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Goodwin, Ellen Pemberton, Ph.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1988

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JUSTICE REASONING AND RESPONSIBILITY REASONING IN RELATION TO COMMITMENT AND HAPPINESS IN LONG-TERM MARRIAGES

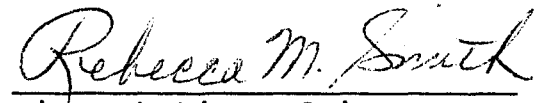
by

Ellen Pemberton Goodwin

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Greensboro
1988

Approved by



Dissertation Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Dissertation Adviser Richard M. Jaenicke

Committee Members Mildred Johnson
William J. Hunkey
Barbara Cannon

February 29, 1988
Date of Acceptance by Committee

February 16, 1988
Date of Final Oral Examination

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Marriage, as a microcosm of society, involves the moral dilemmas of conflicting rights, competing claims, and responsibility for decisions. This study focused on the moral development of the individual-in-relationship using commitment and happiness as the common ground. The purposes of this study were (a) to describe justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning of individuals in long-term marriages and (b) to assess the relationship of justice and responsibility reasoning to commitment and perceived happiness.

Separate in-depth interviews were conducted with 30 individuals in 15 long-term marriages. Data collected were responses to three hypothetical dilemmas, four real-life dilemmas, and questions on commitment and happiness.

The findings were that individuals in long-term marriages (a) who had similar justice reasoning scores as their partner had similar commitment scores and perceived happiness scores; (b) who had responsibility reasoning scores similar to their partner had dissimilar commitment scores; (c) who scored a stage of responsibility reasoning similar to their own stage of valuing marriage also exhibited similar levels of happiness as their partners; and (d) showed no relationship between similarity in moral type and responsibility reasoning scores and perceived levels of

happiness.

This research in cognitive/developmental theory of moral reasoning extends the literature on enduring marriages by lending support to the hypotheses that justice reasoning stages are associated with both commitment and perceived happiness in long-term marriages.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rarely do individuals go through life apart from other people. In fact, the norms of a good life tend to embrace intimate relationships with marriage partners, children, parents, and significant friends. In the process of fashioning these connections, most persons strive for long and enduring relationships. Researchers (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Cuber & Harroff, 1965; Kegan, 1982; Marks, 1985) have investigated the characteristics such as affective communication, role satisfaction, interpersonal resources, conflict resolution, and mutuality of long-term marriages in an attempt to discover why these marriages endure, and if by enduring, why they are meaningful to the persons involved. The question that researchers, theoreticians, and clinicians have long asked is this, "What are the essential elements of a good long-term relationship?" Generally, the people in long-term relationships perceive themselves as happy, but it is still not clear what factors are associated with this happiness and commitment to a long-term marriage. One avenue for exploration is in the cognitive/moral realm.

Marriage, as a microcosm of society, involves the moral dilemmas of conflicting rights, competing claims, and

responsibility for decisions. Good long-term marriages are an arena in which persons have a history of having dealt somewhat successfully with these dilemmas. Questions arise as to the underlying structures that have allowed those persons in long-term relationships to deal competently with the numerous conflictual areas that are present. It appears that persons behave in a relationship in the way they do because of an underlying cognitive thought structure that interprets reality in a way that is compatible with their belief system. What are those structures, and how do they allow for accommodation to the desires and wishes of another? The major question in this research is this: Does similarity in moral reasoning, conceptualized as justice and responsibility, encourage persons to maintain commitment to marital partners and even allow for perceptions of happiness to exist?

Morality has been the cornerstone of societal living since the days of Aristotle and Plato, when justice was originally delineated as the first virtue of society that "must also be the first virtue of an individual...insofar as moral virtues govern relations between a person and other persons in a society" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 226). Aristotle made a distinction between justice as an "other regarding" virtue and the remaining virtues, i.e., gentleness, truthfulness, etc., as "not 'other regarding' but rather norms of an ideal of the good life for a single rational

individual" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 226). Another aspect of the "other regarding" virtue is responsibility for action toward others (Higgins, Power, & Kohlberg, 1984). Do the two domains of morality, justice as the deontic domain and responsibility as the aretaic domain, work concurrently in strengthening commitment and encouraging perception of happiness? Would justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning be related to happiness and commitment of individuals in long-term marriages? Secondly, would responsibility reasoning and stages of valuing marriage be related to perception of happiness? Furthermore, would happiness be related to autonomous and heteronomous moral types?

Moral Reasoning

The study of moral reasoning seems far removed from the daily struggles of living in relationships; yet the microcosm of family life or marriage is where people live out their beliefs in themselves, in others, and in society in general. Researchers (Belenky, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan & Wiggins, 1986; Kegan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981; Murphy & Gilligan, 1980; Roodin, Rybash & Hoyer, 1984) attempted to delineate different levels of moral reasoning as explanations of why people make certain decisions and choices. These structural-developmentalists assume that there is a sequential, irreversible, hierarchical progression along a continuum from less effective to more

effective adult living. They believe that movement along the continuum carries with it an increased awareness of the moral worth of all human beings and that this awareness affects decisions and choices.

Justice and Responsibility Orientations

Piaget's (1932/1965) work with cognitive structures and the principles of assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration has guided the work of the moral reasoning developmentalists. He said that cognitive conflict is the disequilibrium required to necessitate reorganization or development to a qualitatively different level of cognition in order to accommodate to new material in the interaction between the individual and the environment. Kohlberg (1981) accepted Piagets' theoretical framework for development, however, he found in his research that moral reasoning development has four necessary antecedent conditions for movement from one stage to another: (a) cognitive development, (b) will and desire to change, (c) number of opportunities for social perspective-taking, and (d) belief in the centrality of justice. Most researchers have ignored the role of real life experiences in moral development research preferring to use hypothetical situations instead. However, Kohlberg (1984) did stress that

> personal experiences of choice involving questioning and commitment...seem (to be) required for movement from conventional to principled thought (p. 493)

even though his research centered on hypothetical

situations.

After assisting Kohlberg with his research, Gilligan (1977) conducted research on the real life dilemmas of women who were contemplating abortion, "a decision that affects both self and others and engages directly the critical moral issue of hurting" (p. 491). In response to the findings of her research, Gilligan (1977) proposed a Care and Responsibility framework for delineating cognitive structures in the decision-making realm of dealing with real-life experiences. Higgins, Power and Kohlberg (1984) acknowledged that Kohlberg's moral judgments stem from a justice orientation, and that "an orientation of care and response usefully enlarges the moral domain" (p. 340). Furthermore, Kohlberg, Levine, and Hewer (1984a) proposed

> that there is a dimension along which various moral dilemmas and orientations can be placed. Personal moral dilemmas and orientations of special obligations...represent one end of this dimension, and the standard hypothetical justice dilemmas and justice orientation represent the other end. (p. 232)

Kohlberg's studies were done with male subjects, and some of the criticisms of his theory (Gilligan, 1982; Golding & Laidlaw, 1979-1980; Murphy & Gilligan, 1980) question his generalizations to the general population from only males' responses. Kohlberg's research emphasizes that males' moral reasoning development is through an ethic of rights and rules measured against an ideal of perfection. Males, in developing morally, have been socialized to see

themselves as apart from others. Because of this, decisions are made using rights, fairness, and equity as guidelines. Females, on the other hand, seem to have been socialized to consider moral decisions with all concerned. Therefore, they developed an ethic of Care and Responsibility measured against an interconnecting web of relationships. Decisions are made using the connection and influence on relationships as guidelines (Gilligan, 1982). She found that a

> female's world is a world of relationships and psychological truths where an awareness of the connection between people gives rise to a recognition of responsibility for one another, a perception of the need of response...her understanding of morality as arising from recognition of relationships, her belief in communication as the mode of conflict resolution...leads her to see the actors in the dilemma arrayed not as opponents in a contest of rights but as members of a network of relationships on whose continuation they all depend. (p. 30)

Even though Gilligan claimed a probable gender difference in moral orientation, other research does not seem to support this contention (Kohlberg, 1984; Pratt & Royer, 1982). Kohlberg (1984) counters that revision of his scoring method in 1984 eliminated the sex-differences that appeared prior to that time. Kohlberg, et al. (1984b), in summarizing the findings of the Higgins, et al. (1984) study of a moral atmosphere inquiry, said that

> this study suggests that both considerations [justice and responsibility] are used by both sexes and that preferential orientation is largely a function of the type of moral problem defined and of the sociomoral atmosphere of the environment in which the dilemma is located. Dilemmas located within a "community" or "family" context are likely to invoke caring and

> response considerations, (as) do dilemmas of responsibility and caring that go beyond duty....In brief, choice of orientation seems to be primarily a function of setting and dilemma, not sex. (p. 350)

Gilligan (1986) augmented this statement by suggesting

> that people understand the logic of both justice and care (responsibility) and that these analytically distinguishable orientations prompt different ways of perceiving conflicts in relationships and promote different strategies for attempting to resolve such conflicts (p. 12).

Even though in the research cited, the social setting or the dilemma chosen seemed to evoke a justice orientation or a responsibility orientation, Roodin, et al (1984) asserted that

> the fully functioning, mature adult (man or woman) shows a sensitivity for and capacity to deal with both dimensions: Justice as equity and justice as personal caring. Men as well as women need to integrate both rights and responsibility as a condition for attaining moral maturity. This integration is attained through experience (p. 304-305).

Experience is recognized by Kohlberg (1981) as important. He mentioned adult experiences as antecedents for movement into a higher stage of mature morality. Roodin, et al (1984) spoke of the influence of "self-involving life events that are affectively meaningful" (p. 301).

> There is a recognition of the influence of affectively toned, personally significant life events as antecedents to mature morality. Personally significant life events are characterized by genuine affect, concern and caring for others as well as a sense of interpersonal recognition and responsibility. (Roodin, et al, 1984, p. 305)

Murphy and Gilligan's (1980) response would be that

> while the logic concepts of equality and reciprocity can support a principled morality of universal rights and respect, experience of moral conflict and choice seem to point rather to special obligations and responsibilities for consequences that can be anticipated and understood only within a more contextual frame of reference. (p. 81)

Therefore, the proposal in the present research concerned using long-term marriages as the contextual frame of reference. Furthermore, the author proposed that the individuals within the marriage behave in the relationship in the way they do because of an underlying cognitive structure that interprets reality in a way that matches their cognitive and affective expressions toward their partner. This is probably manifested in happiness and commitment.

Both orientations of morality, justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning, were chosen for this research since moral development is assumed to be

> fundamentally a process of the restructuring of modes of role-taking... (and) the first prerequisite for role-taking is participation in a group or institution" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 74).

Individuals in long-term marriages, by necessity, are exposed to multiple opportunities for role-taking, or social perception of the other, experienced in an atmosphere of caring for the other. Marriage could be considered one of the relationships in life that could encourage conditions for movement through the stages of moral development. Kohlberg, et al (1984a) connected the two orientations when

they asserted that "special relationship dilemmas may elicit care responses which supplement and deepen the sense of generalized obligation of justice" (p. 229).

Stages of Justice Judgments

Kohlberg asserted that "there are three kinds (levels) of morality that form a developmental order: first, a morality of restraint; second, a morality of rules, authority and convention; and third, a morality of justice and principle" (Turiel, 1983, p. 153). The level (See Table 1) labeled preconventional level includes: Stage 1 (punishment and obedience orientation) and Stage 2 (instrumental purpose and exchange). The conventional level includes: Stage 3 (mutual interpersonal relationships and conformity) and Stage 4 (law and order and conscience). The third level, called post-conventional morality, is composed of Stage 5 (social contract and individual rights) and Stage 6 (universal ethical principles). Stage 6 is not included in the latest scoring manual (Colby & Kohlberg, 1988) because of lack of subjects that have moved sequentially from stage 5 to stage 6.

Stages of Responsibility Judgments

In the Higgins, et al (1984) study of moral atmosphere, the authors felt that "deontic judgments of rightness were often embedded in judgments of responsibility but that judgments of responsibility went beyond deontic judgments" (p. 79) in special obligatory relationships. They developed

Table 1

Stages of Justice Reasoning

LEVEL I. PRECONVENTIONAL MORALITY

Stage 1. Heteronomous Morality. The perspective is that of naive moral realism. Punishment is seen as important because it identifies a bad action. Moral rules and labels are applied in a literal, absolute manner, and characteristics of persons of authority and power are determined by physical attributes or categories. Actions become wrong simply because someone labels them wrong.

Stage 2. Individualistic, Instrumental Morality. The perspective at Stage 2 is pragmatic, understanding that each person's primary aim is to pursue their own interests. The assumption that the other is also operating from this same perspective leads to an emphasis of instrumental exchange, or tit for tat. A limitation is that it fails to provide a means for deciding for conflicting claims.

LEVEL II CONVENTIONAL MORALITY

Stage 3. Interpersonally Normative Morality. This perspective coordinates the separate perspectives of individuals into a third person perspective consisting of mutually trusting relationships among people embodying a set of shared moral norms. The importance of these shared norms requires an emphasis of being a good, altruistic or prosocial person conforming to the accepted norms. The individual is particularly concerned with maintaining inter personal trust and social approval.

Stage 4. Social System Morality. At this stage the individual takes the perspective of a generalized member of society. The pursuit of individualistic concerns is valid only when it is consistent with maintaining the sociomoral system as a whole. The perspective taken is generally that of a societal, legal, or religious system which has been codified into institutionalized laws and practice. The perspective may also be that of a higher moral law, like one's conscience which may conflict with

Table 1 (Continued)

institutionalized law. In this case, internal conscience is equated with a system of divine or natural law.

