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DYSFUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS
AMONG
PARTNERS IN MARRIAGE

by

© Daniel R. Cohen

A thesis
presented to the University of Windsor
in partial fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
Psychology

Windsor, Ontario, 1986

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the validity of the dysfunctional relationship belief construct for a nonclinical marital population. 48 married couples volunteered for the writer's study at the Ontario Science Centre, Toronto, Canada. Each spouse completed a demographic questionnaire, and self-report measures of dysfunctional relationship beliefs, marital communications, mood disturbance, and marital satisfaction. The writer hypothesized that all 5 dysfunctional relationship belief subscales, Disagreement is Destructive, Mindreading is Expected, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism and the Sexes are Different would be negatively related to adaptive verbal and nonverbal communications, positive moods, and marital satisfaction, and positively related to maladaptive communications and disturbed moods. Moreover, it was predicted that beliefs, communications and moods should form a tripartite regression model for marital satisfaction.

Correlational analyses revealed that only one subscale, of the RBI, Disagreement is Destructive, was significantly related to spousal and couple marital communications, moods and satisfaction in their predicted directions. Two other subscales, Sexes are Different and Sexual Perfectionism,

were significantly related to some, but not all of these variables, and these associations were gender-typed. Wives Sexes are Different beliefs were negatively related to marital satisfaction; however, this relationship was limited to the wives's beliefs and husbands' marital happiness. The writer suggested that wives may be reinforcing their spouse's traditional gender-role schemata in response to the conflict they experience between traditional gender-role expectations and new cultural ideas concerning cross-gender behaviour. Contrary to prediction, partial correlations controlling for the effects of Disagreement is Destructive revealed that Sexual Perfectionism was positively related to husbands' satisfaction and negatively related to their disturbed moods. This subscale was, however, positively related to wives' disturbed moods. The writer argued that Sexual Perfectionism beliefs may have different connections for the spouses, husbands viewing them as a barometer of sexual efficacy, and wives as an index of unfulfilled intimacy expectations. Moreover, the reversal in the direction of the correlations for Sexual Perfectionism when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were removed statistically, and the generally strong correlations between the latter subscale and the other RBI belief scales, suggests that Disagreement is Destructive is a superordinate mental representation in close relationships, determining hierarchically the deleterious effects of subordinate relationship-oriented cognitions.

In addition to support for the construct validity of these RBI subscales, the results of the hierarchical regression analyses for couples' marital satisfaction supported the hypothesis that marital happiness is primarily predicted by beliefs, communications and moods. However, separate regression analyses for spouses revealed that different variables predicted husbands' and wives' marital satisfactions. The variance in husbands' satisfaction scores was primarily shared by Disagreement is Destructive and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs and vigorous moods, whereas wives' satisfaction variance was predicted by adaptive verbal communications and depressed and dejected moods. The general tenor of these findings suggest that gender-role schemata are a primary influence in determining the satisfaction husbands' and wives' garner from their marriage.

Results were interpreted and discussed with reference to current cognitive theories of marital satisfaction, and theories and findings pertaining to the effects of gender-role schemata on marital dynamics. In addition, suggestions for further research on the influence of beliefs and other relationship-oriented mental representations in close relationships were offered.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Psychologists have long been interested in studying the variables which influence the quality and stability of marital relationships. Since Terman's seminal work (Terman & Butterweisser, 1935; Terman, 1938) researchers from the various theoretical traditions in psychology have examined numerous factors considered important for the psychological health of married life. Some of the more popular areas of investigation have included: the effects of children on marital quality (Lucky & Bain, 1970); premarital chastity and postmarital adjustment (Anthanasious & Sarkin, 1974); the family life cycle and marital satisfaction (Nock, 1979); and partner communication effectiveness and marital adjustment (Gottman, 1979).

In recent years marital investigators have begun to pay particular attention to the role of maladaptive cognitions and beliefs as determinants of marital dissatisfaction (Lederer & Jackson, 1968; Sager, 1976; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979). Ellis and Harper (1975) argue that a spouse's unrealistic beliefs and philosophies about his/her relationship can affect the psychological, emotional and behavioural quality of their interpersonal functioning by encouraging unrealistic and self-defeating expectations.

Although the marital literature is replete with theoretical studies attesting to the association between dysfunctional relationship beliefs and marital satisfaction, there is a paucity of empirical work in this area. The reason for this imbalance in the marital literature is a lack of reliable and valid assessment devices for measuring unrealistic beliefs in close relationships. The development of the Relationship Belief Inventory (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982) is a recent attempt to correct this situation.

Even though Eidelson & Epstein (1982) reported good validity coefficients for the Relationship Belief Inventory (RBI) among their clinical samples, several questions remain as to its utility for measuring dysfunctional beliefs among nonclinical couples. The significant correlations the authors reported between dysfunctional beliefs and marital satisfaction among their nonclinical sample were lower than their clinical counterparts, but not substantially so as to preclude the utility of the RBI as a measure of these beliefs in a nonclinical population. Their findings, however, have not been replicated. In addition, Epstein & Eidelson (1981) limited their validity studies to evaluating the association between the RBI and other cognitive indicators of marital satisfaction, and did not assess the scale's relationship with other theoretically important concomitants of dysfunctional beliefs, such as low frequency of adaptive marital communications, and high frequency of

negative moods. Given that marital satisfaction is influenced primarily by cognitions, communications and affect, determining the construct validity of the RBI should illuminate the complex relationships among these variables, and their effects on the happiness spouses experience in their marriage.

The primary purpose of the present investigation therefore was two-fold: 1) to assess the construct validity of the RBI as a measure of dysfunctional relationship beliefs in a nonclinical population, and 2) to explore the relationship between marital beliefs, communications, moods and marital satisfaction.

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF MARITAL SATISFACTION

Marital satisfaction is an all-encompassing term which includes among other factors, each partner's agreement on values, priorities, family "rules", frequency and quality of sexual intercourse, frequency of arguments, regret or lack of regret about the marriage itself, and the quality and quantity of intimacy and communications in the relationship. Several terms have been used to classify marriages based on these indices. The more popular ones include marital adjustment, happiness and marital satisfaction, the one used thus far in this review. Although this use of multiple terms suggests that each may be measuring a different aspect of this construct, Gottman (1979) reported high convergent

validity among several measures and questionnaires of marital satisfaction using these terms and concluded that each is assessing the same dimension.

Models of Marital Satisfaction

Attempts to integrate the numerous indices of marital satisfaction have led to several theoretical models of marital adjustment. The construct has been explored from a number of perspectives including, the psychoanalytic (Mittleman, 1948; Greenspan & Mannino, 1974; Dicks, 1963; Meissner, 1978), behavioural (Weiss, 1978; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979), systems theory (Lederer & Jackson, 1968; Minuchin, 1974; Steinglass, 1979) and various integrative approaches (Burr, 1973; Burr et al, 1979; Lewis & Spanier, 1979). The first three paradigms are the ones which have received the most attention in the literature, and thus will be highlighted in this review.

The psychoanalytic model of marital adjustment is one of the oldest paradigms delineating the factors involved in successful marital functioning (Prochaska & Prochaska, 1978). Meissner (1978) argues that marital relationships are intimately bound up in each spouse's child-parent relationships in their families of origin, and each spouse must separate himself/herself from his/her old object relationships in order to form new ones. To form healthy new relationships, each spouse must come to understand

his/her pathological introjects (repressed ideas, emotions and wishes) developed during the original object relationships. Moreover, Meissner believes that each spouse must comprehend these debilitating introjects before they become transformed into concrete modes of perceiving and behaving. He hypothesizes that pathological introjects, if left unattended, can develop into misperceptions of the spouse, and escalate into reciprocal misperceptions, collusionary processes and conflict.

Marital satisfaction has also been explored from a behavioural perspective. In contrast to the analysts, behaviourists believe that satisfaction between partners is determined by situations and the reinforcing control of outcomes rather than traits (Weiss, 1978). Several paradigms within this perspective have been proposed, generally under the rubric of social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959) and its hybrid, behaviour exchange theory (Jacobson & Margolin, 1979). The key concept among these approaches is that marital satisfaction is a function of give-get, cost-benefit exchanges between marital partners. Their proponents argue that satisfying marriages are typified by partners who maximize rewards in their relationship and minimize costs. In essence, spouses who deliver a high rate of reinforcers will not only influence the levels of marital satisfaction, but also the rate at which the rewards are returned by the spouse (Jacobson &

Margolin, 1979). These writers argue that conflict arises when the exchange process develops into one of coercion where behaviour exchanges involve punishments instead of rewards (Patterson & Reid, 1970). Common examples of coercion processes include "nagging" and character assassination.

The behaviour exchange model has been expanded to include the role of the family life cycle in marital functioning. Weiss (1978) has developed a critical model of marital satisfaction incorporating couple relationship accomplishments, support/understanding, problem-solving, and behaviour change. In his model, behaviours are referred to by constructs like companionship, household management, and self-spouse independence, whereas the family life cycle denotes the different stages in marriage, like the honeymoon, childrearing and post-childrearing periods. Weiss argues that a satisfied couple is one which is able to balance all these factors with minimal costs and maximum rewards.

Weiss' (1978) integration of the family life cycle into a behavioural model reflects the increasing acceptance by marital investigators that marriage is an integral part of a system incorporating the intrapersonal, dyadic, familial and extra-familial spheres of life. Steinglass (1978) argues that marriage is one subsystem among other subsystems, and that marital researchers must delineate how marriage fits

among other subsystems to understand its functioning. In addition, he contends that marital partners must define and denote the boundaries by which they function as a separate subsystem, and explicitly delineate the rules governing their behaviours and interactions with other subsystems. Furthermore, Steinglass argues that a well-functioning marriage has a well-defined and cohesive rule-governing structure; one which can be used to control, predict and cope with the stresses and strains of married life.

Several paradigms have been based on the systems approach. Two of the more salient ones in the literature are communication (Watzlowik, Beavin & Jackson, 1967), and structural family models of marital satisfaction (Minuchin, 1974). Watzlowik, Beavin and Jackson (1967) argue that all behaviour in interactions has a message value. Whether the communication exchanges are at the verbal or nonverbal levels, messages are being sent and interpreted. According to this perspective, the marriage relationship is a communicative one. Without messages and information exchanges there could be no relationship. Steinglass (1979) notes that communication theorists believe that optimal information exchanges are typified by messages which are clear and devoid of self-contradictions, inconsistencies and subject switches. Conversely, poor communications between spouses are characterized by "double-binds", disqualifying and confusing messages. In this perspective, happy and

satisfying marriages are those in which each partner's information exchanges have noise-free message pathways, "inputs" and "outputs" which are mutually understandable, and avenues of delivery which are supportive for both spouses.

Whereas communication theorists consider marital satisfaction to be a product of clear and consistent information exchanges, "structural" family theorists regard the organization of boundaries and marital responses to stress as the primary determinants of marital functioning. Steinglass (1978) notes that structural theorists like Minuchin (1974) perceive the marriage subsystem as a fully functioning part of a larger system. It is the structural view that transactions between spouses are not merely messages between the sender and receiver, but are complex interactions between environmental contexts and individual behaviours. Structural theorists consider satisfactory marriages as ones which have the ability to weather stressors in a highly organized way, reflecting, in part, a good fit between each partner's familial and extra-familial subsystems.

In summary, the theoretical models described above indicate the variety and diversity of perspectives and levels of importance attached to the various indices associated with marital satisfaction. Psychoanalytic theorists regard marital adjustment as a function of the

amount of "excess baggage" each partner brings to the marriage from past relationships. Behaviourists view marital satisfaction as determined by rewarding behaviour exchanges, whereas systems theorists perceive marital adjustment as a product of good communication between spouses, and a good fit between the marriage and other subsystems. In the next section of this thesis, a cross-section is presented of empirical studies investigating the variables considered to be important determinants of marital satisfaction by these and other models.

Empirical Studies of Marital Satisfaction

One of the major problems in translating theoretical models into empirical research is extracting measurable constructs. The psychoanalytic model of marital satisfaction is a good example. Though this paradigm is replete with excellent metaphors for describing human behaviour, the model offers few variables which can be empirically tested. The empirical studies of marital satisfaction, which have remained within its intrapersonal focus, have concentrated on investigating the relationships between spousal personality traits and marital adjustment (Burgess & Wallin, 1953; Corsini, 1956; Dean, 1966; Locke, 1968). Even though the majority of these researchers found significant relationships between marital satisfaction and various personality indices (e.g. spousal emotional

stability, partner considerateness and emotional dependency), most of these variable relationships accounted for less than 10% of the common variance, suggesting that, in its present form, the psychoanalytic model may have limited utility for understanding marital satisfaction.

Results from empirical studies of marital satisfaction illustrating other paradigms have been more promising. One area which has received considerable study in the literature is the relationship between the age of the marriage and marital satisfaction. Lucky (1966) found that marital satisfaction declined with the age of the relationship. Chadwick, Albrecht and Kunz (1976) reported that the older the marriage, the more likely the husband would be willing to remarry. Moreover, he found that the wives were less pleased with the husband's performance in the relationship as it aged. Rollins and Feldman (1970) hypothesize a U-shaped functional relationship between marital satisfaction and the age of the relationship. They argue that the early and later years of a marriage have the highest levels of satisfaction, whereas the middle years have the lowest levels. Other writers have questioned the validity of this proposed relationship between these two variables. Miller (1976) found no support for the U-shaped functional relationship between the length of a marriage and marital adjustment. In their review of this area, Spanier and Lewis (1975) cautioned against making any conclusions concerning

the association between these two variables. They argue that the majority of these studies did not control for cohort or age related effects. Moreover, Spanier and Lewis contend that the relationship between marital quality and the life cycle is affected by a number of demographical variables.

