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MARRIAGE CLOSE UP: A STUDY OF COUPLES EXPECTING THEIR FIRST CHILD

RALPH LAROSSA

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MARRIAGE CLOSE UP:
A STUDY OF
COUPLES EXPECTING THEIR FIRST CHILD
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TO MAUREEN
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ABSTRACT

MARRIAGE CLOSE UP:
A STUDY OF
COUPLES EXPECTING THEIR FIRST CHILD

by

RALPH LaROSSA

This research is essentially two studies in one. Manifestly, it is a study of how married couples respond to the first pregnancy--to the transition to parenthood. More importantly, it is a study of the structure and phenomenology of the husband-wife relationship. The methodological stance taken is holistic. No hypotheses are presented beforehand. Rather, only the two general questions which guided the inquiry are specified. (1) How does the husband-wife system work during the first pregnancy stage--during the transition to parenthood? (2) How does the husband-wife system work, in general?

Sixteen married couples were interviewed during the 12th, 20th, 28th, and 36th weeks of their respective first pregnancies. The interviews were conjoint (husband and wife together) and unstructured (non-standardized). They were conducted in the couples' homes, were taped and later
transcribed. Analysis of the interview transcripts was qualitative (the conceptual components of explanation were developed from the data).

The heart of the report consists of a presentation of four of the sixteen sample couples in a case study format. Each of these couples is followed (retrospectively) from before their marriage to and through (longitudinally) their respective first pregnancies. The level of analysis is a balance between the concrete and the abstract. Quotations from the couples give each case its depth. Substantive theories are integrated with the transcripts when their inclusion helps to explain a given sequence or event. The major analytical section of the report is the last chapter. It is essentially a synthesis of previous research findings, existing theories, and insights gleaned not only from the four case studies but from the total sample.

In answer to the first general question posed (How does the husband-wife system work during the first pregnancy stage—during the transition to parenthood?), it appears that even before the arrival of the first child the marital system undergoes shifts in its organization. These shifts are, for the most part, transformations in the type of conflict in the system and alterations in the balance of power. In answer to the second general question posed (How does the husband-wife system work, in general?), the
data indicate that the organizational shifts brought on by the transition to parenthood point to the general pattern. That is, marriage works as a system in conflict, and the total process through which social power is distributed and exercised (politics) is the system's nucleus.

The significance of these conclusions is that they contradict the conceptions of marriage and parenthood which are presently dominant. The suggestion that the family is better understood from a conflict rather than a consensus-equilibrial perspective is of course not new. What has been lacking however is empirical support for this contention. This research helps fill this void. In fact, this study may be the best available data on the explanatory potential of the conflict approach to family life.

In an effort to display the major axioms of the conflict orientation, a model of marital politics is presented. The conflict-power process is depicted as a system in which both the marital symbol structure (conventional sign structure) and the marital exchange structure (reward-cost structure) influence, and are influenced by, the marital power structure (the ability of the husband to affect marital life vs. the ability of the wife to affect marital life). The fact that the cognitive dimension is incorporated into the model is noteworthy. The point is the conflict approach as it is specified here does not
simply imply an exchange framework. Rather, conflict is said to imply politics, and politics is said to entail both symbols and exchange.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The most significant interpersonal relationship in American society is the husband-wife relationship. No other role set is more central or more valued. Yet, despite the importance of American marriage as a socio-cultural phenomenon, our scientific knowledge of the American marital dyad is extremely shallow. One reason for this is that mailed questionnaires and structured interviews, the most popular tools of the family researcher, are of limited value if one is interested in acquiring a depth understanding of the married state. Both strategies fail in that they force upon the couple the researcher's preconceived system of meanings rather than permit the couple's patterns to emerge. The few studies which attempt to deal with this problem by using unstructured interviews and/or home observations prove to be limited to the extent that they can provide a depth understanding of American conjugal life because of the a-marital bias they exhibit. The classics (e.g., Hess and Handel, 1959) as well as the more recent studies in this methodological vein (e.g., Kantor and Lehr, 1975) focus, for the most part, on the parent-child relationship.
The present inquiry is predicated on the assumption that there exists a real need for qualitative\(^1\) studies of American marriages. Based on conjoint, in-depth (unstructured) interviews with sixteen married couples over the course of their first pregnancies, it is manifestly a study of how couples respond to the first pregnancy--to the transition to parenthood. More importantly, and at a higher level of abstraction, it is an analysis of the structure and phenomenology of the husband-wife relationship.

Originally, the decision to study marriages during their first pregnancies was based on the supposition that socio-cultural systems became transparent when they are responding to a problem, special event, or crisis. This supposition is held by ethnographers in both sociology (e.g., Garfinkel, 1967) and anthropology (e.g., Lewis, 1959). The study's reliance on primiparous couples yields the additional benefit of providing some insights into the first pregnancy/transition to parenthood experience. The fact is although medical and psychological monographs and papers on pregnancy abound, there are few studies of couples expecting their first child.

\(^1\)"Qualitative methodology refers to those research strategies such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing, total participation in the activity being investigated, field work, etc., which allow the research to..." 'get close to the data,' thereby developing the analytical, conceptual, and categorical components of explanation from the data itself--rather than from the preconceived, rigidly structured, and highly quantified techniques that pigeonhole the empirical social world into operational definitions that the researcher has constructed" (Filstead, 1970:6).
The heart of this report consists of a presentation of four of the sixteen couples in a case study format. The rationale for this style is that it is one of the best ways to delineate the organization of complex systems. Weiss (1966:202), for example, discusses the type of information one might expect from case studies of marriages.

In a study of the organization of a marriage... only material of the density available in the study of a single case—or a few cases—could support speculation that a complex balance is maintained in the marriage dependent on the continued presence of the girl's mother, the continued availability for the husband of a group of men with whom he had been friendly for years, a particular patterning of activities outside the home, a particular set of job demands, and particular expectations of marriage and of each other on the part of the husband and wife. In a case approach there would be a wealth of anecdotal material bearing on the contribution of each element to the quality of the marriage. In addition, the couple themselves might appraise the role of various factors. If the case is followed over a period of time, there might be material describing the shift in the organization of the marriage coinciding with change in other factors. The repetition of incidents revealing information about a few interrelated themes—in general, the density and focus of the data—enables the investigator to become fairly confident of the validity of a quite complex description of the case organization.

Some of the illustrations Weiss mentions are exhibited by the couples documented here. One couple's marriage and transition to parenthood are greatly influenced by the actual and implied presence of the wife's mother. Another couple's experiences are centered around their work. Conflicting definitions of the husband-wife relationship contribute to marital problems in one and minor skirmishes in another.
All of the couples, in varying degrees, show organizational shifts over the course of the pregnancy.

One question that is often raised when a case study format is used is the question of generalization: What can we learn about the general case from the specific cases studied? The sixteen couples were not randomly selected; hence, no statistical support exists for generalization. Furthermore, although the sample as a whole is relatively heterogeneous (see Appendix D), the four case study couples are, for the most part, middle class and college educated. This is due to the fact that the four were chosen not because they were representative of the sample, but because they provided the most data. (Given the nature of data collection, unstructured conversational interviews, the characteristics of the case study couples are not surprising. Any decision based on the depth of the data would more than likely be biased toward the more articulate couples in the sample). So what can we learn from these husbands and wives?

First of all, it is important to emphasize that it is not the purpose of this research to test hypotheses or verify theory. Rather, it is my intent to describe, in detail, four variations of a social form (marriage during its transition to parenthood) and to generate from these descriptions, as well as from my notes on the other twelve couples, ideas about the nature of marriage and ideas about the nature of the first pregnancy and the transition to parenthood. In other
words, my data (the transcripts of the interviews) are meant to suggest ideas not prove them.² Given this, the breadth of the data (the degree to which it represents a specified population) is not as important as the depth of the data (the degree to which it covers the aspects of the phenomena in question). In this research breadth has been sacrificed for depth. The result is a study which depicts the husband-wife relationship in "flesh-and-blood" terms. The ideas which I have been able to generate from these depictions constitute the last chapter of the report.

A Holistic Approach

There exist essentially two general approaches in the study of phenomena--the analytical approach and the holistic approach (Weiss, 1966).

In the analytic approach the investigator ... takes as his task the isolating of elements from each other, or, perhaps, the identification of a small number of linked relationships. His investigation procedure will involve the identification of independent, dependent, and intervening variables; the assessment of the direction and strength of their linkages; and, perhaps, the assessment of the possibility that the strength of a linkage may be modified by the action of elements not part of the linkage.

In the holistic approach the investigator ... is concerned with identifying the nature of the system rather than with focusing on particular independent-dependent relations. He will tend to explain particular phenomena in terms of the action of the

---

²For a discussion of how theory can be generated from qualitative research, see Glazer and Strauss (1967).
system rather than in terms of some intersection of causal factors.... His chief interest might be phrased as "Taking it all together, how does the whole thing work?" (Weiss, 1966:200, emphasis mine).

The approach taken here is holistic. Central to this approach is the system notion. The definition of system subscribed to is Buckley's (1968:493).

We define a system in general as a complex of elements or components directly or indirectly related in a causal network, such that at least some of the components are related to some others in a more or less stable way at any one time. The interrelations may be mutual or unidirectional, linear, non-linear or intermittent, and varying degrees of causal efficacy or priority. The particular kinds of more or less stable inter-relationships or components that become established at any time constitute the particular structure of the system at that time.

Implicit in the above definition is the most important assumption made by the holistically oriented investigator. This assumption is nonsummativity (or emergence). Watzlawick et al. (1967:134-139) discuss this assumption as it applies to family systems.

A system cannot be taken for the sum of its parts; indeed, formal analysis of artificially isolated segments would destroy the very object of interest. It is necessary to neglect the parts for the gestalt and attend to the core of its complexity, its organization.... The analysis of a family is [therefore] not the sum of the analyses of its individual members. There are characteristics of the system ... that transcend the qualities of individual members ...

Given this conceptual approach and the qualitative methodological stance noted previously, it should be understandable why there will be no hypotheses presented. Rather, only the two general questions which have guided me in this
inquiry shall be specified. These are --

1. How does the husband-wife system work during the first pregnancy stage—during the transition to parenthood?

2. How does the husband-wife system work, in general?

**Organization of the Report**

Chapter two is devoted to a review of research relevant to the dissertation. The most important research on marriage and first pregnancy is reviewed first. Afterward, the most important research on the husband-wife relationship is examined.

Chapter three outlines the methodology and field techniques used. In addition to a discussion of problem formation, sample selection, and data collection, the chapter summarizes how I went about analyzing the transcripts and explains why I chose the case study form of presentation.

Chapters four through seven constitute the four case studies. Each of the couples is followed (retrospectively) from before their marriage to and through (longitudinally) their respective first pregnancies. The level of analysis is a balance between the concrete and the abstract. Quotations from the couples give each case its depth. Substantive theories are integrated with the transcripts when their inclusion helps to explain a given sequence or event.

Chapter eight, the final chapter, is a presentation of my ideas on the nature of marriage and on the nature of the first pregnancy and the transition to parenthood. It
is essentially a synthesis of previous research findings, existing theories, and insights gleaned not only from the four case studies but from my analysis of the total sample.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

As noted, this inquiry is, in one sense, two studies in one. Manifestly, it is a study of how married couples respond to the first pregnancy--to the transition to parenthood. On a higher level of abstraction, it is a study of the structure and phenomenology of the husband-wife relationship, *per se*. Given the dual nature of the research, the review of literature covers both first pregnancy (specifically marriage and first pregnancy studies) and studies of marriage (specifically the most important studies of the past two decades).

First Pregnancy

The literature on the medical (physiological) aspects of pregnancy is vast. As one might suspect, psychological studies of pregnancy are also numerous. Relatively speaking, however, there are few studies which deal with (1) the effect of the first pregnancy on the marital relationship (its social structure and/or phenomenology), or (2) the effect of the marital relationship on the husband and/or wife's first pregnancy experience. It is these studies on marriage and first pregnancy which, nevertheless, are the most relevant to this dissertation, and, therefore, it is the most important studies in this grouping which shall be reviewed.
Apparently, the first sociological study on marriage and first pregnancy was conducted in 1949 by Shirley and Thomas Poffenberger (Poffenberger, S., 1949; Poffenberger, T., 1949). The Poffenbergers distributed questionnaires in a university housing project to all married couples whose first child was not more than two and a half years old. The final sample size was 212. Two publications came out of this research (Landis et al., 1950; Poffenberger et al., 1952). However, only the first paper focuses on the marriage and first pregnancy link. Its specific concern is the effects of first pregnancy upon the sexual adjustment of their couples. The data are retrospective. A summary of some of their findings appears below (Landis et al., 1950:772).

1. In general, the couples studied who had a good sexual adjustment before the pregnancy had a good sexual adjustment during the pregnancy and following the birth of the child.

2. The percentages of husbands and wives reporting the same sex desire as before the pregnancy decreased with each trimester of the pregnancy; the percentages reporting less desire increased rapidly with each trimester. The general level of sex desire reported by husbands and wives was somewhat lower after the birth of the child as compared to before the pregnancy.

The most important finding reported is the decrease of sexual desire as the pregnancy progresses. The authors conclude that whereas physiological factors may contribute to the wife's decrease in desire, the husband's pattern suggests that "there may be a psychological basis for the decrease in sex desire of both the husband and the wife" (p. 769).
In 1964, Roy McCorkel did a study on the adaptive responses of husbands to changes associated with the first pregnancy (McCorkel, 1964). The study is based on single, unstructured interviews with 29 student husbands whose wives were in their first pregnancies, or who had just delivered a child. McCorkel takes the position that the first pregnancy is a time of family crisis requiring adaptations and adjustments of family members to a new life situation. The definition employed is W.I. Thomas' (Volkart, 1951).

A crisis, according to W. I. Thomas, is a threat, a challenge, a call to new action, or a call for a change in plans. A crisis appears when the habitual situation is altered or disrupted, when habitually met expectations can no longer be met... Following a crisis, in Thomas' view, an adjustive effort is made by the individual, a process of adaptation through which the actor arrives at a definition of his situation, an interpretation or a point of view, and from this point of view proceeds to act, or not to act, along a given line. The result is a new policy or behavior pattern, new habits which may become upset and set again as further crises are encountered.... From this point of view, the first pregnancy is undoubtedly an important change in the life situation of the pregnant woman and her husband (McCorkel, 1964: 1-3).

The adaptive responses of the husbands were examined at three levels. It was found that:

1. At the level of the self a transformation of identity begins to take place as the father role is perceived as ever more valent [valued].

2. In the husband-wife dyad, the husbands change both habitual routines and modes of relationships.

3. In the world outside the home the pregnancy brings about transformations in the husbands'
relationships with relatives and friends, changes in the spheres of finances, recreation, and education (McCorkel, 1964: Abstract).

Within the context of this dissertation, the most important finding is that the husbands' interpretations of their situations at each of these levels are different according to their orientations toward marriage—familistic, career, and romantic. The three orientations are ideal types in Max Weber's sense (see Gerth and Mills, 1958:59-61).

The familistically oriented husband places his family above all else. As far as he is concerned, the husband-wife relationship is incomplete without children. Consequently, the pregnancy is interpreted as "a blessing." His transformation of identity (which had, in many ways, begun before the pregnancy), his relationship with his wife, and his associations with his relatives (particularly his parents and in-laws) becomes more intense with the onset of pregnancy. He also tends to feel closer to friends who have children and to friends whose wives are pregnant. The career oriented husband, on the other hand, places his profession and his career above his marriage and parenthood. For him, the pregnancy is "an intrusion, an interruption." He actively avoids a transformation of identity, resists developing a closer and more sensitive relationship with his wife, and isolates himself from his relatives. Rather, in order to sustain his career orientations through the crisis, he not only maintains his colleague relationships but tries to develop new professional
and career associations. The romantically oriented husband enters marriage without an appreciation for the responsibilities which it involves. When he finds out his wife is pregnant, he is "awed at the prospect of having to support a wife and a child." His transformation of self during the pregnancy is the greatest of the three types. It is largely a maturational experience. His relationship with his wife becomes "shaky." His associations with the outside world (his single friends as well as his and his wife's parents) come under strain.

Two years after McCorkel completed his research, a study by Esther Goshen-Gottstein was published in monograph form under the title, *Marriage and First Pregnancy* (Goshen-Gottstein, 1966). The book relies on data collected in Israel between August 1957 and June 1958. The sample included 159 primiparous women who were each interviewed twice, usually in the fourth and seventh months of pregnancy. The women were classified according to the country of their birth (Oriental, Western, Israeli), and according to their marriage pattern (traditional, transitional, modern). The reactions of the women were evaluated to determine whether culture or marriage type was of greater importance in determining attitudes. It was found that the marital pattern was the more important.

The differences in attitudes toward the pregnancy experience are summarized by the author in her concluding chapter (Goshen-Gottstein, 1964:120-125).
The main characteristics of the woman in the traditional setting are her passive acceptance, if not endurance, of patriarchal demands, and her inability to communicate with her husband. The result is that she is "undernourished" in respect of concern and attention for herself as a person [sic]. When she becomes pregnant, therefore, she will attempt, consciously or unconsciously, to exploit her situation in order to make up for what she has lacked. In contrast to the traditional woman, the modern woman enjoys a relationship of equality with her husband, and consequently she bears no particular grudge against her environment. She has no need, therefore, to make excessive narcissistic demands during pregnancy, since she is not starved of love and attention in the normal way. Thus the modern woman can fulfill her maternal role without distorting it for the satisfaction of selfish ends. Between the traditional and the modern groups are what have been termed the transitional [from traditional to modern] woman. Where socially determined behavior and attitudes are concerned, the transitional woman is closer to the traditional. For example, she is likely to seek parental consent to her marriage; and she tends to marry because it is culturally expected of her, and in order to have children and a home of her own, rather than for what it may offer in terms of personal relationships. Consequently she does not emphasize compatibility of personality as a deciding factor in her choice of husband. Nevertheless, the subservience that is characteristic of the traditional woman, her passive submission to patriarchal demands, are no longer evident in the transitional group... The more balanced relationship between husband and wife is reflected also in greater ease of communication... Thus the transitional woman, not characterized by submissiveness in her relationship towards her husband, but enjoying a freedom to communicate easily with him, has no need, when she becomes pregnant, to try to exploit her situation in order to obtain love and attention, as the more deprived traditional woman is impelled to do.
Goshen-Gottstein's longitudinal design permitted her to assess changes across the pregnancy period. She finds, for example, that women who during the first interview expressed a non-accepting attitude toward the pregnancy developed an accepting or reconciling attitude by the second interview. (A similar finding, based on retrospective data, is reported by Poffenberger, S., 1949 and Poffenberger et al., 1952). Goshen-Gottstein concludes that the change is a consequent of the baby becoming "more of a reality" to the mother as the birth is approached. Despite her research design, no changes across the pregnancy are related by the author to marriage type or country of origin.

During the early 1960's, Harold Feldman launched a project on marriage and parenthood. The project actually encompassed two studies. The first was a cross-sectional study of 852 middle and upper class couples. Each couple was classified according to their stage in the marital life cycle (beginning marriage, childbearing, childrearing, and post child rearing) (see Feldman, 1961). The second study employed a short term longitudinal design with controls involving three interviews with 400 couples during a ten month period. The first interview was during the fifth month of the first pregnancy, the second at five weeks after delivery, the third at five months after delivery. One hundred matching control control couples, half nulliparous and half multiparous, were interviewed during the same time periods. It is the reports from the second of the two studies which dealt
explicitly with the first pregnancy experience and which, therefore, shall be reviewed here.

The first report to emerge from the longitudinal study is a joint authored paper by Meyerowitz and Feldman (1966). Although the paper's primary focus is changes after the arrival of the first child, some of their findings do pertain to the first pregnancy. For example--

1. The prior marital relationship was recalled as having been more positive than the relationship during pregnancy. The decline in satisfaction during pregnancy was significantly pronounced for the husband than for the wife (p. 78).

2. During pregnancy wives reported less frequent interest in sexual relations and perceived that they received less attention from their spouses (p. 81).

3. Both spouses anticipated being more interested in sexual relations after the baby was born; the wife expected to get much more attention from the husband; he expected to get less from her (p. 81).

4. Spouses independently and reliably reported on the frequency of sexual intercourse. At mid-pregnancy, the first interview, the mean frequency of intercourse was three times a week. In the last month of pregnancy, intercourse occurred perhaps once every other week, and at least one time in the first month after the baby was born. It should be noted that obstetricians had advised abstinence the month before and after delivery (p. 81).

5. Both spouses disagreed with the suggestion that the pregnancy was not being enjoyed, but wives were significantly less sure that they could think of no other time that it would have been better to have a baby (p. 83).

One interesting hypothesis which the authors develop from these and other findings on the pregnancy and parenthood is
that the onset of pregnancy may result in a rise of self-esteem for the husband but not for the wife, whereas the birth may result in a rise of self-esteem for the wife (she has achieved Motherhood) but not for the husband.

The second paper to come out of the Feldman project is an unpublished manuscript by Meyerowitz (n.d.). The focus of this paper is socio-economic variation during the transition to parenthood. Using the husband's occupation and education as the basic criteria, Meyerowitz categorized the 400 couples into four equal size groupings--professional, student, white collar, and blue collar. To be classified as a professional, it was necessary for the husband to ascribe this title to himself and for his occupation to require specialized academic training and an academic degree. The student group was equally divided between undergraduates and graduates. The white collar group included proprietors, semi-professionals and clerks. The blue collar category represented the widest variety of occupations--from "shirtless" workers to skilled union craftsmen and foremen. The pregnancy related findings are presented below.

The professional couples--reported marriage to be most satisfying and much as expected... valued emotional over financial security... reported enjoyment of the pregnancy experience and the least occurrence of negative emotional concomitance (p. 18).

The student couples...were the most satisfied with marriage and the least "romantic" (in the specific sense of naive)...felt [this was] a poor time to be having a baby...expected the least personal satisfaction during the baby's first month of life (p. 19).
The white collar couples... [are] difficult to define... felt this was the best time to have a baby, although the wife had consequently become nervous and irritable (p. 20).

The blue collar couples... are the most clearly defined by contrast with [the professionals]... [felt] marriage was less satisfying... were most naively romantic and the most disillusioned... considered [children] important for marriage [but did not enjoy the pregnancy itself] (p. 20-21).

Meyerowitz's paper does not move beyond the level of categorizing. Nevertheless, it is interesting in that it illustrates the link between the social structural (social class), the interpersonal (marriage), and the cognitive (attitudes toward the first pregnancy).

The third report based on data collected for the Feldman project is Meyerowitz's (1970) paper on marital satisfaction during the first pregnancy. Focusing solely on the pregnancy interviews, Meyerowitz examines eight aspects of marital satisfaction and their experiential concomitants as manifest during the first pregnancy (p. 42). Some of the more relevant findings are paraphrased below.

1. The couples tend to report less conflict or disillusionment in the enactment of marital roles when the husband does not see the child as potentially intrusive to the couple's relationship and when his own psychophysiological state is positive.

2. A woman accepts pregnancy more when it brings her closer to her husband; she rejects pregnancy when she feels it serves to exclude her from her husband.

One of the most significant social structural changes a social unit can undergo is accession, the addition of new members. The most drastic accession is the transition from
dyad to triad. The reason for this is that a triad introduces many patterns which were not possible when there were only two people. For example, with the triad, coalitions (two against one), interference (one separating two), and bonding (one uniting two) all become possible. Meyerowitz's findings are important because they point to the fact that not only the transition itself, but the anticipation of the transition has effects on the dyad. In the case of the transition to parenthood, the concern seems to be centered on whether the child will separate or unite the couple.¹

During the early 1960's another major project on marriage and parenthood was launched under the direction of Harold Raush. This project employed a long term longitudinal design and involved the use of questionnaires, focused interviews, and observations during a quasi-role playing procedure called Improvisations (verbal transcripts of interactions during the procedure were coded by using a thirty-six item coding scheme developed specifically for this research). The data for the study were collected in

¹The concern over whether the child will separate or unite the couple continues after the birth of the child. Feldman (1974), using data from his own project, found that increased marital satisfaction after the birth is positively correlated with the extent to which the marriage is differentiated (low level of husband-wife communication, lesser use of spouse as an interpersonal resource) as opposed to companionate. Feldman infers that the increase in marital satisfaction is due to the cohesive effect (bonding) of the child (pp. 14-15). These same findings are discussed again in Feldman and Rogoff (n.d.).
between 1961 and 1964. Originally there were forty-six couples in the sample. The plan was to follow these couples from early marriage to parenthood. Couples who did not have children would be used as a matched group. Three developmental stages were chosen: newlywed (the fourth month after marriage), first pregnancy (the seventh month), and parenthood (the fourth month after childbirth). The project yielded a monograph (based on the behavioral data from the Improvisations) which is relevant to this review (Raush et al., 1974). Of the forty-six couples, thirteen completed all three phases of the Improvisations. The monograph is based on forty-six newlywed couples, thirteen pregnant and thirteen matched non-pregnant couples, and finally thirteen pairs of parents.

The general focus of the book is the relationship between communication and conflict in marriage. A few pages are, however, devoted to a discussion of the effects of first pregnancy on the husband and wife. The most significant finding is that—

Despite the fact that it was they who were pregnant, developmental wives did not change as dramatically in their responses [that is, in their verbal communications during the Improvisations] as did their husbands (p. 186)...  

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2 Other reports derived from this project include Goodrich et al. (1968), and Rausch et al. (1970).
The single unequivocal stage-related change was the marked increase in reconciling behavior by the husbands of pregnant wives (p. 188).

The authors conclude that "husbands seem to be responding to cultural notions about behavior toward pregnant woman" (p. 187). What they mean is that our shared system of meanings prescribes conciliatory actions toward the pregnant woman because of her "condition." By their behavior, the husbands are simply following "the rules."

During the mid-1960's a first pregnancy project was begun under the direction of Pauline Shereshefsky and Leon J. Yarrow. This research involved sixty middle class families each of whom participated for a period of one year, from three months prenatally during the course of the first pregnancy until six months postnatally. Data collection included both interviewing (by case workers and psychiatrists) and psychological testing. During the pregnancy phase of the study both the husband and wife were seen a number of times--individually and conjointly. The results of the study are reported in a monograph edited by the project's directors (Shereshefsky and Yarrow, 1973; the book is a compilation of papers written by the research staff). Although the sample included couples, the study is biased toward the maternal side.

The research was designed to (1) explore psychological aspects in adjustment of women to a first pregnancy and early mother-infant adaptations, and (2) evaluate the effects of social work counseling on the course of pregnancy and early maternal adaptation (Lockman, 1973:15).
In order to accomplish this purpose the sixty couples were randomly assigned to either a counseling or a control group.

In spite of its maternal focus a number of findings relevant to this dissertation are reported. First of all it is interesting to note that the research team was confronted with a contradiction between its "statistical" and its "clinical" analyses (terms used by the authors). Statistically, they found that a husband's responsiveness to his wife (e.g., his affection for her) and his responsiveness to the pregnancy (e.g., his reaction to the fetus) are not significantly related to his wife's adaptation to the pregnancy (e.g., her reaction to the fetus). Clinically, they found that the husband and wife's actions are related to each other, and that the most apparent manifestation of this is the extent to which the wife's adaptation to the pregnancy is related to marital adjustment. Poor marital adjustment was seen to increase a wife's negative attitude toward the pregnancy (Shereshefsky et al., 1973:82). Faced with the contradiction, the authors discounted the statistical findings by claiming the relationship may have been "obscured" by the nature of the sample (a number of couples had married young; some were suffering from "marital stress") and the fact that half the sample was receiving counseling (Shereshefsky and Lockman, 1973a:53-54).

From the clinical perspective, the team also found what they considered "different tendencies."
We also saw two different tendencies clinically. On the one hand, the pregnancy seemed to draw the couple closer as they shared in planning and sustaining each other at times of anxiety, and also in projecting themselves into the new roles they would be carrying in the near future. At the same time we noted a tendency on the part of the woman to shut her husband out from inner preoccupations. Husbands, in turn, were not always ready to be patient and supportive over the long months of waiting, and many women were left to their own resources in handling their conflicting feelings and fantasies (p. 67). (Shereshefsky et al., 1973:67).