LEVEL III POST-CONVENTIONAL MORALITY

Stage 5: Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality. The Stage 5 prior-to-society perspective is that of a rational moral agent aware of universalizable values and rights that anyone would choose to build into a moral society. The validity of actual laws and social systems can be evaluated in terms of the degree to which they preserve and protect these fundamental human rights and values. This is a society-creating rather than a society-maintaining perspective. There is a concern for the protection of the rights of the minority. Rules and laws are evaluated from a long-term consequence perspective in relation to groups in society.

Stage 6. Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles. The sociomoral perspective of Stage 6 is that of "the moral point of view," a point of view which ideally all human beings should take toward one another as free and equal autonomous persons. This means equal consideration of the claims or points of view of each person affected by the moral decision to be made. This includes Rawls's position of choosing under "a veil of ignorance," a second order application of the Golden Rule of "moral musical chairs," an emphasis on actual dialogue, and considering preferences under the condition of having an equal probability of being any of those involved in the situation. Multiple principles of justice include the principle of maximum quality of life for each, maximum liberty compatible with the like liberty of others, equity or fairness in distribution of goods and respect. (Kohlberg, 1984, 621-639)

criteria for judging stages of responsibility reasoning (See Table 2). Gilligan (1986) proposed that children are exposed to both perspectives of morality in their experiences of equality-inequality and attachment-detachment; therefore, most will develop both perspectives for resolving dilemmas with one perspective being more dominant.

In an earlier work, Gilligan (1977) proposed a framework for organizing a perspective or orientation of care and responsibility consisting of five levels, three distinct levels and two transitional levels, from the least effective in resolving dilemmas to the most effective in resolving dilemmas. A brief comparison of Gilligan's (1977) framework of care with the responsibility orientation suggested by Higgins, et al (1984) follows. (See Table 3 for the stages of Responsibility Judgments adapted for marital relationships by incorporating Gilligan's levels).

Gilligan's Level I (Individual Survival) corresponds with Higgins' Stage 1 judgment when responsibility and obligation are seen as being the same to ensure one's survival by obeying the one (or system) that has power.

Gilligan's Level I/II (From Selfishness to Responsibility) corresponds with Higgins' Stage 2 and Stage 2/3 when responsibility is differentiated from obligation and there is a beginning recognition that everyone is responsible for themselves. Connection becomes an issue

Table 2

Criteria for Judgments of Responsibility and Stages of Responsibility Judgments

---

A. Judgments of responsibility go beyond deontic judgments in one of four ways:

1. Judgments that consider the needs and welfare of the other as an individual where the other's welfare seems to be a matter of a right or claim the other has or where it is a matter of not harming the other's welfare is a deontic concern. Judgments that consider filling the other's need when it is not based on a right or claim or where it is a matter of enhancing his or her welfare, not just preventing harm, is a responsibility concern.
2. Judgments of responsibility consciously consider the involvement and implication of the self in the action or in the welfare consequences to the other.
3. Judgments of personal moral worth (aretaic) of the kind of self the actor wants to be (perfecting character) or would be if he or she failed to perform the action (judgments of blame, guilt, loss of integrity) are judgments of responsibility when explicitly used as a basis for action rather than rights or obligations.
4. Judgments that use an intrinsic valuing of social relationships such as friendship or relationships of community as justification for performing a moral action are judgments of responsibility.

B. Stages of responsibility judgments:

Stage 1 Responsibility and obligation are seen as being the same. The person feels compelled to fulfill the commands of superiors or authority figures or the rules given by them.

Stage 2 Responsibility is differentiated from obligation from this stage onward. The person is responsible only to and for himself or herself and his or her welfare, property, and goals.

Stage 2/3 There is a recognition that everyone is responsible to and for themselves, their welfare, property, and goals. Persons who are irresponsible or careless lose some of the right to have

Table 2 (Continued)

	themselves, their welfare, and so on, respected. For example, being careless mitigates the right to have one's property respected as well as justifying a lessened concern for the person's welfare.
Stage 3	Responsibility for the self is to do the "good" thing, to live up to generally known and accepted standards of a "good person." Responsibility to others is limited to those with whom one has a personal relationship and is defined as meeting their needs or promoting their welfare.
Stage 3/4	Responsibility is seen more as a process for maintaining and enhancing feelings of closeness and affection in personal relationships. Being irresponsible is defined as "hurting the other's feelings" within an a relationship and is considered a valid basis for a lessened concern of the other's welfare if one's feelings have been hurt.
Stage 4	Responsibility is seen as a mutually binding set of feelings and agreements among people in relationships, groups, or communities. Being responsible for the self means one must act out of dependability, trustworthiness, and loyalty regardless of the day-to-day fluctuation of feelings among people. Irresponsibility on the part of those peoples within the same group does not mitigate concern for their welfare or rights by other group members.

Note From "The relationship of moral atmosphere to judgments of responsibility" by A. Higgins, L. Kohlberg, and C. Power, 1984. In W. Kurtine & J. Gewirtz (Eds.), Morality, Moral Behavior, and Moral Development, (p. 80), New York: John Wiley & Sons. Reprinted with permission.

Table 3

Stages of Responsibility Judgments (Adapted for Marital Relationships)

Stage 1	Responsibility and obligation are seen as being the same. The person feels compelled to fulfill the commands and rules of the parent figure or spouse. External approval dictates behavior.
Stage 2	Responsibility is differentiated from obligation from this stage onward. The person is responsible only to and for himself or herself and his or her welfare, property, and goals. Persons in marital relationships operate from an exchange perspective by "doing" for their spouse because their spouse "does" for them.
Stage 2/3	There is a recognition that everyone is responsible to and for themselves, their welfare, property, and goals. Persons who are irresponsible or careless lose some of the right to have themselves, their welfare, and so on, respected. For example, irresponsibility is believed to mitigate the right to have one's property respected as well as justifying a lessened concern for the person's welfare. Connection and attachment begin to become issues at this transitional stage and exchange becomes less important.
Stage 3	Responsibility for the self is to do the "good" thing, to live up to generally known and accepted standards of a "good person." Responsibility to others is limited to those with whom one has a personal relationship (like a marital relationship) and is defined as meeting their needs or promoting their welfare. Self-sacrifice becomes the norm of goodness, and when responsibility conflicts, the self becomes the sacrificed victim.
Stage 3/4	Responsibility is seen more as a process for maintaining and enhancing feelings of closeness and affection in personal relationships, a reconsideration of the relationship between self and others. There is an infant awareness of the beginning shift from approval of others to an inner sense of judgment for what is honest and real. Being irresponsible is defined as "hurting

Table 3 (Continued)

	the other's feelings" within a relationship and is considered a valid basis for a lessened concern of the other's welfare if one's feelings have been hurt.
Stage 4	Responsibility is seen as a mutually binding set of feelings and agreements among people in relationships or marriages. Being responsible for the self means one must act out of dependability, trustworthiness, and loyalty regardless of the day-to-day fluctuation of feelings among people. Equity and reciprocity are key ingredients in maintaining the relationship. Responsibility becomes a self-chosen ethic that enables one to reconstruct the dilemma in new terms knowing that choices made becomes one's responsibility. A transformed understanding of self allows for assertion of moral equality between self and others. Irresponsibility on the part of a partner or group does not mitigate concern for their welfare or rights by their spouse.

Note From "The relationship of moral atmosphere to judgments of responsibility" by A. Higgins, L. Kohlberg, and C. Power, (1984), in W. Kurtine and J. Gewirtz (Eds.), Morality, Moral Behavior, and Moral Development, (p.80). New York: John Wiley & Sons. Adapted with permission.

with this transition level.

Gilligan's Level II (Goodness as Self-Sacrifice) matches with Higgins' Stage 3 when responsibility for the self involves doing the "good" or "right" thing and living as others expect one to live. Self-sacrifice becomes the norm of goodness, and when responsibilities conflict, the self becomes the sacrificed victim.

Gilligan's Level II/III (From Goodness to Truth) parallels Higgins' Stage 3/4 when the responsibility is seen as a process of maintaining closeness in relationships and reconsidering of relationships with acceptance of a beginning shift from approval of others to an inner sense of judgment for what is honest and real.

Gilligan's Level III (The Ethic of Responsibility) coincides with Higgins' Stage 4 when responsibility is seen as a mutually binding set of feelings and agreements, and a transformed understanding of the self allows one to assert a moral equality and reciprocity between self and others in an atmosphere of love and affection.

Valuing Marriage

Being able to arrive at decisions in real-life dilemmas, either fictional or actual, involves more than just the ethical base of the individual involved. In reinterpretating the findings of the Kohlberg, Scharf, and Hickey (1972) study, Higgins, et al (1984) stated

that practical moral judgment is not simply a product

> of a fixed property of the individual, his or her moral competence, but is a product of the interaction between his or her competence and the moral features of the situation, what we also term the 'moral atmosphere' of the social situation in which he or she makes decisions. (p. 81)

Marriage also has an "atmosphere", conceptualized in this study as stages of valuing marriage (See Table 4). The capacity of the individual to act "morally" could be influenced and controlled by the environment (the context of the marriage) they live and work in. Valuing marriage is the conceptual term for describing the environment of the marriage.

Moral Action and Moral Types

One of the basic aims of moral development research has been to study how persons develop autonomy which has been seen as a necessary condition for moral action. The philosophic approach to moral development "defines an action as being moral in reference to objective and universal standards as well as to the individual's own moral judgments" (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984, p. 519). Kohlberg and his colleagues approached questions about moral action and autonomy from a typology perspective to discover "if individuals who make an autonomous judgment would be more likely to engage in `moral action' than individuals who make heteronomous moral judgments" (Tappan, Kohlberg, Schrader, & Higgins, 1988). Data from previous studies were analyzed and tended to support this statement (Kohlberg & Candee,

Table 4

Stages of Valuing Marriage (Commitment)

I.	Marriage is valued as an institution that helps the individual meet his/her interpersonal needs and serves to protect the individual.
II.	Marriage is valued as an institution that helps an individual by allowing them to take care of others in exchange of being taken care of.
III.	Marriage is valued as an institution that enables the individual to fulfil their obligation to take care of their spouse. One's value is based on the ability to care for and protect others.
III/IV.	Marriage is valued as an institution because of a sense of shared expectations that each will care for the other because each is important and valuable. There is a self-chosen responsibility to care for self and others.
IV.	Marriage is valued as an institution because it is conceived as based on cooperation and agreement between two equal agents. Marriage is seen as an arena for maximizing and promoting individual rights within a context of relationship with reciprocity and equity being maintained in the relationship.

1984). If Moral Type B (autonomous) denotes the propensity for moral action more than Moral Type A (heteronomous), then this typology has implications for a marital relationship. The assignment to negotiate and compromise might rest with the partner who is more prone to action. The marital environment itself can be beneficial in facilitating the development of autonomy since the expectation of Tappan et al. (1988) in that

> social environments that stress cooperation and mutual respect lead to autonomy, while those that stress constraint and unilateral respect lead to heteronomy. This includes both the environments encountered by children and the environments encountered by adults. (p. 68)

Commitment and perception of happiness, components that nourish the marital environment, may be dependent upon similar moral types in both partners.

Purpose of the Study

Moral reasoning development research to this point in time has focused on individual development within the justice and responsibility orientation. The present study focused on moral development of the individual-in-relationship using commitment and happiness as the common ground of both individuals in the relationship of long-term marriages.

Yankelovich (Scanzoni, 1983) defined an ethic of commitment specifically as

> a social ethic better equipped to achieve the goals of self-fulfillment...in which partners may make mutual

> sacrifices in order to gain greater good for themselves and for their relationship simultaneously (p. 166),

a description Scanzoni claimed "describes decision making aimed at maximum joint profit" (p. 166), or, in other words, "a sense of equitable reciprocity" (Scanzoni, 1983, p. 165), which seems to harmonize with the higher stages of justice orientation. Since developing an attitude of commitment involves time, the author proposed that the research include only individuals in a long term relationship, defined as 15 to 40 years with the same partner. Rogers, writing futuristically in 1972, stated that

> it is becoming increasingly clear that a man-woman relationship will have permanence only in the degree in which it satisfies the emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of the partners. This means that the permanent marriage of the future will be even better than marriage in the present, because the ideals and goals for that marriage will be of a higher order. The partners will be demanding more of the relationship than they are today. (p. 8)

The purpose of this study was to describe individuals in committed and happy marriages under the assumption that they would have similar levels of justice reasoning and similar levels of responsibility reasoning. Similarity in levels of moral reasoning implies the ability to interpret life experiences alike. If partners perceive themselves as similarly happy and committed, then it is reasonable to expect them to be operating from similar levels of moral reasoning. This study was expected to provide empirical evidence for the relationship between moral reasoning,

commitment, and happiness. Furthermore, it was assumed that the levels of justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning in happy and committed marriages would be at least on the conventional level or above. It was also assumed that both individuals in happy and committed marriages would be autonomous, that is, both would be moral type B.

Directional Hypotheses

Given the literature of moral reasoning, commitment, and marital happiness in which it is implied that happiness and commitment could be predicted from similar levels of moral reasoning, the following directional hypotheses were made:

H_1 Individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit stages of justice reasoning similar to their partner will have similar commitment scores.