The effects of children on the marital relationship has been one of the more heavily investigated research areas in the field. Hurley and Polanis (1967) found that the higher the rate of children per years of marriage, the less the marital satisfaction. Lemasters (1957) reported that 90% of the parents he interviewed indicated that the arrival of their first child was a crisis transition for the relationship. Dyer (1963) reported similar findings, however, only 50% of his sample indicated that their relationship underwent a crisis upon the arrival of their first born. In a longitudinal study designed to test this relationship, Luckey and Bain (1970) reported that couples who were initially dissatisfied with their marriage before the arrival of the first child, indicated seven years later that their children were the only source of satisfaction in their relationship. Happier couples reported significantly more areas of satisfaction which contributed to the overall quality of their marriage. In their review of the area, Rollins and Galligan (1978) argue, however, that children per se do not influence marital quality, but the decline in

companionship between spouses that follows the birth of a child does.

The influence of marital roles on spouse's satisfaction levels has also been investigated. Stukert (1963) found that the more the perceived role of the spouse matched the expectations of the other, the greater the marital satisfaction. Luckey (1964) reported similar findings. He found that marital satisfaction was related to the congruency of the husband's concept of his father role with the concept held by his wife of his role; however, this relationship did not hold for the concepts of wives held by the husbands. In their review of the marital quality research in the sixties, Hicks and Platt (1970) reported that role similarity was the single most consistent finding among satisfied couples.

Another fruitful area of marital research has been the relationship between spousal communication skills and marital satisfaction. Navran (1967) reported a .92 correlation between his measure of marital communication and a measure of marital satisfaction. Moreover, he found that satisfied spouses differed from dissatisfied counterparts in several respects: 1) happy couples talked more to each other; 2) they conveyed feelings that they understood each other's disclosures; 3) had a wide variety of subject topics to discuss with their spouse; 4) had open and fluid communication channels with each other; 5) were more

empathic and 6) made better use of nonverbal cues. Other researchers have concentrated on spousal empathy and positiveness as important determinants of marital satisfaction. Bienvenue (1970) found that their satisfied spouses were good listeners, spoke in affectionate tones of voice, showed more understanding and were better equipped to cope with hostile feelings than their sample of unhappy spouses. Goodman and Ofshe (1968) reported that satisfied couples had higher degrees of empathy than less satisfied relationships. Fiore and Severson (1977) found that adjusted spouses showed more affect, gave more moral support and positive statements to each other than maladjusted spouses. In their review of the literature on treatment outcome research, Gurman and Kniskern (1981) suggested that "increased communication skills, however they are achieved, are the sine qua non of effective marital therapy" (p. 749).

One of the most salient aspects of spousal communications is self-disclosure. In his seminal book, The Transparent Self, Jourard (1971) argues that a healthy marriage is one in which both partners are able to self-disclose without fear or trepidation. Several studies have investigated the relationship between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction. Webb (1972) reported positive relationships between spousal self-acceptance, self-disclosure and marital satisfaction. Freed (1975) also found that self-disclosure between partners is an important determinant of marital

quality. In a recent study, Hendrik (1981) reported that self-disclosure significantly predicted marital satisfaction. Other investigators have studied sex differences in self-disclosure and disclosure reciprocity between marital partners. Levinger and Senn (1967) reported that wives tended to be higher disclosers than their husbands. Moreover, they found that partner's descriptions of the other's self-disclosures had significantly higher correlations with marital satisfaction than their own self-ratings. Levinger and Senn (1967) also found support for self-disclosure reciprocity between happier spouses, reporting high correlations between each spouse's independent reports of their self-disclosures.

Whereas self-disclosure has been perceived as having positive effects on the marital relationship, a few writers argue that too much disclosure can be detrimental to a marriage. Bienvenue (1970) reported that the one item which most discriminated his happy from his unhappy spouses was "Does your spouse have a tendency to say things which would better be left unsaid?" Cozby (1972) suggests that a high self-disclosing spouse may arouse anxiety in his/her mate, and proposes a curvilinear relationship between spousal self-disclosure and marital satisfaction. Charkin and Derlega (1974) argue that marital satisfaction is not only affected by the amount disclosed, but by the avenue and content of the disclosures. From the results of these

studies it would appear that the relationship between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction is indeed a highly complex one.

In recent years there has been a trend towards in-vivo studies of the behavioural concomitants of marital communication and satisfaction. These studies have been spurred, in part, by experimentally-oriented marital investigators who have been dissatisfied with self-report methodologies. For example, Gottman (1979) notes that self-report research methodologies have accounted for a maximum of 80% of the common variance in marital satisfaction scores. He argues for an experimental approach, such as analyzing spousal interactions, and hypothesizes that including this variable in a prediction model should account for significantly more of the shared variance in marital satisfaction scores, than with questionnaires alone.

Several investigators have studied the relationship between marital communications and satisfaction by developing and employing observational coding schemes for assessing marital interactions in the laboratory. Hops et al (cited by Gottman, 1979) developed the Marital Interaction Coding System (MICS). In a study using this system, Birchler et al (1975) were able to discriminate distressed from nondistressed spouses by the mean rate per minute of negative codes in problem-solving and various communication tasks. In another study, Winter, Ferreira and

Bowers (1973) used a decision-making task to study interactions in married and unrelated couples. They found that married couples were less polite to each other than the unrelated pairs. Other investigators using the MICS have found similar relationships between levels of positive behaviours and marital satisfaction (Patterson, Hops and Weiss, 1975; Royce & Weiss, 1975; Vincent, Weiss & Birchler, 1975).

Another scoring system used to rate spousal interactions is the Couple Interaction Scoring System (CISS) developed by Gottman (1979) and his associates. The CISS measures and catalogs spousal interactions from three perspectives: 1) content, the literal aspect of the message; 2) affect, nonverbal delivery; and 3) context, nonverbal behaviours of the listener. In a series of studies using the CISS Gottman (1979) found that nondistressed spouses differed from their distressed counterparts in several respects: 1) they had higher agreement to disagreement ratios in their nonverbal interactions; 2) they were less sarcastic; 3) they expressed their feelings to their spouse with less negative affect; 4) they were less likely to mind-read and be negative listeners; and 5) happy spouses were less likely to enter into mind-reading negative affect spirals. Gottman (1979) noted, however, several similarities between his distressed and happy couples. They did not differ in frequency of mindreading, expressing direct feelings and


metacommunications. Moreover, he found that distressed couples did not differ from nondistressed ones in reciprocity of negative behaviours and disagreement exchanges.

In summary, the empirical literature on variables affecting marital satisfaction indicates that there is a wide variety and diversity of phenomena which are related to marital functioning. Though investigations of personality indices related to marital satisfaction have not had definitive results, spousal companionship, role congruency and communication abilities have been identified as important determinants of marital satisfaction. In the final sections of this review, an emerging area of importance, the role of cognitions and beliefs in marital relationships will be discussed.

Influence of Cognitions and Beliefs on Marital Satisfaction

In the past two decades, psychology has experienced a flurry of theoretical and empirical research activity delineating the importance of cognitions to human functioning. The evolution of cognitive psychology as a subdiscipline has been spurred, in part, by growing dissatisfaction with traditional behaviourism, and an increasing reliance on the use of computer metaphors to explain human thinking and activity. Proponents of a cognitive ideology argue that cognitions play an important

role in moderating the relationship between environmental stimuli and human actions, and hypothesize that a wo/man's ability to cope with his/her environment is largely a function of the adaptiveness of his/her assumptions and beliefs about the world (Cantril, 1950; Kelly, 1955; Frank, 1974). In the applied area of this subdiscipline, cognitive clinical psychologists argue that maladaptive cognitions, beliefs or assumptions (i.e. those which are unrealistic, or do not mirror the beliefs adhered to by the prevailing culture) elicit negative emotions and promote psychopathology (Ellis, 1962; Beck, 1976). The development of several treatment strategies based on a cognitive model of psychopathology reflects psychology's recognition of mental representations as important factors in the etiology of behavioural disorders (Ellis, 1962; Mahoney, 1974; Meichenbaum, 1974).



The current cognitive approach in psychology has prompted marital investigators to develop several hypotheses concerning the relationship between cognitions and marital satisfaction. Ellis and Harper (1975) argue that a spouse's unrealistic beliefs and illogical thoughts about his/her relationship can seriously affect marital satisfaction levels. Moreover, they contend that spouses enter a relationship with two basic beliefs: 1) that their partner must satisfy them sexually, and 2) that he or she must "love" them. These writers hypothesize that these beliefs,

if exaggerated, can develop into unrealistic and self-defeating expectations. Other writers argue that relationship beliefs are "contracts" between spouses. Sager (1976) contends that each partner enters the relationship with a set of unconscious or conscious contracts for the marriage which can work for or against marital satisfaction. Lederer and Jackson (1968) argue that marital satisfaction is largely a function of each spouse's abilities to negotiate "quid pro quo" (something for something) agreements based on similar values and beliefs. They hypothesize that each partner's assumptions about his/her relationship, if too rigid or divergent from one another, can seriously limit negotiations and, consequently, decrease their levels of marital satisfaction.

Still other writers contend that spousal expectancies such as trust and locus of control are important determinants of marital satisfaction. Rempel, Holmes and Zanna (1985) argue that partner trust is the focal expectancy in a marriage, determining the ways in which each partner responds to the other's communications, moods and behaviour. Spouses with low levels of trust are more likely to view their partners' behaviours negatively and respond in kind, than spouses who have high levels of interpersonal trust. Miller, Lefcourt and Ware (1983) argue that couples' marital locus of control orientation affects their ability to solve problems in their marriage. They hypothesize that

couples with an external locus of control orientation for resolving marital conflict, that is, the perception that their overall happiness with their marriage is due to luck or chance, are more likely to have poor problem-solving strategies and, consequently, experience lower levels of satisfaction in their relationship, than couples who have an internal orientation.

In summary, these writers argue that a spouse's dysfunctional relationship beliefs, negative expectancies and cognitions about his/her marriage can have deleterious effects on his/her relationship. Indeed, the common thread which connects the various paradigms of marital satisfaction described earlier in this review is a cognitive one. Whether beliefs are referred to as introjects, communication/boundary rules, contracts, beliefs or expectancies, all these writers agree that mental representations are important determinants of marital satisfaction.

Measuring Dysfunctional Relationship Beliefs

Though theoretical support for an association between dysfunctional relationship beliefs and marital satisfaction is abundant, there is a paucity of empirical studies investigating this relationship. The main reason is a lack of reliable and valid assessment devices to measure dysfunctional relationship beliefs. The majority of studies

which have tried to assess these cognitions have used repertory grid methods (i.e. Ryle & Lipschitz, 1975; Wijesinghe & Wood, 1976). This testing technique, however, is plagued by several methodological problems: 1) it is idiographic; 2) time-consuming; 3) difficult to score; and 4) requires good verbal skills on the part of the testee. Other researchers have used measures of dysfunctional beliefs about the self to assess maladaptive relationship beliefs; however, with little success. For example, Eisenberg and Zingle (1975) used Jone's (1968) measure of Ellis's eleven irrational beliefs about the self, with their sample of married couples, and found that none of the beliefs were significantly correlated with marital satisfaction.



The recent development of the Relationship Belief Inventory (RBI, Eidelson & Epstein, 1982) was an attempt to create a reliable and valid nomothetic self-report measure for dysfunctional relationship beliefs. The RBI is comprised of five subscales, each one assessing a different dysfunctional relationship belief considered important to marital satisfaction by researchers and therapists:

1. Disagreement is Destructive. The first subscale assesses the notion that disagreements between spouses signify a lack of love and pose a threat to the relationship. Satir (1974) argues that spouses who hold this belief are more likely to solve disagreements by avoidance.

2. Mindreading is Expected. The second subscale measures the belief that each partner must sense the other's thoughts, feelings and moods without overt communications. Eidelson and Epstein (1982) note that this belief has been found to promote reciprocal misperceptions and conflict (see Lederer & Jackson, 1968). Moreover, they argue that partners holding this belief may be less inclined to communicate clearly with his or her spouse, ultimately leading to strain and dissatisfaction in the marriage.
3. Partners Cannot Change. The third subscale assesses the belief that partners have rigid, uncompromising personalities, and that change within the relationship is impossible. Epstein and Eidelson (1982) note that that this belief sets up a "terminal hypothesis" (Hurvitz, 1970) whereby partners lose hope of directing any change in their marriage.
4. Sexual Perfectionism. The fourth subscale measures the belief that spouses must be perfect lovers. The authors argue that this dysfunctional belief may promote undue anxiety, feelings of sexual inadequacy and marital dissatisfaction.
5. The Sexes are Different. The sixth and final subscale in the inventory is concerned with sexual stereotyping. Eidelson and Epstein (1982) argue that partners who hold this belief may attribute conflict

to enduring stereotypic traits, and thus may not make any valid attempts at problem-solving.

In their reliability and validity studies with the inventory, Eidelson and Epstein (1981) reported that the RBI had good internal consistency (Cronbach alphas ranged from .72 to .81 for the five subscales), and convergent validity with Jones' (1968) measure of irrational beliefs about the self. In addition, they reported that each of the subscales was significantly and negatively correlated with a measure of marital satisfaction, and that the correlations were generally higher for their clinical sample than for their nonclinical population. Partners Cannot Change was the only subscale which did not correlate with marital satisfaction in the nonclinical group. Additional support for the construct validity of the RBI was obtained in another of the authors' studies. Epstein and Eidelson (1981) reported that clinical couples who had a high frequency of dysfunctional beliefs reported significantly lower expectations for improvement in therapy, little desire to improve the relationship and a preference for individual therapy, as compared to a sample of clinical couples who had lower frequencies of these beliefs.



THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

Although Eidelson and Epstein (1981) reported good validity coefficients for the RBI among their clinical couples, several questions remain as to its validity for measuring dysfunctional relationship beliefs in a nonclinical population. For example, though the significant correlations the authors reported between the RBI subscales and a measure of marital satisfaction were lower for their nonclinical sample (range = -.19 to -.43) than their clinical couples (range = -.26 to -.53), they were not substantially so as to argue against the effects of these beliefs in a nonclinical population. As Eidelson and Epstein argue in their discussion, "it should be recognized that it is not necessary for a person to completely embrace a particular belief in order for it to have detrimental effects on his/her relationship (just as a limited level of alcohol in the blood can nevertheless produce severe consequences)" (p. 719).