Some of their clinical findings have been reported elsewhere (for example, both Goshen-Gottstein, 1964, and Meyerowitz, 1970, report that in some marriages the pregnancy has a cohesive effect). But then some of their clinical findings are contradicted too (for example, the team did not always find Raush et al.'s, 1974, culturally prescribed "reconciling" behavior by the husband toward the wife). The fact that, clinically, the team had a difficult time seeing consistent behavior in the couples is noteworthy.

Clinical or qualitative analyses often yield data which bring up exceptions to the (statistical) rule. The nature of the clinical or qualitative inquiry (depth rather than breadth) makes it sensitive to the contradictions in social life. In one sense, the contribution which Sherefsky and Yarrow's project makes is that by pointing to the contradictions it complements many of the other studies which (because of the nature of their inquiry--breadth rather than depth) classify husbands and wives according to their common (and non-contradictory) pregnancy experiences. Shereshefsky and Yarrow help to balance the picture, so to speak.
Other findings relevant to this discussion include the following. (1) Almost half the sample reported a sharp decrease in sexual activity during the pregnancy. The wives claim that fatigue contributed to their lack of interest. The husbands justify their disinclination by saying they are afraid of hurting the baby. (2) Although the counseled group did show some effects of the counseling, for example counseled women "coped better" with labor and delivery than the non-counseled women, "the project did not establish an unequivocal role for counseling as a method of intervention for normal couples during a first pregnancy" (Shereshefsky and Lockman, 1973b:160).

Finally, the research team concludes that the first pregnancy may be thought of as a "crisis" in the sense that it is a transitional phase. Their comments on this point echo, to some degree, McCorkel's (1964) "crisis" approach.

In the course of our study, we came to see that pregnancy-as-crisis may connote different meanings. If the term "pregnancy-as-crisis" is used to mean a stress involving threat or loss and requiring resources beyond the ordinary, then our data suggest that a first pregnancy is not, generally, a crisis in these terms... However, in the use of the term crisis in the sense of a transitional phase of its dictionary definition of "turning point", our young women and their husbands were indeed involved in a crisis. In all cases in our sample the first pregnancy made substantial demands for change in current routines of living, and obviously, in issues and decisions involving the future--demands which were sometimes onerous and resisted in different ways and degrees, and sometimes anticipated and met with an investment of positive feelings that varied from little to all-out involvement. Pregnancy was also a turning point in terms of inner reality in that it allowed or
even forced the woman to become aware of her intrapsychic self—of her body image and her feeling responses especially. The impact on the man's self-concepts was often of equal force. (Shereshefsky, 1973:244-245).

The eight reports reviewed represent what I believe are the most important studies on the relationship between marriage and first pregnancy. Perhaps the conclusion to be drawn from this review is that the relationship between marriage and first pregnancy is not unidirectional or unidimensional. Rather, marriage and first pregnancy interact with each other (over time) on a number of dimensions. For example, the type of marriage pattern (traditional vs. modern) may influence whether, when, and how the first pregnancy is experienced. The first pregnancy, in turn, may change the marriage pattern (from companionate to differentiated).

Marriage

In addition to being a study of first pregnancy and the transition to parenthood, this inquiry is (at a higher level of abstraction) also a study of the husband-wife relationship, per se. Also chosen for review, therefore, are the most important (in my opinion) studies of marriage reported within the past two decades.

The first is an English study conducted by Elizabeth Bott (1971). The research is based on multiple, unstructured, conjoint interviews with twenty "whole" families (husbands and wives with their children) living in London.
Bott outlines her intent and rationale on the first page of her monograph.

The family, we are constantly told, is the backbone of society. But actually not much is known of the relationship between families and society. There are very few studies of the way families interact with external persons and institutions, and there are not even many studies of families in their natural habitat, their home. Everyone knows a great deal about family structure from personal experience, but it is difficult to extend this personal knowledge to other families, to penetrate the privacy of another home, to absorb its special atmosphere, to observe its unspoken understandings. Considering these difficulties, it is not surprising that there are few field studies of families as social groups, and even fewer attempts to combine such anthropological study with psychological examination of the personalities of husband and wife and of the relationship between them. The research reported in this book was intended to fill this gap.

Although her sample included only couples with children, Bott admits that her study is more a study of marriage than it is a study of the family.

Strictly speaking, the research should be called a study of marriage rather than a study of families, for we were chiefly interested in the relationship between husband and wife, and we studied the children and the relationship of parents to their children primarily to improve our understanding of the relationship between husband and wife (p. 2).

Bott's study is a classic for two reasons. First it was one of the first studies of urban families "in their natural habitat." Secondly, and more importantly, Bott's hypothesis on "conjugal role segregation and family network connectedness," derived from this research, has inspired many other studies. From her data she noted that husband-
wife relationships could be classified according to the degree of role segregation, and the degree of the family's network connectedness. Conjugal role relationships, she argues, can be typed as either "segregated" or "joint". Segregated role relationships are relationships in which the work and leisure activities of the husband and wife are different and separate but form a whole (complementary), or are separate without reference to each other (independent). Joint role relationships are those in which these activities are performed by the husband and wife together, or the same activity is performed by either spouse at different times. A family's immediate environment (that is, friends, neighbors, relatives, clubs, shops, places of work, etc.), she also argues, can be types by its degree of "connectedness." In order to understand this point, it is important to understand Bott's distinction between an "organized group" and a "network."

In an organized group, the component individuals make up a larger social whole with common aims, interdependent roles, and a distinctive sub-culture. In network formation, on the other hand, only some, not all, of the component individuals have social relationships with one another. For example, supposing that a family, X, maintains relationships with friends, neighbours, and relatives who may be designated as A,B,C,D,E,F,...N, one will find that some but not all of these external persons know one another. They do not form an organized group in the sense defined above. B might know A and C but none of the others; D might know F without knowing A, B, or E. Furthermore, all of these persons will have friends, neighbours, and relatives of their own who are not known by family X. In a network the component external units do not make up a larger social whole; they are not surrounded by a common boundary (p. 58-59).
It is the family's immediate environment as a social network that can be typed by its degree of connectedness. By connectedness Bott means "the extent to which the people known by a family know and meet one another independently of the family" (p. 59). Essentially there are two types of connectedness, "close-knit" and "loose-knit." A close-knit network is one in which there are many relationships among the component units; a loose-knit network is one in which there are relatively few. Bott posits that a family's degree of conjugal role segregation is related to its degree of network connectedness. Specifically, she hypothesizes that "[t]he degree of segregation in the role-relationship of the husband and wife varies directly with the connectedness of the family's social network" (p. 60). Bott's explanation of her hypothesis is interesting. She sees the essential link as the existence of consensual social norms (rules for behavior) in the close-knit network, and lack of consensual social norms in the loose-knit network.

When many of the people a person knows interact with one another, that is when the person's network is close-knit, the members of his network tend to reach consensus on norms and they exert consistent informal pressure on one another to conform to the norms, to keep in touch with one another, and, if need be, to help one another. If both husband and wife come to marriage with such close-knit networks, and if conditions are such that the previous pattern of relationships is continued, the marriage will be superimposed on these pre-existing relationships, and both spouses will continue to be drawn into activities with people outside their own elementary family (family of procreation). Each will get some emotional satisfaction from these external
relationships and will be likely to demand correspondingly less of the spouse. Rigid segregation of conjugal roles will be possible because each spouse can get help from people outside.

But when most of the people a person knows do not interact with one another, that is, when his network is loose-knit, more variation on norms is likely to develop in the network, and social control and mutual assistance will be more fragmented and less consistent. If husband and wife come to marriage with such loose-knit networks or if conditions are such that their networks become loose-knit after marriage, they must seek in each other some of the emotional satisfactions and help with familial tasks that couples in close-knit networks can get from outsiders. Joint organization becomes more necessary for the success of the family as an enterprise (p. 60).

The studies which Bott's hypothesis inspired did not always confirm Bott's own findings. In the 1971 edition of her book, Bott summarizes and discusses the studies which were prompted by her work. The importance of Bott's work, however, is not the truth or falsity of the hypothesis, rather it is her attempt to note that the husband-wife relationship is an open system and that a couple's transactions with their immediate environment are important for understanding the nature of the conjugal union.

The second study worthy of review is Robert O. Blood and Donald M. Wolfe's research on the dynamics of American marital life (Blood and Wolfe, 1960). The book is in part a report of findings derived from structured interviews with 731 married women living in the Detroit area (city families) and 178 married women living in Southeastern
Michigan (farm families). The goals of the book are broad.

Our primary purpose is to understand the dynamics of American marriage, by systematically analyzing our empirical evidence. The general question is: what factors determine how husbands and wives interact and what are the effects of varying interaction patterns on the general welfare of the husband, the wife, and the family as a whole (p. 4).

It would not be practical to review all of Blood and Wolfe's findings. Therefore only a selected few shall be discussed.

Perhaps the most important and most controversial part of the book is their discussion of family structure. Under this heading, Blood and Wolfe subsume power and the division of labor, the two most important aspects of family structure in their opinion. The major question with which they are concerned is which theory best explains the American family structure--ideology or resource theory?

According to ideological theory, a family's pattern of decision making and household task distribution is a function of the culture within which a family is located. In other words, whatever the culture prescribes as the appropriate pattern is the best predictor of what the pattern in any given family will be. If the culture is patriarchal, the husband-father will probably be in charge, and he will probably not be responsible for many household tasks. According to resource theory, a family's pattern is a function of the characteristics of the individual family. Specifically, the comparative resources of the family members and the circumstances within which they live are
the best predictors of what the family pattern will be. What is the resource? "A resource may be defined as anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter satisfy his needs or attain his goals" (p. 12). The balance of power and the division of labor will be based on the comparative resources of the husband and wife. For example, if the husband is the primary breadwinner he is more likely to be in charge because he brings to the marriage perhaps the most important resource (money). He is also not likely to be responsible for household tasks simply because he has less time to perform these chores. In this sense time is a resource and the wife has more of it. Beliefs about how the family structure should work are not directive, they are reflective—rationalizations. Blood and Wolfe conclude from their data that the resource theory is the better predictor of an American family's structure. Blood and Wolfe's conclusion has come under some attack (see Heer, 1963; Komarovsky, 1962; Scanzcni, 1970). Their dismissal of ideology as a source of power is, in my opinion, too radical.

Some of their other findings worthy of note are:

The economic function of the family depends primarily on the efforts of the husband who goes out of the family to participate in the economic system. His occupational success determines the economic resources available to the family. Whether the wife is satisfied with these resources depends, however, on how they compare with her frame of reference. Despite the "leveling-up" influence of the mass media and modern advertising, special family origins or ethnic communities can provide higher than average norms resulting in dissatisfaction with even substantial economic resources (p. 113).
There has been a dramatic rise in the proportion of married women employed outside the home. For single women, self-support has long since been taken for granted. The innovation is that it is no longer the wedding but the first pregnancy which brings this working span to a halt (p. 18; emphasis mine).

"What have been some of the good things about having children?" The most common answers describe the emotional satisfactions in raising children (p. 138-139).

Companionship has emerged as the most valued aspect of American marriages today... The primary emphasis is on companionship in leisure-time activities, not on merging every aspect of married life (p. 172-173).

The importance of Flood and Wolfe's work is that it is the first comprehensive empirical study of American marriage.

The third study to be reviewed is Mirra Komarovsky's research on American lower class family life (Komarovsky, 1962). The study is based on case studies of fifty-eight white, native born of native parents, Protestant husbands and wives. Each couple had at least one child. Each couple was "working class"--the husbands all were employed as blue collar or manual workers.

Komarovsky concludes that some of the generalizations about American family life that have been based on previous studies are class biased. For example, unlike the middle and upper classes, the lower class couples rarely had problems which stemmed from conflicting demands from work and home. Emotional investment in a career or profession was not the rule. Unlike the middle and upper classes, the lower class couples rarely had conflicts because of ambiguous
or contradictory definitions of conjugal roles. Coming from similar cultural backgrounds, lower class husbands and wives approached marriage with pretty much the same ideas as to what their right and obligations were—the husband should work, the wife should stay home. Blue collar couples did have marital problems, nonetheless. However, they were not, as one might have expected, a result of a lack of consensus and understanding.

But these families pay a high price for their immunity to some typical ills of our time. This immunity is produced by their isolation from the social mainstreams. However, the shield which protects them is also a barrier against the diffusion of some beneficial social influences. Among others, it prevents the dissemination of values that would be more functional for marital adjustment than some of the traditional norms held by families. Whether or not these traditional norms of marriage were appropriate at some earlier historical period, they appear unfavorable for adjustment in the modern world.

The sharp separation of masculine and feminine tasks and the absence of the expectation of friendship in marriage are cases in point... The husband pays a price for his relative exemption from domestic duties. Irritability, apathy, desire for a job outside the home—these are reactions of some women to a domestic routine unrelieved by companionship with their husbands... Because the need for psychological intimacy could not be satisfied in marriage, some men and many more women exchange confidences with outsiders... But this, in turn, resulted in the violation of marital privacy... But the cultural lag in conceptions of marriage is not the only, or perhaps even the major marital problem. Some couples have accepted the new goal of companionship, but lack the means for its realization. [Some couples have a] "trained incapacity to share." As a result, in accepting the goal of companion-
ship some married couples only thereby deepen their sense of inadequacy. They know that husbands and wives should talk to one another, but they find nothing to say... Changes in patterns of socialization and improvement in interpersonal skills would go far towards strengthening marriage. But the root of the difficulty lies deeper. Shortening of the work day, smaller families and the withdrawal of many economic functions from the home have given these couples long evenings and weekends together. But life in general is impoverished, and marriage assumes saliency by default. It is questionable whether any relationship can fill so great a void. Even the middle class suburbanite, who has reputedly forsaken the world for the family nest, bristles with outside interests in comparison with our respondents (pp. 334-337).

The above narrative presents only some of Komarovsky's findings and interpretations. Throughout the book she brings to light other exceptions to the rule, other aspects of marital life which are class linked (for example, contrary to what Blood and Wolfe's 1960, "resource theory" would have predicted. Komarovsky found that the uneducated and unskilled husbands who earned less money enjoyed more decision making power than the more educated skilled and higher wage earners). The significance of Komarovsky's work is essentially two-fold. First, she illustrates the relationship between social class and married life, and in doing so demonstrates the class bias that limits many previous generalizations. Secondly, she uncovers the overemphasis on consensus as a "good" thing by pointing out that stable social norms do not necessarily imply a problem free social organization.

The fourth study which deserves mention in this review is John F. Cuber and Peggy B. Harroff's study of the
affluent in America (Cuber and Harroff, 1965). Based on unstructured interviews with 235 men and 202 women of the American Elite or Upper Middle Class, the authors attempt to present a picture of the marital experiences of (to use their phrase) "the significant Americans." In one sense, their study is like Komarovsky's in that it focuses on a strata which had previously been ignored. Cuber and Harroff devote the whole book to a presentation of their findings. However, one chapter stands out above the rest; this chapter includes what may be considered their most important contribution. The chapter outlines a typology of five different kinds of husband-wife relationship, "each with a central theme--some prominent distinguishing psychological feature which gave each type its singularity" (p. 44). The five types are presented below.

The Conflict-Habituated. In this association there is much tension and conflict--although it is largely controlled... There is private acknowledgement of both husband and wife as a rule that incompatibility is pervasive, that conflict is ever-potential, and that an atmosphere of tension permeates the togetherness (p. 44).

The Devitalized. The key to the devitalized mode is the clear discrepancy between middle-aged reality and the earlier years. These people usually characterize themselves as having been "deeply in love" during the early years... The present picture, with some variation from case to case, is in clear contrast...the relationship has become a void. The original zest is gone. There is typically little overt tension or conflict, but the interplay between the pair has become apathetic, lifeless (pp. 46, 47, 49).
Passive-Congenial. The passive-congenial mode has a great deal in common with the devitalized, the essential difference being that the passivity which pervades the association has been there from the start. The devitalized have a more exciting set of memories; the passive congenials give little evidence that they had ever hoped for anything much different from what they are currently experiencing. There is therefore little suggestion of disillusionment of compulsion to make believe to anyone. Existing modes of association are comfortably adequate--no stronger words fit the facts as they related them to us (pp. 50-51).

The Vital. In extreme contrast to the three foregoing is the vital relationship... [T]he essence of the vital relationship [is that] the mates are intensely bound together psychologically in important life matters. Their sharing and their togetherness is genuine... The presence of the mate is indispensable to the feelings of satisfaction which the activity provides (p. 55).

The Total. The total relationship is like the vital relationship with the most important addition that it is more multifaceted. The points of vital meshing are more numerous--in some cases all of the important life foci are vitally shared. There is practically no pretense between persons in the total relationship or between them and the world outside. There are few areas of tension, because the items of difference which have arisen over the years have been settled as they arose (p. 58).

Cuber and Harroff's typology is not based on their entire sample. Rather it is based on the interview materials of those people whose marriages had passed their tenth anniversary and who said they never seriously considered separation or divorce. 107 men and 104 women fit the criteria. The purpose behind their selection was that they wanted to construct a classification of "enduring" relation-
ships. The typology is not to be interpreted as degrees of stability. All the types reflect a more or less stable mode of relationship. Nor are the types to be considered a representation of degrees of marital satisfaction or adjustment. Persons in each of the five types claim they are at least content, if not happy. What then do the five types represent?

They represent different kinds of adjustment and different conceptions of marriage. This is an important concept which must be emphasized if one is to understand the personal meanings which these people attach to the conditions of their marital experience (p. 61).

Instrumental to their argument is the assertion that--

To know that a marriage has endured, or for that matter has been dissolved, tells one close to nothing about the kinds of experiences, fulfillments, and frustrations which have made up the lives of the people involved (p. 65).

The point that Cuber and Harroff are trying to make, and here lies their contribution, is that there are varieties of stable and happy marriages--and not all of these modes necessarily imply "togetherness" or "complete mutual involvement," elements which some marriage scholars have posited as "ideal" and/or "mandatory" for a "good" (i.e., stable and happy) marriage.

The next study for review is John Scanzoni's (1970) project on the conjugal family and its relation to the economic opportunity structure. The report is based on structured interviews with 419 husbands and 497 wives residing in the city of Indianapolis. The purpose of the book, according to the author, is "to contribute to the development of systematic sociological theory" (p. 1). More specifically,
Scanzoni is concerned with developing a substantive theory of marital cohesion which has as its major independent variable the family's link with the economic system, in particular the husband-father's occupation.

The conjugal family is best understood from a perspective that links structural with interactional variables. The basic structure to which the conjugal family is attached is the economic opportunity system—a linkage mediated through the husband's occupation...

Combining exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity with the implications of "personal excellence" inherent in the dominant orientations of achievement-success, it is suggested that as articulation or integration with the economic opportunity structure increases, so does marital cohesion (p. 23).

What Scanzoni means by "articulation or integration" is the extent to which the husband-father is a part of the economic system.

The greater the level of achievement and/or success, the more rewards one is reaping from the opportunity structure, and the more one may be said to be a part of this system—which is to say, to be articulated or integrated with it. The chronically unemployed male possesses little or no achievement or success—he is not reaping any of the rewards of the opportunity structure, hence may be said to have little or no articulation with it. But just "above" this level, certain husbands have gained greater achievement and success—more rewards from the opportunity system—and thus may be described as having greater articulation with it than those "below" them (pp. 11-12).

With respect to the second major variable in his formulation, marital cohesion, Scanzoni relies on Levinger's (1965) definition.
Levinger argues that "marital cohesiveness is analogous to group cohesiveness and can be defined accordingly. Group cohesiveness is 'the total field of forces which act on members to remain in the group.'... Thus the strength of the marital relationship would be a direct function of the attractions within and barriers around the marriage, and an inverse function of such attractions and barriers from other relationships" (p. 13).

The essence of Scanzoni's theory is presented below.

The greater the degree of the husband's articulation with the economic opportunity system, the more fully and extensively is the interlocking network of conjugal rights and duties performed in reciprocal fashion [each is "indebted" to the other]. The economic rewards he provides induce motivation in the wife to respond positively to him, and her response in turn gives rise to a continuing cycle of rectitude [and the more this occurs the more the husband and wife experience feelings of gratification and the more the couple share feelings of cohesion] (p. 21).

The book is essentially an attempt to deal with the "numerous questions that emerge in connection with a model of this sort" (p. 21).

One of the more interesting chapters, in my opinion, is the one titled "Authority Relations." Perhaps the reason for this is that exchange theory (central to Scanzoni's argument) is ultimately a theory of power. The major findings of this chapter are as follows. (1) The attitudes

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3"Exchange relations are power relations... The dynamics of social interaction [from an exchange theory point of view] then consists in the continuous balancing of power which takes the form of reducing needs, acquiring by force, providing inducements, or seeking out alternative sources for rewards" (Singlemann, 1972:416).
of the wife toward the balance of power shifts as a result of changes in her husband's articulation with the economic system. The more articulated her husband is the more traditional her attitudes are with respect to male authority ("the husband should be in charge"). (2) The husband shows no change in attitudes. Regardless of his level of economic articulation, he is likely to believe that he should rule. However, what does change as his economic articulation changes is his behavior, specifically, the extent to which he dominates in actual conflict resolutions. The more articulated he is, the more likely he is to share power with (rather than dominate) his wife. The significance of these findings is discussed by Scanzoni.

Higher status wives believe that it is "right and proper" that their husbands should settle issues more often than they, though in fact they tend at least to share in these decisions more frequently than do lower-status wives... the particular combination of beliefs and behavior in terms of legitimate authority found among higher-status families actually contributes to the likelihood of their greater cohesion. But among the "less advantaged" families, in which husbands more frequently dominate conflict resolution, wives do not believe that this exercise of male power is legitimate. Rather, they are more likely to hold that power should be shared to a greater extent, that contested issues should be settled on a more equalitarian basis. This kind of situation, therefore, we may presume to be a source of strain within the conjugal family as it would be in any social system (pp. 153-154; emphasis mine).

This is an interesting finding in that it demonstrates that both resources and ideology are important for understanding the balance of power in a marriage. It is a
concrete illustration of Scanzoni's theory which in effect is an attempt to link the phenomenological with the social structural (he calls it the subjective and the objective).

The importance of Scanzoni's theory is twofold. First, like Bott, he shows that the family is an open system transacting with an environment. Secondly, he presents testable propositions which identify the economic system as the major element in the family's environment.

The final project for review was introduced previously in the discussion of studies relating to marriage and first pregnancy, i.e., Harold Raush's long term longitudinal study (Raush, et al., 1974), based on observations of married couples during a quasi-role playing procedure called Improvisations. The purpose of the study was to explore the nature of husband-wife "communications & modes of handling and resolving marital conflicts" (p. 3). The authors approach their data from a conceptual framework which they term "adaptive probabilism."

...we chose a thesis of probabilism: that people rarely act in a completely deterministic fashion; rather there are multiple possibilities for response to an event, and we respond to events probabilistically (p. 195).

Raush and his colleagues then go on to delineate the major influences on marital interaction, that is, those factors which constrain (limit) the interpersonal behavior of the husband and wife. Five factors, derived from the data are presented.
Behavioral Reciprocity. Insofar as people communicate with each other, what person A says to person B constrains person B's response. We find further that among young married couples faced with situations of interpersonal conflict, messages tend to be reciprocal... For example, coercive tactics and personal attacks receive responses in kind (p. 198).

The Situational Context. Situational factors exert a major influence on the interactions of our couples. The constraining effects of the specific conflict situation seem in our data as strong as or stronger than the effects exerted by a partner's specific action. Situations induce and maintain the interactions of the participants. They set the tone of the approach to conflict. Thus, conflicts between marital partners are far easier to resolve when issues of conflict are specific, substantive, definable (and defined) at the situational level (p. 199).

The Context of the Relationship. Our data suggest that, whatever the contributions of the specific partners, the marital relationship forms a unit, and the couple can be thought of as a system. Within our analyses the marital unit was the most powerful source in determining interactive events. Couples function as units, exhibiting their own styles of conflict enactment (p. 201).

The Context of Stage and Time. The major determinants of how our couples interact with one another in conflict situations have been discussed above. The stage of marriage, at least within the first two years, tells us far less about interactive events (p. 204).

The Male-Female Context. Of all variables examined, the sex of the partner tells us at least about behavior in conflict situations. Certainly, there is no evidence that in interpersonal conflicts husbands show more instrumental acts and wives more expressive acts as Parsons and Bale's theory of sex differentiation would suggest (p. 205).
Additional findings report the styles of conflict and marriage. For example, the researchers were surprised that many of their so called "normal" couples exhibited psychopathological communication patterns (e.g., double binds). Also contrary to what they would have guessed, couples who coped with conflict by avoidance did not have marriages which were any less stable, compatible, or comfortable than those who coped by confrontation and engagement. It would seem, with respect to this last point, that Raush and his colleagues learned as Cuber and Harroff before them, that there are many varieties of happy and stable marriages.

Raush et al.'s study is one of the few in the marriage and family literature to use behavioral data. This in itself is an accomplishment, particularly when it is realized that the study is longitudinal. The significance of the project, however, is its synthesizing behavioral data with a "systems theory" approach. By doing so the research team was able to lend support to a rather elusive systems theory axiom--that the organization of the system (the action of the system taken as a whole) is the primary determinant of behavior of elements in the system. This they do by finding that "the marital unit [as a system] was the most powerful source in determining interactive events."

The six studies reviewed represent what I believe are the most important studies of marriage reported within the past two decades. Taken together, the studies indicate
that marriage is a complex system of phenomenological and social structural variables (e.g., both ideology and resources contribute to the balance of power), transacting with an environment (e.g., relatives, friends, the economic system), and that it is capable of taking a variety of forms e.g., complementary, conflict-habituated, psychopathological) and still endure.

The purpose of this chapter is to locate the report in the research literature. The next chapter outlines the methodology and field techniques on which the present study is based.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND FIELD TECHNIQUES

A family is a private world which family members try to keep closed to outsiders (Hill, 1949). This is one reason why field studies of families are so rare. It is one thing to be part of a mass survey; it is quite another to submit to the scrutiny of home observations and/or multiple conversational interviews. In order to do more than scratch the surface of a family's life, it is necessary to gain entrance not only into their home, but into their private world as well. The purpose of this chapter is to disclose how I gained access to the homes and marital worlds of sixteen first time pregnant couples and to discuss how I analyzed the information I acquired.

The Decision to Study Married Couples Expecting Their First Child

In the Spring of 1974, I decided that to fulfill my thesis requirement I would conduct a qualitative study of marriage. My first attempt to outline such an endeavor evolved into a study of martial communication and interpersonal pathologies. This proposal proved to be impractical—at least to me. I did not see how I could acquire a non-clinical sample without serious selection biases. Nor could I solve the problem of whether or not to inform the couples
that I was interested in pathologies. Telling them, I felt, weakened my design (e.g., how would I work around the problems of demand characteristics and evaluation apprehension?). Not telling them raised some serious ethical questions. I abandoned the pathology project.

Later in the year, while thumbing through a textbook on the family, I came across a chapter on first pregnancy. The chapter was devoted to outlining the significance of the first pregnancy as a transition phase in the life cycle of a marriage. What seemed to be lacking were studies to support some of the notions discussed. It occurred to me that a qualitative study of married couples expecting their first child would help fill a void in the marriage and family field. It also occurred to me that such a study might, in addition, be an excellent vehicle to examine the husband-wife relationship, itself. The first pregnancy, a significant event to which a married couple must respond, would, in one sense, make the couples' marriages transparent before me.

The principle that socio-cultural systems become transparent when they are responding to exigencies is not new. In the opening chapter to his anthropology of poverty, Oscar Lewis outlines the approaches he used during his years of studying Mexican families. One of his techniques speaks to this point.
...select for intensive study a problem or a special event or a crisis to which the family reacts. The way a family meets new situations is revealing of many latent aspects of family psycho-dynamics; it also points up individual differences (Lewis, 1959:4).