H_2 Individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit stages of responsibility reasoning similar to their partner will have similar commitment scores.

H_3 Individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit similar stages of justice reasoning as their partners will perceive a similar level of happiness.

H_4 Individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit similar stages of responsibility reasoning as their partners will perceive a similar level of happiness.

H_5 Individuals with similar Moral Types as their partners will perceive a similar level of happiness.

H_6 Individuals in long-term marriages will exhibit both a similar stage of responsibility reasoning and a similar stage of valuing marriage when they exhibit similar levels of happiness as their partners.

H_7 Individuals who have similar levels of happiness as their partners will also have similar levels of commitment to their partners.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The purpose was to study the relationship of justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning to commitment and perception of happiness in long-term marriages. The process of how persons resolve hypothetical and real-life moral dilemmas was explored through interviews and questionnaires. A pilot study consisting of preliminary interviews with four individuals (two couples in long term marriages) were conducted in order to test the procedure and instruments.

Subjects

A purposive sample of 30 white men and women with children (at home or away), married between 15-40 years, and in the middle to upper-middle socio-economic status were asked to participate in this project. Since the sample was small, homogeneity was necessary to help control for extraneous variable effects. Prior to selection, these 30 individuals were assumed to be committed to remaining married and expressed at least moderate happiness with the marriage. A letter explaining the purpose of the research project was sent to ministers, colleges, and presidents of civic organizations in Salisbury and Rowan County asking for names and addresses of three couples who fit the criteria described above (See Appendix A). The minimum endurance of

15 years was set in order to get beyond the age of highest divorce rates. The sample used were between 35 and 69 years of age and had been married between 17 and 39 years.

A letter explaining the purpose of the research project and asking for their participation was sent to those persons named (See Appendix B). They returned a postcard with convenient appointment times for the interviews. Individual interviews of one to one and one-half hours were conducted separately with each of the 30 subjects.

Data Collection Procedure

A multi-method technique for data collection was used. Each individual completed a consent form (See Appendix C), a demographic data form (See Appendix D), perception of happiness form (See Appendix E), and a commitment questionnaire (Appendix F). The individuals were then asked to answer questions concerning the commitment questionnaire for self and spouse (See Appendix F). They were also asked questions concerning three hypothetical dilemmas (See Appendix G) and four real-life dilemmas (See Appendix H).

Individual interviewing about the dilemmas was conducted by the researcher, who is also a marriage and family clinician, using several interview guides composed of open-ended starter questions. The 30 interviews were conducted in the home and were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim for scoring purposes. Each transcription producd from 8 to 10 pages per person. The individual was given an

opportunity to ask any questions or discuss any part of the process. Separate interviews were scheduled sequentially on the same visit to the couple's home to ensure confidentiality and to encourage an individuals' initiative in resolving the dilemmas.

A valuable asset in this type of project was the clinical experience of the researcher. A clinician tends to view the family or marriage as a whole while making specific observations of the individual. "The crucial difference between research and the clinical model of observation is not in the type of information that they would make use of. The important difference is how this information is integrated to create a meaningful whole." (Eisler, Dare, & Szmukler, 1988, p. 52). Therapists operate from a foundation of theory, their own personal experiences and their professional experiences, and, as a result, can integrate a wide variety of information that can be used during the interview to gather more information. This understanding is extremely valuable in interviewing by the process of using open-ended structured questions. The clinical experience of the researcher was important also, if it became necessary to assess concerns of the interviewees and deal with them. This did not occur and it was not necessary to abort any interview because of anxiety or concerns.

Interviews done for the purpose of research carry with

them the bias of the person conducting the interview, regardless of the qualifications or training. Experimenter bias, even if recognized, was probably also present in this project. The Hawthorne effect may be operating when someone is being asked to be in a research project; that is, they might be more attentive due to the phenomenon of being asked to be in research. People also might answer ás they want to be perceived instead of how they are because of social desirability. Questions concerning the nature of the project and expected results were asked in several instances at the close of the interview. The response was that the study was on the structures people use in making decisions on the issues in marriage.

Instuments and Operational Definitions

The major variables of interest were happiness, commitment, justice reasoning, and responsibility reasoning. Another variable which was used to understand responsibility reasoning better was called "Valuing Marriage" which describes the moral atmosphere of marriage. Still another variable was measured, the moral type of reasoning, A and B, which gives a better understanding of the autonomy of a person when making moral decisions. Socioeconomic status was measured to describe the sample and to assure homogeneity.

Socio-economic Status

Middle to upper-middle class was measured by a

combination of the variables of occupation (skilled, professional, or owner), and education (high school graduate, college graduate, or graduate school). All the couples in this project satisfied the criterion of middle- to upper-middle class. Twenty-seven of the 30 persons were employed, the majority of whom were employed in the professional or executive areas. All couples had at least one employed person. Three females were not employed and labeled themselves housewives. Of the 30 persons interviewed, 22 had college degrees with 10 of those having had graduate or professional degrees also. Two families were in the income range of $25,000 to $50,000 with the remaining 13 families having incomes over $50,000. (See Duncan's Socioeconomic Index for complete explanation of combining two variables to arrive at social class, Miller, 1977).

Perception of Happiness

Even though these couples were assumed to be happy, a score was necessary for statistical analysis. For this study, an individual's perception of a state of feelings, defined as happiness by the subject, was used as a measurement of perception of happiness, all things being considered, with the marital relationship. A spouse's global evaluation of the state of the marriage is considered a valid measure (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987). It was measured by a cumulative score on three questions (See Appendix E),

two of which (questions 1 and 3) are from items 31 and 16 of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Spanier, 1976), and the third (question 2) a modification of item 20 from the same scale.

Scoring on question 1 was changed to reflect the more modern orientation toward equity and reciprocity in marriage. "Perfect" was given a score of "0" instead of "6" since perfection is probably not available in a dyadic relationship. "Very happy" received the highest score of "5" since this would tend to describe best a relationship in which the partners are comfortable and honest with the reality of the situation. "Extremely happy" was scored "4" instead of the original "5" since it could reflect a societal norm instead of an actual state of feeling. Persons might think this is what they "should" feel instead of being truthful. Conflicts are common in relationships and happiness was assumed to be achieved when an equitable settlement of conflict occurs.

All three questions loaded high on the Spanier's factor, Dyadic Satisfaction Factor. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the Dyadic Satisfaction Subscale was .94 (Spanier, 1976). Spanier also claimed content, criterion, and construct validity for the DAS (Spanier, 1976).

The possible range of scores for the three questions used in this study was from 0-13. The categories of

perception of happiness for the chi-square method of analysis were: Similar to Partner and Dissimilar to Partner with Dissimilar defined as a three point difference in scores.

Commitment

Commitment was defined as a morphogenetic process of feelings of cohesion and solidarity that is "generated through participation in arrangements that are mutually advantageous" (Scanzoni, 1983, p. 177). Commitment in individuals in long term marriages was measured by using Spanier's measure of commitment (See Appendix F) developed in 1971 but was included in his 1976 DAS (item 32). Spanier (1976) gave the highest score to the statement, "I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does." The contention in the current research was that Spanier's highest scored statement coincides more with the socially accepted norm of how a spouse "should" behave and feel in a marital relationship and reinforces the sex role myths of the "good" husband and the "good" wife. When the scale was developed, society accepted this proposition as having the highest value. This would not agree with the stance that one would assume if one believes that a marital relationship is one of a mutually binding agreement between equals with equity and reciprocity as key ingredients in maintaining the relationship. The lowest score was given to the statement

"My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going" (Spanier, 1976, p. 28).

Therefore, the author suggested a new scoring system for commitment with the highest scored statement being "I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does," (See Appendix F for new scoring of statements). The rearrangement of the scoring seems to fit better with the present-day emphasis on an emerging ethic of commitment which is composed of elements of mutuality, trust, and maximum joint profit. The possible range of scores was from 0-5. The scoring of commitment for the chi-square analysis was on two levels: Similar to Partner; Dissimilar to Partner with Dissimilar being defined as a one point difference.

Stages of Justice Reasoning

Kohlberg's (1981) hypothetical standard dilemmas, like the Heinz dilemma (See Appendix G) were scored to arrive at a stage score of deontic judgment of justice orientation. The Standard Issue Scoring method was used (See Colby & Kohlberg, 1988, for complete description of scoring) (See Appendix G for Standard Issue Scoring Form). It has proven useful in a variety of settings for ascertaining a stage score for moral judgment general competence. The standard dilemmas elicit "should" and not "would" answers in response to dilemmas of justice.

As with most instruments of this nature, questions of reliability and validity arise. Colby and Kohlberg (1988) reported test-retest reliability ranging from .92 to .96 with interrater agreement ranging from 88% to 100% within a third of a stage and 75% to 88% for complete agreement. "The correlation for raters 1 and 2 on the form A test-retest interviews was .98 (Colby & Kohlberg, 1988)."

In order to assure that the scoring for the present research was reliable, six randomly selected interviews were scored by an expert scorer, who was a Senior Research Assistant at Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Center for Moral Development and Education. For the six interviews, interrater agreement with the Harvard expert rater and a trained researcher at this University was 83.3% There was 100% agreement within one-half stage between the researcher and the Harvard rater. Also there was a 100% agreement between the researcher and the trained researcher at this University. The correlation for the researcher and the trained researcher at this University was .96 using Pearson r with interrater agreement being 93% at the same stage or within one-half stage (the smallest increment between stages). These findings seem to fall within acceptable ranges for reliability among scorers.

The responses were scored to obtain a stage score for justice reasoning and a Moral Maturity Score (MMS) or global score (Colby & Kohlberg, 1988). Possible stage scores were

1, 1/2, 2, 2/3, 3, 3/4, 4, 4/5, and 5 for a range of 0-5. Each scorable interview was weighted by the stage it was judged to represent resulting in a Moral Maturity Score (MMS) with a possible range from 100-500. The categories of justice reasoning for chi-square analysis were these: Similar to Partner defined as within one-half stage and Dissimilar to Partner defined as one whole stage or more apart.

Stages of Responsibility Reasoning

Responsibility reasoning is a measure of aretaic judgments, that is, judgments concerned with the personal worth and special responsibilities toward persons that are part of the intimate network of relationships. A preliminary scoring manual (See Appendix H) was developed from pilot interviews for scoring responsibility reasoning used in resolving real-life dilemmas. The manual was revised when additional material became available. Kohlberg's model for developing the responsibility reasoning scoring manual was used (Colby, & Kohlberg, 1988). Since a definitive coding system for responsibility judgments was not available, the criteria and rules that were used to define and score judgments of responsibility in a prior study were adapted (Higgins, et al., 1984, adapted with permission) to fit real-life marriage dilemmas. These stages of responsibility judgments were initially derived from Gilligan's (1977) research.

The manual for scoring stages of responsibility reasoning (as adapted) gives the stage structure, criterion judgments and match examples for each of the four stages and two transition stages which correspond to Gilligan's (1977) three levels and two transition levels. A stage structure is an abstract description of the qualitative phenomenon which differentiates general cognitive structure from ethical content in the area under study, in this case, marriage as an arena for responsibility. The stage of sociomoral perspective from which the individual formulates a responsibility judgment was the basic structure that was looked for in the interview. A criterion judgment was a statement that used concepts directly from the content of the issue being studied and was descriptive of the stage. Match examples were verbatim illustrations of the criterion judgment from the interview that were scored in that particular stage of responsibility reasoning.

The following procedure was used in developing the scoring manual: All interviews from the pilot study were read and the verbatim illustrations that seemed to be expressive of stage structures were isolated. These statements included both ego statements (I or he, she) and prescriptive judgments (shoulds and oughts). These statements were grouped by stage and content. A criterion judgment that seemed to express the same idea had been developed for each developmental stage from the responses on

the pilot interviews. A scorable statement was one from an interview in which a moral judgment was rendered concerning the issue and was called "interview judgments." Match examples were illustrative quotations which embody the concepts of the criterion judgments. Two independent judges read all pilot interviews to determine if the criterion judgments and match examples were consistently placed for each responsibility stage in the manual. Matched examples from the 30 research interviews were used for the stages not represented in the pilot interviews, and they were added to the scoring manual as illustrative material.

After the 30 interviews were conducted, scorable statements (interview judgments) for each interview were compared with the model statements of the criterion judgments and the match examples for determining which stage of responsibility reasoning was being used. Since each individual verbalized many reasons for decisions, there was more than one stage expressed in one interview. Each statement was scored according to the particular stage that it matched. The method of scoring developed by Colby and Kohlberg (1988) was used to arrive at a responsibility stage score and a Responsibility Maturity Score (RMS).

Interrater reliability was established for the responsibility reasoning stages of the 30 participants by the use of two trained scorers who have had previous experience with this type of scoring. Of the 414 statements

scored in the responsibility dilemmas, the first reliability check yielded agreement on 365 of the statements for an 88% agreement rate. Of the remaining 49 statements, 34 were agreed upon after consultation between the scorers yielding a 94% agreement rate. The other 15 statements out of the 414 statements had to have negotiation for agreement, resulting in 100%.

The stage scores were in agreement (the same stage or within one-half stage) 87% (26 out of 30 interviews) on first review. Of the remaining four interviews, two were accepted by the scorers yielding a 93% agreement rate. Two remaining interviews received a stage score different from that of the first scoring via agreement of the scorers. The original scores by both scorers agreed with the final stage score at a 97% agreement rate (29 out of 30). One score each differed by one stage from the final score. Together they agreed at a 93% agreement rate (28 out of 30). There was a 100% agreement by both scorers on the final stage score.

