described as "invariably disturbed" by DSM-III-R. Because narcissistic personality is so associated with exploitative, unempathic,

grandiose behavior, relationship problems would indeed appear to be inevitable. However, spouses of narcissistically vulnerable individuals may initially be taken in by their smooth, effective, socially adept personal style. As part of their desire for perfect mirroring, the narcissistically vulnerable individual is indeed likely, initially, to idealize his or her partner, only to experience a profound irreversible disillusionment and disappointment once the initial idealization wears off (Wolfe, 1978).

Hence, it would follow that as overidealization is shattered, devaluation follows. There may be a sudden "flip" from an expansive sense of well-being in the narcissistic person to a feeling of total disillusionment in the other, which, as Kernberg has observed, may eventually result in disinvestment in the formerly "perfect" object. Kernberg notes that people with narcissistic disorder lack the capacity to move beyond the normal disillusionment stage experienced in any sustained close relationship, or recover any of the excitement or fascination, even in a less intense form, associated with the initial stage of the relationship (Wolfe, 1978). The negative feelings and dysphoria experienced with disappointment are usually temporary, since, as noted by Klein (1989), the narcissistic individual "is usually able to repair the damage and deny reality by reinflation through self-aggrandizement, projection of self-damage onto others, or devaluation of the offending other or situation" (p. 42).

However, over an extended period of time, as external affirmation or admiration becomes too predictable or becomes depleted, the narcissistic person experiences boredom and restlessness, and will seek new sources of adulation. Solomon (1989) describes marital relationships with such

conditions as being ripe for the development of affairs. Stevens, Pfozt, and Skelly (1984) similarly note that "narcissistic relationships tend to consist of brief, serial, and shallow attachments, often of a sexually promiscuous nature" (p. 384). There is a marked absence of guilt feelings regarding exploitative behavior as well, and behind a facade of charm and seductiveness, narcissists are very often cold and ruthless (Stevens, Pfozt, and Skelly, 1984, p. 384).

It should be noted, however, that narcissism as a clinical concept ranges from archaic to mature forms i.e., that mature narcissism consists of the capacity to combine skills and talents with ambitions in order to accomplish important life goals (Solomon, 1989, p. 43). As noted by Stolorow (1975), "The issue of whether a piece of narcissism is healthy or unhealthy reduces to the question of whether or not it succeeds in maintaining a cohesive, stable and positively coloured self-representation" (p. 1984). As noted by Masterson (1981) in a related conceptualization, the "wide spectrum of the psychopathology of the self (narcissism) . . . ranges from the deficient emotional investment in the self seen in the borderline to the pathologic overinvestment of the self seen in the narcissistic patient" (pp. ix-x). Hence, the implication is that a "healthy" level of narcissism is crucial in the maintenance of self-esteem, a stable sense of self, and functional relationships with others (Jacobson, 1964; Solomon, 1989; Stolorow, 1975).

The current state of empirical research on narcissism is rather limited (Emmons, 1987; Shulman & Ferguson, 1988). Especially given the sharp theoretical debate over the etiology and course of narcissism, as Shulman and Ferguson (1988) note, "Although the controversy persists, there have been surprisingly few empirical investigations of questions

related to the disorder" (p. 858). Earliest studies of narcissism (Grayden, 1958; Young, 1959) used the Blacky Picture Test, a psychodynamically based projective instrument, to explore the relationship between narcissism and variables such as hypochondriasis and overall degree of psychopathology, with findings being generally positive. Later studies (Exner, 1969; Harder, 1979) utilizing projectives such as the Rorschach and TAT demonstrated that, as noted by Shulman and Ferguson (1988), "it is possible to obtain adequate reliability and validity when narcissism is assessed by means of a projective" (p. 859). Shulman and Ferguson (1988) also summarized the empirical findings regarding inventory methods of assessing narcissism, focusing primarily on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) which was developed by Raskin and Hall (1979).

A number of findings utilizing the NPI are particularly relevant in regard to a study of marital relationships, and are briefly summarized here. Raskin and Hall (1981) found that subjects high on narcissism scores were similarly high on extroversion and psychoticism on the Eysenck as well as these attributes combined. They found that the individual with a combination of these traits, who also scored high on narcissism, to be "exhibitionistic . . . yet at the same time is primarily solitary, self concerned and absorbed, and lacking in empathy" (p. 160). Watson, Grisham, Trotler, and Biderman (1984), in a study with 60 undergraduate subjects, found a significant negative relationship between NPI scores and two measures of empathy. Further illuminating the self-absorption and preoccupation of narcissism, Raskin (1981) found that NPI scores, which positively related to the frequency of use of first-person singular pronouns (i.e., I, me, mine, etc.), were negatively related to usage of first-person plural pronouns (i.e., we, us, our, etc.). Emmons (1981),

exploring the relationship between sensation seeking and narcissism, found significant correlations between scores on the NPI and experience seeking, disinhibition, and boredom susceptibility. Watson, Hood, and Morris (1984) found NPI scores to be negatively correlated with religious values, which indicate some transcendence of egocentric needs.

An additional study which utilizes the NPI is of particular interest because it involved newlywed couples in its sample. This study, by Buss and Chiodo (1991), attempted to evaluate gender differences regarding narcissistic acts, and to provide validity evidence regarding the NPI, as well as to identify what narcissistic acts are performed most frequently in everyday life and to establish whether or not narcissism actually constitutes an actual "syndrome". The most frequent themes among narcissistic acts were condescension and extreme preoccupation with or attention to one's physical appearance. Males were found to commit more acts reflecting a lack of empathy, while females showed validity of the NPI was supported overall. Of the seven components of the NPI identified by Raskin and Terry (1988), grandiosity, self-aggrandizement, and exhibitionism showed the strongest relationships with act-based measures of narcissism. This particular study did not, unfortunately, relate either scores on the NPI or level of narcissistic acts to any measure of marital quality or satisfaction.

Additional research utilizing the NPI by Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan (1991a, 1991b) focused on narcissism as a "defensive form" of self-esteem regulation. They based this proposition upon a number of empirical findings, including: 1) there is a positive correlation between narcissism and self-esteem (Emmons, 1984; Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan, 1991a; Watson, Taylor, and Morris, 1987); 2) narcissism is positively

correlated to grandiosity (Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan, 1991a); 3) narcissism is positively correlated to hostility (Emmons, 1984; McCann and Biaggio, 1989; Raskin and Novacek, 1989; Raskin and Terry, 1988); and 4) narcissism is positively correlated to the defense of projection and turning against others while it is negatively correlated to turning against the self (Biscardi and Schill, 1985). Raskin, Novacek and Hogan (1991a, 1991b) found support for the contention that grandiosity is used to guard against depression and self-doubt. Maintenance of a grandiose self-image is furthered by the interpersonal strategies of exhibitionism, superiority, vanity, exploitativeness, entitlement, self-sufficiency, and authority, all of which were found to be components of the NPI by Raskin and Terry (1988). As noted by Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan (1991b), "When successful, this narcissistic configuration promotes self-esteem", but "When unsuccessful, self-esteem gives way to self-doubt" (p. 912).

In a similar vein, Raskin and Novacek (1991) have provided empirical support for much of the clinical literature which relates to the function of fantasy in protecting, stabilizing, and repairing the narcissistic individual's sense of well-being, cohesion, and self-esteem (Jacobson, 1964; Kernburg, 1975; Kohut, 1971; and Reich, 1960). As noted in the DSM-III-R (1987), one diagnostic criteria defining narcissistic personality disorder is a preoccupation with "fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love" (p. 351). Raskin and Novacek (1991) found that narcissistic individuals are very accepting of their daydreams, which most frequently revolve around fantasies relating to heroic, sexual, or hostile actions or to achievement, self-revelation, and future-orientation, and, when taken together, comprise a coherent "narcissistic" fantasy style.

These findings support several clinical discussions relating to the role of fantasy in narcissism, including: Tartakoff's (1966) "Nobel Prize Complex", which involves fantasies of being either the "powerful one" or the "special one"; Modell's (1975) and Volkan's (1979) descriptions of "cocoon" and "glass bubble" fantasies which emphasize self-sufficiency and not needing others for emotional sustenance; and Horowitz's (1975) comments on the importance that "reflections of glory" play in maintaining narcissists' self-esteem when they are threatened by distressing events. This last clinical point was specifically supported by Raskin and Novacek's (1991) finding that narcissistic individuals, when under higher levels of daily stress, report more frequent use of fantasies involving self-admiration, power and revenge, and suffering (as a heroic martyr) in order to cope with stress. Hence, fantasies and daydreams, as one form of cognitive process, appear to play a crucial role in the lives of narcissistically vulnerable individuals. Other cognitive components related to narcissism will be noted in discussion to follow.

In assessing the NPI, Emmons (1987) found "additional evidence for the validity of narcissism as a normal personality trait" and that "Only the Exploiteness/Entitlement subscale was found to correlate significantly with the measures of pathological narcissism" (p. 15). Hence, the significance of exploitiveness and feelings of entitlement (as opposed to self-admiration, superiority, or leadership domains) in fostering maladaptive interpersonal relationships is highlighted. Emmons (1987) further suggests that narcissism may be an important concept as applied to attribution theory, which posits that individuals tend to take credit for successful outcomes while denying responsibility or blame for failure, a process believed to function for the individual's self-esteem

enhancement or self-protection. As noted by Emmons (1987), "One might expect such egotistical attributions to be particularly prevalent among narcissistic individuals, given that their self-esteem is especially vulnerable and that they may be motivated to enhance their self-esteem" (p. 16). He calls for further exploration of the attributional styles of people with varying levels of narcissism.

Attention to this cognitive component of narcissism has elsewhere been addressed by Bach (1977), who described a "narcissistic state of consciousness" which related to a variety of cognitive distortions, a predominance of egocentric reality perception and an excess of self-stimulation. Horowitz (1975), in discussing the "narcissistic mode of information processing", describes the cognitive process of "sliding meanings" in which too much attention is paid to sources of praise and criticism in order to enhance the former while minimizing the latter. The narcissistic personality additionally employs other characteristic cognitive coping mechanisms to lessen threats to self-esteem. As noted by Horowitz (1975), "the central pillar of this narcissistic style is externalization of bad attributes and internalization of good attributes" (p. 169). In this process, the narcissist avoids the discomfort of trying to manage or tolerate ambivalence toward either self or others. Since he is particularly vulnerable to any deflation or loss of others who support his grandiose self-concept, the narcissist, when faced with stressful events such as criticism, loss of praise or admiration, humiliation, or simple lack of recognition, etc. may "deny, disavow, negate, or shift in meaning the information involved to prevent a reactive state of rage, depression, or shame" (p. 170). Hence, as Horowitz (1975) notes, "To prevent this state, the narcissistic personality slides around the meaning

of events to place the self in a better light" (p. 171).

Such cognitive fluidity permits the narcissistic personality to maintain what appears to be logical consistency while minimizing weakness or "evil" within self while exaggerating the presence of control or innocence within self, depending on the circumstances. Involved in such maneuvers, according to Horowitz (1975), are behaviors such as: either overestimating or underestimating self and others; avoiding "self-deflating situations"; and variability in demeanor, depending upon the circumstances and current level of self-esteem, including charm, superiority, a sense of omnipotent control, coldness, and withdrawal, as well as less "competent" presentations of self such as panic, shame, and helplessness. In terms of locus of control, a narcissistic personality may well swerve back and forth between an internal locus and external locus as part of his/her effort to minimize self-blame for failure while taking credit for success, etc. As noted by Horowitz (1975) regarding "sliding meanings", this sort of shifting mental perspective may result in incompatible psychological attitudes being held in separate but related clusters, which may contribute to a vague feeling of uncertainty, restlessness, and consistent need for confirmation from others, etc.

One additional study on narcissism which has implications for marital relationships, but which utilizes a different instrument, is Solomon's validation study (1982) of the Narcissistic Personality Disorder Scale developed by Ashby, Lee and Duke (1979). This scale is a subscale of the MMPI and hence is intended to measure pathological narcissism. Solomon's findings were that narcissism, as measured by this particular instrument, is significantly related to self-esteem, involvement in a satisfying love relationship and frequency of nightmares. That is,

subjects with "normal" levels of narcissism evidenced greater self-esteem, were more likely to report involvement in a satisfying, ongoing relationship with a significant other, and reported having fewer nightmares than did those with high levels of narcissism. This last finding, which is less obvious in terms of its meaning, is related by Solomon to Kohut's (1971, 1976) view of nightmares "as a reflection of one's self-feeling, self-state, or level of narcissistic development" and supports other research positing the incidence of nightmares "as an index of psychopathology" (pp. 465-466). As in the majority of the studies noted above, however, Solomon exclusively utilized undergraduate students in his study. Nevertheless, this study, in addition to those cited above, has very strong implications for the application of self-report inventories in the study of narcissism and its impact on interpersonal relationships.

Critique

Three overall criticisms regarding the shortcomings of the above-cited research in terms of furthering our understanding of the relationship between narcissism and intimate relationships can be noted. First, those studies which were cited as having particular relevance for understanding the relationship between narcissism and interpersonal relationships, while highly suggestive in terms of the related variables under study, e.g., empathy, self-absorption, boredom susceptibility, etc., and their impact on intimate relations, are limited to samples of undergraduate college students. Hence, obvious problems as to external validity and generalization to other populations (i.e., broader age, racial, educational, and socioeconomic groups) exist as a result.

Secondly, it appears that whatever reciprocal impact may exist between narcissism and ongoing relationships is not addressed in these studies, which look exclusively at the relationship between narcissism and one or two other personality or individual variables in a "linear" manner without looking at the possible interactive effects of relationship variables. For instance, none of the studies cited look specifically at the relationship between narcissism and marital adjustment. The only study cited which related specifically to the issue of love relationships was that by Solomon (1982). Unfortunately, the only assessment regarding love relationships and narcissism was the global self-report of either being or not being involved in a satisfying relationship, and utilized an inventory (Ashby, 1979) with very limited validity data available (Shulman and Ferguson, 1988). Obviously, when research utilizes such global, dichotomous variables in this manner, much potentially meaningful information is lost.

Finally, several authors have made reference to the importance of the cognitive components of narcissism (Akhtar and Thomson, 1982; Bach, 1987; Emmons, 1987; Feldman, 1982). While Emmons (1987) makes reference to the role of the "self-serving bias" as described in attributional theory, and Bach (1987), Horowitz (1975), and Feldman (1982) all highlight the importance of cognitive distortions in the interpersonal relationships of narcissistically vulnerable individuals, all of this discussion, although provocative and interesting in terms of its possibilities, remains at the level of clinical analysis or speculation until some empirical application of such cognitive variables is undertaken. One of the intentions of the present paper will be to add some empirical evidence regarding the cognitive component(s) of narcissism.

2. Locus of Control

Derived essentially from social-learning theory, locus of control is a cognitive personality construct which has been defined by Rotter (1966) as a generalized expectancy or belief that one's outcomes are more under one's own personal control (internal locus) or more under the control of forces external to oneself, such as chance, fate, or powerful others (external locus). Summaries of locus of control empirical literature (Lefcourt, 1976, 1982; Phares, 1976; Strickland, 1977) have described internals in comparison with externals as less compliant to social influence, more task-oriented and better at gathering information, more achievement oriented, and better adjusted in general. Although locus of control has been found to account for only a small portion of overall criterion behavior when looking at those areas just noted, Rotter (1975) has noted that, on theoretical grounds, generalized control expectancies most likely would account for a small amount of variance of specific behaviors, but would be relevant over a wide spectrum of behaviors.

