

EGO IDENTITY STATUS  
IN STABLY AND UNSTABLY MARRIED COUPLES

BY

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Abstract

The present study examined the association between ego identity status and the maintenance and success of long-term, intimate, heterosexual relationships. This was guided in part by Erik Erikson's (1959, 1968) notion that identity achievement was a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of intimacy. In particular, the "similarity versus complementarity" (i.e., "birds of a feather flock together" vs. "opposites attract") of ego identity status as a possible determinant of the maintenance and quality of such relationships was assessed. The sample for this study consisted of 78 volunteer married couples obtained from a variety of settings, primarily in the Thunder Bay area. Of these 78 couples, 40 were designated as "stable," and 38 as "unstable," on the basis of whether or not the couple had reported some recent step towards dissolution in their relationship (usually separation) and/or some recent involvement in marital counselling. All couples were tested on Grotevant and Adams' (1984) self-report measure of ego identity status, as well as on self-report measures of relationship satisfaction, psychosocial intimacy, passionate love, and spousal attitude similarity. Overall, it was noted that spousal similarity in terms of ego identity status, as expected, did tend to be related to the patterns of mate choice and marital stability among the couples. Specifically, significant correlations emerged between the spouses in the stable group on their moratorium and diffusion subscale scores, while such significant correlations were not seen in the unstable group nor in

two randomly-paired control groups. In addition to this modest similarity factor, it was also suggested by the data that the "absolute levels of identity" may have played a key role in influencing the marital satisfaction and stability of the couples. As an example of this, the unstable marital group was found to have significantly higher moratorium scores in comparison to the stable group, while having lower identity achievement and psychosocial intimacy scores. These latter two differences, however, appeared to be largely associated with just the husbands in the sample. Similar trends were also observed when expressing the identity data in terms of J. E. Marcia's (1966) popular "identity status" classification scheme, or when correlating the identity/intimacy subscales with a continuous, paper-and-pencil measure of marital satisfaction. As far as passionate love and spousal identity content similarity were concerned, these were also examined within the context of marital stability and found to be strongly related--as expected. However, contrary to expectations, these two variables did not appear to be particularly important in terms of "masking" or "suppressing" the complex relationship which may exist between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. Thus, it was tentatively concluded that the chances of a marriage being successful may be enhanced to some extent if neither partner is currently experiencing the "identity crisis," and if the husband in particular, has achieved a secure sense of his own identity and is capable of being intimate. Possible clinical implications of the study and numerous directions for future research are also thoroughly discussed.

## Introduction

### Overview of the Problem

Marriage is an intriguing "ubiquitous" phenomenon (Barry, 1970). The vast majority of individuals get married at least once in their lifetime. In fact, over the lifespan, fewer than 10 per cent of men or women remain single--a pattern which has remained more-or-less stable throughout this century (Jacobson, 1959; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978). In some studies (e.g., Glenn & Weaver, 1981) happiness in life has been found to depend more on having a satisfying stable marriage than on any other domain of adult life, including work, friendships, hobbies, or community activities.

Yet, while almost everyone wants to get married (and in fact does) for many of those couples who say "I do," the desire to maintain a long-term, satisfying and stable intimate relationship can be an elusive dream. Marital breakdown and dissolution have become increasingly commonplace. Many scholars (e.g., Greenbaum, 1983) have commented that the institution of marriage in North America is in a crisis. Over the course of this past century, the rate of divorce in North America has risen astronomically (Jacobson, 1959). In fact, in the period between 1965 and 1975 alone, the number of divorces in the U.S. more than doubled (Spanier & Glick, 1981; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978). Similar trends have also been noted in the incidence of separation and desertion (Leslie, 1979). Of course, these

statistics don't take into account the millions of so-called stable unsatisfactory marriages that may endure and remain intact for decades--yet be characterized by chronically-low levels of relationship satisfaction and adjustment (Booth, Johnson, & Edwards, 1983; Greenbaum, 1983; Landis, 1963).

To say that the termination or dissolution of a long-term intimate relationship such as a marriage can be a stressful life event would be an incredible understatement. The dramatic income loss and social isolation resulting from divorce are well documented (Weiss, 1984). Divorced adults have also been found to be more likely to suffer from stress-related physical symptoms (Bloom, Fisher, & White, 1978). Furthermore, it is estimated that as much as 60% of the middle class who divorce may seek psychotherapy (Greenbaum, 1983). As for the impact of divorce on the children involved, this has only recently begun to be investigated (Longfellow, 1979). Clearly, changes in marital stability have implications for the work of marriage and family educators, researchers, therapists and counselors, and other practitioners (Spanier & Glick, 1981). Marital crises frequently generate immense suffering that goes far beyond the boundaries of the nuclear family and often ends in tragedies involving suicide or homicide (Greenbaum, 1983).

Fortunately, the divorce rate appears to have stabilized or levelled off after reaching a peak in 1980, and recent statistics also indicate that age at first marriage has been increasing while marriage rates have been declining (Norton & Moorman, 1987). This trend of delaying or postponing matrimony until one's late 20's

coincides with another interesting trend that became apparent in the early 1970's: dramatic increases in the number of cohabitating couples (Spanier, 1983). No doubt, many of these cohabitating couples are taking the advice of social scientists such as Margaret Mead (1966) to have a so-called "trial marriage," in which the partners can get to know each other better, achieve greater intimacy, and adapt to future marital roles. Although the validity of this approach has yet to be firmly established, the key point here is that the increase in cohabitation reflects a general societal concern to identify those factors that are responsible for achieving success in relationships. As Booth et al. (1983) explain, the increased prevalence of marital instability in the U.S. "has fostered not only widespread societal concern but a renewed scholarly scrutiny...divorce and its attendant consequences have been identified as principal research concerns of the 1980's" (p. 387).

Several factors have been associated with the likelihood of divorce. Perhaps no other factor is as strongly associated with marital instability as age at marriage. Those couples who marry under the age of twenty are twice as likely to divorce as those couples who marry in their early or mid-twenties (Booth & Edwards, 1985). Socioeconomic level, a family history of divorce, and socioemotional level (which relates to dimensions such as maturity, autonomy, and expressiveness) have also been studied within the context of marital stability and found to be related (Newman & Newman, 1987). Divorce and marital dissatisfaction generally seem more likely in persons psychiatrically somewhat

abnormal--that is, individuals who score high on scales of psychoticism or neuroticism (Eysenck, 1980; Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981), a finding already anticipated by Terman (1938). Meanwhile, courtship has proven to be a significant correlate of divorce--long courtships are more favourable than short ones, and opposition by parents generally increases the likelihood of divorce. Sexual difficulties also appear to be correlated with marital dissatisfaction and breakup, while religious values and the presence of children tend to lessen the risk of divorce (Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981). These findings are perhaps not out of line with reasonable common sense prediction (Eysenck, 1980).

In addition to marital instability, a great deal of research has also been devoted to the topic of mate selection or "who marries whom." The closely related (but still distinct) issue of marital satisfaction has also garnered a lot of attention in recent years. While the mate selection research attempts to identify those characteristics that couples select for when choosing a partner, the marital satisfaction literature explores those variables that may lead to happy or unhappy marriages. "Satisfaction" in this context, refers to the subjective qualitative evaluation of an intact marriage. It relates to the overall degree to which needs, desires, expectations, and so forth are being met in a relationship (Booth et al., 1983; Burr, 1970). Marital satisfaction is often confused with the concepts of marital "adjustment" and marital "stability" which will be discussed in some detail later (the concept of "quality of role enactment" is occasionally seen in the literature as well, and

this relates to the perceived competence with with marital role tasks are performed; Booth et al., 1983).

Two of the most recurring themes in the marital satisfaction literature concern the issues of: (a) changes in marital happiness over the family life cycle, and (b) the effect of working wives on marital happiness (Schlesinger, 1982). Although a great deal of research has been devoted to these issues over the past 2 decades, overall, the findings have been somewhat ambiguous (Schram, 1979; Wright, 1978). In general, most research has pointed to the importance of good communication skills as well as equality between partners in achieving a successful marriage (Boland & Folingstad, 1987; Levinger, 1965; Schlesinger, 1982).