Unfortunately, Eidelson & Epstein's findings obtained from their nonclinical sample have not been cross-validated. Given that the validity coefficients for this group were not strong ones, and they may reflect error rather than true-score variance, the validation of the RBI is a necessary step to determine the validity of this measure for a nonclinical population. Moreover, given that the RBI is the only published self-report measure of relationship beliefs,

dysfunctional, or otherwise for a married population, if it should prove valid for nonclinical couples, the inventory might encourage more detailed and precise investigations of the role of mental events in close relationships.

In addition to questions concerning the scale's validity for a nonclinical population, Eidelson and Epstein's evaluation of its construct validity focused only on the RBI's relationship with a measure of marital satisfaction and cognitive indices related to marital functioning, and did not explore the inventory's associations with other theoretically important correlates of dysfunctional relationship beliefs.

One of the more important theoretical correlates of these beliefs alluded to in previous sections of this thesis is low frequency of adaptive marital communications. It is argued here that dysfunctional relationship beliefs are not passive cognitions; they are dynamic and influence the communication effectiveness of marriage partners. For example, if a spouse agrees strongly with the statements "I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me" or "When my partner and I disagree I feel like our relationship is falling apart", it not only suggests that he/she holds these beliefs about relationship disagreements, but that he/she may avoid topics of conversation with their partner which are potentially conflictual. The same holds true for the remaining dysfunctional relationship beliefs. For example,

if a spouse believes in Mindreading, he/she may distort their partner's verbal and nonverbal messages. Spouses who believe that their partner cannot change may have a low frequency of adaptive marital communications. Partners who believe that they must be perfect lovers may be less willing to converse on intimate topics with their spouse. Finally, spouses who believe in traditional sex roles may have stereotyped communication styles, as well may be verbally abusive toward their spouse, rather than concentrate on problem-solving.

Another important concomitant of dysfunctional relationship beliefs which Eidelson and Epstein did not examine in their validity studies is that of negative moods. Several investigators have studied the relationship between these variables. Goldfried and Sobocinski (1975) studied the relationship between the tendency to hold irrational beliefs about the self and the likelihood of being aroused in stressful situations. Using a paper and pencil measure of irrational beliefs about the self, they found that subjects holding the belief that social approval is a crucial facet of their self-esteem were significantly more anxious after imagining themselves in a socially-rejecting situation than subjects who did not hold this belief. In another study, Rohsenow and Smith (1982) tested the validity of a cognitive-mediational hypothesis of emotional arousal by assessing the relationship between irrational beliefs and

daily mood disturbance in a student population over seven months. They found that ten of Ellis's eleven irrational beliefs were significantly correlated with negative moods. Other investigators have found significant relationships between negative self-statements and physiological and emotional arousal (Birn & Litvack, 1969; May & Johnson, 1973; Himle, Thyer & Papsdorf, 1982).

Several investigators have hypothesized a reciprocal relationship between moods and cognitions. Isen et al (1978) posit a "cognitive loop" hypothesis for the relationship between cognitions and affects. They argue that a person in a good mood will more likely recall positive material from memory. Other investigators argue for a state-dependent relationship between cognitions and moods. Bower and Cohen (1982) posited a selective-retrieval hypothesis between moods and cognitions. Bower and Cohen (1982) contend that a person's current feeling state acts as a selective filter that is tuned into incoming material that supports and justifies his/her mood states. Moreover, they argue that this "filter" admits only memories and thoughts congruent with the perceiver's mood, and ignores incongruent material. In a series of studies testing these hypotheses, Bower and Cohen (1982) induced emotional states in college students via hypnotic suggestion and asked their subjects to perform several social and cognitive tasks. They reported that students in the "happy" condition saw more positive,

prosocial acts performed by their experimental partner than those in the "sad" condition. Moreover, they reported that their "happy" subjects were charitable, loving and generous in their descriptions of people close to them, whereas subjects in the "angry" mood condition were merciless and fault-finding in their appraisals.

A few investigators have studied the relationship between moods and spousal perceptions of marital events. Stone (1982) had his sample of spouses keep a daily log of their positive and negative experiences and moods over a fourteen day period. He reported that wives' and husbands' negative experiences were significantly correlated with their moods whether they were self or spouse-rated. The relationship between spousal perceptions of intimacy in their marriage and moods has also been investigated. Waring et al (1983) correlated his measure of marital intimacy with the Profile of Mood States (POMS, McNair, Lorr & Droppleman, 1971) in a nonclinical population. He reported that marital intimacy had a negative relationship with disturbed moods.

Though these studies suggest a relationship between dysfunctional relationship beliefs and moods, there is a paucity of empirical work in this area. Presumably, partners who believe that disagreements are destructive to their relationship could be inclined to suppress their feelings and suffer quietly and miserably. Spouses who believe in mindreading may experience feelings of confusion

and bewilderment in their relationship. The same may hold true for the remaining dysfunctional beliefs. Marital partners who believe that their spouse cannot change may feel frustrated, helpless and hopeless in their marriage. Spouses who believe in sexual perfectionism may tend to be grouchy, on edge and anxious. Finally, spouses who believe that the sexes are different may experience spiteful and annoying moods.

In summary, therefore, the validity of the Relationship Belief Inventory for measuring dysfunctional relationship beliefs in a nonclinical population has not been fully assessed. In their validity studies, Eidelson and Epstein (1981) reported significant correlations between a majority of the RBI subscales and a measure of marital satisfaction among their nonclinical couples. In addition, Eidelson and Epstein limited their appraisal of the RBI's construct validity to relationships with a measure of marital satisfaction, and cognitive indices of marital functioning. The writer contends that dysfunctional relationship beliefs should be negatively related to adaptive marital communications and positively related to negative moods. Moreover, beliefs, communications and moods should predict the level of satisfaction experienced by the couple, since these variables primarily determine the marital experience.

The purpose of the present investigation is thus three-fold: 1) to assess the validity of the Relationship Belief

Inventory for nonclinical populations; 2) to evaluate the construct validity of the REI by correlating the scale with measures of marital communications and mood disturbance; and 3) to explore the general relationship between beliefs, communications and moods in marital relationships. Based on the arguments presented in this thesis, the following general hypotheses are offered:

1. Dysfunctional relationship beliefs are negatively related to marital satisfaction.
2. Dysfunctional relationship beliefs are negatively related to adaptive marital communications and positively related to maladaptive communications.
3. Dysfunctional relationship beliefs are positively related to negative moods and negatively related to positive moods.
4. Dysfunctional relationship beliefs, marital communications, and moods should predict couples' levels of satisfaction.

Chapter II

METHOD

Subjects

A total of 48 married couples volunteered for the writer's study at the Ontario Science Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. No restrictions were placed on spousal age; however, couples had to be cohabiting for a period not less than 2 years to avoid "honeymoon effects", and to insure that each couple has had time to develop relationship beliefs and communication styles in their marriage. Couples were not remunerated; however, they were offered refreshments upon volunteering.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire developed by the author specifically for this study was used. The questionnaire asks each spouse to give information on a number of demographic variables considered important for understanding marital functioning. In addition, to questions on age, sex, occupation, and number of children, spouses were asked about their religious and ethnic affiliations and their influence in their lives. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix A.

Relationship Belief Inventory

The RBI was described in a previous section. The inventory is comprised of 40 statements delineating five dysfunctional relationship beliefs. The response format for the RBI is a five point scale, ranging from "I strongly believe this statement is false" to "I strongly believe this statement is true." The RBI and its scoring key are presented in Appendix E.

Primary Communication Inventory

The Primary Communication Inventory (PCI, Navran, 1967) was designed to assess communications in marriage. The inventory is composed of 25 questions delineating factors considered important to healthy communication exchanges in marriage. Sample items include, "Do you and your spouse talk over things you disagree about or have difficulties over?", and "When you start to ask a question, does your spouse know what it is before you ask?" The measure includes 8 items which involve making a judgment about their spouse's communication effectiveness. These scores are then transposed for their mates. In addition to the total test score, the inventory has separate subscores for verbal and nonverbal communication effectiveness. The response format is a five point scale, ranging from "very frequently" to "never". Initial validity studies with the PCI reported that the scale items significantly discriminated happy from

unhappy couples, and that the inventory was highly correlated with a measure of marital adjustment ($r=.82$). The PCI and its scoring key are presented in Appendix C.

Marital Communication Inventory

The Marital Communication Inventory (MCI, Bienvenue, 1970) is a 40 item questionnaire designed to assess spousal communication styles. Like the PCI, this inventory measures maladaptive spousal communications styles. Sample items include, "Does your spouse insult you when he or she gets angry with you?", and "Do you feel that he or she says one thing but really means another?" The response format of the MCI is a four point scale, ranging from "usually" to "never". The split-half reliability of the MCI is high ($r=.93$), and the scale has been found to significantly discriminate happy from unhappy couples. Because a number of the items of the MCI have content overlap with those in the PCI, only four of the twenty most highly discriminating items were used. Moreover, they were employed as separate item scores and not as a short version of the scale. The items are presented in Appendix D.

Profile of Mood States

The Profile of Mood States (POMS, McNair, Lorr & Droppleman, 1971) is one of the most widely used instruments to measure disturbed moods. The scale is a 65 item adjective checklist

comprising 6 subscales (Tension-Anxiety, Depression-Dejection, Anger-Hostility, Vigor, Fatigue, Confusion-Bewilderment), one of which measures positive moods (Vigor). The response format is a five point scale, ranging from "not at all" to "extremely". In the usual administration of the POMS, subjects are asked to describe how they have been feeling during the past week, including today. For the purposes of the present investigation, each spouse was asked to describe how they have been feeling with their partner during the past month. The POMS has been extensively validated, and has excellent internal consistency with reliability coefficients ranging from .87 to .94 for all six subscales.

Locke-Wallace Short Marital-Adjustment Test

The Locke-Wallace (MAT, Locke & Wallace, 1959) is one of the most widely used instruments in the marital literature to assess marital satisfaction. It was employed by Epstein & Eidelson in their validity studies with the RBI. The MAT has excellent internal consistency ($r=.90$), and has been found to consistently discriminate distressed from nondistressed couples.

Procedure

Couples were actively solicited by a female research assistant, naive to the purpose of the study, once they approached the entrance to the amphitheatre at the Ontario Science Centre. They were then asked to volunteer for a marriage survey, and told that they would receive coffee, lemonade, or both if they participated. Upon volunteering, the writer and his assistant gave each spouse a packet of questionnaires, and asked them to sit separately from their partner and not collaborate on their responses. As part of each packet, each spouse received a cover letter (Appendix E) designed to encourage their collaboration with the research endeavour, and to counteract social desirability response sets generally found among couples who participate in psychology research. In addition, each spouse received a consent form (Appendix F), and a demographic questionnaire. Moreover, they were each given a copy of the Relationship Belief Inventory, Primary Communication Inventory with the four MCI items, Profile of Mood States, and Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjustment Test in counterbalanced order to control for carry-over effects. On average, each spouse took 20 to 30 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Upon completing the forms, each couple was debriefed and permitted to leave.

Chapter III

RESULTS

Data collected from each spouse were transformed into couple variables by averaging the husbands' and the wives' scores. In addition, spousal scores were analyzed separately. Data from nondistressed and distressed spouses were included in the analyses, using mean couple and spousal satisfaction scores on the Locke-Wallace scale as the criterion for marital distress. Those couples who received mean satisfaction scores > 100 were considered to be nondistressed, whereas those couples and spouses who had mean satisfaction scores < 100 were regarded as distressed.

Prior to the formal analyses, frequencies and descriptive statistics were computed from each variable, and their distributions were checked for outliers and skewness. To evaluate outliers, the extreme scores of each variable distribution were converted to standard scores. Fortunately, none of the variable scores exceeded the outlier criterion of ± 3.00 standard deviations. Skewness was evaluated by comparing the obtained skewness coefficient with the critical value for an $N=48$ (Tabachnik & Fidell, 1983). Variable distributions which had skewness in excess of ± 2.58 standard deviations (moderately skewed), or ± 3.00

standard deviations (severely skewed) were transformed by computing the square root and log₁₀, respectively. Hereinafter, transformed variables are identified by the letter "T" at the beginning of the variable name.

All subscale scores from the RBI, PCI (including 4 MCI item scores) and PCMS were included in the analyses, as were the scores for the Locke-Wallace. In addition, the writer used a trust item from the FOMS to explore the relationships among trust, dysfunctional relationship beliefs, and marital satisfaction.

The main statistical analyses used in this study were Pearson product-moment and partial correlations to assess the strength and the direction of the relationships between all continuous variables. In addition, hierarchical multiple regression analyses using the SPSS-X stepwise regression method were employed to test couple and spousal predictors of marital satisfaction. Finally, to test for variance differences between demographic subgroups on couple and spousal variables, one-way ANOVA were computed for each categorical demographic variable.

Table 1 outlines the order of the presentation of the results. Only couple and same-sex variable intercorrelations (husband X husband; wife X wife) are listed in tabular form. Husband X wife variable intercorrelations are only included in the text to elaborate on discrepancies among these relationships.

TABLE 1

RESULTS OUTLINE

I SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

II ANALYSIS OF COUPLE AND SPOUSAL VARIABLES

- A. Dysfunctional beliefs and marital satisfaction
- B. Dysfunctional beliefs and marital communications
- C. Dysfunctional beliefs, moods and trust
- D. Marital communications, moods, trust and satisfaction
- E. Predictors of couple and spousal satisfaction

III SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Table 2 presents a legend of variable acronyms and their formal names. The reader is encouraged to consult this table as s/he peruses the results.