Construct validity was assumed by following the Colby and Kohlberg's model for manual development. The responses for responsibility reasoning were scored for a stage score and a Responsibility Maturity Score (RMS). Possible stage scores were 1, 2, 2/3, 3, 3/4, and 4 for a total of 4 whole stages and two transitions. Possible Responsibility Maturity Scores (RMS) were from 100 to 400. The categories

of responsibility reasoning for chi-square analysis were these: Similar to Partner defined as same stage as partner and Dissimilar to Partner defined as one-half stage difference between partners. Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Higgins used different ordering systems in structuring the layers of moral reasoning. When Kohlberg's Stages of Justice Reasoning are correlated with Gilligan's Ethic of Responsibility and Higgins' Responsibility Reasoning, whole stage differences (according to Kohlberg's scheme) became one-half stage/level difference in Gilligan's and Higgins' nomenclature. Therefore, a whole stage difference in Stages of Justice Reasoning is the equivalent measure of one-half stage difference in Responsibility Reasoning (See Appendix J for Comparison of the Stages of Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Higgins).

Stages of Valuing Marriage

Stages of valuing marriage is conceptualized as a measurable entity for the "moral atmosphere" of the marriage. If "a judgment of responsibility is the mediating bridge from a deontic judgment of rightness and justice to moral action" (Higgins, et al., 1984, p. 74), then it becomes important to assess the atmosphere of the marriage since the context of the marriage becomes an active place for persons to behave or be morally active in a responsible manner toward other persons. In response to questions concerning the level of commitment of a partner, it was

possible to ascertain which stage of valuing marriage a person has achieved. The stages of valuing marriage are given in Appendix F and parallel the stages of justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning. A scoring key was developed by the author (See Appendix F) by matching examples given by the participants with the appropriate stage. A numerical value was assigned to each stage score for purposes of statistical analysis. The possible stage scores were I (100), II (200), II/III (250), III (300), III/IV (350), and IV (400). The stage of valuing marriage was compared with the stage of responsibility reasoning for each individual. The categories for chi-square analysis were Similar to Self defined as stage of Valuing Marriage within 49 points of their RMS and Dissimilar to Self defined as stage of Valuing Marriage as 50 points or more different from their RMS. A spread of 50 points or more is the equivalent of a half-stage difference between stages.

Moral Types A and B

Kohlberg and his associates (Tappan, Kohlberg, Schrader, & Higgins, 1988), using Piaget's work on moral autonomy (1932/1965) as a starting point, have studied the question of moral types or substages for several years, and they now conclude that there seems to be a heteronomous type (A) and an autonomous type (B) within each stage. The autonomous type (B) adult is able to make decisions under conditions of mutual respect, or awareness of importance of

cooperation among equals which entails reciprocity and freedom, without reference to external authority or laws for justification or validation (See Colby and Kohlberg, 1988, for complete description of moral types). The heteronomous type (A) adult is more sensitive to conformity and obedience to authority and to authority-made rules. Within marriages, as adults strive toward an ethic of responsibility, equity and cooperation are essential elements for negotiating conflictual decisions. Therefore, the moral type of the individual would have an influence on the type of decision-making processes that occur. The moral type of the individuals in long-term marriages was scored using the scoring manual developed by Tappan, et al (1988). They noted inter-rater reliability of moral types was 85% agreement across both forms used. Test-retest reliability was 95% for Form A and 94% for Form B. Scoring was done using nine general criteria that reflect an ideal topology of autonomous judgments (See Appendix J for Moral Type Scoring Form). Heteronomous typing was indicated when one did not pass the critical criteria for moral type B.

The responses to the justice dilemmas in this research were read to determine the presence or absence of the critical criteria. The scores were categorized, A or B. Couple scores were AA, BB, or AB. The categories for chi-square analysis were Similar to Partner defined as classified as same Moral Type (AA or BB) and Dissimilar to

Partner defined as classified as different Moral Type (AB or BA).

Limitations

Limitations present in every research project include the realization that the operational definitions and the chosen variables might not capture the theoretical concepts in the fullest sense. Limitations of instrumentation are present in this study. One is never sure whether the instrument is measuring the concept one hopes to measure, or whether the instrument gives one an accurate assessment of the quantity or quality of the concept measured. Even though validity is claimed for several of the instruments, there are still questions as to the construct validity. Several instruments were adapted from other instruments for this project and, as of yet, no support is available to render a judgment to their validity except for face validity and agreement among two other judges. Even with these limitations, it is important to develop new methods and instruments for capturing the unique dimensions of individuals in long-term relationships that will further understanding of the human condition.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The data for the research were collected from 30 individuals (15 couples) in long term marriages residing in a Piedmont county of North Carolina. During the fall and winter of 1986, these individuals were interviewed about their perception of happiness and commitment within a long term marriage.

Statistical Approach to the Data

The chi-square test of independence was chosen as the most appropriate statistical technique by which to examine the research question about frequencies of individuals who were similar or dissimilar on the variables of commitment, happiness, and moral reasoning. This test of relatedness or independence has been described as a "goodness of fit" technique since it permits a determination of whether "a significant difference exists between the observed number of cases appearing in each category and the expected number of cases specified under the null hypothesis" (Runyon & Haber, 1984, p. 370). The Yates correction for continuity was used to "improve the approximation of the sampling distribution of chi-square to its distribution with one degree of freedom" (Glass & Stanley, 1970, p. 332). Even though "most textbooks recommend that expected cell frequencies equal or

exceed 5 when df = 1," Runyon and Haber (1984) have dropped this recommendation based on "convincing evidence" (p. 363). The expected frequencies were computed from the marginal totals rather than from prior hypothesis. All computations were done by the researcher.

Commitment Variable

The majority (21) of the individuals scored 5 out of a possible range from 0-5 on commitment (See Table 5). There were 20 individuals who had a similar commitment score (exactly the same score) as their partner. There were 10 individuals who were dissimilar with a difference of one point.

Justice Reasoning

Although 26 individuals used stages of justice reasoning similar to their partners, the range of actual justice reasoning stages used by them was from the transition stage 2/3 to the transition stage 4/5 (See Table 6). Of the total group of 30, 27 of them scored in the conventional level: 13 people scored in the transition stage 3/4, which is characterized by adherence to the roles of society with a view that the stability of society is based on carrying out expected role behaviors; nine used stage 3 and three used stage 4, two people were scored in the transition stage 4/5. Only one scored in the top justice reasoning, stage 5, use of equity principles in decision making. Two people scored in the transition stage

Table 5

Commitment and Happiness Scores of Partners in Long-Term Marriages in Two Categories: Similar to Partner and Dissimilar to Partner (Ranked by Wife)

A. Commitment *		B. Happiness **	
Similar to Partner		Similar to Partner	
Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
5	5	12	12
3	3	12	12
3	3	11	13
Dissimilar to Partner		11	10
5	4	8	8
5	3	Dissimilar to Partner	
5	3	12	8
5	3	8	12
4	5	8	11
N = 30		N = 30	

* Commitment: Range = 0-5; Similar = exactly same; Dissimilar = one point difference

** Happiness: Range = 0-13; Similar = two points or under; Dissimilar = Three or more points difference

Table 6

Justice Reasoning and Responsibility Reasoning Stages of Partners in Long-Term Marriages in Two Categories: Similar to Partner and Dissimilar to Partner (Ranked by Wife)

A. Justice Reasoning		B. Responsibility Reasoning	
Similar to Partner		Similar to Partner	
Wife Stage (MMS)*	Husband Stage (MMS)	Wife Stage (RMS)**	Husband Stage(RMS)
4/5 (446)	4/5 (445)	4 (401)	4 (392)
3/4 (375)	3/4 (371)	3/4 (342)	3/4 (341)
3/4 (368)	3/4 (350)	3/4 (341)	3/4 (379)
3/4 (367)	4 (402)	3/4 (333)	3/4 (326)
3/4 (347)	3/4 (360)	3 (302)	3 (311)
3/4 (333)	3/4 (327)	Dissimilar to Partner***	
3 (323)	3/4 (369)	3/4 (330)	4 (393)
3 (315)	3/4 (369)	3/4 (326)	3 (305)
3 (307)	3/4 (333)	3 (317)	2/3 (270)
3 (303)	3 (322)	3 (306)	2/3 (267)
3 (298)	3/4 (360)	3 (303)	2/3 (254)
3 (292)	3 (306)	3 (300)	3/4 (337)
2/3 (289)	2/3 (282)	3 (293)	3/4 (336)
Dissimilar to Partner***		3 (292)	3/4 (324)
4 (397)	5 (487)	3 (285)	2/3 (266)
3 (269)	4 (378)	2/3 (259)	3 (303)
N = 30		N = 30	

* MMS = Moral Maturity Score; ** RMS = Responsibility Maturity Score; *** Dissimilar: Justice = one whole stage, Responsibility = one-half stage (See Appendix J)

2/3, which implies that they were only beginning to move out of the exchange level of justice reasoning. The spread of justice reasoning levels of this group of 30 individuals fits the norm for adults in the United States (Kohlberg, 1984).

It was hypothesized that individuals in long term marriages who exhibit stages of justice reasoning similar to their partner would have similar commitment scores (H_1). Dissimilar justice scores were one stage different from their partner. Dissimilar commitment scores were one point different from their partner. The statistics for the contingency table of justice reasoning and commitment produced a $X^2 = 8.22$ (df = 1) (See Table 7). Since the obtained X^2 exceeded this value, H_1 was not rejected. The examination of the data reveals a clear-cut tendency for similar stages of justice reasoning to be moderately related (C = .464) to similar scores of commitment.

Responsibility Reasoning

Ten individuals scored the same stage as their partner in responsibility reasoning. Twenty individuals were one-half stage different from their partner and 20 were called Dissimilar to Partner (Refer to Table 6). The scores ranged from transition stage 2/3 to whole stage 4, with 22 individuals (11 at stage 3 and 11 at transition stage 3/4) in the conventional level. Only three scored at stage 4. Five scored at the transition stage of 2/3.

Table 7

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Justice Reasoning by Similarity in Commitment

Justice Reasoning		Commitment: Similar	Commitment: Dissimilar[a]
Similar to Partner		20(17.4)	6(8.60)
	row	77%	23%
	col	100%	60%
Dissimilar to Partner[b]		0(2.60)	4(1.60)
	row	0%	100%
	col	0%	40%
N = 30			

$X^2 = 8.22$; df = 1; $p < 0.01$; C = .464

[a]Dissimilar commitment scores = one point difference
[b]Dissimilar justice reasoning scores = one whole stage

Overall, the responsibility reasoning stages were a little more than one-half stage lower than justice reasoning stages. In previous research, it was found that reasoning from real-life moral dilemmas, from which responsibility reasoning scores come, tend to give slightly lower scores (Gilligan, 1977). The explanation for this may be that in hypothetical dilemmas, a respondent uses more ideal statements than when confronted with a real-life moral dilemma.

The hypotheses was that individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit stages of responsibility reasoning

similar to their partner would have similar commitment scores (H_2). Since the chi-square test of independence tests for the null hypothesis, the null hypothesis for H_2 would be: There would be no difference in similarity to partner in commitment scores between individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit responsibility reasoning scores similar to their partner. The statistics of the contingency table of responsibility reasoning and commitment produced a $X^2 = 4.77$ (df = 1) (See Table 8). Since the X^2 exceeded this value, the null hypothesis was rejected, but also the proposed directional hypothesis was rejected. The number of individuals with similarity of responsibility reasoning scores to partner, predicted to exhibit similarity of commitment scores, actually was lower than the number of individuals with dissimilar to partner scores producing an opposite relationship from the hypothesized relationship.

Happiness Variable

It was expected that these 30 individuals would be at least moderately happy. In fact, the majority of the individuals were happy to very happy as indicated from the 8 to 13 range of actual happiness scores on a scale from 0-13 (Refer to Table 5). Most (19) of the individuals scored 12. Similarity of happiness scores was observed in 24 individuals.

Justice Reasoning

It was hypothesized that individuals in long-term

Table 8

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Responsibility Reasoning by Similarity to Partners in Commitment

Responsibility Reasoning		Commitment: Similar	Commitment: Dissimilar[a]
Similar to Partner		4(6.67)	6(3.33)
	row	40%	60%
	col	20%	60%
Dissimilar to Partner[b]		16(13.33)	4(6.67)
	row	80%	20%
	col	80%	40%

$X^2 = 4.77$; df = 1; $p < .05$; C = .371

[a]Dissimilar commitment scores = one point difference
[b]Dissimilar responsibility scores = one/half stage

marriages who exhibit stages of justice reasoning similar to their partner would have similar happiness scores (H_3). Dissimilar happiness scores were equal to a three-point difference between partners. The results indicated that happiness scores were strongly related to similarity in justice reasoning. The statistics of the contingency table of justice reasoning and happiness produced a $X^2 = 11.313$ (df = 1) (See Table 9). Since the obtained value of X^2 exceeded this value, H_3 was not rejected. Examination of the data reveals a strong relationship (C = .523) between similarity of stages of justice reasoning and similarity of

Table 9

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Justice Reasoning by Similarity to Partners in Perception of Happiness

Justice Reasoning		Happiness: Similiar	Happiness: Dissimilar[a]
Similar to Partner		24(20.8)	2(5.192)
	row	92%	8%
	col	100%	33%
Dissimilar to Partner[b]		0(3.2)	4(0.8)
	row	0%	100%
	col	0%	67%
N = 30			

X^2 = 11.313; df = 1; p < .001; C = .523

[a]Dissimilar = 3 points difference
[b]Dissimilar = one whole stage difference

perception of happiness scores.