Research on personality factors related to mate choice and marital satisfaction has traditionally been dominated by the issue of "complementarity versus similarity"--as expressed in the age-old contrasting homilies that either "opposites attract" or "like marries like"/"birds of a feather flock together"; fictions illustrated in popular literature by writers as diverse as Dickens and Ibsen (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981; Tharp, 1963). Actually, the issue is quite complex and not easily resolved. Some research evidence suggests that similarity (or perceived similarity) may lead to attraction and mate choice. Comprehensive reviews of the literature indicate that individuals are more likely to marry those of similar education, socioeconomic status, occupational choice, race, ethnic background, religion, age, and culture (Anderson, 1938; Burgess & Wallin, 1953; Hollingshead, 1950; Murstein, 1976; Vandenberg, 1972). This



phenomenon is often referred to as "homogamy" or "assortive mating," and has traditionally been attributed to familial influence on marital choice and to residential closeness or "propinquity" (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981; Hollingshead, 1950). Such similarity in mate choice or homogamy is also associated with various individual difference variables, such as attitudes and opinions (Byrne, 1969, 1971; Richardson, 1939); values (Coombs, 1966; Murstein, 1976); interests and hobbies (Richardson, 1939; Vandenberg, 1972); and a large number of physical factors, including height (Burgess & Wallin, 1944); and physical attractiveness (Murstein, 1972). In addition, Eysenck (1979) and others have noted that the correlations between spouse's IQ's are usually around 0.4 to 0.6. Assortive mating has even been observed with respect to "previous marital status," that is, persons who have not been married before tend to marry each other, while divorced persons tend to marry other divorced persons (Bowerman, 1953). In short, it can be said that while controversy exists concerning the exact processes which may underlie homogamy, and the "similarity effect" may require some qualifications (see especially Huston & Levinger, 1978), it is a generally well-accepted precept that similarity can be a potent force in attraction and mate selection (Campbell, 1980).

Other theorists, however, have argued that attraction, mate choice, and relationship success may also be influenced to some extent by a "complementary pattern" of attributes (e.g., Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962; Schutz, 1958; Winch, 1958). Theory and research dealing with such notions of "complementarity" have typically

focused on global personality traits or needs. In particular, Winch (1958, 1967) has argued that within a field of "homogamous eligibles," individuals may be more attracted to (and hence, more likely to marry) those potential partners whose personality needs are most likely to gratify or complement their own needs. In other words, certain patterns of personality dissimilarity may actually enhance attraction and mate selection. It has even been suggested that such a complementary pattern of mutual and maximum need gratification may also impact positively on the subsequent success or happiness of a marriage (Blazer, 1963; Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962; Meyer & Pepper, 1977).

The "theory of complementary needs" has a certain intuitive appeal or plausability associated with it. After all, how could a marriage in which both partners are dominant or assertive hold a promising future? Put another way, it is difficult to conceive of a satisfactory relationship in which each partner consistently attempts to dominate the other (Campbell, 1980). Instead, wouldn't a relationship in which partner A asserts and partner B submits be more mutually gratifying, and hence, more likely to succeed? Unfortunately, the situation is not always this clear-cut, and as we shall see later, the majority of research tends to indicate that Winch's theory may require considerable refinement before it can serve as a useful predictor of patterns of mate selection and marital satisfaction (Rubin, 1973, Chap. 9).

Yet while evidence supporting the complementarity position almost nonexistent, evidence in favor of the similarity

viewpoint (at least with regard to traditional personality variables) is far from impressive either. As Eysenck (1980) explains, marriage partners tend to be similar in terms of their background, beliefs, and intelligence (i.e., homogamous), "but neither similar nor dissimilar in personality" (p. 1235). In fact, some studies in the literature have reported finding no evidence whatsoever for either complementarity or similarity (e.g., Bowerman & Day, 1956; Heiss & Gordon, 1964; Levinger, Senn, & Jorgenson, 1970). A lack of consistent findings has prompted many researchers to abandon the area or to pronounce it "a blind alley for marital research" (e.g., Lewak, Wakefield, & Briggs, 1985, p. 477). However, the difficulty in precisely defining complementarity (in part, due to lack of an "ideal" statistical test) as well as the methodological difficulties inherent in many previous studies, leaves the question of personality complementarity still somewhat unresolved (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981).

Possibly a new perspective on this issue may be found in the field of social development. To date, few researchers have seriously attempted to address the issue of complementarity versus similarity within the framework of Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. Erikson (1950, 1963) set forth a theory of development which encompassed the entire life span. He provided a broad theoretical framework to account for the complex interactions between psychological, social, historical, and developmental factors in the formation of personality. Specifically, he proposed eight stages or "turning points" of

psychosocial growth. Each stage is characterized by a crisis or "tension state" in which the individual is faced with the difficult task of establishing an equilibrium between the individual's personal needs and the demands placed on the individual by society. At each stage, individuals have the potential to either move forward and successfully resolve their conflicts, or fail in resolving their conflicts and possibly regress.

At the very core of Eriksonian thought lies the notion of a so-called adolescent identity crisis in which young individuals must come to grips with their emerging self-concept (Erikson, 1959, 1968). According to Erikson, the basic psychosocial task of this crucial developmental phase is the formation of an ego identity: "the more-or-less actually attained but forever-to-be-revised sense of the reality of the self within social reality" (1959, p. 116). Adolescents, according to Erikson, are faced with very difficult decisions regarding their occupational future as well as their ideological beliefs. Those individuals who explore meaningful alternatives in order to arrive at a strong unified sense of personal identity, are said by Erikson to be identity achieved. At the other end of the bipolar continuum of ego identity lie those individuals who have failed to make a commitment to a set of personal ideological beliefs (and hence have failed to resolve the identity crisis adequately) and are said to be identity diffused. Studies of college students have actually found that in general, the transition from adolescence to adulthood tends to be accompanied by a progressive

strengthening in one's sense of identity (Waterman, 1982).

Moreover, in Erikson's view, resolutions of previous crises are said to influence resolutions of future and current crises. Thus, identity achievement is said to act as a kind of precursor or foundation to "intimacy achievement," which is the successful resolution of Erikson's next stage or crisis of psychosocial development, the intimacy versus isolation stage:

Whereas Eriksonian theory identifies identity formation as the central developmental issue of adolescence, it views intimacy development and the establishment of an intimate mode of interpersonal relationships as paramount in young adulthood. Successful resolution of the tasks of this period is reflected in individuals developing an intimate orientation, evidenced in their capacity to commit themselves to enduring intimate relationships (like marriage and close friendships) and in the high degree of communication and closeness which characterizes these relationships. Failure at the task is reflected in an inability to establish and maintain close relationships, in withdrawal, and in isolation. (Orlofsky, in press, p. 1)

Erikson was especially emphatic about the role of identity in intimacy development: "True engagement with others is the result and the test of firm self-delineation...it is only after a reasonable sense of identity has been established that real intimacy with the **other** sex (or, for that matter, with any other person or even with oneself) is possible" (1959, p. 95).

**Thus, it would appear that** Erikson's view suggests that one must first have an identity before one can share it in interpersonal relations. "Intimacy," Erikson wrote in 1959, "is really the ability to fuse your identity with someone else's without fear that you're going to lose something yourself. It is

the development of intimacy which makes marriage possible as a chosen bond. When this has not developed, marriage is meaningless" (p. 148). Thus, those individuals who have achieved a strong sense of personal identity may view the possibility of a deep emotional involvement with another person as being exciting rather than frightening or threatening to their own identities (Newman & Newman, 1987).

On this basis, one could argue that the stability and success of a marriage depends on both partners having achieved a secure sense of their own identities. Yet on the other hand, it might also be argued that a successful satisfying marriage may be possible provided that at least one of the partners in a relationship is identity achieved. Barry (1970) for example, has inferred on the basis of an extensive literature review as well as his own research, that successful marriages tend to be those in which the husband has achieved a secure sense of "identity":

It would appear, therefore, that "healthy" marriages, in the large, are those in which the husband is secure enough in his own identity that he can be supportive of his wife's effort to find herself in her new role. In such marriages, conflicts are settled more easily, precisely, because the husband is able and willing to be supportive, conciliatory, and trusting. Such behavior is of course, reinforcing because the wife responds positively since her need for sympathy and support is satisfied. Thus mutual growth is fostered. (p. 52)

Thus, Barry would appear to view the self-concept of the male as the key factor in determining the success and stability of a long-term relationship such as a marriage.