TABLE 2

VARIABLE ACRONYM LEGEND

The first letter of the acronym denotes the type of variable:

If the acronym begins with the letter

C = couples' variable

H = husbands' variable

W = wives' variable

T = transformed variable

MARITAL SATISFACTION

MARSAT marital satisfaction

DYSFUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS

DISDES Disagreement is Destructive

ME Mindreading is Expected

PCC Partners Cannot Change

SP Sexual Perfectionism

SAD Sexes are Different

MARITAL COMMUNICATIONSAdaptive

CCNV verbal communications

CCOMNV nonverbal communications

Maladaptive

SVI how much spouses' voice irritates partner

INS how often spouse feels partner insults him/her when he/she is angry

MA how often spouse feels partner says one thing but means another

NCLIS how often spouse pretends to listen to partner

MOODS WITH SPOUSENegative

DEPDEJ depressed and dejected moods

TENANX tense and anxious moods

ANGHOS angry and hostile moods

CCNBE confused and bewildering moods

FAT fatiguing moods

Positive

VIGOR vigorous moods

TRUST trusting moods

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

The subjects ranged in age from 21 - 63 years, and had a mean age of 38 years. On average, couples were married 13.1 years, within a range of 2 to 38 years. 82.3% of the sample declared that their marriage was their first one, whereas 17.7% indicated that they had been married more than once.

Subjects had a mean of 15.7 years of formal schooling, within a range of 10 to 23 years. Because spouses declared a wide variety of occupations, their responses were re-coded into six categories, with the following percentages: 34% professionals, 23% white collar/managerial, 15.6% homemakers; 6.3% labourers; 6.3% did not declare their occupational status; 3.1% retired; and 2.1% students. Approximately 62.5% of couples declared they had combined yearly incomes in excess of \$40,000, whereas 37.5% revealed they had combined annual incomes under \$40,000.

Regarding religious affiliation: 41.7% of subjects declared they were Catholics; 37.5% Protestant; 15.5% Jewish; 5.2% no religion; and 2.1% other. Because spouses as a group indicated over 18 ethnic affiliations, their responses were re-coded into 4 categories, with the following percentages: 40.6% declared they were of West European descent; 24% East European; 19.8% North American; and 6.3% Asian. 61.5% of the sample declared that their religion was an important influence in their lives, whereas 38.5% indicated that it was not. In contrast, only 18.7%

declared that their ethnic affiliation was an important influence, and 81.3% said it was not.

70.8% of couples had 1 or more children living at home, whereas 29.2% did not have any living at home. In the former group, they had a mean of 1.4 children with a mean age of 10.3 years, within an age range of 1 to 35 years. 67.2% of these spouses stated that their children do reduce the amount of quality time they can spend alone with their partner, whereas 32.8% said that they did not.

Preliminary analyses revealed that all continuous demographic variables (e.g. age, number of years married, number of years formal schooling) were insignificantly correlated with couple or spousal beliefs, communications, moods, trust and marital satisfaction. In addition, one-way ANOVAs revealed that none of the means for spousal and couple beliefs, communications and moods differed significantly between the various subgroups for each of the categorical demographic variables used in this study.

ANALYSIS OF COUPLE AND SPOUSAL VARIABLES

A perusal of Table 3 reveals that couples' mean marital satisfaction score was 113.60, having a standard deviation of 20.97. This mean is greater than the criterion for distressed couples, and reflects the nonclinical nature of the sample. Spousal means for marital satisfaction were similar, and both in the nondistressed range, and were not

significantly different from one another, $t(47) = -.11$, $p < .91$, two-tailed. However, husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction scores were only moderately correlated ($r = .50$, $p < .001$).

TABLE 3

MARITAL SATISFACTION MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

This table presents the means and standard deviations for couple and spousal scores on the Locke-Wallace, the main measure of marital satisfaction. Refer to Table 2 for acronym legend.

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
CMARSAT	113.60	20.97
HMARSAT	113.40	24.72
WMARSAT	113.79	23.62

NCTE: Maximum score = 158

Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for each of the RBI subscales. Inspection of this table indicates that couple and spousal RBI subscale means were all low. The only significant difference found between spousal subscale means was for Sexual Perfectionism, husbands' having significantly higher mean scores (HSP, $M=14.71$) than the wives (WSP, $M=12.19$), $t(47) = 3.04$, $p < .004$, two-tailed.

TABLE 4

BELIEF MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

This table presents the means and standard deviations for each of the couple and spousal RBI subscale means. Refer to Table 2 for acronym legend.

	<u>Couples</u>		<u>Husbands</u>		<u>Wives</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
EISDES	12.20	5.53	11.85	6.07	12.63	6.31
ME	16.67	3.33	16.40	4.88	16.94	5.25
PCC	12.78	4.27	13.13	5.18	12.44	5.43
SP	13.44	4.01	14.71*	4.67	12.19*	5.16
SAD	15.64	5.92	15.33	6.63	15.94	6.67

* t-test, $p < .004$, two-tailed

NOTE: Maximum score on each subscale = 40

Preliminary correlational analyses (Appendix G) revealed that Disagreement is Destructive had consistently higher correlations with marital satisfaction, communications and mood variables than the other RBI subscales. Consequently, the writer computed partial correlations for Mindreading is Expected, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism and Sexes are Different subscales controlling for Disagreement is Destructive.

Table 5 presents the partial correlations among four of the five RBI subscales with the effects of Disagreement is

Destructive removed statistically. Inspection of the intercorrelation matrix reveals that couple and spousal Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with their Mindreading, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism, and Sexes are Different beliefs. A comparison of the spouses' coefficients indicates that wives had a stronger correlation between their Disagreement is Destructive (WDISDES) and Sexes are Different (WSAD) beliefs ($r = -.56, p < .001$) than husbands' ($r = .42, p < .001$). However, husbands' had a stronger correlation between their Disagreement is Destructive beliefs (HDISDES) and their Sexual Perfectionism (HSP) beliefs ($r = .71, p < .001$), than the wives had between their respective beliefs ($r = .58, p < .001$).

A perusal of the other matrix columns reveals that the majority of the partial correlations for Mindreading, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism and sexes are different beliefs did not reach significance when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed statistically. Only the husbands' Sexes are Different beliefs (HSAD) were significantly and positively correlated with their Mindreading (HME) beliefs ($r = .43, p < .001$), while the wives' Sexes are Different beliefs (WSAD) were significantly and positively correlated with their Sexual Perfectionism (WSP) beliefs ($r = .29, p < .05$). Moreover, husbands' and wives' Sexes are Different beliefs were

TABLE 5
INTERCORRELATIONS: RBI SUBSCALES

This table presents the partial correlations among 4 of the 5 RBI subscales with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	CDISDES ¹	CME	CPCC	CSP
	HDISDES ¹	HME	HPCC	HSP
	WDISDES ¹	WME	WPCC	WSP
CME	.50***			
HME	.42***			
WME	.48***			
CPCC	.69***	-.06		
HPCC	.57***	.17		
WPCC	.66***	-.09		
CSP	.71***	.05	.27*	
HSP	.71***	-.16	-.16	
WSP	.58***	.18	-.20	
CSAD	.60***	.24*	.11	-.11
HSAD	.42***	.43***	.23	-.08
WSAD	.56***	-.12	-.03	-.29*

* $p < .05$

*** $p < .001$

NOTE: ¹ Pearson correlations

significantly and positively intercorrelated ($r = .42$, $p < .001$).

Beliefs and Marital Satisfaction

Table 6 presents the partial correlations for 4 of the 5 dysfunctional relationship beliefs and marital satisfaction with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. Inspection of this table reveals that Disagreement is Destructive beliefs had the highest correlations with marital satisfaction for couples, husbands and wives. Couples', husbands' and wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and negatively correlated with their marital satisfaction scores ($r = -.77, p < .001$; $r = -.70, p < .001$; $r = -.59, p < .001$, respectively).

Contrary to prediction, however, couples' and husbands' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with their marital satisfaction scores ($r = .32, p < .01$; $r = .38, p < .001$, respectively); the partial correlation for the wives, though positive, did not reach significance ($r = .23, p < .09$). Regarding the partial correlations for marital satisfaction and the other dysfunctional relationship beliefs when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed: couples' and wives' Mindreading beliefs were negatively correlated with their satisfaction scores; however, contrary to prediction, husbands' Mindreading beliefs were positively and insignificantly correlated with their satisfaction scores. Similar trends were found for Partners Cannot Change beliefs. The partial correlation for Sexes are Different

beliefs and couple and spousal satisfactions were in the predicted directions, but did not reach significance for the for the couple and same-sex coefficients; however, wives' Sexes are Different beliefs were significantly and negatively correlated with husbands' satisfaction ($r = -.38$, $p < .001$).

TABLE 6

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS: BELIEFS AND SATISFACTION

This table presents the partial correlations for 4 of the 5 couple and spousal dysfunctional beliefs and their marital satisfaction scores with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	CDISDES ¹	CME	CPCC	CSP	CSAD
	HDISDES ¹	HME	HPCC	HSP	HSAD
	WDISDES ¹	WME	WPCC	WSP	WSAD
CMARSAT	-.77***	-.18	-.03	.32*	-.11
HMARSAT	-.70***	.12	.06	.38***	-.03
WMARSAT	-.59***	-.22	-.14	.23	-.05

* $p < .05$
 *** $p < .001$

NOTE: ¹ Pearson correlations

Beliefs and Marital Communications

Table 7 presents the means and standard deviations for adaptive and maladaptive couple and spousal communications. Inspection of this table reveals that the means for adaptive verbal communications were surprisingly low given the nonclinical nature of the sample. This finding suggests that spouses had a low frequency of adaptive verbal communications in their marriages. However, the couple and spousal means for nonverbal communications were relatively high suggesting that these couples may have well-developed private message systems. Regarding the means for maladaptive marital communications: they were low and congruent with expectations for this sample. Spouses differed on only one variable, wives having significantly higher mean frequency of adaptive verbal communications (WCOMV, $M=43.58$) than the husbands (HCOMV, $M=41.35$), $t(47) = 2.68$, $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Because couple and spousal adaptive verbal communications were highly correlated with their total PCI scale scores (all r 's $> .90$), the latter variable was dropped from the analyses. Table 8 presents the partial correlations for 4 of the five dysfunctional beliefs and marital communications, with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. Inspection of the table reveals that couples', husbands' and wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and negatively correlated with

TABLE 7

COMMUNICATION MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

This table presents the couple and spousal means and standard deviations for adaptive (PCI subscales) and maladaptive (NCI items) marital communications. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
<u>Adaptive</u>		
CCCMV	42.47	6.91
HCOMV	41.35*	6.66
WCCMV	43.58*	8.24
CCCMNV	26.95	4.03
HCOMNV	26.56	4.79
WCCMNv	27.33	4.17
<u>Maladaptive</u>		
CSVI	1.12	.66
HSVI	1.91	.80
WSVI	1.04	.87
CINS	1.07	.73
WINS	1.06	.85
WINS	1.07	.95
CMA	1.12	.62
HMA	1.04	.75
WMA	1.22	.89
CNCLIS	1.16	.61
HNCLIS	1.32	.84
WNCLIS	1.00	.76

* t-test, $p < .01$, two-tailed

NOTE: Maximum score on COMV = 90; COMNV = 35;
PCI items = 4.

their adaptive verbal communications (CCOMV, $r = -.60$, $p <$

.001; HCONV, $r = -.57$, $p < .001$; WCONV, $r = -.48$, $p < .001$, respectively), and adaptive nonverbal communications (CCOMNV, $r = -.50$, $p < .001$; HCOMNV, $r = -.36$, $p < .001$; WCOMNV, $r = -.44$, $p < .001$, respectively). In addition, couples', husbands' and wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with how much they feel their spouse insults when he/she gets angry (CINS, $r = .53$, $p < .001$; HINS, $r = .33$, $p < .01$; WINS, $r = .39$, $p < .01$, respectively). Couples', husbands' and wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were also significantly and positively correlated with how much they feel their spouse says one thing but means another (CMA, $r = .55$, $p < .001$; HMA, $r = .39$, $p < .001$; WMA, $r = .40$, $p < .001$, respectively). However, only couples' and wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with how much their partners' voice irritates them (CSVI, $r = .56$, $p < .001$; WSVI, $r = .45$, $p < .001$, respectively). The husbands' correlation did not reach significance (HSVI, $r = .20$, $p < .13$) indicating that the couple Pearson r for these variables is a spurious one. In addition, couples' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with how much spouses pretend to listen to each other (CNOLIS, $r = .24$, $p < .05$); however, the insignificant relationship found for the husbands' and wives' suggests that the couple correlation for this variable pair is also a spurious one.

Regarding the partial correlations for couples' and spouses' Mindreading, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism, Sexes are Different beliefs and marital communications: the majority were insignificant, having coefficient values less than .2. For the husbands', only their Partners Cannot Change beliefs (HPCC) were significantly and negatively correlated with how much they feel their partner says one thing but means another (HMA, $r = .25$, $p < .05$). In the case of the wives, their belief in Mindreading (WME) was only weakly correlated with how much they perceive their partners' insult them when the latter gets angry (WINS, $r = -.32$, $p < .02$), as were their Sexes are Different beliefs (WSAD) and their frequency of adaptive verbal communications (WCOMV, $r = -.26$, $p < .05$). Their Sexes are Different beliefs were also weakly correlated with how much they pretend to listen to their spouse (WNOIIS, $r = .27$, $p < .05$). Like the trend found for Sexual Perfectionism and Mindreading among the belief x satisfaction correlations, the one for these beliefs and communications seems to suggest that in the absence of the effects of Disagreement is Destructive these subscales measure adaptive mental representations.

TABLE 8

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS: BELIEFS AND COMMUNICATIONS

This table presents the partial correlations for 4 of the 5 dysfunctional beliefs subscales and marital communications with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	CDISDES ¹	CME	CPCC	CSP	CSAD
	HDISDES ¹	HME	HPCC	HSP	HSAD
	WDISDES ¹	WME	WPCC	WSP	WSAD
<u>Adaptive</u>					
CCCMNV	-.60***	.11	-.11	-.15	-.23
HCCMV	-.57***	.14	-.11	-.14	-.22
WCCMV	-.48***	.02	-.14	.00	-.26*
CCCMNV	-.50***	.01	-.09	-.11	-.23
HCCMNV	-.36**	-.19	-.08	-.04	-.24
WCCMNV	-.44***	.15	-.06	-.11	-.09
<u>Maladaptive</u>					
CSVI	.56***	-.21	-.20	-.35**	-.15
HSVI	.20	-.13	.14	-.20	.00
WSVI	.45***	-.08	-.24	-.21	-.04
CINS	.53***	-.14	.02	-.08	.06
HINS	.33*	-.09	.08	-.21	.02
WINS	.39**	-.32**	-.09	-.07	.13
CMA	.55***	-.21	.19	.02	.02
HMA	.39**	-.05	.25*	.19	-.04
WMA	.40***	-.08	.18	-.12	.15
CNOLIS	.24*	.06	.06	-.15	.14
HNOLIS	.19	-.03	.22	-.20	.05
WNCLIS	.21	.23	-.09	-.04	.27*
	* p < .05				
	** p < .01				
	*** p < .001				

NOTE: ¹ Pearson correlations

Beliefs, Moods and Trust

Table 9 presents the couple and spousal means for negative and positive moods and trust. A perusal of this table reveals that the means for negative moods were low, whereas those for positive moods and trust were high. No significant differences were found between spousal means on any of these variables.