Responsibility reasoning

The hypothesis was that individuals in long-term marriages who exhibit similar stages of responsibility reasoning as their partners would perceive a similar level of happiness (H_4). The statistics of the contingency table of similarity of responsibility reasoning scores and perception of happiness produced a X^2 = .9083 (See Table 10). This hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis

Table 10

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Responsibility Reasoning by Similarity to Partners of Perception of Happiness

		Happiness	
Responsibility Reasoning		Similar	Dissimilar[a]
Similar to Partner		8(7.9)	2(2.1)
	row	80%	20%
	col	33%	33%
Dissimilar to Partner[b]		16(16.1)	4(3.9)
	row	80%	20%
	col	67%	67%
N = 30			

X^2 = .9083; df = 1; No significant relationship

[a]Dissimilar = 3 points difference
[b]Dissimilar = one-half stage

was accepted indicating no relationship between similarity of responsibility reasoning and perception of happiness scores.

Moral Types

The individuals were almost evenly divided between Moral Type B (14) and Moral Type A (16). The individuals were almost evenly divided into Similar to Partner, (14) with 8 being homogenous AA and 6 being homogeneous BB, and Dissimilar to Partner, (16) 6 had wife A and husband B, and 10 had wife B and husband A (See Table 11).

Table 11

Moral Types and Justice Reasoning of Partners in Long-term Marriages by Two Categories: Similarity to Partner in Moral Type and Dissimilarity to Partner in Moral Type

Wife	(Husband)	Justice Stage	Husband	(Wife)	Justice Stage
Similarity to Partner in Moral Types					
A	(A)	3/4	A	(A)	3/4
B	(B)	4	B	(B)	5
A	(A)	3	A	(A)	3/4
B	(B)	4/5	B	(B)	4/5
A	(A)	3	A	(A)	3
B	(B)	3/4	B	(B)	3/4
A	(A)	3/4	A	(A)	3/4
Dissimilarity to Partner in Moral Type					
B	(A)	3/4	A	(B)	3/4
A	(B)	3	B	(A)	4
B	(A)	2/3	A	(B)	2/3
B	(A)	3	A	(B)	3/4
A	(B)	3	B	(A)	3/4
A	(B)	3/4	B	(A)	4
B	(A)	3	A	(B)	3
B	(A)	3	A	(B)	3/4

N = 30

The hypothesis was that individuals with similar Moral Types would have similar perceived levels of happiness (H_5). The statistics for the contingency table of moral type and happiness produced a $X^2 = .769$ (df = 1) (See Table 12). This hypothesis was not supported. There was no significant relationship between similarity of partners in moral types and similarity of partners in perception of happiness.

Table 12

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Moral Types by Similarity to Partners in Perception of Happiness

		Happiness	
Moral Type		Similar	Dissimilar[a]
Similar to Partner		12(11.2)	2(2.8)
	row	86%	13%
	col	50%	33%
Dissimilar to Partner[b]		12(12.8)	4(3.2)
	row	75%	25%
	col	50%	67%
N = 30			

$X^2 = .769$; df = 1; No significant relationship

Stage of Responsibility Reasoning and Stage of Valuing Marriage

Exactly half of the individuals in the research study (15) had similar stage scores on responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage (See Table 13). Thirteen of the 15

Table 13

Similarity of Responsibility Stages and Valuing Marriage Stages for Each Individual by Similarity to Partner in Happiness Scores

Happiness Scores	Responsibility and Valuing Stages for Each Individual							
	Similar Stages				Dissimilar Stages**			
	Wives		Husbands		Wives		Husbands	
	RMS	VM*	RMS	VM*	RMS	VM*	RMS	VM*
Similar to Partner	401	400	392	400	342	400	337	400
	333	300	341	300	306	200	326	200
	326	350	336	300	303	200	305	200
	317	300	324	300	300	350	267	200
	302	300	311	300			254	200
	293	300	270	300				
	292	300	266	300				
	285	300						
	N = 15				N = 9			
	Wives		Husbands		Wives		Husbands	
Dissimilar*** to Partner					RMS	VM*	RMS	VM*
					341	400	393	300
					330	400	379	300
					259	200	303	200
					N = 6			

* VM = Valuing Marriage converted to numerical score
** Dissimilar Responsibility scores and VM = 50 points
*** Dissimilar to Partner = 3 points

scored on the conventional level on both scales.

The 15 who had Dissimilar stages in responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage were split between Similar to Partner in perception of happiness (9) and Dissimilar to Partner in perception of happiness (6). Of the 15 individuals who had responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage scores dissimilar, 8 of them scored in stage II of valuing marriage which depicts marriage as valued as an institution that helps individuals by allowing them to take care of others in exchange for being taken care of.

Overall the wives tended to score higher on Stage of Valuing Marriage than did the husbands with 6 wives scoring stage III/IV or IV and only 2 of the husbands above stage III. This would be an expected finding in the general population since women are assumed to have more invested in marriage and, therefore, they would work harder to have a "meaningful" marriage. In this purposive sample, however, the expectation was that the husbands and wives would equally share the desire for an accepting atmosphere instead of viewing marriage as exchange.

It was hypothesized that each individual in a long-term marriage who had a similar stage on both responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage would have levels of happiness similar to their partners (H_6). The statistics of the contingency table of individual similarity of stages of responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage with

happiness scores similar to partner produced a $X^2 = 8.672$ (df = 1) (See Table 14). Since the obtained value of X^2 exceeded this value, H_6 was not rejected.

Table 14

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Perception of Happiness by Similarity of Self in Responsibility Reasoning and Stage of Valuing Marriage

Responsibility Reasoning and Stage of Valuing Marriage		Happiness	
		Similar	Dissimilar[a]
Similar Self Scores		15(12)	0(3)
	row	100%	0%
	col	62.5%	0%
Dissimilar Self Scores[b]		9(12)	6(3)
	row	60%	40%
	col	37.5%	100%
N = 30			

$X^2 = 7.69$; df = 1; $p < .01$; C = .451

[a]Dissimilar = 3 points difference
[b]Dissimilar = 50 points difference between RMS and Stage of Valuing Marriage

Examination of the data reveals a moderate relationship (C = .451) between similarity of both stages of responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage, and happiness.

Commitment

It was hypothesized that there would be similar levels of happiness in partners when there is similarity of

commitment in partners (H_7). The statistics for the contingency table of commitment and happiness produced a $X^2 = 5.609$ (df = 1) (See Table 15). Since the obtained X^2 exceeded this value, H_7 was not rejected. Examination of the data revealed a low relationship (C = .396) for commitment scores to be related to similarity in happiness scores.

Table 15

Frequencies of Individuals for Similarity to Partners in Perception of Happiness by Similarity to Partners in Commitment

		Happiness	
Commitment Scores		Similar	Dissimilar[a]
Similar to Partner		18(16)	2(4)
	row	90%	10%
	col	75%	33%
Dissimilar to Partner[b]		6(8)	4(2)
	row	67%	33%
	col	25%	67%
N = 30			

$X^2 = 5.609$; df = 1; $p < .05$; C = .396

[a] Dissimilar happiness scores = 3 points difference
[b] Dissimilar commitment scores = 1 point difference

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major purposes of this study were (a) to describe justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning in individuals involved in long-term marriages and (b) to assess the relationship of justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning to commitment to the relationship and perceived happiness in these individuals. One unique feature of this research concerned studying both individuals involved in the long-term marriage to determine similarities and dissimilarities within the non-clinical couple. Most studies in justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning have been conducted with individuals while most studies in marital conflict have used couples in therapy or large surveys.

A purposive sample of 30 individuals, partners in 15 long-term marriages of 15-40 years, were selected from recommendations of community leaders in one Piedmont county in North Carolina. To be included in the research, the couple had to have had at least one child and claim a moderate level of satisfaction with the marriage. The actual length of marriage ranged from 17-39 years. Ages of the individuals ranged from 35-69. All the couples were white and upper-middle class.

Separate in-depth interviews were tape-recorded using hypothetical and real life dilemmas, which were later transcribed verbatim and scored. Instruments concerning demographic data, commitment, and perception of happiness were completed. The data were analyzed by the chi-square test of independence with the contingency coefficient employed as a measure of the strength of the association.

Summary of Findings

The hypothesized relationship between justice reasoning, responsibility reasoning, commitment, and happiness were supported by the data. These analyses revealed:

1. That individuals in long-term marriages who exhibited stages of justice reasoning similar to their partner did have similar commitment scores as their partners.
2. That individuals in long-term marriages who exhibited stages of responsibility reasoning similar to their partner had dissimilar commitment scores as their partners.
3. That individuals in long-term marriages who exhibited stages of justice reasoning similar to their partner did perceive a similar level of happiness as their partners.
4. That individuals in long-term marriages who scored a stage of responsibility reasoning similar to

their own stage of valuing marriage did perceive a similar level of happiness as their partners.

5. That there were similar levels of happiness in partners when there was similarity of commitment in partners.

The data revealed that there was not a significant relationship between:

1. Similarity of moral types and perceived levels of happiness.
2. Similarity of responsibility reasoning scores and perceived levels of happiness.

The purpose of these analyses was to determine if there was a significant relationship between similarity in partners in justice reasoning and responsibility reasoning to commitment and perception of happiness. The data supported the hypothesis concerning similarity in partners in justice reasoning and commitment and happiness. The data were mixed concerning similarity of responsibility reasoning scores and commitment and happiness. There was an unexpected relationship between responsibility reasoning and commitment and no significant relationship to happiness.

Discussion

In trying to assess the various components of a committed and happy marriage, several factors appear. Rogers (1977) enumerated his thoughts on the characteristics of a mature and happy relationship:

> To the degree that each partner becomes truly a free agent, then the relationship only has a permanence if the partners are committed to each other, are in good communication with each other, accept each other as separate persons, and live together as persons, not roles. This is a new and mature kind of relationship toward which many couples are striving. (p. 55)

The merging of the four characteristics of commitment, communication, dissolution of roles, and becoming a separate self create an atmosphere in which perception of happiness can occur. The cognitive/developmental theory of moral reasoning gives a framework for helping persons strive for such a relationship. The justice orientation of moral reasoning encourages dissolution of roles and becoming a separate self by encouraging decisions based on rights, fairness and equity. The responsibility orientation of moral reasoning encourages commitment and communication by encouraging decisions based on caring and connection to relationships.

The endurance of long term marriages, conceptualized as commitment, may be explained as the ability of two partners to use similar stages of justice reasoning to resolve conflicts. Similarity in justice reasoning was related to similar levels of commitment (H_1). When two partners use similar structures (stages) or similar rationale to arrive at decisions, they would be able to understand how each arrived at their end point even if the decision was different. If the two partners are operating at similar stages, then their views of equity and fairness would be

similar, and the outcome would produce positive feelings expressed as perception of happiness. Perhaps, perceived happiness, also related to similarity of justice reasoning (H_3), became the reinforcing element of an enduring relationship.

Dissimilarity to partners of responsibility reasoning scores yielded a greater number of persons who were similar to their partners in commitment scores, the opposite of the predicted hypothesis. There would be several explanations for this unexpected finding. The first explanation concerns the instrument itself. As Miller, Rollins, and Thomas (1982) suggested, "When problems of fit are raised, researchers in essence are questioning the validity of the operationalization of theoretical constructs and relationships between constructs" (p. 860). Whenever one uses a new instrument that has had limited testing, the researcher must consider construct validity as a possible explanation for unexpected findings. Miller, et al also suggested that more attention should be paid to measurement variance as a factor in unexpected findings. Sensitivity in determining the scoring levels of responsibility reasoning could explain why the division of similarity to partner and dissimilar to partner was skewed in the non-predicted direction. A more plausible explanation concerns trying to simplify for research reasons, a complex interaction between partners. Responsibility reasoning deals with making moral

decisions about everyday life events that occur within marriage. As Gilligan (1982) noted, decisions in the responsibility realm are usually based on relationships, caring, and connection. Commitment to a relationship or a person takes precedence over similarity of thinking or deciding. Likewise, similarity of thinking or deciding does not guarantee similarity of commitment.

There was not a significant relationship between similarity of responsibility reasoning scores and perception of happiness. Indeed, 80% of the individuals in both categories, similar to partner (8) and dissimilar to partner (16), were similar to partner in perception of happiness (24). Because of the large number of individuals who were dissimilar to their partner in responsibility reasoning scores, one might suspect an instrument problem, such as construct validity, measurement error, or insensitivity of the measurement to the different stages of responsibility reasoning. Another explanation of this unexpected finding concerned the question of whether dissimilarity to partner in responsibility reasoning scores has anything to do with perception of happiness. Perhaps everyone "expects" their partner to deal with real-life dilemmas differently from them, and therefore, it does not affect over-all global measure of happiness.

The moral atmosphere of the marriage was assessed through the scale of Stages of Valuing Marriage which

measured the importance of the marriage to the individuals involved. The context of the marriage provided the active place for the partners to behave toward one another in a responsible manner. Similarity between one's score on responsibility reasoning and valuing marriage yielded a similarity of perception of happiness (H_6). If one feels free to act in a responsible manner toward the partner, then feelings of happiness would be generated. For example, if partners wanted to behave in a caring manner toward their spouse, they would feel good about the act instead of worrying about being questioned as to motives or suspicions about why they were doing it.