A whole variety of other patterns may also emerge from such

research. It may be found, for example, that the most satisfying stable relationships are those in which the partners possess similar levels of identity achievement (regardless of their absolute levels). Or, one might be tempted to suggest that similarity with regard to ego identity may impact positively on attraction and mate choice, but that once a couple has gotten married, other factors (such as the quality of spousal communication, or the similarity in the content of the spouses' identities) may play a more critical role in determining the subsequent success of such relationships. These are merely interesting conjectures, and one has to wonder why these questions have not been addressed adequately by previous researchers. At the present time, I am not aware of any previous investigation which has attempted to apply a measure of Eriksonian ego identity to a sample of actual heterosexual couples--testing both members of the couple at the same time on the instrument. Clearly, a study examining the role of ego identity achievement in marital relationships is long overdue.

#### The Eriksonian Model and Subsequent Research on Identity Formation

Since the concept of ego identity is pivotal to an understanding of the present study, for those readers who are not familiar with the literature on this interesting topic, a brief overview may be in order.

Erik Erikson was a psychoanalyst who studied under Anna

Freud, Sigmund Freud's daughter. Erikson's theory (1950, 1963) was based largely on his own clinical observations. He built on Freud's ideas and extended his psychosexual theory by emphasizing the psychosocial aspects of development beyond early childhood. In psychosocial theory, human development is viewed as the product of the interaction between individual (psycho) needs and abilities and societal (social) expectations and demands (Newman & Newman, 1987). Thus, Erikson can be considered to be both a neo-Freudian and an ego psychologist (Corey, 1982). In fact, there are many who consider Erikson to actually be the "first ego psychologist," although this title is occasionally accorded to Alfred Adler as well.

Since Erikson's seminal 1968 book Identity: Youth and Crisis few theoreticians have had as great an impact as Erikson has on our perceptions of adolescent personality development. His theoretical framework has provided a rich, thought-provoking structure within which to explore the major issues of growth and development during adolescence, and indeed, across the lifespan (Adams, Bennion, and Huh, 1987). In fact, since Erikson's original formulations, the concept of ego identity has influenced not only the psychology of adolescence, but a broad range of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities as well. This influence has extended even into ordinary language, contributing such common expressions as "finding one's identity," "identity crisis," "national identity," and even "sexual identity" (Bourne, 1978a). The popularity of psychosocial theory, however, is understandable. Erikson's thoughtful analysis is particularly



appealing to contemporary young readers of psychology who are faced with difficult decisions regarding their own identity and their intimate relationships with other people.

Of course, Erikson was not the first to emphasize identity. Historically, a concern with the nature and role of personal identity can be traced back at least as far as the philosophical dispute on the nature of the soul between Leibnitz and Hume (Levita, 1965). More recent forerunners of Erikson's specific concept of "ego identity" might include William James's notion (1910) of the "social self," or George Herbert Mead's and Harry Stack Sullivan's conception of the self as a precipitate of social appraisals (Mead, 1934; Sullivan, 1953). However, none of these concepts comes close to capturing all that is encompassed by Eriksonian "ego identity" (Bourne, 1978a).

In attempting to describe the processes of identity formation, Erikson (1958) used William James' distinction between those who are "born once" and those who go through a so-called "second birth" or growth crisis in the shaping of their identities. Originally, Erikson was stimulated by the difficulties which some World War II veterans encountered upon reentering society, and became interested in the problems associated with acute identity diffusion. Gradually over time, his clinical observations led him to believe that the pathological difficulties experienced by some veterans in leaving one role (soldier) and entering another (civilian) were psychologically similar to the problems which some adolescents experience as they leave the "role" of childhood and move through the transition of

adolescence into adulthood. From this rather experiential framework has evolved a psychology of adolescent identity formation (Adams et al., 1987).

But what exactly does Erikson mean by "identity"? Drawing on his psychoanalytic thinking, Erikson (1968) states that the ego organizes a coherent personality with a "sameness" and a "continuity" perceived by others:

Ego identity then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego's synthesizing methods, the style of one's individuality, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for significant others in the immediate community. (p. 50 [ italics in original ])

Erikson (1956) states that identity involves both a persistent self-sameness and a "persistent sharing of some kind of essential character [italics added] with others" (p. 57). Throughout his writings he proposes that individuals unconsciously strive to achieve a subjective "continuity of personal character" through a continual process of "ego synthesis." Eventually individuals should arrive at a sense of "inner solidarity" with a group's "ideals and social identity."

According to Erikson, each society provides a scheduled time period for the completion of identity formation. Adolescents are offered a sanctioned period of psychosocial moratorium wherein they are expected to make "commitments for life" and to establish a relatively fixed self-definition (Adams et al., 1987). This critical phase of life is normally accompanied by a sense of crisis which Erikson (1968) defines as a normative life event

designating "a necessary turning point, a crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, marshalling resources of growth, recovery, and further differentiation" (p. 16).

The identity crisis is thought to stimulate the "identity consciousness" that compels the individual to explore various life alternatives (e.g., occupational choices, political views, etc.). Such a crisis may be eventually resolved through personal ideological commitment. In fact, according to Erikson, the period of later adolescence can be drawn to a close only through the eventual commitment to a personal integration of values, goals, and abilities with societal demands and expectations. Experiencing this feeling of integration is said to bring about a feeling that childhood is over and that adulthood is beginning (Newman & Newman, 1987). In this light, ego identity may be conceptualized as an adaptive accomplishment or an achievement of the individual vis-a-vis his social environment. Specifically it may be viewed as the "adaptation of the individual's special skills, capacities, and strengths to the prevailing role structure of the society in which he lives" (Bourne, 1978a, p. 225). However, according to Erikson, identity once "achieved," may still be subject to continual challenges and fluctuations as changing environmental conditions periodically reawaken old identity issues (Cote & Levine, 1988).

Ego identity is also frequently described as a developmental product or outcome of an individual's previous experiences. Identity is in effect, a "cumulative attainment." It reflects the manner in which the young person has resolved the previous

fundamental psychosocial crises of childhood, that is, "basic trust vs. mistrust," "autonomy vs. shame and doubt," and so forth (Bourne, 1978a). This relates to the so-called epigenetic principle alluded to earlier; that the successful resolution of the crisis associated with each of the earlier stages of psychosocial development may provide the foundation for the successful resolution of subsequent stages, including the development of identity or intimacy.

Throughout his writings Erikson also accords identity structural role in personality. Identity is often spoken of as a "synthesis" or a "complex configuration" of needs, capacities, roles and so forth which provides the individual with "a stable frame of reference, or anchor point, from which the young person can confidently proceed to enter society and assume adult responsibilities" (Bourne, 1978a, p. 226). Furthermore, whenever Erikson speaks of a "sense of identity" he is referring to the subjective experience of the individual, who, from an adaptive standpoint, has achieved a "personal sense of identity." This is probably the best known usage of the term, and it also implies the sense of "continuity" mentioned earlier. An individual who has achieved an identity is said to experience a feeling of "connectedness" between "that which he has come to be during the long years of childhood and that which he promises to become in the anticipated future" (Erikson, 1968, p. 87). A sense of identity further implies a felt inner cohesiveness which Erikson (1959) speaks of as a "feeling of being at home in one's body," and "a sense of knowing where one is going." Individuals who have

achieved an identity are said to experience, in effect, a "sense of belongingness" in the world. Thus, ego identity is not merely a self-definition, but a social self-definition which takes into account an individual's attempts to make sense of oneself in a socially acknowledged way, as well as an individual's attempts to find a place and a meaning in the world. It is this existential stance to ego identity as well as its implied mutual or reciprocal psychosocial relationship with one's immediate community and/or larger society that distinguishes Erikson's identity concept from most traditional concepts of the self (Bourne, 1978a).

