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Self-Disclosure, Value Consensus, Sex Drive, and Person Perception in Engaged Couples

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SELF-DISCLOSURE, VALUE CONSENSUS, SEX DRIVE, AND PERSON PERCEPTION IN ENGAGED COUPLES

by

Robert W. Cavanagh

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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VITA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The psychological study of intimate relationships, courtship, marital choice, and the ingredients of successful marriages is a relatively recent phenomenon. For a long time, these were not considered appropriate areas for investigation because they were seen as too personal or too complex or because of a certain mystique surrounding them. There have been objections that love cannot be quantified and that there is no accounting for why two people are "right" for each other. People explained selection of a spouse by citing in one instance that "birds of a feather flock together." While in another case, they noted how "opposites attract" (Murstein, 1976). The apparent contradiction between these explanations was left unresolved. This state of affairs led Harlow to write in 1958; "So far as love or affection is concerned, psychologists have failed in their mission. The little we know about love does not transcend simple observation, and the little we write about it has been written better by poets and novelists" (1958, p. 673). The situation also prompted Bernard Murstein to formulate "Murstein's Law": "The amount of research devoted to a topic on human behavior is inversely related to its importance and interest (to mankind)" (1971b, p. 75). At a time when divorce rates are soaring, the
institution of marriage is described as moribund, and attitudes toward sex roles are in flux, the last decade has finally seen the beginning of serious research interest in the areas of love, courtship, and marriage.

The focus of the present study is on certain aspects of mutual communication and perception in engaged couples. This study fits into the broad area of mate selection research. Previous research with premarital dyads has frequently considered a wide variety of dating couples within a single sample. Couples who have had only a few dates have been examined along with couples who have been "going steady" for years, or couples who are going together have been studied together with formally engaged or married couples. This has often led to ambiguity as to what stage of courtship couples were going through. The present research will consider only formally engaged couples so that its findings may be more clearly related to developmental models of mate selection. The specific areas to be examined are couples' mutual self-disclosure, their perceptions of their own and their partners' marriage-related values and self-concepts, and the relationship between reported male sex drive and these other major variables.

The self-disclosure process figures prominently in several developmental theories of mate selection and dyad formation. However, it has been little studied in pre-
marital couples and never in engaged couples. In the present study, self-disclosure will be explored from the vantage point of sex differences, reciprocity, and its relationship to couples' accurate knowledge of each other's values and self-concepts.

Dating couples' consensus on marriage-related values has been explored in several previous studies. However, only actual value consensus has been considered. This study will compare couples' perceived consensus with their actual consensus. Likewise, couples' perceived similarity in self-concept will be compared with their actual similarity.

The role of sex drive in the mate selection process has been almost completely ignored in previous research. Expanding on an earlier finding, the present study will examine the relationship between reported male sex drive and the amount of self-disclosure within couples and the accuracy of their knowledge of each other's values and self-concepts.

In summary then, the present study addresses questions such as these: By the time a couple has made a firm commitment to marry, has an ongoing process of mutual self-disclosure developed? Is there a corresponding knowledge of each other's values and self-concepts? Or is there evidence that couples engage in a process of ignoring their
differences, maintaining a false belief that they share similar values and have similar personalities? And how does the strength of reported male sex drive relate to the self-disclosure process and to the accuracy of partners' knowledge of each other?
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Sociocultural Findings on Mate Selection

A major contribution to our present knowledge of mate selection has come from sociology. There is, for example, impressive evidence supporting a theory of homogamy in mate selection as regards sociocultural variables. Research has repeatedly shown a strong tendency for people to marry others who are the same or similar in race, religion, socioeconomic status, education and age (see Burchinal, 1964; Burgess & Wallin, 1953; Hollingshead, 1968; Kerckhoff, 1974). Sociologists have suggested that external pressures toward marriage serve as something of a "conveyor belt" for dating couples (Ryder, Kafka, & Olson, 1971). Once a relationship has reached a certain point, it requires considerable courage to stop the inexorable drift toward matrimony. For many young adults there remains a stigma, though perhaps less severe than a decade ago, about being single beyond a certain age. It is expected that one will "fall in love" and marry.

Clearly, then, there are powerful cultural and social influences at work in the courtship process and in mate selection. A number of psychological factors have also been proposed as important determinants of marital choice. These will be reviewed in the sections to follow.
Freud (1950, 1955) emphasized male idealization of women as the central process in mate selection. The male's repressed libidinal impulse is projected as idealization onto the woman he loves. He tends to overestimate the woman, endowing her with characteristics above and beyond what an objective assessment would warrant. In many instances, the loved one serves as a substitute for some unattained ego ideal of the lover. The beloved is perceived as possessing perfections which the lover himself has striven to reach. Thus, the other offers an indirect means by which the lover may satisfy his own narcissism. Similarly, an individual is drawn to another who can aid him to become what he is unconsciously seeking to be. For example, a masochist needs a sadist, and a nurturant person needs a receptive partner.

Freud viewed women in quite a different light. Their love is likely to be cooler and more detached. However, there are exceptions; and presumably for those with a large capacity for object-love, the same process of idealization may occur.

Idealization, in Freudian theory, does not generally survive a continuing sexual relationship. Once the repressed sexual impulse is actually gratified, the idealized perception of the other as the perfect mother-image
may be tainted. Thus the woman may be associated with all the negative attributes of someone of low morality, even of a prostitute.

Waller (1938) expanded on Freud's notions of idealization. He defined idealization as the process of building up a complete picture of another person in one's own imagination, a picture for which sensory data are absent or to which they are definitely contradictory . . . One builds up an almost completely unreal picture of a person which he calls by the name of a real person and vainly imagines to be like that person, but in fact the only authentic thing in the picture is the emotion which one feels toward it (p. 200).

At first, the members of a couple see each other more or less objectively. As the relationship develops, sexual desire increases and so does the need for idealization. Each senses the other's idealization and seeks to perpetuate it. Each then displays only a limited segment of himself in an effort to live up to the image he thinks the other has of him. This mutual idealizing grows during the courtship but decreases sharply with marriage, familiarity, and sexual relations.

The massive study of several hundred engaged couples by Burgess and Wallin (1953), conducted during the late 1930s and early 1940s, provided much evidence against the theories of Freud and Waller. Subjects were white and middle class; most were college educated and in their middle 20s. The authors found that the average couple in
their sample had known each other for almost four years, had dated for two and a half years, and had been engaged for over a year. Most reported that they had been good friends before they began dating seriously. Almost half of the couples had had premarital sex, but this had little effect on either their engagement success or their reported happiness three to five years after marriage. One possible bit of support for the views of Freud and Waller was the finding that men, who had had premarital sex with their partners, listed more desired changes in their partners.

A cross-sectional study tested Waller's hypothesis that individuals would become increasingly idealistic about their dating partners as the relationship moved from casual to moderate to serious involvement (Pollis, 1959). Members of dating couples rated each other on 17 personality characteristics. The results were the reverse of those predicted. Males had significantly higher idealization scores in the casual stage than in the later stages. A trend in the same direction was found for females. Also in contrast to the theories of Freud and Waller was Pollis' finding that females idealized their partners more than males did in both the moderate and serious involvement stages.

In their study of couples who were seriously considering marriage, Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) employed both cross-sectional and longitudinal methods. Using the second
part of Farber's (1957) Index of Consensus, they found that members of short-term couples (dating less than 18 months) rated their partners' personality characteristics in a more idealized way than did members of long-term couples (dating more than 18 months). A similar finding was that the person perception scores of the short-term couples tended to become more negative during the seven-month follow-up.

In a related study Hall and Taylor (1976) had members of married couples rate self, spouse, a friend, and an acquaintance on an adjective checklist, as well as on an attribution exercise regarding positive and negative behaviors. On both parts of the study, self and spouse ratings were significantly more favorable than ratings of friends and acquaintances. Moreover, on the adjective checklist, the vast majority of subjects rated their spouses more favorably than they rated themselves. Similarly, in over 80 percent of the cases, subjects were rated higher by their spouses than by themselves. No differences were found related to the length of time (from six months to 12 years) that couples had been married. The authors interpreted these results as strong evidence that one's perception of one's spouse is highly idealized, through a mutual pattern of biased causal attributions.

In summary, the idealization theories of Freud and Waller have failed to find empirical support. Nonetheless,
as the findings of Hall and Taylor suggest, for many couples idealization of one's partner may continue to play an important role through the courtship period and on into marriage.

Winch's Theory of Complementary Needs

In 1954, Robert Winch's theory of complementary needs was formally published. This was the first time a theory of mate selection had been presented with accompanying data testing the theory. Winch accepted sociocultural homogamy as a very potent influence but only as a preliminary screening to determine a "field of eligibles." The actual selection of a partner from this field was based on complementary needs, that is, an individual is chosen who seems most likely to provide maximum gratification of one's needs. The pattern of need gratification for a couple is complementary rather than similar. He posited two types of complementarity. In one type, the members of the couple exhibit the same need but at two very different levels of intensity, such as when a highly dominant person is attracted to a person who has a very low need to dominate others. In the other type, they have different needs which are reciprocally gratified, such as when a highly nurturant person and a highly succorant person are attracted to each other. Statistically significant but rather weak support was found for the theory, even after frequent reworking of the data (Winch, Ktsanes, & Ktsanes, 1954; Winch, 1958). A large number of studies were conducted during the ensuing homo-

Winch (1968) continued to defend his theory, claiming that most of the studies which failed to provide support were not really testing his theory. He has also modified his theory and now sees a combination of complementarity (a psychological theory) and role theory (a sociological theory) as the best basis for understanding marital choice. The three dimensions in which he sees complementarity most involved are: nurturance/receptivity, dominance/submissiveness, and achievement/vicariousness. Murstein has concluded that the original theory of complementary needs is "no longer of much impact in theoretical thinking regarding marital choice" (1967, p. 72). However, he notes the major contribution of Winch, who had no earlier model to improve on and who stimulated considerable research.