Table 10 presents the partial correlations for 4 of the 5 belief subscales with moods and trust, with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. As revealed in the matrix, couples', husbands' and wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with their negative moods (couples' range = .47 to .70; husbands' range = .33 to .58; and wives' range = .51 to .68). Of these correlations, couples' and spouses' angry and hostile moods (ANGHOS) had the strongest relationship with Disagreement is Destructive beliefs, whereas fatiguing moods (FAT) had the weakest.

Couples' and spousal Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were also related to their levels of vigorous moods and trust. This dysfunctional belief was significantly and negatively correlated with couples', husbands' and wives' vigorous moods ($r = -.63, p < .001$; $r = -.41, p < .001$; and $r = -.59, p < .001$, respectively) and their levels of trust ($r = -.48, p < .001$; $r = -.48, p < .001$; and $r = -.32, p < .05$, respectively). A perusal of the other matrix columns

TABLE 9

MOOD & TRUST MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

This table presents the couple and spousal means and standard deviations for the untransformed mood subscales of the POMS, along with the descriptive statistics for the trust item. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
CDEPDEJ	7.29	5.34
HDEPDEJ	6.79	8.07
WDEPDEJ	7.79	10.86
CTENANX	7.36	5.43
HTENANX	7.34	5.94
WTENANX	7.32	7.13
CANGHOS	7.03	5.66
HANGHOS	7.30	7.02
WANGHOS	6.70	6.39
CCONBE	5.40	3.24
HCONBE	5.15	3.78
WCCONBE	5.64	4.40
CFAT	5.39	4.15
HPAT	4.83	4.16
WPAT	5.96	5.43
CVIGOR	17.20	5.39
HVIGOR	17.66	4.86
WVIGOR	16.91	8.02
CTRUST	3.13	.77
HTRUST	3.15	.75
WTRUST	3.11	1.09

NOTE: Maximum score on DEPDEJ = 60; TENANX = 36;
 CONBE = 22; ANGHOS = 48; FAT = 28; VIGOR = 32;
 TRUST = 5.

reveals that the only other significant belief x mood

partial correlation was for Mindreading (CME) and confusing and bewildering moods (CCONEE), $r = -.34$, $p < .01$.

Sex differences were also indicated among these partial correlations. Whereas wives' beliefs remained positively correlated with their respective negative mood variables after the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were partialled out, husbands' beliefs became negatively correlated with their negative moods. For example, whereas wives' Mindreading beliefs were significantly and positively correlated with their tense-anxious (TWTENANX), angry-hostile (TWANGHOS), and confusing-bewildering (TCONEE) moods ($r = .26$, $p < .05$; $r = .42$, $p < .001$; and $r = .46$, $p < .001$, respectively), husbands' Mindreading beliefs were significantly and negatively correlated with these moods ($r = -.26$, $p < .05$; $r = -.39$, $p < .01$; and $r = -.44$, $p < .001$, respectively). The same is true for spousal Sexual Perfectionism. Husbands' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were negatively correlated with negative moods, whereas wives' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were positively correlated with their respective negative moods. Though a similar trend was found for spousal Partner Cannot Change beliefs (PCC), only the wives' partial correlations reached significance. Finally, with the exception of the significant and positive correlation between wives' Sexes are Different beliefs and their depressed and dejected moods ($r = .26$, $p < .05$), the partial correlations for this belief and the remaining negative mood variables did not reach significance.

Regarding the partial correlations for beliefs and positive moods: only wives' Mindreading and Partner Cannot Change beliefs were significantly and negatively correlated with their vigorous moods ($r = -.33, p < .01$; and $r = -.34, p < .01$, respectively). None of the partial correlations for the husbands' beliefs and his vigorous moods reached significance. The same is true for spousal beliefs and trust. Only wives' Mindreading and Partners' Cannot Change beliefs were significantly and negatively correlated with their levels of trust ($r = -.29, p < .05$; and $r = -.26, p < .05$, respectively).

TABLE 10

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS: BELIEFS, MOODS & TRUST

This table presents the partial correlations for 4 of the 5 RBI subscales with the subscales of the FOMS, and the trust item, with the effects of Disagreement is Destructive removed. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	CEISDES ¹	CME	CPCC	CSP	CSAD
	HDISDES ¹	HME	HPCC	HSP	HSAD
	WDISDES ¹	WME	WPCC	WSP	WSAD
TCDEPDEJ	.64***	-.02	-.07	-.06	-.05
THDEPDEJ	.46***	-.15	-.11	-.35*	-.15
TWDEPDEJ	.65***	.38**	.29*	.31*	.26*
TCTENANX	.70***	-.14	-.02	-.06	-.07
THTENANX	.59***	-.26*	-.09	-.23	-.17
TWTENANX	.64***	.26*	.34**	.23	.23
TCANGHCS	.70***	.11**	-.07	-.26*	-.10
THANGHCS	.46***	-.39**	-.05	-.39***	-.17
TWANGHCS	.68***	.42***	.25*	.24	.21
TCCONBE	.70***	-.34**	-.08	-.08	-.11
THCONBE	.54***	-.44***	.10	-.30*	-.10
TWCONBE	.63***	.46***	.32**	.23	.06
TCFAT	.47***	-.05	-.05	-.07	-.11
THFAT	.33**	-.19	-.07	-.41***	-.08
TWFAT	.51***	.19	.17	.28*	.10
CVIGOR	-.63***	-.10	-.06	.11	.11
HVIGOR	-.41***	.00	.05	-.03	.04
WVIGOR	-.59***	-.33**	-.34**	-.18	-.11
CTRUST	-.48***	-.05	-.02	-.04	.05
HTRUST	-.48***	.10	-.16	.11	-.19
WTRUST	-.32*	-.29*	-.26*	-.21	-.02

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

NOTE: ¹ Pearson correlations

Marital Communications, Moods, Trust & Satisfaction

Table 11 presents the intercorrelations for spousal and couple satisfaction and communications, mood and trust variables. A perusal of the table reveals that all couple adaptive and maladaptive communications were significantly correlated with marital satisfaction, in the predicted directions. In addition, couple negative and positive mood and trust variables were also significantly correlated with marital satisfaction. A perusal of the correlations for the spousal variable pairs indicates that husbands' and wives' adaptive communication variables were significantly and positively correlated with their respective marital satisfaction scores; however, the wives correlation for adaptive verbal communication (WCCMV) and her marital satisfaction was stronger than the husbands' correlation for his respective variable pair. Furthermore, the correlation between wives' verbal communications and their satisfaction ($r = .69, p < .001$), was stronger than the Pearson r between husbands' frequency of adaptive verbal communications and her satisfaction ($r = .58, p < .001$).

With respect to maladaptive communications and marital satisfaction: wives' and husbands' had similar Pearson r values; however, wives' obtained a stronger correlations between her feeling that spouses says one thing but means another (WMA) and her level of satisfaction ($r = -.55, p < .001$), than the husbands' (HMA, $r = -.29, p < .05$). In

addition, wives' had a stronger correlation between how often they pretend to listen to their spouse and their marital satisfaction ($r = -.45, p < .001$), than the husbands' did for their variable pair ($r = -.23, p < .09$). Husbands' and wives' did obtain similar Pearson r values for negative and positive moods and their marital satisfaction scores; however, only the wives' trust and her marital satisfaction correlation reached significance ($r = .31, p < .05$).

TABLE 11

COMMUNICATIONS, MOODS, TRUST & SATISFACTION

This table presents the couple and spousal intercorrelations for marital communications, moods, trust and marital satisfaction. Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

	<u>CNARSAT</u>	<u>HMARSAT</u>	<u>WMARSAT</u>
CCMV	.72***	.53***	.69***
CCMV	.57***	.41***	.40***
SVI	-.52***	-.39**	-.41***
INS	-.41***	-.38***	-.29*
MA	-.52***	-.29*	-.55***
NCLIS	-.44***	-.23	-.45***
TDEPDEJ	-.65***	-.58***	-.61***
TTENANX	-.63***	-.55***	-.46***
TANGHOS	-.66***	-.59***	-.57***
TCNBE	-.68***	-.57***	-.63***
TFAT	-.56***	-.52***	-.42***
VIGOR	.63***	.59***	.54***
TRUST	.54***	.25	.31*

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Couple Predictors of Marital Satisfaction

The predictors of couples' satisfaction (CNARSAT) were assessed according to two criteria: 1) theoretical considerations based on a tripartite belief-communication-mood model of marital satisfaction proposed earlier; and 2) statistical factors, namely, those variables which were highly correlated with marital satisfaction, and weakly

correlated with each other. Four couple variables, Disagreement is Destructive (CDISDES) beliefs, adaptive verbal communications (CCOMV), depressed-dejected moods (TCDEPDEJ), and trust (CTRUST) were chosen as independent variables and entered into a hierarchical regression with couples' marital satisfaction (CMARSAT) as the dependent variable. Table 12 presents the results of this analysis.

After step 4, with all the significant IV's in the equation, $R = .88$, $F(4,41) = 43.64$, $p < .001$. After step 1, with CDISDES in the equation, adjusted $r^2 = .59$, $F(1,44) = 66.75$, $p < .001$. After step 2, with CCOMV added to the prediction of CMARSAT by CDISDES, adjusted $r^2 = .69$, $F(2,43) = 15.40$, $p < .001$. With the addition of TCDEPDEJ on step 3, adjusted $r^2 = .73$, $F(3,42) = 6.62$, $p < .01$. Finally, the addition of CTRUST on step 4 resulted in an adjusted $r^2 = .76$, $F(4,41) = 5.47$, $p < .02$. Because the hierarchical procedure tends to inflate the F ratios for r^2 (Tabatchnik & Fidell, 1983), Wilkinson critical values for r^2 (Wilkinson, 1979) were computed for this model. Results indicate that the obtained $r^2 = .76$ surpassed the critical $r^2 = .30$, $df = 44$, $p < .01$. The regression equation for this model is presented in Appendix H.

For the regression models for the spouses, the writer employed the criteria used in constructing the couples' regression model. For the husbands' model, five variables, husbands' disagreement is destructive beliefs (HIISDES),

TABLE 12
HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS

This table presents the results of a hierarchical regression of couple beliefs, communications and moods on couples' marital satisfaction (CMARSAT). Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Cumulative</u> <u>r²</u>	<u>Increase</u> <u>in r²</u>	<u>F-test</u> <u>on increment</u>	<u>p</u> <u>value</u>
CDISDES	.59	.59	66.75	.001
CCGMV	.69	.10	15.41	.001
TCDEPDEJ	.73	.04	6.62	.01
CTRUST	.76	.03	5.47	.02

R = .88 p < .001

Sexual Perfectionism beliefs (HSP), wives' Sexes are Different beliefs (WSAD), how often wives' find their spouses' voice irritating (WSVI), and husbands' vigorous moods (HVIgor) were chosen as independent variables and entered into a hierarchical regression analysis, with husbands' marital satisfaction (HMARSAT) as the dependent variable. Table 13 presents the results of this analysis.

After step 5, with all significant IV's in the equation, $R = .86$, $F(5,43) = 22.36$, $p < .001$. After step 1, with HDISDES in the equation, adjusted $r^2 = .46$, $F(1,47) = 39.24$, $p < .001$. After step 2, with HVIgor included, adjusted $r^2 = .59$, $F(2,46) = 13.81$, $p < .001$. After step 3, with HSP added to the equation, adjusted $r^2 = .66$, $F(3,45) = 9.72$, p

< .001. After step 4, with WSAD included, adjusted $r^2 = .69$, $F(4,44) = 4.38$, $p < .04$. After step 5, with WSVI added to the equation, adjusted $r^2 = .71$, $F(5,43) = 4.23$, $p < .05$. Again, Wilkinson critical values for r^2 were computed, and results indicate that the obtained $r^2 = .71$ surpassed the critical $r^2 = .33$, $df. = 44$, $p < .01$. The regression equation for this model is presented in Appendix H.

TABLE 13

HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS

This table presents the results of a hierarchical regression of spousal beliefs, communications and moods on husbands' marital satisfaction (HMARSAT). Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Cumulative</u> <u>r^2</u>	<u>Increase</u> <u>in r^2</u>	<u>F-test</u> <u>on increment</u>	<u>p</u> <u>value</u>
HDISDES	.46	.46	39.24	.001
HVIGOR	.59	.13	13.81	.001
HSP	.66	.07	9.72	.001
WSAD	.69	.03	4.38	.04
WSVI	.71	.02	4.23	.05
	$R = .86$	$p < .001$		

For the wives' model, three variables, her belief in Disagreement is Destructive (WDISDES), the frequency of her adaptive verbal communications (WCOMV), and the frequency of her depressed-dejected moods (TWDEPDEJ) were chosen as independent variables and entered into the hierarchical

regression, with her marital satisfaction (WMARSAT) as the dependent variable. Table 14 presents the results of this analysis. After step 2, with all significant IV's in the equation, $R = .78$, $F(2,44) = 33.70$, $p < .001$. After step 1, with WCONV in the equation, adjusted $r^2 = .48$, $F(1,45) = 42.93$, $p < .001$. After step 2, with TWDEPDEJ added to the prediction of WMARSAT by WCONV, adjusted $r^2 = .59$, $F(2,44) = 13.02$, $p < .001$. The addition of wives' Disagreement is Destructive beliefs (WDISDES) did not reliably improve upon the r^2 value, $F(3,43) = 2.08$, $p < .16$. The regression equation for this model is presented in Appendix B.