When partners express similar commitment levels, then they would also have positive feelings (perception of happiness) that would be similar (H_7). The matrix of elements that compose marital satisfaction is usually based on perceptions of several elements, i.e., "empathy, along with sexuality and companionship--both of which are influenced by empathy...develop from past experiences and their significance...lies in what is known as commitment to the relationship" (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, p. 40). Although this, perhaps, is a chicken-egg question since both commitment and happiness can become reinforcing elements of each other.

It was unexpected that there was not a significant relationship between moral types (indicative of action) and

happiness. One would have expected similar partners, with each more prone to action or each more passive, to be similar to their partners in perception of happiness since a similar moral types would be more harmonious than dissimilar types. In the original studies done on moral types (Tappan, et al., 1988), there were significant relationships between age, moral stage and moral type. The older the person and the higher the justice stage score, the more likely they were to make autonomous moral judgments. All six persons at stage 4 or higher were categorized by moral type B in this study.

Marriage, per se, is usually seen as an institution, static and unchanging, instead of a dynamic changing process in which two persons share their lives and create a mutually meaningful, satisfying climate together. The difficulty in creating such an environment could be termed marital conflict.

Therapists often see couples for marital therapy who claim not to be able to communicate, or if communicating, not to be understood. "We don't communicate" or " He/she doesn't understand" are often used cliches and are main presenting complaints of couples seeking therapy. Could it be that these couples are really operating from dissimilar stages of moral reasoning and the difficulty in communicating or understanding springs from different underlying processes (dissimilar stages) for arriving at

decisions?

Conflicting rights, competing claims, and the responsibility incurred from these undergird a typical marital relationship. Every conflict could be broken down into elements of fairness, equity, justice, caring and responsibility. How an individual deals with handling such conflicts is probably dependent upon the structures of decision-making developed over time. As Gilligan's (1982) research suggested,

> Men and women may speak different languages that they assume are the same, using similar words to denote disparate experiences of self and social relationships. Because these languages share an overlapping moral vocabulary, they contain the propensity for systematic mistranslation, creating misunderstanding which impedes communication and limit the potential for cooperation and care in relationships. (p. 173)

Perhaps it is not the gender that creates the language barrier, but instead the dissimilarity in stages that create the barrier.

The process of helping people grow in moral reasoning is predicated on four antecedent conditions: (a) the capacity for cognitive development; (b) the desire or willingness to change; (c) number of opportunities for perspective-taking; and (d) belief in the centrality of justice (Kohlberg, 1981). Given the theory of cognitive/moral development, clinicians could pattern their therapeutic interventions around attempting to change the partner who is operating on the lower stage to a higher

level of justice reasoning. But if they do not have the desire or willingness to change, or an understanding that thoughts about justice can change over time, or if they cannot see the perspective of the other and be empathic, they will not or can not grow or change in moral reasoning. It is not unusual to see people of more than average intelligence who are operating on the exchange stage (preconventional level) of moral reasoning. If any one of these conditions is not met, then no growth can occur. Therefore, if therapists assess a lack of any one of the necessary conditions, implying that the client cannot move to a higher stage, then it becomes the function of the therapist to help the client or family

> by facilitating the transformation of the family system. This process includes three major steps. The therapist joins the family [or client] in a position of leadership. He unearths and evaluates the underlying structure [assesses the presence of the antecedent conditions]. And he creates circumstances that will allow for the transformation of this structure [growth process]. (Minuchin, 1974, p. 111)

As Dienhart (1983) pointed out, causing cognitive disequilibrium is ethically correct for therapists, because the assumption is that higher stages of moral reasoning are more adequate for good human relationships (Kohlberg, 1984).

Disequilibrium becomes a sufficient condition for moral reasoning growth after the four antecedent necessary conditions are met. Usually, the distress of the marital conflict has precipitated the disequilibrium that occurs

when old moral reasoning structures (stages) no longer seem adequate for resolving the present moral conflict. Such disequilibrium occurs when a wife realizes that taking care of others in the role of the "good" woman is really self sacrifice. If she realizes that in higher levels of justice all people should have equitable treatment, then the old moral reasoning of giving up everything for her family presents cognitive conflict or disequilibrium. Such a state of disequilibrium is necessary for moral reasoning growth. "Marriage therapy offers a context where a couple can learn alternative ways of behaving while being forced to abandon those past procedures which induced distress" (Erickson & Hogan, 1981).

The cognitive/developmental theory of moral reasoning is offered as a paradigm for explaining some of the paradoxes presented by the clinical population. If one of the presenting problems, as assessed by the therapist, is a dissimilarity of partners in stages of justice reasoning or responsibility reasoning, then, the person operating on the lower stage may appear to be the "innocent party" if they do not feel the disequilibrium produced by the stress of the conflict. A typical comment of the "innocent party" would be "I thought everything was great. I don't have any complaints." The person operating on the higher stage may appear as the distressed partner because they may now feel an injustice is present that was not present before his/her

growth to a new level. Actually both partners need to be part of the change process if the marital relationship in jeopardy is going to grow, since both partners impact on the relationship.

After assessing the cognitive capacities of the clients, the therapist, using antecedent conditions for change as a framework, can offer intervention at the points of (a) willingness to change, (b) number of opportunities for role-taking or (c) belief in the centrality of justice. As Minuchin (1974) suggested,

> Patients move for three reasons. First, they are challenged in their perception of their reality. Second, they are given alternative possibilities that make sense to them. And third, once they have tried out the alternative transactional patterns, new relationships appear that are self-reinforcing. (p.119)

Or in other words, clients are challenged as to their willingness to do things differently or in their belief of the fairness of what they are doing, and then, they are presented opportunities within the present relationship for role-taking that are different. Partners, if in fulfilling the antecedent condition of willingness to change, agree to do things differently and support each other in the process, will have a chance to improve the relationship to the point that it will become reinforcing for both partners. Persons do not develop in the same stage across all areas at the same time, because the four antecedent conditions are dependent upon an individual's personal experiences. Piaget

(1965) called this decalage, an uneven development.

How does a therapist assess clients' moral reasoning stages? Therapists constantly assess clients while the interview is in progress. A therapist trained in the moral stage structure and criterion judgments for these stages can make assessments of the stages either in the general interview or can use vignettes or moral dilemmas and can ask the clients how they would respond. A typical question would be, "What if you were the person involved, what would you do in this situation?" The responses could then be judged as to their stage in moral reasoning.

This research adds to the literature on the explanation of enduring relationships by showing that justice reasoning stages are associated with both commitment and happiness in long term marriages. In the pilot study a retrospective interview of how relationships change over the lifetime of the marriage showed that partners who do have long-term marriages both developed in moral reasoning stages. Sometimes they developed at the same rate. At other times one moved ahead of the other. So long as one caught up with the other, the marriage continued to have a moderate level of happiness and commitment. This is what O'Neill and O'Neill (1972) were probably referring to in their description of the open marriage which was dependent on the acceptance of irregular growth as long as both eventually continue to grow. The old cliche that one spouse outgrew

the other gains more support.

Recommendations

This research study provides some empirical evidence that showed that partners in committed and happy marriages do indeed have similar levels of justice reasoning but not responsibility reasoning. The concept of responsibility reasoning needs to be reexamined, not only for its meaning, but for its measurement. To further strengthen these empirical findings, a replication of this study with a larger, random sample of non-clinical couples would enhance the validity of the findings. This would also enable one to develop more sensitive parameters in ascertaining the levels of responsibility reasoning.

A study of a clinical population would offer new insights into the process of marital conflict. The use of an objective form, such as the Ethical Reasoning Inventory (Page & Bode, 1980) or the Sociomoral Reflection Objective Measure (Gibbs, Arnold, Morgan, Schwartz, Gavaghan, & Tappan, 1984) would be a more efficient use of time than using the hypothetical dilemmas with the transcribing and scoring. A similar instrument could be developed for responsibility reasoning dilemmas that would also be time efficient and still yield useful data.

Further studies concerning how moral reasoning orientations impact on couples would be of interest to researcher-therapist-educator since all three positions

impact on a community. Since the family is conceptualized as the building block of society, any endeavor that improves family life has the potential to improve community and societal life. It is an ethical responsibility of the researcher-educator-therapist to validate research hunches through empirical research, to share this learning with others, and to assist persons in becoming more than they are presently. Only in this way will these three areas converge to form a cohesive aggregate and contribute to our society.

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Appendix A

Letter to Community Leaders

FAMILY RESEARCH CENTER

Department of Child Development and Family Relations
University of North Carolina
Greensboro, NC 27412

AAUW
Dr.

Salisbury, NC 28144

Dear

I am contacting you and other presidents of civic organizations in Salisbury and Rowan county about possible participants in a research project I will soon be conducting. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Child Development and Family Relations, UNCG.

The purpose of this project will be to examine long term marriages in the areas of commitment and happiness, and to explore the process of how persons reason about these areas. In order to gather information about these areas, persons will be asked about commitment and perceptions of happiness Persons will also be asked to resolve hypothetical and real-life dilemmas and give the reasons why certain responses were chosen.

I am asking you if you will identify three couples in your organization who have been in their first marriage 15-40 years, have children either at home or away, are middle class or above and appear to be at least moderately satisfied with their marriage. Please send me their names, addresses and telephone numbers (home and business) on the enclosed postcard by March 1.

After I receive the names from you, I will contact the couples asking them to participate in the research project, and your part will be over. The Human Subjects Committee at UNCG has approved this project, and each couple will be asked to sign an informed consent form.

As with all research done at the University, total confidentiality and anonymity will be observed. Responses from the couples chosen will be grouped and analyzed together so that no connection could ever be made between the couples and their responses. Because only a small number of couples will be chosen for this project, no one except the primary researcher will know who has been included from the original list of names.

We are all concerned about the quality of family relations, and it is projects like this one that contribute more information into the overall area. The information gathered should generate some recommendations for healthier family life.

I very much appreciate your part in helping me identify couples to participate in this project.

Sincerely,

Ellen P Goodwin
Doctoral Candidate
412 Richmond Road
Salisbury, NC 28144

cc: Rebecca M Smith, PhD., Adviser
Professor of Child Development
and Family Relations, UNCG

Appendix B

Letter to Subjects

Dr. and Mrs. John Doe
Local Address
Salisbury, NC 28144

June 17, 1987

Dear John and Mary,

I have contacted presidents of civic and professional organizations in Salisbury and Rowan county for names of persons who might participate in a research project sponsored through the UNCG Department of Child Development and Family Relations. Your name was furnished as one who might be interested.

The purpose of this project is to examine long term marriages in the areas of commitment and happiness, and to explore the process of how persons reason about these areas. In order to gather information about these areas, persons will be asked about commitment and perceptions of happiness. You will also be asked to resolve hypothetical and real-life dilemmas and give the reasons why certain responses were chosen.

If you and your spouse are willing to participate in this project, please return the enclosed postcard with some times that I may contact you by phone. I will then arrange appointments with each of you for the interview. The interview will take about one to one and one-half hours to complete for each. The interviews can be arranged to be following one another. All information is confidential. There will be three short questionnaires to complete, followed by some questions concerning commitment. You will then to be asked to respond to three hypothetical dilemmas and four real-life dilemmas. I prefer to tape-record the interviews since it will be necessary for me to analyze the information at a later date. Persons I have already interviewed tell me it was an enjoyable and interesting experience.

As with all research done at the University, total confidentiality and anonymity will be observed. Responses from the interviews will be grouped and analyzed together so that no connection could ever be made between an individual and their response. The Human Subjects Committee at UNCG has approved this project, and you will be asked to sign an informed consent form at the time of the interview.

I have a personal and professional concern about quality family relations, and it is projects like this one that contribute more information to the field. I would hope that the information gathered will generate some recommendations for healthier family life.

I am very appreciative of your taking the time to read this letter, consider participating in the project, and returning the postcard. I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Ellen P Goodwin
Doctoral Candidate

cc: Rebecca M Smith, PhD., Adviser
Professor of Child Development
and Family Relations

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

This research is concerned with examining long term marriages in the areas of commitment and happiness, and exploring the process of how persons reason about these areas. In doing so, persons will be asked about commitment and perceptions of happiness. You will also be asked to resolve hypothetical and real-life dilemmas and give your reasons why you chose certain responses.

The interview will last approximately one to one and one-half hours. You and your partner will both be interviewed but separately. Your participation in this research project is strictly voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question and may withdraw from the interview at any time.

Your individual responses will be held confidential. Each participant will be assigned an identification number, and this information will be kept in a locked file.

Certain parts of the interview will be tape-recorded in order to look for consistencies in the way each individual tells the story. These tapes will be kept in a locked file. Real names used on the tapes will be changed before the tapes are transcribed on paper. Excerpts from the tapes may be published in the final report, but there will be no identification of the source.

All interview material, questionnaires, tapes, and transcriptions will be destroyed within twelve months after the completion of the project. Your permission to record and transcribe your response is requested.

Thank you for your help in this research.

I, _____, have been satisfactorily informed by the researcher about the procedures, risks, and rights to inquiries and withdrawal to the research. I am going to voluntarily participate.