**Developmental Theories**

In their review of the literature on the premarital dyad in the sixties, Moss, Apolonio, and Jensen (1971) noted that one of the most significant current trends in the conceptualization of mate selection is the emergence of developmental theories.
These theories have generally attempted to integrate previous findings and provide a framework in which various factors can be seen to operate at different stages of courtship in influencing the development of a premarital dyadic relationship (Hutton, 1974, p. 49).

Some of these theorists (Bolton, 1961; Reiss, 1960) rejected the notion that there is just one process by which all persons go about choosing a spouse. They have attempted to delineate several very different processes.

Based on his review of the literature and numerous interviews with students, Reiss (1960) developed a "wheel theory" of the heterosexual love relationship. He proposed that four sequential processes are involved in these relationships: rapport, self-revelation, development of mutual dependencies, and personality need fulfillment. The wheel can continue to turn, with ever increasing rapport, self-revelation, and so on. However, the wheel can also "unwind," with weakening need fulfillment leading to less dependency, self-revelation, and rapport. He also suggested that there are four types of "love" or heterosexual primary relationships: (1) ultra-romantic love at first sight; (2) sexual love, where the sexual factor is dominant; (3) rational love, where the intellectual appraisal of the relationship is very important, and (4) several other mixed varieties. Reiss believed that the wheel theory offers a broad over-all conception which can encompass all types of heterosexual love and can incorporate both homogamy and complementary needs theory.
In developing his theory, Bolton (1961) abandoned the term "mate selection" in order to emphasize the development of a love relationship. Rather than looking at the traits or needs of the individual members of a couple, he focused on the transactions between individuals as the key determinants in a relationship. Based on intensive interviews with 20 recently married couples, he described five types of developmental process: personality meshing, identity clarification, relationship-centered, intrapersonal-centered, and expediency-centered. Each of these types accounted for the relationship development for several of the couples but not for the others. Indeed, he found such great differences between couples that he concluded: "A basic difficulty of almost all mate selection studies is the attempt to treat, as a homogeneous class, all relations culminating in marriage" (p. 237). Bolton also noted the very important part played by expediency (e.g., to escape one's parents), the pressure of peers once the relationship has become public, and the need to resolve identity crises.

In their theory Rapoport (1963) and Rapoport and Rapoport (1965) suggested that couples go through a series of both intrapersonal and interpersonal tasks in the process of courtship. The three main intrapersonal tasks, which represent movement from self-orientation to mutuality, are: preparation for the new role of husband or wife, disengagement from relationships which interfere with the marriage
relationship, and awareness and acceptance of the accommodations which have to be made in getting married. Nine interpersonal tasks are listed, including the following:

(1) establishing an identity as a couple; (2) developing a mutually satisfactory sexual adjustment for the engagement period; (3) developing a mutually satisfactory orientation to family planning; (4) establishing a mutually satisfactory mode of communication; (5) establishing satisfactory relations with others; (6) developing a mutually satisfactory work pattern; (7) developing a mutually satisfactory leisure pattern; (8) developing a mutually satisfactory plan for the wedding and early marriage; (9) establishing a mutually satisfactory decision-making pattern (1965, p.390).

The authors view the accomplishment of these tasks as essential for the successful continuance of the premarital and marital relationship. However, no additional information is given regarding the way couples proceed through this sequence.

Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) found experimental support for a developmental theory of mate selection in their longitudinal study of seriously dating college couples. They used Farber's (1957) Index of Consensus as a measure of value consensus and Schutz's (1958) FIRO scales as a measure of need complementarity. The results indicated that value consensus was significantly related to progress toward a permanent relationship only in short-term couples (dating less than 18 months). Significant complementarity was found on the FIRO "control" and "inclusion" scales, but only in long-term couples. By way of interpretation, the authors suggested that a series of filtering factors operate in
marital choice, with homogamy on social status variables, then consensus on values, and finally need complementarity becoming successively important as the relationship develops. They attribute the delay in the effectiveness of the complementarity factor to both the stylized boy-girl role relationship and the idealization of the loved one which occur in the early stages of a relationship. In a later study, Levinger, Senn and Jorgenson (1970) used the same procedures and instruments as Kerckhoff and Davis but failed to confirm any of the previous findings.

Two additional developmental theories—those of Murstein and Lewis—will be considered at length in the sections to follow.

**Murstein's Stimulus-Value-Role Theory**

Murstein's (1971b, 1976) Stimulus-Value-Role (SVR) Theory is a relatively complex theory of the development of dyadic relationships. It is in many respects a compendium of earlier theories, with additional elements that are unique. Regarding sequence, it is a modified "successive filters" theory; at each stage, a social exchange theory; and for teleology, a hedonistic theory. As a modified or partial successive filters theory, SVR is an extension and elaboration of Kerckhoff and Davis's (1962) filter theory. Murstein, however, has added the Stimulus Stage in an attempt to account for the initial attraction process. He
has also de-emphasized the filter aspects somewhat because he sees it as an incomplete filter at best. Stimulus, value, and role variables are "operative during the entire course of courtship, but they are maximally influential at different stages . . ." (1976, p. 107).

From a transactional point of view, SVR is a social exchange theory. It proposes that, in a relatively free choice situation, attraction and interaction at any given point of time depend on the exchange value of the assets and liabilities each person brings to the situation. Viewed teleologically from the individual's standpoint, SVR is a hedonistic reinforcement theory. Thus it emphasizes the individual's efforts to maximize the rewards and minimize the costs associated with the relationship.

SVR theory's first stage, the Stimulus Stage, involves all the perceptions of the other which do not necessitate any kind of meaningful interaction. If there is not sufficient reinforcement of one's value system at this stage, it is likely that no further contact will be sought and the other's desirable qualities might never become known. During this stage the individual's perception of himself is compared to his perception of the other. "Premarital bargaining" takes place, as the two individuals weigh the benefits versus the costs of the relationship and assess their respective liabilities and assets. Murstein postulates
that the weighted pool of stimulus attractions that each possesses for the other will be approximately equal if the individuals are to progress to the next stage.

In the Value Comparison Stage, verbal interaction occurs regarding religion, politics, goals, attitudes toward men and women, work, and so on. The individuals discover similar attitudes and values which provide social validation and lead to liking based on the expectation of being liked.

The couple exhibits increasingly larger areas of what they think and feel. They evaluate their comfortableness, the acceptance of what they reveal, and the effect of their disclosure on their partner's behavior. In a successful relationship, the partner evinces acceptance of the values of the individual and discloses his own values (1976, p. 124).

While noting a number of exceptions and mediating variables, Murstein proposes that consensus on the important values intrinsic to the relationship is generally reached.

In the Role Stage the focus is on the ability of the members of the couple to function in desired roles. This shift in emphasis occurs as the relationship moves from an expression of attraction, liking, and interest toward the possibility of a commitment. Emphasis is more on the relationship itself and on questions of depth of feeling for the other, desire for permanency, and accuracy in predicting the feelings and perceptions of the other. A primary feature of this stage is the process of self-evaluation and
evaluation of one's partner. The individual compares his perception of his own functioning with the roles he envisions for himself as a married person. Similarly, he evaluates his perceptions of his prospective partner's behavior as they relate to the roles he sees as important for a spouse. According to Murstein, this is the most complex of the stages because individuals seem to be constantly adding new roles or modifying them. Also, personal, intimate behaviors, such as those involved in key marriage roles, are revealed much more slowly than are values, which can be expressed in more abstract or general terms. In his research, Murstein has limited his role stage analysis to three broad areas: (1) perceived role compatibility; (2) personal adequacy (for example, moodiness, ability to make decisions, degree of self-esteem and security, and neuroticism), and (3) sexual compatibility.

Murstein has done considerable research to test hypotheses derived from his theory. His subjects were two large samples (N = 98 and 99 respectively) and one small sample (n = 19) of seriously dating college couples who received stipends for their participation. On the average, partners had known each other for just under two years. His data have provided support primarily for the exchange part of his theory. Physical attractiveness was used as a Stimulus Stage variable. Members of these couples were found to be significantly similar in attractiveness, using both their
self-ratings and photo ratings by judges. Significant value consensus was found within couples for two of the three groups, using a modified form of Farber's (1957) Index of Consensus. Numerous Role Stage variables were also examined in the light of the equity of exchange principle. Partners showed significant similarity in (1) their ability to predict each other's self and ideal-self concepts; (2) their tendency to confirm each other's self-concept; (3) their levels of self-acceptance (significant in one of two groups); (4) their levels of neuroticism based on MMPI profiles (significant in one of three groups), and (5) their levels of satisfaction with one another (significant in one of two groups).

Sequence aspects of the theory were examined based on the amount of "courtship progress" that couples reported at six-month follow-up. Support was found to be mixed. Equity of partner satisfaction, accuracy in predicting the partner's self and ideal-self, and equity in self-evaluation of physical attractiveness were each found to be predictive of courtship progress for one of the groups studied, but not for another. Using the combined perceptions of both members of the couple, perceived role compatibility was found to be significantly related to courtship progress.

A study by Hutton (1974) provided support for Murstein's theory, particularly the equity of exchange prin-
ciple. Subjects were 54 dating or engaged couples; one member of each couple was a student in an introductory psychology class. Each subject completed a modified form of the Leary Interpersonal Checklist (ICL), the Allport-Vernon-Lindsey Scale of Values, and two questionnaires to measure "self-differentiation." Using self/ideal-self discrepancy scores on the ICL as a measure of self-esteem, Hutton found, as predicted, a significant similarity between partners' self-esteem scores (r = .24, p < .05). She also had hypothesized, based on Murstein's inclusion of self-acceptance as a Role Stage variable, that long-term couples (dating for over 18 months) would be more similar than short-term couples (dating less than 18 months). This prediction was strongly confirmed. Self-esteem scores of long-term partners were significantly correlated (r = .45, p < .01), but those of short-term partners were unrelated (r = -.08). Hutton also found significant positive correlations between partners' scores on four (economic, artistic, political, and religious) of the six value categories on the Allport-Vernon-Lindsey Scale of Values. No support was found for the prediction that short-term partners would be more similar in values than long-term partners. On the two self-differentiation questionnaires, partners again emerged as significantly similar (r = .39, p < .01, and r = .43, p < .001, respectively).