TABLE 14

HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS

This table presents the results of a hierarchical regression of spousal beliefs, communications and moods on wives' marital satisfaction (WMARSAT). Refer to Table 2 for variable acronym legend.

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Cumulative</u> <u>r^2</u>	<u>Increase</u> <u>in r^2</u>	<u>F-test</u> <u>on increment</u>	<u>p</u> <u>value</u>
WCONV	.48	.48	42.93	.001
TWDEPDEJ	.59	.11	13.02	.001
WDISDES	.59	.00	2.08	.16

$R = .78$ $p < .001$

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Hypothesis #1: Beliefs and Marital Satisfaction

Of the five dysfunctional relationship beliefs, only two, Disagreement is Destructive and Sexes are Different were significantly and negative related to marital satisfaction; and only the wives' Sexes are Different beliefs were related to husbands' marital happiness. Contrary to prediction, Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were positively related to husbands' and wives marital satisfactions when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed statistically; however, only the husbands' partial correlation reached significance. Regarding the correlations for the remaining subscales: husbands' Mindreading beliefs were positively related to husbands' satisfaction when Disagreement is Destructive was controlled for, whereas the wives' Mindreading beliefs were negatively related to marital happiness. Neither correlation reached significance, however. In addition, couples' and spousal Partners Cannot Change beliefs were also nonsignificantly related to marital satisfaction when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed statistically.

Hypothesis #2: Beliefs and Marital Communications

As predicted, Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and negatively related to adaptive marital communications, and significantly and positively related to

maladaptive marital communications. Contrary to prediction, the majority of the partial correlations for Mindreading, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism and Sexes are Different Beliefs and marital communications were nonsignificant when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were removed statistically.

Hypothesis #3: Beliefs and Moods

As predicted, Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and positively related to negative moods, and significantly and negatively related to positive moods. Furthermore, wives' Mindreading, Sexual Perfectionism and Partners Cannot Change beliefs were significantly and positively related to negative moods when Disagreement is Destructive was controlled for; however, contrary to prediction, husbands' Mindreading and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were significantly and negatively related to a majority of the negative mood variables when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed statistically. The majority of the partial correlations for Sexes are Different beliefs and moods did not, however, reach significance when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were removed.

Hypothesis #4: Predictors of Marital Satisfaction

As predicted, belief, communication and mood variables significantly predicted couples' satisfaction and formed a tripartite regression model for their marital happiness. However, separate regression analyses for spousal satisfactions revealed that different variables predicted husbands' and wives' marital happiness. Whereas Disagreement is Destructive and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs, and vigorous moods shared the majority of the common variance in husbands' marital satisfaction scores, adaptive verbal communications and depressed and dejected moods accounted for a majority of the shared variance in wives' satisfaction scores.

Chapter IV

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to assess the validity of the dysfunctional relationship belief construct for a nonclinical marital population, and to explore the relationships among dysfunctional relationship beliefs, marital communications, moods, and satisfaction. In doing so, the Relationship Belief Inventory (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982) was correlated with self-report measures of marital communications, moods and marital satisfaction. The results of this investigation fully support the construct validity of only one of the RBI subscales, and give partial support to two others. In addition, the findings support a belief-communication-mood model of couple marital satisfaction; however, the results indicate that different factors predict husbands' and wives' satisfactions in marriage.

CONSTRUCT VALIDITY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BELIEF INVENTORY

The results of the correlational analyses indicate that only the Disagreement is Destructive subscale has construct validity for husbands and wives. As predicted, Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were significantly and negatively related to the frequency of adaptive verbal and nonverbal

marital communications and positive moods, trust, and marital satisfaction, and significantly and positively related to maladaptive communications and negative moods. In this regard, Baush et al (1974) found in their studies of married couples that conflict-avoidant spouses were characterized by 1) their use of manipulating and distracting communications techniques, 2) confused and distorted communication channels, 3) language laden with irrelevant remarks, and 4) anxiety when conflict arises. The findings that spousal Disagreement is Destructive beliefs were positively related to how much partners think their spouse says one thing but means another, to how much they insult each other when they are angry, and to their frequency of confusing and anxious moods supports Baush et al's observations.

The negative relationship found between Disagreement is Destructive beliefs and trusting moods is further support for the construct validity of this subscale. Rempel, Holmes and Zanna (1985) argue for a tripartite model of interpersonal trust, one which includes expectancy factors of predictability, dependability and faith. They contend that a sense of trust in one's partner is, in part, a function of how reliable each perceives the other's motives and actions. Moreover, they argue that these expectations only grow within a relationship atmosphere in which risk-taking is a salient component of spousal interactions. In

their view, spouses are only able to make attributions that their partner can be trusted if they have had the experience of testing their expectancies and attributions during the course of the relationship. By avoiding contentious issues, Rempel, Holmes and Zanna believe that spouses cannot acquire the information needed to foster a feeling of trust. The writer's findings lend support to their position that the more partners adhere to conflict avoidant schemata like Disagreement is Destructive, the less trusting they feel.

Whereas the results of this study supported the construct validity of the Disagreement is Destructive belief subscale of the RBI, the Mindreading is Expected, Partners Cannot Change subscales were generally nonsignificantly related to marital satisfaction, communications and moods. The Sexual Perfectionism and Sexes are Different subscales were the only ones which were significantly related to marital satisfaction; and the data indicate that their construct validity is gender-typed. Only the husbands' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were significantly related to his satisfaction and moods; the relationship between the wives' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs and marital satisfaction did not reach significance. In light of the significantly greater mean Sexual Perfectionism beliefs among the husbands, and the finding that these beliefs only predicted his satisfaction scores and not those of the wives, suggests that the spouses differ in the level of importance each

places on sex in a close relationship. This finding was well-documented in Komarovsky's (1967) study of working-class married couples, in which she reported that many of the wives expressed less interest in sexual relations than their husbands, and a greater desire for intimacy.

The results of the present study suggest that wives are not only less interested in sexual relations than their husbands, but that they interpret these beliefs differently. Contrary to prediction, husbands' and wives' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were positively related to their satisfaction levels; however, only the husbands' correlations reached significance. Moreover, whereas husbands' beliefs were negatively related to their disturbed moods, wives' beliefs were positively related to her negative moods. These findings suggest that the Sexual Perfectionism subscale may not only be assessing adaptive sexual beliefs in both partners when Disagreement is Destructive beliefs are not a salient cognitive component of their marital interactions, but that husbands and wives react differently to these mental representations. In this regard, Sherfey (1974) argues that females, in contrast to males in our culture, are socialized with negative expectancies and attitudes to sex, even though they can experience far greater sexual expression and satisfaction than males. Given her argument, and Komarovsky's (1967) findings of less interest in sexual relations among her

sample of wives, perhaps, in a relationship where husbands have a greater adherence to Sexual Perfectionism beliefs, wives may feel compelled to perform sexually when they really desire intimacy, and feel moody as a consequence. The positive relationship found between wives' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs and the frequency of depressed moods suggests that they may feel depressed and dejected when these mental representations are activated.

Though husbands' Sexual Perfectionism beliefs were significantly related to satisfaction and moods, they were virtually unrelated to marital communications. An explanation for these nonsignificant findings may lie in the measures of marital communications employed in this study. The vast majority of the scale items of the PCI and MCI measured the frequencies of intimate verbal behaviour, self-disclosure, and nonverbal communications. As such, these items may not have been an adequate measure of the communicative behaviours associated with Sexual Perfectionism beliefs. Perhaps, measures of spousal congruence on the frequency and quality of their sexual relations would have been a more useful measure.

As the writer reported gender differences for the Sexual Perfectionism subscale, discrepancies were also noted between husbands and wives for their Sexes are Different beliefs. Whereas wives' Sexes are Different beliefs were significantly and negatively related to husbands' marital

satisfaction, neither the husbands' nor the wives' beliefs were related to their satisfactions. Given that the subscale includes items like "Men and women have different emotional needs" and "Men and women do not need the same basic things out of a relationship", these findings raise several questions concerning the effects of gender-role schemata on marital satisfaction. In their book, Sex and Gender, Archer and Llyons (1985) argue that men are socialized for relationship behaviours which are characterized by competition, whereas women are programmed for negotiation and affiliation in their relationship interactions. They contend that the socialization patterns of the males contradicts, and is in opposition to the behaviour expected of them as husbands and fathers, an inconsistency not found within female social development.

As males are socialized to be competitive and typically emotionally restrictive in interpersonal relationships, it is conceivable that females are also socialized to view males in this manner. Consequently, as wives, they may collude with their husbands in restricting his cross-gender behaviour, and reinforce his traditional gender-role schemata in a relationship which demands considerable latitude in gender-role flexibility. The finding that spousal Sexes are Different beliefs were significantly and positively related, and that only the wives' beliefs predicted husbands' satisfaction lends support to this interpretation.

Though partners' Mindreading beliefs were nonsignificantly related to their satisfaction levels, these beliefs were significantly and positively related to wives' disturbed moods, and negatively related to husbands' disturbed moods. The results suggest that Mindreading beliefs, like Sexual Perfectionism beliefs, may have different connotations for the sexes. In his observational studies of marital interactions, Gottman (1979) reported that mindreading was usually associated with negative affect in distressed couples, and with neutral affect in nondistressed marriages. While gender differences were not reported, the results of the present study indicate that the Mindreading negative affect relationship may be limited to the wives. Perhaps, mindreading for females in close heterosexual relationships with men who are less verbal than themselves signals a failed attempt at trying to communicate with their spouse, with disturbing moods as a consequence. On the other hand, for the less verbal husbands, expecting mindreading from their wives may be their attempt at impelling their spouse to garner information about their thoughts and feelings without directly communicating their concerns. The negative relationship found between wives' Mindreading beliefs and their satisfaction, and the positive one found for the husbands, would seem to support this argument. Such an interpretation must, however, be taken with caution, as the Mindreading by satisfaction partial correlations did not reach significance.

Though Edelson and Epstein (1982) constructed their Relationship Belief Inventory on the premises that each subscale would measure a dysfunctional relationship belief, and that in small amounts these beliefs could still have deleterious effects on marital satisfaction, the generally nonsignificant correlations for Partners Cannot Change and Mindreading is Expected beliefs suggests that in the absence of Disagreement is Destructive beliefs, these mental representations are relatively inconsequential to partner satisfaction. Perhaps, spouses who strongly believe that disagreements are harmful to their relationship are unable to communicate their other dysfunctional beliefs to their partner, thus allowing them to fester and interfere with their marital relations. Though the spousal scores on the RBI subscales were too low to test this hypothesis, and the number of distressed couples in this sample were too few (n=10) for comparative analyses, the moderate to strong positive relationships found between Disagreement is Destructive and the other belief subscales lends support to this interpretation. Furthermore, the reversal in the direction of the correlations among Sexual Perfectionism, Mindreading and marital satisfaction when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed, buttresses the writer's implied argument that Disagreement is Destructive is a superordinate belief in close relationships, determining hierarchically the deleterious effects of subordinate relationship-oriented mental representations.

The pattern of intercorrelations among the belief subscales suggests that spouses have different belief hierarchies in marriage, and that the "architecture" of their cognitions are structured to reduce the cognitive dissonance each experiences between their beliefs concerning wishes to maintain the marriage, and perceptions regarding the quantity and quality of their marital interactions. The results indicated that husbands had a stronger relationship between Disagreement is Destructive and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs than the wives, whereas the wives had a stronger association between Disagreement is Destructive and Sexes are Different beliefs. Perhaps, husbands, who as males are socialized to believe in the ethic of "personal responsibility" (Gilligan, 1982) and to regard sex as their only acceptable expression of intimacy, employ Sexual Perfectionism beliefs attributionally when Disagreement is Destructive cognitions are salient to reduce the cognitive dissonance they experience between beliefs concerning relationship investment (I need this marriage), and those pertaining to the distress they experience in their marriage (I am unhappy in this marriage), i.e. "My marriage is an unhappy one because I have not satisfied my wife sexually." In contrast, wives, who as females are socialized to believe in the ethic of "collective responsibility" (Gilligan, 1982) and to be sensitive to relationship dynamics, employ Sexes are Different beliefs attributionally when Disagreement is

Destructive cognitions are salient as a way of reducing the dissonance they experience between their beliefs regarding relationship investment (I need this marriage), and marital distress (I am unhappy in this marriage), i.e. "Our relationship is unhappy because our needs are fundamentally different." In fact, these belief hierarchies may develop into self-fulfilling prophecies, ones which spouses may increasingly utilize as Disagreement is Destructive beliefs become a salient cognitive component of their marital interactions. As noted earlier, Sexual Perfectionism beliefs engender mood disturbance among wives, whereas Sexes are Different beliefs lessen husbands' marital satisfaction. And spouses appear to increase these cognitions as they deepen their conviction that disagreeing is harmful to the relationship. Perhaps, in marriages where husbands strongly believe that disagreeing with their spouse is deleterious to the relationship, and that they must be perfect lovers, their beliefs and concomitant behaviour may elicit Sexual Perfectionism cognitions and negative moods in their wives and, consequently, reinforce their belief that they are not fully satisfying their spouse's sexual needs. Similarly, in marriages where wives strongly believe that disagreeing with their partner is harmful to the relationship, and that the sexes are fundamentally different, their beliefs and concomitant behaviour may restrict their husbands' cross-gender behaviour and, consequently, reinforce their belief

that the sexes have different emotional needs in marriage. Conceivably, spouses who are trapped in these self-fulfilling prophecy cycles without the opportunity to communicate and refute their dysfunctional beliefs, may become increasingly distressed and dissatisfied in their marriage.