The locus of control construct has infrequently been investigated in the context of ongoing interpersonal relationships (Doherty, 1981). As noted by Doherty (1981), when applying the locus of control construct to marriage, "one may speculate that internals, believing in more personal control over marital events than do externals, may 'work harder' to achieve success in their marital relationships" (p. 370). Whereas internals may take a more assertive, task-oriented approach to marriage, externals would more likely take a passive position regarding marital issues as a result of their diminished sense of influence over the outcomes of marital situations (Doherty and Ryder, 1979). Additionally, internals appear to exercise greater independence of judgment and are more

resistant to their spouse's attempts to control them. Externals, on the other hand, may be more dependent on support from their spouses.

However, Doherty (1983), also notes that "nothing in the theory underlying the locus of control construct suggests a clear-cut theoretical relationship between locus of control and satisfaction with particular domains in life" (p. 169). While internals may work harder toward achievement in areas such as school, career, and marriage, there is no direct link, conceptually or empirically, between internality and satisfaction in such areas. Further, such relationships, if found, tend to be very slight and not easily interpreted in one causal direction, i.e. are internals more satisfied with their marriages because of their internality, or do couples in satisfying marriages become more internal as a consequence of their satisfaction?

With these restrictions in mind, research on individual locus of control and marital satisfaction as well as couple combinations of locus of control and marital satisfaction can be summarized. Research on newlyweds (Doherty, 1981), on couples married an average of almost three years (Sabatelli, 1982), and on couples married an average of eleven years (McCabe, 1978) all showed nonsignificant correlations between measures of marital satisfaction and Rotter's I-E (internal-external) scale. However, Doherty (1980) found a small but statistically reliable positive association between internality and marital and family satisfaction. Additionally, two other studies using marriage-specific locus of control instruments revealed moderate correlations between internality and marital satisfaction. Miller (1981) found moderate correlations between internality and a measure of marital intimacy and a one-item measure of marital satisfaction, as did unpublished data from a later study (Winkler

and Doherty, 1983). The most recent findings suggest a positive relationship between internality as assessed on a marriage-specific measure of locus of control and marital satisfaction and intimacy ratings (Miller, Lefcourt and Ware, 1983; Smolen and Spiegel, 1987). Hence, evidence to date regarding locus of control is somewhat mixed in terms of its relationship with marital satisfaction and intimacy, although more recent research indicates a likely connection between internality and positive marital outcome.

In terms of marital problem-solving abilities, external husbands, when compared to internal husbands, were found to be more passive in their problem-solving interactions with their wives in low-demand, low-pressure, or non-threatening situations (Doherty and Ryder, 1979), but more likely to resort to impulsive aggression in problem-solving interactions with their wives when placed under pressure or in emotionally-charged situations, etc. (Winkler and Doherty, 1983). Doherty (1983) also noted that, in general, internals are likely to behave in a more consistently assertive fashion, while externals are more likely to operate from the extremes of either passivity or aggression. In terms of gender differences, external wives tend to engage more in indirect problem-solving efforts, such as teasing or ignoring, while external husbands are more likely to resort to aggressive behavior (Doherty, 1983).

In terms of individual scores on locus of control, Doherty (1983) notes overall that "the empirical evidence suggests at best a small positive relationship (so small that only large samples will demonstrate it reliably) between generalized internal locus of control and marital satisfaction" (p. 171). Although the relationship between internality and marital satisfaction is enhanced somewhat when marital locus of control

measures are utilized, as noted already, the theoretical basis for a direct connection between individual locus of control and marital satisfaction is not particularly strong (Doherty, 1983). However, the opinion here is that there certainly appears to be a definite trend between internality and positive outcomes such as successful marital problem-solving, marital satisfaction, and intimacy. Further, while a direct linkage between internality and positive marital outcomes may be difficult to establish, an indirect influence of locus of control may be of great significance.

In terms of one-couple locus of control configurations, studies of the combination of internal husband/external wife and marital satisfaction have shown varying results. Mlott and Lira (1977) found that for maritally distressed couples, husbands were significantly more internal than their wives. Genshaft (1980) found wives in outpatient settings to be more external than "normals", and such wives were more external than their husbands (although such differences were not statistically significant). Doherty (1981) found that the combination of external wife/internal husband was associated with high marital dissatisfaction among wives. Sabatelli (1982) found that the internal husband/external wife combination was associated with lower marital satisfaction for husbands. However, Sabatelli found that for this combination, higher satisfaction was found for external wives.

Further confounding overall interpretation of the internal husband/external wife combination, reanalysis of McCabe's (1978) data found that internal husbands with external wives were more dissatisfied, although dissatisfied wives were not significantly different from their husbands in terms of locus of control. Doherty (1983) concludes in a

review of these research findings that the most plausible interpretation supports the notion that the more internal husband/more external wife combination may be associated with lower marital satisfaction, although the research is somewhat contradictory. It is further proposed that external wives are likely to desire greater overt expression of support from their husbands than are more internal wives with greater confidence in their capacity to control their lives. Further, internal husbands are characterized as quiet, moderately assertive, and, perhaps most importantly in the context of a newlywed stage of marriage where emotional bonding between spouses is so crucial, tend to guard their autonomy and independence jealously (Strickland, 1977). Doherty notes that, "This combination appears akin to an unstable wife-stable husband mixture, which may be troublesome at some points in the life cycle" (1983: p. 172).

Another perspective regarding locus of control within the context of marriage is that it may serve as a modifier of the relationship between the frequency or intensity of marital stress and marital satisfaction, as it has been found to be a modifier of stress in a variety of other contexts (Johnson and Sarason, 1978; Kobasa, 1979; Lefcourt, Martin, and Saleh, 1984; Lefcourt, Miller, Ware, and Sherk, 1981; Sandler and Lakey, 1982). Smolen and Spiegel (1987) note that "an internal marital locus of control, through its association with effective marital problem-solving behavior, may serve to buffer the noxious effects of provocation by spouse on marital satisfaction" (p. 72). Hence, Smolen and Spiegel (1987) hypothesized that "the relationship between provocation by spouse and marital satisfaction should be stronger in externals than internals" (p. 72).

The results of their study supported this hypothesis for external

husbands, but not for wives, whose marital satisfaction was found to be strongly associated with the frequency of provocation by their husbands (irregardless of their locus of control). In regard to this difference between husbands and wives, Smolen and Spiegel speculate that the relationship between locus of control and problem-solving behavior may be greater in husbands than in wives, and if so, it would suggest that internality may be of greater importance as a modifier of marital stress for husbands than it is for wives. This interpretation would be consistent with findings noted earlier suggesting that external husbands tend toward the extremes of either passivity or aggression when involved in marital problem-solving interactions with their wives (Doherty and Ryder, 1979; Winkler and Doherty, 1983).

Smolen and Spiegel also demonstrated a positive correlation between internality and marital satisfaction. They further note that marriage-specific measures of locus of control (such as the Miller Marital Locus of Control Scale) have produced much stronger correlations with marital satisfaction than the weak and inconsistent ones found in studies which used global measures of locus of control (Doherty, 1983). Hence, these more recent findings utilizing a marriage-specific locus of control measurement suggest that an internal locus of control may be more crucial in affecting marital satisfaction and intimacy, whether through influencing problem-solving or by acting as a modifier of stress, etc., than has been thought to be the case previously.

Critique

A few of the shortcomings of the research on locus of control within a marital context can be briefly stated here. First, only a few studies

cited above utilized a marriage-specific locus of control measure. Hence, many of the findings utilizing more general measures of locus of control may have been insufficiently sensitive and/or not relevant to the issues found within a marital context and thus were unable to adequately assess the impact of this construct within marital relationships. Secondly, many of the studies on locus of control and marital relationships resulted in very small associations and were difficult to interpret as to causal direction. And finally, with the possible exception of the study done by Smolen and Spiegel (1987), no studies relate locus of control to other significant independent variables such as personality, demographic, or relationship influences as to their combined or relative importance pertaining to marital quality or outcome.

3. Marital Quality

The term "marital quality" has evolved in the marriage and family research literature from earlier conceptions such as marital adjustment, happiness, satisfaction, interaction, disagreements, and proneness to separate or divorce (Johnson et al., 1986). A general description of marital quality should include theoretical, conceptual, and methodological issues, as well as existing research findings relative to this construct. Research findings will be presented here first in terms of marital quality as an independent variable, and secondly in terms of its use as a dependent variable. As the present study utilizes marital quality as a dependent variable, greater emphasis will be given to this latter set of findings.

The most common theoretical perspectives used to address marital quality in quantitative studies have been variants of social exchange

theory or some type of cost/benefit theory (Glenn, 1990; White, 1990). A number of researchers have suggested that their work is based upon a life course theory or perspective (Billy et al., 1986; Heaton et al., 1985), which integrates family studies and demography and calls greater attention to the time-dependency of various social processes. Feminist or conflict theories have generally not been utilized, with the one exception being a study by Chafetz (1980). However, as noted by Glenn (1990) in regard to the marital quality research done in the 1980's, "Not much of the literature was completely atheoretical, but the rationale for the major lines of research was largely practical, with elements of theory being brought in on an incidental ad hoc basis" (p. 818).

In addition to the relative absence of theoretical development regarding marital quality, problems concerning conceptual, measurement, and methodological issues have plagued research in this particular field. As noted by Glenn (1990), "The literature on marital quality has for several decades been characterized by considerable conceptual confusion and disagreement about measurement" (p. 819). Various researchers have defined marital quality as simply how individuals feel about their marriages, while others have viewed marital quality as an interactive characteristic of the relationship between spouses as opposed to, or in addition to, the separate subjective evaluations or feelings of each spouse. Scales such as Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), which were multidimensional, combining interactional elements and individual evaluations of satisfaction together to produce a single summated score, have come under rather severe criticism within the last several years (Fincham and Bradbury, 1987; Huston, McHale and Crouter, 1986; Huston and Robins, 1982; Johnson, White, Edwards, and Booth, 1986;

Norton, 1983). Various methodological and conceptual issues, such as the shortcomings of cross-sectional studies, the distinction between marital quality and marital success in research studies, and methodological difficulties such as the "identification problem," are summarized by Glenn (1990). Finally, a thorough review and critique of marital quality scales is offered by Sabatelli (1988).

As noted by Glenn (1990), relatively few recent studies have utilized marital quality as an independent variable. The majority of these were designed to estimate the effect of marital quality upon the overall sense of well-being of married individuals. For instance, Glenn and Weaver (1981) found that the effect of marital quality upon global happiness was greater than seven other life domains, ranging from health to work, for white males and females, and black females. Benin and Nienstedt (1985) similarly found powerful effects of marital quality upon subjective well-being. As noted by Glenn (1990), however, none of the reported research could establish the direction of any causal relationship between marital quality and individual sense of well-being. That is, as noted by Glenn, "Although there are reasons to believe that having a good marriage will tend to make a person pleased with life in general, people who are generally happy, for whatever reasons, may tend to have good marriages" (p. 827). Additionally, Glenn (1990) notes that the relationship between marital and subjective global happiness may be spurious, that is, caused by the affects of some third variable, such as physical health or various family or social influences, etc.

Marital quality has been examined as a dependent variable in relation to a variety of independent variables or influences affecting it. The independent variables used in research to assess marital quality have

included family stage, presence-absence of children, duration of marriage, premarital cohabitation, marriage order, wives' employment status, gender role attitude differences between husbands and wives, perceptions of division of housework and childcare, and various demographic and family process variables (Glenn, 1990; White, 1990). A brief summary of the findings relative to these independent variables and their impact upon marital quality follows.

Research has consistently supported a curvilinear relationship between family stage and marital quality. The average marital quality is higher in both the preparental and the postparental stages of marriage (Ade-Ridder and Brubaker, 1983; Anderson, Russell, and Schuum, 1983; Glenn, 1989). As noted by Glenn (1990), "that there is, or recently has been, a curvilinear relation between family stage and some aspects of marital quality is about as close to being certain as anything ever is in the social sciences" (p. 823). However, as further noted by Glenn (1990), this curvilinear relationship may be due to the effects of duration of marriage, since studies show that marital quality most likely declines whether the couple has a child or not (Huston et al, 1986; McHale and Huston, 1985; White and Booth, 1985). As summarized by Glenn (1990), "Again, the evidence suggests that changes often attributed to the transition to parenthood are duration-of-marriage effects instead" (p. 824).

Another possible effect upon marital quality which has received attention is premarital cohabitation, a phenomena which has increased substantially in recent years (Glick, 1988). Advocates of premarital cohabitation argue that it serves as a trial marriage which tests out the couple's compatibility and the suitability of the individuals involved for

marriage. Several studies (Bennett, Blanc, and Bloom, 1988; Booth and Johnson, 1988; DeMaris, 1984; DeMaris and Leslie, 1984; Watson, 1983; White, 1987) point toward premarital cohabitation as having a higher association with lower marital quality and higher divorce rates for couples who cohabit prior to marriage as compared to those who do not. The most frequent explanation for this finding is that individuals who are unconventional enough to cohabit prior to marriage have fewer inhibitions about divorce later on after marrying (White, 1990). This "kinds of people" perspective is buttressed by the finding by Yamaguchi and Kandel (1985) that drug use is associated with cohabitation, as well as by the finding by Booth and Johnson (1988) that controlling for personality variables indicative of personal problems and lack of commitment to marriage reduced greatly the negative relationship between premarital cohabitation and marital quality.

Research has shown consistently that average marital quality is somewhat higher in first marriages than in subsequent marriages, and that average quality in remarriages is greater for men than for women, as shown in a recent meta-analysis of research on this area (Vemer, Coleman, Ganong, and Cooper, 1989). Remarriages appear vulnerable to instability, as they have been shown to be more prone to divorce than first marriages, at least through the early years of such marriages (McCarthy, 1978; White and Booth, 1985). White and Booth (1985) concluded that this greater vulnerability of remarriages appears mostly due to the presence of stepchildren and subsequent parent-child difficulties stemming from blended family issues, thus lowering the overall quality of family life, which then negatively impacts marital stability.

Several other miscellaneous factors have been related to marital

quality and outcome. Parental divorce increases the likelihood of divorce for their children (Greenberg and Nay, 1982; McLanahan and Bumpass, 1988), while early marriage also increases chances of divorce (Martin and Bumpass, 1989; South and Spitze, 1986). Martin and Bumpass (1989) concluded that age at the time of marriage is, in fact, the strongest predictor of divorce in the first five years of marriage. Wives' participation in work and career has received mixed, inconclusive findings as to its impact on marital quality and outcome, as noted by White (1990). Race also has been found to be a significant variable, with blacks more likely to divorce than whites (White, 1990). Socioeconomic status has also been found to be positively related to marital quality and outcome (Greenstein, 1985; Martin and Bumpass, 1989; South and Spitze, 1986), as has husband's education, husband-wife similarity in their socioeconomic status prior to marriage, and religiosity (Hicks and Platt, 1970).

Research involving demographic and family process variables relative to marital quality among newlyweds has been summarized by McGoldrick (1988). McGoldrick (1988, p. 231) lists the following thirteen conditions or factors as making early marital adjustment more problematic:

1. The couple meets or marries shortly after a significant loss (Ryder, 1970; Ryder et al., 1971).
2. The wish to distance from one's family of origin is a factor in the marriage.
3. The family backgrounds of each spouse are significantly different (religion, education, social class, ethnicity, the ages of the partners, and the like).
4. The spouses come from incompatible sibling constellations.
5. The couple resides either extremely close to or at a great distance from either family of origin.
6. The couple is dependent on either extended family

financially, physically, or emotionally.