Hutton's hypotheses concerning courtship progress were not strongly supported. Neither similarity in self-
esteem nor similarity in values was related to courtship progress at three-month follow-up. Similarity in self-differentiation, however, was found to be positively correlated with courtship progress when all couples were considered ($r = .23, p < .05$), but no significant difference between long-term and short-term couples was found. Thus, Hutton's study provides consistent support for equity between partners but little support for equity as a predictor of courtship progress.

Rubin and Levinger (1974) criticized Murstein's research on several scores. While maintaining that SVR theory seems quite reasonable, they asserted that Murstein's data fail to offer any evidence to support his three-stage sequence. Rather, they argue, any of his findings pertaining to variables from a particular stage could be presumed to be operating just as saliently at a different stage. Another criticism is that SVR's Role Stage variables include such diverse elements that it is difficult to see any real connection among them. Finally, they note Murstein's use of partners' perceptions of one another rather than objective matching or role fit. They claim that a more parsimonious explanation of several of his findings is that there is a response bias underlying the same person's reports of self and partner.

In direct response to Rubin and Levinger's article,
Murstein (1974) expressed agreement with their contention that his data fail to support the sequence portion of SVR theory. However, the fact that they make no mention of the considerable data supporting the exchange principle is interpreted by Murstein as their tacit agreement with his findings in this important area. As for the possibility of a response bias in subjects' perceptions of self and partner, he states that "the subject's perceptual distortions, biased perceptions if you will, often correlate significantly with movement towards marriage, and with marital satisfaction" (p. 233).

Lewis's Theory of Premarital Dyadic Formation

Based in part on the works of Reiss (1960) Bolton (1961), Kerckhoff and Davis (1962), and the Rapoports (1965), Lewis (1973) formulated his developmental framework for premarital dyadic formation (PDF). He chose this theoretical approach rather than a general theory of mate selection because the final, direct stimulus for selecting a particular mate may be largely due to chance, situational and idiosyncratic factors, or particularistic norms. For instance, expediencies such as peer or family pressures to marry at a certain point in time, impending graduation from college, the death of a parent, an identity crisis, or some other unpredictable event may be more instrumental in crystallizing an actual marriage commitment than any general explanatory variable that yet has been identified (p. 16).

The PDF framework consists of a sequence of six processes which Lewis believes most middle-class American couples
experience in their dating and courtship periods. The processes are as follows:

1. the process of perceiving similarities in each other's sociocultural backgrounds, values, interests, and personality;

2. the process of achieving pair rapport, as shown in ease of communication, positive evaluations of the other, satisfaction with pair relationships, and validation of self by the other;

3. the process of achieving openness between partners through a mutual self-disclosure;

4. the process of achieving role-taking accuracy;

5. the process of achieving interpersonal role-fit, as shown by the couple's observed similarity of personalities, role complementarity, and need complementarity;

6. the process of achieving dyadic crystallization, as shown by the couple's progressive involvement, their functioning as a dyad, boundary establishment, commitment to each other, and identity as a couple.

Lewis assumes that the outcome of any given process depends on the successful achievement by couples of the antecedent process. A second assumption is that a particular process will be more relevant at one stage of the relationship than at another.

Lewis's theory has been criticized on three major
points: (1) it is a mere checklist; (2) no rationale is given for the sequence of the six processes (e.g., why the perception of similarities should come before rather than after the induction of mutual self-disclosure), and (3) no information is given as to when one process ends and the next begins (Murstein, 1976; Rubin & Levinger, 1974).

In a two-year longitudinal study, Lewis (1973) tested his theory. He collected questionnaire data from 173 dating couples in which at least one partner was a university student. Two years later 314 of the 346 subjects were reached by phone for follow-up. Of the 173 couples, 58 had broken up; the mean number of months since breakup was 21. Lengthy questionnaires, which included all the original measures and several new instruments, were mailed out to all subjects who had been re-contacted. Those who had broken up were told to answer in terms of the month prior to the separation. A total of 91 couples (53 percent of the original sample) completed follow-up questionnaires; 30 of these couples had ended their relationship. Lewis found that continuing couples scored significantly higher on many tasks representing the six processes than did dissolved couples. He also interpreted his results as confirming his prediction that success on a given process at the first testing was significantly related to success on the succeeding process at follow-up. Lewis concluded that at least some support was found for the salience of five
(of six) pair processes for the progress of dyadic relationships.

Lewis's research has received severe criticism from both Murstein (1976) and Rubin and Levinger (1974). These authors maintained that Lewis's findings can be accounted for by the simple explanation that continuing couples scored higher than dissolved couples across all the processes, both on initial testing and at follow-up. This is consistent with Lewis's theory but of little relevance, since converse analyses would likely show that later processes were also predictive of success on early processes. Lewis reports no converse analyses to refute this rival hypothesis. Another criticism is that the dissolved couples were tested long after their relationship had broken up. The validity of these retrospective reports is suspect. The critics also questioned Lewis's assertion that the attrition rate (47 percent) did not influence the longitudinal analyses. Murstein concluded that Lewis's data did not adequately test his theory. Rubin and Levinger agreed, stating that Lewis failed to demonstrate any particular sequential relationship between variables. They added that Lewis's failure to report how long his couples had been going together further confuses any attempt to interpret his findings.
Perceived Versus Actual Similarities in Self-Concept and Values

As was noted earlier, Winch's theory of complementary needs ushered in a homogamy-complementarity controversy that lasted the better part of two decades. Hutton (1974) and Murstein (1976) reached the same conclusion based on their reviews of the literature: the vast majority of studies failed to support complementarity; several provided moderate support for homogamy, and many supported neither theory. A number of researchers sought to move beyond the homogamy-complementarity dichotomy by emphasizing the importance of partners' perceived similarities rather than their actual similarities in attitudes, values, and personality characteristics. In a study of young married couples, Byrne and Blalock (1963) found that husbands' and wives' political views were significantly but only moderately related (correlations in the .30s and .40s). However, their perceived similarity, based on predictions of their spouses' responses, was much greater (correlations ranging from .69 to .89). The authors' interpretation of these results was that couples' misperceptions served to increase consensual validation and the presumption of greater liking because of shared viewpoints.

Trost (1967) found that members of engaged and newly married couples perceived significantly greater similarity in personality characteristics (e.g., religiosity, anomie tendencies, and rigidity) than was actually present, even
on traits where significant homogamy existed. One of Udry's (1963) major findings in his study of engaged and married couples was that partners project their own traits onto each other to a substantial degree. This was especially true among engaged couples. Karp, Jackson and Lester (1970) investigated the perceptions of engaged women. They found that all 50 subjects rated themselves and their fiancés as more similar than chance on a 54-item adjective checklist. Furthermore, as predicted, on items in which there was a discrepancy between self and ideal-self ratings, subjects tended to see their fiancés as like the ideal-self. The authors concluded that women seek out partners whom they see as similar to themselves but who also are seen as having characteristics which they lack and would like to possess.

In testing his SVR theory of mate selection, Murstein (1976) has extensively studied the perceptions of members of seriously dating couples; using self, ideal-self, partner, and ideal-spouse ratings. Among his findings were that subjects perceived their partners' "role compatibility" (the relationship between the intraperceptual ratings of partner and ideal-spouse) to be much greater than the actual compatibility (interperceptual ratings which compare one partner's self-rating with the other's rating of the ideal-spouse). The correlations for perceived role compatibility were .63 for women, .60 for men; the correlations for actual
compatibility were .20 and .17 for women and men respectively. In another part of his study, Murstein found that subjects' intraperceptual ratings of physical attractiveness (i.e., one's self-rating compared to one's rating of his partner) were more highly correlated (.50 for men, .45 for women) than judges' ratings (.38) and partners' self-ratings (.30).

Several studies have found significant similarity in the values held by members of dating couples (Hutton, 1974; Schellenberg, 1960; Schooley, 1936). Specifically regarding marriage-related values, however, the results have been mixed. Kerckhoff and Davis (1962), using Farber's (1957) Index of Consensus, found significant similarity in marriage values. With the same instrument, Levinger, Senn, and Jorgenson (1970) had non-significant results. With his first two samples of dating couples, Murstein (1976) found value consensus, using a slightly modified form of Farber's test. With a similar third sample, the findings were not significant. It is noteworthy that no researcher has compared perceived similarity in values with actual similarity, although an early investigation of couples' common interests revealed significant similarity in perceived interests but not in actual interests (Benson, 1955).

Self-Disclosure

Briefly the literature pertaining to sex differences
in self-disclosure will be reviewed, followed by a review of the literature on self-disclosure in couples. Numerous studies have found that it is the common belief, among both males and females, that women are more emotionally expressive, demonstrative, and relationship-oriented than men (Bateman, 1977). Theoreticians have also tended to view the sexes as quite different in this area. Parsons and Bales (1955) proposed that men were on the "instrumental" axis in their family role, while women were on the "expressive" axis. Similarly, Bakan (1966) wrote of an "agency-communion" continuum. Generally speaking, men are found closer to the agency end of the continuum, women closer to the communion end.

In their pioneering research, Jourard and Lasakow (1958) found that females reported higher self-disclosure scores than males. A large number of replication studies had similar results, but several others found no sex differences (Bateman, 1977). Cozby (1973) suggested that this was due to the use of different measures and to the variability of the items within these measures. He encouraged future researchers to specify more clearly the types of disclosure items and situations they were investigating rather than relying on global self-disclosure measures.