MARITAL BELIEFS, COMMUNICATIONS, MOODS AND SATISFACTION

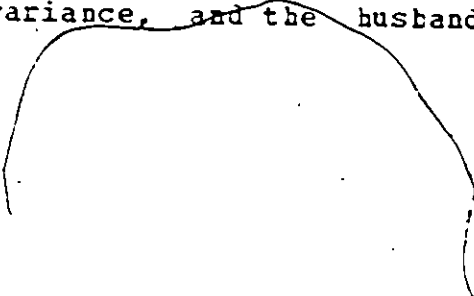
The results of the hierarchical regression analyses of couples' variables on their satisfaction scores indicates that their happiness with their relationship is predicted by low levels of Disagreement is Destructive beliefs, high frequency of adaptive verbal communications, low frequency of depressing and dejecting moods, and to a lesser extent, a high frequency of trusting moods. Whereas these findings support the general hypothesis of a belief-communication-mood model of marital satisfaction, the results obtained from separate regression analyses of husbands' and wives' variables on their respective satisfaction scores, indicate that different factors influence each spouses' perceived happiness with their marriage. Whereas Disagreement is Destructive and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs and vigorous moods predicted 66% of the common variance in husbands' satisfaction scores, and communications only 2%, adaptive verbal communications and depressed and dejected moods predicted 59% of the shared variance in wives' satisfaction scores, and the one belief predictor, Disagreement is

Destructive, did not reliably add any unique variance to the model over and above that of adaptive verbal communications and depressed and dejected moods. The different predictive relationships for the spouses suggest possible gender-role schemata effects on the satisfaction husbands and wives garner from their marriage.

In this regard, Cancian (1985) argues that the dissatisfaction spouses feel in their marriage is determined by their differing definitions of "love". She argues that women view love in marriage in traditional feminine terms, that is, as attachment, affection and emotional and verbal intimacy, whereas men define love in masculine terms, such as sexual relations, helping with the household duties and offering advice. Cancian contends that the spousal denotations for love in marriage develop from the contrasting socialization patterns of males and females, and that the expectations which arise from these different definitions result in conflict and dissatisfaction. She argues that females are socialized to be affiliative and verbal in close relationships, and may expect their husbands to show their in a similar fashion. In contrast, men are socialized to be unresponsive and pragmatic in their relationships with significant others, and may, upon their wives' expectations and advances for verbal intimacy, feel threatened and withdraw, leaving their spouse helpless to exert any control over their marital interactions. The

finding that depressing and dejecting moods significantly predicted over 11% of the wives' satisfaction variance seems to concur with Cancian's argument that wives' primary emotional response to marital disappointments is depression and dejection. Moreover, the finding that husbands' vigorous moods significantly predicted a portion of satisfaction variance underscores the differences between husbands and wives in their emotional reactions to the demands of marriage.

Rubin (1976) argues that the new cultural ideas of intimacy and communication fostered by the feminist movement and the media popularization of psychology has had an effect on the relations between husbands and wives. In her interviews with married couples, she cites several cases of wives who push their husbands to communicate, but are unsure of what they really want in their marriage, and fear abandonment by their husbands if they push too far. Rubin also notes that the husbands are also afraid and confused, not knowing what to do with their wives' requests for greater verbal intimacy, and feel afraid that they will say the wrong thing. According to Rubin (1976), these husbands reported that they are happy with "the old ways", but afraid to say something lest they engender marital conflict. Perhaps, the finding that wives' verbal communications significantly predicted the largest share of their satisfaction variance, and the husbands' largest share was



predicted by his belief that Disagreement is Destructive reflects the conflict that Rubin's couples are experiencing.

Even though these interpretations appear to contradict the earlier one regarding the wives reinforcement of their husbands' traditional gender-role, conceivably wives may have their traditional and egalitarian gender-role schemata operating concurrently. They may, on the one hand, have a desire for greater verbal intimacy with their husbands fueled, in part, by changing attitudes in society and, on the other hand, are trapped by their own traditional gender-role schemata and beliefs regarding male cross-gender behaviour in close relationships. Though husbands' adaptive verbal communications should have predicted the wives' satisfaction given these arguments, the lower verbal activity found among the husbands in this study suggests that the wives may have accustomed themselves to their "silent" partners, and may engage in verbal communications with their spouse for intrinsic purposes regardless of their husbands' responsiveness. The moderately stronger relationship found between wives' frequency of adaptive verbal communications and their satisfaction scores as compared to husbands' verbal communications and their satisfaction lends support to this interpretation.

The finding that Disagreement is Destructive beliefs only significantly predicted the husbands' satisfaction variance suggests that they not only employ this mental

representation as a response to their wives' requests for greater verbal intimacy, but that they may feel ineffective in this type of task. As noted earlier, male socialization does not encourage verbal and affiliative behaviors in close relationships. In fact, one of the most reliable findings in the sex difference literature is the greater verbal skill among females (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1978). In close relationships where good verbal skills are needed, men may avoid communicating their concerns to their spouse for fear of appearing inadequate. Interestingly, husbands' mindreading is expected beliefs were positively correlated with their satisfaction levels, whereas wives' mindreading was negatively related to their marital happiness. Perhaps, men employ Disagreement is Destructive beliefs as a trade-off: trying to communicate and failing to do so may engender more distress than withdrawing and impelling the wives to mind-read. A more parsimonious explanation for these findings is suggested by Miller's (1984) research on nonverbal communication in marital relationships. She found that nondistressed wives had more accurate decoding skills than their distressed counterparts. Given that mean marital satisfaction scores for couples and spouses were in the nondistressed range, and their mean frequency of nonverbal communications was relatively high, it is conceivable that these wives were accurate mindreaders, and were able to abstain from verbal intercourse with their husbands without engendering serious relationship distress.

Chapter V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study was undertaken to investigate the role of dysfunctional relationship beliefs in normative marital dynamics. In doing so, the construct validity of the Relationship Belief Inventory was examined for a nonclinical population of married couples. The results indicated that the Disagreement is Destructive subscale of the EEI has construct validity for husbands' and wives, having significantly correlated with self-report measures of marital satisfaction, communications, and moods in their predicted directions. Though the Sexual Perfectionism subscale was found to be related to marital satisfaction and, contrary to prediction, in the positive direction, this subscale was insignificantly related to wives' happiness in marriage. Furthermore, this subscale, contrary to prediction, was negatively related to husbands disturbing moods, and positively related to wives' negative moods. The writer has thus argued that Sexual Perfectionism beliefs may have different connotations for males and females in close relationships when Disagreement is Destructive beliefs are not a salient cognitive component of marital interactions. Whereas these beliefs appear to reduce negative moods among

husbands, they appear to promote depressing and dejecting moods in the wives, possibly, as a response to their unfulfilled emotional intimacy expectations.

Similar, though less reliable results, were found for Mindreading is Expected subscale of the RBI. The writer suggested that Mindreading is Expected beliefs may have different connotations for husbands and wives. For females in close relationships, these beliefs may trigger disturbed moods as a consequence of their failed attempts at communicating with less verbal husbands. Husbands, in contrast, may activate these beliefs to avoid communicating directly, and risk testing their developed verbal communication skills. It was also suggested that husbands' conflict-avoidance may be adaptive if their wives are accurate decoders of their nonverbal behaviour. While these findings shed light on the differences between spousal Mindreading and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs, further research is needed to cross-validate these findings, for the correlations for these belief subscales were relatively weak.

The only other dysfunctional relationship belief which was significantly related to marital satisfaction was wives' Sexes are Different beliefs; and this belief was only related to husbands' marital happiness, and in a negative direction. Though this relationship was a weak one, and the relative contribution of this variable to the shared

variance in husbands' satisfaction scores was small, these significant findings do beg the question of whether wives may be reinforcing their husbands' traditional gender-role schemata. Perhaps, further research could be undertaken to compare how Sexes are Different beliefs operate in marriages which are strongly traditional, versus those marriages which are less bound by traditional stereotypes and are more flexible in their beliefs concerning cross-gender behaviour. Furthermore, research should be undertaken to investigate the behavioural and communication styles associated with these beliefs. Unfortunately, the present study failed to uncover any reliable associations between Sexes are Different beliefs and marital communications. Presumably, wives who strongly believe that the sexes have fundamentally different needs in marriage should emit some form of punishing verbal or nonverbal communicative signals when their spouse engages in cross-gender behaviour, ones which would limit the satisfaction he garners from the marriage.

The finding that Sexual Perfectionism and, to a less reliable extent, Mindreading beliefs, were both positively correlated with marital satisfaction when the effects of Disagreement is Destructive were removed statistically, suggests that in the absence of the latter belief, the former beliefs may be assessing adaptive mental representations. The writer argued that Disagreement is Destructive may be a superordinate belief in close

relationships, influencing hierarchically the extent to which subordinate mental representations engender distress. Furthermore, it was argued that husbands and wives may have gender-typed cognitive hierarchies in marriage, and that these structures may operate to reduce the cognitive dissonance spouses experience between their beliefs regarding relationship investment, and their thoughts concerning the distress they experience in marriage. It was speculated that the two gender-typed belief hierarchies found in the present study, namely, Disagreement is Destructive and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs for husbands, and Disagreement is Destructive and Sexes are Different beliefs for the wives, may develop into self-fulfilling prophecies among spouses who are particularly conflict-avoidant. Further research could help clarify these cognition hierarchies by investigating the relationships among these beliefs and other mental representations found to be important in close relationships. Presumably, partners who strongly believe that disagreeing with their spouse is harmful to the marriage and are trapped within self-fulfilling prophecy cycles, should have external marital locus of control expectancies, since these spouses would likely have few developed self-efficacy expectations for their relationship happiness. In fact, a recent study by Miller et al (in press) found that couples who were external for marital locus of control were significantly less

engaging in their problem-solving attempts than internal couples.

Though the relationship between dysfunctional relationship beliefs and trusting moods was explored in this study, and a significant and negative correlation was reported, the trust measure used in this investigation was only a single item from the POMS, and does not do justice to the multidimensional nature of the trust construct proposed by Reapel, Holmes and Janna (1995). Further research studies might investigate how Disagreement is Destructive beliefs relate to different aspects of their trust model, specifically, the components of predictability, dependability and faith. Presumably, spouses who believe that disagreeing is harmful to their relationship should have less of these trust expectancies.

In addition to finding construct validity for 3 subscales of the RBI, the results of this study also supported a belief-communication-mood model of couple marital satisfaction. However, the results of separate regression analyses of spousal variables on their respective satisfaction scores indicated that the majority of the variance in husbands' satisfaction scores was predicted by Disagreement is Destructive and Sexual Perfectionism beliefs and vigorous moods, whereas adaptive verbal communications and depressed and dejected moods predicted a majority of the common variance in the wives' satisfaction scores. The

writer argued that these differences may lie in the conflicting definitions spouses have for "love" in marriage, and the influence of gender-role schemata in their marital interactions. Further research studies should be undertaken to assess the concurrent development of dysfunctional relationship beliefs, communications, moods and their resulting gender-role schemata, by tracing the course of their ontogeny during childhood, adolescence and early adulthood. Conceivably, some of the RBI subscales, like Disagreement is Destructive, could be modified to facilitate investigations of the cognitive dynamics underlying parental, sibling and peer relationships, ones which are characteristic of these life periods. Furthermore, the Disagreement is Destructive subscale could be adapted to study how this belief operates in adult-oriented relationships, like those of the care-giver and therapeutic variety.

Though the influence of demographic variables was negligible, and the variables the writer employed for his study predicted 76% of the variance in couples' satisfaction scores, 71% of the husbands' and 59% of the wives' common variance, it is acknowledged that replication of the present study is necessary to insure the reliability of its findings. Furthermore, the percentage of the unaccounted variance in couples' and spousal marital satisfaction scores indicates that other factors important to relationship

satisfaction were not assessed in this study. Perhaps, variables external to the relationship could be investigated, such as the influence of perceived quality of spousal social networks, and extra-marital friendships. Recent research in this area (DeJong-Gierveld, 1986) has found that husbands and wives differ in their subjective evaluations of their social networks, and its relationship to the loneliness and dissatisfaction each feels within the marriage. These variables could conceivably be included as independent variables in future studies employing the writer's spousal and couple regression equations for marital satisfaction. In addition to these limitations, it should be acknowledged that all the measures used to evaluate the construct validity of the REI were self-report, and that any firm conclusions regarding the validity of this measure should be arrived at through a multitrait-multimethod validity analysis (Campbell & Fiske, 1959), one which would insure the results were not influenced by method bias.

In spite of these shortcomings, the significant results obtained from this investigation lend further empirical support to a cognitive component in marital satisfaction. Though none of the dysfunctional relationship beliefs predicted the wives' satisfaction scores when the variance for communications and moods were accounted for, only five of the wives' relationship beliefs were assessed in the present study. Presumably, the taxonomy of their mental

representations, as well as those of the husbands' cognitions in close relationships are more diverse. Further investigations should explore the feasibility of measuring other relationship-oriented cognitions, such as self-efficacy expectations for marital role competence, and beliefs about other aspects of married life like humour and interpersonal play. In all likelihood, partners should have beliefs about their efficacy in coping with role demands, and the place of humour and playfulness in their interactions. Recent work suggests that these factors may have important consequences for marital satisfaction (Bandura, 1982; Doherty, 1981; Betcher, 1981). Answers to these and other research questions should help us clarify the structure and role of mental representations in marriage and other close relationships, and lead us to a better understanding of the variables which influence this complex sphere of human activity.

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Appendix A

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the form below by filling in the blanks, and/or by checking your answer. Please answer EVERY question.

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Occupation: _____

Number of Years of Schooling: _____

Is this your first marriage? _____ (yes/no)

Number of years married: _____

Number of children living at home? _____

Ages of children living at home? _____

Do your children reduce the amount of quality time you and your spouse can spend together alone? _____ (yes/no)

What is your combined annual family income?

under \$10,000 _____

\$10,000 to 20,000 _____

\$20,000 to 30,000 _____

\$30,000 to 40,000 _____

\$40,000 to 50,000 _____

\$50,000 and over _____

What is your religious affiliation? Protestant _____

Catholic____
Jewish____
Mcslem____
Other____
No religion____

Does your religion play an
important role in directing your life? _____ (yes/no)

What is your ethnic background? _____

Does your ethnic background play an
important role in directing your life? _____ (yes/no)

Thank you.