7. The couple marries before age 20 (Booth & Edwards, 1985).
8. The couple marries after an acquaintanceship of less than six months or more than three years of engagement.
9. The wedding occurs without family or friends present.
10. The wife becomes pregnant before or within the first year of marriage (Christensen, 1963; Bacon, 1974).
11. Either spouse has a poor relationship with his or her siblings or parents.
12. Either spouse considers his or her childhood or adolescence an unhappy time.
13. Marital patterns in either extended family were unstable (Kobrin and Waite, 1984).

McGoldrick notes in regard to this list that these factors have been supported by other sociological data on divorce. She also refers to other factors, such as changing gender roles and economic dependence upon parents by those pursuing higher education, as further complicating early marital adjustment. McGoldrick concludes that "achieving marital adjustment in our time, when we are attempting to move toward equality of the sexes (educationally and occupationally), may be extraordinarily difficult" (p. 232).

Critique

A number of shortcomings regarding research on marital quality have been cited. As noted above, numerous reviews have criticized some of the most frequently used instruments purporting to measure marital quality, usually finding fault with multidimensional, overly-broad definitions and measurements. As noted by Donohue and Ryder (1982), "it may be time to abandon the fundamental idea that there is in any meaningful sense, a

general dimension of marital happiness, marital distress, or marital quality, and to turn attention to less expansive and more realistic conceptualizations" (p. 747). Thus, much of the evaluative research utilizing multidimensional scales may have to be interpreted with great caution. For this reason, the present study will focus on two distinct dimensions of marital adjustment, namely one form of "marital satisfaction" as reflected by individuals' global evaluation of the amount and quality of attention received from their spouses, and "marital quality" as measured by more objective, behavioral aspects of the marital relationship, such as types of marital problems present and the frequency and severity of marital disagreement present.

Donohue and Ryder (1982) also question the value of large-scale surveys which utilized a single-item measure of marital quality. Additionally, much of the research has focused on white, middle-class, college-educated, non-random samples. As noted by Donohue and Ryder (1982), "Perhaps, in other words, we really do know very little about the American population as a whole," (p. 746).

Finally, there is a paucity of solid research on the determinants of early marital adjustment. While the longitudinal study on newlywed adjustment by Huston, McHale, and Crouter (1986) was an important study with sound design and methodology, etc., and provided clear data on the decline of marital quality within the first year of marriage, it nevertheless did not look at specific personality variables of individual spouses which may have shed more light on the reasons for the decline in marital satisfaction which they found. Hence, more study in this area, utilizing personality, as well as demographic and family process variables, is needed in order to better assess these variables impacting

early marital quality and outcome. Among such variables are several which have received scant attention in recent marital quality research -- issues such as the impact of drug and alcohol abuse, adultery, and physical and emotional abuse, etc. Such variables clearly deserve additional investigation in terms of their impact upon marital quality and outcome (White, 1990).

Chapter 3

Collection of Data

A. Population

The population from which the sample of newlyweds was selected included all first marriages (for both husband and wife) which occurred between 19 and 27 months prior to the time of the implementation of the present study. That is, all subjects were married between March and November, 1991, and the study was implemented between June and September, 1993. The source of data was marriage license records of a central Virginia city and one of its surrounding counties. The ages of couples in the study at the time of marriage was limited to age 20-29. Information on such couples as obtained from marriage licenses included names, addresses (prior to the marriage), which marriage this would be for each spouse, educational level, race, and state of birth. Hence, a considerable amount of demographic information was gathered from the marriage licenses themselves.

In terms of population size, the total number of first marriages within the two localities during the specified time period for spouses in their 20's was 1,034. A more complete description of the population in terms of demographic characteristics is noted in Table 1. However, for our purposes here, it might be noted that 43% of the population originated from the city marriage licenses, while 57% of the population came from the county marriage licenses. Sixty-seven percent (67.2%) of the population

was comprised by white couples, 28.3% by black couples, 3.1% by interracial couples, and 1.4% by Asian couples. Table 1 also includes a description of the population by education, whether the couple cohabitated prior to the marriage, whether the wedding was a religious or civil ceremony, and a combination of characteristics.

B. Procedure

The original population of 1,034 couples was reduced to 406 couples when current addresses were verified through telephone directory listings as well as through metropolitan area directory listings. A stratified sample of 150 couples (reflecting exactly the racial composition of the population) was selected from this reduced sample frame. An initial contact letter explaining the purpose and nature of the study was then mailed out in a series of several mailings between June and August, 1993 to the 150 couples. The initial contact letter (copy included in Appendix B) further requested the participation of the couples in a mail questionnaire survey, noting that the researcher or research assistant would be contacting them by telephone within one to two weeks to request their participation.

As the researcher was unable to reach many of the couples in the original sample due to incorrect addresses, disconnected telephones, etc. (there were 50/33.3% of these), an additional 46 couples were added to the sample to compensate for those who could not be found. Overall, 92 (72%) of all the couples reached via the follow-up telephone contact agreed to participate in the study. As noted by Borg and Gall (1989), contacting respondents before sending a questionnaire, either by letter or telephone, or a combination of such, has been shown to increase response rate.

Hence, the procedure used in this study included an initial contact letter, followed by a telephone call(s) requesting participation, and offering clarification as to its purpose, reassurances as to confidentiality and procedures used, etc. Further, a voice-mail telephone number was included in the initial contact letter should participants have had any questions they would like to ask the researcher as to the study or any items on the questionnaire once they received them in the mail. It may be noted here that the questionnaire was pretested with ten couples (not involved in the study) who took the questionnaire anonymously and gave feedback on a separate rating form. Pretesting results indicated that the questionnaire was perceived as clear and generally non-threatening and non-offensive to couples involved in the pretesting (for a summary of pretesting, see Appendix A).

The final sample included 71 couples who returned completed questionnaires out of a total of 92 couples who had consented to participate and to whom questionnaires had been sent. For couples who did not return their questionnaires within three weeks, a follow-up letter (see Appendix C) was sent and/or telephone call(s) were made to encourage completion and return of the questionnaires. Of the 21 couples who did not return their questionnaires, several (5) declined to participate after receiving the questionnaire, while most (16) agreed to complete and return them, but simply did not. Chapter 4 will include an analysis of possible factors contributing to non-response or refusal to participate. However, the response rate of 71 out of 92 couples, or 77%, well exceeds the criteria of a 70% return rate recommended by Borg and Gall (1989), thus adding strength to the present study.

A letter of transmittal (Appendix D) which accompanied the

questionnaires and consent forms (Appendix E) requested that respondents complete and return the questionnaires (Appendix F) within a week after receiving them. Instructions in the letter of transmittal also requested that couples not discuss the questionnaires or any items on the questionnaire until both spouses had completed and returned them in the separate, self-addressed, stamped envelopes. Once again, strict confidentiality of the results was guaranteed. Further, the researcher noted that a summary of the study's overall findings and conclusions would be mailed out to all the couples involved after completion of the study. And finally, the consent form noted that the researcher would be available for consultation and referral for marital counseling services should any of the respondents request such as a result of being sensitized to marital issues and problems or distressed through the process of completing the questionnaire. As part of ethical concern in this area, a licensed mental health clinician was recruited to offer free crisis and/or short-term counseling services should such a request come about.

C. Instrumentation

o Independent Variables

1. The Miller Marital Locus of Control Scale (MMLOC)

The Miller Marital Locus of Control Scale (MMLOC) was used to measure the extent to which spouses perceive reinforcement in the marriage as being contingent upon their own abilities and efforts, or as due to factors outside their own control (Miller, 1981; Miller, Lefcourt, and Ware, 1983). The MMLOC is a 44-item scale in 6-point Likert scale format designed to assess an individual's locus of control orientation for achievement of marital satisfaction (Appendix G). Higher scores indicate

greater externality. The MMLOC was found to have good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach Alpha = .83), discriminant validity, and convergent validity, as evidenced by the MMLOC being positively related to two other measures of marital locus of control using global ratings (Miller, Lefcourt and Ware, 1983).

The items used in the MMLOC Scale relate to six major dimensions of marriage, and hence, in addition to an overall measure of marital locus of control, subscale scores relating to beliefs concerning particular content domains within marriage are also included within the scale. Examples of true/false items include the following: "The unhappy times in our marriage just seem to happen regardless of what I am doing" and "If my spouse and I were to experience sexual difficulties we would certainly be able to overcome them."

A subscale of the MMLOC was identified for the specific purpose of testing hypothesis 4b), which refers to items that indicate acceptance of self-responsibility or self-blame for problems or difficulties in the marriage. Such items should not, however, also reflect a clear confidence in one's ability to improve marital problems or conflicts. In order to select those items which best reflect responsibility or self-blame without a concomitant confidence in addressing the particular issue noted, the researcher requested that five independent raters assess the MMLOC in its entirety and select only those items which best reflect the characteristics indicated. The five raters included one college faculty member in counseling/school psychology, as well as two private mental health clinicians, and two marriage and family counselors working in a public agency. There were six items on the MMLOC (numbers 5, 8, 16, 27, 29, and 42) which met the criteria of rater consensus used for inclusion.

Instructions to the subscale raters are also included in Appendix G.

2. The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI)

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) was used to measure spouses' levels of individual narcissism. The NPI, developed by Raskin and Hall (1979) and revised by Raskin and Terry (1988), is a 40-item forced-choice questionnaire with items selected to conform with the criteria for narcissistic personality disorder as stated in DSM-III-R (Appendix H). The NPI's use is intended to assess narcissistic aspects of both the healthy personality as well as the excessively narcissistically vulnerable individual.

The reliability of the NPI has been found to be adequate (Shulman and Ferguson, 1988). Raskin and Hall (1979) reported a split-half reliability of .80. An alternate form test-retest reliability coefficient of .72 was later reported (Raskin and Hall, 1981). Validity evidence includes a study on undergraduates which found a significant positive relationship between high NPI scores and exhibitionistic tendencies, self-absorption and lack of empathy as measured by the Eysenck personality scales (Raskin and Hall, 1981). Emmons (1984) found a significant positive relationship between NPI scores and peer ratings of narcissism. Two other studies found significant positive associations between the NPI and the Millon Multiaxial Clinical Inventory scored for narcissism (Auerbach, 1984; Prifitera and Ryan, 1984). Emmons (1984, 1987) factor analyzed the NPI and found four fairly distinct factors comprising the scale: exploitativeness-entitlement, leadership-authority, superiority-arrogance, and self-absorption/self-admiration. Raskin and Terry (1988) found seven components of narcissism as assessed by the NPI: vanity, superiority, exploitativeness, self-sufficiency, entitlement,

exhibitionism, and authority (see Appendix I). Watson et al. (1984) demonstrated the exploitativeness-entitlement factor to be significantly negatively related to three independent measures of empathy. Other evidence suggests that this factor is related to maladaptive items on other personality inventories, while the remaining three factors seem to be related to several different self-esteem measures.

Hence, the overall reliability and validity of the NPI appears to be adequate, as demonstrated by other studies (Bennett, 1988; Biscardi and Schill, 1985; Carrol, 1987; Raskin and Novacek, 1989; Raskin and Shaw, 1988; Watson, Grisham, Trotter and Bidderman, 1984), in addition to those studies cited above. Although three other inventories have been developed to measure narcissism (Ashby, Lee and Duke 1979; Millon, 1982, Phares and Erskin, 1984), those instruments appear to have limited validity and reliability data available at this time (Shulman and Ferguson, 1988). As such, the NPI was selected as the best available instrument with which to assess narcissism in this study of newlyweds.

In terms of item content and structure, the respondent is given two choices for each item. Choices made are scored as either non-narcissistic or narcissistic. The following are two sample items:

1. (a) There is a lot I can learn from other people; or
(b) People can learn a great deal from me.
2. (a) I insist upon getting the respect that is due me;
or (b) I usually get the respect that I deserve.

0 Dependent Variables

1. Lovesickness (LS) Scale

The first dependent or criterion variable reflecting marital quality

among newlyweds in this study is the extent to which a spouse feels satisfied with the amount of and quality of attention and concern he or she receives from his/her partner. This variable is measured by the Lovesickness (LS) Scale developed by Ryder (1973). The LS Scale is a 32-item questionnaire with item responses being "true", "partly true", or "false" (Appendix J). Half of the items are worded in a positive direction, with the other half worded in a negative direction. The LS Scale has been critiqued as being "appropriate for use in varied contents where attention from the spouse is of interest" (Touliatos, Perlmutter, Straus, 1990, p. 247). Ryder (1973) originally developed the LS Scale to assess husbands' feelings of lovesickness following the birth of a child, but has been noted as equally appropriate for use with both wives and husbands (Touliatos, Perlmutter, & Straus, 1990).

Sample items from the LS Scale include:

- 1) I know my spouse loves me but I wish he/she would show it more.
- 2) I wish my spouse paid more attention to me.
- 3) My spouse always pays careful attention to how I feel about matters.

In addition, there is a global assessment item at the end of the LS Scale which reads, "Generally speaking, ours is a wonderful and successful marriage." Scores on this item will be used as a separate measure of marital satisfaction in this study. For this item, as well as the other 32 items, a higher score indicates greater "lovesickness" or dissatisfaction.

Although Ryder did not offer any reliability information on this scale, other studies (Doherty, 1981; Sabatelli, Buck, & Dreyer, 1982) have found Cranbach's alpha to be between .82 and .91. In Ryder's study

(1973), three groups of couples were studied from four months after marriage to one to two years later. The three groups included childless couples, couples with one or more children, and couples with a pregnancy with the first child. While LS scores for husbands and wives in all groups tended to increase, wives' scores tended to increase more than husbands, especially for those wives who were pregnant at the time of the second test administration. Concurrent validity for the LS Scale is suggested in a study by Sabatelli, Buck, and Dreyer (1982) which found correlations of .49 to .58 between the LS Scale and the Locke-Wallace Marriage Adjustment Test (Locke and Wallace, 1959).

2. Nebraska Scale of Marital Problems

The Nebraska Scale of Marital Problems was developed by Johnson, White, Edwards, and Booth (1986) as a measure of personal traits and behaviors which may have contributed to problems in the marriage. It is a self-report questionnaire which contains 13 items (Appendix K). Items may be answered through simple "yes-no" responses. The scale was developed for use in personal as well as telephone interviews, in addition to paper-and-pencil administration.

Sample items read as follows:

I'd like to mention a number of problem areas. Have you had a problem in your marriage because one of you:

- (A) Gets angry easily?
- (B) Has feelings that are easily hurt?
- (C) Is domineering?
- (D) Has had a sexual relationship with someone else?
- (E) Has been in trouble with the law?

The authors note that this scale was administered to a national probability sample of 2,033 couples in 1980 and later in 1983. Cronbach's alpha was reported to be .76. This scale correlated negatively with

marital interaction (-.28) and marital happiness (-.47) and positively with marital instability (.54) and marital disagreement (.54).

3. Nebraska Scale of Marital Disagreement

The Nebraska Scale of Marital Disagreement was also developed by Johnson, White, Edwards, and Booth (1986) as a measure of the presence and severity of disagreements. As noted by the authors, "Disagreements may reflect lack of consensus about marital and individual goals or other problems, both internal and external to the marriage", and "taps a collective behavioral property of the relationship and assesses amount and severity of conflict between the spouses" (p. 36). The scale is a self-report questionnaire which contains four items, two of which may be responded to by a simple "yes" or "no", while one item involves a 5-point Likert response of frequency, and the fourth item involving a numerical answer (Appendix L). The scale was developed for use in personal as well as telephone interviews, in addition to paper-and-pencil administration.