After reviewing the literature, Bateman (1977) concluded that "one of the most consistent findings of the self-
disclosure research has been the existence of a norm of disclosure reciprocity" (p. 26). Described as the "dyadic effect" (Jourard, 1971), reciprocity has been found for both the amount and the intimacy of self-disclosure. For example, in a laboratory study Worthy, Gary, and Kahn (1969) reported that subjects disclosed more intimate information to those they liked. After mutual self-disclosure, liking between subjects increased in relation to the intimacy of the disclosure. He also found that the more intimate the information that subjects received, the more intimate they were in their own disclosures. A caution, however, has been given by Chaikin and Derlega (1974). There is not perfect reciprocity. Subjects have tended to be somewhat less intimate than confederates when high intimacy levels are reached.

There has been some controversy regarding whether or not reciprocity of self-disclosure operates in married couples. Research on sex differences leads to the expectation that husbands and wives will differ in self-disclosure. On the other hand, the findings on reciprocity suggest that there will be a high level of mutual self-disclosure in a relationship as intimate as marriage. The reported growth in the number of androgynous men and women during the past decade would also lead to a prediction of no sex differences in self-disclosure between spouses (Bate-}


In research studies which have used general measures of self-disclosure, results have been mixed. Kenkel (1957), Farber (1957), and Hendrick (1980) found husbands and wives differing in disclosure along traditional lines. However, other studies have found no sex differences in married couples' self-disclosure (Navran, 1967; Shapiro & Swensen, 1969).

A number of researchers have investigated specific areas of disclosure between spouses. Katz, Goldston, Cohen, and Stucker (1963) made a distinction between anxiety-related items and other items of self-disclosure. The results indicated that wives confided more than their husbands on the anxiety items, while no differences were found on the other items. Cutler and Dyer (1965) investigated communication processes in young married couples when their expectations were violated. They found that both husbands and wives tended to take a wait-and-see approach in such circumstances. However, wives reported that more often they eventually talked about their violated expectations in the hopes of correcting the situation. Levinger (1968) had husbands and wives rank their spouses' real and ideal performance on certain tasks and in social-emotional areas. He found general support for his position that both members of the couple are task specialists and that they are equally concerned with primarily social-emotional goals. On one of the six social-emotional items, however, there was signifi-
cant inequality. Wives were seen as talking more about their feelings when bothered or upset.

Two studies have used a "dual perspective" methodology in studying self-disclosure between spouses. Levinger and Senn (1967) had husbands and wives rate both their own disclosure output and the input received from their spouses on nine different communication topics. They further distinguished between pleasant and unpleasant feelings for each topic. No sex differences were reported for disclosure output, but the input received from wives was significantly higher than that from husbands, for both pleasant and unpleasant feelings.

Bateman (1977) developed a disclosure questionnaire with one section on emotions and another on relationship concerns. He used a dual perspective approach but went beyond Levinger and Senn by considering within-sex comparisons in addition to between-sex comparisons. As predicted, (1) wives reported higher self-disclosure output for both emotions and relationship concerns; (2) husbands reported higher input from their wives, than did wives from husbands, for the emotions category; (3) in within-sex comparisons, husbands reported more disclosure received than given for the emotions category; (4) no differences were found (as predicted) between husbands' ratings for output and wives' ratings for input, nor between wives' ratings for output
and husbands' ratings for input. Contrary to predictions, wives did not report lower input than did husbands for relationship concerns; nor did they, on the within-sex comparisons, report higher disclosure given than received for relationship concerns. The author concluded that husbands and wives are in agreement that husbands disclose less for the emotions category. But for relationship concerns, the sexes have different perspectives; husbands think they disclose less, but wives see no difference.

Two studies have investigated self-disclosure in dating couples. Heiss (1962) examined couples' discussion patterns and found support for his hypotheses that (1) men would dominate discussions; (2) women would specialize in social-emotional areas and in giving positive reactions, and (3) this traditional instrumental-expressive role pattern would be more prevalent in casually dating couples than in seriously dating and engaged couples.

In an important recent study of 231 college student dating couples (dating for an average of eight months), Rubin, Hill, Peplau, and Dunkel-Schetter (1980) found evidence of the impact of both traditional sex roles and an "ethic of openness." Couples rated themselves and their partners on 17 items, each of which represented a different self-disclosure topic. Following the format of Jourard, a 0-to-2 scale was used to indicate no disclosure, moderate
disclosure, or full disclosure. Couples were also placed in traditional, moderate, or egalitarian groups based on their responses to a 10-statement sex-role attitude scale. The authors found that high proportions of both men and women reported full disclosure in almost all areas. There were no sex differences in total self-disclosure, and both men and women tended to report their own self-disclosure as fuller than their partner's. However, when the 17 disclosure areas were examined individually, a traditional pattern of sex differences emerged. Women disclosed more than men in five areas: feelings toward parents, feelings toward closest same-sexed friends, feelings about classes or work, greatest fears, and accomplishments at school or work. Men disclosed more regarding their political views, things they were most proud of, and things they liked about their partner.

Rubin, et al., also investigated actual versus perceived reciprocity in self-disclosure. For total disclosure, a correlation of .48 was found between male and female self-reports of disclosure given (actual reciprocity). Within-subjects correlations between disclosure given and received were .77 for women and .75 for men (perceived reciprocity). The authors concluded that there is a substantial degree of reciprocity or matching in the degree to which partners disclose themselves. At the same time, there is a strong tendency for both males and females to over-
estimate the degree to which self-disclosure is reciprocal.

Other important findings from the Rubin, et al., study were that (1) egalitarian couples reported fuller self-disclosure than did moderate or traditional couples; (2) contrary to their prediction, women did not report more disclosure than men in traditional couples, and (3) there was a significant but rather weak tendency toward fuller disclosure in long-term couples than in short-term couples.

In summary, there are somewhat inconsistent results regarding sex differences in couples when self-disclosure has been studied in general terms. In some studies significant sex differences have been found but not in others. When differences have emerged, they have invariably found women higher in self-disclosure than men. When anxiety and emotion-related areas have been specified, consistent sex differences have been found both in married and dating couples, with women disclosing significantly more than men. This support for sex differences, however, does not necessarily rule out the operation of a reciprocity principle, as is evident in the results of Rubin, et al. The present study considers self-disclosure in engaged couples in the intimate disclosure areas of anxiety and emotions. It predicts that there will be sex differences in self-disclosure, but at the same time that there will be significant similarity or equity in disclosure within couples.
Sex Drive

Murstein's SVR theory is the only theory of mate selection that includes sex among its important variables (Murstein, 1976). He explored the relationship between couples' sex drive and the accuracy of their perceptions of each other. As predicted, he found that dating couples in which the male reported a relatively low sex drive (based on reported frequency of orgasm) were more accurate in predicting each other's responses on the Marital Expectations Test. This test focuses on heterosexual interpersonal relationships and on factors influencing marital choice. Murstein also found, as hypothesized, that degree of reported sex drive in females did not influence couples' perceptual accuracy. He speculated that lower accuracy in high (male) sex drive couples may be due to "insensitivity caused by the imperiousness of the (male) sex drive" (p. 234). In the present study, Murstein's work will be expanded to include the relationship between male sex drive and the couples' degree of mutual self-disclosure and their accuracy in perceiving each other's marriage-related values and self-concepts.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are proposed:

1. There will be significant sex differences in self-disclosure on anxiety and emotion-related items, with women reporting greater amounts of disclosure than men. This
prediction is in accord with previously cited findings on self-disclosure in dating and married couples when personal or intimate disclosure areas were specified (Bateman, 1977; Rubin, et al., 1980).

2. **Within individual couples, there will be significant similarity or equity in self-disclosure between partners.** This prediction is based both on the consistent finding of reciprocity in the self-disclosure literature and on the equity of exchange principle in Murstein's SVR theory (Bateman, 1977; Jourard, 1971; Murstein, 1976; Rubin, et al., 1980).

3. **Couples' perceived consensus (similarity) on marriage-related values will be significantly greater than their actual consensus.** No previous study has considered perceived value consensus. Nonetheless, the hypothesis is in accord with a number of earlier findings that perceived similarity in interests, personality characteristics, and political views is greater than actual similarity (e.g., Trost, 1967; Udry, 1963). It is also based on Murstein's proposal that marriage-related values be considered a Role Stage variable. Therefore, the expectation of perceived role compatibility would lead to a prediction of perceived value consensus (Murstein, 1976).

4. **Couples' perceived similarity in self-concept will**
be significantly greater than their actual similarity. This prediction is again in accord with earlier findings, regarding dating and married couples, that perceived similarity will be greater than actual similarity in personality characteristics, etc. It also fits into Murstein's Role Stage expectation of perceived role compatibility.

5,6. **High self-disclosure couples will show greater accuracy in predicting their partners'** (5) **values and (6) self-concepts than will low self-disclosure couples.** These hypotheses are based primarily on the developmental theories of mate selection of both Lewis and Murstein. Both authors emphasize the ongoing process of self-revelation and increasing openness as the dating relationship progresses. They also specify the importance of accuracy in evaluating oneself and one's partner in the advanced stages of courtship (Lewis, 1973; Murstein, 1976).

7,8. **Couples in which the male reports a relatively low sex drive will show greater accuracy in predicting each other's** (7) **marriage-related values and (8) self-concepts than will couples in which the male reports a relatively high sex drive.** These predictions are based on Murstein's finding that low (male) sex drive couples were more accurate in their perceptions than were high sex drive couples (Murstein, 1976).