Appendix B

RELATIONSHIP BELIEF INVENTORY

The statements below describe ways in which a person might feel about a relationship with another person. Please mark the space next to the statement according to how strong you believe that it is true or false for you. Please mark every one. Write in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 to stand for the following answers.

- 5: I STRONGLY believe that the statement is TRUE.
- 4: I believe that the statement is TRUE.
- 3: I believe that the statement is PROBABLY TRUE,
or more true than false.
- 2: I believe that the statement is PROBABLY FALSE,
or more false than true.
- 1: I believe that the statement is FALSE.
- 0: I STRONGLY believe that the statement is FALSE.

D+ 1. If your partner expresses disagreement with
with your ideas, s/he probably does not think
highly of you.

M- 2. I do not expect my partner to sense all
my moods.

- C+ 3. Damages done early in a relationship probably cannot be reversed.
- S+ 4. I get upset if I think I have not completely satisfied my partner sexually.
- MF- 5. Men and women have the same basic emotional needs.
- D+ 6. I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me.
- M- 7. If I have to tell my partner that something is important to me, it does not mean that s/he is insensitive to me.
- C+ 8. My partner does not seem capable of behaving other than she does know.
- S- 9. If I'm not in the mood for sex when my partner is, I don't get upset about it.
- MF+ 10. Misunderstandings between partners generally are due to inborn differences in psychological makeups of men and women.
- D+ 11. I take it as a personal insult when my partner disagrees with an important idea of mine.
- M+ 12. I get very upset if my partner does not recognize how I am feeling and I have to

tell him/her.

- C- 13. A partner can learn to become more responsive to his/her partner's needs.
- S+ 14. A good sexual partner can get himself/herself aroused for sex whenever necessary.
- MF+ 15. Men and women probably will never understand the opposite sex very well.
- D- 16. I like it when my partner presents views different from mine.
- M+ 17. People who have a close relationship can sense each other's needs as if they could read each other's minds.
- C- 18. Just because my partner has acted in ways that upset me does not mean that s/he will do so in the future.
- S+ 19. If I cannot perform well sexually whenever my partner is in the mood, I would consider that I have a problem.
- MF- 20. Men and women need the same basic things out of a relationship.
- D+ 21. I get very upset when my partner and I cannot see things the same way.

- M+ 22. It is important to me for my partner to anticipate my needs by sensing changes in my moods.
- C+ 23. A partner who hurts you badly once probably will hurt you again.
- S- 24. I feel OK about my lovemaking even if my partner does not achieve orgasm.
- MF- 25. Biological differences between men and women are not major causes of couple's problems.
- D+ 26. I cannot tolerate it when my partner argues with me.
- M+ 27. A partner should know what you are thinking of feeling without having to tell.
- C- 28. If my partner wants to change, I believe that s/he can do it.
- S- 29. If my sexual partner does not get satisfied completely, it does not mean that I have failed.
- MF+ 30. One of the major causes of marital problems is that men and women have different emotional needs.
- D+ 31. When my partner and I disagree, I feel like

our relationship is falling apart.

- M+ 32. People who love each other know exactly what each other's thoughts are without a word ever being said.
- C- 33. If you don't like the way a relationship is going, you can make it better.
- S- 34. Some difficulties in my sexual performance do not mean personal failure to me.
- MP+ 35. You can't really understand someone of the opposite sex.
- D- 36. I do not doubt my partner's feelings for me when we argue.
- M+ 37. If you have to ask your partner for something, it shows that she was not "tuned into" your needs.
- C+ 38. I do not expect my partner to be able to change.
- S+ 39. When I do not seem to be performing well sexually, I get upset.
- MP+ 40. Men and women will always be mysteries to each other.
-

Scoring of Relationship Belief Inventory

The subscales are as follows:

- D = Disagreement is Destructive
- E = Mindreading is Expected
- C = Partner's Cannot Change
- S = Sexual Perfectionism
- MF = The Sexes are Different

Compute a total for each subscale as follows:

For positively keyed items, leave the subject's response as is.

For negatively keyed items, reverse the response so that

Subjects Response	becomes	Score
5		0
4		1
3		2
2		1
1		4
0		5

Then compute the sum for the 9 items on each subscale.

Appendix C

PRIMARY COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

1. How often do you and your spouse talk over pleasant things that happen during the day?
2. How often do you and your spouse talk over unpleasant things that happen during the day?
3. Do you and your spouse talk over things you disagree about or have difficulties over?
4. Do you and your spouse talk over things in which you are both interested?
5. Does your spouse adjust what s/he says and how s/he says it to the way you seem to feel at the moment?
(ES)
6. When you start to ask a question, does your spouse know what it is before you ask? (ES; NV)
7. Do you know the feelings of your spouse from his/her facial and bodily gestures? (NV)
8. Do you and your spouse avoid certain subjects in conversation?
9. Does your spouse explain or express himself/herself to you through a glance or gestures? (ES; NV)
10. Do you and your spouse discuss things together before making an important decision?

11. Can your spouse tell what kind of day you have had without asking? (ES; NV)
12. Your spouse wants to visit some close friends or relatives. You don't particularly enjoy their company. Would you tell him/her this?
13. Does your spouse discuss matters of sex with you? (ES)
14. Do you and your spouse use words which have a special meaning not understood by outsiders?
15. How often does your spouse sulk or pout? (ES; NV)
16. Can you and your spouse discuss your most sacred without feelings of restraint or embarrassment?
17. Do you avoid telling your spouse things which put you in a bad light?
18. You and your spouse are visiting friends. Something is said by the friends which causes you to glance at each other. Would you understand each other? (NV)
19. How often can you tell as much from the tone of voice of your spouse as from what s/he actually says?
20. How often do you and your spouse talk with each other about personal problems?
21. Do you feel that in most matters your spouse knows what you are trying to say? (ES)
22. Would you rather talk about intimate matters with your spouse than with some other person?

23. Do you understand the meaning of your spouse's facial expressions? (NV)
24. If you and your spouse are visiting friends or relatives and one of you starts to say something, does the other take over the conversation without the feeling of interrupting? (ES)
25. During marriage, have you and your spouse, in general, talked most things over together?
-

KEY

ES = Evaluation of partner's communication

NV = Nonverbal item

Appendix D

MARITAL COMMUNICATION INVENTORY ITEMS

1. Do you find your spouse's tone of voice irritating?
2. Does your spouse insult you when s/he gets angry with you?
3. Do you feel that s/he says one thing but really means another?
4. Do you pretend you're listening to your spouse when actually you're not really listening?

Appendix E
COVER LETTER

To Our Volunteer Couple:

We would like to begin by thanking you for volunteering for our research project. By participating in this research endeavor you will not only be helping us better understand how partners communicate with each other in close relationships, but will also be contributing to the completion of a graduate student's M.A. thesis project.

Before we begin, we would like to bring your attention to a problem we have encountered in the past. Typically, when couples enter into a research project of this sort they try and put on their best possible face for us. This is perfectly natural. However, today we would like you to be as frank as possible in your answers. Our results will have no meaning unless you and others feel free to respond as you normally would. Moreover, to insure the privacy of your responses, no one outside of Dr. Page and myself will have any direct knowledge of your answers, and they will remain completely confidential.

Again, thanks for volunteering.

Sincerely yours,

Appendix F
CONSENT FORM

I hereby agree to participate as a subject in a study being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Stewart Page of the Department of Psychology, University of Windsor.

I understand that:

1. My participation in this study is voluntary, and I can, if I wish, withdraw at any time during the proceedings.
2. My anonymity will be preserved by removing identifying information from the materials, the data will be fully confidential, will be used for research purposes only.
3. I will receive a complete explanation of the procedures and purpose of the study at the end of the session.

Signed _____

Name in Print _____

Date _____

Appendix G

PRELIMINARY ANALYSES

INTERCORRELATIONS: REI BELIEF SUBSCALES

	CDISDES HDISDES WDISDES	CME HME WME	CPCC HPCC WPCC	CSP HSP WSP
CME	.50***			
HME	.42***			
WME	.48***			
CPCC	-.69***	-.31*		
HPCC	-.57***	-.37**		
WPCC	-.66***	-.26*		
CSP	.71***	-.32**	-.63***	
HSP	.71***	-.41***	-.49***	
WSP	.58***	-.41***	-.50***	
CSAD	.60***	.47***	-.48***	-.49***
HSAD	-.42***	-.53***	-.41***	-.35**
WSAD	-.56***	-.36***	-.35***	-.52***

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

INTERCORRELATIONS: COUPLE BELIEFS AND SATISFACTION

	CMARSAT
CDISDES	-.77***
CME	-.48***
CPCC	-.55***
CSP	-.40***
CSAD	-.52***

*** p < .001

INTERCORRELATIONS: BELIEFS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The following table presents the couple correlations between the subscales of the REI, MCI and the four items from the FCI.

	CDISDES	CME	CPCC	CSP	CSAD
CCCMV	-.60***	-.24*	-.49***	-.32*	-.50***
CCCMNV	-.50***	-.27*	-.44***	-.31**	-.47***
CSV1	.56***	.14	.28*	.24*	.24*
CINS	.53***	.16	.39**	.36**	.37**
CMA	.55***	.13	.50***	.43***	.35**
CNOLIS	.24*	.17	.21	.09	.26*

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

INTERCORRELATIONS: BELIEFS AND MOODS

The following table presents the couple correlations between the subscales of the RBI and those of the POMS. In addition, the correlations between the RBI subscales and the trust item are also listed.

	CDISDES	CME	CPCC	CSP	CSAD
TCDEPDEJ	-.64***	.29*	-.39**	-.44***	-.37**
TCTENANX	.70***	.25*	-.47***	-.47***	-.39**
TCCONBE	.70***	.14	-.53***	.51***	-.39**
TCANGBES	.70***	-.25*	-.43**	-.41**	-.38**
TCFAT	.47***	.17	.27*	.33**	.22
CVIGOR	-.63***	-.35**	-.47***	-.45***	-.33**
CTRUST	-.48***	-.28*	-.37**	-.24*	-.23

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

NOTE: The correlations presented are those for the transformed negative mood variables.

INTERCORRELATIONS: SPOUSAL BELIEFS AND SATISFACTION

This table presents the same-sex spousal correlations for the subscales of the RBI and the Locke-Wallace.

	HMARSAT	WMARSAT
DISDES	-.70***	-.59***
ME	-.22	-.44***
PCC	-.36**	-.48***
SP	-.30*	-.20
SAD	-.31*	-.37**

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

INTERCORRELATIONS: SPOUSAL BELIEFS AND COMMUNICATIONS

This table presents the same-sex spousal correlations for the subscales of the RBI, PCI and the four MCI items.

	HDISDES WDISDES	HME WME	HPCC WPCC	HSP WSP	ESAD WSAD
HCCMV	-.57***	-.05	-.39**	-.35**	-.41***
WCCMV	-.48***	-.27	-.45***	-.28*	-.46***
HCCMV	-.36**	.00	-.27	-.27	-.34**
WCCMV	-.44***	-.16	-.39**	-.21	-.32*
HSVI	.20	-.02	.23	.03	.08
WSVI	.45***	.17	.16	.13	.22
HINS	.33**	-.06	.25	.13	.16
WINS	.39**	-.05	.21	.19	.32*
HMA	.39***	.11	.40**	.41***	.13
WMA	.40**	.14	.40**	.16	.34*
HNCLIS	.19	-.04	.29*	.02	.14
WNCLIS	.21	.30*	.09	.16	.33*

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

INTERCORRELATIONS: SPOUSAL BELIEFS, MOODS & TRUST

This table presents the same-sex spousal correlations for the subscales of the RBI with those of the POMS and its trust item.

	HDISDES WDISDES	HME WME	HPCC WPCC	HSP WSP	HSAD WSAD
THDEPDEJ	.46***	.02	.16	.24	.13
TWDEPDEJ	.65***	.39*	.41***	.42**	.45**
THTENANX	.59***	.06	.25*	.34**	.10
TWTENANX	.64***	.28*	.41***	.32**	.36**
THCONBE	.54***	-.11	.26*	.33*	.21
TWCONBE	.63***	.45***	.45***	.36**	.31*
THANGHCS	.46***	-.08	.17	.27	.10
TWANGHCS	.68***	.42***	.35**	.34**	.38**
THFAT	.33**	-.05	.15	.09	.13
TWFAT	.51***	.28	.24	.33**	.20
HVIGOR	-.41***	.01	-.33*	-.31*	-.06
WVIGOR	-.59***	-.34*	-.45***	-.31*	-.34**
HTRUST	-.48***	-.11	-.39**	-.23	-.30*
WTRUST	-.32*	-.31*	-.32*	-.27	-.14

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

Appendix B

REGRESSION EQUATIONS

COUPLES' MARITAL SATISFACTION

$$\text{CMARSAT} = 66.5544 + -1.1647(\text{CDISDES}) + 1.2170(\text{CCOMV}) + \\ -5.7698(\text{TCDPDEJ}) + 5.4855(\text{CTRQST})$$

HUSBANDS' MARITAL SATISFACTION

$$\text{HMARSAT} = 97.3153 + -2.4659(\text{HDISDES}) + 2.0594(\text{HVGCR}) \\ + 1.7871(\text{HSP}) + -.7626(\text{WSAD}) + -5.1944(\text{WSVI})$$

WIVES' MARITAL SATISFACTION

$$\text{WMARSAT} = 58.2018 + 1.5253(\text{WCOMV}) + -17.3650(\text{TWEPDEJ})$$

Appendix I

VITA AUCTORIS

- 1956 Born January 16th, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- 1969 Graduated Westminster Elementary School,
Cote St. Luc, Montreal, Quebec.
- 1973 Graduated Wagar High School, Cote St. Luc,
Montreal, Quebec.
- 1975 - 78 Kibbutz Gal-on, Israel.
- 1979 - 80 University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B.
- 1980 - 81 University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario.
- 1984 Graduated B.A. Honours Psychology,
University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.
- 1984 - Presently enrolled in Doctoral program,
clinical psychology, University of Windsor,
Windsor, Ontario.