Sample items read as follows:

(A) Do you and your husband/wife have arguments or disagreements about whether one of you is doing your share of the housework?

(B) How often do you disagree with your husband/wife? Would you say never, rarely, sometimes, often, or very often?

(C) How many serious quarrels have you had with your spouse in the last two months?

(D) In many households bad feelings and arguments occur from time to time. In some cases people get so angry that they slap, hit, punch, kick, or throw things at one another. Has this ever happened between you and your husband/wife?

This scale was administered to the same national probability sample noted above in reference to the Scale of Marital Problems. The authors report an alpha reliability of .54, which they consider to be an

acceptable level of reliability for a four-item scale.

D. Research Design

The design of the current study is a cross-sectional survey in which standardized information was collected from a sample drawn from a predetermined population. The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed by correlational statistics, chi square, the t-test, and a simple comparison of variability.

E. Specific Hypotheses

Consistent with object relations theory and clinical literature regarding narcissism, and research findings relating locus of control to marital satisfaction, the following five hypotheses were offered:

1. a) When looking at all subjects, there will be a curvilinear relationship between subjects' levels of narcissism as measured by the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) and 1) subjects' dissatisfaction with the amount of attention received from one's spouse, as measured by Ryder's Lovesickness Scale (LS), 2) subjects' perceptions of marital dissatisfaction as measured by a global satisfaction item on Ryder's Lovesickness Scale, and 3) subjects' perceptions of marital quality as measured by the Nebraska Scale of Marital Problems and the Nebraska Scale of Marital Disagreement (i.e., there will be a u-shaped relationship between subjects' levels of narcissism and scores on these four measures of marital outcome, with low and high levels of

narcissism being associated with marital difficulties and moderate narcissism being associated with fewer marital difficulties).

b) When looking at all subjects, there will be a curvilinear relationship between subjects' spouses' levels of narcissism as measured by the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) and 1) subjects' dissatisfaction with the amount of attention received from one's spouse, as measured by Ryder's Lovesickness Scale (LS), and 2) subjects' perceptions of marital dissatisfaction as measured by a global satisfaction item on Ryder's Lovesickness Scale, and 3) subjects' perceptions of marital quality as measured by the Nebraska Scale of Marital Problems and the Nebraska Scale of Marital Disagreement (i.e., there will be a u-shaped relationship between subjects' spouses' levels of narcissism and subjects' scores on these four measures of marital outcome, with low and high levels of spouses' narcissism being associated with marital difficulties and moderate narcissism being associated with fewer marital difficulties);

2. When looking at subjects whose narcissism scores, as measured by the NPI, are low to moderate, but who have a spouse whose NPI score is high, and who also score moderate to low on at least two of the three marital outcome measures (excluding the LS global item measure), the locus of control scores, as measured by the Miller Marital Locus of Control (MMLOC), will be significantly more internal (i.e., lower) for

such subjects than for the remaining subjects in the overall sample;

3. As a test of the reciprocity/complementarity of spouses' internal objects in determining mate selection, when looking at nine couple groups formed on the basis of husband-wife combinations on narcissism as measured by the NPI (the nine groups will result from a 3 X 3 table, combining husbands rated high, medium, and low on narcissism with wives rated high, medium, and low on narcissism), there will be no significant departure from chance as to actual distribution of couple combinations;

4. As a test of the "sliding meaning" interpretation of narcissistic cognitive style (Horowitz, 1975) and of Emmons' (1987) concern as to "egotistical attributions" by narcissistic individuals, a) subjects with high narcissism as measured by the NPI will show greater variability on the Miller Marital Locus of Control Scale than will subjects with either moderate or low scores, and b) subjects with high narcissism scores on the NPI will score significantly more external (i.e., higher) on items of the MMLOC which were selected as indicating acceptance of responsibility for difficulties in the marriage, but which did not reflect a simultaneous confidence in one's ability to control or correct the problem, than will subjects with either moderate or low scores on the NPI;

5. There will be a positive correlation between externality

on the MMLOC (i.e., high scores) and marital problems and difficulties (also high scores) as measured by the four marital outcome measures noted in hypothesis number 1a and b.

One additional hypothesis, which relates to not only narcissism and locus of control, but to family systems and developmental variables as well, was also offered;

6. Using stepwise multiple regression analysis, it is hypothesized that variance in scores for satisfaction with the amount of attention/care received from one's spouse, as measured by the Lovesickness Scale, and marital quality, as measured by the Nebraska Scales of Marital Problems and Marital Disagreement, will be significantly accounted for through a combination of both individual and family systems/developmental variables, with narcissism, as measured by the NPI, and locus of control, as measured by the MMLOC Scale, hypothesized to be among the higher loadings; these variables include:

- a. Subjects' narcissism;
- b. Subjects' spouses' narcissism;
- c. Marital locus of control of subjects;
- d. Whether the couple married within a year of a significant loss for either spouse
- e. Whether either spouse wished to get more distance from his/her parents/family when they married;
- f. Whether the wife became pregnant either before or within the first year of the marriage;
- g. Whether either spouse reports less than a "good" relationship with his/her parents at

the present time;

- h. Whether either spouse reports that his/her childhood was less than "happy";
- i. Whether either spouse has parents who are divorced.

F. Statistical Procedure

As noted above, the statistical procedures utilized in this study involved use of correlational statistics (including stepwise multiple regression analysis) along with chi square, the t-test, and a simple comparison of variability. Hypothesis number 1a. and 1b. involved use of a correlation ratio (eta) to assess a curvilinear relationship between subjects' levels of narcissism, as well as subjects' spouses' levels of narcissism, as independent variables, and various marital adjustment measures as the dependent variables/outcome measures. Hypothesis number 2 and hypothesis number 4b. both utilized the t-test to substantiate significant differences in measures for two groups. Hypothesis number 3 utilized chi square to test for departure from chance for combinations of couples based on husbands' and wives' narcissism scores. Hypothesis number 4a. involved the use of a simple comparison of variability (i.e., standard deviation) of a measure (marital locus of control) for two groups (high scorers on narcissism versus low to moderate scorers on narcissism). Hypothesis number 5 utilized a correlation statistic (Pearson's product moment correlation) to measure strength of relationship between two variables (marital locus of control and marital outcomes). Hypothesis number 6 involved the use of stepwise multiple regression analysis.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Results

A. Demographic Description of Sample

As noted earlier, 71 couples, or a total of 142 subjects, participated in the study. As presented in Table 2 a number of relevant demographic characteristics may be summarized here. Most notably, this was a predominantly white, highly educated sample. There were 61 (85.9%) white couples, 5 (7.0%) black couples, 4 (5.6%) interracial couples, and one (1.4%) Asian couple in the study. As noted in Table 1, the population was composed of 695 (67.2%) white couples, 293 (28.3%) black couples, 32 (3.1%) interracial couples, and 14 (1.4%) Asian couples. The accessible population, i.e., those whose addresses could be located, reflected a relative decrease in the availability of black couples (down from 28.3% to 13.7%). The accessible population was composed of 349 (82.5%) white couples, 58 (13.7%) black couples, 11 interracial couples (2.6%), and 5 (1.2%) Asian couples.

Whereas the percentage of Asian couples in the study were exactly representative of the percentage in the population (1.4%), and interracial couples in the study were slightly over-represented (5.6% in the study, 3.1% in the population), the percentage of black couples in the study (7.0%) was only a fourth of that in the population (28.3%). Further, white couples in the study (85.9%) were significantly over-represented as compared to white couples in the population (67.2%). Hence, the most

notable difficulty involved in acquiring a representative sample was in locating black couples and obtaining their participation. Although efforts were made via stratified sampling procedures to obtain a representative number of black couples in the sample, there was persistent difficulty in both locating and obtaining participation of black couples. For instance, although 15 black couples were recruited to participate in the study (which represented 16.5% of all couples recruited), only 5 black couples (or 7.0% of the final sample) actually completed and returned their questionnaires. This issue is further delineated in the analysis of nonrespondents to follow. Therefore, the present sample can not be considered to be representative of the population at large in terms of racial composition due to the under-representation of black couples and over-representation of white couples.

As to the educational levels of the couples in the sample, 95 subjects (66.9%) had college educations and/or graduate/professional training. An additional 29 subjects (20.4%) had some college education. There were 15 subjects (10.6%) with high school educations only, and 3 subjects (2.1%) had not finished high school. For the population, 59.2% had had at least some college education or more. When combining those subjects with college educations, those with more than college educations, and those with some college education in the sample, a percentage of 87.3% was obtained. Hence, 87.3% of the sample had had at least some college education, as compared to 59.2% for the population, a difference of 28.1%. The sample is therefore disproportionately educated as compared to the population from which it was obtained.

Three other demographic characteristics included educational differences between spouses, whether or not couples cohabitated prior to

the marriage, and average age at the time of completing the questionnaire. Only 3 (4.2%) couples had significant educational differences (defined as one spouse with a college education or more, and the other being a high school graduate or less). In terms of cohabitation, 34 couples (47.9%) had cohabitated prior to marriage, while 37 couples (52.1%) had not cohabitated. Finally, the average age at the time of completing the questionnaire was 27 for the overall sample.

Other variables included in the study which related family systems or developmental issues to marital outcome (as noted in both Chapter 2 and in Hypothesis 6) were: 1) how long the couple dated or were engaged; 2) whether either spouse felt a desire to distance from either his/her parents or family at the time of the marriage; 3) whether there had been a significant loss in either extended family within one year prior to the marriage; 4) whether the couple had at any point received financial assistance from their parents; 5) whether either spouse rated his/her present relationship with his/her parents as less than good; 6) whether either spouse rated his/her childhood as less than happy; 7) whether either spouse's parents were divorced; and 8) whether the wife had gotten pregnant or had a child prior to or within the first year of the marriage. Only 6 couples (7.7%) had either dated less than 6 months or were engaged longer than 3 years. For 25 couples (35.2%), at least one spouse had had a desire to distance from their family or parents at the time of the marriage. For 17 couples (23.9%), at least one spouse had experienced a loss in his/her own or extended family during the year prior to the marriage. Thirty-nine (54.9%) reported having received financial assistance from their parents at some point in the marriage. For 16 couples (22.5%), at least one spouse reported having less than a good

relationship with his/her parents. For 23 couples (32.4%), at least one spouse reported having had a less than happy childhood. For 34 couples (47.9%), at least one spouse had divorced parents. And finally, 10 couples (14.1%) had a child or the wife became pregnant within the first year of marriage. These findings are summarized in Table 3.

B. Analysis of Nonrespondents

As noted in Chapter 3, 21 couples who had originally agreed to participate in the study did not actually return their questionnaires. Of these, five indicated to the follow-up phone interviewer that they had changed their minds about participating. The remaining 16 couples indicated to the follow-up interviewer that they would complete the questionnaires and return them, but simply did not do so. In an attempt to discover some patterns as to characteristics of couples who did not return their questionnaires, a breakdown as to two demographic features (race and education) is presented in Table 4 regarding nonrespondents and may be compared to the demographics for the sample described in Table 2.

As noted in Table 4, 84.8% of all white couples in the sample actually returned their questionnaires. On the other hand, only 33.3% of the black couples returned their questionnaires. Interestingly, all the interracial and Asian couples returned their questionnaires. In terms of education, 84.1% of subjects with college or more education returned their questionnaires, whereas 64.4% of those with some college did, and 69.2% with high school or less did. Hence, more educated individuals were more likely to return their questionnaires. Since 61.4% of the black couples in the population were those where both spouses did not have at least one year of college education, there was likely an interaction between lower

educational levels of black couples in the population and their underrepresentation in the study. This interpretation is supported by the fact that 4 out of the 5 black couples who did participate in the study were either college educated or had some college education for both spouses, which suggests a strong connection between higher educational status and willingness to participate in the study.

C. Description of Subsamples

Descriptive information for a number of variables is presented in Table 5 for husbands and wives. The variables include: 1) narcissism score (NPI); 2) scores on the Entitlement-Exploitativeness subscale of the NPI; 3) Lovesickness Scale score (LS); 4) the LS global item score; 5) the Marital Disagreement score; 6) the Marital Problems score; and 7) the Miller Marital Locus of Control score.

The mean scores for husbands and wives on the NPI are almost identical, with husbands only slightly higher on narcissism (14.7746) than were wives (14.5915). The mean scores found for male and female college students by the developers of the revised, 40-item NPI (Raskin and Terry, 1988) were somewhat higher, both for males (16.50) and females (14.72). The entire sample (n=1018) had a mean of 15.55 in that study (Appendix I). Since the current sample mean (14.6831) and means for husbands and wives are somewhat lower as compared to the college-age sample, there may be some indication that narcissism scores decrease somewhat with age or experience with "the real world", etc. However, this is only an observation which would obviously require greater exploration to confirm.

Additionally, frequencies and percentages for low, medium and high categories for several variables (noted above) are also summarized in

Table 6. Groupings for the variables were based on the mean and standard deviation for each. And, finally, the mean, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum scores for independent and dependent variables are noted in Table 7.

D. Results of Specific Hypotheses

o Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1a) stated that there would be a curvilinear (u-shaped) relationship between subjects' levels of narcissism as measured by the NPI and subjects' scores on four marital outcome measures, i.e., the LS Scale, the LS Scale global item, the Marital Disagreement Scale, and the Marital Problems Scale. The results of Hypothesis 1a) were significant, but small negative correlations between subjects' NPI scores and the LS Scale and the LS Scale global item, but non-significant correlations with the Marital Disagreement and Marital Problems scales.

Hypothesis 1b) stated that there would be a curvilinear (u-shaped) relationship between subjects' spouses' levels of narcissism as measured by the NPI and subjects' scores on four marital outcome measures, i.e., the LS Scale, the LS Scale global item, the Marital Disagreement Scale, and the Marital Problems Scale. The results of Hypothesis 1b) were significant, but small negative correlations with the LS Scale, the LS Scale global item, and the Marital Problems Scale.