By now, one should begin to appreciate the complexity of Erikson's concept of ego identity. Few personality-theoretical concepts encompass so many different perspectives (Bourne, 1978a). One can also understand Erikson's stated preference (1968, p. 16) for not explicitly defining the term. However, because Erikson presented his theory of adolescent development in such general terms which are cumbersome to operationalize, not surprisingly, it has been difficult to make specific predictions from his theory or to test it empirically. As Bourne (1978a) explains, "to those who value theoretical precision--especially the kind which is necessary if a concept is to be operationalized--the term 'ego identity' will probably seem hopelessly broad and vague" (p. 228). Likewise, Simmons (1970) notes that one reason for the delayed development of instruments for assessing the nature and level of ego identity has been "Erikson's own tendency to present identity as a construct with multiple, non-operational, and relatively intangible meanings and

referents" (p. 241). Similarly, Marcia (1980) comments that "studying identity in adolescence is not a task for the methodologically hypersensitive" (p.159). A number of investigators have also taken Erikson to task for not adequately distinguishing between the "objective" and "subjective" aspects of the term (e.g., Jacobson, 1964, Chap. 2). In defense of Erikson, however, it may be said that the clinical phenomenon from which the term was originally derived, and to which it may be applied, are exceedingly complex (Bourne, 1978a). Nonetheless, many investigators have actually attempted to operationalize the concept of "ego identity." A review of the empirical literature on ego identity reveals that nearly all of these studies have used one of three types of procedures: (a) self-descriptive Q-sorts using adjectives or phrases, (b) self-report questionnaires, or (c) semistructured interviews (Bourne, 1978a).

In an early study, Gruen (1960) used a real-ideal Q-sort discrepancy score to operationalize ego identity. Gruen assumed that an adolescent's achievement of a stable sense of identity would be accompanied by a reduction in differences between idealized and realistic attributes he ascribed to himself. All subjects were given the same fake personality sketch and asked to rate its accuracy as it applied to themselves. A significant positive relationship ( $r = .45$ ) was obtained between subjects' self-ideal discrepancy and willingness to accept the false sketch. Gruen concluded that self-ideal discrepancy and willingness to accept an external definition of self were two facets of a poorly developed sense of identity.

One of the most frequently cited early studies in the literature is that of Dignan (1965), who administered her own 50-item Ego Identity Scale (EIS) to a sample of 130 college freshman and 115 sophomore females. The psychometric adequacy of the EIS was carefully established. Subjects were also given a semantic differential scale, which they completed for themselves and also as they expected their mothers would. A relationship between the two semantic differential ratings was assumed to indicate identification with the mother. As hypothesized, Dignan found that subjects who were high on the EIS showed significantly higher maternal identification. In a similar manner, Rasmussen (1964) developed his own ego identity questionnaire, with subscales designed to measure the degree of resolution of each of Erikson's psychosocial stages up to and including the identity stage. The instrument was able to differentiate Navy recruits receiving high and low sociometric ratings from their peers. Several questions arise, however, regarding the capacity of the early Q-sort and questionnaire procedures to measure the broad construct of "identity." For example, it is difficult to know for sure whether Dignan's or Rasmussen's self-report instruments are actually assessing anything directly pertinent to Erikson's construct, or whether these instruments are merely tapping into a social desirability response set, or some other distinct dimension related to ego identity; such as self-esteem, self-reported adjustment, general psychosocial effectiveness, and so forth (Bourne, 1978a; Enright, Lapsley, Cullen, & Lallensack, 1983; Wylie, 1974).

Although several operationalizations of Erikson's theoretical statements regarding identity have emerged, the most widely accepted has been provided by James Marcia (1964, 1966). Marcia's dissatisfaction with the early self-rating measures of identity was what prompted him to develop a semistructured interview and coding procedure to assess identity. Marcia (1966) states that while previous self-report procedures "have investigated characteristics which should follow if ego identity has been achieved, they have not dealt explicitly with the psychosocial criteria [italics added] for determining the degree of ego identity" (p. 551). And what precisely are these psychosocial criteria?

If one accepts Marcia's interpretation of Erikson, there are two major dimensions of identity formation: (a) the presence or absence of a crisis or exploration period, in which the adolescent actively questions or "struggles" with his or her identity and experiments with alternative roles and ideals; and (b) the presence or absence of a clearly defined and stable commitment to a set of values, beliefs and standards, which in turn serves to complete the adolescent's self-definition and provide him or her with a place in the community. "Commitment" involves making a firm, unwavering decision regarding one's identity, as well as engaging in the appropriate implementing activities.

Although many types of commitment may be involved in the establishment of ego identity, only two types of commitment are considered salient by Marcia: occupational and ideological.



Ideological commitment is further broken down into political and religious beliefs. Thus, by drawing on the dimensions of crisis and commitment, Marcia is able to conceptualize four types of identity formation: (a) identity achievement, (b) moratorium, (c) foreclosure, and (d) identity diffusion.

An identity achiever, not surprisingly, is someone who has gone through a period of crisis and active questioning and has developed relatively firm ideological and occupational commitments. Identity achievers typically demonstrate a sense of confidence, stability, and optimism about their future. They tend to behave according to an internal frame of reference, and tend to structure their lives in such a way as to translate their identity commitments into action (Marcia, 1967; Waterman, 1985). The term moratorium on the other hand, is used to refer to an individual who is currently in a state of crisis and is still actively searching or struggling among various alternatives in an attempt to arrive at a final choice. The moratorium individual, is in effect, still experiencing the "identity crisis," and what commitments he or she has made are still relatively vague and unstable. At their best, moratorium subjects are active, engaging, and creative; at their worst, they are paralyzed by a sense of inner turmoil and indecisiveness (Orlofsky, et al., 1973; Waterman, 1982). Meanwhile, a person who is classified as a foreclosure has never experienced a crisis, but is nonetheless committed to a set of particular goals, values, or beliefs. However, the commitments that foreclosures have made generally reflect the wishes of their parents or other authority

figures. The foreclosed individual has in effect, "obtained" or "inherited" his or her identity early in adolescence through the assimilation of parental (or societal) standards, values, and ideologies; with little prior role experimentation or crisis (Bourne, 1978a). Notice that there are no basic differences between the foreclosures and the achievers in either the strength or the nature of the commitments that these individuals have made. However, what differs between these two groups is the process by which these commitments were formed (with the foreclosed group not having experienced the identity crisis). And finally, the category of identity diffusion refers to those individuals who do not have any firm commitments and are not actively trying to form them. Such individuals may never have been in crisis, or they may have had a period of active questioning and been unable to resolve it, subsequently emerging without having made a decision (Waterman, 1982). Marcia (1966) mentions that the identity-diffused group has a rather casual or cavalier "playboy" quality that allows members to cope with the college environment. He suggests that the more seriously confused or aimless persons (such as the almost "schizoid" types of individuals described by Erikson in 1959) may not appear in research studies because they are simply unable to cope with college. Table 1 summarizes these four identity status classifications, as they relate to the dimensions of crisis and commitment.

In Marcia's system, interview protocols are usually coded by two or three judges, using a scoring manual (Marcia, 1964) that

Table 1

The Ego Identity Statuses

Commitment dimension	Crisis dimension		
	Past crisis	In crisis	Absence of crisis
Presence of commitments	Identity achievement	---	Foreclosure
Absence of commitments	Identity diffusion	Moratorium	Identity diffusion

Note. From Identity in adolescence: Processes and content (p.12)

by A.S. Waterman (Ed.), 1985, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

provides explicit criteria of crisis, commitment, identity achievement, foreclosure, and so forth, with respect to each of the three major content areas (occupation, religion, politics). After rating each content area separately, the interview as a whole is assigned on the basis of a "clinical decision," to an aggregate or overall identity status rating (i.e., achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, diffusion). Two judges typically agree on the aggregate identity status rating about 80% of the time (Marcia, 1976a). The interview technique generally requires about 20-30 minutes to complete, but may take longer if more than the three usual content areas are explored; as is often the case in recent studies.

Since its introduction in 1966, the "identity status paradigm" developed by James Marcia has dominated the empirical study of identity. Bourne, in his two-part comprehensive review of the literature in 1978, noted that out of a total of about 40 studies which had attempted to operationalize Erikson's identity stage, that approximately 30 of these had employed Marcia's interview procedure. More recently, Cote and Levine have reported in a 1988 article which was highly critical of Marcia's system, that the paradigm now appears in over 100 publications and dissertations.