Also, the strategy of "disturbing the scene" to reveal "the routine grounds of everyday life," popular among ethnomethodologists (see Garfinkel, 1967), makes a similar assumption.

The first pregnancy is actually a most appropriate transition during which to study the marital experience. It involves an alternation which is obviously central to marriage. What's more, although the transition ultimately results in the addition of (at least) a third party, a major structural change, during the first pregnancy period itself, the basic integrity of the marriage, as a dyad, is maintained. Two studies in one is how I originally saw the project. The first pregnancy and marital experiences would be explored. I decided to follow through on my idea.

**Acquiring a Sample: Problems of Entry and Trust**

Acquiring my sample was basically a two stage process. First I met with health care professionals. Second I contacted prospective couples.

I anticipated that if I could not get the support of the health care professionals in the community that I would probably have difficulty obtaining a sample. I, therefore, took great care in planning how I would approach them. Specifically, I sought the help of friends and contacts
(friends of friends) who were themselves associated with the medical profession, and asked them who they thought I should approach and how they thought I should approach them. Their suggestions resulted in the drafting of a letter (see Appendix A) which was subsequently mailed to target persons (mostly obstetricians) in four medical groups (one prenatal clinic, one family planning agency, and two obstetrical team practices). Each letter was followed up with a phone call in which I asked to meet personally with representatives from each of the groups. All four groups consented to speak with me. The first week after I mailed the letters I talked with the supervisors of the prenatal clinic and family planning agency. Both were briefed on the study and agreed to help in any way they could. They informed me, however, that I could not expect to get many referrals from them because the women they saw were unlikely to come to them during the first quarter of the pregnancy (which is when I wanted to conduct the first of four interviews). For the prenatal clinic (a free clinic servicing the less privileged) it was too early. It seems that lower class women tend to wait until the second and sometimes the third quarters of the pregnancy to confirm their condition. For the family planning agency the first quarter was too late. Their clients were usually women who did not want to get pregnant; if they did, they rarely told the agency. Having met with these two groups, I knew that the success of the study depended on the cooperation of the obstetricians. My plan was to ask the doctors if they would
be willing to furnish me with the names of primiparous women to whom I would then mail letters (addressed to both the husband and wife) introducing myself and my project. Anticipating that they might want to see the letter, I brought a copy to my meetings with them the following week (see Appendix B). Much to my surprise the doctors suggested that they or their nurses personally hand the letters to the women and that I be presented with the recipients' names and phone numbers. I would then call and ask if the couple had made their decision on whether or not to participate. The obstetricians felt that a direct endorsement from them would increase my chances for getting a high acceptance rate. I agreed and the procedure was put into effect.

In the beginning I intended to include twenty couples in the sample. Based on the estimates of how many first time pregnant women the two groups would see over the next two months (the time interval I calculated, given my time limitations), I decided that I would not be selective in my sampling. I could not afford to restrict the number of women approached. Thus no quotas (e.g., by age) were set. No random process was initiated. With the exception that all who were approached were primiparous women whose babies were due within a specified time frame, the sampling procedure is "accidental" (Selltiz et al., 1951:516). During the two month interval, twenty eight couples were referred to me. The two obstetrical groups each gave me thirteen names. The prenatal clinic and family planning agency each gave me one. Sixteen couples in
all agreed to participate—an acceptance rate of 57%. With the exception that the husbands and wives are all white residents of towns and small cities in New England, the sixteen couples, when compared across other demographic characteristics (e.g., age, education, income, occupation) prove to be quite diverse. Appendix D presents a demographic profile of the total sample.

It is often useful for the researcher to know what motivates people to accept or reject a request to be in a study. When I called a couple, if the husband or wife who was on the phone stated that they did not want to participate, I would try to get the reason why. The reasons given varied. One wife said they were moving out of the state, that if they weren't they would've been glad to be in the study. Two wives claimed that their husbands worked days and evenings, that it would just be "too much." In a few cases, I received the impression that the wife wanted to participate but the husband didn't. In two cases this was made explicit. One wife said they felt the pregnancy was "a personal thing" and they wanted to keep it that way. For half of the non-participants I was unable to get any specific reasons. This was due, in part, to my not forcing the issue. The last thing I wanted to do was disrupt the doctor-patient relationship and/or university-community relationship. There was one couple who agreed to participate but who dropped out after completing only one of the four scheduled interviews.
The reason the wife gave at the time—"we've just got too many things going on." I did consider using the data I managed to get on this couple to speculate on the characteristics of the non-participants. I have since rejected this idea. By terminating their participation, the couple, in my opinion, withdrew their consent to my using them in the study. None of the data from this couple appear in this report.

The reasons why couples decided to participate also varied. First of all, there was the endorsement from the medical groups. Many of the couples who did opt to be in the study would not have done so were it not for my association with the doctors. As one husband put it—

Peter:¹ We had faith in the doctor, and if he recommends you it kind of takes the tension away.

In fact, I feel that without the doctors support that there would have been no study. I recommend here to anyone who might be considering conducting a field study of marriages or families not to approach one's subjects directly but to rely on professionals and/or friends for entree. Though this may mean delaying the collection of one's data, not following this policy may mean never collecting any data at all!

Some couples wanted it "perfectly clear" (lest I misunderstand their motives) that they were not in the study for their own benefit but for mine. For example—

¹Sample pseudonyms are discussed in Appendix E.
Barbara: We're pretty comfortable with the pregnancy, and we don't feel that we have to use you for getting our own thrills out of this whole thing. I think we look more towards being of help to you.

But then some couples admitted that they were in it for themselves too.

Carl: The reason why we decided to do it was so that I could communicate more with Cheryl. Because she tells me almost everything, but if I have a bad day at work, I come home and slam the door.

***

Elizabeth: Another motivation for helping you out in this study is that it focuses some of it for us too.

Eric: As we're doing this, all these things, I'm kind of on the outside looking in and seeing how we can improve our marriage at the same time.

***

Interviewer: Are you doing it for me or are you doing it for Linda?

Lloyd: For you and Linda.

Linda: No, well--

Lloyd: It started out for you [speaking to his wife].

Linda: Yes, I guess it did start out for me.

The Interviews

Other than a background questionnaire which I used to gather information on age, education, income, etc., (see Appendix C), the research is totally based on multiple (four
each), conjoint (husband and wife together), unstructured (sometimes called non-standardized) interviews.

The reason I chose the unstructured mode of interviewing is that I wanted to gain as much of an internal perspective as I could. I wanted to minimize the extent to which the couple would have to translate their world into my boxes. I wanted them to construct for me the conceptual frameworks they use to organize their life.

The nature of the phenomenon under study also guided me in my choice of the conjoint interview mode. Essential to a marital world are the mutually understood (known) conceptions of the husband and wife. Interviews with only one of the parties in a marriage are insufficient for gaining access to these conceptions. For example, if only the wife is interviewed, instead of getting the couple's mutually understood conceptions--the husband and wife's conceptions toward an object or situation and their conceptions of each other's conceptions--the researcher is actually getting the wife's view of her own and her husband's conceptions toward an object or situation and her conceptions of their conceptions of each other's conceptions. In other words, the data are biased.

Separate interviews with both the husband and wife are one means of gathering this data. This is essentially what Laing and his colleagues (1966) do with their Interpersonal Perception Method. This method, however, relies on structured interviews. Consequently, the picture derived is somewhat
shallow. If one does not want to restrict a couple's responses (which I did not), trying to infer mutually understood conceptions from separate interviews is, at best, difficult. Only in the conjoint interview can the interviewer play the husband and wife off each other (e.g., "Were you aware of your husband's feelings on that? Were you aware of your wife's feelings about your feelings?"). An additional, though circumscribed, advantage of the conjoint interview is that the researcher also obtains a behavioral document of the couple's interactions. The fact that the interactions take place in front of an interviewer, however, requires that the analyst be critical of any inferences drawn (see Vidich, 1956, on this point).

Multiple interviews were chosen to permit me to gradually build a rapport with each couple. The premise was that the more contact I had with each couple, the more I would be able to get beyond the couple's shell. Comments made by the couples lend support to this assumption.

Cheryl: I get the feeling, although I don't remember the first interview that much, there was a lot more of our trying to please you, trying to give you the picture of the happy couple, trying to describe ourselves in the way that maybe we would like to be, or something, whereas along the course of the interviews we've told you the things we've argued about, and we certainly couldn't have done that in the first interview right off the bat.
I also believed that multiple interviews would minimize the probability that a couple could (or would) present a facade. I assumed that I could pick up any attempt to do so by cross referencing the couples' comments and then asking them about the inconsistencies. Of course, inconsistency might be part of the couple's world. If it was I would still be more likely to pick it up with multiple interviews. When asked at the end of their participation whether they thought it possible for a couple to lie, most couples answered "no". They felt that because of the multiple interviews it would be difficult. They also contended that it wouldn't make much sense to volunteer to be in the study if deceit was the strategy a couple intended to employ.

Given that the research was to be a study of first pregnancy as well as a study of marriage, I decided to schedule the interviews around the physical reality of pregnancy. Each couple would be interviewed four times during (approximately) the 12th, 20th, 28th, and 36th weeks of the pregnancies. (Note: Pregnancy is a 40 week event). Typically, a woman who suspects she is pregnant will undergo a pregnancy test sometime around the 6th week. I was told by the health care professionals that I would probably not be able to conduct the first interview until the 12th week, however. The delay is a function of (1) late pregnancy tests (many women wait until well after the 6th week to make sure their suspicions are not false alarms); and (2) referral time (the time lags between the pregnancy test and my initial
contact with the couples). While it is true that by the 12th week the physical cycle of pregnancy is almost one-third complete, it is still less than a month, and often less than two weeks, after the couple has become aware of the pregnancy. To the point, by the 12th week the non-physical cycle of pregnancy (the psycho-social dimension) is still in its early stages. The 20th week was chosen for the second interview because by this time most women have experienced quickening—the first feeling of the fetus in the uterus. The physicians with whom I spoke hypothesized that profound changes in the husband-wife relationship should be detected at this time. By the 28th week, the wife has acquired the shape of pregnancy. Her physical appearance announces her condition. By conducting the fourth and final interview four weeks before the couples' expected due dates, the obvious problems which a premature delivery would pose were minimized. The 36th week is still close enough to birth, however, to assess the couples' responses to imminent parenthood. The benefits of continuing the interviews after the child arrived were (and still are) recognized. Many of the couples expressed an interest in being interviewed during their first year as parents. Whether these interviews will come to pass depends on a number of considerations (one of which is finances). The report presented here is based on the pregnancy interviews only.

All sixty four interviews (16 x 4) were conducted by myself (see Biographical Data) in the couples' homes. Most
of the interviews were in the evening but there were some Saturday morning interviews scheduled. Each interview lasted about an hour and a half, was taped, and later transcribed.

**Analysis of the Interview Transcripts**

The interviews completed, I faced the task of organizing some sixteen hundred pages of transcripts. Originally it was my intent to present a comparative analysis of the sixteen couples. In the end I chose instead to write case studies of four of the couples. What follows is a discussion of how I came to this decision.

As noted, I originally intended a comparative analysis of the total sample. In order to do this it was necessary to develop from the transcripts a set of conceptual categories across which the couples could be compared. To facilitate the construction of these categories I decided to establish a flexible file which would consist of selected passages cut from the transcripts and taped on 5 x 8 cards. Anticipating the establishment of such a file, I had my transcribers prepare more than one copy of the interviews. In this way, even though the transcripts would be cut up, there would always be an intact copy to which I could refer (I also wanted a copy kept in a safe place). The flexible file seemed like a good idea. By shuffling the cards I would be able to more easily make comparisons across couples and across sessions (time analysis). There was the problem, however, of arriving
at some criteria by which passages would be selected for carding. Having been relatively unstructured during the data collection, I wanted to continue in this vein during analysis. That is, I wanted to let the data speak to me, rather than impose on the data some preconceived coding scheme. Recognizing, first of all, that the sooner I cut up the transcripts, the sooner I would be establishing a more rigid conceptual set toward the data, I did not begin to create the flexible file until I was just about finished with the interviews. I do not mean that I did not look at the transcripts until I was just about finished with the interviews. Hardly. All during the data collection phase of the study I read and reread the transcripts making notations in the margins, brainstorming ideas. Before each interview, in fact, I would review the transcripts from the previous sessions to brief me on the couple I was to visit that night. What I do mean is that I saw the creation of the flexible file as a critical stage. Once the file was established, it would be the file and not the whole transcript set with which I would be primarily working. I appreciated the fact that the flexible file was a far cry from the raw data. When I finally decided to begin cutting and taping, I opted for a more or less free flow method. That is, I went through the transcripts and cut out anything that I felt might be relevant. If in doubt, I cut it out. I did not, during my first run through, try to wrestle with
why I was cutting up a given passage (I did not make notes on what I was doing). I was trying to, once again (and as much as I could), let the couples lead me. By the time I had gone once through all the transcripts available to me at the time, I had built an extensive pile (not file) of segregated passages. My next step was to go through the pile and develop headings under which specific passages might be legitimately placed. In the beginning I found that each card seemed to infer a different heading. Soon I came across cards that could be grouped under established headings. However, before a card would be placed in the same file with others I would review the other cards in the file to see how this passage fit. Sometimes a new card would lead to the dividing of a file into two or more appropriate headings. This strategy of each time comparing a new passage with the passages already grouped is akin to what Glazer and Strauss (1967:101 ff.) call the "constant comparative method." As I shuffled I wrote on the cards themselves and on separate pieces of paper my reasons for creating a given category. My first filing pass through the data yielded approximately thirty categories. I went through the transcripts again and again each time cutting and carding more passages. These succeeding runs were increasingly influenced by the emergent category scheme which was continually being developed as new cards became available for filing. When I reached a point that it appeared that further runs through the data were not providing anything new, ("theoretical saturation" - Glazer &
I stopped coding the transcripts and attempted to see how the categories could be organized into chapters. A number of outlines seemed workable. I believed that I had come to the end of the data analysis phase of the study. I had not.

The first chapter I tried to write based on the category set dealt with the issue of separateness and connectedness between the husband and wife. I started it thinking that most, if not all, of the sixteen couples would be represented (by quotation) in the chapter. I soon realized that this was impractical. Some couples spoke to the issue more than others. I shifted my strategy. I would present mini-case studies of a few (three or four) couples on this issue. This also did not work. Rather than add depth to the analysis, the mini-case studies left the reader with the feeling that only the surface of each couple had been scratched. The only alternative left, it seemed, was to write the couples up in case study form. There was, however, one basic problem with this idea. I had never enjoyed reading case studies, myself. I had always believed that they were easier to write than comparative analyses, that they didn't offer much beyond a picture of one instance of a given social phenomenon. In short, I didn't have much of an appreciation for the case study as a form of presentation. So disinclined was I toward the case study format that I had not even considered it as a possible organizing frame during the problem formation or data collection phase of the study. Now during the data
analysis phase, it appeared to be the best way to present the information I had gathered. Somewhat reluctantly (to be quite honest) I chose the case study form. I have not regretted that decision. I have since learned, as others evidently have, that case studies can not only be interesting, they can be theoretically and empirically stimulating.

The detailed examination of cases suggests lines of thought, urges re-examination of contemporary theory, reveals areas of behavior in which our knowledge is sparse, and stimulates hypotheses that may be tested in other research formats. Case analysis serves another function, perhaps more important: it translates abstractions into the concrete components of actual lives. (Hess and Handel, Family Worlds, case studies of five families, 1959:x1).

Deciding to do case studies created new problems. Would I write analyses of all sixteen couples? This did not seem practical. How about only some of the couples. There was precedent for this strategy. Hess and Handel (1959) collected data from thirty-three families. They presented case histories of only five of them. Howell (1973) lived in a working class suburb of Washington, D. C. for a year observing blue collar families' lives. His monograph tells the story of only two of these families. Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) in their study of dual career families interviewed sixteen couples. They selected five of these for analysis. I elected to go with this strategy. I would present analyses of four of the sixteen couples in my sample. Now the question was, "Which four couples?" The first thing I did to prepare for the selection was to convert my analytical file into a couple file. I then reviewed the cards and
my notes on each couple. After considering several criteria, I decided to write up the four couples for whom I had the most data (cards and notes).

The fact that the couples were not chosen because they illustrated a type or were necessarily representative of the sample (in age, socio-economic status, etc.) permitted me to approach my analysis of each couple as a separate task. In other words, I tried as much as I could to let each couple tell me their story and not to impose on the couples some scheme which would tie the couples together. Comparisons of the four couples (at least on a formal level--note taking) was left for after the four case studies were written.

I soon discovered that writing case studies was no easy chore. Part of the problem, I feel, was that when I first started the case studies I had not come down to a level of analysis appropriate to the task. My mind was still working at the more abstract level of comparative analysis. Consequently, my first drafts were much too shallow. Another part of the problem, I believe, is that, in the beginning, I approached each couple as a couple rather than two people interacting. This may have also been a function of my not having come down from the comparative analysis. I also believe, however, it was a function of the symbolic interactionist framework which was very much a part of my "conceptual orientation" at that time. What I mean by this is that I evidently assumed that the key to each of the couples would be the system of shared meanings which the couple had
mutually constructed (the marital culture). This belief prompted me to focus on the consensual (agreed upon) aspects of the couple. The problem was that as long as I focused on the consensual I could not crack the couple (I could not organize the couple's 5 x 8 cards and notes into some meaningful picture.) When I began, however, to look at the dissensual, the conflict side of marital life, the individual puzzles seemed to come together. ² The fact that the couples did not confirm my intellectual stance is significant. First of all, I think it is a concrete illustration of my letting the data lead me (something I had been consciously trying to do from the first of the sixty four interviews). Secondly, I think it says something about the conflict theme which (as you will soon see) permeates the four case studies. The conclusion

²Two points need to be made here. First of all, there is the question of whether a symbolic interactionist approach contradicts a conflict approach. In theory, it does not. It is essentially a process model of interaction which focuses on the negotiation of symbols. However, the school has had a tendency to ignore the structural dimension (see Reynolds and Reynolds, 1973). Consequently, its approach to conflict and negotiation is, in my opinion, seriously lacking. The second point is that I am not saying that I began to understand the couples when I shifted from a systemic to a component analysis. This would contradict my holistic approach (see Chapter I). What I am saying can perhaps be explained by noting the formula definition often given for the term, system; that is, system = components + the interaction of those components. What I essentially did is shift from the left to the right side of the equation. In doing so, I actually conformed more to a holistic approach which emphasizes explaining phenomena "in terms of the action of the system" (Weiss, 1966:202).
which I draw from this (presented in the last chapter) is that marriage is essentially a system in conflict.

This chapter concludes the introductory remarks to the heart of the report—date presentation and analysis. In the next chapter, the case studies begin.
CHAPTER IV

DARYL AND DEBBY

When I wrote the first draft of this chapter, I based my comments on the contention that for Daryl and Debby, pregnancy and parenthood did not seem to be a crisis. Using the term crisis in a very general sense, what I mean by this is that I believed that the couple did not see the event as a threat, a challenge, a call to new action, or a call for a change in plans. One reason for my contention was the fact that the decision of whether or when to have a child was not viewed by them as a major decision in their lives. Daryl and Debby went so far as to say that they felt they had put more thought into when to get their cat than they did into when to have a child. When I asked whether they had planned the pregnancy, I was first given the impression that they had used something of a laissez-faire approach (if it happens, it happens). Only after probing did I learn that Debby had intentionally stopped taking her birth control pills during the eighth month of their marriage and that they supposed (if I wanted to categorize them) they would fall into the category of "planned pregnancy."

1The definition of crisis I am using is the one used by W. I. Thomas. Thomas' theory of crisis is discussed in Volkart's (1951) introduction.
Debby offered her explanation for why her transition to motherhood was relatively crisis free.

**Interviewer:** Did you ever entertain the thought of not having children?

**Debby:** Me, seriously. Yes.

**Daryl:** Yes, that's right... what changed your mind dear about that? I know that it changed. We never really probed that situation.

**Debby:** It is probably because so many of our friends have adorable babies... That had something to do with it I'm sure. Plus our relationship had something to do with it. When you're 22 or 23 and you're very independent and someone says, "Well don't you want to get married, settled down, and have kids," your first reaction is to tell them what they can do with it---"Go take a flying leap out the next highest window!" But I think after settling down and getting married, it just seemed like the logical thing to do!

Placing the blame on peer influence and "getting married" (taking on the role of wife) seemed social psychologically sound. One question remained, however. What happened during the first eight months of her marriage? In other words, what was it about "settling down and getting married" that prompted the revolution in her way of thinking? In order to answer this question, I was forced to look at Daryl and Debby's marriage chronologically. Seeing their relationship over time permitted me to recognize the changes in action and plans which the pregnancy had initiated and which parenthood would bring. Pregnancy and parenthood were crises for the couple. Daryl and Debby, throughout their
marriage, had been engaged in a conflict of wills. Within this context, having a baby was "the logical thing" for Debby to do because (1) Daryl had in effect left her no choice, and (2) the child would give her the means to launch an offensive.

Before her marriage, Debby was intent on carving out a career for herself. She had gone to college and had decided while she was there to become an elementary school teacher. She had had the opportunity to spend her Junior year of college in Europe. Her grades and determination were sufficient to earn her a graduate teaching assistantship at the university where she received her bachelor's degree. As a graduate student she had the opportunity to teach her own freshman course in her specialty. She also was able to find a substitute teaching position at the local grammar school. It was while she was subing that her prejudice against having children crystallized.

Debby: It was always my idea that I didn't want to have children. Basically, I'm petrified of kids because I'm an only child and I'd never been around little boys and girls until I taught school and then I hated them even more.

She considered herself an "independent" person. She took particular pride in the fact that she was, from her point of view, not easily swayed by others, that she did, more or less, what she wanted to do and if people didn't like it, "Tough!"
Daryl had been married before but had been divorced from his first wife for about seven years when he met Debby. He had one child by his previous marriage. By the time he married the second time, he was no longer responsible for alimony or child support. Daryl had a bachelor's degree in engineering and worked for a local company. Daryl thought of himself as something of a happy-go-lucky type. He enjoyed his work, but he enjoyed his play more. His spare time activities included ham radio competition\(^2\) (his first love), golf, working on his car, among other things. When he and Debby first got together he was not working but was "taking off for the year" (he implied that he was out of work by choice).

After knowing each other for a little over a year they decided to get engaged. Nine months later they were married. The first six months of married life were rough. Each had come to the marriage with different conceptions of how a marriage should work. During one of the interviews, Debby offered what she believed to be the main reason for their different outlook on things.

Debby: He's a male chauvinist...because of his parents. In his entire life, I don't think his mother ever said "no" to anything his father or any of the kids wanted to do... Whereas I'm just the opposite. I've watched my mother manipulate my father for years.

\(^2\)Competitions in which one's score was determined by how many other operators one could contact and how far (geographically) these contacts were.
Of course, Debby's analysis is retrospective. It seems, so she claimed, that while they were dating she had no idea that her marriage would be a relationship in which her role would be essentially that of Daryl's cook and housecleaner.

Interviewer: Did you [Debby] know how your marriage would be set up before you got married?

Debby: No. Maybe you did, but I didn't.

Daryl: I had an inkling, but you never know quite how things are going to work out.

Interviewer: When did you find out, Debby?

Debby: After we got married.

Interviewer: How soon?

Debby: Very soon. Within the first week.

Interviewer: Why do you think you didn't pick this up before you were married?

Debby: I don't know. Probably because we weren't together for that long a time. We'd see each other two or three times a week.

Daryl: Yes.

Debby: But it was all on a--you know, he'd cook supper, or we'd go out--on a date basis. Now he comes home for supper every night and I've got to have it on the table.

Perhaps the most significant point made by Debby is that before they were married they would sometimes get together at Daryl's apartment (Debby lived with her parents) and Daryl would cook supper, but that after they were married Daryl demanded that she take over the cooking. It's significant because it opens the possibility that the reason
why their differing conceptions of marital roles were not realized was not that they were rarely in a position where their differences might come to a head, as Debby claimed, but that Daryl did not begin to act chauvinistically until Debby became his wife. Only then was she the incumbent of the wife position. Only then did he have the rights of the husband and she the obligations of the wife. Additional support for this contention is provided when Daryl admits that he "had an inkling" that the marriage would be set up the way it was. Perhaps he anticipated the role transition. This is not the only possible explanation. There is also the possibility that Daryl did tell Debby beforehand what he would be demanding of her as his wife but that Debby did not listen (selective inattention, perhaps) or that she planned to change Daryl, that once he and she were married she would "manipulate" him to her way of thinking! ("I've watched my mother manipulate my father for years.")

Debby's original plan was to find a job soon after she got married. She evidently believed, even during the first months of marriage and while she was looking for work, that Daryl's demands on her to be the chief cook and bottle washer would have to be altered. As she saw it, he couldn't possibly want her to be a full time housewife if she was working full time. The first problem she encountered in trying to implement her plan was not being able to find a job. Marrying Daryl meant (at least in the beginning) living close to where Daryl worked. The company
with which Daryl was associated, however, was located in a remote area of New England. Teaching or even secretarial positions (the types of jobs for which Debby considered herself qualified and in which she was willing to work) were scarce. She did get one break. One of the secretaries who worked for Daryl's firm quit and Debby was offered her job. Much to her surprise, though she was working full time, Daryl still expected her to "take care of him." What resulted was, in Debby's words, "a big battle royal."

Daryl: It's tough taking care of me. She couldn't work full time and take care of me. That couldn't be possible.

Interviewer: What makes you say that?

Daryl: I just demand a lot of care, that's all.

Debby: He says that because--

Daryl: I say that because I don't like to do dishes, vacuuming--I don't really care about doing those things--and if she worked, then we'd have to share in those duties. So I would rather that she did them and not have to work and I'll supply, as well as can be, the money to run the household.

Debby: I worked with him two weeks last spring as a secretary because their girl quit and I found that after working a ten hour day bent over

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Daryl's use of the phrase "take care of" is, interestingly, different from Hank's (see Chap. V). Whereas Hank uses the phrase to denote his wanting to protect Helen, Daryl uses it to mean that Debby must serve him.
a typewriter I was in no mood
when I got home to get his supper
or do anything else and it resulted
in a big battle royal.

Daryl: I think we agree that you shouldn't
work full tim.

Debby: That's right.

In the above sequence you will note that Debby concurs with
Daryl's assessment that now they both agree that Debby
shouldn't work full time. The implication is that Debby
had conceded to Daryl's definition of the marriage. Daryl
had won the first battle. The war however was not yet over.

Their second major conflict of wills started about
the sixth month of their marriage and was still in progress
by the fourth interview at the end of the pregnancy. They
had been renting since they were married and were in the
market for a house. The question was "where to live?"

Daryl wanted to stay pretty much where they were. It was
close to his work, his parents, his friends. What's more,
in this area he was more likely to find a house with enough
land to accommodate his ham radio antennas. Living in an
apartment had prevented Daryl from moving his rig from his
parent's backyard. Debby wanted to move closer to where
her parents and friends lived. She did not like living at
"the end of the world." Moving closer to a city meant that
she could be near all the places she liked to go shopping
and, perhaps most important of all, that she might be able
to find a job.
Debby: ...This seems like the end of the world up here. It's completely removed from Smallcity and all the places I like to go shopping, and all the people I know... I just find this town kind of suffocating. If I really wanted to go to work, I couldn't because there aren't any jobs around here...

During the fourth interview, I asked the couple who they thought was in charge of their marriage. Their discussion of the issue is interesting because, first, it illustrates the logic Daryl used to support his believe that where to live was his domain, and, secondly, it demonstrates the conflicts in Debby's personal conceptions between what was and what she believed should be. It is also an interesting sequence in that it shows the importance of labels in the intersubjective world.

Interviewer: Do you feel that anyone is in charge in this marriage?

Debby: No.