Hence, the results do not support the prediction of a u-shaped relationship between either subjects' NPI scores and marital outcome measures or subjects' spouses' NPI scores and subjects' marital outcome measures. However, for subjects' NPI scores there is some evidence that at least the left half of a u-shaped curve, i.e., a negative relationship,

is suggested for both LS and LS global item scores. That is, for the LS Scale and LS Scale global item, low NPI scores for subjects are somewhat associated with higher scores on the marital outcome measures. The same pattern is seen for subjects' spouses' NPI scores and subjects' marital outcome measures. Hence, while lower scores on both subjects' and subjects' spouses' NPI are suggestive of higher scores on the subjects' marital outcome measures, higher scores on the NPI for either subjects or subjects' spouses are not. Stated in terms of marital adjustment and quality, while lower scores on the NPI for either subjects or their spouses appear somewhat related to problematic marital adjustment, higher scores on the NPI by either subjects or their spouses do not appear to be related to greater marital problems or difficulties (and hence do not contribute to the right half of the hypothesized u-shaped relationship). Refer to Table 8 for full presentation of results.

o Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that for subjects whose NPI scores were moderate to low, but whose spouses' NPI scores were high, and who also scored moderate to low on at least two of three marital outcome measures (LS Scale, Marital Disagreement and Marital Problems scales), there would be a significant difference between such subjects' MMLOC Scale scores and the MMLOC scale scores for the rest of the sample, with it being hypothesized that the specified subjects would be significantly more "internal" (i.e., lower scores) on the MMLOC than the rest of the sample. These groups were formed by taking the mean score for NPI and the marital outcome measures for the sample, halving the standard deviation (on both sides of the mean), and thereby creating high, medium, and low groups. The t-test showed no significant difference between the means for these two groups

(138.57 for the specified group and 137.76 for the rest of the sample). Hence, Hypothesis 2 is not supported. Refer to Table 9 for full results.

o Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that there would be no significant departure from chance as to the actual distribution of couple combinations on high, medium, and low NPI scores for both spouses. Nine groups resulted from a 3 X 3 table cross-tabulating husbands and wives as to high, medium, and low scores. These groups were formed by taking the mean score for narcissism (NPI) for the sample, halving the standard deviation (on both sides of the mean), and thereby creating high, medium, and low groups. As shown in Table 10, there was no significant departure from chance as to the actual distribution of couple combinations on the NPI. Hence, Hypothesis 3, stated as a null hypothesis, is supported.

o Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4a) stated that subjects with high narcissism as measured by the NPI would show greater variability on the MMLOC Scale than would subjects who were moderate to low on narcissism. Groups were formed as indicated in Hypotheses 2 and 3. There was no significant difference between the standard deviations for these two groups. Hence, Hypothesis 4a) is not supported.

Hypothesis 4b) stated that subjects with high narcissism scores would score significantly more external on six items of the MMLOC which reflected personal responsibility for difficulties in the marriage (but without a simultaneous confidence in one's ability to control or correct the problems) than would subjects with moderate to low NPI scores. Again, groups were formed as indicated in Hypotheses 2 and 3. Subjects who scored high on NPI had a more internal mean score on the MMLOC items than

did subjects with moderate to low scores, although the difference was not significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 4b) is also not supported. Refer to Table 11 for full presentation of results.

o Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 stated that there would be a positive correlation between externality on the MMLOC (i.e, higher scores) and marital problems and difficulties (also higher scores) as measured by the four marital outcome measures noted in Hypothesis 1a) and b). This hypothesis is supported for all four outcome measures. Significant, moderately strong, positive correlations were obtained between MMLOC and each outcome measure. Refer to Table 12 for full presentation of results.

o Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 stated that, using stepwise multiple regression analysis, the variance in scores on the four marital outcome measures would be significantly accounted for through a combination of both individual and family systems/developmental variables, with NPI and MMLOC hypothesized to be among the higher loadings; these variables included:

- a. Subjects' narcissism;
- b. Subjects' spouses' narcissism;
- c. Marital locus of control of subjects;
- d. Whether the couple married within a year of a significant loss for either spouse;
- e. Whether either spouse wished to get more distance from his/her parents/family when they married;
- f. Whether the wife became pregnant either before or within the first year of the marriage;
- g. Whether either spouse reported less than a "good" relationship with his/her parents at the present time;
- h. Whether either spouse reported that his/her childhood was less than "happy";
- i. Whether either spouse reported having parents who were divorced.

Each outcome measure will be discussed separately in terms of the multiple correlation coefficient (R) and R-Square between each outcome variable and

each predictor variable or some combination of predictor variables. Refer to Table 13 for full presentation of results.

For the LS Scale, MMLOC, loss, and subject's NPI were entered into the prediction equation. This combination gave a correlation of .5240 with the LS Scale, and an R-Square of .2746.

For the LS Scale global item, MMLOC and global evaluation of current relationship with parents were entered into the prediction equation. This combination gave a correlation of .44349 with the LS Scale global item and an R-Square of .19668.

For the Marital Disagreement Scale, MMLOC, loss, and childhood happiness were entered into the prediction equation. This combination gave a correlation of .49632 with the Disagreement Scale and an R-Square of .24634.

For the Marital Problems Scale, MMLOC, loss, childhood happiness, and spouse's NPI were entered into the prediction equation. This combination gave a correlation of .51502 with the Marital Problems Scale and an R-Square of .26524.

E. Additional Analysis of Data

As noted earlier, some additional analysis of the data is offered to evaluate the importance of two independent factors not specifically addressed earlier as to their possible impact upon marital outcome. The two factors are the presence of physical confrontations in the marriage and whether or not the couple cohabitated prior to the marriage. Also, the strength of the relationships between the four outcome measures is assessed.

First, the correlation coefficients between the four outcome

measures (LS Scale, LS global item, Disagreement and Problems) are presented in Table 14. It is seen that all four measures are significantly correlated in a positive direction. The highest correlation (.7005) is between the LS Scale and the LS global item. Marital Problems and Marital Disagreements also show a fairly strong positive correlation (.6755). Marital Problems and Marital Disagreements had moderately strong, positive correlations (.5736 and .5436, respectively) with the LS Scale, and similar correlations (.5213 and .5140, respectively) with the LS global item. Hence, while moderate to strong correlations were found, indicating a strong connection between the measures, the correlations were not to such a high degree so as to cause suspicion that they were measuring the same variable or construct.

As to subjects who reported having had at least one physical confrontation with their spouse and those who reported none, there were statistically significant differences between the two groups on the LS Scale, and the LS global scale, as well as the Marital Problems Scale. Thus, those who reported physical confrontations scored significantly higher on "lovesickness", global marital dissatisfaction, and marital problems. Such subjects were also slightly higher on MMLOC, indicating a more external locus of control than subjects who did not report physical altercations, although the differences were not statistically significant. These findings are shown in Table 15, and will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

Finally, the impact of cohabitation prior to marriage was explored. Couples who had cohabitated were compared to those who had not cohabitated in terms of the four marital outcome measures and marital locus of control. Using a t-test, there were no significant differences between

couples who had cohabitated and those who had not in terms of either marital outcome or locus of control. Refer to Table 16 for full presentation of results.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

A. Discussion

As noted in the Introduction, the development of disillusionment with either one's mate or with marriage itself is a normal, predictable phase of marriage which has been found to become most noticeable after three to five years of marriage (Pineo, 1961). The present study has been focused on the marital quality and satisfaction of 71 couples in their twenties who have been married around two years, a period which precedes the most vulnerable phase of marriage noted above. There are, however, numerous researchers, noted in the Introduction, who have identified the first year or two of marriage as particularly crucial in laying down patterns in the marriage revolving around separation-individuation, intimacy and sexuality, separation from one's family of origin, and problem-solving, which may well persist throughout the marriage and ultimately determine its success or failure. Hence, the purpose of the present study has been to explore and evaluate those influences upon early marital development which are postulated by object relations family systems theory as contributing to either the health or dysfunction of relationships in general. The primary theorist from the object relations family systems school of thought has been James Framo (1970, 1976, 1981, 1992). The theoretical perspective of Framo as well as other object relations and family systems theorists as discussed in Chapter 2 will be

related to the present findings, especially in terms of how well the present findings either support or fail to support these theoretical orientations.

In general, the sample of young couples who participated in this study ranged all the way from being very happy, satisfied, and relatively problem- and conflict-free to being quite dissatisfied, with pronounced feelings of being uncared for and neglected, and having a high level of conflict and problems. As noted in the frequency tables in Table 6, showing the distribution and percentages of subjects as to being high, moderate, and low on "lovesickness", conflict, and problems, significant proportions of subjects scored in the high (i.e., problematic) categories of the marital outcome measures. Nearly a third reported high scores on "lovesickness", while more than a third reported high levels of disagreement/conflict. Interestingly, only 12.7% of subjects fell into the high category of marital problems. We might conclude, from these percentages, that early marital difficulties may primarily be expressed initially on a subjective, feeling level, which may contribute to increased levels of conflict, and which may ultimately result in a greater number of manifest marital problems.

Such a possibility could best be explored via a longitudinal study of couples over several years of marital development. Such a design, of course, is not within the scope of the present study. However, the frequency of high level subjective distress cited above, which may possibly contribute to greater conflict, which, in turn, may possibly lead to a greater number of marital problems, certainly frames this phase of marriage as serving as a potential watershed stage of marriage. Hence, accumulated issues and consequential patterns may subsequently contribute

either to marital stability and quality or to ultimate dissatisfaction and disillusionment. Hopefully, the conclusions and discussion to follow will help illuminate those intrapsychic and family systems variables which have been hypothesized as important in determining early marital development.

As previously discussed, Framo's work has been an attempt at integrating object relations and family systems theories into what he has termed "family-of-origin therapy", which emphasizes intergenerational themes and issues (1992). Both of the intrapsychic variables, narcissism and locus of control, were delineated in Chapter 2 as they are related to Framo's theory. Additionally, Framo makes extensive use of family systems concepts and thinking, as well as frequent reference to other intergenerational theorists such as Bowen (1978), Boszormenyi-Nagy (1965), Whitaker (Neil and Kniskern, 1982), and Paul (Paul and Grossner, 1965; Paul and Paul, 1975; Paul and Paul, 1982), and object relations theorists, such as Dicks (1967) and Fairbairn (1954), in highlighting similarities and differences in his theory and method of therapy. Using Framo's theoretical perspective, we will now look at the specific findings from this study, while at times referring to related empirical and clinical investigations such as noted above.

o Hypothesis 1

Framo referred to narcissism as an inevitable part of human existence which may require "special conditions in order to be manifested, such as a marital relationship" (1992, p. 114). While Framo does not specifically speculate on the possible impact of varying levels of narcissism upon marital relationships, it is clear from his work that he considers those who "are unable to bond or sustain any kind of relationship with others" as either psychotic, borderline or severely

narcissistically impaired (1992, p. 114). Hence, in line with this thinking as to the likely dysfunctional nature of extreme levels of narcissism, it was hypothesized that subjects who scored high on narcissism would also score high (i.e. more problematic) on the marital outcome measures for "lovesickness," global marital assessment, marital conflict, and marital problems. However, this expectation was only part of the first hypothesis, which predicted a curvilinear (u-shaped) relationship between narcissism and negative marital outcome. Hence, it was predicted that low narcissism would be associated with high negative outcome, that moderate narcissism would be associated with low negative outcome, and high narcissism would be associated with high negative outcome. It was suspected that either extreme of ego-investment (Masterson, 1981) would lead to marital difficulties, and that a moderate amount of narcissism would be associated with good mental health and marital quality (Jacobsen, 1964; Solomon, 1989; Stolorow, 1975).

However, as noted in Chapter 4, only low narcissism was associated with poor marital outcome. Given all the interpersonal problems supposedly associated with high narcissism, we may ask what could have contributed to the lack of association between either subjects' high narcissism or subjects' spouses' high narcissism and negative marital outcomes reported by subjects. There are two factors discussed in the clinical literature which may have accounted for this lack of association between high narcissism and marital difficulties. These include the selective choice of marital partners so as to minimize spousal complaints, and the denial of any serious marital problems or the need for greater attention from one's spouse on the part of subjects scoring high on narcissism.

First, the process followed by narcissistic individuals in selecting partners has been described by several writers as being geared toward self-aggrandizement and self-enhancement. Relating back to the concept of "perfect mirroring" (Klein, 1989), narcissistic personalities may seek out an idealized mate with whom to identify and in large part "fuse" their identities together. As stated by Solomon (1989), "For some the wish is to shine in the reflected glory of a perfect other" (p. 45). As described by Freeman, Pretzer, Fleming and Simon (1990):

Often the narcissistic individual will seek out kindred spirits who will participate in a "mutual admiration society." They may well believe that they should only have to relate to "special" people like themselves and see others as beneath them either socially, financially or intellectually (p. 240).

On the other hand, some narcissistic individuals may select spouses who will admire them unquestioningly, and who can be easily exploited (Freeman, Pretzer, Fleming, and Simon, 1990). This would perhaps most likely occur in the case where one spouse is quite "entitled" and/or exploitative and his/her partner scores low in these areas (for a clinical example see Freeman, Pretzer, Fleming, and Simon, 1990, pp. 241-242). As noted by Solomon (1989), "Some narcissistically damaged adults expect to have the same kind of control over their mates and children as they do over parts of their own bodies" (p. 58). The spouses of such individuals may passively accept the domination and control, perhaps deriving some sense of "security" from it, at least in the early stage of marriage.

When frequencies of spouses who both scored high on NPI were added to those for high husband/low wife and for high wife/low husband, there was a total of 25 couples (over 35% of the entire sample) where either one of the two possibilities described above may have existed. If either of

the dynamics noted were to play out in such a manner in many of these couples, we could probably expect average to favorable marital outcome measures, even in the face of one or both spouses scoring in the high category on narcissism. However, this is only an interpretation of the lack of association between high levels of narcissism and marital difficulties found in this study, and further investigation beyond this would be necessary to address these possibilities adequately.

The second factor which has been described in the clinical literature which may help explain the lack of association between high narcissism and marital difficulties found in this study relates to the narcissistic need to present an image of a "perfect" marriage to the outside world, as a reflection of high ego ideals, omnipotent control, and fantasies of ideal love such as described in the DSM-III-R. A specific area of concern in this regard would be social desirability influences upon narcissistic individuals' responses to a marital outcome instrument. Specific to the Lovesickness Scale (LS), the issue of omnipotent control also arises, since the this scale measures how needy or uncared for one feels in regard to one's spouse. If indeed the "glass-bubble fantasy" described by Volkan (1979) as characteristic of highly narcissistic individuals were to hold true, we would expect a negative relationship between narcissism and "lovesickness". This is precisely what occurred in this study. Hence, instead of finding a positive association between high narcissism and the desire for greater attention from one's spouse, the opposite was true. Higher levels of narcissism seem to present no real problem as to marital satisfaction, whereas lower levels do, at least at this early stage of marriage.

0 Hypothesis 3

As Hypothesis 2 was not supported and no interpretation as to the result is offered here, we will move on to briefly consider the theoretical implications of Hypothesis 3. This hypothesis stated that there would be no departure from chance as to the frequencies of couple combinations as to high/medium/low levels of narcissism. Since this null hypothesis was supported, the propositions as to couple similarity or complementarity proposed by theorists such as Bowen (1978) and Lachkar (1992) receive no support. However, because the current sample was relatively small in terms of the number of couples (71) analyzed by a 3 X 3 table, the present findings are quite limited as to conclusiveness. Given a larger number of couples, more definite patterns of couple complementarity versus similarity may possibly emerge.

0 Hypothesis 4

As to Hypothesis 4, there were no significant findings that would support either a "sliding meanings" interpretation of cognitive style or the view that individuals scoring high on narcissism are more likely to deny responsibility for problems in the marriage. It is possible that in regard to the first part of the hypothesis (testing out the sliding meaning interpretation of narcissistic cognitive style), the lack of greater variability on MMLOC by subjects scoring high on narcissism could have resulted from at least two sources. First, the effects of the social desirability factor possibly having a greater impact on individuals who were more narcissistic, as suggested earlier, may have played a role in this outcome. Further, as shown in Table 11, individuals scoring high on NPI were significantly more internal than the rest of the sample. In clinical terms, this greater internal locus may be akin to the defense of

"omnipotent control" (Kernberg, 1975).