9. **Couples in which the male reports a relatively**
low sex drive will be higher in their mutual self-disclosure than will couples in which the male reports a relatively high sex drive. This hypothesis is based on Murstein's (1976) theoretical position that the male's more imperious sexual needs may result in his being less sensitive to the needs and desires of his partner. It is here proposed that one such need or desire is that for mutual self-disclosure.
Subjects

Subjects for this study were 70 formally engaged couples recruited from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago's "Pre-Cana Conferences." These conferences are designed to help prepare engaged couples for married life. Attendance at a Pre-Cana Conference is generally required by the Archdiocese for any couple wishing to be married in the Catholic Church. Several of these conferences are held every weekend throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. Usually between 25 to 50 couples attend each conference. The couples in the present study were recruited at four different conferences--one in Chicago and one each in a northern, western, and southern suburb of Chicago. Completed materials were received from 44.9 percent (70 out of 156) of those invited to participate. All 70 couples were included in the final analysis, although certain data from three couples had to be discarded because they were not completed correctly.

There were 21 couples (30 percent) with one Catholic partner and one non-Catholic partner; in the other 49 couples both members were Catholic. The vast majority of subjects were white (95 percent), with two Oriental couples, one Latino couple, and one White-Latino couple. On the average
partners had known each other for 45.1 months, had dated for 37.1 months, and had been engaged for 9.1 months. As Table 1 indicates, couples were generally in their mid-twenties. On the average, men were about two and a half years older than women. Subjects averaged between two and three years of college education, with men having slightly more schooling than women. The vast majority of subjects were working full-time; men on the average had worked approximately one and a half years longer than had women.

Materials

Marriage Value Inventory. This 11-item rank order checklist (Appendix A) is based on Farber's (1957) Index of Consensus and closely follows Murstein's (1976) modification of Farber's instrument. The wording of one item was slightly changed, and one item was added to Murstein's version of the measure. The order of Murstein's items was changed on a random basis because a pilot study suggested that his first several items were also the most socially desirable ones. To reduce the amount of time needed to complete the inventory, subjects were not required to rank order all 11 items. Instead, they were instructed to rank the three most important and the three least important values. In Part I couples were asked to rate their own values. In Part II they were to rate the values as they predicted their partners would rank them.
TABLE 1

SUBJECTS BY SEX, AGE, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>20-37</td>
<td>18-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Years of Education Completed</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>9-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Current Full-Time Students</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Full-Time Students</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Employed Full-Time</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Employed Full-Time</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Number of Months of Consecutive Full-Time Employment</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Self-Disclosure Questionnaire. Entitled "Communication" (Appendix B) in the present study, this 11-item scale was designed by Bateman (1977) to measure sex difference in disclosure in anxiety and emotion-related areas. In Part I subjects rate on a 1-to-7 scale how fully they have talked to their partners about each item. In Part II they rate how fully they think their partner has talked to them about each item.

In developing the scale, Bateman searched the existing literature looking for items that would be appropriate for two categories, disclosure of feelings and disclosure of relationship concerns. He relied heavily on the work of Taylor and Altman (1966) who compiled a battery of 671 disclosure items and then had two sets of judges (college students and sailors) scale the items for intimacy. Bateman selected 75 high intimacy items which also seemed to be topics of discussion in most marriage relationships. These 75 items were supplemented with a few relevant items designed by Bateman himself. This new set of items was then rated for intimacy by ten married graduate student couples. From their ratings 22 items were selected for inclusion in the final questionnaire. The 22-items were divided into two categories "emotions and feelings" and "our marriage relationship." The "emotions and feelings" section was chosen for use in the present study. This measure has only been used in Bateman's (1977) original study in which
consistent sex differences were found.

**Semantic Differential.** This measure, entitled "Rating Scale" in the present study (see Appendix C), contains 17 pairs of adjectives or phrases to be rated along a seven-point continuum. The first 12 items are from the three traditional semantic differential categories--evaluative, potency, and activity. The fourth category, which includes the final five items, was designed for the present study to tap a dependence-independence dimension. This latter category was also meant to be relatively free of a social desirability bias. To this end, four couples (two newly married, one engaged, and one seriously dating) rated 12 "independence" and 12 "dependence" adjectives or phrases on their social desirability. Five paired items were then formed such that (a) each pair was made up of characteristics that were rated as similar in degree of social desirability, and (b) the total social desirability score of the five "dependence" items was equal to that of the "independence" items.

**Background Information Sheet.** This form (Appendix D) was designed for the present study in order to gather information about important demographic variables, such as, age, education, employment, religion, parents' occupation and marital status, and the length of time couples had known one another, dated, and been engaged.
Sex Questionnaire. Items 11 through 14 on the "Background Information" sheet (Appendix D) comprise the Sex Questionnaire. Numbers 11 and 12 are taken from Murstein's (1976) Sex Questionnaire, with very minor changes in wording. Numbers 13 and 14 were added in order to again get a dual perspective. Murstein's Questionnaire had two additional items regarding frequency and source of orgasms. These items were deleted in order to avoid possible offense to Pre-Cana officials and to the subjects themselves.

Procedure

Participation in the research was requested of a total of 156 couples at four Pre-Cana Conferences. Each conference has an opening session of two and a half hours on Saturday evening and a four-hour session on Sunday afternoon. At the Saturday evening meeting, the purpose and procedure of the study were briefly described by the researcher; and everyone was invited to participate. It was clearly stated that involvement in the project was voluntary. Both the oral and written instructions (Appendix E) emphasized that members of each couple were to work independently and were not to discuss any of the questions until both had completed their questionnaires. Every couple was given an envelope containing two identical packets of materials. Couples were asked to complete the questionnaires at home and bring them back with them on the following day. Couples who chose not to participate were also to return their
envelopes (containing the uncompleted materials) on Sunday afternoon. In this way, each couple's choice to participate was kept private. At the same time, it was hoped that having all couples take envelopes home would encourage participation. All materials were then collected on Sunday, prior to the start of the second part of the conference. This procedure was followed because typically the Sunday afternoon session emphasizes intra-couple discussion of key marriage-related topics and could potentially influence subjects' responses to the questionnaires.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Whenever directionality was predicted, all tests of significance were one-tailed and are reported here as such. Otherwise, the probabilities given below are two-tailed.

Sex Differences in Self-Disclosure (Hypothesis 1)

This hypothesis predicted that women would report greater amounts of self-disclosure than would men. Three comparisons were used to test this hypothesis: differences between males and females in reported disclosure given and in reported disclosure received, and within-subjects differences between disclosure given and disclosure received. This latter score was obtained by subtracting each subject's disclosure received score from his/her disclosure given score. Since the self-disclosure questionnaire contained 11 items to be ranked on a seven-point scale, a maximum score of 77 was possible. Table 2 presents the mean and the result of the t-test for independent groups for each of the three comparisons. Highly significant differences in the predicted direction were found for self-disclosure given and for within-subjects differences. A trend in the predicted direction was found for self-disclosure received. Thus, the results support the hypothesis.
### TABLE 2

**SEX DIFFERENCES IN SELF-DISCLOSURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Self-Disclosure Given</th>
<th>Mean Self-Disclosure Received</th>
<th>Mean Difference Within-Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEN</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>-3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>+3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = -2.59, \quad p < .01, \quad \text{one-tailed} \]
\[ t = 1.28, \quad p = .10, \quad \text{one-tailed} \]

\[ t = -4.10, \quad p < .001, \quad \text{one-tailed} \]
A correlational analysis also indicated that women were more self-disclosing than men \((r = .22, p = .011)\). One demographic variable was found to be significantly related to the amount of self-disclosure given. Individuals who were not working full-time or who had worked full-time for only a short period were more self-disclosing than long-term full-time employed subjects \((r = .27, p < .001)\). This finding cannot be dismissed as simply due to sex differences in employment. While men on the average had worked full-time for a longer period, this difference was not significant \((r = .12, p = .155)\).

**Similarity in Partner's Self-Disclosure** (Hypothesis 2)

It was hypothesized that within individual couples there would be significant equity or similarity in self-disclosure between partners. A distribution-free statistic (nonparametric) was used because several extremely deviant scores made the assumption of a normal distribution suspect. The absolute mean difference between partners' self-disclosure given scores was computed and found to be 12.4. Of the 69 couples involved in the analysis, 42 had absolute differences below the mean. Using the binomial test for large samples (Siegel, 1956), the results confirmed the hypothesis \((z = 1.69, p < .05)\).

In a post hoc analysis, non-significant correlations were found for the interperceptual comparisons between
partners' self-disclosure given scores ($r = .14$, $p = .239$) and between partners' self-disclosure received scores ($r = .13$, $p = .299$). This finding seems to contradict the results of the binomial test. However, when subjects' perceptions were compared (intraperceptual comparisons), it was found that they saw considerable similarity between their own and their partners' level of disclosure. Men's self-disclosure given scores correlated .51 ($p < .001$) with their disclosure received scores. An even stronger relationship was found between women's disclosure given and received scores ($r = .69$, $p < .001$).

**Perceived Versus Actual Value Consensus (Hypothesis 3)**

It was predicted that couples' perceived consensus on marriage-related values would be significantly greater than their actual consensus. Perceived consensus scores were obtained by computing the discrepancy between subjects' self-rankings of values and their prediction of their partners' rankings (intraperceptual scores). The discrepancy scores for the two partners were then averaged to yield the couples' perceived consensus score. The actual consensus score for each couple was the difference between the partners' self-rankings (an interperceptual score). The means of the perceived consensus scores and actual consensus scores were 8.6 and 11.5 respectively. (Lower scores indicate greater consensus.) A $t$-test for paired measures was used in the analysis, and the hypothesis was strongly confirmed.
Correlational analyses indicated that none of the demographic variables was associated with greater accuracy in predicting values. However, it is noteworthy that couples' perceived consensus scores correlated .39 \((p < .001)\) with their actual consensus scores; the slope of the regression line was .34. This suggests that couples' perceptions were somewhat accurate despite their tendency to perceive greater similarity than was actually present.