Daryl: Although if you talk in terms of President and Vice-President--

Debby: He'd be President, right dear?

Daryl: I suppose.

Debby: Yes, you're probably in charge.

Daryl: ...I thought that fit pretty well. Didn't you?

Debby: How about President and Chairman of the Board? I don't think President/ Vice-President is very good. A Vice-President is usually a yes man who goes along with everything the President says. I don't like that. We've gone through that before and found that it doesn't work.
Interviewer: What do you mean you've gone through that before?

Debby: We went through that over where we wanted to live. He wanted to buy the house we rented this past summer. He said he was going to buy. I finally made him see that if he bought it, I wasn't going to live with him... That's why I don't like the idea of President/Vice-President. Chairman of the Board. For equal voice.

Interviewer: Is that how you see it Daryl?

Daryl: [Begrudgingly] Well, yea, I suppose so.

Interviewer: Daryl, what did you mean by President/Vice-President?

Daryl: I suppose that if we had some big decisions to make, I would probably have to make final a situation.

Debby: And I don't agree with that at all. If it can't be a mutual decision, then I don't think it's a decision worth making.

Daryl then shifts his strategy and claims that the reason he should be in charge of the house buying is that he is more likely to be the more forceful and strike for a better deal. Debby has no qualms with this explanation. Perhaps she sees Daryl's justification less sexist (Daryl is the more competent bargainer). When he returns to more of an ideological line (he should be President because "that's the way it should be.") she tells me he's a chauvinist.

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Debby implies that she would be Chairman of the Board and Daryl would be President--"for equal voice." But Chairman of the Board is formally higher than President!
Daryl: The point about deciding on the house—I direct how that will occur... because I would probably be more forceful. If somebody said, "It's this much," you'd say, "Oh, OK." And I'd say, "Is that right? We'll go somewhere else."

Debby: I see your point.

Interviewer: Debby, you had said that this was a source of conflict.

Daryl: It was a source of conflict—deciding where to live.

Debby: It was more general [Daryl was trying to generalize his right to make this decision to all major decisions?]. You went on and said what you'd just said, that you'd be the one to make the decision. And I just couldn't agree with you. You make the decision as long as I agree with the decision you're making... Because I can get very nasty. That's why it was a point. I absolutely hated this house. I detested the place. I loathed every second we lived there and he kept talking about buying it.

Interviewer: Daryl, why do you think you should be the President?

Daryl: I just think that's the way it should be, that's all.

Debby: He's a male chauvinist.

Debby has no objection to Daryl claiming authority if he bases his claim on competency. Authority claimed in this way is more objective and subject to change. For example, Debby could gain competence in an area and command Daryl's respect. What Debby objects to is Daryl's chauvinism—his ideological claims to power. Authority claimed in this way is more difficult, if not impossible, to change; Debby
can not change her sex. The distinction between the two claims to power—competency and ideology—represents the two theories of power most often discussed by sociologists. Actually, competency is one way power may be gained under the resource theory which states that power in a marriage (or any social organization) is based on the comparative resources which the husband and wife bring to the marriage. "A resource may be defined as anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter satisfy his needs or attain his goals" (Blood and Wolfe, 1960:12). Besides competency, resources may include money, perhaps the most important resource for satisfying needs and attaining goals. Thus the more powerful spouse is the more competent individual or the primary wage earner. The ideological theory, on the other hand, states that power is based on beliefs and values. What the culture says is the way it's supposed to be. Thus the more powerful spouse is whoever the culture prescribes. If the culture is patriarchal, the husband will rule, for example.

At this point Debby introduces her theory on why they have differing conceptions on how a marriage should work. She explains, as previously noted, that she believes it all has to do with the way they were raised, that in his house his father was the boss, but that in her home her mother manipulated her father. This prompts Daryl to ask whether she manipulates him.
Daryl: Well, how come you don't do it that way? Or do you do that?

Debby: I always get my own way, don't I?

Interviewer: How do you get your own way?

Debby: Various methods. I don't want to go into it. Those are trade secrets.

Debby left little doubt that, if only on an informal (under the table) level, she did, in fact, exert control in the marriage. Her point is noteworthy because it raises the distinction between formal and informal control. The formal control structure is the explicit command hierarchy in a social organization. The informal control structure is the implicit network of influence which operates parallel to or, sometimes, in contradiction of the formal hierarchy. In the military, for example, though lieutenants are formally higher than sergeants, quite often it is the sergeant that commands more respect and has more influence in a unit. How many traditional patriarchal families are actually run behind the scenes by the wife mother?

Daryl then shifts his strategy again. He draws a distinction between the "inside world" and the "outside world". His marriage constitutes the inside world. Everything else is the outside world. Where he is "the President" is at the "interface" between the two worlds, that decision making which is limited in scope to the inside world is, perhaps, on a "much more equal basis." He claims, and Debby agrees, that buying a house is part of the interface, but he concedes that his authority at the interface (taxes,
money, terms) would only be used "if [they] found a house that [they] both liked!"

Daryl: My presidency of the marriage is in terms of the interface between the inside world and the outside world.

Interviewer: How about the inside world?

Daryl: That may be much more on an equal basis.

Interviewer: Do you see buying a house on a basis with the outside world?

Daryl: Yes.

Debby: As far as tax, and discussing money and terms, and stuff like that.

Daryl: ...That's one interface. If we found a house that we both liked, then the interface would be mine--like offering this many dollars less than what they're asking for...

Debby: I think it started out that he had the idea that I would just go along with whatever he wanted to do about living there. I thought that he thought he was acting as a President in making the decision. I don't think it was so much the house as being told I was going to live there.

The fact that this indicates a serious change in Daryl's previous position is noted by Debby who claims that Daryl "started out" with the idea that whether or not she liked the house was unimportant. She closes by stating that it wasn't the house as much as it was being told where she was going to live. Score one for Debby.

Thus far I have outlined two major areas of conflict for Daryl and Debby--work (Debby's job and the division of labor within the home) and decision making (specifically, the
rules for decision making in their marriage). Both of these areas fall within what is usually termed the instrumental aspects of the marriage. The third major area of conflict falls within the non-instrumental (sometimes called the expressive or affective) sphere of the marriage. Specifically, it has to do with Daryl and Debby's recreational activities. As noted, Daryl worked to play. In fact so involved was he in his play activities, that when I asked him why his marriage worked he answered in unequivocally utilitarian terms (cf. Cuber and Harroff, 1965).

Interviewer: Why do you think your marriage works?

Daryl: I think it works because, first off, probably the necessities that one needs to accomplish are fulfilled by each of us. The problem is easier, or less painful, than if we tried to do all the things necessary for one person to do. And I would say that it's easier for me to go to work, and it's easier for Debby to do the food and washing and so forth than it would be for either of us to do both. That's definitely a fit right there. It's quite important. I think also that we don't do all of what we do together, but I think what we do, watching television, playing cards, and maybe go visit somebody, whatever, or go shopping, we enjoy, or at least I do. And...I'm given enough free time to do what I may want to do, like work on the ham radio, or the car, or go fishing, or something like that. And I think she's given the same opportunity. I think free time is very important, whether you're married or not.
The conflict within the recreational sphere centered principally on Daryl's involvement with recreational activities which excluded Debby. The activity which annoyed Debby the most and which she saw as a waste of time was the activity Daryl enjoyed the most—ham radio competition.

Debby: ...I see ham radio competition as a waste of time.

Interviewer: Why do you think Debby thinks it's a waste of time?

Daryl: ...Because it's time that's spent away from her.

Debby: You're probably right.

The weekend competitions required that Daryl go to his parent's home where his radio was set up. Typically, he would be gone for just about the whole two days. Daryl's exclusion of Debby in his play activities was actually congruent with his chauvinistic ideology. Daryl advocated conjugal role segregation (see Bott, 1971:53) not only with respect to work roles and decision making but also in recreation. Debby, on each of these fronts, was more in favor of a joint conjugal role relationship (see Bott, 1971:53). She wanted to share in the economic functions of the marriage. She wanted Daryl to share more in the division of household tasks. She advocated a more democratic form of decision making, or, at the very least, a criteria for decision making (namely resources) which permitted authority to be more objective and capable of change. Finally, she wanted Daryl and her to spend more of their free time doing things together rather than apart.
Given the gap between what Debby wanted in her marriage and what she had, having a baby was, in fact, the "logical thing to do!" Through parenthood she could gain a lever on Daryl. She could use her pregnancy and the baby to restructure her marriage to her conceptions. Whereas the early months of their marriage required a change in plans for Debby, parenthood would force Daryl to change his ways— in a direction which would bring him more into line with Debby's ideas on what he should be doing. The irony of the situation is that Debby did not, I believe, consciously decide to get pregnant as a power move. Having a baby, first of all, was "logical" because Daryl didn't really give her much choice. During the first interview, when I asked how they came to the decision to have a baby, Daryl said the decision was really Debby's (another example of conjugal role segregation) that she wasn't sure what she would be doing, that she had to choose between working or having a child (he considered the two mutually exclusive). As we have already seen, Daryl foreclosed on one of Debby's options (working). She, in effect, had no choice. Couple the fact that she was forced to stay home with the peer pressure from her friends ("so many of our friends have adorable babies") and it becomes quite understandable how parenthood seemed so "logical." It gave her something worthwhile to do (other than cooking and cleaning). It legitimated her role as a house-wife. After Debby got pregnant, I believe she began to see that having a child
was also "logical" in another sense. Whereas the woman who leaves her job because she is a mother may lose power in her marriage (the amount of money/resources she brings to the marriage declines), the woman who is a housewife when she gets pregnant may begin to gain power in her marriage. First, it is typically the wife who is deemed the one who knows about childcare. Therefore, motherhood increases the wife's relative competency. Second, pregnancy and motherhood give the wife legitimate reasons for withholding satisfaction and goal attainment (resources) from her husband (e.g., I'm too ill...I'm taking care of the baby now.). Third, the wife may use the child to gain benefits for herself. She may demand that her husband spend more time at home with the child (Be a father!) and, thus, covertly force him to spend more time at home with her (Be a husband!).

Debby began to make her first moves during the pregnancy itself. Like many husbands of pregnant wives, Daryl expected that, given his wife's condition, he would be doing more of the duties around the house. What he evidently did not anticipate was Debby's attempts to normalize his helping her. By normalize I mean redefining an activity from a-typical (and therefore worthy of recognition) to typical. Although I was able to pick up only one instance of this negotiation process, its existence does raise the possibility that there were other tasks which were being traded. The task in question is a simple one--carrying the laundry bag from the house up the hill to the car so Debby
could wash the clothes at the laundromat. What made the
task difficult for Debby was the fact that there was a hill.
Before she was pregnant, Debby carried the clothes to the
car. Thus for her to request that Daryl do it was a-typical
and worthy of recognition (Thank you for doing something
which you normally don't have to do.). As the pregnancy
progressed, and as Debby got larger, it seems that Debby
began to take it for granted that Daryl would carry the
laundry up the hill (thereby normalizing the activity).
Daryl sensed (and resented?) this and asked "Why?" Debby
claimed that it provided an excuse to put off doing the
laundry (something she couldn't get away with before evi-
dently). Perhaps, what she meant by this is that she could
now argue that it was Daryl's fault if the laundry did not
get done (You weren't here to carry the laundry to the car.).

Interviewer: Have you noticed any changes since
I last spoke with you?

Daryl: I noticed that I've been carrying
the laundry up sometimes. You
wouldn't attempt some things that
you may have attempted previously.

Debby: Yes. That's true.

Daryl: There's got to be some reason for
that. Why was that?

Debby: It's just too heavy.

Daryl: Oh. I see.

Debby: It gets very awkward trying to carry
that laundry basket when you're
carrying it out far. You don't
have quite the sense of balance
that you do when it's close to you.
Daryl: Yes, but you could do it.
Debby: Yea, I could do it.
Daryl: Well, why didn't you do it?
Debby: Why not let you do it?
Daryl: I don't know. I'm just trying to figure out why you didn't do it.
Debby: I just didn't feel like it. Besides, it was an excuse not to go to the laundromat anymore.
Interviewer: So you've been doing the laundry more, Daryl?
Daryl: No, I haven't been doing it, but coming up this hill several months previously, she would carry it up the hill. Now there's no question that I carry it up the hill.
Interviewer: When did you start carrying it up the hill?
Daryl: A couple of months ago. But it seemed to be a more intense feeling, that there was no question that you would not carry it up the hill. It just wouldn't get done.
Debby: I told you it was an excuse!
Interviewer: Does that mean that you expect this to continue after the baby's born, Daryl?
Daryl: Oh, no!

During the second interview, Debby explicitly mentioned that she felt the pregnancy gave her the feeling that she could say anything she felt like saying and that nobody dare do anything about it because they had no "weight" (no pun intended by me or Debby). Hearing this, Daryl replied that he hadn't noticed that. Debby's come-back implies
that she is using the art of spousal manipulation learned from her mother. While Daryl's power may be more obvious, Debby's guerrilla (unobtrusive) approach is not necessarily any less potent.

Debby: I just have a feeling that I can say anything I feel like saying and nobody dares do anything about it! Isn't that awful?

Interviewer: Do you think that's related to the pregnancy?

Debby: Yes. Who is going to say anything to me now? They have no weight.

Daryl: I never noticed that.

Debby: Just keep on not noticing it, and we'll get along fine.

As I mentioned, when Daryl made the comment that the decision to have the baby was in Debby's hands, he gave the impression that, as far as he was concerned, parenthood was Debby's domain. By the fourth interview, after having attended the childbirth classes (which from my conversations with the couples had the very definite effect of convincing husbands to go into the delivery room with their wives), Daryl began to feel that he was (whether he liked or not?) very much a part of the whole affair.

Daryl: It looks like we are going to the hospital and we are going to have a baby by the looks of these classes.

Debby: Your attitude has changed considerably since you went to the classes.
Debby evidently intended to make sure that Daryl continued in this vein after the baby was born. She could understand if Daryl did not want to help with the diapering or if he only wanted to spend time with his child when he (the baby) was in a good mood (she was probably being very realistic). She just wanted to see Daryl spend time with the baby--perhaps more time than Daryl, himself, intended to spend. Debby's demand can be interpreted in two ways. First, it is an attempt to incorporate Daryl more into the parenthood role. Secondly, it may have been an attempt to manipulate Daryl into spending more time with Debby. One may wonder how many family outings would be planned for weekends on which ham radio competitions were also scheduled.

Finally, although working did not give her an out from having to take care of Daryl (when she got the full time job), Daryl still expected she be a full time maid), the child would give her an excuse to deny Daryl some attention.

Debby: I can see where with a third person in the house there will be a change. Obviously, he'll not get my undivided attention as he gets it now.

Daryl: Groan!

Debby: [Imitating Daryl] Groan! Hadn't thought about that, had you?

One point needs to be made. At no time did Debby explicitly state that she intended to use motherhood as a lever to bend Daryl to her will. But then again, if Debby did make explicit reference to her tactics she would, in effect, be undermining her whole strategy ("Just keep on not noticing it, and we'll get along fine.").
For Hank and Helen, pregnancy signaled essentially one thing—the end of the conflict over "when to have a child, when to become a family?" They had always assumed that, at some time in their married life, they would become parents. As Hank said during one of the interviews, they never seriously considered not having children (at least not "out loud"), the question was always "now or later?" The pattern was Helen wanting a child "now" and Hank opting for "later." The disagreement reached serious proportions at the end of their second year of marriage when they considered a separation to try to "work things out." After one meeting with a counselor, they decided to stay together.

Hank did most of the talking during the interviews. I often found it difficult to get Helen to express her opinion. Consequently, throughout this chapter I have had to rely, to a large extent, on Hank's quotes as data for Helen's thoughts and feelings. Much of our discussion during the sessions revolved around Hank's reconstructing for me the past four years of their marriage. He especially wanted me to appreciate what the pregnancy meant to him, how far they had come. In fact, whenever they spoke about the pregnancy (how they felt about it, what had happened since my last visit with them) or projected themselves into the postnatal
period (how they would feel, what they would be doing) they were always positive. Not once did they ever have anything negative to say. Hank and Helen are the only couple in the sample (of the sixteen) to do this. Some couples, of course, were more positive than others. But, with the exception of Hank and Helen, no couple was completely positive about their transition to parenthood. They could all find at least one thing that was bad about the pregnancy. They could all entertain the possibility that having children around could prove to be less than wonderful at times. All except Hank and Helen. But then none of the other couples' marriages was saved from divorce by the pregnancy; Hank and Helen's marriage was.

Hank and Helen knew each other for three years before they were married. During that time Hank was in the service and Helen was enrolled in school studying to be a nurse. Hank was anxious to leave the service and "settle down and get married." Helen wanted to go on for her bachelor's degree in nursing after which she wanted to gain experience in her field. She "wasn't interested in settling down at that point." She did change her mind however. What prompted her was Hank's having to take a tour of duty in Europe. It was while they were separated that she "realized she wanted to marry him." After they married they reversed roles, so to speak. Hank, who by then had left the service, wanted to go on to college (he had a high school diploma)
and get not only his bachelor's degree but his doctorate as well. He planned to be a college professor. Helen, on the other hand, was eager to "settle down and start a family." Finances precluded both having what they wanted. They decided that they would put off having the family for a while; Helen would work full time as a nurse (she scrapped her idea to continue school after she received her nursing license), and Hank would try to get through school as quickly as he could while he brought in money through part-time work and the G.I. Bill. Helen was only able to get the evening shift (4 pm - Midnight) when she applied at the local hospital. Hank's schedule of classes and work was such that he was home only during the evenings. They rarely saw each other. Even the weekends were taken up. Helen's hospital required that all nurses work every other weekend. Helen described what their situation was like.

Helen: ...we were both caught up in our little worlds; he at school and I with my job and it just seemed like we didn't have much of a marriage. We just kind of passed each other now and then.

According to the couple, not being with each other meant that they rarely had the opportunity to "really talk." When they were able to find time to get together, they usually had to catch up on issues that were pressing (e.g., bills). Very infrequently did they just visit with each other. Not being able to engage in an exchange of ideas during the early phases of their marriage may have con-
tributed to the fact that Hank and Helen lived in two "little worlds" in more ways than one.

With respect to their decisions to put off starting a family, Hank said that before they got married they had sat down and discussed the whole thing, that they had pretty much settled how they would work it (and why they were doing what they were doing) beforehand. The first time they began to suspect that their arrangement to wait was not as settled as they thought was during the first year of their marriage when Hank happened to ask Helen what she thought of living in Washington, D. C., that, given his specialty (one of the social sciences), they could very well end up there. Helen was stunned. She had been born and raised in New England and had always planned to raise her family there too. She had no idea that Hank was considering leaving. She began to question the value of his education if it meant leaving the area she loved, and the area she thought Hank loved too. Hank, whose family was with the military when he was a child (his self description: "someone without roots"), did love New England, but he was unwilling to jeopardize his career just to stay there.

Hank: She wanted to stay close to New England, and I kind of like New England too. I didn't want to feel that if there wasn't something in New England that I wanted to do, I'd be trapped into staying, and working at a job. She's a New England girl. She's been out of the area maybe three times in her life. Before I married her, once in her life. I should have sensed it. And one day in the conversation it came out. "How about if I ended
up with a job in Washington?" It was then that I realized that we didn't see eye to eye on this. At the time, things were pressing, and things were hard, and we didn't know each other that well. In light of some of the arguments we have had, that didn't get blown all out of proportion because we did manage to talk about it.

What disturbed Helen, however, was not that Hank would be unwilling to stay in New England if he had to choose between it or his career. What disturbed her was what she felt this signified—that, contrary to what she thought Hank believed in, Hank was self centered rather than family centered. She felt he was putting his own interests above the family's. Actually, Hank's concern for his career, his concern for himself, was, according to Hank's definition of marriage and the family, ultimately for the family. The fact is Hank and Helen each had different conceptions of what the institution of marriage was all about—what it should be. Helen's definition of marriage was that it was a relationship in which two people become one, it was the giving of oneself to one's spouse.

Helen: Marriage is just two people becoming very close together. I don't know. You want to do things for the other person, you want to do things with the other person. In marriage you love the other person and you become one. You want to do everything for him.

The rules of such a marriage, according to Helen, specified a relationship of togetherness. Individual pursuits (e.g., working) were permitted but only because they were necessary
to support the family. Too much individuality was a symptom and a major cause of marital failure. Hank's schooling was permissible provided it was defined as a means to an end—the family. Hank's definition of marriage was that it was a relationship in which two people become one but without losing their selves.

Hank: Marriage is a commitment to a common identity which compels sacrifice. It is a surrendering of your own identity or a good share of your identity to a common identity... It entails a sense of selflessness, of surrendering the self to a common identity... It's possible [however] to go too far into it, to wake up one morning and to find that you've lost yourself...and that frame of mind is broken.

The rules of such a marriage, according to Hank, specified a relationship in which autonomy was not simply tolerated—it was desirable. A husband or wife should seek things to do which don't include the other. Too much togetherness was a symptom and a major cause of marital failure.

Hank: I think that an awful lot of people that divorce...do it because they had realized that the selflessness had perhaps gone too far.

For Hank, his schooling was a means to an end. It was, ultimately, for the family. But it was in a different way than Helen's system dictated. It was for the family not only because it meant that Hank would be able to support Helen and the children; it was for the family also because through Hank's personal development he would be contributing to the development of the family. By not "losing himself"
in the marriage, the marriage would be maintained.¹

The fact that Hank and Helen had differing conceptions of the husband-wife relationship introduces another reason why, when they were able to find time in their hectic schedules to be together, they didn't "really talk." Hank spoke of the problem they had when they had an evening at home.

Hank: Like when I come home I like to settle back a little and relax. I like to be able to sit down and spend an hour reading the Times in the evening and then spend a couple of hours reading a book, or instead of reading work on my painting. She wants, "Let's do something together." And for me, she's sitting here reading or knitting and I'm sitting at the desk painting and we chat back and forth about things that happened during the day, are doing things. But not for her. Doing things together, for her, means me here and she about there [both on the couch, about a foot apart] and that's how we get our conversation and everything else. And I just don't feel like doing that. "Come on, do something else. I want to do my thing for a while. Move over and give me a little bit of room!"...we compromise and everything works out all right.

It is significant that Hank's comments do not pertain specifically to the first two years of his marriage. He implies that this is a continual problem which they must continually work out.

¹Hank's conception of marriage is related to what O'Neill and O'Neill (1972) call "open marriage." By the same token, Helen's conception would be categorized as "closed."
Returning to the New England controversy, (as previously indicated) Hank mentioned that "in light of some of the arguments" they had had (over the course of their marriage), this argument "didn't get blown all out of proportion" because they managed to "talk about it." Whatever they said, they did not change the way they lived. That is, Hank continued to go to school and Helen continued to work. What they implied did change was the way they thought about what they were doing. Helen began to believe they were just wasting their time as long as they continued without starting a family.

Hank: I saw her at times waiting, every day was just another day wasted without a family being started. And she couldn't quit work, and she couldn't stand the waiting, wanting to stay home and be a mother.

Hank started to wonder whether he was doing "the right thing."

Hank: I was in a real rut and depressed about one thing or another and caught up in school and I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing...

At the end of their second year of marriage, Helen encountered some problems with her menstruation cycle. Despite the fact they were trying not to have a baby, they were faced with the possibility that she might be pregnant. The different reactions each had toward the possibility prompted an argument which did get "blown all out of proportion." Helen was not pregnant. However, as a consequence of what they had each said to each other during the crisis, they concluded that it might be best if they saw a
"professional." They were seriously considering a separation.

Hank and Helen admitted to seeing the professional and considering separation during the fourth and final interview. Previously, when I asked them about the early years of their marriage they would never be very specific. They always left me with the impression that something was being left unsaid. Finally, in the last interview I asked them outright, "Was there ever any time in your marriage that you considered getting a divorce?" There was a long pause. Then Hank started to speak, "No. Not divorce. But..."

This is one illustration of the value of multiple interviews. They permitted me to build a rapport with my subjects.

I asked what kind of professional the woman was.

Hank: She wasn't in the marriage counselor business. She was a counselor. She had a doctorate in clinical psychology.

Their sessions with the counselor were individual rather than conjoint. I asked them to describe to me what happened during their respective sessions.

Helen: I don't think she told me anything much. I did most of the talking. She just said back to me what I had said and kind of made me listen to what I was saying. And I don't remember any real advice that she gave other than to stay open and communicate with each other.

Hank: It was just a matter of going in and she'd say, "What's on your mind? What do you imagine to be the problem." And we'd talk to her and she'd say, "Well what about this attitude or that attitude?"
They each saw the woman once. You will note that when Hank speaks of what transpired during the session, he says that the psychologist focused on what was on his mind, and then she asked, "Well, what about this attitude or that attitude?". Helen's session preceded Hank's. The attitudes the psychologist was asking Hank to think about here Helen's attitudes, Helen's conceptions and definitions. Hank was being introduced (for the first time?) to his wife! They never followed through on their separation.

By asking Hank and Helen what happened during their respective sessions with the psychologist, I prompted a discussion which gave me a detailed picture of the couple's conceptions and interactional patterns not only during the first two years of their marriage but during the last two years as well. The reasons for this are, first of all, the couple did not remain on a descriptive level but retrospectively evaluated the sessions, and secondly, many of the problems which the psychologist raised were not remedied by the sessions. In some respects, the sessions merely made the couple aware of their problems. Working out those problems was a perennial task for Hank and Helen.

Hank: We had been married two years and still--How do you marry? How do you act married? What's the proper way of being married? Rather than just you're married, we were still working this out.

Helen: ...We were just not communicating and I think that is where we just kind of fell down instead of talking things out...
Hank: "I'd tell her it's senseless to feel that way, you don't need to feel that way. I was giving her feelings that she didn't feel. I was assuming things on her part and then responding to my assumptions rather than to what she really was. She'd feel sorry sometimes about not having a family and I'd tell her, 'You don't have to feel sorry about that. We've talked about it before, about holding off on it. You don't need to feel sorry.' And it was wrong, I know now, to tell her because those were honest legitimate feelings and they had to be dealt with. It couldn't be swept under the rug as having no basis because for her they had a real basis. What the woman [the psychologist] did for me was just plain and simple. She'd listen and she said it back and I couldn't believe what I was saying when she said it back to me. I had taken a very protective, overbearing role toward Helen and I thought I had kept a very understanding open approach. But in reality I was very closed and had a very narrow mind about what she was capable of doing, and what she should be doing, and what she shouldn't be doing...