Researchers have been interested in the differences between the identity statuses with respect to a wide variety of cognitive, personality, and developmental variables. Typically, a sample of 50-150 subjects are classified into the four identity statuses. Then t tests or analyses of variance are employed to examine

whether the mean score of say, identity achievers on dependent variable X differs significantly from that of foreclosures or diffusions. When the dependent variable is categorical rather than continuous, a chi-square test will generally be used to test the discrepancy between actual and expected frequencies of subjects in each status with respect to the categories comprising the variable (Bourne, 1978a). Several useful summaries of the available findings from the use of the clinical interview technique have been published recently and should be read by potential users of that methodological strategy (e.g., Bourne, 1978a, 1978b; Marcia, 1980, in press; Matteson, 1975; Waterman, 1982, 1985).

In Marcia's own original 1966 study, 86 college males were classified into the identity statuses using the interview procedure. "Performance on a stressful concept-attainment task," "levels of authoritarianism," "patterns of goal setting," and "vulnerability to self-esteem change" were the dependent variables in the study. It was noted that the subjects in the identity achievement status performed best on the concept-attainment task, whereas those in the foreclosure status set unrealistically high goals and subscribed significantly more to authoritarian values. The self-esteem condition, meanwhile, failed to discriminate in any way among the statuses.

Subsequent studies which have investigated the differences between the identity statuses, have confirmed Marcia's basic assumption that in general, the more "mature" or "advanced" statuses (i.e., achievement, moratorium) should be associated with

more effective or adaptive modes of psychological functioning. Studies have found, for example, that subjects who are identity-achieved, tend to perform better on a variety of cognitive and problem-solving tasks. Such individuals tend to exhibit a more "reflective" cognitive style, tend to be more field independent, and appear to perform better on certain measures of Piagetian formal operations (Bourne, 1978a; Marcia, 1980). Identity achievers have also been found to perform well under stress, are less likely to feel anxious or overwhelmed by their workload (Bob, 1968), and have also been found to be more relaxed and to report fewer instances of insomnia or other sleep disturbances (Wagner, Lorian, & Shipley, 1983). Furthermore, identity-achieved individuals, as Erikson predicted, appear to show greater autonomy and impulse control than other individuals (Matteson, 1977; Orlofsky et al., 1973), tend to feel less self-conscious than nonachieved individuals (Adams et al. 1987), and are less likely to conform to peer pressures (Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, & Neilson, 1985), or to exhibit an external locus of control (Abraham, 1983; Adams & Shea, 1979). Such individuals also tend to possess more complex and effective interpersonal skills (also as Erikson predicted) and as mentioned earlier, tend to be more intimate in their relationships with other people (e.g., Marcia, 1976b; Orlofsky et al., 1973). Identity achievers have also been found to display more "flexible" styles of social behaviour--such as androgyny (e.g., Orlofsky, 1977; Waterman & Whitbourne, 1982), as well as more effective and flexible social influence or compliance behaviours (Read, Adams, and Dobson,

1984). In general, identity achievers would appear to be more analytical or philosophical--unlike foreclosed or diffused individuals who tend to make errors due to narrowed attention, i.e., failing to keep in mind the "big picture" (Read et al., 1984). In short, identity achievement would appear to be associated with independence, flexibility, effective coping styles, and tolerance for ambiguity and frustration (Waterman, 1985).

The observation that the foreclosed subjects in Marcia's original study scored higher on a measure of authoritarianism (i.e., the authoritarian subscale of the California F scale, Adorno et al., 1950) is perhaps the most highly replicated finding in the identity status literature (Bourne, 1978a). This provides support for the notion that foreclosures retain a strong identification with parental standards and values, and are more likely to endorse statements favouring obedience to conventional societal standards and respect for authority (Bourne, 1978a, 1978b; Marcia, 1966, 1967; Podd, 1972). Foreclosures have also been found to score the lowest among subjects on measures of autonomy, and to demonstrate the highest need for social approval (Orlofsky et al., 1973). This is not surprising in light of their dependence on authority figures, and is also consistent with Marcia and Friedman's (1970) suggestion that these individuals tend to be unusually sensitive or defensive regarding the social implications of their behaviour.

Unfortunately, it has not always been possible in many identity studies to consistently "order" the statuses in any

predictable fashion along a continuum of psychological measures. For example, contrary to expectations, it has been difficult to reliably demonstrate differences between the identity statuses with respect to levels of self-esteem, cooperation versus competitiveness, or even academic achievement--although achieved individuals have been found to be more academically motivated and more likely to choose difficult majors (Bourne, 1978a; Marcia & Friedman, 1970). Furthermore, although one might expect diffused individuals to be the least satisfied with their social environments, studies have actually found that it is the moratorium status subjects who report the least social satisfaction, as well as the greatest levels of anxiety and feelings of burnout (Marcia, 1967; Podd, Marcia, & Rubin, 1970). According to Marcia (1966, 1976a), although identity-diffused subjects are probably the most seriously "disturbed," they are typified more by apathy, aimlessness, and a lack of internal motivation and engagement, rather than by anxiety and dissatisfaction per se. Moratorium individuals, on the other hand, since they are more likely to be in a state of crisis or active questioning at the time of these studies, are more likely to report such feelings of anxiety and dissatisfaction. In short, it would appear that while crisis, anxiety, and conflict with authority figures would tend to characterize the typical moratorium subject, perhaps the word which best describes the diffused subject is "withdrawal." The foreclosed individual, on the other hand, might best be described as rigid or "constricted" (Bob, 1968; Bourne, 1978b).



Investigators have been particularly interested in testing Erikson's most basic hypothesis regarding identity formation: that the transition from adolescence to adulthood should be accompanied by a progressive strengthening in one's sense of identity. Because Marcia's interview procedure involves categorizing individuals into a status (and does not in itself yield a single continuous identity measure), a complex set of developmental patterns can be identified through longitudinal studies. For example, it is generally hypothesized that over time there should be progressive developmental shifts in identity status, that is, that individuals should move from the identity diffusion status into either the foreclosure or moratorium status, from the foreclosure into the moratorium status, and from the moratorium into the identity achievement status. Movement from any other status to diffusion suggests regression. A person who has achieved identity at one period could conceivably return to a crisis period of moratorium. However, those who are in the moratorium or achieved statuses could never be accurately described as "foreclosed," since by definition they have already experienced some degree of crisis (Newman & Newman, 1987; Waterman, 1982).

Although traditional psychosocial theory presumes that the identity stage covers much or all of the period from puberty through the college years (i.e. 12 to 22 years of age), studies have found that the greatest gains in identity formation tend to occur primarily during the college years. Prior to and during the high school years there appears to be little interest on the part

of individuals in ideological identity-related questions (Waterman, 1982). Foreclosure appears to be the most common characteristic of identity during the early adolescent period. Identity achievement, when present, seems most likely to be observed in only the oldest high school students, and shifts toward identity achievement in high school have not generally been found to be significant across age groups (e.g., La Voie, 1976). As Waterman (1982) emphasizes, it is the college years which appear to be the most active time for work on identity formation:

College environments provide a diversity of experiences that can serve both to trigger consideration of identity issues and to suggest alternate resolutions for identity concerns. The results of numerous studies confirm that, in general, senior men and women have a stronger sense of personal identity than do their freshman counterparts and that identity commitments held as seniors are more likely to have been arrived at through the successful resolution of identity crises. (p. 346)

There have been three longitudinal studies which have traced identity development among college students using Marcia's interview procedure. Adams and Fitch (1982) interviewed males and females from different college cohorts at a state university in successive years. In the other two studies, changes from the freshman to the senior year were assessed among male students at an engineering college (Waterman & Waterman, 1971; Waterman, Geary, & Waterman, 1974) and at a private liberal arts college (Waterman & Goldman, 1976). Despite various differences in the samples, as well as in the timing of the studies, the results from the three schools were generally quite similar:

1. College clearly facilitates identity development in the area of vocational plans. Studies have found significant increases over time in the number of students who are identity achieved with respect to occupational choice, as well as decreases in the number of identity-diffused subjects in this content area. In both of the studies covering the 4-year span from the freshman to the senior year, there were significant decreases in the frequency of students in the occupational moratorium status, and it was also noted that the crisis period regarding one's occupational choice was most likely to occur during the freshman year.