I would like a copy of the summary of the project:
Yes No

_____ _____

Signature of the Interviewer Date

Appendix D

Demographic Data Form

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Name _____ Spouse _____

Address_____ City_____ Zip_____

Birthday_____

Date Married_____

Children/Ages _____, _____

_____, _____

Occcupation _____

Highest Educational Level Achieved _____

Individual Income: Please check one (1).

None	_____
Below $25,000	_____
$25,100 to $50,000	_____
Above $50,000	_____

Appendix E

Perception of Happiness

PERCEPTION OF HAPPINESS

1. Perception of Happiness:
   The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. Please circle the dot which <u>best</u> describes the degree of happiness, all things being considered, of your relationship.

0*	1	2	3	5	4	0
.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Extremely Unhappy | Fairly Unhappy | A little Unhappy | Happy | Very Happy | Extremely Happy | Perfect

2. If you had your life to live over, do you think you would:

   Marry the same person (3)
   Marry a different person (0)
   Not marry at all (0)

3. How often have you discussed or seriously considered divorce, separating, or terminating your relationship:

   All the time (0)
   Most of the time (1)
   More often than not (2)
   Occasionally (3)
   Rarely (4)
   Never (5)

---

* The scores were not included on the questionaire given to the subjects.

Appendix F

Commitment Statements and Questions

Please choose one of the following statements that best describes the present state of your feelings toward your relationship.

_3*_ I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.

_5_ I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.

_4_ I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.

_2_ It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.

_1_ It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.

_0_ My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

---

* Scores not included on questionnaires given to subjects.

Commitment Questions

PERSONAL ISSUE AND NORM QUESTIONS

1. Why did you chose that statement to describe your effort/non effort in maintaining the relationship?
2. What does that mean you will do/not do in maintaining the relationship?

EXPECTATION OF SPOUSE QUESTIONS

1. Which statement do you think your spouse would chose?
2. Why would they chose that statement?
3. What does your spouse do/not do, that would indicate they would chose that statement?

A Manual for Scoring
Stages of Valuing Marriage

I. Marriage is valued as an institution that helps the individual meet his/her interpersonal needs and serves to protect the individual.

Criterion Judgment: Marriage is seen as a safe haven, a way out of a bad situation. The husband is THE boss, and all the wife can do is obey him. This is what she chooses to do, because he is big and strong and will take care of her.

NO MATCH EXAMPLES OF THIS STAGE

II. Marriage is valued as an institution that helps an individual by allowing them to take care of others in exchange for being taken care of.

Criterion Judgments: Marriage is seen as a way to take care of someone else in exchange for them taking care of the other person. The person is willing to make sacrifices for their spouse because that is the way it should be.

Match Examples:

Wife: We have to make personal sacrifices for your spouse and that's just sort of the way it has always been.

Husband: In believing in commitments, I will just see that we will succeed in our marriage.

III. Marriage is valued as an institution that enables the individual to fulfil their obligation to take care of their spouse. One's value is based on the ability to care for and protect others.

Criterion Judgement: Marriage is seen as a responsible act of mature adults. It is valued within itself as a status provider. It enables one to take care of others and be taken care of. The "rules" of marriage are set by societal expectations.

Match Examples:

Wife: I would do anything in the world for him because he has done everything in the world for me.

Husband: I'm a more satisfied person than (my spouse). She is searching more for fulfillment...Work together, do my part to maintain the marriage.

III/IV. Marriage is valued as an institution because of a sense of shared expectations that each will care for the other because each is important and valuable. There is a self-chosen responsibility to care for self and others.

Criterion Judgment; Marriage is an arena where one is able to show caring and affection for a spouse because they are important as an individual. Yet, one is able to care for others

only as they develop a sense of caring for self. This is the beginning of truly valuing a mate because of one's ability to be responsible for one's self.

Match Examples:

Female: Through the years, I have felt that I probably did more than my fair share. I am starting to concentrate more on me now as a person....I am not trying to change anything, only asking for room for me to be an individual, not just (husband's) wife. It took me a while to get there, that is not always an easy thing to do.

Husband: Because I think we are both committed to the relationship, but it is a two-way street. I will go the extra mile to compromise, to discuss issues.

IV. Marriage is valued as an institution because it is conceived of as based on cooperation and agreement between two equal agents. Marriage is seen as an arena for maximizing and promotion individual rights within a context of relationship with reciprocity and equity being maintained in the relationship.

Criterion Judgment: Marriage is a chosen state of being with someone because one's life is better with them than without them. It is a place for two unique individuals to continue to grow within a context of

equity and reciprocity.

Match Examples:

Wife: I will give, share, take but not at the expense of my own personal esteem, or my own personal freedom, or my own personal development.

Husband: We have been willing to sit down and talk about things, and define issues and work out strategies for moving forward and I will continue to do those sorts of things in the future.

Appendix G

Justice Reasoning

JUSTICE REASONING INTERVIEW

FORM A

Dilemma III: In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid $400 for the radium and charged $4,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money and tried every legal means, but he could only get together about $2,000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So having tried every legal means, Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

1. Should Heinz steal the drug?

1a. Why or why not?

*2. Is it actually right or wrong for him to steal the drug?

*2a. Why is it right or wrong?

*3. Does Heinz have a duty or obligation to steal the drug?

*3a. Why or why not?

4. [If subject originally favors stealing, ask:] If Heinz doesn't love his wife, should he steal the drug for her.

4. [If subject originally favors not stealing, ask:] Does it make a difference whether or not he loves his wife?

4a. Why or why not?

5. Suppose the person dying is not his wife but a stranger. Should Heinz steal the drug for the stranger?

5a. Why or why not?

*6. [If subject favors stealing the drug for a stranger, ask:] Suppose it's a pet animal he loves. Should Heinz steal to save the pet animal?

*6a. Why or why not?

7. Is it important for people to do everything they can to save another's life?

7a. Why or why not?

*8. It is against the law for Heinz to steal. Does that make it morally wrong?

*8a. Why or why not?

9. In general, should people try to do everything they can to obey the law?

9a. Why or why not?

9b. How does this apply to what Heinz should do?

*10. In thinking back over the dilemma, what would you say is the most responsible thing for Heinz to do?

*10a. Why?

Dilemma III':Heinz did break into the store. He stole the drug and gave it to his wife. In the newspapers the next day, there was an account of the robbery. Mr. Brown, a police officer who knew Heinz, read the account. He remembered seeing Heinz running away from the store and realized that it was Heinz who stole the drug. Mr. Brown wonders whether he should report that Heinz was the robber.

*1. Should Officer Brown report Heinz for stealing?

*1a. Why or why not?

*2. Suppose Officer Brown were a close friend of Heinz, should he then report him?

*2a. Why or why not?

Dilemma III`: Officer Brown did report Heinz. Heinz was arrested and brought to court. A jury was selected. The jury's job is to find whether a person is innocent or guilty of committing a crime. The jury finds Heinz guilty. It is up to the judge to determine the sentence.

3. Should the judge give Heinz some sentence, or should he suspend the sentence and let Heinz go

free?

3a. Why is that best?

4. Thinking in terms of society, should people who break the law be punished?

4a. Why or why not?

4b. How does this apply to how the judge should decide?

5. Heinz was doing what his conscience told him when he stole the drug. Should a lawbreaker be punished if he is acting out of conscience?

5a. Why or why not?

To elicit moral type

*6. Thinking back over the dilemma, what would you say is the most responsible thing for the judge to do.

*6a. Why?

Dilemma I: Joe is a fourteen-year-old boy who wanted to go to camp very much. His father promised him he could go if he saved up the money for it himself. So Joe worked hard at his paper route and saved up the $100 it cost to do to camp and a little more besides. But just before camp was going to start, his father changed his mind. Some of his friends decided to go on a special fishing trip, and Joe's father was short of the money it would cost. So he told Joe to give him the money he had saved from the paper route. Joe didn't want to give up going to camp, so he thinks of refusing to give

his father the money.

1. Should Joe refuse to give his father the money?

1a. Why or why not?

To elicit the moral type (Questions 2 and 3)

*2. Does the father have the right to tell Joe to give him the money?

*2a. Why or why not?

*3. Does giving the money have anything to do with being a good son?

*3a. Why or why not?

*4. Is the fact that Joe earned the money himself important in this situation?

*4a. Why or why not?

5. The father promised Joe he could go to camp if he earned the money. Is the fact that the father promised the most important thing in the situation?

5a. Why or why not?

6. In general, why should a promise be kept?

7. Is it important to keep a promise to someone you don't know well and probably won't see again?

7a. Why or why not?

8. What do you think is the most important thing a father should be concerned about in his relationship to his son?

8a. Why is that the most important thing?

9. In general, what should be the authority of a father over his son?

9a. Why?

10. What do you think is the most important thing a son should be concerned about in his relationship to his father?

10a. Why is that the most important thing?

A Sample of Scoring Manual for Stages of Justice Reasoning using Hypothetical Dilemmas

Heinz Dilemma

Stage 1. Reasons for stealing confuse the intrinsic value of a person's life with external status characteristics.

Reasons against stealing or for obeying the law refer to simple labeling or breaking the law as wrong.

Stage 2. Reasons for stealing focus on instrumental interests, needs, and exchanges, considered from the perspective of the individual.

Reasons against stealing or for obeying the law emphasize concrete ownership rights and prudential interests.

Stage 3. Reasons for stealing center on prosocial motives and norms and on the expectations of relationships valued for their own sake.

Reasons against stealing or for obeying the law relate to normative expectations that people should obey the law.

Stage 4. Reasons for stealing appeals to generalized practices, responsibilities, and values, which are required or should be upheld by society.

Reasons against stealing or obeying the law entail a rule-utilitarian appreciation of the rights,

practices, and institutions functional for the social system.

Stage 5. Reasons <u>for</u> stealing focus on the rights to or value of life as the fundamental presupposition to socio-legal values.

Reasons <u>against</u> stealing or for obeying the law is based on the assumption that any rational individual would appreciate and contract into law as necessary for agreement in society and for protection of his or her own rights or interests.

Note: Adapted from Colby and Kohlberg, <u>The measurement of moral judgment; Standard issue scoring manuals,</u> Vol., II, (1988).

STANDARD SCORING SHEET

DATE:
INTERVIEW NO./S name:
SCORED BY: FORM A/FORM B (circle one)

(Circle Chosen Issue) DILEMMA III (FORM A) OR IV (FORM B)

LIFE (Form A) or LIFE-QUALITY (Form B) ISSUE			LAW (Form A) or LAW/LIFE-PRESERV.(Form B) ISSUE		
Q#	CJ#/Norm & Element	Stage (Substage/Notes)	Q#	CJ#/Norm & Element	Stage (Substage/Notes)
ISSUE SCORE:			ISSUE SCORE:		

(Circle Chosen Issue) DILEMMA III' (FORM A) or IV' (FORM B)

MORALITY & CONSCIENCE ISSUE			PUNISHMENT ISSUE		
Q#	CJ #/Norm & Element	Stage (Substage/Notes)	Q#	CJ #/Norm & Element	Stage (Substage/Notes)
ISSUE SCORE:			ISSUE SCORE:		

(Circle Chosen Issue) DILEMMA I (FORM A) OR II (FORM B)

CONTRACT ISSUE			AUTHORITY ISSUE		
Q#	CJ #/Norm & Element	Stage (Substage/Notes)	Q#	CJ #/Norm & Element	Stage (Substage/Notes)
ISSUE SCORE:			ISSUE SCORE:		

Summated Weightings From Issues: 1. _____ 3. _____ 5. _____ 2. _____ 4. _____

OVERALL PROTOCOL SCORE
GLOBAL: _____
MMS: _____

Appendix H

Responsibility Reasoning

RELATIONSHIP DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1.

Alan and Sue have been happily married for 20 years. Alan is a successful lawyer, and Sue is the Executive Director of the Community Art Council, a position that carries much responsibility and status in the community. With their combined income, they fall in the upper-middle class. Alan has been offered a political job 500 miles away from where they live with an income equal to both of their incomes. Alan wants to take the job and move with his family to the larger town.

COMMITMENT DILEMMA--Reciprocity versus cooperation

1. What should Alan do?

1a. Why or why not?

2. Is Alan responsible to anyone other than himself?

2a. Why or why not?

3. If Sue does not want to move (different from Alan's position), should that make a difference to Alan?

3a. Why or why not?

4. Which is more important, loyalty to self or loyalty to spouse?

4a. Why or why not?

5. Who has the final decisions?

Mary has a friend receiving cancer therapy every Wednesday at noon at a hospital 60 miles away. She normally has a driver but on this particular day, her driver is sick, and her back-up driver is out-of-town. Mary's friend calls on Tuesday and asks Mary to take her for her therapy. Mary agrees and they arrange to leave at 10:am. Ben, Mary's husband, calls at 9:30am on Wed. morning to say that the big boss is in town for the day and wants Mary to join them for an important luncheon meeting that has to do with Ben's future with the company.

CARING DILEMMA--Relationship versus wife role obligation

1. What should Mary do?

1a. Why or why not?

2. Does Ben have the right to tell Mary she has to meet with them?

2a. Why or why not?

3. Is an agreement with a friend as important as a request from a spouse?

3a. Why or why not?

4. Would you say that Mary "promised" her friend she would do something?

4a. Why is an agreement like/not like a promise?

5. What do promises have to do with relationships?

Dilemma 3.