In the above sequence, Hank makes two essential points about how he was acting toward Helen. First, he says that he would act toward Helen on the basis of what he assumed she was like rather than what she "really" was like. We all act on the basis of our assumptions. This is a major proposition of the symbolic interactionist approach. Its classic formulation is W.I. Thomas' axiom: If people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences. What Hank seems to be saying, however, is that he was ignoring Helen, that he simply was not taking her into account. The term used to denote the problem which Hank is referring to is disconfir-
mation. More devastating than rejection—which says to the listener you are wrong, disconfirmation says in effect you do not exist (Watzlawick et al., 1967:86). Secondly, he says that he had taken a very protective, overbearing role to her. It would seem, given Hank's comments, that Hank was placing the blame for the state of their marriage on himself. He seems to be saying that he is the cause of their problem. Actually, this is only half the picture. From what the couple said and from what I observed, there is evidence to suggest that Helen at times contributed to her own disconfirmation and subordination through her introversion and dependency. The fact is Hank and Helen were involved in a vicious interactional cycle. By a vicious interactional cycle I mean what Watzlawick et al. (1967:46, 58) mean when they speak of the circularity of communication patterns. The illustration they use is the husband-wife cycle...nag-withdraw-nag-withdraw...in which one partner's nagging causes the other's withdrawal which causes the first's nagging, and so on. The point is it is meaningless to speak of a beginning (the cause) because the series is a feedback system. The parties involved may see what they believe to be the cause of the cycle (e.g., I nag him because he withdraws) but this is an example of what Watzlawick et al. (1967:54) call punctuating the sequence. Punctuation is simply the cognitive organization of behavior.
The introversion-disconfirmation cycle was illustrated during the interviews. As noted previously, Hank provided most of the answers to my questions. Helen spoke very little. Often her silence prompted Hank to speak for her. That is, if I asked the couple how they felt individually about something, Helen would frequently defer to Hank and Hank would then tell me how he felt and how he thought Helen felt. On these occasions, when I would then turn to Helen to try to get her to tell me in her own words how she felt, she would say, "Hank said it all." The impression I received from sequences such as this is that Helen's introversion was the cause of Hank's not knowing how Helen "really" felt and his having to rely on his "assumptions." There were occasions, however, when the causal order seemed to be reversed. Sometimes I would direct a question specifically at Helen (that is, I would say her name and look straight at her); she would try to answer but Hank would intercede and answer for her. It was as if she wasn't in the room! Whether or not Hank realized what he was doing (that he was not permitting Helen to tell me--and him--how she "really" felt) is an open question. One comment made during the third interview pointed to the possibility that he was not aware that he in effect was disconfirming her. The comment was made in connection with their telling me what they talked about after I left them. Hank said that after the end of the second interview, Helen told him that
he had "talked alot," that he had gotten "carried away."
Hank remarked that he "never saw it that way," that he would
admit "there were times" when he might "go off with some­
thing," but this was "very rare, very rare." The trans­
cripts give evidence to the contrary. In fact, Hank's
remark came at the end of a sequence in which he had just
spoken for her (and she wanted to speak for herself). When
I asked the couple whether the interaction pattern which was
taking place during the interviews was typical of their
everyday pattern, Hank answered, "Yes," and then told me how
this pattern was a problem for him because he was then
forced to "piece together things" (guess? create?) in order
to find out what's on Helen's mind.

Hank: I see her sitting there quietly
which she does very well because
that's all she's done by and large
for a long time. You know, she's
kind of introverted in that fashion...
And then there are times when she
says, "Well, let's go to bed and
talk or let's talk a little."
"Well, fine, what are we going to
talk about?" And I'm the one who
ends up talking and I had nothing
to talk about in the first place.
Because she says, "Well, things in
general." "Well, what about? You
got a problem? What's bothering you?"
"Well, everything kinda." And I have
to interpret that! I have to piece
together these things. She doesn't
say what's on her mind.

Although Hank's anecdote is supposed to serve as his example
of how Helen is the cause of his not being able to "really"
know her, the same episode could be used to explain the
reverse. That is, if Helen told me her opinion of what happened would she have punctuated the interaction by saying, "I wanted to talk, but he wouldn't let me get a word in edgewise"? It is my belief that Hank and Helen's introversion-disconfirmation relationship is a circular feedback system.

With respect to the dependency-subordination cycle (Helen dependent--Hank subordinating), the seeds for this interactional cycle were sown before Hank and Helen were married. In fact, "taking care" of Helen was the reason Hank gave when he decided to marry her. What is noteworthy in the following passage is Hank's attributing his strength to Helen. It was her confidence in him (dependence on him?) that gave him strength. Strength to do what? Take care of Helen.  

Interviewer: What was it about Helen that made you decide to marry her?

Hank: She just radiated confidence. And when I was with her, she'd give me every confidence in the world. She provided me with something long before I ever considered marrying her, just something that gave me a little bit of self support. It helped me. What I didn't have in myself for accomplishing things that I wanted to accomplish she provided just by being with me. I thought of doing things in terms of the confidence she gave me. That I think and the

\[2\] Hank's use of the phrase "take care of" is, interestingly, different from Daryl's (see Chap. IV). Whereas Daryl uses the phrase to denote Debby's serving him, Hank uses it to denote protection of Helen.
I mean she's so small. I just wanted to take care of her. What's strange is that when I met her she was extremely thin as well. I guess I just wanted to take her home and take care of her. I was attracted to her because of what she did for me and then I didn't want to leave her out in the cold after she'd given me all the confidence in the world. I just wanted to take her along because she was so good for me.

How much different is the above description from the one below in which Hank discusses what he realized after speaking with the psychologist. He starts out by coming down hard on himself ("I was making rather major decisions with very little consideration for her") implying that he is the cause of her dependency. He concludes, however, by implying the reverse ("Because she took advantage of my doing that"). Once again, the pattern is cyclical.

Hank: I realized that I was perhaps being extremely unfair to her. By not letting her do it herself—even minor details, say keeping track of the checkbook—I was making rather major decisions with very little consideration for her. Even sometimes without asking her. Because I felt, perhaps, she couldn't make the decision on her own, wasn't qualified to make the decision. I had disregarded whatever her thoughts were as being unimportant and it was kind of a hard realization. Because she then, I think, kind of took advantage of my doing that and I used to get a little upset that I was babysitting that way...

Of course, the two cycles (introversion-disconfirmation and dependency-subordination) are interrelated. Perhaps
took place during the third interview. Hank was accusing Helen of being dependent on him.

Hank: She just lets herself become dependent on me...

Interviewer: What do you think, Helen?
Helen: I think I can be assertive at times.
Hank: Yes, if I prompt her.

The critical statement is Hank's, "Yes, if I prompt her." With it he essentially rejects Helen's claim that she can be assertive. He does so by describing how he has disconfirmed her independency by accepting only those "times" in which he has "prompted" Helen to be assertive. All other "times" (times which Helen may have thought she was being assertive) do not qualify as assertive and therefore do not exist (under the category assertive). The only "times" that do qualify, however, can not be categorized by Helen as assertive because she was prompted. Having been "prompted," she can no longer claim she was the initiator, but must give Hank the credit for motivating her.

If the above exchange is typical it is understandable why Helen is confused over whether she is dependent or not, as she indicates below.

Helen: I let myself become dependent on him. It's my own doing, but then other times I can be very independent. Just sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between the two.
R. D. Laing's comments on the effects of disconfirmation are most appropriate in this regard. The individual's "feelings are denuded of validity, his acts are stripped of their motives, intentions and consequences, the situation is robbed of its meaning for him, so that he is totally mystified and alienated" (Laing, 1961:135-136 as quoted by Watzlawick, 1967:87). The point--Hank can subordinate Helen by his words as well as by his deeds.

At the end of their third year of marriage, Hank and Helen came to a crossroad in their lives. Hank had managed to get his bachelor's degree in three years. The question before them was "parenthood--now or later?" Hank said they "sat down and talked to each other" and "straightened each other out." What it seems they did is construct a compromise. Agreed: they would live in New England because that was the best place to raise a family. Agreed: with only a bachelor's degree, it was doubtful that Hank could get a job that he liked in the New England area; Hank would go on to graduate school for his M.A. after which he would apply for a position--the Ph.D. would have to wait. Agreed: they would try to conceive a child the first semester of graduate school (assuming Hank would finish his master's in one year, parenthood would coincide with Hank's graduation and Helen's resignation from the hospital).

At the time of my first interview with Hank and Helen, they were approximately twelve weeks into the pregnancy. Hank was going to school and looking for a college teaching
position for the Fall semester. Helen was working the evening shift at the local hospital. When I asked Hank how he felt about the job market, he said he felt "confident." When I asked him whether he felt pressured in his job hunt because of the soon to be added responsibilities of parenthood, he said, on the contrary, the pregnancy "took the edge off the negative replies" from employers, that it served as a "galvanizing factor," a protection against the pressure. Helen's responses were similarly optimistic. I left the first interview believing that they were being inordinately ideal, perhaps naive. What I came to understand during the succeeding interviews was that parenthood might very well have saved their marriage from divorce. Their pregnancy pointed to a negotiated settlement between them. For the first time in their marriage, Hank and Helen would be able to live in harmony. But, and this is extremely important, the order to their marriage would not be a consequence of their having finally come to a consensual (shared) view of their relationship as much as it would be a result of their having created a situation in which they could live with the other's view. The term that has been used to denote this form of arrangement is cooperation. The essence of the arrangement is that it is not based on attitudinal similarity or value consensus but on a set of shared, mutually understood, procedural rules. The parties to such an arrangement are not concerned with the abolition of existing differences but with their effective management (Sprey, 1969:703-704).
Parenthood would mark a structural change which would facilitate the effective management of Hank and Helen's differences.

By the second interview, Hank had found a job. It was a non-academic position, but it offered what Hank saw as "potential." It would require that Hank finish his M.A. part-time (his employer wanted him to start immediately), but that also didn't bother Hank ("I don't have to rush with my thesis"). It was a New England based organization. Initially, it seemed to me that Hank had made some real concessions. Actually, he had not conceded that which was most important to him. He had found a job he considered personally fulfilling. His personal growth, as he saw it, would benefit the family. Helen was happy that Hank was doing something he enjoyed. She was also happy to be able to stay in New England. She too was doing something she had wanted to do for a long time—she was becoming a mother. Furthermore, since she would be quitting work at the end of the pregnancy, she and Hank would be spending their evenings together. Her and Hank's togetherness, as she saw it, would benefit the family.

The phrase which Hank and Helen used to describe what was happening to them was "everything falling into place."

Helen: Just being able to get settled down, to raise a family, Hank's career, and my own career, just fitting everything together into its place. Rather than concentrating on Hank's schooling having priority over having a family. Getting everything to work together.

* * *
Hank: And I think an awful lot of this fantastic adjustment has to do with the fact that I've got a good job. I enjoy what I'm doing and, like she says, everything is falling into place.

It is apparent that when they use the phrase what they mean is that they are each finally getting what they have each wanted all along. When Helen speaks of her own "career" she is referring to her career as a mother. It is significant that she uses the word to describe both her and Hank's life-work (which is one definition of career given by Webster, 1958:274). One may infer that she considers their work qualitatively different but equally important. This is not the same attitude Helen had toward her profession. She wasn't sure when, if at all, she'd care to return to nursing. Hank's comment denotes the fact that he considers the "fantastic adjustment" he is making to Helen to be more a function of his job than it is the pregnancy. Their conflicts still remain. But their marriage is stable.

The most dramatic change to take place during the pregnancy occurred when Helen quit work at the end and became a full-time housewife. Concurrent with her quitting, Hank and Helen moved into a new (more spartious) apartment in order to be nearer to where Hank worked. The couple's fourth and final interview was conducted in their new home.

They loved their new surroundings. They saw the change as symbolic of the change in their lives. They couldn't be happier. Everything was "fantastic." They
were looking forward to the birth. Now that Helen wasn't working anymore, they had their evenings to spend together. They considered this one of the best things to happen to them.

Hank: Really, I have a companion now that I didn't have in the past...It gives us an opportunity to just be together about things. In the past we did not have that much time to talk with each other, so what talking we did usually was about things that were pressing or important. Now we have a chance to do that. We have a little more of a chance to have a little more feedback back and forth.

The fact that they now had the opportunity to give each other "feedback" was encouraging. Perhaps they would be able to talk themselves out of their interactional cycles. Perhaps they would finally get to know each other. Indications were that they were heading in this direction. Note both the content and the form of the following sequence. This is one of the few times that Hank defers to Helen and that Helen speaks at length (at least for her) about what she thinks.

Hank: She's become, I don't know, what would you call it?

Helen: More sensitive to your feelings.

Hank: And I think I'm becoming much more sensitive to her.

Helen: I think the whole thing about the change in our life style is that I'm just more relaxed about it all and I can tune myself into Hank's feelings and if he's tired I'll go to bed early and if he's not I'll stay up [togetherness!]... And I think I appreciate him more.
What they would conclude once they knew each other is, at this point, unknown. When I left them, what they were discovering in each other they evidently liked.

Hank: She has a way with plants!...Helen doesn't talk to plants. Helen is busy. She's got this--but you know, she talks to plants! I can't explain the feeling that comes over me when she does something like that. Wow! I didn't know you talked to plants! I thought you'd be one of those that thought it was strange to talk to plants!

Postcript: Of all the case studies, this is perhaps the most elusive. It was, without a doubt, the hardest to write. In effect, what Hank and Helen did to each other, they did also to me. They never really introduced themselves. While Helen hid behind silence, Hank hid among his abstractions and verbosity. What is interesting is that I left each session with the couple feeling that they had (relative to many of the other couples in the sample) really opened up to me. In fact, Hank and Helen were the first couple I chose to do a case study on because I thought I had so much. I was duped. For no other couple was I forced to infer so much.
CHAPTER VI

JOE AND JENNIFER

The first pregnancy meant essentially two things to Joe and Jennifer. It meant that after having waited close to four years they were finally starting a family, something they had always wanted to do. It also signaled a change in their work structure. For the first time since they were married Jennifer would not be working. More important, for the first time since they were married Joe would be the sole wage earner. The significance of this latter point is that Joe intended to use his new position to make a claim for dominance in the marriage.

Joe was a metaphorical speaker. Often, while discussing an issue, he would (to "clarify" a point) bring in anecdotes from his personal experiences or relate the issue to the international state of affairs. There were times, I must confess, when I wished he would have been more specific in his answers. I learned however that I had to accept, as others had, that Joe was just "deep."

Jennifer: Joe is a very deep thinker, and he always has something on his mind. He can drive you right up a wall!

Though Joe did most of the talking, Jennifer was not at a loss for words. Sometimes she found it difficult to get a word in edgewise or remember what question I had asked after Joe had picked it up and ran with it for a while, but then
so did I! When Jennifer did speak, she said what was on her mind—as did Joe; but, as she once said, what it took Joe to say in a paragraph, she said in a sentence. On a number of occasions during the interviews while Joe was building an argument (and this was particularly true if Joe's argument was an attempt to justify why he should be in charge) a few well placed words by Jennifer and Joe's edifice would come tumbling down.

Joe and Jennifer knew each other since high school. Their first reaction to each other was, as Jennifer put it, "mutual disgust." Both attribute this to the fact that they are each honest types—if they don't like you, they tell you—and, in the beginning, they told each other more of what they didn't like than of what they liked. In time, their hatred turned to love. What attracted them to each other was their similarities—their openness, their aggressiveness, and, interestingly, what they saw as the inability of either to dominate the other. It was a relationship built explicitly on conflict and honesty. (Joe once described Jennifer as his "confessor," and he her's.)

The couple could not recall any specific point at which they decided to get married. "Someplace along the line," it was just assumed. Though they may not have gone through the marriage proposal ritual, the transition to the married state was one they took very seriously. Joe and Jennifer were a religious couple. Joe, in particular, prided himself on his interpretations of the Bible. They did not
believe in divorce. They felt it reflected weakness—a couple's inability to face life's problems.

When they got married, they lived solely on Jennifer's income. Having graduated from high school with a business diploma, she worked as a bookkeeper. Joe was just beginning his third year of college. He was studying to be an accountant. Actually, for the first three and a half years of their marriage, Jennifer would be the primary wage earner. This was because after Joe was awarded his bachelor's degree, he went on to attend a postgraduate business school which took him a year and a half to complete.

Both believed that the way they were each raised explained their personalities and why they complemented each other. Jennifer described her pre-marriage family life as one in which she was the primary decision-maker.

Jennifer: I was always very independent before I got married. As a matter of fact, my parents were never my rule. I was the rule of my parents.

Joe, on the other hand, was brought up in a patriarchal home—all decisions were made by his father.

Joe: ...And at my house it was just the opposite. My father was a very strong father image, traditional. "Come to him, your father will decide for you."...he wouldn't give me any responsibility.

Jennifer's independence, they felt, was a function of her having been forced to be independent all along. Joe's was a manifestation of his rebellion against his father's autocratic style ("I had to sort of assert myself."). According
to Joe, Jennifer came to the marriage wanting to "get rid of" some of her power, and he came "wanting more," so their relationship "worked out alright." Neither would try to dominate the other.

Although Joe claimed that Jennifer wanted less power and that she would not try to dominate him, this evidently was not the case. Sometime during the first two years of their marriage, Joe and Jennifer got into an argument which ended in violence--Joe struck Jennifer. The conflict was a power struggle. Joe supposedly hit Jennifer because Jennifer was trying to dominate. He responded with force because he felt he "had to do something physical to stop the bad progression of events." The sequence opens with my asking Jennifer whether she thought she ran things now--that is, does she believe she is "the rule" of Joe as she was "the rule" of her parents and sisters.

Interviewer: Do you think you run things now?

Jennifer: No. I tried hard, though!

Joe: She tries. One day we had a conflict and she more or less tried to run me and I told her no, and she got hysterical and said, "I could kill you!" And I got rather angry and slapped her in the face three or four times and I said "Don't you ever say that to me again!" And we haven't had any problems since. So she's sort of learned that she isn't going to dominate.

Jennifer: Yes, and I kind of like the idea, too.
Joe: She threw a temper tantrum when she realized that she couldn't dominate me, and when she started getting hysterical,...that's the last time, kid! Yeh that's the worst argument we ever had! That was a drawn out bang out fight. It lasted about four hours. It sort of built and built...

Interviewer: Were you surprised when Joe hit you?

Joe: Oh, boy, was she.

Jennifer: Yea.

Joe: She started crying not because I hurt her but because she was shocked--"How dare you!"

Interviewer: Why did you hit her?

Jennifer: That was a long time ago.

Joe: That was a real long time ago. It's just like if you want to do something like tear down a house, what do you use? Do you use an atom bomb, or do you use a crane and hammers and stuff like that. It's just like physical force. You don't use it until you're forced to use it. At that point, I felt I had to do something physical to stop the bad progression of events. I took my chances with that and it worked. In those circumstances, my judgement was correct and it worked.

Jennifer: Joe doesn't usually use force. That was the first and the last time he'll ever do that. It was my fault. I was trying to dominate him, that's for sure. But I was always that type of person, that's why. I always had to be that type of person, because I always had to make my own decisions. I never had anybody else make my decision.

Joe: I'm a very dominating person, too, so there was a conflict there.
Jennifer: I think that's one of the reasons we got along so well, because he was the first person I went out with that I couldn't dominate. So he was a challenge.

Joe: That was a severe conflict. I don't know if we hadn't solved that problem, if we would still be married, because of the tension. I'm not the kind of person that's going to be dominated.

Jennifer: And I'm not either.

Joe: So we've had to agree, through a process of compromise, and talking this out. We're living on reconciliation and compromise and understanding.

Though lengthy, the sequence is important. It is important not only for what is said, but for how as well. For example, the tenor of Joe's comments—he speaks as if Jennifer were guilty of disrespect or even insubordination ("Don't you ever say that to me again!"..."That's the last time, kid!"). Even more, there is undoubtedly a certain amount of pride expressed—he knew he had won that argument. Jennifer, on the other hand, is quick to point out "that was the first and the last time he'll ever do that [hit her]." She wanted to make it perfectly clear to me, but more importantly to Joe, that she too had no intention of being dominated—and, perhaps, that she considered Joe's gloating an attempt to do just that! She goes on to admit that she married Joe because "he was a challenge." Does she mean by this that she considers Joe her opponent? The conflict nature of their marriage is explicitly acknowledged when Joe concludes by saying that their relationship works on "recon-
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ciliation and compromise" (words which connote conflict) as well as "understanding" (an afterthought?).

As noted, Joe was a student for the first three and a half years of their marriage. When he graduated, he accepted an offer to work as an accountant with a local firm. One month after Joe took the job, the couple started trying to conceive a child. Four months later they found out that Jennifer was pregnant. They were evidently just biding their time, waiting for Joe to finish school--the point at which they felt it would be time to start a family. They always intended to have children. As Jennifer put it, they never "really seriously" considered not having children. They believed that having children is a fulfillment, that married couples who don't have children are selfish and self-centered, and that couples who do are healthier in mind.

Joe: I think having children is a fulfillment... People that are married and don't have children tend to get more selfish as they get older. And I think there's a lot of truth in that.

Jennifer: If you see people without children, they tend to be very selfish, self-centered people.

Joe: I think people who have children tend to be more outgoing, and have a healthier attitude toward life.

They also believed the child would bring them closer to each other.

Joe: I think it's going to pull us together more... Each and every little item that you do together or can discuss together or have in common brings you closer together.
In addition to these reasons, the couple offered yet another reason why they opted for now. They wanted to start a family before Jennifer got "too ambitious" in her job. The fact is that while Joe may have just been starting his career, Jennifer had become quite established in hers. She had become the supervisor of the bookkeeping department in the company she had been working for since they were married.

Jennifer: I figured I better have one before I got too ambitious in my job. I was getting a lot of promotions and I decided if I got too ambitious I may not want children. I might get too involved in material things.

And in another interview--

Jennifer: There's a point in your life when you should have a family... If you wait too long, you start to believe that money is more important than family life. I've seen that happen to some other people.

Joe and Jennifer's deemphasis of "material things" and their positive regard for "family life" was, to a large degree, an outgrowth of their religious beliefs. At the core of these beliefs is the notion that working is for personal fulfillment and not for the monetary rewards it may bring. Jennifer spoke of being a full-time mother, so I asked her whether she believed she would ever return to work. She assured me she would, that she would like to work as a consultant eventually, if only part-time. She felt it was important for her to pursue her career, that "in this day and age, you need more than just the family." It was apparent that Jennifer's concept of self was related to her career as well.
as to her family. So was Joe's. While Jennifer's ambitions were being stifled, Joe's ambitions were being raised. Jennifer once said that when her "quiet," "subdued" family first met Joe, they were "shocked" by his frankness. The impression the couple give however when they speak of the effect which moving from student to worker had on Joe is that he had lost some of his assertiveness in the interim. Through his work he was evidently regaining his independence and self-confidence.

Jennifer: I think Joe is getting more independent... He's been working well with all the business people he's been dealing with lately. He's getting more self confident...

Interviewer: Do you feel that Joe lacked self confidence?

Jennifer: I think that when you first get out of school you do. You're not used to being with business people. You're used to being with students.

Interviewer: What do you think about your self confidence, Joe?

Joe: I think I'm gaining more self confidence. With more experience you know what to do.

Another self confidence builder which Joe was involved with was studying for the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exams. He didn't want to be a CPA. He just wanted to pass the exam and, as he said, "stick my tongue out" (At whom? He didn't say.) Jennifer also wanted him to take the exam so that he would be more flexible. If he didn't like one job, he would be able to move to another with more ease.
The fact that both Joe and Jennifer's individual concepts of self were so related to their respective careers is particularly interesting. When the subject of arguing came up (I asked all the couples what they usually argued about), Joe and Jennifer said that the thing they argued about the most was accounting and bookkeeping. When I asked them why they argued so much about accounting and bookkeeping, it became apparent that they consider themselves, more or less, in the same business—the business of handling money—and that in this business they both have their own ideas. Actually, they seem to approach the business from two different points of view. Joe, as an accountant, represents the abstract or theoretical viewpoint. Jennifer, as a bookkeeper, represents the concrete (down to earth) view.

Interviewer: Why do you think you end up arguing about it?

Jennifer: I think that's something we both have our own ideas on.

Joe: Sometimes I'm inconsistent and she points it out. At other times her knowledge about the subject is not as high as mine, so I have to sort of educate her.

Jennifer: I'm more accurate and he's more knowledgeable. Put it that way.

And later on—

Jennifer: He's an accountant, and I'm a bookkeeper.

Joe: Yea, she's a bookkeeper. Bookkeepers can find errors, and accountants can make up systems and can decide how the systems can run or why, and the bookkeepers can find errors.
Jennifer: Bookkeepers can correct accountants' mistakes.

The classic conflict--education vs. experience--seems to be at the root of their discussion. Despite what may appear to most of us as an intellectual exercise, the fact that Joe and Jennifer's individual concepts of self are so related to the money handling business make their confrontations more than a diversion. They were, I believe, manifestations of the same conflict which had been going on between them since they met in high school--who dominates whom?

Given that the onset of pregnancy signaled a change in the work structure of the couple's marriage, one might also suspect that their perennial conflict would develop into some interesting power plays and parries. This is, in fact, essentially what happened. Joe may have rebelled against his father's attempt to exert control as the husband-father. There were, however, indications that Joe too would have liked to command Jennifer's respect and subordination because he too was now the man of the house.

Joe: Well, I'm a pure male chauvinist pig, and I'll admit it.

Jennifer: Yea.

Joe's chauvinism, or more precisely his belief that he should dominate Jennifer because that's the way it should be, was often not as explicit as the above admission, but there was no mistaking its existence in some of Joe's other comments. For example--
Joe:  
I don't really discuss the pregnancy that much with others. I let Jennifer do all the discussing... My background with the people in this area; the men just don't discuss pregnancy... we let the women take care of that.

* * *

Joe:  
It seems like there's a breakdown in roles, if you know what I'm getting at. It seems like all the women want to be coal miners all of a sudden. It seems to be the thing to do. My theory is: that the women would be better off to stay home and take care of the kids and take care of the social clubs and that sort of stuff. And the men go out and earn the money... I think the basic problem with juvenile delinquency and the whole mess that this country is in is that the man goes out and works, the woman goes out and works, and the children are left home...

Unfortunately for Joe, Jennifer wouldn't buy his ideological (the culture says that's the way it's supposed to be) theory on who dominates whom. To be a master, one must have a slave. But the byproduct of parenthood--Jennifer leaving her job, he becoming the breadwinner--offered Joe another avenue to justify a claim to power. The justification he switched to is sometimes called the resource theory of power. This theory argues that the allocation of tasks and power is based (or should be based, if you're using it as a maxim which Joe

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1Joe's reference to "the people in this area" is interesting. Born and raised in rural New England, Joe seems to be claiming that there exists a geographically based subculture and that he is a part of it.
was) on the comparative resources of the members of a society and by the life circumstances within which they live. In more simple terms, what this means for the micro society, marriage, is that the division of work and, most importantly, power is determined not by ideology but by who brings in the more resources. "A resource is defined as anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter satisfy his or her needs or attain his or her goals" (Blood & Wolfe, 1960:12). Money and expertise, for example, might qualify as resources. Within the resource theory system, Joe's claim to power would be structurally based on the assertion that he was bringing in what most couples consider the most important resource--money. Perhaps Jennifer tried to use this justification to dominate Joe during the first three and a half years of their marriage. She was then the breadwinner. And perhaps Joe, though he (literally) fought her attempts during the early years of their marriage to make such a claim, eventually was convinced of her definition of the situation. Would this explain his loss of self confidence which getting a job (resources?) helped him to regain? Whether or not Joe was making a claim based on rules which had existed all along, it was obvious he anticipated using what he saw as his comparatively greater resources to support his domination. With the transition to parenthood he would become the breadwinner, he would have the responsibilities, and he would be in charge! Or so he hoped.
Joe: I'm sort of proud and happy now that my wife's pregnant and we're going to have a child, and it was the motivating force in terms of me thinking about being the breadwinner, assuming a specific role. She's going to be staying home. Before, I was just another person going out and working and now I'm going to be the breadwinner...

Interviewer: Do you like that?

Joe: I think it's nice to feel that you're taking charge... When you have responsibilities, you end up being in charge.

Once again, unfortunately for Joe, Jennifer wouldn't buy his theory on who dominates whom. She made it clear a number of times during the interviews that she had no intention of endorsing Joe's claim. The sequence which follows illustrates Joe's moves and Jennifer's countermoves in their negotiation of power.

Interviewer: In the organization of your marriage, are you the boss?

Joe: In the circumstances here, in the way we're dividing the authority, now she's going to be the housewife and I'm going to be the principal breadwinner. That moves me up a notch in terms of being the breadwinner and having the say in financial matters. She's going to be in control of the house exclusively. She's going to have more say in what goes on with it, even more so with the furnishings of the house.

Jennifer: I don't think he's the boss, because I never thought of myself as being the boss either.

Interviewer: What do you think of Joe's notion that if he's making the money, he's a notch up on you.
Jennifer: Oh, that's his idea.

Joe: Well, I think when... anybody does something to assume responsibility in a specific area, there is sort of a raising of him there in authority in that area. That's all I'm trying to get at. Because I will be the sole breadwinner, my authority will go up slightly.

Interviewer: So your authority is going up here and Jennifer's is going down here. [I motioned with my hands to indicate two different levels.]

Jennifer: I'd still work on that one... It's still going to work that mine will go up there. [Translation: I will still have as much authority as he has.] He thinks that way [but I know better].