2. With regard to religious beliefs, the only consistent pattern in all three studies has been a significant decrease over time in the frequency of students in the foreclosure status. As Waterman (1982) explains, "college experiences appear to undermine traditional religious beliefs without necessarily helping the students to establish alternate belief systems" (p. 347).

3. Significant increases in the frequency of the identity achievement status with regard to political ideology were observed over a 1-year period at the state university, and over 4 years at the engineering college. Significant decreases were found for the identity diffusion status at the state university and the foreclosure status at the engineering college. However, no systematic changes were noted for the students at the private liberal arts college. It should be kept in mind that although the development of new clearer commitments in the area of political ideology was observed to occur during the college years, many students still demonstrated little interest in this topic. In

fact, in both of the 4-year studies, more than half of the participants were approaching graduation without any clear beliefs in this area and without trying to form any commitments.

4. In both of the 4-year studies, the Cultural Sophistication scale (of the College Student Questionnaire Part I; Peterson, 1965) was given to all participants at the beginning of their freshman year. This scale, which taps into interests such as art, music, literature, and so forth, was found to be associated with identity formation. At both schools, those freshman who were identity achievers scored higher on the scale than did freshman who were not in the identity achievement status. More importantly, an interest in cultural activities was found to be predictive of identity formation, since students who became identity achievers during their college years reported more cultural interests as freshman than did students who did not enter the status. These findings are consistent with other studies which have noted a significant relationship between identity achievement and expressive writing activity (e.g., Waterman and Archer, 1979). Among samples of both high school and college students, males and females who wrote poetry were far more likely to be in the identity achievement status than students who had never written poetry. Waterman (1982) suggests that the exposure to new ideas through the cultural media may serve to challenge the views with which a person was raised and suggest more promising identity alternatives. Cultural activities may also provide a means of gaining feedback from others about one's identity.

5. With regard to overall identity status classifications, it was noted (as expected) that the moratorium status was the least stable of the four statuses. At the engineering college, 76% of those subjects who were classified as moratoriums at the start of their freshman year had become identity achievers by their senior year. The corresponding figure at the private liberal arts college was 85%. Whereas the foreclosure and achievement statuses were found to be stable in the area of vocational plans, and the diffusion status was stable in the areas of religious beliefs and political ideology, the moratorium status was found to be highly unstable in all interview areas. In the two 4-year studies, there were 34 instances of identity crises in particular interview areas found at the start of the freshman year. Not one of these crises was continuing during the senior year. Thus, there appears to be a very high probability that the various identity crises experienced during college will be successfully resolved.

On the basis of these findings, Waterman (1982) concludes that "the basic hypothesis embodied in Erikson's theory of identity development--that movement from adolescence to adulthood involves changes in identity that can be characterized as progressive developmental shifts--fares very well in empirical studies" (p. 355). It must be recognized however, that in all three studies, follow-up data were only obtained from individuals who continued at their respective schools throughout the entire period of the research. As of yet, very little is known about the patterns of identity formation among those who withdraw from college (Waterman, 1982).

Some research, however, has looked at identity formation among non-college samples of subjects. Munro and Adams (1977) for example, reported a comparison of the distribution of identity statuses between samples of college students and working youth of equivalent age. They found the working sample to be more frequently in the identity achievement status. In the areas of religious beliefs and political ideology, the college students were found to be more frequently in the diffusion status. However, there were no significant differences observed between the two groups with respect to their occupational identity statuses (i.e., only the religious and political content areas appeared to account for the differences between the two groups in terms of their overall identity status classifications). Nevertheless, Munro and Adams (1977) speculated that full-time employment "might stimulate rapid movement toward identity formation while college attendance might be seen as an extended moratorium period" (p. 523).

To date, only limited research has been conducted looking at identity formation in adults. Only one longitudinal study employing the identity status perspective has traced identity development from the college years into adulthood. Marcia (1976b), using the interview procedure, followed up on 30 men who had originally been interviewed 6-7 years earlier while still in college. His results were reported in terms of changes in each subject's overall identity status. It was noted that the identity statuses, aside from the moratorium status, tended to be fairly stable. For example, if a subject was described as identity

diffused or foreclosed during college, there was a very high probability (84%) that he would be diffused or foreclosed 6 years later. In fact, only 1 of the 16 participants who were foreclosed or diffuse at the beginning of the study had become identity achieved by the follow-up interview. Thus, most reviewers (e.g., Waterman, 1982; Adams et al., 1987) are of the consensus that the adult years immediately following college tend to represent a period of strengthening or consolidation of one's sense of identity, but not generally a time when many new identity issues are raised or novel possibilities considered--although more research in this area would certainly be welcome.

The study of antecedent conditions relating to identity development has been focused to a large extent on family variables. Considerable attention has been directed towards identifying the nature of differences in family relationships and parenting styles characteristic of the individuals in the different identity statuses (Waterman, 1982). To date, the findings from the limited research that has been done in this area are consistent with theoretical expectations. As would be expected, foreclosures have been found to have the closest relationships with their parents, while identity diffusions appear to report the most distance from their families. In fact, the parents of identity diffusions were typically seen as indifferent, inactive, detached, not understanding, and sometimes even rejecting (Josselson, 1973; Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1982). Not surprisingly, the subjects in the moratorium and achievement statuses tended to be somewhat critical of their parents, and

often reported themselves to be in conflict with their families (Marcia, 1980). Waterman cautions, however, that although it is an attractive hypothesis that parental behaviour may contribute to identity formation, such a link has not been conclusively proven, since "there are a number of alternative explanations available which do not involve a causal influence of parental variables" (1982, pp. 355-356). These include the possibility that the behaviours of the children in the various identity statuses may elicit particular responses on the part of their parents. Along a similar line, Waterman and Waterman (1975) have hypothesized that parents may serve as the role models for the type of decision-making processes involved in identity formation. Yet they found no relationship whatsoever between the identity statuses shown by a sample of fathers and their college-attending sons.

Eriksonian theory presumes that the process of identity formation should be intertwined with the concurrent maturation of other basic personality constructs, such as moral and ego development. Efforts have been made, for example, to relate progress in identity formation to Loevinger's ego states. Adams and Shea (1979), using a sample of male and female college students, observed a positive relationship between ego identity status and ego stage development. They found, as expected, that the individuals in the more advanced identity statuses also tended to be located in the higher ego stages; that is, at or above the "I-4 stage of conscientious functioning." In a 1-year follow-up study using the same sample, Adams and Fitch (1981)



reported that identity formation appeared to be associated with parallel increases in ego stage development. The authors concluded on the basis of a cross-lagged correlational analysis that "knowledge about an individual's identity status could be used to predict his or her ego stage development as efficiently as ego stage development could be used to predict identity status" (p. 163).

Meanwhile, a positive relationship between identity status and level of moral reasoning was obtained in several studies using Kohlberg's interview procedure or a modification of it (e.g., Podd, 1972; Rowe and Marcia, 1980). In a classic study by Podd (1972), it was reported that 51% of the participants in the identity achievement status were functioning at the postconventional level. The corresponding percentages for the other statuses were: 31% for moratorium, 12% for foreclosure, and only 9% for identity diffusion. As part of the same study, subjects were asked to deliver an electrical shock to a victim in a "Milgram obedience task." Foreclosures were found to be the most willing to participate in the experiment again. These findings by Podd and others are consistent with Erikson's position: that higher levels of identity achievement should be accompanied by a more differentiated and mature set of moral values as a result of an active questioning of conventional morality.