**Perceived Versus Actual Similarity in Self-Concept**

(Hypothesis 4)

This hypothesis predicted that couples' perceived similarity in self-concept would be significantly greater than their actual similarity. Perceived similarity scores were computed based on the discrepancy between subjects' self-ratings on the semantic differential and their predicted ratings for their partners (intraperceptual scores). The discrepancy scores for the two partners were then averaged in order to obtain the couple's perceived similarity score. The actual similarity score for each couple was the difference between the partners' self-ratings (an interperceptual score). The mean of the perceived similarity scores was 25.6, while the mean of the actual similarity scores was 28.5. (Lower scores indicate greater similarity.) Using a \(t\)-test for paired measures, the results were highly significant in the predicted direction \((t = -2.81, p < .005, one-tailed)\).
Correlational analyses indicated that two demographic variables were associated with greater perceived similarity in self-concept: years of education ($r = .17$, $p < .05$) and race ($r = .30$, $p < .001$). These findings suggest a tendency for minority subjects and subjects with more years of education to perceive more similarity to their partners than other subjects perceived. Another finding, similar to that regarding Hypothesis 3, was that couples' perceived similarity in self-concept was positively related to their actual similarity ($r = .47$, $p < .001$). The slope of the regression line was .48. Again, this suggests that couples were somewhat accurate in their perceptions despite their tendency to see more similarity than was actually present.

**Self-Disclosure and Accuracy in Predicting Values (Hypothesis 5)**

It was hypothesized that high self-disclosure couples would be more accurate in predicting each other's values than would low self-disclosure couples. A total self-disclosure score was computed for each couple by summing four scores: the man's self-disclosure given and received scores and the woman's self-disclosure given and received scores. Then a median split was done to form high self-disclosure ($N = 34$) and low self-disclosure ($N = 33$) groups. An accuracy score was computed for each subject on the basis of
the discrepancy between his/her prediction of the partner's values and the partner's own value rankings. Then partners' discrepancy scores were added to form the couple's accuracy score. The mean accuracy score for the low self-disclosure group was 23.1; for the high group, 24.2. (Lower scores indicate greater accuracy.) A t-test for independent groups was used to analyze the data. The results were not significant (t = 0.64, p = .26, one tailed). Correlational analyses indicated that none of the demographic variables was associated with greater accuracy in predicting values.

Self-Disclosure and Accuracy in Predicting Self-Concept (Hypothesis 6)

It was predicted that high self-disclosure couples would show greater accuracy in predicting each other's self concept than would low self-disclosure couples. High and low self-disclosure groups were formed by means of a median split, as described above. An accuracy score for each subject was computed based on the discrepancy between his/her prediction of the partner's self-concept and the partner's self-rating. Partners' discrepancy scores were then added to form the couple's accuracy score. The mean accuracy scores for the high and low self-disclosure groups were 45.3 and 47.8 respectively. (Lower scores indicate greater accuracy.) When a t-test for independent groups was done, the results were not significant (t = 0.68, p = .25, one tailed).
Further analysis was done using the Mann-Whitney U Test for the difference between two populations (Siegel, 1956). The mean rank for the low self-disclosure group was 39.25, and for the high self-disclosure group was 30.87. The result was significant in the predicted direction ($z = -1.74$, $p < .05$, one-tailed), confirming the hypothesis.

Two demographic variables were found to be positively related to accuracy in predicting self-concept: length of time dating ($r = .19$, $p < .05$) and years of education ($r = .24$, $p < .005$).

**Sex-Drive and Accuracy in Predicting Values (Hypothesis 7)**

This hypothesis predicted that couples in which the male reports a relatively low sex drive would show greater accuracy in predicting each other's values. High and low sex drive groups were formed by means of a median split. Males who reported a "much stronger" or "somewhat stronger" than average sex drive (that is, circled "A" or "B" on item 11; see Appendix G) were included in the high sex drive group ($N=34$). The remaining males comprised the low sex drive group ($N=34$). The same couples' accuracy scores were used as those described for Hypothesis 5. The mean accuracy scores were 22.1 for the low sex drive group and 25.3 for the high sex drive group. (Lower scores indicate greater accuracy.) A $t$-test for independent groups was used for the analysis, and the hypothesis was confirmed ($t = -1.93$, $p < .05$).
Sex Drive and Accuracy in Predicting Self-Concept (Hypothesis 8)

It was predicted that couples in which the male reports a relatively low sex drive would be more accurate in predicting each other's self-concepts. The same high and low sex drive groups and the same couples' accuracy scores were used as described in previous sections. The mean accuracy scores for the high and low sex drive groups were 46.8 and 46.1 respectively. (Lower scores indicate greater accuracy.) Using a $t$-test for independent groups, the results were found to be non-significant ($t = -0.20$, $p = .42$, one-tailed).

Sex Drive and Self-Disclosure (Hypothesis 9)

It was hypothesized that couples in which the male reports a relatively low sex drive would be more self-disclosing than would couples in which the male reports a high sex drive. The same high and low sex drive groups were used as in previous sections. A total self-disclosure score for each couple was computed by adding together the self-disclosure given and received scores of both members of the couple. The mean total self-disclosure scores for the high and low sex drive groups were 205.4 and 210.5 respectively. (Higher scores indicate greater self-disclosure.) The results of the $t$-test for independent groups
were not significant \((t = 0.61, p = .27)\), and the hypothesis was rejected.

Additional Findings

Several other findings were of interest. Table 3 summarizes the results pertaining to perceived versus actual similarity for all four major variables. The results of Hypothesis 3 and 4 were presented above, and the correlations related to self-disclosure have already been mentioned under Hypothesis 2. The correlations pertaining to sex drive indicate that partners' self-ratings (interperceptual comparisons) of sex drive were negatively correlated, though not significantly so \((r = -.19, p = .112)\), suggesting that partners tend to be somewhat dissimilar in the strength of their reported sex drive. Women apparently saw themselves as being not so different from their partners \((r = .03, p = .796)\), while male partners perceived about the same degree of dissimilarity \((r = .23, p = .055)\) as reflected in the interperceptual ratings. Viewed together, the results suggest a consistent tendency, across the four major variables, for partners to perceive themselves as more similar than they actually are. The only exception to this tendency is that men showed no minimizing of their dissimilarity in the area of sex drive.

Two correlational findings suggest that couples were consistent in their perceptions and in their degree of
### TABLE 3

**ACTUAL VERSUS PERCEIVED SIMILARITY FOR THE FOUR MAJOR VARIABLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>ACTUAL SIMILARITY (INTERPERCEPTUAL)</th>
<th>PERCEIVED SIMILARITY (INTRAPERCEPTUAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Disclosure Given</td>
<td>$r = .14$</td>
<td>$r = .51$ $r = .69$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of Sex Drive</td>
<td>$r = -.19$</td>
<td>$r = -.23$ $r = .03$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage-Related Values (Hypothesis 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Couples' perceived similarity was found to be significantly greater than actual similarity ($t = -5.13$, $p &lt; .001$, one-tailed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Concept (Hypothesis 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Couples perceived similarity was found to be significantly greater than actual similarity ($t = -2.81$, $p &lt; .005$, one-tailed).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
accuracy. Couples' perceived value consensus scores were positively related to their scores on perceived similarity in self-concept ($r = .30, p < .05$). Also, couples' accuracy scores in predicting values were positively related to their accuracy in predicting each other's self-concepts ($r = .31, p < .01$). These results suggest that couples who perceived themselves as similar in values also saw themselves alike in self-concept. And couples who were accurate in predicting each other's values also tended to be accurate in predicting their self-concepts.

There were significant negative correlations between accuracy in predicting self-concept and subjects' desire to give ($r = -.17, p < .05$) and to receive ($r = -.30, p < .001$) self-disclosure. Thus, individuals who were inaccurate about their partners' personality expressed a corresponding desire for increased mutual self-disclosure.

It should be noted that no significant differences were found between Catholic couples and those in which one of the partners was not Catholic.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study investigated several aspects of mutual communication and perception in engaged couples. Nine hypotheses were proposed, six of which were confirmed. In addition, a number of demographic variables were examined in relationship to the major variables. Strongest support was found for sex differences in self-disclosure and for the importance of partners' perceived similarity in marriage-related values and in self-concept.

Self-Disclosure: Sex Differences, Reciprocity, and Sex Drive

The finding that engaged women were more self-disclosing than their partners in emotion and anxiety-related areas confirms earlier findings with dating and married couples. Traditional sex role behaviors seem to be changing somewhat in today's society, with some impetus toward greater androgyny and toward an ethic of mutual openness (Bateman, 1977; Rubin, et al., 1980). Nonetheless, women apparently continue to be more expressive than men when it comes to intimate, personal matters.

Bateman's self-disclosure measure has been used only once before, and there are no norms for it. Therefore, it is not possible to compare the levels of self-disclosure
reported here with populations other than Bateman's own group of married couples. He found a somewhat wider difference between female and male disclosure than was found in the present study, as well as slightly larger amounts of reported disclosure for both sexes. An important research contribution would be an investigation of whether these sex differences in self-disclosure widen or narrow as couples proceed from dating to engagement and on into their married years. Studies with married couples have found self-disclosure positively related to marital satisfaction (Levinger & Senn, 1967; Hendrick, 1980), but no one has explored the relationship of premarital disclosure with marital success. Another research question is whether there is greater self-disclosure between engaged partners than between partners and their closest same-sexed friends or relatives. In other words, is the engaged relationship the major or exclusive arena for disclosure or do male and female partners disclose as much or more in other relationships?