Carolyn worked at a secretarial job during the years that David attended graduate school. During that time, they had two children. When David became established in his professional career, Carolyn became interested in finishing her undergraduate degree and getting a Master's. She asked David to arrange his work schedule (which was possible) so that he would be home when the children came home from school. She suggested that he could use that time to catch up on book work.

EQUITY AND CUMMULATIVE JUSTICE DILEMMA

1. What should David do?

1a. Why or why not?

2. Does Carolyn's previous behavior (working while David was in school) have any thing to do with this situation?

2a. Why or why not?

3. Does Carolyn's wanting to go to school place an obligation on David?

3a. Why or why not?

4. Is it fair for Carolyn to want to return to school?

4a. Why or why not?

Dilemma 4.

Linda and Jim were both involved in professional careers. They had been married twelve years, and their two children were in elementary school. Linda had

taken time off with each pregnancy, but, since she had

returned to work quickly, had not lost seniority in her position. Shortly after her 39th birthday, Linda discovered that she had a contraceptive failure and she was pregnant. Neither Jim nor she had planned on more children. Jim was really excited.

BALANCING PERSPECTIVES DILEMMA

1. What should Linda do?

1a. Why or why not?

2. In this case, should Linda consider her own feelings more that Jim's feelings or consider Jim's feelings more than her own?

2a. Why or why not?

3. Should this be a mutual or unilateral decision?

3a. Why or why not?

4. If the persons take a different stance on the dilemma, who should have the final word?

4a. Why?

A Scoring Manual for Stages of Responsibility Judgments using Real-Life Dilemmas

STAGE 1 Responsibility and obligation are seen as being the same. The person feels compelled to fulfill the commands and rules of the parent figure or spouse. External approval dictates behavior.

Criterion Judgment: The person involved in the decision-making has only a responsibility to him/her self and external approval is a major basis for arriving at a decision.

Match Examples: NO MATCH EXAMPLES PRESENTED

STAGE 2 Responsibility is differentiated from obligation from this stage onward. The person is responsible only to and for himself or herself and his or her welfare, property, and goals.

Criterion Judgment: The person involved in the decision-making should discuss with their spouse, but the actual decision is theirs' alone to make. Rules and agreements are made according to whether the rules and agreements will help or be instrumental to that person.

Match Examples:

Dilemma #2. "She should get out of the agreement to meet with her husband and boss."

Dilemma #3. "She shouldn't ask him to help."

STAGE 2/3 There is a recognition that everyone is responsible to and for themselves, their welfare, property, and goals. Persons who are irresponsible or careless lose some of the right to have themselves, their welfare, and so on, respected. For example, being a poor housekeeper or a poor earner mitigatesthe right to have one's property respected as well as justifying a lessened concern for the person's welfare. Connection and attachment begin to become issues at this transitional stage.

Criterion Judgment: The person involved in the decision-making should discuss this with their spouse and find out what the concerns are, but the final decision in the dilemma in HIS/HERS alone.

Match Examples:

Dilemma #2. "Don't let someone down, then they won't help you." "This was an agreement, not a promise."

Dilemma #3. "He should help but only if HE wants to."

Dilemma #4. "I know I should talk to my husband, but I can't." "It is MY responsibility."

STAGE 3 Responsibility for the self is to do the "good" thing, to live up to generally known and accepted standards of a "good person." Responsibility to others is limited to those with whom one has a

personal relationship (like a marital relationship) and is defined as meeting their needs or promoting their welfare. Self-sacrifice becomes the norm of goodness, and when responsibility conflicts, the self becomes the sacrificed victim.

Criterion Judgment: The spouse involved in the decision-making should discuss this with their spouse, but since roles are set by society, the wife becomes the compromiser and makes the adjustments to her life, while the husband's main responsibility is to be the bread-winner. Each is concerned with doing the "right" thing since that becomes the "good" decision.

Match Examples:

Dilemma #1. "The wife has to compromise."

Dilemma #2. "Her friend needs her more."

Dilemma #3. "He needs to be unselfish." "She helped him, she deserves a little consideration now."

Dilemma #4. "I want to say she should be responsible to self, but I can't." "She decides she would be a bad person if she had an abortion."

STAGE 3/4 Responsibility is seen more as a process for maintaining and enhancing feelings of closeness and affection in personal relationships, a reconsideration of the relationship between self and others. There is an infant awareness of the beginning shift from approval of others to an inner sense of judgment for

what is honest and real. Being irresponsible is defined as "hurting the other's feelings" within a relationship andis considered a valid basis for a lessened concern of the other's welfare if one's feelings have been hurt.

Criterion Judgment: The spouses know that the relationship is maintained by both being willing to be flexible and to negotiate. Decisions are reflective of the spouse's stand. There is beginning awareness of an inner voice in determining one's position, yet other's opinions are still important.

Match Examples:

Dilemma #1. "Marriage is a two-sided agreement." "They are responsible to each other."

Dilemma #2. "Friendships are based on trust; relationships grow when you can be relied upon or can rely on the other person."

Dilemma #3. "There should be give and take in a marital relationship." "Carolyn has a need and he should help Carolyn with her need."

Dilemma #4. "Jim is half of the unborn. He has to have input."

STAGE 4 Responsibility is seen as a mutually binding set of feelings and agreements among people in relationships or marriages. Being responsible for the self means one must act out of dependability, trustworthiness, and

loyalty regardless of the day-to-day fluctuation of feelings among people. Equity and reciprocity are key ingredients in maintaining the relationship. Responsibility becomes a self-chosen ethic that enables one to reconstruct the dilemma in new terms knowing that choices made becomes one's responsibility. A transformed understanding of self allows for assertion of moral equality between self and others. Irresponsibility on the part of a partner or group does not mitigate concern for their welfare or rights by their spouse.

Criterion Judgment: The decision is regarded as a mutual decision, and each spouse has equal input into the process of deciding. They both are willing to negotiate to the best possible outcome. They strive for maximum joint profit knowing that their ultimate decision lies with the self after all other possibilities have been considered. At times, the compromises appear to be like Stage 3, but the difference is the self-chosen decision in response to a caring atmosphere, not a societally dictated behavior.

Match Examples:

Dilemma #1. "You mean more to me than the job. We will decide together."

Dilemma #2. "Agreement is more important than a request. It's a commitment." "Once you promise,

you have to carry through because you would let yourself down as well as the other person." [CJ 33-Contract]

Dilemma #3. "They have a total relationship. He wants to do it for her." "He's doing it because he wants to. It is not an obligation." "There is no obligation from her previous behavior. That was then. This is now."

Dilemma #4. "Wife's decision ultimately because she's the one that will carry the pregnancy and the childcare, probably. Husband should be accepting of her decision."

Appendix J

Comparison of Stages of Justice Reasoning, The Ethic of Responsibility, and Responsibility Reasoning

Comparison of the Stages of Justice Reasoning (Kohlberg), Ethic of Responsibility (Gilligan), and Responsibility Reasoning (Higgins)

	Kohlberg(1981)	Gilligan(1977)	Higgins(1984)
LEVEL I	PRECONVENTIONAL MORALITY		
Stage 1	Heteronomous Morality	Level I Individual Survival	Stage 1
Stage 2	Instrumental Morality	Level I/II From Selfishness to Responsibility	Stage 2 Stage 2/3
LEVEL II	CONVENTIONAL MORALITY		
Stage 3	Interpersonal Normative Morality	Level II Goodness as Self-Sacrifice	Stage 3
Stage 4	Social System Morality	Level II/III From Goodness to Truth	Stage 3/4
LEVEL III	POST-CONVENTIONAL MORALITY		
Stage 5	Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality	Level III The Ethic of Responsi-bility	Stage 4
Stage 6	Universal, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles		

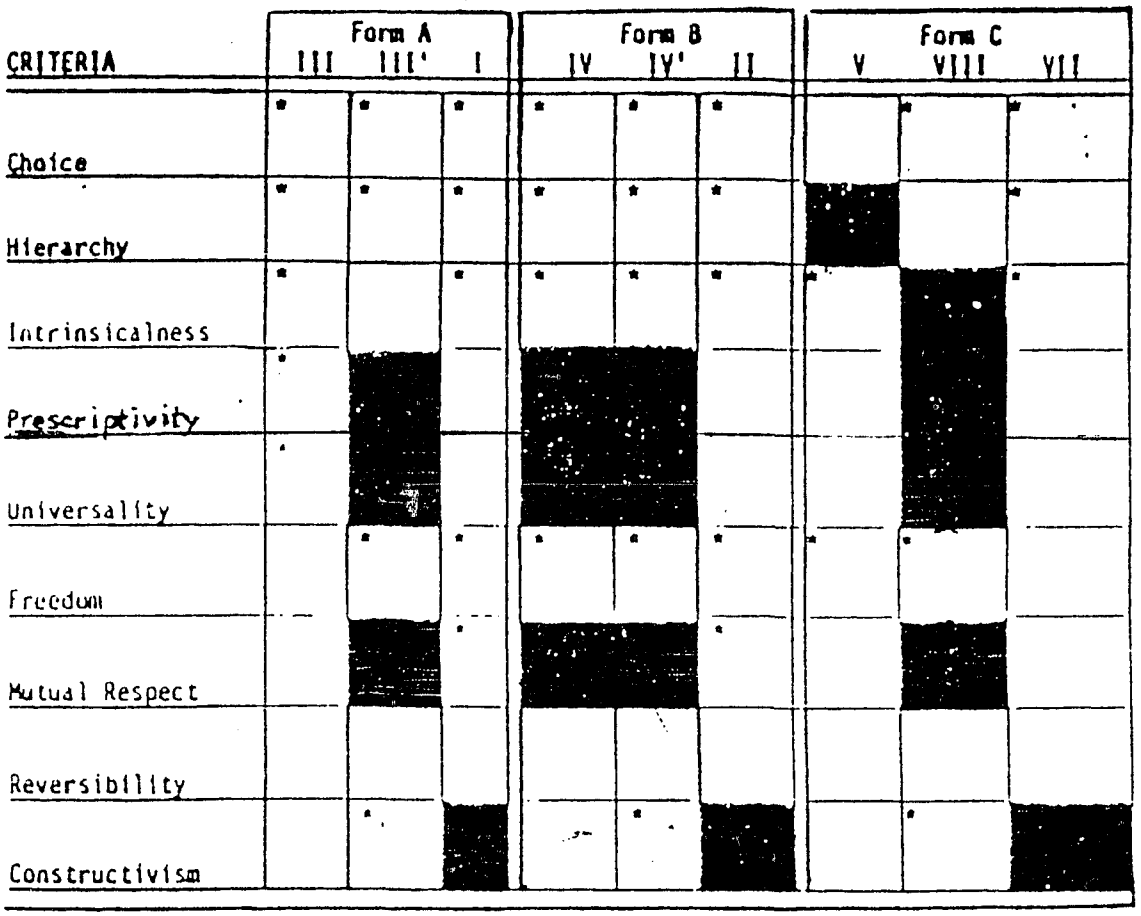
Appendix K

Moral Type Scoring Sheet

MORAL TYPE SCORING SHEET

DATE_____ SUBJECT_____

SCORED BY_____ TIME_____



DILEMMA SCORE: | | | | | | | | | |

FORM SCORE: | | | |

Appendix L

Numerical Values of Data Used in Statistical Analysis

Numerical Values of Data Used in Statistical Analysis

Couple	Happiness		Commitment		Justice Score (MMS)		Moral Type		Responsibility (RMS)		Valuing Marriage	
	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife(MMS)	Husband(MMS)	Wife	Husband	Wife(RMS)	Husband	Wife	Husband
1	11	13	5	5	3/4(368)	3/4(350)	A	A	3(285)	2/3(266)	3(300)	3(300)
2	8	8	3	3	3/4(333)	3/4(327)	B	A	3(303)	2/3(254)	2(200)	2(200)
3	8	12	5	3	3(269)	4(378)	A	B	3/4(330)	4(393)	4(400)	3(300)
4	12	12	5	5	2/3(289)	2/3(282)	B	A	3(306)	2/3(267)	2(200)	2(200)
5	8	11	5	4	4(397)	5(487)	B	B	3/4(341)	3/4(379)	4(400)	3(300)
6	12	12	5	5	3(323)	3/4(360)	B	A	3(300)	3/4(337)	3/4(350)	3(300)
7	12	11	5	5	3(323)	3/4(369)	A	A	3(317)	2/3(270)	3(300)	3(300)
8	12	12	5	5	3(307)	3/4(333)	A	B	3(302)	3(311)	3(300)	3(300)
9	12	11	5	5	4/5(446)	4/5(445)	B	B	4(400)	4(392)	4(400)	4(400)
10	12	12	5	3	3/4(367)	4(402)	A	B	3/4(342)	3/4(341)	4(400)	3(300)
11	12	12	5	3	3(303)	3(322)	A	A	3(293)	3/4(336)	3(300)	3(300)
12	11	10	5	5	3/4(375)	3/4(371)	B	B	3(292)	3/4(324)	3(300)	3(300)
13	12	12	4	5	3/4(347)	3/4(360)	A	A	3/4(333)	3/4(326)	3(300)	2(200)
14	12	8	3	3	3(292)	3(306)	B	A	2/3(259)	3(303)	2(200	2(200)
15	12	12	5	5	3(315)	3/4(328)	B	A	3/4(326)	3(305)	3/4(350)	2(200)
Total	166	168	70	64	4754	5420	7 A	9 A	4729	4804	4700	4100
Mean	11.1	11.2	4.7	4.3	317	361	8 B	6 B	315	320	313	273