Although a large number of correlates of identity achievement have been identified, any of which might contribute to the process of identity formation, it is difficult to precisely determine

which variables may actually constitute antecedent influences on identity achievement--since most of the research on identity formation has involved assessment at only a single point in time. Waterman (1982) emphasizes that what is needed the most at the present time in identity research are sound longitudinal studies employing a cohort-sequential methodology (Schaie, 1965). Studies are also needed which include the assessment of possible predictor variables of identity change, and which trace identity formation over a relatively broad range of ages. In particular, Waterman stresses that "more information is needed about the roots of identity in the years before and during high school and the nature of identity changes during the adult years" (p. 356); this latter point being relevant to the present study's investigation of older, married individuals. In this regard, the phenomena of a "midlife crisis" could even be studied from an identity status perspective (Okamoto, 1985/1987; Waterman, 1982). Of course, it is also stressed that considerably more research is needed on samples that do not attend college, including samples of minority subjects. In addition, research must be undertaken outside of the United States in order to assess the cross-cultural validity of Marcia's categorization system (Cote & Levine, 1988). Some recent foreign studies have provided encouraging results in this regard (eg., Chang, 1982/1983; Okamoto, 1985/1987). For example, a study by Chang (1982/1983) involved categorizing a large number of Chinese students at two universities in Taipei into the identity statuses. Results of a cross-sectional analysis indicated that there was a significant increase in the number of

identity-achieved subjects as the participants moved from the freshman to the senior year. It was also noted, not surprisingly, that identity achievers tended to participate more in student organizations and tended to report greater previous work experience in comparison to individuals in the other identity statuses. These findings are generally compatible with those of the previous American investigations, and would tend to suggest that the identity status paradigm has at least a promising degree of cross-cultural validity associated with it. In fact, Marcia (in press, as cited in Waterman, 1988) reports on a number of other interesting identity studies which have been conducted outside of the North American culture. Clearly however, more research is needed in this area. Further work must also be done to determine the extent to which the identity status paradigm overlaps with Erikson's theory, as well as the extent to which the system differs in some important ways from the foundation provided by Erikson (Cote & Levine, 1988; Waterman, 1988).

#### Sex Differences in Identity Formation, and the Relationship Between Identity and Intimacy

The controversial issue of sex differences in identity formation has been the stimulus for a great deal of research in recent years. Since this is an issue which has some relevance to the study being presently reported, it will be discussed here in some detail.

In a review of sex differences in measures of identity,

Waterman (1982) has reported few discrepancies. For both sexes, the identity achievement status is generally associated with good adaptive capacities, whereas the diffusion status is typically associated with difficulties in coping. Furthermore, the patterns of change in identity formation have been found to be very similar for both sexes. Males and females have been found to show generally similar probabilities of the consideration of identity alternatives and the establishment of commitments (Adams & Fitch, 1982; Newman & Newman, 1987; Waterman, 1982). Waterman (1982) has also reported that the various paper-and-pencil measures of identity formation tend to yield few if any, significant sex differences in ideological identity levels (e.g., Adams, Shea, and Fitch, 1979; Constantinople, 1969; La Voie, 1976; Simmons, 1970; Waterman & Whitbourne, 1981). Only when "attitudes toward premarital sex" is included as an interview content area does one find consistent sex differences. Here, females appear more likely to go through a period of moratorium before achieving identity commitments, whereas males are more likely to remain either foreclosed or diffuse (Waterman & Nevid, 1977). A few studies have found a similar pattern with respect to sex role attitudes or other interpersonal content areas (eg., Hodgson & Fisher, 1979).

The most puzzling finding, however, is that among males, individuals in the moratorium status look generally similar in behavioural traits to identity achievers, whereas among females the patterns are somewhat more complex. On some measures, the foreclosure women look similar to identity achievers, whereas on others it is the identity achievement and moratorium women who

appear most similar (Marcia, 1980; Newman and Newman, 1987; Waterman, 1982). In response to these findings, Ginsburg and Orlofsky (1981) have suggested that while the moratorium status may be highly conflictual and uncomfortable for some women, it is nonetheless associated with very high levels of ego functioning. They argue that the greater stability of the foreclosed status for certain women may be a reflection of less conflict (possibly due to greater social support) but not necessarily a reflection of greater depth of personal development. Furthermore, Josselson (1973), as part of her dissertation, has noted that foreclosure women appear to be generally inhibited in their impulse expression; while the moratorium women, in spite of their many conflicts and anxieties, actually emerge as the most insightful, sensitive, and "likeable" of the status groups.

Although comparisons of the patterns of identity formation shown by males and females yield far more evidence of similarities than differences, some have suggested that there may be differences between the sexes in the content of their identity-related commitments. Gilligan (1982) for example, has argued that the concept of ego identity as it has been formulated is a reflection of a male-oriented culture that tends to focus heavily on occupation and ideology rather than on interpersonal commitments. She argues that while boys may focus heavily on ideological or autonomy issues during their identity development, girls may choose instead, to focus on various interpersonal or social role aspects of their identity. Gilligan's notions, in effect, imply that identity and intimacy struggles may be more

psychologically integrated constructs for women than for men, and that females, therefore, may be better understood on their own developmental terms. In response to this, some research evidence actually suggests that there may be characteristically male and female pathways to the resolution of identity and intimacy issues. For males, it is assumed that intrapersonal issues dominate, and that intimacy follows identity resolution; whereas for females, it is often proposed that the emphasis is on interpersonal tasks, and that identity and intimacy struggles often merge or coexist (Gilligan, 1982; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Marcia, 1980; Matteson, 1975; Orlofsky, 1977; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985). The view that young women may be further developed in their intimacy capacity than young men--due to the greater emphasis placed on expressive social skills in women versus instrumental skills in men--is a position which has been frequently been put forth even by researchers outside the field of identity (e.g., Bem, 1975). A closely-related view suggests that women are socialized to look to others to define their identity, rather than to assume a proactive stance with respect to identity formation (Newman & Newman, 1987).

Although Erikson himself, does not "dwell" on the issue of female identity formation (among the biographies of Gandhi, George Bernard Shaw, and so forth, there is little mention of famous women), he does nonetheless offer some interesting ideas. Erikson (1968, 1975) proposes that female identity formation follows the same basic processes as male development, except that the content differs. Following body morphology, Erikson states that male

"intrusiveness" could be witnessed in identity issues such as career and political choices, whereas female "inclusiveness" emphasized how, when, and by whom the potential of a woman's "inner space" or reproductive capacity would be realized. Thus, Erikson's view suggests that a woman's identity formation is not complete until an intimate partnership with a male has been established. This position implies that the achievement of intimacy is necessary for a strong identity in women--an actual reversal of the sequence characterizing masculine development (Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982). In response to this, some of Erikson's critics (e.g., Fischer & Narus, 1981) have argued that the interactionist perspective of Sullivan (1953) may better describe the developmental sequencing of identity and intimacy (Sullivan suggested that intimacy with a same-sex "chum" during late childhood tends to validate one's perceptions of oneself, and also provides practice in the behaviours necessary for later intimate relationships with the opposite sex).

At this point in our discussion regarding identity and intimacy, it may be necessary to first clarify exactly what is meant by the term "intimacy." In broad terms, intimacy refers to the nature and quality of interactions between individuals (Orlofsky, in press). Thus, intimacy may be viewed as an active process, which according to Erikson (1968, p. 135) involves a "counterpointing as well as a fusing of identities," in both sexual relationships and close friendships. For Erikson, the intimacy crisis of young adulthood involves learning "whom you care to be with --at work and in private life, not only exchanging

intimacies, but sharing intimacy" (1974, p. 124 italics in original ). In a similar manner, the Humanistic and social psychological perspectives (e.g., Kelly et al., 1983; Rogers, 1972) attempt to conceptualize intimacy in terms of a continuous flexible process. In particular, Rogers (1972) emphasizes the communication and growth-promoting aspects of intimacy and prescribes certain conditions which are necessary to foster healthy, growthful relationships. However, intimacy from an Eriksonian perspective (or from H. S. Sullivan's perspective) may also be viewed as the capacity of an individual to be intimate. According to Erikson, the individual with a capacity for intimacy is able "to commit himself to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises" (1963, p. 263). Likewise, Newman and Newman (1987) using a psychosocial approach, define intimacy as "the ability to experience an open supportive tender relationship with another person without fear of losing one's own identity" (p. 446). Thus, intimacy involves both a sense of commitment, as well as a certain degree of abandon and openness to experiences of interpersonal "fusion" without fear of ego loss (Orlofsky, in press).