Interviewer: Do you believe he's the boss because he's the breadwinner?

Jennifer: He can believe it if he wants.

Interviewer: What do you think he believes?

Jennifer: I think he's more of householder. That's a better word.

Joe: Yea. I get stepped upon! [Laughter]... for example, if there should be a prowler in the house and they had a gun, I would probably assume responsibility in that circumstance because I'm in charge of the weapons, and I'm the more physical, violent personality! [Laughter] So I would take more responsibility in that circumstance because I am more knowledgeable. Now if she was gung-ho on guns, I'd say, "Here, you go downstairs..." [Laughter] That sort of thing. In times of emergency I take over... We each assume our own responsibilities in our own area.

Interviewer: But you're going to be head of the household.
Joe: Yea. [Laughter] I like the way you said that!

Interviewer: What does it mean to be head of the household?

Jennifer: It means nothing. [Laughter]

Joe: This is what it means. It means nothing, but when a job is botched up, the buck stops here. That's what it means! [Laughter]...What I'm saying is if I'm the sole breadwinner, I think over a period of time I'll be feeling more authority in specific areas due to the circumstance that I'm familiar with. If she should get a job, my responsibility as sole breadwinner would have to go down. And her's will start to rise. She's the one who's going to be in contact with the kid more time than I am, so I'm going to have to lean over and say, "OK, she's the boss when it come to taking care of and making decisions about this little kid." See what I'm getting at? Because this turns the area of responsibility, because she's more in touch with it, and so on and so forth. So what happens is that there are many areas of responsibility. So at any given point in time, you assume "boss of the car," "boss of the weapons," "boss for home defense," "boss for being breadwinner," "boss for heavy manual labor," "boss for repairs and replacements," "boss over the tools." Her--"boss for child-bearing, childcaring, food, shopping, household decisions"...I was just trying to explain that because I am earning the money solely that I probably will end up having more decision making power in that area.

Jennifer: Yea, but I know how to handle it more.

There are a number of things worth noting in the above sequence. First of all, Joe's claim is bound to run into trouble from the start. He is attempting to argue that since
he is the breadwinner, he is to have "the say" in financial matters. Given their sensitivity to money handling, Jennifer's final reply, "Yea, but I know how to handle it [money] more [because I'm a bookkeeper and you're an abstract accountant]," is predictable. Secondly, Joe attempts to elaborate on his claim by arguing that responsibility implies authority, and that Jennifer, because she will have responsibilities, will be "boss" of some areas too. But of course some areas have more weight than others, and the area which in this household carries the most weight is the financial area. Joe knows this, but then so does Jennifer. She refuses to give Joe's claim validity by denying it access to their world of consensual rules ("Oh, that's his idea."..."He can believe it if he wants."..."It means nothing.").

Toward the end of the pregnancy, it appeared that Joe had not given up on an ideological claim to power, that he in fact would resort to both ideology and resources to support his power play. By the fourth interview, Jennifer had quit work and was trying to adapt to being a housewife. It was difficult for her. She took a great deal of pride in the work she had done, the books she had set up, the department she supposedly had straightened out. When she left, everything started to "fall apart." The person who took Jennifer's place didn't want to learn what to do, so they claimed, and as a consequence Jennifer had been called a number of times to give assistance over the phone. The whole
affair provoked a conflict between Joe and Jennifer. In spite of Jennifer's attachment to her previous job, Joe wanted her to "let go." He was actually quite vehement about it. His threat of what he would do "if they [Jennifer's former co-workers] call up" is interesting. He says he is going to "act like a father" when he tells them to stop calling. Is it his father he is going to act like, his father the patriarch who made all the decisions for Joe? And for whom is he acting--Jennifer's former co-workers or Jennifer, herself?

Joe: ...If they call up here, I'm going to get on the phone and act like a father. And I'm going to tell them, "Hey, you'd better hold up now, and if you call once more, I'm going to punch you in the mouth." And I'm going to hang up on them. And I know they are going to bother her. I don't want that to happen.

Joe once said that he felt the pregnancy made him more of a man and Jennifer more of a woman. Perhaps what he meant by this is that finally he can draw the line as his father drew the line. Whether Jennifer will be able to continue to resist remains to be seen.
CHAPTER VII

LLOYD AND LINDA

For Lloyd and Linda, the first pregnancy and impending parenthood marked a phase in a transition which they had been undergoing since the day they decided to get married. The transition for them involved a revolution of ideas and behavior—a return from their sojourn into another world. The other world I am referring to is the world of the student activist in the late 1960’s. Lloyd and Linda, class of 1972, saw themselves at one time as part of this world. Throughout each of the interviews one central theme continued to emerge. They were troubled by the fact that they were being pulled back to the world they knew before they went to college, the world in which they were raised, the world they fought against "in the riotous sixties." Lloyd and Linda were coming home to a middle class way of life.

In September 1968, Lloyd and Linda each left the sanctuary of their homes to live away at college. Sometime during their freshman years, they met and, soon thereafter, decided to set up house. They continued to live together until their wedding at the beginning of their senior years. Lloyd described their pre-marriage relationship.

Lloyd: ...very peculiar... It wasn't like we were madly in love with each other, or something like that. We were just together. You know when
you're an undergraduate in college, you're really fucked up anyhow. So on top of all this, we had this relationship. We didn't go out with anybody else.

While in college, Lloyd and Linda also became involved with the student movement. On a concrete level, their participation in the movement involved demonstrating against the domestic and foreign policies of the United States. On a more abstract level, and from their point of view, their participation meant that they had developed a cognitive frame of reference which was at odds with the middle class frame of reference they had been taught at home. During the first interview they presented a picture of a marriage which was based on what they saw as an anti-middle class theme.

Interviewer: What type of marriage do you want to avoid?

Linda: Nice middle class.

Lloyd: You know, what your parents want you to be. Raise your kids. Come home from work every night and that's it.

Linda: Stay home with the kids. Do club work, organizational work. That's what I want to try to avoid.

Lloyd: I think if we can maintain our individual interests and goals, to a large extent, we can avoid something like that.

Each time they described their ideal conception of marriage, they used their parents' marriages as a negative referent. Even Lloyd's last comment on individuality is an implicit dig against his parents.

Lloyd: ...My father
Linda: can't exist without

Lloyd: would stand in the middle of the room for twenty-four hours without my mother. He just wouldn't move.

Linda: He can't exist without her, which is bad.

During the second interview, they tried to illustrate again how their marriage was different from their parents. The focus once more was individuality.

Linda: I never, if someone asks my name, I never say Mrs. Lloyd L.. I always say Linda L.. I don't go around telling people I'm married you know.

Lloyd: That's one of those things that's different from my parents.

Linda: ...Because I want to be known as myself, not as his right arm.

Despite their attempts to establish distance from their parents, one fact continued to emerge. Their behavior contradicted their ideal. Outwardly their marriage was, stereotypically, middle class. They owned their own home, had a dog and two cars (one of which was a station wagon). They may have thought it was bad to have Lloyd "come home from work every night and that's it," but, in fact, that was Lloyd's pattern. Linda belonged to a bridge club and intended to "stay home with the kids." As far as their individuality, both preferred to watch TV together rather than be with their individual friends. If they were in the house, they considered it "important" that they be in the same room so they could be in each other's physical presence. Lloyd
couldn't bear the idea of Linda not coming to bed with him at the end of the day. He would be extremely angry if Linda wanted to stay up and watch TV or read a book. Coming to bed with him was, he said, "one of the demands" he makes on Linda. Lloyd worked in his father-in-law's business. Linda wouldn't think of moving away from her folks. She wanted to see them at least once a week.

Lloyd and Linda were not oblivious to the contradiction they were living. In fact, trying to understand what happened was very much a part of their everyday existence. Having been members of the movement, how could they have ended up where they are? Lloyd speculated on one theory.

Lloyd: The problem that has always bothered me, as far as the kids who went to school in the late sixties, has never been resolved. None of us know yet. Were we, in the riotous sixties, what we really were, or are we getting to it now, becoming middle class people? Because we all were children of middle class homes. How much effect does it have on us?

Even though they were away at college, were they really away from being middle class? Could any of them escape the fact that their proletariat way of life was made possible because their parents were supporting them? Were they really free, or were they simply given a longer leash which permitted them to believe they were straying? Lloyd and Linda's retrogression (their degeneration--as they saw it--to the middle class way of behaving and, finally, thinking) did not take place immediately upon graduation. Rather the change was
gradual, spanning at least three years. At the time of the pregnancy, their conversion (back) was in its last phases. It was here, given the contradiction that existed between their thoughts and behavior, they began to conform their beliefs to their acts. In fact, the pregnancy itself was a strategy mutually directed to remove the last chance they may have had to recover.

The first step in the retrogression can be traced back to Christmas 1970. It was Linda's mother who made the first tug on the leash.

Lloyd: This is typical of her relationship with her mother. Even though she was away at school, Linda could not lie to her mother. It would upset her emotionally and get her very uptight. And one day we were home for Christmas vacation at my mother's house and her mother called Linda and she said to her, "Well, Lloyd will give you an engagement ring for a Christmas present." So Linda came and told me that, and we were sitting around and we had nothing else to do so I said, "Let's go down and buy an engagement ring." Just like that. And then that night we brought the ring home to my parents and showed it to them, and they said, "Oh, that's really nice." And then they went into their bedroom and closed the door, and stayed in there for about five hours [exaggeration?], and then they came out screaming, and they realized we were getting married. And then it dawned on Linda and I that we were going to get married. And Linda started to cry [Laughter]. We didn't go about it to get married. And then her father called me and talked to me for the first time in his life after three years.
Lloyd and Linda viewed their marriage as a concession to their parents. More importantly, they also saw it, in retrospect as a turning point in their relationship. When they were living together their relationship was based on individuality and conflict with each other, patterns which they considered anti-middle class. Now that they were married they began to move toward togetherness and consensus.

Lloyd: ...we were together since 1968. So we were having a fight from day 1 of 1968. Then since we got married, we woke up the next morning and said, "What the hell did we get married for?" We started wending our way toward consensus, or, what's the word, acceptance, I guess... Everything [was] completely turned around.

Perhaps Lloyd and Linda, in spite of the fact they were married, could have managed to have the anti-middle class relationship they so much wanted were it not for one fact. Linda's parents undermined the structure of their marriage by funneling them large amounts of money.

Lloyd: One of the problems with our marriage in the early years was the tug-of-war coming down heavy-handedly from her family. [Is Lloyd using the leash metaphor here?]. Because they're the ones we lived near, and the ones that have it all, and the ones that dish it out to us. Her father would say, "Here's a thousand dollars, have fun." And there are all these things, "Wait a minute, I've gotta work for my money. Why does he do that? I don't want to live like him."

In the beginning, Lloyd fought it. After a while, he just "accepted it."
Lloyd: When we bought this house, they came over and gave us a $5,000 check, and we said, "Thanks," and I put it in the desk and went back to the bathroom. Just accepted it.

What does Lloyd mean when he says he "just accepted" the $5,000? Does he mean that he had learned that it was no use to try to fight it, that one way or another Linda's parents would end up giving them the money no matter what he did to resist? Or does he mean that he and Linda had become more accepting of the middle class way of life and that his willingness to accept a check from his in-laws was a reflection of their change in attitude? I believe that the second interpretation is more correct. This interpretation also raises the question of what role did the injections of funds from Linda's parents play in bringing about Lloyd and Linda's attitudinal change? In effect the money (1) created cognitive inconsistency for the couple, and (2) reinforced their middle class behavior.

Cognitive consistency theory asserts that people attempt to perceive, cognize, or evaluate the various aspects of their environments and of themselves in such a way that the behavioral implications of their perceptions shall not be contradictory (Deutsch and Krauss, 1965:68). In short, people need to believe their cognitions are consistent—not dissonant with one another. What the money did for Lloyd and Linda is it created a life style (relative affluence) which was inconsistent with their conceptions of themselves as part of the movement. In order to remove the dissonance,
Lloyd and Linda changed their conceptions of themselves to middle class. Also operating was the reinforcing effect which the money had. Instrumental leaning theory (also called Incentive Theory) asserts that attitudes become habitual because their overt expression or internal rehearsal are followed by the experience or anticipation of positive reinforcement (Deutsch and Krauss, 1965:90). In short, reinforced attitudes prevail. What the money also did for Lloyd and Linda was to reinforce their overt expression of middle classness. For example, as I will soon discuss, buying a house to Lloyd and Linda is being middle class. The $5,000 which followed this act may be seen as a reinforcement. Perhaps even Lloyd and Linda bought the house in anticipation of the check! One final point in this regard.

Cognitive consistency theory and Instrumental learning theory have sometimes been pitted against each other (see Abelson, 1968; Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959; Janis and Gilmore, 1965; Rosenberg, 1965). Within the context of the marital system, however, I do not see the two theories as mutually exclusive. I believe either theory can explain, at least in part, the attitudinal changes of Lloyd and Linda. Of course, this does not mean that one theory may not be the more powerful but simply that I see the two operating systematically.

The fact that Lloyd and Linda were more accepting of the gifts after they had bought their home is also significant because the purchase of their home is the second step
in their retrogression. Before they lived where they now live they were renting an apartment. But (and Linda's parents may have realized this) apartment living was like being in college. At least this is how Lloyd and Linda saw their lives at that time. Apartment living provided the opportunity for them to maintain, to some extent, independence from each other. As Lloyd said, "We weren't really married."

Lloyd: Nine months ago, when we lived in the apartments, it was really independent. There were like twenty couples. The girls did things together and the guys did things together... It was an extension of dormitory living. We weren't really married. Well, we weren't middle class living in a house.

Lloyd's last comment is noteworthy. It gives an insight into what having a house meant to him and Linda. Having a house meant being married which meant being middle class. Once they were in their house, the independence which they had from each other "slowed down," according to Lloyd. Once they had their house, they were also on the track toward finishing (according to their conceptions) the middle class picture—kids. One of the reasons given in fact for having a child was because they had a house! During the first interview, I asked why they decided to have the baby when they did. The first answer that was given was that Linda couldn't find a job that she liked. Later on in the interview, Linda admitted that wasn't "really" the reason. She seemed unable to come up with a reason which she could
classify as her own. She finally concluded that she must have decided to have a baby because Lloyd wanted it so badly.

Linda: I don't know why I decided to. It was all up to me because he had already made up his mind he wanted a child. He was ready. It was all up to me. Why did I decide I wanted one? I don't know. I mean I don't know what caused me to change my mind all of a sudden. I think knowing that Lloyd wanted it so badly.

When we turn to Lloyd to find out why he wanted to have a child, we are told that the house made him do it.

Lloyd: ...we always knew when we had the house, we would start to think about it.

* * *

Lloyd: ...This house is too big for two people.

* * *

Lloyd: I think what happened may be the rushing up of the baby came along with the pushing up of my career... everything got pushed back... So I guess I condensed the baby too. We got the house and, all of a sudden, a lot of things came too quickly after we got the house. I figured well it's OK to have a kid now and that's what brought the baby on.

Understanding how having a home would, for Lloyd, imply parenthood requires understanding that Lloyd went through life with what he called his "game plan." During the first interview, Lloyd spoke of his plan.

Lloyd: Well, I'm a very, how would you say, compulsive person.

Linda: Compulsive person.
Lloyd: I think I know what I want to do with my life every step of the way, you know. I want a certain job. I want to make a certain amount of money, I want to have a kid, I want to be this place in my career, and all that... I literally go to the bathroom according to schedule.

It was always part of Lloyd's game plan to have children with his home. When I asked him if he was compulsive about everything, he said that he was not compulsive about his wife. He illustrated his point by saying he "didn't marry Linda because it was part of his game plan." This may be true (it appears marriage may have been part of his parents-in-law's game plan), however there seems to be some evidence to support the notion that one of the reasons that Lloyd and Linda decided to have a child was that, according to Lloyd's timetable, they were due.

Lloyd's "compulsiveness" about life (his game plan) may have been a factor which predisposed him to accept more readily the money which was given to them by Linda's parents. There is a strong possibility that Lloyd's drive made it easier for him to accept a job in his father-in-law's company. Taking the job, and the salary which came with it, made it possible for Lloyd and Linda to buy their home and therefore be removed from the un-marriage type of life they had when they were in the apartments. And where did Lloyd get such motivation? Lloyd credits it to his upbringing.

Lloyd: I was raised that there were only two kinds of people in the world: those on top and those of the bottom. And you've got to be on top and that's all there is to it.
By taking the job with his father-in-law, Lloyd had, in the vernacular of the late 1960's, sold out. In spite of the rhetoric and accoutrements of the movement, Lloyd deep down was a nice middle class boy. Perhaps no one realized this more than Lloyd. He considered it both the major flaw and the only stable thing in his life. His contradictory feelings toward himself were projected in his attitude toward his parents-in-law. He both hated and loved them for what they had done to him and for him. Nowhere in the transcripts is Lloyd's paradoxical relationship with himself and his in-laws more apparent than in a sequence which took place during the second interview. During that interview, while we were talking about Linda's parents, the phone rang and Lloyd answered it. It was Linda's mother. The sequence which follows includes not only the phone conversation but also the conversation before and after.

Interviewer: Do you feel the problem with Linda's mother will be changed when the child comes?

Lloyd: No, it's just a stand off and I'm sure once again, that I will lose, and compromise, and let them talk and take the kid to spoil it to Boston, and there'll be nothing I can do. After the baby's born, they'll move in a roomful of furniture or two. I'll just accept it. I'll tell Linda I'll fight it, but I won't.

Interviewer: Is that what you object to, the fact that they would do something like that?

Lloyd: Yes, because they do that with everything. They've compromised a little bit, but I've compromised more than they have.
Linda: Yes. Everybody's compromised a little. Not as much as you have.

Lloyd: They've compromised with their mouth. They don't say much. They just mail it over now. [What? The money?].. But they're afraid I'm going to bite them, which is all I've got now, and they think twice before they talk.

Linda: I don't think my mother is going to butt in much.

Lloyd: She will.

Linda: You think so?

Lloyd: In her self-affixing way. But this is something I can say, this is my territory. I can really put my foot down. Although I thought I could do that when it came to my house. I don't dare throw them out. I tell them to shut up. There's nobody else that I've ever been quiet for.

Telephone: Ring...Ring...

Lloyd: Oh, we were just talking about you! Oh, only complimentary things.

Linda: It must be my mother [addressed to Interviewer].

Lloyd: Ha! Ha! Ha! Behind your back is your chair, I'm sure. We have our shrink over here with us--the guy doing the survey on the marriage.

Linda: The marriage? It's on pregnancy!

Lloyd: The pregnancy, that's what it's all about. [Pause.] Very good. Bye.

Telephone: Clunk.

Lloyd: See how polite I was.

Linda: Yes.

Lloyd: She said, "You're lying. You're not saying nice things."
Linda: She knows you don't like her.
Lloyd: Does she? Why, did she tell you that?
Linda: No, I can tell.
Lloyd: Why, because she never kisses me?
Linda: She has once.
Lloyd: Once, on our wedding day. Do you really think she thinks I don't like her?
Linda: Yes.

Noteworthy are the contradictions: (1) Lloyd first states that his in-laws are afraid of him, that they fear he might "bite them," that he can tell them to "shut up." Then he confesses that "there's nobody else that I've ever been quiet for." (2) He also implies that he is the master of his own home, that it is his "territory." He admits, however, that he could never "throw his in-laws out," though he thought evidently at one time that he could. (3) In spite of the hatred he projects before and during the phone call, after he hangs up he becomes very concerned that his mother-in-law might know that he doesn't like her.

During the year before the pregnancy, Lloyd's repulsion to the fact that he was dependent on his in-laws for his living was beginning to outweigh the attraction having such a position held for him. Lloyd started to lean toward recovery. That is to say, he was threatening to quit work and return to school in order that he might make it on his own. The pregnancy, as far as they were concerned, stifled any chances they might have had to cut the leash. It essentially marks
the third step in the retrogression. During the second interview, I asked again why they decided to have a baby at the time that they did. A new reason emerged, one which demonstrates that Linda was not simply an onlooker to the retrogression but that she and Lloyd were co-directors of their self-proclaimed tragedy.

Linda: I know another reason why I did it. I can't say it in front of you, Lloyd. Lloyd comes home every night, and says, "I'm leaving my job, I'm going back to school." And I'm a bit afraid of him quitting. Now it comes out.

Lloyd: No kidding, I knew that.

Linda: I'm a little bit afraid of him quitting. I don't know why, I guess because of the security that I have now. So I figured that if I had a kid, he wouldn't leave. Too late now, hon.

Lloyd: Boy, you're sneaky. You're rotten! That's a terrible reason to have a child.

Linda: But I was so worried.

The pregnancy was, to use a cliche, the point of no return. Once they knew they were going to be parents, Lloyd and Linda's return to middle classdom became a foregone conclusion. Over the course of the pregnancy period, I was able to monitor the next to final phase in their transition. By comparing comments made across the four interviews, I was able to note significant changes in their behavior and in their way of thinking, changes which would ease them into the fourth (and possibly final) step in the retrogression—parenthood.
During the first interview, Lloyd and Linda's concept of marriage was based on a philosophy of personal freedom. Lloyd talked about his Saturday morning breakfasts with the guys. Linda spoke of her plans to take a pack horse trip across the country the following summer. Their descriptions of what they did not want their marriage to be reflected everything their parents' marriages were. As noted, during this interview Linda brought up the fact that she could not get a good job and that that might have influenced her to have a child now. When I asked her if she intended to stay home when the baby arrived, she was quick to point out that she had no intention of remaining a housewife for the rest of her life, that yes she had every intention of trying to find work, if only part time. Lloyd also revealed his "game plan" during this interview. At the time of the first interview, they were about to buy a new car. Linda said they refused to buy a station wagon, something she equated with a middle class way of life.

Symbolic perhaps is the fact that when I came for the second interview, I was told that they had bought a station wagon! They said they couldn't believe what was happening to them. (Yes, to them. They gave the impression that they felt they were not responsible for their changes.) Lloyd said that his "game plan" had become "less urgent," that he was becoming, to use his words, "an amorphous mass of middle classdom." Linda's trek across the country had, in a sense, also become less urgent. Whereas before she considered the
trip an example of her independence, now she was worried about geographical hazards and being lonely. Perhaps the most significant change to be noted since the first interview is their withdrawing from many of their college friends. They said they "just didn't get along with them anymore." They were a bit annoyed that their friends would not stick with them through the changes they were going through. They defined "a friend" as someone who would be willing to stick by you no matter what, implying that they felt they were going through a crisis in their lives. The rift between Lloyd and Linda and their former friends is important because it removed the couple from the student movement reference group. A reference group is that group which serves as the point of reference in making comparisons or contrasts, especially in forming judgments about one's self, and/or that group in which the actor aspires to gain or maintain acceptance, and/or that group whose perspective constitutes the frame of reference of the actor (Shibutani, 1955). Losing touch with the student movement reference group meant losing the reinforcement they would have needed to fight the transition. Perhaps those friends with whom they did get along were the marginal members of the group. Lloyd and Linda with these others now constituted a new reference group, a group which would construct a new (middle class? semi-middle-class?) frame of reference, a group which would come together to define their former group as not really friends, as outsiders.
Commensurate with their cutting themselves off from their friends was their growing dependence on each other. They mentioned that they liked to stay home more. When I asked what they thought about the fact that they were spending more and more time with each other, they said that they believed their marriage was stronger, that they liked each other more. Later however in the same interview, they classified their situation as "sickening."

Lloyd: I'm really turning inward. I'm giving up a lot of things.

Linda: Gee, I hope it changes by the time you're here next time! It's sickening.

Lloyd: It sure is.

Lloyd and Linda's ambivalence toward their marriage, I believe, is indicative of their transition. Although they were outwardly becoming what they saw as middle class, inwardly (cognitively) they had not yet made the transition. Lloyd made this very point in the second interview.

Lloyd: ...well, maybe outwardly, we still live like our parents did, or do. But there's certainly been a thought process that was tremendously different. Our thoughts, for instance, about the role of women in the world is totally different than our parents' conceptions. Perhaps we make Linda function like our parents do, but we still conceive that there is a viable alternative. We don't put people down for living alternatively, so we're aware of it. We've put some thought into it. We've made a progression of thought. I just don't know if we've exhibited it too much.
Actually, their "thought process" was showing some signs of change during the second interview. In addition to their positive evaluation of their marriage ("more stable;" "we like each other better") they also noted some change in their attitudes toward what they considered pivotal issues—abortion and divorce.

Lloyd: We were discussing it the other night. Of course, we were always pro-abortion. We said we could never have an abortion now.

Linda: Gee, I can't believe I said that.

Interviewer: You can't believe you said which one?

Linda: That I can't see abortion anymore. I wouldn't do it myself.

Interviewer: And you can't believe you said it now?

Linda: Yes, when I was so pro-abortion a few years ago.

Interviewer: What made you change your mind?

Linda: When I got pregnant!

* * *

Lloyd: But now I think I could sacrifice for the kid, almost to the extreme of staying together.

Interviewer: So you would stay together?

Linda: Unless it was really bad. Probably.

Interviewer: But you could conceive of it now?

Linda: I could conceive of it sure.

Lloyd: We used to say that's ridiculous.

Linda: Yes.
When I returned for the third interview, Lloyd and Linda's retrogression was becoming more and more an inevitable turn of events. Given the ambivalence they felt during the second interview, it could be argued (assuming the validity of cognitive consistency theory previously discussed) that they had one of two options open to them. Either they could change their behavior to conform to their beliefs or they could change their beliefs to conform to their behavior. In effect they were locked into their middle class behavioral pattern by their bank account, their home, Lloyd's executive position, and the pregnancy. Given that changing their behavior pattern was highly unlikely, their beliefs began to retrogress. Gone was the classification of their way of life as "sickening."

Lloyd: Well, I think I told Linda the other day, that I feel a little more content with myself right now.

Interviewer: What makes you say that?

Lloyd: I'm at ease...I'm happy and I have no ambition. [Lloyd's use of the word "ambition" here refers to the "game plan" he set for himself in college. He often used the term in this context].

Interviewer: What do you think of Lloyd's changes?

Linda: Oh, I think they're nice. He has changed I guess... He likes to stay home and do nothing.

Interviewer: Do you like that?

Linda: Yes.

Interviewer: What was it like before?

Linda: He always liked to go out, go out and play. Now he's more content to stay home.
Lloyd's attitude toward his work took an interesting turn. He spoke now of how his father-in-law was beginning to appreciate him more, how he had proved himself as a capable executive. He reflected on the past, on how his in-laws had tried at one time to "boost him out" (come between him and Linda) but that now they were beginning to almost realize that "Linda was very lucky" to have married him.

Lloyd: She [Linda's mother] likes me this month.

Interviewer: How do you know that she likes you this month?

Lloyd: Because we spent the weekend at the chalet with them. Almost to the point that they realized that Linda was very lucky to get married to me, that she really has an outstanding marriage.

Interviewer: Is this about the closest they've come?

Lloyd: Oh yea. Along way back they were boostin' me out. Now she's almost to the point that she respects that I am the boss of my own household. It has a lot to do with the fact that I work with my father-in-law, which is a very confusing situation. First my father-in-law and his partner took me on because Linda and I needed money. "Give the kid a job." In the last month or two [however] they have come to realize that not only could I do my job. They had me come into his office and they said, "You know, we actually have the belief that maybe someday you could come to sit in this chair." They never thought anybody else could. In other words, I'm not just on the payroll because I'm a son-in-law. They believe I can do a job, maybe better than some of the other junior jerk executives.
Lloyd implies in the above series that his father-in-law finally discovered Lloyd's worth with the firm. Another possibility is that Lloyd finally came around to their way of thinking, and their approval of him is an indication not of their discovering what had been there all the while but of Lloyd's compliance.