The second part of the hypothesis, i.e., that subjects scoring high on NPI would likely score more external on several MMLOC items reflecting self-blame, was not supported, either, as noted above. Once again, it is speculated that a social desirability factor may have had a differential impact on individuals scoring high on NPI. As defensive self-esteem regulation has been found to be of great importance to narcissistic individuals (Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan, 1991a, 1992b), there is a clear possibility that such individuals may have wanted to present themselves in the best possible light, thereby agreeing that they would accept responsibility for problems in the marriage. Whether such subjects' behavior would be consistent with their statements is, of course, the primary question, as it would be for all the subjects. Additional research would be necessary to address this issue adequately.

o Hypothesis 5

The impact of marital locus of control was explored in both Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 6. Hypothesis 5 involved a simple product moment correlation between MMLOC and the four outcome measures, whereas Hypothesis 6 involved a multiple correlation regression analysis which included MMLOC as well as subjects' and subjects' spouses' NPI scores and six family systems/developmental variables. Hence, marital locus of control was first tested on its own as to the strength of its relationship with the four marital outcome measures, and then was tested as to how it might combine with up to eight other variables in predicting marital outcome.

First, for the correlation between MMLOC and the four outcome measures, there were significant, positive, moderately strong correlations

between MMLOC and the four outcome measures, as specified in Chapter 4. Hence, there was a consistent, moderately strong relationship between an external marital locus of control and the presence of marital dissatisfaction, conflict, and problems. This would be consistent with several earlier studies which found positive correlations between internality and marital stability and satisfaction (Miller, 1981; Miller, Lefcourt, and Ware, 1983; Smolen and Spiegel, 1987). As noted in Chapter 2, more recent studies which have shown stronger correlations between locus of control and marital outcome measures may have likely been enhanced by marriage-specific locus of control instruments.

However, as referred to in the critique of research on locus of control within a marital context presented in Chapter 2, there may be some difficulty in establishing causal direction when looking at the correlations between MMLOC and the marital outcome measures. For example, as in this study's finding of a positive correlation between externality and marital difficulties, we could ask if an external locus of control causes or contributes to marital dissatisfaction, conflict, and problems, or do marital dissatisfaction, conflict, and problems cause or contribute to an external locus of control? This question cannot be resolved here, as it would perhaps best be addressed in a time-ordered or longitudinal design measuring increases and decreases in the variables over an extended period of time. All that can be said from the findings here is that externality appears to be consistently related to marital difficulties (or, conversely, that internality appears to be related to marital satisfaction).

Before going on to consider MMLOC (as well as the other variables) in Hypothesis 6, some additional comments about the relevance of locus of

control to physical conflict as well as to depression in marriage would be in order. First, as described in the follow-up analysis at the end of Chapter 4, the couples in this study who reported at least one incident of physical assault or abuse in their marriage scored significantly higher on marital dissatisfaction and problems than did couples who did not report any physical confrontations. Hence, couples who have had at least one physical altercation in their marriage appear to be more vulnerable to develop or maintain a higher level of marital difficulties in general. Such subjects were also somewhat more external as to MMLOC, although the differences were not statistically significant.

An external locus of control has also been found to be associated with depression (Benassi, Sweeney, and Dufour, 1988). Hence, depressed individuals tend to perceive situations as less under their own control and more under the control of external events, circumstances, or powerful others. Such a finding is consistent with the "learned helplessness" paradigm first advanced by Seligman (1975).

In terms of this study, the relationship between externality and depression has direct implications. Since there was a positive relationship between externality and marital dissatisfaction, problems, and disagreement in this study, it is possible that unhappiness and depression may also have been involved at some level in these negative outcomes, since depression has been found to be highly associated with marital discord in other studies (Beach, Arias, and O'Leary, 1987; Coleman and Miller, 1975; Renne, 1970; Weiss and Aved, 1978). However, the impact of depression or mood disorders on marital quality is beyond the scope of the present study, but may be especially relevant to a study of newlywed adjustment given the "loss" involved in having to loosen ties with one's

family of origin, or possibly having to leave one's friends and community, etc. upon entering marriage.

o Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 was designed to pull together several of the family systems/developmental variables which McGoldrick (1988) had listed as contributing to early marital difficulties, and two intrapsychic variables (narcissism and marital locus of control), which have also been studied in regard to relationship problems, in an effort to determine the relative importance of these variables in predicting marital outcome. Some overall observations about consistencies or patterns seen between the predictor variables and the four outcome measures can be made at this time.

First, marital locus of control (MMLOC) was the first predictor variable for all four outcome measures, which suggests that external locus of control is consistently involved in feelings of not being cared for or attended to adequately in a marriage, as well as in negative global ratings of marital quality, and frequency and intensity of marital problems and conflict. This finding certainly highlights the importance of particular cognitive mind-sets in overall marital adjustment. Hence, the salience of positive expectancies in shaping marital interaction and outcome, such as posited by Jacobson (1991), is supported. This finding also loans support to those cognitively oriented therapies addressing marital dysfunction, such as advanced by Beck (1988), and Ellis and Harper (1961), as well as to more integrative models combining the role of cognitions with systems (Epstein, 1982, 1986; Weeks and Treat, 1992) or psychodynamic concepts (Feldman, 1982). Framo's work (1970, 1976, 1981, 1992), as delineated in Chapter 2, includes the role of cognitive expectancies in his integration of family systems and object relations

concepts. Hence, the finding here regarding the negative impact of external locus of control upon marital outcome dovetails nicely with Framo's reference to what he refers to as "regressive expectancies" and the need for their resolution through the type of marital treatment he has developed (1981, 1992).

Next, a significant loss affecting either spouse or their families within one year prior to the marriage was found to be the second strongest predictor variable for three of the four outcome measures, which also reflects a great deal of consistency in the overall combination of variables in predicting marital outcome across the dimensions measured. Loss combined with marital locus of control for the Lovesickness Scale, the Marital Disagreement Scale, and the Marital Problems Scale. Hence, it would seem that the presence of a significant loss within a year prior to the marriage, when combined with an external locus of control, would significantly contribute to feelings of being uncared for or unattended to by one's spouse (i.e., "lovesickness"), as well as the probability of conflict and problems in the marriage.

The impact of loss upon marital adjustment was referred to by Framo (1992) in regard to assessment of family-of-origin influences in the early stage of marital treatment. Framo (1992) makes more extensive reference, however, to the work of Norman and Betty Paul (Paul, 1967; Paul and Grossner, 1965; Paul and Paul, 1975; Paul and Paul, 1982) in elaborating upon the importance of unresolved losses in effecting marital outcome, thereby incorporating this emphasis into his overall therapeutic approach. The Pauls are particularly insightful and persuasive in terms of presenting how unresolved losses effecting either or both spouses can cause an emotional shutting down or disengagement from one another.

For example, Paul and Paul (1982) have offered an exploration of how the death of a significant other (e.g., parent, sibling, etc.) may contribute to sexual dysfunction in marriage. Further, as described by Derdyn and Waters (1979), often "a variety of losses are not mourned and are not shared between partners, but one spouse uses the other for externalization of internal conflict regarding the losses," with loss being "neither acknowledged nor mourned, but . . . experienced as disenchantment with and anger at the spouse" (Abstract). Hence, unresolved loss could be enormously divisive for any couple, and perhaps most especially for newlywed couples, where its unspoken influence could be seriously disruptive to the emotional bonding critical at this stage of marriage. Thus, the salience of death and loss as crucial issues in intergenerational and object relations theories (such as in both Framo's and the Pauls' work) is highlighted by the present finding.

The second predictor variable for the fourth marital outcome variable, the LS Scale global item, was present relationship with parents, i.e., whether either spouse rated their current relationship with their parents as less than "good". Interestingly, both the LS Scale item and the present relationship with parents variable involve a global assessment of the quality of relationship, one with parents and the other with one's spouse. Thus, it would appear that subjects' and their spouses' global assessments of their respective relationships with parents, when combined with subjects' marital locus of control, would influence subjects' global assessment of the quality of their marriage. Hence, if a subject with an external marital locus of control were to rate his/her relationship with their parents as less than "good" (or, alternatively, were married to someone who rated their relationship with their parents as less than

"good"), such a subject is more likely to rate their marital relationship as less than "good" as well.

This particular finding resonates very strongly with Framo's emphasis on transferential phenomena between spouses. Long-standing, unresolved issues with one's parents, which remain largely unconscious, are re-experienced and played out between spouses via the process of projective identification. As Framo (1992) notes, "Consequently, one's current intimates, one's spouse and children, are, in part, stand-ins for old images, the embodiments of long buried introjects" (p. 115). Hence, a negative global assessment of one's relationship with one's parents by either spouse may contaminate and color one's relationship with one's spouse.

In regard to this finding's implication for treatment, Framo has described his approach to therapy as offering clients an opportunity to "get to know their parents as real people rather than as fantasy figures who have to be idealized or denigrated" and to "establish an adult-to-adult relationship with one's parents" (1976, p. 200). Via his family-of-origin sessions, "Dealing with the real, external figures loosens the grip of the internalized representations of these figures and exposes them to current realities," which allows for changes in perceptions and transferences (1981, p. 138). Hence, in terms of this particular finding describing current relationship with parents as a significant contributor to the assessment of overall marital quality, Framo's perspective as to the importance of transferential phenomena in marriage appears strongly supported.

A related theoretical perspective which would be consistent with this finding is that of Bowen (1978), whose intergenerational approach has

been acknowledged by Framo (1981) as a major influence on his own thinking, and with whom Framo (1992) has more recently contrasted his family-of-origin method. One of the primary postulates of Bowen's work emphasizes the impact of both lack of emotional separation and emotional cut-off from one's family of origin upon current nuclear family process and individual functioning. From his perspective, either lack of emotional separation or an emotional cut-off from one's parents would result in greater levels of anxiety and vulnerability to dysfunction (e.g., distancing and/or conflict) in the current nuclear family and marriage.

A third predictor variable was entered into the prediction equation for the LS Scale, the Marital Disagreement Scale, and the Marital Problems Scale. For the LS Scale, the third predictor variable was the subject's narcissism score, which yielded a negative correlation. That is, low scores on NPI for subjects was combined with external locus of control and loss to produce a greater likelihood of feelings of "lovesickness" in the subject. A possible interpretation for low scores on subjects' NPI being related to high scores on "lovesickness" is that low NPI scores generally indicate less manifest self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, etc. (Emmons, 1984; Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan, 1991a; Watson, Taylor, and Morris, 1987), all of which might result in greater need for confirmation and bolstering from one's spouse. High scores on the NPI may infer the opposite -- that is, less manifest need for reassurance and confirmation, as discussed earlier in reference to Hypothesis 1.

For both the Marital Disagreement and Marital Problems scales, the third predictor variable to enter the prediction equation was whether

either spouse rated their childhood as less than "happy". Hence, these two scales received the same three predictor variables in the same order entering the prediction equation. This would suggest a very strong influence of that particular combination of variables, i.e., marital locus of control, loss, and childhood happiness, in predicting both marital conflict and problems. Thus, subjects with an external marital locus of control, who had experienced a loss (or whose spouse had experienced a loss) within a year prior to the marriage, and who reported a less than happy childhood (or whose spouse reported a less than happy childhood) were more likely to report marital conflict and problems.

The addition of the childhood happiness variable has a number of theoretical implications relative to Framo's work as well as to the work of other intergenerational and object relations theorists. Framo (1992) discusses how the experience of family-of-origin sessions "shifts the balance of good and bad objects in the internal world of the family members" in an effort at "recontouring" internal objects, especially in cases where individuals had experienced parental abuse or neglect as children (pp. 117-118). This recontouring is essential in such cases because, as Framo (1992) notes, "The individual is inexorably tied to the internalized bad parent figures, because without them there is nothingness, depersonalization, fragmentation, and fear of dying" (p. 118). He adds that the young adult goes on to seek out someone who will offer the opportunity of neutralizing earlier negative experiences with their parents:

In order to preserve the original libidinal object (the loving or hoped for aspect of the parent), the split-off, bad antilibidinal object is found in the intimate others (Seinfeld, 1990). (Thus we can account for some people

idealizing a parent and beating or murdering a spouse.) (pp. 118-119).

Hence, from Framo's perspective, without the recontouring of internal objects he attempts to accomplish through family-of-origin sessions, an unhappy childhood is likely to result in unresolved conflicts over closeness and separation, and subsequent difficulties in marriage.

Hence, as alluded to in Chapter 2, couples who have had disappointing, negative, or perhaps even abusive experiences with their families of origin, and who emotionally cut off from them, believing that they can get "beyond" their influence by doing so, may only be setting themselves up for more disappointment. Carl Whitaker, another transgenerational family therapist with whom Framo (1992) also contrasts his use of family-of-origin sessions, has perhaps best summarized this situation in one of his wry observations. Whitaker refers to marriage as "really just two scapegoats sent out by two families to reproduce each other . . . The battle is which one will it be" (Neil and Kniskern, 1982, p. 368). Hence, the influence of one's family of origin cannot be avoided so simply, and, as the present finding as to childhood unhappiness suggests, may act as a significant, ongoing factor in the emotional lives of young couples.

Seen from the related object relations perspective of Dicks (1967), marriage is the nearest adult equivalent to the original parent-child relationship. Marriage invariably elicits infantile feelings in partners. While satisfying marriages allow a high degree of freedom in expressing such deeply repressed needs and feelings without a loss of security or dignity, troubled marriages do not allow for such expression without harmful, embittering interactions occurring (Nadelson, 1978). In such

situations, the spoken or unspoken demand by those who had unpleasant childhoods to receive from their spouse what they did not receive as children will lead to difficulties.

As noted by Freeman (1992), another intergenerational family systems therapist, we simply are unable to give to someone else what we did not receive emotionally from our own parents or families. Framing this as a developmental issue needing to be addressed over the course of the entire life cycle, Freeman (1992) further comments on the dilemma of needing more than one can give:

Nonetheless, the degree to which an adult comes out of his or her own family feeling emotionally unsafe determines the degree to which he or she will need a partner to make up for those losses. When one feels emotionally unsafe and one's partner behaves in a way that seems unloving, one is not able to become curious about one's partner's reactions. Rather, one becomes defensive and reactive toward those behaviors that remind one of earlier losses, abandonment, and betrayal. Once these dynamics are set in motion one can no longer give emotionally or be nurturing; the defensive stance takes over and one withdraws or shifts into anger and conflict (p. 12).

Thus, the present finding that subjects' (or subjects' spouses') lack of childhood happiness significantly contributed to marital disagreement and problems is very much in line with Freeman's account of the dilemma of needing more than one can give, and reflects both intergenerational and object relations perspectives, as well as Framo's theory, as described above.

A fourth predictor variable was entered into the prediction equation for one outcome measure, that being the Marital Problems Scale. The fourth predictor variable, subjects' spouses' NPI score, was negatively correlated with marital problems. That is, subjects whose spouses scored low on the NPI, when combined with subjects' MMLOC, loss, and the

childhood happiness variable, were more likely to report marital problems as compared to others without this combination of variables. An interpretation of the effect of spouses' low NPI scores on subjects' increased number of marital problems is that just as low NPI scores in subjects could contribute to greater "lovesickness" in subjects, being married to someone more prone toward "lovesickness" may well result in subjects indicating a greater number of problems in the marriage (such as the spouse's being easily hurt, moody, or critical due to feeling neglected, etc.).