While sex differences in self-disclosure were confirmed, at the same time there was some support for reciprocity or equity in self-disclosure within couples. Although the relationship was not a strong one, it provides confirmation of the literature's finding that self-disclosure is a reciprocal process. It also provides support for Murstein's equity of exchange principle. Moreover, the post hoc correlational finding, that couples perceive considerably more
reciprocity in self-disclosure than actually is present, suggests that the perception of reciprocity may be as important in engaged couples as is actual reciprocity. Interpretation of this latter finding should be done cautiously, both because no prediction was made in this area, and because what may be correlated here to some degree is response style. Subjects' criteria about how much disclosure constitutes a large amount of disclosure are likely to vary considerably. Any one subject's self-ratings and ratings of his/her partner (intraperceptual ratings) will be based on that subject's own criterion. When partners' self-ratings (interperceptual ratings) are compared, however, there is the likelihood of a greater discrepancy because each partner approaches the ratings with a somewhat different criterion. Thus, one might expect intraperceptual ratings to magnify the perceived similarity in a close, positive relationship such as that between engaged partners. Similarly, such a response style might serve to magnify the perceived differences if an individual were asked to rate both himself and his worst enemy. Nonetheless, the magnitude of the differences in correlations in the present study, coupled with a similar finding by Rubin, et al. (1980), suggests that beyond response style there is a strong tendency for partners to see greater similarity in self-disclosure than actually exists.

Low male sex drive was found to be unrelated to
couples' self-disclosure. This may have been due in part to the limitations of a one-item sex drive score. Further study is needed to determine whether low sex drive males are more sensitive to their partners' needs, including the need for intimate disclosure.

Perceived Versus Actual Similarity in Values and Self-Concept

The study's strongest statistical support was found for the predictions that couples' perceived similarity in marriage-related values and in self-concept would be greater than their actual similarity. The finding regarding perceived similarity in self-concept confirms earlier research with dating and married couples on similarity in personality characteristics. While no previous research had been done relating perceived value consensus to actual value consensus, the finding of greater perceived consensus is consistent with the results of similar studies on attitudes and interests.

Self-concept and marriage-related values are variables that fit into Murstein's (1976) Role Stage. A major emphasis at this stage is on partners' mutual evaluations, as they compare their perceptions of self and the partner with the roles each will play in marriage. The present findings provide support for SVR theory's principle of equity of exchange and its prediction of perceived role compatibility. At this advanced stage of courtship, partners see each other
as sharing similar key values and personality characteristics which are conducive to a permanent commitment. These results also seem to support PDF theory's (Lewis, 1973) emphasis on the perception of similarities and the achievement of "interpersonal role-fit."

Although couples perceived greater similarity than was actually present, it is important to note the correlational findings that suggest they were somewhat accurate in their predictions. It appears that these couples were neither blind about whom they were marrying, nor were they without some self-deception and distortion in viewing their prospective spouses.

Two limitations of the present study suggest areas for future research. First, it is not known whether partners perceive greater or less similarity in each other as their relationship progresses through courtship and marriage. Second, there are no data here regarding how similar partners actually were, only the comparison between perceived and actual scores.

Accuracy of Perceptions

Partial confirmation was found for the relationship between couples' high self-disclosure and low (male) sex drive, on the one hand, and accurate knowledge of their partners on the other. Self-disclosure was found to be significantly related to accuracy in predicting partners'
self-concepts but not their values, while just the reverse was found for low sex drive. These differing results may be due at least in part to the nature of the two measures. The type of personal, intimate information tapped in the self-disclosure questionnaire would seem more likely to help in knowing the partner's self-concept than in knowing about his/her values.

The sex drive score, based on a single item, does not directly reflect sexual performance but is a subjective comparison of oneself with one's peers. It may be tapping to some degree the social desirability of a strong sex drive or its "value." Hence, the significant relationship with marriage-related values and not with person perception would follow.

The significant relationship between self-disclosure and accurate prediction of self-concept provides some confirmation for the theories of Murstein and Lewis, both of whom propose that a process of mutual self-disclosure leads to increased knowledge between partners. That a stronger relationship was not found may be due in part to the fact that couples gain knowledge of each other in ways other than verbal exchange.

The finding that sex drive was related to accuracy in predicting values provides some support for Murstein's finding that low male sex drive was associated with couples'
greater perceptual accuracy. As Murstein suggested, high sex drive males may be less sensitive because of the imperiousness of their sex drive. In such couples both partners may be relatively more interested in the sexual part of their relationship than in other aspects.

No other variable was found to be a potential predictor of accuracy in predicting values, while only two such variables were found to be related to accuracy in self-concept—years of education and months dated. Thus, although only partial support was found for both self-disclosure and low sex drive, they stand out as predictors of accuracy when few are to be found.

Several areas that were not touched by the present study deserve future investigation. There were no predictions here regarding whether males or females would be more accurate in their perceptions. It is also not known how accurate partners' perceptions were compared to other dyads, such as same-sexed friends or pairs of family members. Finally, it would be useful to obtain longitudinal data to see if couples' accuracy increases or decreases during the course of courtship and after marriage.

Integration of Present Findings with Previous Research

The couples in this study clearly belong in Murstein's Role Stage and in the final stages of Lewis's PDF theory. On the brink of marriage, they exhibit traditional sex
differences in self-disclosure in anxiety and emotion-related areas. At the same time there is evidence of reciprocity or equity in self-disclosure between partners. These results confirm two consistent sets of findings in the self-disclosure literature. That both predictions were confirmed in the same group of couples suggests that sex differences and reciprocity in self-disclosure are neither mutually exclusive nor contradictory. Rather there seems to be a dynamic interplay between a deeply ingrained, culturally influenced characteristic (sex differences) and a powerful interpersonal process (reciprocity). Women in general appear to be more comfortable and accustomed to talking about anxieties, fears, and emotions than do men, who may equate such feelings with weakness. Thus, partners' needs and expectations in this area may be very different. However, since disclosure is a reciprocal process, it does not seem that a serious imbalance between partners' actual levels of sharing can go on indefinitely. The tendency toward equity in disclosure will continue to exert its power. Depending on what level of disclosure the balance is reached, both partners may be reasonably satisfied, or one or both may grow increasingly frustrated and resentful. It seems likely then that for many couples achieving and maintaining a mutually satisfactory level of intimate self-disclosure poses an important challenge.

The present study confirms earlier findings (e.g.,
Byrne & Blalock, 1963; Trost, 1967) that members of couples see themselves as more similar than they actually are. It also provides support for the developmental theories of Lewis (1973) and Murstein (1976) which emphasize the importance of perceived similarities and perceived compatibilities, particularly in the later stages of courtship. Furthermore, regarding the exchange and hedonism aspects of Murstein's theory, the present findings point to the major role of perceived assets and liabilities and perceived rewards and costs in dyadic relationships.

Clearly there is a basis in fact for these perceived similarities. The couples in this study were homogamous on important sociocultural variables, and other studies have found modest support for homogamy in personality characteristics. But with a basis in actual similarity, the evidence here, across the four major variables, points to a strong, pervasive tendency to perceive more similarity than is actually there. Although not studied here, the tendency to idealize the partner (see Hall & Taylor, 1976; Karp, Jackson & Lester, 1970) may be a companion process to perceiving similarity. Viewed together these processes appear to be over-generalizations of actual similarities and actual strengths of the partner, a sort of halo effect. Murstein has noted that

as we like the other more and more, we perceive him as behaving more and more in accordance with our needs and wishes. If the data for how the partner actually be-
haves is sparse or absent, we imagine that he would behave as we would like him to, nonetheless, because this assumption is necessary to justify our increased commitment to him...(1976, p 192).

Thus there is evidence of factors (self-disclosure, low male sex drive) which seem to contribute to accurate knowledge between partners, along with other factors (perception of similarities, idealization) that may distort the way the partner is seen.

It may be speculated that courtship--perhaps particularly the final stages of courtship--is characterized in part by a tendency to accentuate similarities and to minimize both the degree and importance of differences. The emphasis is on what partners have in common. It is a time when individuality may be de-emphasized in favor of the relationship of the couple as an entity. Such processes may serve the purposes of impressing and winning the other, of keeping things smooth until the wedding. Certain information, needs, and feelings might not be revealed until after a permanent commitment has been made.

Perhaps the process begins to change somewhat after marriage. This is not likely to occur suddenly, due to increased sexual activity, as Freud and Waller theorized. But with the passage of time and day-to-day living, partners' differences may stare them in the face in such a way that they are difficult to minimize; and the idealized partner is seen more clearly as a member of the human race. It is
then that areas in which important actual differences exist (e.g., sex drive and intimate self-disclosure) are most likely to emerge as sources of misunderstanding, disappointment, and conflict.

Limits to Generalizability

The sample in this study is quite different from those used in other mate selection research. In other studies participants have typically come from a college population, were in their late teens and early 20's, and had dated for less than two years. Subjects in the present study were mostly in their middle 20's and full-time workers. They represent a broader range in age, education, and occupation. This sample has the further advantage of consisting exclusively of formally engaged couples. The present study shares the limitation of other research in this area in that participants were predominantly white and middle class. The clearest limitation of this specific sample is that it represents essentially one religious group. Furthermore, even though attendance at a Pre-Cana Conference is a requirement of the Catholic Archdiocese, it seems likely that these couples come from stronger than average religious backgrounds as well. Presumably a church wedding and one specifically sanctioned by the Catholic Church was quite important to at least one member of each couple. Finally, the couples who chose to participate (less than 50%) were an even more select group. They very likely were the least
resentful about having to attend the weekend and the most whole-hearted in their desire to prepare for marriage.