A critical aspect in Lloyd and Linda's transition was their reconstruction of their marital and personal identities, their conceptions of who they were together and individually. At the end of the third interview, Lloyd and Linda conclude that "deep down" they're very traditional inside, and that they've known this all along. The fact that they claim they "always" knew it is important because it signifies a reconstruction of not only their present conceptions but a reconstruction of their former conceptions as well. They thus have created a common past which permits them to view what is happening to them as not simply inevitable, but, according to Lloyd, a return to "the only content part of life." Being traditional "deep down" means that they now assess their retrogression as a return to stability and continuity. They're coming home.¹

It is important to note that the transition which Lloyd and Linda are undergoing is continuous and not discrete. By that I mean their transition from the student world to the middle class world is not a sharp or complete transition from

¹For a discussion of identity construction, past and present, see Berger and Luckmann (1966). For a discussion of the issue within the context of marriage, see Berger and Kellner (1964).
one world to the next. Rather, it would be better to conceptualize the retrogression as a movement on a continuum in which the student world and the middle class world are poles. Thus, once Lloyd and Linda became students in 1968 and participants in the movement soon thereafter, they did not completely divorce themselves from their middle class world. Had they done so, the Christmas phone call from Linda's mother in which she predicted that Lloyd would buy Linda an engagement ring would not have the effect that it did. So also, their retrogression to the middle class world did not mean that they had completely removed themselves from the student world of which they were once a part. What is taking place through each of the steps in the retrogression is that Lloyd and Linda's position on the continuum is changing. With each step they move closer to the middle class pole. Perhaps in time their position on the continuum will be so close to the middle class pole that the student world will have little, if any, effect. During the fourth interview, we talked about their plans after the baby arrived. Both agreed that having the child would be the "final cement" between them (a phrase they chose), that it would "tie them together" that their marriage would be "stronger" (less likely to end in divorce?). Linda talked of "finding something" to do because she couldn't see herself "just sitting around" with the child. When I asked if she intended to go back to work, she said she didn't know, that work was not
important, that she would probably find some "volunteer work."

Interviewer: Do you intend to go back, Linda?

Linda: I don't know. If I could find a good full time job, I certainly wouldn't mind working full time.

Interviewer: Is it important to you that you work?

Linda: No.

Interviewer: What do you see yourself doing as the child grows to pass the time?

Linda: I don't know. Something. I'll find something.

Interviewer: Like what?

Linda: Volunteer work, tending to the household. I can't see myself just sitting around.

Noteworthy is the fact that Linda mentioned that she would be willing to find volunteer work. During the first interview, when I asked her what type of marriage she and Lloyd wanted to avoid, she responded, "Nice middle class... Stay home with the kids. Do club work, organizational work. That's what I want to try to avoid."

Lloyd reiterated the position he took during the third interview, saying "I think secretly we've harbored the basic marriage beliefs." He also mentioned for the first time his "home office," a room in the house set aside evidently just for Lloyd. He spoke of his office as a place where he could "think about all the things he was going to be"--his game plan, his ambitions.
Interviewer: Do you like having this private room to yourself?

Lloyd: Yes, it's great. I think about all the things I was going to be...

Linda: I know. You can do whatever you want to do in there.

Lloyd's office was a memories room, an altar to a (forever lost?) dream. It was all that was left of "the riotous sixties." Parenthood (the fourth stage) was less than a month away.
All relations between sets of individuals that involve an incompatible difference of objective—i.e., in its most general form, a desire on the part of both contestants to attain what is available only to one, or only in part—are, in this sense, relations of social conflict (Dahrendorf, 1959:135).

The one theme which seems to underly each of the case studies is interpersonal conflict. Daryl and Debby exhibit this theme in their differences over whether their activities should be complementary (activities of husband and wife are different and separate but fitted together to form a whole), independent (activities are carried out separately without reference to each other, in so far as this is possible), or joint (activities are carried out together, or the same activity is carried out by either partner at different times). Hank and Helen's conflicts stem from their differences over whether their marriage should be based on the principle of fusion ("becoming one") or individuality. Joe and Jennifer's perennial debate is of course "who shall dominate?". Lloyd and Linda are somewhat of a special case. First, most of their conflicts are transactional (between them and Linda's parents). Second, they are the only couple in which the focus of my observations and interpretations was in large
part their common intrapersonal conflicts. They both were significantly concerned over the absence of conflict in their marriage—"we started wending our way toward consensus"—toward being middle class.

The fact that the case study couples are variations on a conflict theme does not sit well with out "common sense" conceptions of how marriage works. One might expect governments, or prisons, or even universities to offer examples of social units riddled with conflict, but marriages? It is my opinion that the case studies illustrate the dominant form of marital interaction. That is to say, I believe that conflict is the fundamental form of interaction in the marital system. This notion is not new.¹ Sprey (1969), for one, asserts that the family is better understood not as a consensus-equilibrial unit but as a system in conflict. Some of the arguments he makes are worth repeating here.

To preface and support his point Sprey brings up two fallacies about the nature of the family which he feels may be impeding the realization that family life is a life of conflict. The first fallacy is that participation in the

¹Steinmetz and Straus (1974:5) comment on just how old the conflict approach to society is. "[A] conflict approach to society is...an old tradition in sociology, going back to Ibn Khaldun, the great medieval social philosopher of the Islamic world, and held by many others such as Thomas Hobbes, Karl Marx, George Simmel, Robert Park, Rolf Dahrendorf, and Louis Coser."
family is a voluntary matter. To dispute this claim, Sprey notes that membership in one's family of orientation is obviously not by choice, and that (more important to this discussion) there is no real normative alternative to the married state as a life career in this society. With respect to the latter point, Sprey contends that marriage may be a "personal commitment" but it is "one made, consciously or unconsciously, under societal duress" (Sprey, 1969:702). In this regard, one may wonder how typical the following comments are:

Peter: I think it's just a person's nature to want to settle down... I probably like to raise hell just as much as anybody else, you know, chasing women and so on, but you just can't do that, you know, for sixty years. I mean there's just something inside you that says that's not what I was put here for.

Pamela: ...you don't want to live with your parents all your life, and neither of us could live alone I don't think... I guess all you hear about, you know, grow up and get married. And I guess you're brought up with that ideal that that's what you're going to do.

* * *

Interviewer: Why did you two get married? Why didn't you just live together?

Barbara: In 1965 [the year of their marriage] that was a no-no. My upbringing--

Brad: Before we were married, you're parents wouldn't let us go out on the island. And I don't think you considered it for even three seconds.

* * *
Interviewer: Why did you decide to get married? Why didn't you just live together?

Irene: I wouldn't live together. I wouldn't live with anybody because my parents wouldn't like that. I wouldn't do anything they wouldn't like. Well, I wouldn't. I wouldn't do anything to hurt them. I was living at home until we got married... Living together never really entered my mind, did it enter your mind? It never entered mine.

Ira: No. We might have talked about it in passing but I don't think on a serious note.

The idea that parenthood is a voluntary matter is also a fallacy. In spite of the advances made in contraceptive techniques during the past decade, there is no real alternative to parenthood as a life career. Parenthood, like marriage, is a commitment made, consciously or unconsciously, under societal duress (see Peck, 1971, and Peck and Senderowitz, 1974). One may wonder (again) how typical the following comments are.

Gloria: I mean everyone wants to be a mother. You know, it really is a good thing...

Interviewer: Did you ever consider not having a child, George?

George: Well, certainly I've looked at the options. [However] I always wanted to be a father someday.

* * *

Irene: I think all through your childhood, that's what you think of, just getting married and having a family. It was for me.
Ira: I think having children is one of the main motivations of getting married. It should be anyway... The fact is our landlord has been married for almost twenty years now and has never had any children, never had any desire for children. I don't know whether she [the landlord's wife] did; that's none of my business. But to me, their marriage, other than being legally binding, has no bearing, no basis.

* * *

Norman: Once you get married you're supposed to live up to standards.

Interviewer: What standards?

Norman: The people put out; people put standards out for other people. If they [a couple] get married they [the people] say, "Oh, they are going to stay together and have kids and everything, you know."

Because marriage and parenthood are not actually "free choices," a feeling of ambivalence permeates the husband-wife relationship. Underlying this feeling are the perennial questions, "Do I (we) really want to be married?" "Do I (we) really want this child?" One husband, for example, who had been married nine years disclosed his confrontation with the perennial "Why?"

Brad: I don't have any good answers for "Why?" And it's not as easy as "because everybody does it, or because we wanted to." It's like, "Why did you get married? Why do you choose to do what you do?"... Be damned if I know why we decided to [start a family].
In some cases this feeling is denied, in others it is accepted. Denial is understandably difficult to assess. For example, are Owen and Olyvia denying their ambivalence toward parenthood in the following passage, or are they "really" pronatalistic?

Owen: But there are people who the thought of having kids in the house just drives them crazy. They couldn't cope with it. I really do think that they are lacking something.

Olyvia: I feel badly for them.

Owen: Their whole world is centered around just two people, on themselves really. And I don't think that could be a good marriage either.

Olyvia: But how can you put them down because they're happy?

Owen: But are they really happy?

Olyvia: That's the thing that you can't really measure because we're not them.

Owen: ...we can't really tell because we really want to have children.

Olyvia: We can't understand them not wanting children.

Owen: We would be lacking if we didn't.

One couple admitted openly that they felt uneasy about being married and making the transition to parenthood. This was Lloyd and Linda, a case study couple. One husband conceded that at times he needed to escape. A wife confessed to feeling trapped.

Kevin: There are times...when I wish I could just forget this house, this existence. And sometimes I do it. I'll just walk
around the block, and while I'm walking around, I try to shut everything out of my mind, just walk and not think anything. By the time I get back again, this place has become real again. So you might say, at that particular time, that I wished I was divorced of everything—the marriage, the house, everything.

***

Cheryl: I feel trapped by the baby a little, even though I want it. Already I'm worried about being stuck home all the time. That sounds funny because I'm not a career type person, but it does bother me a little bit, not being able to come and go as I want.

Evidently, the fact that a marriage or a pregnancy is "planned" does not mean that a couple is free from experiencing some apprehension over their "decision."

The second fallacy discussed by Sprey is the notion that the family is a buffer between the individual and society, that the family serves as a world into which one may withdraw from the conflicts of everyday life. In reply to this notion, Sprey asserts that the reverse could also be true. That is, it could also be argued that one way of escaping the conflicts of family life is to withdraw to the impartial and predictable world of everyday life. Both notions suffer from the misconception that the individual is "somehow apart from society, while moving more or less at will from one societal institution to another" (Sprey, 1969:703). As an alternative to this conception, Sprey offers one in which "individuals participating in families, or whatever institu-
tional arrangements, are seen as being involved in society itself" (Sprey, 1969:703).

The idea that the husband-wife relationship cannot be understood apart from the environment with which it transacts is a point made by a number of researchers, most notably Bott (1971) and Scanzoni (1970) (see Chapter II). The marriage-environment interchange was certainly demonstrated in the case studies. None of the couples' marriages are comprehensible divorced from their specific environmental contingencies. The first pregnancy is also better understood as an open experience. It is true that there have been times when pregnancy was considered a private event. The mother-to-be was often sheltered from the outside world and it was not uncommon for her to take on a sick role which precipitated (and justified) her withdrawal. Historically however pregnancy has been very much a public event, shared by husband as well as wife, and intermeshed with the everyday world. Today this is manifested by the fact that more and more husbands are participating in the experience (through their participation in prenatal classes and their presence at the delivery). And more and more wives are not quitting work on the notice that they are pregnant but work up to the birth (sometimes to the due date itself).

2 The point is pregnancy as a public event is nothing new. We are actually returning to the pattern which historically has been dominant.
The most important reason, in my opinion, for approaching marriage as a system in conflict is the paradoxical nature of the husband-wife relationship. This point is not made by Sprey in his 1969 article. It is however implied in one of his later papers (Sprey, 1971).

A human bond...is a paradox. Moving closer to another person also, by necessity, means moving apart. That is, increasing intimacy brings with it an increasing awareness of, and confrontation with, the uniqueness of the other. The more special two people become to each other the greater may be the pressure, from both sides to possess the other totally, or in popular phraseology, to "become one." And that indeed, would mean the end of reciprocity. Intimacy, to be viable, thus requires the awareness, and acceptance, of the stranger in the other (Sprey, 1971:724).3

Given Sprey's specification of the paradox, it is difficult to conceive of a human bond more paradoxical than the husband-wife relationship. If, as Sprey asserts, a corollary to intimacy is an awareness of, and confrontation with, the uniqueness of the other, than certainly marriage, the most intimate of all relationships, must entail the most complex balance of attraction and repulsion, connectedness and separateness, unity and individuality.

All of the sample couples, in one way or another, and in varying degrees, were involved in a continual adapta-

3The principal social theorist to focus on the paradoxical nature of interpersonal relationships is Simmel (see Wolff, 1950); the principal family theorists are Hess and Handel (1959).
tion to this fact. The most articulate expression of this paradox is made by Hank, one of the case study husbands.

Hank: When you are first married you are wrapped up and put in a nice box and there's a bow on it and it's nice and neat and the community lets you wander and everything else but after a while that's all gone. It dissolves. How it dissolves or who dissolves it or takes it off I'm not sure. You are suddenly come up, hey we are married and we feel something that we never felt before and it's not something that the church gave out or anything else. It's something that we created ourselves so it's not a foreign product. It's not a church ceremony or a civil ceremony. It's something that you created and in that sense it's a frame of mind...and you realize that it is a very fragile thing and that it exists only because the two of you decide that it does exist and it will continue to exist only as long as you continue to keep it. In reality there is no bow around you there, there is not a box around you or anything else. It's, you are free to go your own ways but there is a frame of mind that keeps you together. And I think it's a sense of selflessness, a sense of common identity.

Interviewer: What do you mean by a common identity?

4In this quote Hank articulates another paradox of social life. While it is true society does "determine" what we do (e.g., societal pressure to marry, to have children), we in turn "determine" society. In other words, we may indeed be social products, but society is a human product. Not to realize that society is an artifact is to reify the social world. Hank is reflecting here not only on the dialectical relationship between the individual and the "macro" society, he is also commenting on the dialectical relationship between the spouse and his/her "micro" society—marriage. For a discussion of these two dialectics, see Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Berger and Keliner (1964) respectively.
Hank: ...it's, I can't imagine not being married to Helen. I think of myself in terms of husband of Helen instead of Hank alone. You know, it's a difficult thing to verbalize. It's more feeling than it is anything concrete. It's a very abstract feeling... I think it's possible to go too far into it or to wake up one morning and to find [that you're] another person or that causes you to say that you've lost yourself and you start evaluating it from a very biased point of view. I never intended to give up my personality. I never wanted to do this. And that frame of mind is broken.

Hank's propensity for verbal expression is one reason why he is able to articulate the paradox. More important than this, however, is the fact that for Hank and Helen the paradox is so explicit. Their conflicting conceptions of marriage (open vs. closed) directly touch the issue. Nonetheless, the paradox is also apparent in the other case studies. Daryl and Debby's conflict over segregated vs. joint conjugal relationships is another relatively explicit illustration of the issue. Joe and Jennifer's struggle for domination, more implicit perhaps than the other case studies, is also a manifestation of the paradox. Power struggles may be understood as attempts to both separate and connect. In the sense that the subordinate is below the superordinate, the struggle is an attempt by each to gain autonomy. In the sense that the subordinate is dependent on the superordinate, the struggle is an attempt by each to establish a bond.5

5Raush et al. (1974:148) define power in a way that gets at the paradoxical aspects of the power struggle. "Power can be defined by the (relative) independence of one party from the other and the other's dependence on him for the attainment of goals."
Lloyd and Linda's concern over their becoming middle class means essentially that they are becoming interdependent on each other. Gone is the independency of their college relationship.

The anticipated arrival of the child seems to make the paradox even more salient. The reason is that the child is both a symbol of unity and a symbol of disunity. As a symbol of unity it is viewed (1) as a concrete manifestation of the couple's love for each other,

Fran: After the baby I think we'll be closer than we are now.

Interviewer: What makes you say that?

Fitz: ...I feel that the baby is the love that we have for each other, you know?

(2) as a common element on which the couple may focus,

Ira: With the baby we'll have some type of force that will bring us closer to each other. And you never know. A sickness to the baby like a matter of life and death might draw us closer in that respect. There's always something that will crop us that, you know, will keep you, supposedly, hopefully, together.

(3) as a tie that binds the husband and wife to each other,

Kevin: I think with the child coming along, you have an added responsibility to try and work out the marriage...

Karen: I think you're right. You feel that with a child you have more responsibility to work it out.

Kevin: Right, because now you're involving another person, and another life.
(4) as a weapon to keep the husband (or wife?) in tow (connected).

Amy: I think this would be a great weapon with wives over their husbands, when they say, "You don't do as I ask, and I'm going to get a divorce, and take that child away from you." I've discussed this with my friend, and she said, "I really have a weapon and I'm going to use it over my husband, because I think he'll do almost anything." And I know how important the child is. And some people use it, and you can see that they do.

Implicit in Amy's remarks is the contention that the wife "owns" the child. Given the results of child custody cases (almost all in favor of the mother), she is not alone in her belief. Ownership, however, involves responsibilities as well as rights. If the child "belongs" to the mother, then she is more likely to "get stuck with it." The fact that it is typically the wife who is tied to the children may explain why only wives in the sample raised the disuniting possibilities of parenthood. Only they, it seems, feared getting so involved with the child that they would be cut off from their spouses. In essence the child is a symbol of disunity because it reaffirms the separation between male and female roles in our society.

Amy: I think too many times you give up your whole life to your child, and as a result, when the child is three or four or five, or six or seven, he doesn't know how to adjust. I think we too feel a great loss as the child gets older, and is more and more independent. I see this in my mother and father. They just never took a trip or anything. It was always the
children first. I think that people who go out once a week, or they'll leave the child with the babysitter, I think it's much better for the child and for the parents.

* * *

Cheryl: You know my parents had lived for the kids for so long, done everything with the kids, and I think they were a little out of touch with each other, you know? And this is something I'm very strong about. I'm going to love my children, but the children are going to have to be brought up to realize that I have to be allowed to have time to get away from them. The bedroom door's not always open to the kids.

* * *

Gloria: Once we grew up and left the house, my parents just didn't have it anymore. I don't know what happened, except that my Dad was involved with his work, and my Mom was so involved with our upbringing that they just lost it along the way. Now they're on and off, and they have to learn how to get back. It's kind of sad. I would like to hope that I won't get so wrapped up in my children that I forget what loving is. I don't know how to do it, but I'm going to make a conscientious effort to try.

Given that (1) marriage is not a voluntary union and parenthood is not a "freely chosen" life career, (2) marriage is not a sanctuary from the world outside, but is in a transactional state with that world, (3) marriage is a social relationship in which the paradox of human action (separateness and connectedness) is acute, it is my (and Sprey's) belief that the husband-wife relationship is better under-
stood as a system in conflict. The consequences of this understanding in terms of what one sees when one looks at a family is outlined by Sprey. The substance of his remarks is not lost if "marriage" is substituted for "family."

Conceptualizing the family as a system in conflict means to see its process as an ongoing confrontation between its members, a confrontation between individuals with conflicting interests in their common situation (Sprey, 1969:702).

The question naturally arises, "If conflict is the fundamental structure of marital interaction, how is social order possible?" In order to answer this question, it is important, first of all, to discuss the structure of the conflict situation. "Conflicting interests" may take essentially two forms--zero-sum and nonzero-sum (Conn, 1971).

Zero-sum situations are strictly competitive ones in which the protagonists have exactly contrary preferences. Every gain for one contestant yields a corresponding loss for the other contestant...the defining characteristic of the zero-sum game is that cooperative strategies are impossible (pp. 15-16).

Nonzero-sum conflicts...are not strictly competitive, in the sense that there is at least one outcome for which the preferences of the players are not strictly opposed. This does not mean that the compatible outcomes are the most preferred for either side. Rather the nonzero nature of the game permits limited cooperation between protagonists. But whether they will engage in such cooperation depends upon such factors as the peculiar character of the particular conflict, the psychological make-up of the players, and whether the nature of the conflict they are engaged in allows them to freely exchange information with each other and reach binding agreements (pp. 18-19).
An example of a zero-sum conflict is a football game. The two teams are in competition with each other, one team's gain is the other team's loss. Cooperation is not an option. Most labor-management negotiations, on the other hand, are nonzero-sum conflicts. Though the rift between the two parties may start as competition, typically in the end (as a result of talks), a cooperative strategy—an option which wasn't either sides first choice but which is agreeable to both—is chosen. A conflict approach to social life acknowledges the existence of both of these forms. The more common of the two however is the nonzero-sum form. The key to this form and to the nature of social order is cooperation. According to conflict theorists, it is this mode of agreement and not consensus which is the more prevalent in social life. The difference between consensus and cooperation is explained by Horowitz (1967:278-279), one of the leading proponents of the conflict approach.

First: consensus stands for agreement internally, i.e., in terms of shared perspectives, agreements of rules of association and action, a common set of norms and values. Cooperation for its part makes no demands on role uniformity but upon procedural rules.6

Second: consensus is agreement on the content of behavior, while cooperation necessitates agreement only on the form of behavior. We speak of consensus if all members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union agree to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages. But we speak of cooperation when agreement is reached on the forms allowed for curbing the intake of liquor.

6procedure--the set, method, or manner of proceeding in some process or course of action; the way of doing something (Webster, 1958:1434).
Third: cooperation concerns toleration of differences, while consensus demands abolition of these same differences.

It is apparent in Horowitz's remarks that conflict theorists do not actually deny the existence of consensus. Procedural rules are consensual (agreed upon) abstractions. What they essentially contend is that it is these lower order rules rather than values and belief systems (in one sense also rules but at a higher level) which are the more important consensual abstractions. To claim as I have that the fundamental form of marital interaction is conflict rather than consensus is not to say that consensus is not an important aspect of the marital relationship. Rather I am asserting that conflict theory with its emphasis on competition, cooperation, and the establishment and maintenance of procedural rules, fits more closely the empirical reality of the husband-wife relationship.

Of all the case study couples, perhaps the best illustration of this point is Daryl and Debby (Joe and Jennifer are not far behind). Their marriage obviously works not because they share a common set of beliefs and values (in many respects they think differently), but because they have been able to establish and maintain a common set of procedural rules (the most important of which is Daryl will provide the money, Debby will provide the "care"). Of course, the construction of these rules was not without mishap. In the beginning, for example, Debby was unwilling to devote herself to caring for Daryl. Their conflict over
this issue was a zerosum-game simply because Daryl refused to compromise. Debby eventually conceded and the rule became part of their shared world. Their conflict over where to live, on the other hand, is an example of a nonzero-sum game. Daryl insisted that the decision should be his; Debby insisted that the decision should be mutual. The compromise (the cooperative option chosen) was that the initial decision (the decision over whether they should consider buying a particular house) would be mutual, but that the final decision (the decision over how much to pay) would be Daryl's. The cooperative strategy did not mean that their differences had been abolished, only effectively managed. The couple's conflict over Daryl's recreational pattern (play without Debby) was a zero-sum game during the first year of the marriage. It was a game which Daryl was winning (he would play in spite of Debby). With the onset of the pregnancy and the transition to parenthood, the conflict shifted to a nonzero-sum game. Debby had acquired the "weight" to force Daryl into a cooperative strategy. She would not be able to get Daryl to completely give up those play activities which excluded her but she would be able to force Daryl into making some concessions.

The Politics of Marriage

Apparent in the foregoing argument is the supposition that if conflict is the fundamental form of marital interaction, then power—"the ability to affect social life"
(Olsen, 1968:172)\textsuperscript{7}--is one of the most important variables in the marital system. Politics--"the total process through which social power is distributed and exercised" (Olsen, 1968:171)--constitutes the nucleus of the system.\textsuperscript{8}

A longstanding debate exists in the marriage and family field over which of two sources of power is primary--ideology or resources (see Blood, 1963; Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Heer, 1963a, and 1963b; Komarovsky, 1962; Scanzoni, 1970). My data suggest however that ideology and resources operate systemically with each other. What's more, it seems that a systemic conceptualization of power offers a concrete illustration of how cognitive sociology (e.g., symbolic interaction, phenomenology) and behavioral sociology (e.g., social exchange theory) can be synthesized.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{7}There are a number of definitions of power (see Salifilos-Rothschild, 1971). The one I am using is relatively broad.

\textsuperscript{8}Actually all social relationships are power relationships (see Hawley, 1963), and all social relationships are conflict relationships. The issue here is obviously the degree to which conflict and power are salient aspects in a social system. I would argue that the processes are more salient in the husband-wife relationship than they are in the student-teacher relationship, for example.

\textsuperscript{9}Rodman's (1967, 1972) cross-cultural data also suggest a systemic approach to marital power. His "Theory of Resources in Cultural Context" recognizes the joint influence of resources on the one hand and of cultural and subcultural differences regarding power on the other. Rodman also notes that a synthesis of these two sources of power brings to the fore the relationship between cognition and behavior (1972: 60).
An ideological approach to marital power is based essentially on the assumption that symbol systems not only reflect behavior, they direct behavior. This is, of course, the central axiom in cognitive sociology.

...according to [ideological theory], families do what the culture [the mutually understood and agreed upon symbol system] tells them to do [e.g., patriarchy may be prescribed] (Blood and Wolfe, 1960:13).

Language does not simply symbolize a situation or object which is already there in advance; it makes possible the existence or appearance of that situation or object, for it is part of the mechanism whereby that situation or object is created (Mead, 1934:77-78).

A resource approach to marital power, on the other hand, is based essentially on the assumption that human behavior is directed toward maximizing rewards and minimizing costs. This is, of course, the central axiom in behavioral sociology.

A resource may be defined as anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter satisfy his needs or attain his goals (Blood and Wolfe, 1960:12).

Exchange theory assumes that men have needs and that fulfilling these needs constitute a reward ...Social interaction results from the fact that others often provide a person's rewards (Simmelmann, 1972:415-416).

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10By symbol I mean a conventional sign. "A sign is any cue that has come to stand for something else... Signs may be classified as conventional or natural. A natural sign is a stimulus that is perceived to have a direct [contiguous in time and space] connection with something else for which it becomes a sign... By contrast, the conventional sign derives its meaning from social consensus and can be seen as having a degree of arbitrariness about it" (Kinch, 1973:57-58).
The two approaches are not however mutually exclusive.
Given that human beings act symbolically, what is rewarding
must be defined (and identified) as such. This point ex-
plains why not only what we may commonly think of rewarding
constitutes a resource (e.g., food, shelter, money) but that
companionship, self-esteem, recognition, for example, also
reinforce behavior. Paradoxically, however, the construction
and maintenance of symbol systems is determined by the
association (in time and space) of certain symbols with
certain rewards or costs. The brainwasher, for example,
associates certain ideas (symbols) with certain rewards and
costs to produce the desired effect. When this dialectical
relationship between symbols and exchange is incorporated
into a conceptualization of power, the result is a systemic
understanding of the politics of marriage (see Figure 1).

The model depicts marriage as a complex system, open
to its environment.

For a given system, the environment is the set
of all objects, a change in whose attributes
affect the system and also those objects whose
attributes are changed by the behavior of the
system (Hall and Fagen, 1956:20).

That a system is open means, not simply that it
engages in interchanges with the environment
but that this interchange is an essential factor
underlying the system's viability...the envir-
onment is just as basic as the organic system
in the intimate system-environment transactions
that account for the particular adaptation and
evolution of complex systems (Buckley, 1967:50).
The set of private and mutually understood, agreed upon and not agreed upon symbols.

Rewards and costs bestowed by husband on wife, rewards and costs bestowed by wife on husband.

Ability of husband to affect marital life vs. ability of wife to affect marital life.

FIGURE 1. A Model of Marital Politics.
Implicit in the model is the variable, time, and the assumption that the system is more than the sum of its parts. Symbols and exchange are both components of the system along with power. Ideology and resources therefore conjoinently influence, and are influenced by, the power structure. The interaction among these components is continual. The social order in a marriage is thus considered problematic (not a given). The power structure and the output from the power structure are schematically set apart from the symbol and exchange structures and their output (through the use of heavy lines) because the power structure is logically higher than the other components. It is the control center. As such, it is a meta-structural process; it transcends symbols and exchange. The transaction between the system and its socio-cultural environment (which is itself a series of hierarchically structured symbol-power-exchange systems) is denoted by dotted lines.