As an overall summary, it appears that one's having an external locus of control and either spouse having experienced a loss within a year prior to the marriage together combine in a very consistent way to predict feelings of being uncared for or neglected in the marriage, as well as greater marital conflict and problems. Additionally, global assessment of subjects'/spouses' current relationship with parents contributes significantly to global assessment of marital satisfaction. Whether either spouse had a less than "happy" childhood also appears to add greater predictability as to the frequency and intensity of marital conflict and problems. Subjects scoring low on NPI also appears to add to being prone to "lovesickness", while having a spouse who scores low on NPI appears to increase the number of marital problems when combined with subjects' externality, loss, and the childhood happiness variable. Overall, there appears to be a great deal of cohesion, consistency, and logic in the way the six predictor variables which were utilized entered the prediction equation for the four marital outcome measures being predicted.

In terms of theoretical implications, the salience of marital locus

of control certainly supports the relevance of a cognitive perspective in viewing marital adjustment. On the other hand, the addition of loss and lack of childhood happiness, as well as current relationship with parents, is highly consistent with Framo's perspective as well as that of other intergenerational and object relations theorists referred to above. In the author's opinion, the only real "surprise" in these findings, from a theoretical point of view, is the lack of association between high scores on narcissism (NPI) and marital difficulties. This point will be briefly addressed again regarding recommendations for further research.

B. Limitations of Study

A number of limitations of the present study should be noted at this time, with recommendations as to future research to address these limitations, as well as additional questions, to follow. The primary limitations are related to the representativeness of the final sample of 71 couples, the question of causal direction between external marital locus of control and marital outcome, and the moderate levels of correlation found between the independent variables and the four outcome measures. Each of these will be addressed.

First, as was noted in Chapter 4, the final sample was simply not representative of the population from which it was derived. It was disproportionately white and well-educated. Hence, the concern expressed by Donohue and Ryder (1982) noted in Chapter 2 as to the lack of representativeness of most studies on marital satisfaction would apply to this study as well, despite concerted efforts to obtain a racially proportionate sample via stratified sampling procedures. The poor response overall by black couples who were recruited for the study

contributed to this being primarily a study of white couples. Hence, the external validity of the present study is limited as a result.

Next, the question raised earlier as to the causal direction between external marital locus of control and marital outcome is one that could not be adequately assessed by this one-shot, cross-sectional survey. Hence, the question remains as to whether an external locus of control contributes to marital difficulties or whether marital difficulties lead to an external locus of control. The two may well have an interactive or circular relationship, with one effecting the other in turn.

And finally, the levels of correlation found between the independent variables in the study and the four outcome measures were only moderate. Hence, a number of intervening or competing variables were not controlled for or identified. Hence, while the independent variables which were significantly related to outcome measures were generally supportive of the theoretical perspective utilized in the study, the results were not dramatic as such. Thus, other unknown variables not accounted for may be equally important, if not more so, as the independent variables addressed here. As a result, the internal validity of the present study is also limited to some degree.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

Following from the limitations outlined above, as well as from a number of questions raised either explicitly or implicitly in the preceding discussion, a number of recommendations as to future research may be offered at this time. These recommendations refer to the following:

1. Assessing whether marital dysfunction develops in "stages,"

as suggested by the comments at the beginning of this chapter, ie., does subjective distress on a feeling level (e.g., "lovesickness") typically precede increased levels of conflict, which may result in increased numbers of areas of marital difficulties?;

2. Assessing whether subjects who score high on narcissism are more susceptible to social desirability factors than are subjects who score low-medium on narcissism;

3. Using a longitudinal design, explore whether high narcissism for one or both spouses eventually does contribute to marital difficulties over several years beyond the two year time period used here;

4. Using a longitudinal design, explore whether couples having an external locus of control for one or both spouses develop marital problems over time, or whether problems tend to produce an external locus of control, etc.;

5. Assessing the role of depression and its relationship to marital locus of control, as these two variables impact early marital satisfaction and quality;

6. Via follow-up interviews with couples who reported significant loss, lack of childhood happiness, or less than good relationships with parents, explore the types of losses, and the reasons why subjects viewed childhood as less than happy and relationships with parents as less than good, and subjects' awareness of any of these contributing to marital difficulties (and if so, how, etc.);

7. As a more objective assessment of the role of couple complementarity versus similarity on narcissism, an experimental design comparing different groups in terms of their problem-solving abilities, trust levels, honesty with one another, etc.;

8. Using an instrument which is less reactive or without a social desirability factor involved, explore differences in cognitive styles and willingness to accept responsibility for problems in marriage for varying levels of narcissism; and

9. Assess more fully the role of domestic violence in diminishing marital satisfaction, trust, etc., and its possible interrelationship with other variables such as loss, childhood happiness, current relationship with family of origin, etc.

It is suggested that perhaps either more in-depth interviews with couples in combination with the use of objective measures (such as the NPI

and the MMLOC), or the combination of an experimental design with the use of objective measures, could best address some of the areas noted above. For others, a longitudinal design observing changes in couples' scores on the various instruments over time, and making inferences as to causality, may be needed. In either case, the intention would be to explore with greater depth and control over extraneous factors the relationships between variables found in this cross-sectional design. The present study may thus best be seen as supporting a set of relationships which deserve greater study, such as noted above. Recalling the statement by McGoldrick (1988) in Chapter 1 that "Becoming a couple is one of the most complex and difficult transitions of the family life cycle" (p. 209), such additional study would be warranted and would hopefully contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between the "inner and outer worlds", as Framo (1976) has described it, in producing either marital happiness and stability or dysfunction and dissolution.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION (COUPLES)

<u>Locality</u>	<u>Race</u>
County = 594 (57%)	White = 695 (67.2%)
City = <u>440 (43%)</u>	Black = 293 (28.3%)
Total = 1,034 (100%)	Interracial = 32 (3.1%)
	Asian = <u>14 (1.4%)</u>
	Total = 1,034 (100%)

Cohabitation (by Race)

Cohabitated Whites = 366 (52.7%)	Noncohabitated Whites = 329 (47.3%)
Cohabitated Blacks = <u>151 (51.5%)</u>	Noncohabitated Blacks = <u>142 (48.5%)</u>
Total Cohabitated = 517 (52.3%)	Total Noncohabitated = 471 (47.7%)

Education (by Race)

Whites with Some College = 472 (67.9%)
Whites without Some College = 223 (32.1%)
Blacks with Some College = 113 (38.5%)
Blacks without Some College = 180 (61.5%)
Total with Some College = 585 (59.2%)
Total without Some College = 403 (40.8%)

Type of Wedding

Religious = 714 (83.1%)
Civil = 145 (16.9%)

TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE (COUPLES = 71)

<u>Race</u>	<u>Cohabitation</u>
White = 61 (85.9%)	Did Not = 37 (52.1%)
Black = 5 (7.0%)	Did = <u>34 (47.9%)</u>
Interracial = 4 (5.6%)	Total = 71 (100.0%)
Asian = <u>1 (1.4%)</u>	
Total = 71 (100.0%)	

Education

<u>Type of Wedding</u>	<u>Education</u>
All 71 (100.0%) had Religious Ceremonies	Below HS = 3 (2.1%)
	HS = 15 (10.6%)
	Some College = 29 (20.4%)
	College Grad = 66 (46.5%)
	5+ yrs. College = 29 (20.4%)

Educational Differences Between Spouses

No = 136 (95.8%)
Yes = 6 (4.2%)

TABLE 3: FAMILY SYSTEMS/DEVELOPMENTAL VARIABLES (SUBJECTS)

How Long Dated

More than 6 months/or engaged under 3 yrs.	=	130 (92.3%)
Less than 6 months/or Engaged more than 3 yrs.	=	<u>12 (7.7%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Desire to Distance From Parents/Family

No	=	92 (64.8%)
Yes	=	<u>50 (35.2%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Significant Loss Within One Year Prior to Marriage (Either Spouse)

No	=	108 (76.1%)
Yes	=	<u>34 (23.9%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Financial Assistance from Parents at Some Point in Marriage

No	=	64 (45.1%)
Yes	=	<u>78 (54.9%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Present Relationship with Parents

Good (both spouses)	=	110 (77.5%)
Less than Good (one or both spouses)	=	<u>32 (22.5%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Childhood Happiness

Happy (both spouses)	=	96 (67.6%)
Less than Happy (one or both spouses)	=	<u>46 (32.4%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Parents Divorced

Neither Spouse	=	74 (52.1%)
One/Both Spouses	=	<u>68 (47.9%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

Child/Pregnancy within First Year of Marriage

No	=	122 (85.9%)
Yes	=	<u>20 (14.1%)</u>
Total	=	142 (100.0%)

TABLE 4: DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF NONRESPONDENTS (COUPLES)

<u>Race</u>	<u># Couples in Sample</u>	<u>Participated</u>	<u>Refused</u>	<u>Did Not Return</u>	<u>Overall Nonresponse</u>
White:	72 (78.3%)	61 (84.8%)	4 (5.5%)	7 (9.7%)	11 (15.3%)
Black:	15 (16.3%)	5 (33.3%)	1 (6.6%)	9 (60.0%)	10 (66.7%)
Interracial:	4 (4.3%)	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Asian:	<u>1 (1.1%)</u>	<u>1 (100.0%)</u>	<u>0 (0.0%)</u>	<u>0 (0.0%)</u>	<u>0 (0.0%)</u>
Total:	92 (100.0%)	71 (77.2%)	5 (5.4%)	16 (17.4%)	21 (22.8%)

<u>Education</u>	<u># Subjects in Sample</u>	<u>Participated</u>	<u>Refused</u>	<u>Did Not Return</u>	<u>Overall Nonresponse</u>
College Grad/5+:	113 (61.4%)	95 (84.1%)	6 (5.3%)	12 (10.6%)	18 (15.9%)
Some College:	45 (24.5%)	29 (64.4%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (35.6%)	16 (35.6%)
High School or Less:	<u>26 (14.1%)</u>	<u>18 (69.2%)</u>	<u>4 (15.4%)</u>	<u>4 (15.4%)</u>	<u>8 (30.8%)</u>
Total:	184 (100.0%)	142 (77.2%)	10 (5.4%)	32 (17.4%)	42 (22.8%)

TABLE 5: GENDER DIFFERENCES FOR VARIABLES (SUBJECTS)

VARIABLE: Marital Locus of Control (MMLOC)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	138.0423	16.2026	142
Husbands	140.1972	17.5178	71
Wives	135.8873	14.5774	71

VARIABLE: Narcissism (NPI)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	14.6831	6.1175	142
Husbands	14.7746	6.5426	71
Wives	14.5915	5.7061	71

VARIABLE: Entitlement-Exploitativeness (E-E)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	3.0845	2.0542	142
Husbands	3.3803	2.3137	71
Wives	2.7887	1.7231	71

VARIABLE: Lovesickness (LS)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	51.1197	11.3052	142
Husbands	51.0000	10.7968	71
Wives	51.2394	11.8677	71

VARIABLE: Lovesickness Global Item

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	1.1761	.4343	142
Husbands	1.1972	.4666	71
Wives	1.1549	.4017	71

VARIABLE: Marital Disagreement

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	4.8063	2.3579	142
Husbands	4.9835	2.2641	71
Wives	4.6291	2.4513	71

VARIABLE: Marital Problems

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Cases</u>
Entire Sample	3.7817	2.7396	142
Husbands	3.9859	2.8710	71
Wives	3.5775	2.6058	71

TABLE 6: FREQUENCIES/PERCENTAGES FOR LOW, MEDIUM, AND HIGH CATEGORIES FOR INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES (SUBJECTS)

VARIABLE: Marital Locus of Control (MMLOC)

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
Low (<=130)	40	28.2	28.2
Medium (131-145)	57	40.1	68.3
High (146+)	<u>45</u>	<u>31.7</u>	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

VARIABLE: Narcissism (NPI)

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
Low (<=12)	47	33.1	33.1
Medium (13-17)	46	32.4	65.5
High (18+)	<u>49</u>	<u>34.5</u>	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

VARIABLE: Entitlement-Exploitativeness (E-E)

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
Low (<=2)	59	41.5	41.5
Medium (3)	25	17.6	59.2
High (4+)	<u>58</u>	<u>40.8</u>	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

VARIABLE: Lovesickness (LS)

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
Low (<=46.6)	57	40.1	40.1
Medium (46.7-56.5)	46	32.4	72.5
High (56.6+)	<u>39</u>	<u>27.5</u>	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

VARIABLE: Marital Disagreement

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
Low (<=2.7)	29	20.4	20.4
Medium (2.8-5.8)	60	42.3	62.7
High (5.9+)	<u>53</u>	<u>37.3</u>	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

VARIABLE: Marital Problems

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
Low (<=1.3)	31	21.8	21.8
Medium (1.4-6.0)	93	65.5	87.3
High (6.1+)	<u>18</u>	<u>12.7</u>	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

TABLE 7: STATISTICS FOR SAMPLE ON INDEPENDENT
AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES (SUBJECTS)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Marital Locus of Control (MMLOC)	138.04	16.20	92	189
Narcissism (NPI)	14.68	6.12	1	28
Entitlement- Exploitativeness (E-E)	3.08	2.05	0	9
Lovesickness (LS)	51.12	11.31	34	86
Lovesickness Global Item	1.18	.43	1	3
Marital Disagreement	4.81	2.36	1.22	11.67
Marital Problems	3.78	2.74	0	13

TABLE 8: HYPOTHESIS 1

- Correlation Coefficients -

	<u>LS</u>	<u>LS Global Item</u>	<u>Disagreement</u>	<u>Problems</u>
Subjects' NPI	-.2331 (142) P=.005	-.2031 (142) P=.015	-.0515 (142) P=.543	-.1273 (142) P=.131
Subjects' E-E	-.1501 (142) P=.075	-.0963 (142) P=.254	-.0100 (142) P=.906	-.0298 (142) P=.725
Spouses' NPI	-.1676 (142) P=.046	-.1844 (142) P=.028	-.1162 (142) P=.169	-.1984 (142) P=.018
Spouses' E-E	-.0481 (142) P=.570	-.0724 (142) P=.392	-.0749 (142) P=.375	-.0963 (142) P=.254

TABLE 9: HYPOTHESIS 2 (SUBJECTS)

<u>Variable</u>	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Error</u>
MMLOC				
Specified Group:	49	138.5714	14.769	2.110
Rest of Sample :	93	137.7639	16.980	1.761
	Pooled Variance Estimate			
	F	2-tail	t	Degrees of
	<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>
	1.32	.289	-.28	140
				2-tail
				<u>Prob.</u>
				.779

TABLE 10: HYPOTHESIS 3 (COUPLES)

	Count	Husbands NPI			Row Total
		Low	Medium	High	
	Row Pct				
	Col Pct				
	Low	9	7	7	23
		39.1	30.4	30.4	32.4
		<u>37.5</u>	<u>31.8</u>	<u>28.0</u>	
		8	9	7	24
Wives	Medium	33.3	37.5	29.2	33.8
NPI		<u>33.3</u>	<u>40.9</u>	<u>28.0</u>	
		7	6	11	24
	High	29.2	25.0	45.8	33.8
		<u>29.2</u>	<u>27.3</u>	<u>44.0</u>	
	Column	24	22	25	71
	Total	33.8	31.0	35.2	100.0
	<u>Chi-Square</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>DF</u>	<u>Significance</u>	
	Pearson	2.12285	4	.71318	

TABLE 11: HYPOTHESIS 4 (SUBJECTS)

Part a

<u>Variable</u>	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Error</u>
<u>MMLOC</u>				
Subjects high on NPI:	49	134.0612	15.934	2.276
Rest of Sample:	93	140.1398	16.031	1.662
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
1.01	.983	-2.15	140	.033