**Directions for Future Research**

Several suggestions for future research will be made here, to add to those already noted in earlier sections. Clearly there is a need for longitudinal studies to investigate the sequence aspects of developmental theories of mate selection. Such studies also could examine what factors are predictive of satisfaction and success in marriage and how perceptual and communication processes change after marriage. The equity of exchange principle offers a heuristically valuable framework and merits further study. The role of sex drive and other sexual aspects in dating and marriage relationships has barely been touched. Future studies should also examine how realistic premarital couples are in their expectations of relationships and marriage. Finally, in all these areas there is a definite need to develop better measures and to improve research designs.
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Appendix A
Appendix A

MARRIAGE VALUE INVENTORY: PART I

Below are listed 11 standards by which marital success has been measured. Please rank the 3 items which represent the MOST important values of marriage to you personally and the 3 items which are LEAST important to you personally. There is no order of items which is correct; the order you choose is correct for you. Please follow these directions:

1. Please look through the list and mark "1" after the item you consider the most important value of marriage to you personally. Then mark "2" after the item you consider next in importance. Then mark "3" after the item you consider the third most important.

2. Now, please mark "11" after the item you consider the least important value of marriage to you personally. Then continue on and mark "10" and "9" after the items which you consider the next least important.

3. Please do not rank the remaining 5 items. Leave them blank.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------

A home where one feels one belongs, apart from outside relationships with other persons; the feeling of having identity; a place to relax where other people do not interfere. ___________________________

Economic security. Being sure that the family will be able to keep up or improve its standard of living. ___________________________

Moral and religious unity. Trying to live a family life according to religious and moral principles and teachings. ___________________________

A place in the community. The ability of a family to give its members a respected place in the community and to make them desirable citizens. ___________________________

Healthy and happy children. ___________________________

Physical comforts of marriage (non-sexual), such as eating better meals, motivation to prepare meals, having good clothes, living in comfortable surroundings, enjoying labor-saving devices, etc. ___________________________

Satisfactory sex life. ___________________________

Companionship with spouse. Someone to be with and do things with. ___________________________

Enjoying the admiration of others because of the attractiveness of my spouse (physical, intellectual, personality) and our family. ___________________________

The satisfaction of a relationship in which spouses feel free to talk about themselves, their feelings, and their problems. ___________________________

The satisfaction of being a married person with all the social and psychological benefits this status allows in the community, as opposed to being single. ___________________________
PART II: PARTNER'S VALUES

In filling out Part II, it is crucial that you do not refer back to your rankings in Part I...Here again are listed 11 standards by which marital success has been measured. This time, rank the values as you expect your partner will rank them. In other words, predict how your partner will rank the values. Please follow these directions:

1. Mark "1" after the item that you predict your partner will rank as the most important marriage value to him/her personally. Then continue on and mark "2" and "3" after those items you predict are the next most important values to your partner.

2. Then please mark "11" after the item that you predict your partner will rank as the least important marriage value to him/her personally. Then continue on and mark "10" and "9" after those items you predict are the next least important values to your partner.

3. Please do not rank the remaining 5 items. Leave them blank.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------

A home where one feels one belongs, apart from outside relationships with other persons; the feeling of having identity; a place to relax where other people do not interfere.

Economic security. Being sure that the family will be able to keep up or improve its standard of living.

Moral and religious unity. Trying to live a family life according to religious and moral principles and teachings.

A place in the community. The ability of a family to give its members a respected place in the community and to make them desirable citizens.

Healthy and happy children.

Physical comforts of marriage (non-sexual), such as eating better meals, motivation to prepare meals, having good clothes, living in comfortable surroundings, enjoying labor-saving devices, etc.

Satisfactory sex life.

Companionship with spouse. Someone to be with and do things with.

Enjoying the admiration of others because of the attractiveness of my spouse (physical, intellectual, personality) and our family.

The satisfaction of a relationship in which spouses feel free to talk about themselves, their feelings, and their problems.

The satisfaction of being a married person with all the social and psychological benefits this status allows in the community, as opposed to being single.
Appendix B

COMMUNICATION

For each of the following items, please choose the number from 1 to 7 which most accurately reflects the extent to which you have talked to your partner about that item. Please circle your choice.

1. What things or situations make me unusually self-conscious.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   have not talked at all about this item to my partner
   have talked fully about this item to my partner

2. Feelings I have when I am chewed out or severely criticized.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. One of the biggest disappointments of my life.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. The things that I worry about most.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. What it takes to hurt my feelings deeply.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. The things in my past or present life about which I am most ashamed.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. What it takes to get me feeling real depressed and blue.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. What feelings, if any, I have trouble expressing or controlling.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. The most embarrassing situation I have ever been in.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. How much I care about what others think of me.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. The aspects of my personality that I dislike, worry about, or regard as a handicap to me.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Regarding this entire group of 11 items, to what degree do you desire to disclose more than you have currently disclosed about these items to your partner?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
do not desire at all to disclose more to my partner

desire extremely much to disclose more to my partner
PART II: PARTNER'S COMMUNICATION

In filling out Part II, it is crucial that you do not refer back to your answers in Part I. For each of the following items, please choose the number from 1 to 7 which most accurately reflects the extent to which you think that YOUR PARTNER has talked to you about the item.

1. What things or situations make my partner unusually self-conscious.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   partner has not talked to me at all about this item
   partner has talked to me fully about this item

1. What things or situations make my partner unusually self-conscious.

2. Feelings my partner has when my partner is chewed out or severely criticized.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. One of the biggest disappointments of my partner's life.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. The things that my partner worries about most.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. What it takes to hurt my partner's feelings deeply.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. The things in my partner's past or present about which my partner is most ashamed.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. What it takes to get my partner feeling real depressed and blue.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. What feelings, if any, my partner has trouble expressing or controlling.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. The most embarrassing situation my partner has ever been in.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. How much my partner cares about what others think of him/her.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. The aspects of my partner's personality that my partner dislikes, worries about, or regards as a handicap to her/him.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Regarding this entire group of 11 items, to what degree do you desire for your partner to disclose more than he/she currently has disclosed to you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

desire extremely much for my partner to disclose more

do not desire at all for my partner to disclose more
Appendix C
Appendix C

RATING SCALE: MYSELF

In this section, you are asked to rate how you see yourself on the basis of 17 pairs of words or phrases. Between each pair of words, there are 7 short lines. Take for instance the pair GOOD/BAD; each line represents a degree of GOOD or BAD, as indicated below:

```
GOOD

very good
some-what good
slightly good
what good
slightly bad
what bad
bad
```

The middle line means "neither good nor bad" or "as good as I am bad."

**EXAMPLE:** If you see yourself as being "somewhat bad," then you would put a check mark on the corresponding line, as follows:

```
GOOD

_________ X BAD
```

Now please rate how you see yourself on each pair, starting with GOOD/BAD, UNPREDICTABLE/PREDICTABLE, and so on, until you have completed the page. On all of these, we are interested mainly in your FIRST opinions. So please work as rapidly as you can.

```
GOOD

---------- ---------- ---------- ---------- ----------- ---------- ---------- ----------
BAD

UNPREDICTABLE
UGLY
VALUABLE
UNSOCIABLE
FOOLISH
SOFT
DANGEROUS
STRONG
TENSE
SLOW
ACTIVE
GOOD AT ASKING
FOR HELP
GOOD AT DEFEND-
ING OWN VIEWS
LINES TIME
FOR SELF
CONFORMIST
WORKS BEST
WITH OTHERS

---------- ---------- ---------- ---------- ----------- ---------- ---------- ----------
PREDICTABLE
BEAUTIFUL
WORTHLESS
SOCIAL
WISE
HARD
SAFE
WEAK
RELAXED
PAST
PASSIVE
SELF-RELIANT
GOOD AT SEEING
OTHERS' POINTS
OP VIEW
LIKES
TOGETHERNESS
INDIVIDUALIST
WORKS BEST ON
HIS/HER OWN
```
Appendix D
Appendix D

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Sex: (circle) M F
2. Age:
3. I have been married previously: (circle) Yes No
4. Circle the item which best describes your employment/education status at present or, if a student, your status in September, 1980:
   A. Work full-time; not in school
   B. Work full-time; part-time student
   C. Work full-time; full-time student
   D. Work part-time; not in school
   E. Work part-time; part-time student
   F. Work part-time; full-time student
   G. Not employed; not in school
   H. Not employed; part-time student
   I. Not employed; full-time student

If you work full-time, how many consecutive years/months have you worked full-time?
   yrs. mos.
5. I have know my partner for:
   yrs. mos.
6. I have dated my partner for:
   yrs. mos.
7. I have been engaged for:
   yrs. mos.
8. My religion: (circle) Protestant Catholic Jewish Other
9. Father's occupation: 
   Mother's occupation: 
10. Marital status of natural parents:
    Separated (other than by death)
    Divorced
    Never separated or divorced

11. Compared to others of my sex and age, I would rate my sex drive as: (circle)
    A. Much stronger than average
    B. Somewhat stronger than average
    C. About the same as average
    D. Not quite as strong as average
    E. Considerably below average

12. Please rate the extent to which control of your sex drive is a problem. "Control" here means to exercise effort to get your mind off sex, to get to concentrating on something else; efforts to subdue, to cope with sexual desires in some manner: (circle)
    A. Control is little or no problem
    B. Control is something of a problem
    C. Control is a definite problem
    D. Control is a difficult problem
    E. Control is a very difficult problem

13. Regarding my partner, compared to others of his/her sex and age, I would rate her/his sex drive as: (circle)
    A. Much stronger than average
    B. Somewhat stronger than average
    C. About the same as average
    D. Not quite as strong as average
    E. Considerably below average

14. Regarding my partner, I would rate the extent to which control of his/her sex drive is a problem as: (circle)
    A. Control is little or no problem
    B. Control is something of a problem
    C. Control is a definite problem
    D. Control is a difficult problem
    E. Control is a very difficult problem

15. Number of years of school I have completed: (circle)
   9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
   H.S. College Grad. School
Appendix E
Appendix E

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

Each member of the couple is to work independently and complete one set of questionnaires.

Please do not discuss any of the questions with your partner until both of you have completed all the questionnaires.

Please do not change any answers once you have completed your set of questionnaires.

Please do not skip any items.

Thank you for your help and cooperation.
The dissertation submitted by Robert W. Cavanagh has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.