The symbol structure is the phenomenology of the system and it includes all the abstractions (cognitions) of the husband and wife. These abstractions are constructed and maintained directly by the power structure (6) and through the system's transaction with the environment (2). The abstractions, in turn, affect the power structure—directly (e.g., "The husband should be in charge because he is the husband") (7), and indirectly (e.g., by defining what a resource is) (5). The abstractions may be classified on
two dimensions. The first dimension is the degree to which the abstractions are agreed upon or consensual. For example, some goals (a goal is an abstraction) are consensual (both Joe and Jennifer wanted to start a family when they did), other goals are not (whereas Helen wanted a baby after being married for two years, Hank wanted to wait). The second dimension is the degree to which the abstractions are mutually known—the degree to which the husband and wife are both aware of the abstractions in the set. All abstractions which are not mutually known constitute the private (secret) worlds of the husband and wife. All abstractions which are mutually known constitute the intersubjective world of the husband and wife. This dimension is by far the more complex of the two—a fact which will become evident through an illustration. When Linda disclosed that she had decided to have a baby to keep Lloyd from quitting his job with her father, she believed she was revealing a secret ("Now it comes out"). Lloyd, however, claimed he was aware of her motive ("No kidding; I knew that"). Thus, although Linda thought her motive was a secret, residing in her private world, it was not. It was part of the intersubjective world. Lloyd's knowledge of Linda's motive, however, was a secret residing in his private world. Until he admitted he knew Linda's motive, Linda was not aware that he knew. The mutuality dimension of Lloyd and Linda's symbol structure before and after Linda's disclosure is diagrammed in Figure 2.
Before Linda's disclosure, from Lloyd's point of view, he knew about the motive. He did not know whether Linda knew that he knew (at least he didn't say so). Linda's picture of the situation before her disclosure was that her motive was a secret. The real secret was that Lloyd knew the motive. Only he knew that. After Lloyd's disclosure, from Lloyd's point of view, he knew about the motive and he knew that she knew that he knew. The secret moves from the private to the intersubjective world. It is no longer a secret. Linda's picture of the situation is the same as Lloyd's.

The puzzle can obviously get quite involved. Imagine the increased complexity with a third party. The point of all

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11 The complexity of the mutuality dimension is obviously due to its vertical (hierarchical) structure—the familiar phenomenological puzzle (I know that you know, and I know that you know that I know..., and so on). For a discussion of the phenomenological puzzle and a means of measuring it in a dyad, see Laing et al. (1966).
this is that knowing where abstractions are located not simply at the present but at particular points in time (knowing the history of the symbol structure) is important for understanding how the system works. Though it did not become apparent during the interviews, Lloyd and Linda's interaction pattern probably changed after the disclosure (the change may have been Linda asking Lloyd after I left how he knew her motive; or Linda may have begun to wonder how many of her secrets were not really secrets and decided to modify her behavior believing her actions were giving her away).

The exchange structure is the husband-wife behavior pattern. It is influenced by changes in the availability of resources from the environment (3) and by the definition of the situation (5). It in turn affects the power structure (e.g., "The husband should be in charge because he is the breadwinner") (8). Perhaps the most important point that can be made with respect to the exchange structure is that exchange relations are reciprocal. Only when an exchange is conceptually "frozen" (i.e., punctuated; see Watzlawick, et al. 1967:54) can it be spoken of in unidirectional terms as a stimulus-response situation. This is, of course, an attempt to organize the experience of the situation. It should not be confused however with the empirical reality which is an uninterrupted sequence of exchanges. The best example of the reciprocal nature of exchange relations is Daryl and Debby's introversion-disconfirmation cycle. This, you will
recall, was the interaction pattern in which Debby's unwillingness to speak up led to Daryl's speaking for her which led to Debby's unwillingness to speak up, and so on. No one person was the cause (the stimulus) of the cycle. Rather each served to reinforce the other (one person's response was the other's stimulus).

The power structure is the control center of the system. It is directly based on both the symbol structure (7) and the exchange structure (8). It in turn affects the symbol structure (6) which means it indirectly affects the definition of the exchange situation (5). It also affects the system's access to the environment; what symbols are diffused (1), what resources are gained and lost by the husband and wife (4) is a result of the power structure. The power structure involves the use of essentially two kinds of power: legitimate and illegitimate. Legitimate power (sometimes called authority) is used with the consent of the people who are controlled. Illegitimate power is used without the consent of the people who are controlled. An example of legitimate power is Joe's use of physical force to keep Jennifer from dominating him. It was legitimate because Jennifer (the controlled party) conceded (afterward) that it was her fault Joe hit her (implicit message: Joe's hitting me was justified). This is a good example because it shows that legitimate power does not necessarily mean the absence of force. An example of illegitimate power
is Daryl's attempt to decide what house to buy without consulting Debby. It was illegitimate because Debby did not consent to it; she did not like being told where she was going to live. Legitimate power is typically the more stable. It is therefore the more desirable--both to those in power and to those controlled. The trick, of course, is getting the consent of the controlled. Witness Joe's attempt to get Jennifer to accede to him the financial operations of the marriage.

Actually, of all the case study couples, Joe and Jennifer are probably the best illustration of the model. Each came to the marriage claiming different, but mutually known, ideas on who should dominate. Joe wanted a patriarchal marriage. Jennifer wanted a matriarchal marriage. The justification for these claims was located in the symbol structure of the marriage. The construction of these abstractions was, for the most part, through the diffusion from Joe and Jennifer's respective families of orientation (their environment vis-a-vis their marriage). Joe however also claimed that some of his ideas on what role the husband should play in the pregnancy (and marriage?) were derived from the geographical subculture (also an environmental element) of which he was a part ("My background with the people in this area; the men just don't discuss pregnancy...we let the women take care of that."). When they got married Joe was still in school and Jennifer was the sole
breadwinner. The fact that she was working meant that she was bringing in money (a resource) to the system. It appears she tried to use this resource to dominate Joe. Joe's response to this was violence ("I felt I had to do something to stop the bad progression of events"). He would not accept her economic claim to power.\textsuperscript{12} The violent episode, an obvious demonstration of Joe's power, took place during the first two years of their marriage. For the next year and a half Joe remained in school, a factor which eventually took its toll. From the couple's account of this time period, Jennifer did in fact take charge of the marriage. When Joe finally entered the labor market and started bringing in money to the marriage, his salary was no more than Jennifer's. In terms of income, his education was equivalent to Jennifer's experience. Joe and Jennifer's arguments over the worth of an accountant vs. the worth of a bookkeeper are good examples of how the symbol structure affects the exchange structure. Which of the two resources—education or experience—is more important is not inherent in the exchange. Rather the value of each is socially defined.

\textsuperscript{12}Joe's use of violence is an illustration of the resource theory of violence. "[T]he willingness and ability to use physical violence is a 'resource' in the Blood and Wolfe sense (1960). A family member can use this resource to compensate for lack of such other resources as money, knowledge, and respect. Thus, when the social system does not provide a family member with sufficient resources to maintain his or her position in the family, violence will tend to be used by those who can do so" (Steinmetz and Straus, 1974:9).
Understandably Joe was trying to define education as the more important, whereas Jennifer was trying to define experience as the more important. When the couple's transition to parenthood signaled the end to Jennifer's economic resource, Joe began to anticipate taking charge of the marriage. His claim was based on both symbols and exchange. Jennifer's unwillingness to agree to Joe's claim ("He can believe it if he wants.") is another example of the importance of symbol location in the couple's phenomenology.

We could continue following the politics of Joe and Jennifer's marriage through the model. We could also follow the other case study couples through to see how their marriages are organized. I believe however that the approach—the nature of marriage as conflict, the politics of marriage as systemic—has been illustrated. What remains is a discussion of the implications of this approach and of this study as a whole.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to attempt to answer two general questions. How does the husband-wife system work during the first pregnancy stage—during the transition to parenthood? How does the husband-wife system work, in general? In answer to the first question, it appears that even before the arrival of the first child the marital system undergoes shifts in its organization. These shifts are, for the most part, transformations in the type of con-
conflict in the system (e.g., zero-sum games may be transformed into nonzero-sum games) and alterations in the balance of power (e.g., the wife may gain power). In answer to the second question, the data indicate that the organizational shifts brought on by the transition to parenthood point to the general pattern. That is, marriage works as a system in conflict, and the total process through which social power is distributed and exercised (politics) is the system's nucleus.

The significance of these conclusions is that they contradict the conceptions of marriage and parenthood which are presently dominant. As noted previously, the suggestion that the family is better understood from a conflict rather than a consensus-equilibrial perspective is certainly not new. What has been lacking however is empirical support for this contention. The present inquiry helps fill this void. In fact, the research reported here may be the best available data on the explanatory potential of the conflict approach to family life.

Being the best doesn't mean it's the only research to suggest the fruitfulness of the conflict perspective. One of the studies outlined in Chapter II (Raush et al., 1974), for example, lends support to the conflict approach. The major problem however with using that research as evidence for the conflict notion is the fact that the quasi-role playing procedures (the Improvisations) were used to
create spousal conflicts. It can only be assumed that the couples' conflicts during the sessions are representative of their actions "in real life" (p. 6).

Sprey (1969) himself cites research which he feels "chronicles" or "illustrates" the conflict framework (Bach and Wyden, 1969; Brim et al., 1961; Hawkins, 1968; Lewis, 1967; Scanzoni, 1968). Each of these indeed does offer some finding(s) which may be interpreted as support for the conflict approach. None of the studies cited however confront the major assumptions of the conflict perspective "head on" (as I believe I have done). In other words, none address the question of how conflict is intrinsic to family life, or how families manage rather than resolve conflicts. None of the studies focus on the political dimension, the nucleus, in my opinion, of the family as a conflict system.13 The fact that these studies do not address these issues does not imply that they are lacking, only that they are limited to extent that they can be considered valid sources of support for the conflict approach. The same may be said of a recent study published after Sprey's paper (Larson, 1974). The discovery of the existence of "perceptual disparities" among family members leads the author to question the appropriateness of the consensus-equilibrium model. Noting that

13 Of the studies cited, the Bach and Wyden research perhaps comes closest to addressing the issues. This research is, however, based on a clinical sample.
differences exist and delineating how these differences are managed are however two different things. Another way of specifying the contribution of the present inquiry is that it documents the dynamics of marriage as a system in conflict.

In an effort to "display" the major axioms of the conflict orientation, a model of marital politics was presented (Figure 1). The model depicts the conflict-power process systemically. Its limitation is that it illustrates only the existence of relationships. Further research is needed to specify the shape (linear or curvilinear) of the relationships, and the amount of influence (the amount of variation in a dependent variable that is caused by a certain amount of variation in an independent variable) and time involved (coextensive or sequential) in the relationships. The most important addition which the model makes to the argument that marriage is a political process is it explicitly incorporates the cognitive dimension within the conflict approach. Horowitz (1967:278-279) clearly states that a conflict approach does not necessarily mean a behavioral approach by noting that while common norms and values may not be important for a social system's stability, a common set of procedural rules most certainly are. Conflict, in other words, does not imply the absence

\[\text{14} \] These relationship characteristics are discussed by Burr (1973:10-16).
of consensus. Coser (1967:9), another leading proponent of
the conflict framework, recognizes this fact; so does Sprey
(1969:703)--or so it seems. Elsewhere Sprey (1972:237) makes
a somewhat puzzling statement. He asserts that a conflict
approach "implies a framework of exchange." He does not
explain what he means by this. If however he is saying that
cognitive sociology (e.g., symbolic interaction, phenomenology)
has no place within a conflict approach, then I must dis-
agree. In my opinion, a more appropriate way of stating
the case is that a conflict approach implies a framework
of power, and power entails not only the ability to affect
reinforcement contingencies (the exchange structure) but
also the ability to affect the definition of the situation
(the symbol structure). Behavioral and cognitive "theories"
are each partial explanations of how marriage (or any socio-
cultural system) works. In order to achieve a more complete
picture, the two "theories" must be synthesized.

Actually Sprey's statement brings to the fore a
common problem. Whereas cognitive theorists emphasize the
consensual to the point of neglecting the conflict aspect
of social life (see Chapter III for a discussion of my own

Sprey may of course not be saying anything of the
sort. If by a framework of exchange he means one advanced
by Blau (1964) or Thibaut and Kelley (1959) then he is not
excluding the cognitive dimension as both of these works
attempt to incorporate symbols within the exchange framework.

15
experience with this pitfall), conflict theorists sometimes focus on the dissensual to the extent that they forget that consensus is also fundamental to social interaction. A cognitively oriented sociologist observing a chess match or a football game would be quick to point out that the symbolic dimension (specifically the procedural rules) is important for understanding what is taking place, that without some consensus (first you move, then I move; you kick off to me, then I kick off to you) the conflicts would take a different form— anarchy. Certainly the rules of Hank and Helen's marriage, for example, are instrumental to understanding their interpersonal conflicts. For one thing, Hank's ability to subordinate Helen, to "take care of" her, is made possible by the fact that he has the ability to define for the two of them what constitutes "assertive" behavior (see Chapter V).

While the major limitations of the study are methodological (namely, the sampling procedure and sample size) some of the major strengths of the study are also methodological. The research is in fact a demonstration of (1) the merits of a qualitative methodology, (2) the advantages of a longitudinal (albeit short-term) design, and (3) the value of a holistic approach. The detection of the importance of the conflict aspect in the couples' marriages was essentially a result of the unstructured interview format and the emergent mode of analysis employed. The discovery of organizational shifts during the transition to parenthood
was a consequence of the multiple interview design. The
multiple interviews also served as a validity check. As a
result of focusing on the marriage as a whole (more than
the sum of its parts), I was in a better (conceptual)
position to perceive the systemic nature of marital politics--
the fact that both symbol and exchange influence, and are
influenced by, the power structure. All in all, the study
points to the importance of not restricting social science
to quantitative techniques, cross-sectional design, and a
hypothesis testing analytical approach (as defined in
Chapter I).

Perhaps the most significant contribution which
this study makes is that it exposes a myth. Marriage and
the transition to parenthood are not, indeed cannot be, ex-
periences void of anxiety, frustration, and doubt. The
notion that these experiences are, or could be such, may,
more than anything else, be at the root of dissatisfaction
and breakdown in marriage and family systems. We are, in
effect, victims of our own ideals.
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Sprey, Jetse

Steinmetz, Suzanne K. and Murray A. Straus (eds.)

Thibaut, John W. and Harold H. Kelley

Vidich, Arthur J.

Volkart, Edmund H. (ed.)

Watzlawick, Paul, Janet Helmick, and Don D. Jackson

Webster, Noah

Weiss, Robert S.

Wolff, Kurt (ed.)
Dear Dr. -------------:

One of the most critical periods in a marriage is the first pregnancy. The impending arrival of the first child is often the most serious challenge the couple has yet to face. How the husband and wife respond to the pregnancy will not only affect their relationship with each other, their response will ultimately have repercussions for their child. The fact is pregnancy is a social as well as a physical experience.

While undoubtedly you are aware of the social dimensions of pregnancy, the demands of your profession, in all likelihood, preclude you from systematically dealing with this area. It is my belief that the social side of pregnancy merits scientific study. I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of New Hampshire. My specialty is family relations and social psychology (my vita is enclosed). Under the supervision of Dr. Howard Shapiro, Associate Professor of Sociology at UNH, I plan to conduct a study of married couples expecting their first child.

The purpose of the study is to see whether certain variables--namely, whether or not the pregnancy was planned, the length of the marriage, and the occupational status of the couple--significantly affect the couple's response to pregnancy. Three categories of "response" will be focused on: the basic rules of the marriage (for example, who is responsible for earning the money and who is responsible for doing the housework; are these roles shared--if they are shared, how are they shared?); the patterns of husband-wife communication (for example, what types of statements are used in a couple's discussion of their transition to parenthood); and the boundaries of the marriage (very simply, the couple's relationship with relatives, friends, etc.). The format of the study is to interview a limited number of couples (approximately twenty) over the course of their pregnancy. After collecting some background data, each couple will be interviewed four times, coinciding (give or take a week) with the 12th, 20th, 28th, and 36th week of pregnancy. Each interview will take place in the couple's home and will last for up to two hours. A tape recorder will be used. As in all research, the selected couples' anonymity will be assured. All tapes will be held in the strictest confidence.

The reason I am writing you is twofold. First of all, given the nature of the study, I feel it would be beneficial to receive a physician's opinion and advice. Secondly, I would like to seek your help in acquiring couples.

It is my hope that we can meet, at your earliest convenience, to discuss my research plans.

Sincerely,

Ralph LaRossa
APPENDIX B

LETTER TO EXPECTANT COUPLES
Dear Expectant Couple,

I am a doctoral student at the University of New Hampshire. My specialty is the family. Presently, I am planning a study of married couples who are expecting their first child. Specifically, I intend to interview approximately twenty couples during (give or take a few weeks) the 12th, 20th, 28th, and 36th week of their pregnancies. I am not studying abnormal or problem maternities. The interview sessions will not be clinical or therapeutic. The meetings will be mainly informal discussions about the daily activities of the couples during this exciting period in their lives. Simple as this may seem, the fact of the matter is virtually no research has focused on how normal husbands and wives respond to the first pregnancy.

The success of my research ultimately depends on the twenty couples chosen to participate. In order to qualify, a couple must be expecting their first child sometime between ------- and --------.* As one of the few couples in the area to meet this criteria, my study actually depends on you. Without your cooperation, there is a possibility that a sufficient number of couples will not be assembled. I might add that while it is true your participation will contribute to our knowledge of the family, I also believe you might find the interview sessions interesting and personally rewarding—even fun. Certainly, your first pregnancy is a special time for both of you. Talking with me about it may enhance your experience even more.

Each of the interviews will be scheduled, at your convenience, in your own home. You will not have to travel to see me. A tape recorder will be used to facilitate accurate transcription of the interview sessions. You can be assured, however, that all tapes will be held in the strictest confidence. In order to preserve your anonymity, in the final report and in all publications arising from this research, any reference to taped conversations we will have had will be disguised through the use of fictitious names, addresses, etc.

Your first pregnancy is one of the most important events in your marriage. I hope we can get together to talk about it. I'll be phoning you within the next few days to discuss your possible participation in my research.

Sincerely,

Ralph LaRossa, M.A.  

* Dates deleted to protect couples' anonymity.
APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE
What is today's date? _____ _____ _____

When is your baby due? _____ _____ _____

1. When were you born?
   Husband _______ _______ _____
   Wife day month year

2. Where did you grow up?
   Husband ___________________
   Wife town or city province or state country

3. When were you married?
   day month year

4. Where were you married?
   town or city province or state country

5. What were you doing when you were married? (e.g., student, plumber, etc.)
   Husband ___________________________________________________________________
   Wife ___________________________________________________________________

6. Were you ever married before? (Circle Answers)
   Husband Yes No If yes, any children by previous marriage? Yes No
   Wife Yes No If yes, any children by previous marriage? Yes No

7. How long did you know each other before you were married?
   ___________ years

8. How long did you go steady before you were married?
   ___________ years
9. How long were you engaged before you were married?

_____________ years

10. When were your parents born? If you have more than one father or mother, please refer to the one you spent most of your time with or whom you feel to be the most important.

Husband's Father _______ _______ ______
Husband's Mother _______ _______ ______
Wife's Father _______ _______ ______
Wife's Mother _______ _______ ______

11. Where did your parents grow up?

Husband's Father _____________________
Husband's Mother _____________________
Wife's Father _____________________
Wife's Mother _____________________

town or city province/state country

12. Are your parents living? (Circle Answers)

Husband's Father Yes No If no, what year did he die? ______
Husband's Mother Yes No If no, what year did she die? ______
Wife's Father Yes No If no, what year did he die? ______
Wife's Mother Yes No If no, what year did she die? ______

13. When were your parents married?

Husband's Parents _______ _______ ______
Wife's Parents _______ _______ ______

day month year

14. How many children did your parents have?

Husband's Parents ________________
Wife's Parents ________________
15. What is your order of birth with respect to your brothers and/or sisters, if any (for example, first child, second child)?

Husband _________ child
Wife _________ child

16. How old were your mothers when they had their first pregnancies?

Husband's Mother _________ years old
Wife's Mother _________ years old

17. How old were your mothers when they had their first children?

Husband's Mother _________ years old
Wife's Mother _________ years old

18. What is the marital status of your parents? (Circle Answers)

Husband's Parents:
  a. Married to each other
  b. Separated
  c. Divorced/Unmarried
  d. Divorced/Remarried
  e. Other (Specify)

Wife's Parents:
  a. Married to each other
  b. Separated
  c. Divorced/Unmarried
  d. Divorced/Remarried
  e. Other (Specify)

19. Are your parents living with you? (Circle Answers)

Husband's Father Yes No If no, how far away does he live? ___
Husband's Mother Yes No If no, how far away does she live? ___
Wife's Father Yes No If no, how far away does he live? ___
Wife's Mother Yes No If no, how far away does she live? ___ miles
20. Other than your parents, does any one live with you? (Circle Answer)
   Yes   If yes, specify who ________________________________
   No

21. Do you own or rent your own home? (Circle Answer)
   Rent
   Own
   Other (Specify) ___________________________________________

22. How many rooms are there in your house (apartment)? Exclude hallways, stairways, bathrooms, and closets.
   __________________ rooms

23. How long have you lived here?
   __________________ months

24. Where did you live before you moved here?
   ___________________ town or city    ___________________ province/state    __________________ country

25. How long did you live there?
   ___________________ months

26. How many times have you moved since you were married?
   ___________________ times

27. Do you plan to move within the next year? (Circle Answer)
   Yes   If yes, (a) do you know where you are moving to?
   No   ___________________ town/city    ___________________ province/state    __________________ country
   (b) why are you moving? ________________________________
28. Country of Birth? (for example, USA, England, Canada)

Husband _________________________
Husband's Father _________________________
Husband's Mother _________________________
Wife _________________________
Wife's Father _________________________
Wife's Mother _________________________

29. Do you identify with (that is, see yourself as part of) any ethnic group? (Circle Answers)

Husband Yes No If yes, what group? ___________________
Wife Yes No If yes, what group? ___________________

30. Religion? Next to each person, write in the number that applies.

1. Protestant (Specify denomination)
2. Catholic
3. Jewish
4. Greek Orthodox
5. Other (Specify)
6. None

Husband _________________________
Husband's Father _________________________
Husband's Mother _________________________
Wife _________________________
Wife's Father _________________________
Wife's Mother _________________________
31. Education Completed? Next to each person, write in the number that applies.

1. Less than seven years of school
2. Junior high school (grades 7 - 9)
3. Partial high school (grades 10 - 11, but not graduation from high school)
4. High school graduate
5. Partial college training (completion of at least one year, but not full college course)
6. College graduate (completed a four year college or university course leading to a recognized college degree)
7. Partial graduate professional training (completion of at least one year, but not full graduate school course)
8. Graduate Degree (please specify)

Husband ____________________________
Husband's Father __________________
Husband's Mother _________________
Wife _____________________________
Wife's Father _____________________
Wife's Mother _____________________

Record below any other education or training which you have had or which your parents have had.
32. Occupations? Record all jobs which the following persons presently hold. Please be specific (for example, college student at UNH, electrical engineer at IBM, self-employed carpenter). Next to each job, write the number of hours per week devoted to that job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Job #1</th>
<th>Hrs/Wk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband's Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband's Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. Job Descriptions. Give a brief description of the activities and responsibilities involved in your work. If you listed two jobs in question 32, please describe the activities and responsibilities involved in both jobs.

Husband

Wife


34. Have either of you changed jobs within the past year? (Circle Answers)

Husband  Yes  No  If yes, (a) when did you change jobs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>day</th>
<th>month</th>
<th>year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) what was your former occupation?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(c) how many hours per week, on the average, did you work in this occupation?

________________________________________________________________________

Wife  Yes  No  If yes, (a) when did you change jobs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>day</th>
<th>month</th>
<th>year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) what was your former occupation?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(c) how many hours per week, on the average, did you work in this occupation?

________________________________________________________________________

Record below any unusual circumstances which may be relevant (for example, a prolonged illness which kept either or both of you out of work for an extended period of time).

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
35. Income. Which of the following comes closest to your own individual incomes in the last year. Include all sources of income last year; such as G.I. Bill benefits, disability settlements, etc.,

A. Less than $1000  
B. $1000 - $1999  
C. $2000 - $3999  
D. $4000 - $5999  
E. $6000 - $7999  
F. $8000 - $9999  
G. $10,000 - $11,999  
H. $12,000 - $13,999  
I. $14,000 - $15,999  
J. $16,000 - $19,999  
K. $20,000 - $24,999  
L. $25,000 - $39,999  
M. $40,000 and over

Husband ____________________________ (Write in the letter that applies)
Wife ____________________________

36. If you are self employed, how much would it cost to buy a going business like yours? Write in the letter that applies.

A. Less than $3000  
B. $3000 - $5999  
C. $6000 - $9999  
D. $10,000 - $19,999  
E. $20,000 - $34,999  
F. $35,000 - $99,999  
G. $100,000 - $249,999  
H. More than $250,000  
I. Business is rented

Husband ____________________________
Wife ____________________________
APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE
**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Couples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Planned&quot; pregnancy</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advised off the pill, couple &quot;chooses&quot; to conceive</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advised off the pill, couple &quot;unintentionally&quot; conceives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(alternative control measures inconsistently employed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interval</td>
<td>Couples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12 months</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 18 months</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 - 24 months</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years, 1 month - 2 years, 6 months</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years, 7 months - 3 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years, 1 month - 3 years, 6 months</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years, 7 months - 4 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years, 1 month - 4 years, 6 months</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years, 7 months - 9 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22:0</td>
<td>20:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:7</td>
<td>23:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:9</td>
<td>20:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:4</td>
<td>23:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:6</td>
<td>25:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:8</td>
<td>23:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26:2</td>
<td>23:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26:6</td>
<td>26:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27:2</td>
<td>26:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27:5</td>
<td>24:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27:5</td>
<td>26:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30:3</td>
<td>26:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30:10</td>
<td>27:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:7</td>
<td>29:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32:5</td>
<td>25:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41:7</td>
<td>24:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Tables 3 thru 6 are arranged in ascending order according to the husbands' ages, educations, incomes, and occupations, respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partial High School</td>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>Partial High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial College</td>
<td>Partial College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial College</td>
<td>R.N. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial College</td>
<td>R.N. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>Partial Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>Partial Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Graduate School</td>
<td>Partial College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Graduate School</td>
<td>R.N. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Graduate School</td>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>Partial College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 5

**INCOMES [$] OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES AT CONCEPTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>income withheld</td>
<td>income withheld</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[2\text{Proximate.}\]
### TABLE 6

**OCCUPATIONS OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES AT CONCEPTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operative</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman</td>
<td>Clerical Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Clerical Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Professional (part-time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>College Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Occupational classification based on U.S. Census grouping.
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE PSEUDONYMS
The sixteen couples were randomly assigned to the first sixteen letters in the alphabet. Pseudonyms, the first letter of each corresponding to the letter assigned, were then created. The sample's pseudonyms are presented below.

Alan and Amy
Brad and Barbara
Carl and Cheryl
Daryl and Debby
Eric and Elizabeth
Fitz and Fran
George and Gloria
Hank and Helen
Ira and Irene
Joe and Jennifer
Kevin and Karen
Lloyd and Linda
Mark and Marie
Norman and Nancy
Owen and Olyvia
Peter and Pam
Ralph LaRossa

Born January 14, 1947

Brooklyn, New York

Brooklyn Preparatory School; Brooklyn, New York

Saint Peter's College 1964-1968 Bachelor of Science

New School for Social Research 1968-1970 Master of Arts

University of New Hampshire 1972-1975 Doctor of Philosophy