Part b

<u>Variable</u>	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Error</u>
<u>MMLOC items</u>				
Subjects high on NPI:	49	18.1837	4.304	.615
Rest of Sample:	93	18.7097	3.723	.386
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
1.34	.234	-.76	140	.450

TABLE 12: HYPOTHESIS 5

- Correlation Coefficients -

	<u>LS</u>	<u>LS Global Item</u>	<u>Disagreement</u>	<u>Problems</u>
Subjects' MMLOC	.4448	.4111	.3858	.3690
	(142)	(142)	(142)	(142)
	P=.000	P=.000	P=.000	P=.000

TABLE 13: HYPOTHESIS 6, STEPWISE MULTIPLE REGRESSION OF PREDICTOR VARIABLES ON LOVESICKNESS (LS), LS GLOBAL ITEM, MARITAL DISAGREEMENT, AND MARITAL PROBLEMS (SUBJECTS)

LOVESICKNESS (LS)			
<u>Predictor Variable</u>	<u>B Value</u>	<u>Correlation</u>	<u>R Square</u>
1. MMLOC	.398067	.44431	.19785
2. Loss	.240778	.50343	.25344
3. Subjects' NPI	-.149312	.52404	.27462
LS GLOBAL ITEM			
<u>Predictor Variable</u>	<u>B Value</u>	<u>Correlation</u>	<u>R Square</u>
1. MMLOC	.393382	.41113	.16903
2. Present relationship with parents	.167239	.44349	.19668
MARITAL DISAGREEMENT			
<u>Predictor Variable</u>	<u>B Value</u>	<u>Correlation</u>	<u>R Square</u>
1. MMLOC	.369632	.38585	.14888
2. Loss	.230350	.45351	.20567
3. Childhood happiness	.201847	.49632	.24634
MARITAL PROBLEMS			
<u>Predictor Variable</u>	<u>B Value</u>	<u>Correlation</u>	<u>R Square</u>
1. MMLOC	.318246	.36898	.13614
2. Loss	.237383	.44122	.19467
3. Childhood happiness	.233888	.49300	.24304
4. Spouses' NPI	-.153428	.51502	.26524

TABLE 14: CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR FOUR OUTCOME MEASURES

- Correlation Coefficients -

	<u>LS</u>	<u>LS Global Item</u>	<u>Disagreement</u>	<u>Problems</u>
LS	1.000 (142) P=.	.7005 (142) P=.000	.5436 (142) P=.000	.5736 (142) P=.000
LS Global Item	.7005 (142) P=.000	1.0000 (142) P=.	.5140 (142) P=.000	.5213 (142) P=.000
Disagreement	.5436 (142) P=.000	.5140 (142) P=.000	1.000 (142) P=.	.6755 (142) P=.000
Problems	.5736 (142) P=.000	.5213 (142) P=.000	.6755 (142) P=.000	1.000 (142) P=.

TABLE 15: IMPACT OF PHYSICAL CONFLICT ON MARITAL OUTCOMES
AND MARITAL LOCUS OF CONTROL (SUBJECTS)

VARIABLE: <u>Lovesickness (LS)</u>					
	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>	
Physical Conflict	36	55.5278	15.343	2.557	
No Physical Conflict	106	49.6226	9.178	.891	
Pooled Variance Estimate					
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail	
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	
2.79	.000	-2.77	140	.006	
VARIABLE: <u>LS Global Item</u>					
	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>	
Physical Conflict	36	1.3611	.639	.107	
No Physical Conflict	106	1.1132	.318	.031	
Pooled Variance Estimate					
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail	
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	
4.03	.000	-3.04	140	.003	
VARIABLE: <u>Marital Problems</u>					
	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>	
Physical Conflict	36	5.3333	2.986	.498	
No Physical Conflict	106	3.2547	2.450	.238	
Pooled Variance Estimate					
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail	
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	
1.49	.129	-4.15	140	.000	
VARIABLE: <u>Marital Locus of Control (MMLOC)</u>					
	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>	
Physical Conflict	36	141.8333	17.047	2.841	
No Physical Conflict	106	136.7547	15.782	1.533	
Pooled Variance Estimate					
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail	
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	
1.17	.542	-1.63	140	.104	

TABLE 16: IMPACT OF COHABITATION ON MARITAL OUTCOMES
AND MARITAL LOCUS OF CONTROL (SUBJECTS)

VARIABLE: Lovesickness (LS)

	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Did Not Cohabitate	74	52.2432	11.630	1.352
Cohabitated	68	49.8971	10.895	1.321
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
.14	.589	1.24	140	.218

VARIABLE: LS Global Item

	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Did Not Cohabitate	74	1.1892	.428	.050
Cohabitated	68	1.1618	.444	.054
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
.08	.749	.37	140	.708

VARIABLE: Marital Disagreement

	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Did Not Cohabitate	74	3.6757	2.858	.332
Cohabitated	68	3.8971	2.621	.318
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
.19	.474	-.48	140	.632

VARIABLE: Marital Problems

	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Did Not Cohabitate	74	4.6538	2.360	.274
Cohabitated	68	4.9722	2.362	.286
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
.00	.993	-.80	140	.423

VARIABLE: Marital Locus of Control (MMLOC)

	<u># Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Did Not Cohabitate	74	139.0811	15.416	1.792
Cohabitated	68	136.9118	17.060	2.069
Pooled Variance Estimate				
F	2-tail	t	Degrees of	2-tail
<u>Value</u>	<u>Prob.</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Prob.</u>
.22	.397	.80	140	.427

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Appendices A through L

University Microfilms International



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October 8, 1992

Steven Armstrong
Family Counseling Center
1100 W. Franklin St.
Richmond, VA 23220

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Enclosed are some materials related to the Marital Disagreements and Marital Problems scales that should be helpful to you. We have used the scales in several papers, but these are those that best address issues of reliability and validity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'D. Johnson'.

David R. Johnson
Professor

Enclosures

10372 Iron Mill Road
Richmond, Va. 23235
(804) 323-1956

August 26, 1993

David R. Johnson, Professor
Department of Sociology
711 Oldfather
P.O. Box 880324
Lincoln, NE 68588-0324

Dear Dr. Johnson,

This is to follow up on my request from last October regarding the Marital Disagreements and Marital Problems scales as to scoring with these instruments. I did receive the information you sent and thank you for that. However, I do need some additional clarification as to scoring with the Marital Disagreements Scale. I am enclosing a copy of the instructions you sent for easy reference.

I am now at a point in my dissertation research where I am scoring the responses, and I have some confusion about the instructions as written. As it is stated, the instructions read "Item B, frequency of disagreements, was recoded because of the skewed distribution so that 1 or more disagreements were coded as 1(2-96=1)." After some discussion with one of my committee members, Dr. Tom Ward of the School of Education, College of William and Mary, we concluded that perhaps there was a mistake in the instructions, as Item B (Frequency of disagreements with spouse) has frequency categories ("never", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", and "very often") as responses as opposed to specific numbers, whereas Item C (Serious quarrels with spouse within the last two months) does require a specific numerical response. Also, we were unable to compute a maximum score of 12 using the instructions as given.

Hence, we concluded that perhaps the instructions given as to Item B should have been for Item C (i.e., the numerical response). Further, if the categorical responses for Item B (Frequency of disagreements) were scored as "never"= 0, "rarely"= 1, "sometimes"= 2, "often"= 3, and "very often"= 4, and if the weights for Items B and C were reversed (with Item B now having a weight of 2.086 and Item C having a weight of 1.582), then a maximum score of 12 (rounded off to the nearest whole number) could be obtained. Hence, the maximum score of 12 would result if A=2, B=4, C=1, and D=2 (with the weights for B and C being reversed). To be exact:

$$\begin{aligned} -5.552 + 1.258(2) + 2.086(4) + 1.582(1) + 2.354(2) &= -5.552 + 17.150 \\ &= 11.598 \end{aligned}$$

I hope to be running my data in about three weeks, and so, if at all possible, I would greatly appreciate your earliest clarification as to the above, i.e., whether the error was in the instructions or in our interpretation thereof.

Thank you again for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Stephen Armstrong
Doctoral candidate
College of William & Mary



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Nebraska
Lincoln

Department of Sociology
711 Oldfather
P.O. Box 880324
Lincoln, NE 68588-0324
FAX (402) 472-6070

Stephen Armstrong
10372 Iron Mill Road
Richmond, VA 23235

Dear Stephen:

There was an error in the instructions I gave you, but it turns out the error is a little different than you figured out. I did not make it real clear on how to code the frequency of disagreement item. The Frequency of Disagreement Item should be coded as (1) never (2) rarely ... rather than starting with 0. This leads to the highest possible score of 12 (rounded) because B has a possible high score of 5 rather than 4. The lowest possible score is .358 which still rounds to a score of 0.

Hope this helps. Sorry about the problems with my instructions. I did double check my weights and the ones I gave you are the ones we used in our SPSS program to create the variables.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Johnson'.

David R. Johnson
Professor

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VITA

Larry Stephen Armstrong

Birthdate: February 27, 1948

Birthplace: Newport News, Virginia

Education:

The College of William and Mary in Virginia
Williamsburg, Virginia

Ed.D. in Agency Counseling expected December, 1993.
Doctoral Thesis: The Role of Narcissism, Cognitive,
and Family Systems Variables in Early Marital Adjustment

Ed.S. in Agency Counseling awarded May, 1991.

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia

M.S. in Sociology awarded May, 1982.
Thesis: More Socialized or More Delinquent?
A Study of Normative Adaptation Patterns of Male Juvenile
Offenders in State Correctional Institutions and Private
Facilities.

B.S. in Sociology awarded January, 1971.
Sociology major with a minor in Psychology.

Certification/Licensure:

Licensed Professional Counselor, Commonwealth of Virginia
(License #0701 001898)

National Certified Counselor, National Board of Certified Counselors
(Certificate #27544)

Professional Associations/Memberships/Awards:

Member, American Counseling Association
 Member, International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors
 Member, Virginia Counselors Association
 Member, Virginia Association of Marriage and Family Counselors
 (Division of Virginia Counselors Association)
 Member, Virginia Association of Court Family Counselors
 Member, Interagency Prevention Council for the City of Richmond
 Member, Virginia One-to-One Mentoring Task Force
 Past Member, Board of Directors, William Byrd Community House
 Past Member, Alpha Kappa Delta (National Sociology Honor Society)
 Past Member, Kappa Delta Pi (National Educational Honor Society)

Work Experience:

August, 1981 to Present:

Family Counselor, Family Counseling Center (a program of the Richmond Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court), 1100 W. Franklin Street, Richmond, Va., 23220. Provided individual, couples, and family therapy with problems such as: spousal abuse, delinquent, status offending, and emotionally disturbed youth; neglected, physically, emotionally, and sexually abused children & adolescents; separation and divorce, custody determination and resolution; blended family issues; substance abuse; loss and unresolved grief; and other individual, marital, and family dysfunctions. Utilized a family systems/developmental perspective. Organized and co-facilitated an ongoing supervision group in family therapy for beginning family counselors for over two year period (1988-1990). Wrote and designed program brochure which is still in use. Served as Acting Supervisor for periods up to five months due to extended and/or intermittent absence of program Supervisor, providing supervision and case reviews for three other counselors while continuing to carry a full caseload. Served as adjunct trainer with Department of Corrections and Department of Youth and Family Services. Developed series of family therapy training tapes for use at the Family Counseling Center.

July, 1991 to Present:

Therapist, Richmond Counseling Center, 4801 Radford Ave., #107, Richmond, Va., 23230, Part-time. Provided individual, couples, and family therapy to a full compliment of outpatient clients in a private setting. Presenting problems included marital conflict, depression, recovery from childhood sexual abuse, identity disorder, substance abuse, child-focused issues, blended family issues, and loss/unresolved grief. Co-led ongoing substance abuse recovery group with adults. Utilized personality testing with some clients.

January, 1986 to March, 1986:

Instructor, Commonwealth College, 8141 Hull Street Road, Richmond, Va., 23235 (Current Address). Taught an introductory level class in psychology for one quarter.

1978 to July, 1981:

Special Placements Coordinator, Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Service Unit. Responsible for assessment of treatment needs of youth being referred by the Court for private residential programs, knowledge of residential programs treatment approaches in order to make appropriate referrals of youth to diverse facilities, regular visitation with youth, and consultation with facility staff during placement, ongoing contact with families of youth, and post-release supervision. Conducted evaluation/outcome research on effectiveness of special placements regarding recidivism rate, return to school, employment, etc., which was utilized at a departmental level.

October, 1974 to 1978:

Probation Counselor, Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Service Unit. Carried full caseload of youth on probation, as well as worked in specialized unit assigned to prepare predispositional reports for use by the Judiciary. Conducted research, as part of graduate studies, regarding treatment needs of status offenders, resulting in program development (Court Service Unit Director utilized findings in a Federal grant proposal, which led to creation of current Family Counseling Center).

September, 1970 to October, 1974:

Youth Group Worker, William Byrd Community House, 224 S. Cherry Street, Richmond, Va., from September, 1970 to October, 1974. Helped develop and implement a variety of social/recreational/group work programs for youth aged 7-17 in neighborhood center located in inner-city, low income area. Major achievement involved writing a grant proposal to begin a delinquency prevention/outreach program.

Specialized Training/Supervision:

Ongoing group supervision in marriage and family therapy with David Waters, Ph.D. and Stephen Greenstein, Ph.D., September, 1981 to June, 1987.

Ongoing group supervision in marriage and family therapy with Stephen Greenstein, Ph.D., and Mary Quinn Sale, LPC, October, 1987 to June, 1991.

Ongoing group supervision in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy with Reese Harris, LCSW, Fall, 1988 to Spring, 1991.

Numerous workshops and conferences from 1981 to the present, including those featuring: Virginia Satir (extended "hands-on" involvement, which included a family I was working with, as part of Department of Corrections research project in family therapy); Murray Bowen; Jay Haley; Cloé Madares; Thomas Fogarty; Norman and Betty Paul; Jeffrey Zeig (two extended training sessions in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy); Michael Elkin; Christine Courtois; Mic Hunter; Jerry M. Lewis; Michele Weiner-Davis.

Presentations:

November 16, 1993. Identifying and Responding to the Narcissistic Client in Group Therapy. Presentation to graduate level course in group counseling, School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.

July 27, 1993. Family Systems Therapy and the Work of Bowen and Satir. Presentation to graduate level course in counseling, School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.

May 21, 1993. The Absent or Destructive Father. Workshop presented to Virginia Juvenile Officers Association, Richmond, Va.

November 7, 1990. Helping Single Parents Assist Their Children with the Absent Father Issue. Workshop presented at the Ninth Annual Family and Corrections Conference, Waynesboro, Va.

May 18, 1989. Understanding the Wounded Father-Son Relationship; and Healing the Wounded Father-Son Relationship. Workshop presented at the Eighth Annual Family and Corrections Conference, Waynesboro, Va.

February 20, 1976. Adjudication of Juvenile Status Offenders: To What End? Paper presented at Sociological Research Symposium VI, Richmond, Va.; published in Sociological Research Symposium VI, edited by P. D. Hickey, L.D. Nelson, A.M. Schwartzbaum, N. R. Westerburg, and J. S. Williams, Department of Sociology, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.

Areas of Special Interest:

The role of the father in the family system in both male and female development; blended families; early marital adjustment; personality disorders; use of play, humor, and metaphor in therapy.

Personal Interests:

Running; physical fitness; drawing/painting; writing poetry; photography; travel; outdoors/nature.