In Erikson's view, intimacy may also be implicitly seen as a "state" or an "end product" in a relationship occurring between two individuals who possess the requisite capacities to be intimate (Acitelli & Duck, 1987). Such an intimate situation involves a sense of mutual trust and caring between partners, as



well as a certain degree of openness and sharing. Intimacy typically implies the capacity within a couple for the mutual empathy and the mutual regulation of needs. In other words, intimate individuals are able to both give and receive pleasure (Newman & Newman, 1987). Intimate individuals, according to Erikson, also tend to experience a sense of confidence in themselves and in their relationships. The partners in such relationships are able to disclose their personal feelings openly to one another, and are able to share openly in the development of new ideas and plans. In short, there is a sense of openness and mutual enrichment in intimate interactions. Each person perceives enrichment of his or her well-being through affectionate or intellectually-stimulating interactions with the other person (Erikson, 1963; Newman & Newman, 1987). One can easily see how the establishment of intimacy, coming as it does after the development of personal identity, depends on individuals' perceptions of themselves as valuable, competent, and meaningful people (Newman & Newman, 1987). It is interesting to note that Erich Fromm (1956) similarly describes genuine intimacy as involving responsibility, mutual respect, and knowledge; and distinguishes it from immature love which he terms "pseudointimacy" (Orlofsky, in press).

Although discussions of intimacy typically center around marital relationships, intimacy may characterize any relationship involving emotional commitments between adults. As Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979) point out, many types of relationships may be intimate; including close friendships between members of either sex, as well as homosexual and heterosexual relationships that

have not been "legally sanctioned" so-to-speak. Thus, intimacy is of concern throughout life, and may characterize many types of relationships of varying duration and degree of involvement. In this sense, intimacy is a continually-evolving capacity involving increasing openness, sharing, caring, and closeness. However, it is during young adulthood that these developments meet their first major test:

...individuals [during young adulthood] are faced with the task of choosing long term, perhaps life-long, partners and establishing bonds of mutual love and respect that will serve as a continuing foundation for cooperatively dealing with household tasks, family income, recreation and leisure pursuits, sexuality, raising children, and relating to other social systems such as relatives, friends and the community. These challenges and the compromises and sacrifices they require demand a degree of stability and responsibility which may hardly be expected prior to adulthood. Hence, intimacy is particularly at issue in early adulthood and may be considered the phase-specific task of this period. (Orlofsky, in press, pp. 3-4)

Newman and Newman (1987) caution that "although intimacy is generally established within the context of the marriage relationship, marriage itself does not, by definition, produce intimacy" (p. 446). Likewise, intimacy in a dating or courting relationship does not necessarily lead to marriage. Yet there is enough of a rationale for considering intimacy to be virtually "part and parcel" of a successful marriage. In fact, the various measures of Eriksonian intimacy tend to consider the presence of an enduring heterosexual relationship (such as a marriage) to be one of the several critical factors used in determining a subject's overall intimacy level (e.g., Orlofsky et al., 1973;

Rosenthal, Gurney, and Moore, 1981). This is consistent with Erikson's position; that a readiness and a willingness to commit oneself to a long-term relationship with a single partner is the hallmark of successful intimacy achievement.

More importantly, throughout the marital satisfaction literature, terms like marital "happiness," "adjustment," "love," "closeness," and so forth, are often used interchangeably with the term "intimacy" to denote some form of successful functioning within a marriage (Acitelli & Duck, 1987). Of course, not all happily-married couples are intimate, and there are many intimate couples who are not happy, yet there is enough empirical evidence to indicate that intimacy tends to be correlated positively with measures of marital happiness (Acitelli & Duck, 1987; Prager, 1985; Raush, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974; White, Speisman, Jackson, Bartis, & Costos, 1986). For example, a recent study by Prager (1985, as reported in Orlofsky, in press) found that those couples who were high in intimacy status, in addition to disclosing more intimate and private details to each other (based on ratings of their conversations) were also found to report considerably greater marital satisfaction than those couples rated low in intimacy. Similarly, a recent study of 31 young married couples by White et al. (1986) utilizing a recently-developed continuous, interview-based measure of intimacy (involving components of intimacy such as communication, caring, orientation [or perspective-taking], commitment, and sexuality) reported that among the husbands in their sample, there was a significant positive correlation between their intimacy scores and the dyadic

adjustment scores of both themselves and their wives ( $r = .49$ ,  $p < .003$ , in both cases). More importantly, pilot work in a follow-up study involving the same sample (K. M. White, personal communication, October, 1988) has indicated that the couples scoring the lowest on the intimacy measure, were the ones who were least likely to still be together at the time of a follow-up interview. It is important to note, that in each of the above investigations, the intimacy measures which were employed were considered by the authors to be more-or-less compatible with Erikson's conceptualization of intimacy. Thus, Eriksonian intimacy would appear to be at least moderately associated with marital satisfaction and stability. The key question remaining, however, is "to what extent is intimacy related to identity?"

Orlofsky et. al. (1973), using a sample of 53 college men, examined the relationship between identity and intimacy and obtained findings which were more-or-less consistent with Erikson's model. They found that the males who were high in identity status also tended to be more intimate in their relationships with other people. The construct of "intimacy" in this study was operationalized using a semistructured interview and scoring procedure which categorizes subjects into several major intimacy "statuses" (i.e., much like the identity interview procedure). These classifications were based on the following general criteria drawn from Erikson's theory:

1. The presence of absence of close relationships with male and female friends;
2. Presence or absence of an enduring (committed) sexual relationship; and,
3. Depth versus superficiality of peer relationships. "Depth" is

assessed with respect to several referents, including degree of openness and closeness [or "communication"], respect, affection, mutuality, capacity to accept and resolve differences, and maturity of sexual attitudes and behavior. (Schiedel & Marcia, 1985, p. 150)

Based on these criteria, Orlofsky et. al. (1973) proposed three major intimacy statuses: (a) intimate, (b) stereotyped, and (c) isolate. Individuals in the "intimate" status tend to have several close friends and a relatively lasting heterosexual relationship characterized by the previously mentioned criteria. Subjects in the "stereotyped-relationships" status may have many friends of both sexes, however, their relationships have very little openness or commitment, and thus appear to lack "depth." Meanwhile, the individual in the "isolate" status has few if any acquaintances with whom he or she interacts frequently, and thus, is said to exist in a kind of "interpersonal void." Orlofsky et al. characterize the isolate individual as having "a marked constriction of life space, with the absence of any enduring relationships" (p. 213). Such an individual is said to be anxious and immature, tends to date infrequently, and rarely initiates social contacts.

Besides these three major intimacy statuses, two additional statuses were proposed based on the presence or absence of a lasting romantic relationship. The "preintimate" status consists of subjects who have close friendships but no enduring love relationship. Conversely, the "pseudointimate" status describes those individuals who have established a long-term, heterosexual relationship, but whose relationships in general, appear to be

highly stereotyped and superficial. Orlofsky et al. describe the pseudointimate male as resembling the intimate individual in the sense that he has made a lasting commitment to one woman. However, rather than being truly "intimate," both he and his partner are merely "going through the motions" so-to-speak, and tend to treat each other as mere "conveniences." In other words, their relationship is as Erikson put it, a "folie a deux"; a mutual isolation in the guise of intimacy. Thus, Orlofsky et al. (1973), using an approach modeled after Marcia's identity status paradigm, were able to generate theoretical descriptions of several alternative styles of intimacy "crisis" resolution, each with elements of both "intimacy" and "isolation." Clearly, one can see that the intimacy status approach developed by Orlofsky et al. closely reflects the observation that individuals are rarely either completely intimate or completely isolated in their interactions with other people (Orlofsky, in press). The authors have also managed to obtain concurrent validity for their intimacy status approach by using Yufit's intimacy-isolation scale (Yufit, 1956); a 20-item, paper-and-pencil instrument that purports to measure Erikson's concept of intimacy.

In their study, Orlofsky et al. (1973) found that intimate men were almost invariably identity achievers; preintimate individuals were found most frequently in the moratorium status; stereotyped and pseudointimate men tended to be foreclosures or diffusions; and isolates tended to be diffusions. In other words, individuals in the higher identity statuses tended to be found in the higher intimacy statuses, whereas individuals in the

lower identity statuses tended to be located in the lower intimacy statuses. Put more simply, there was a positive association found between identity and intimacy. On this basis, Orlofsky et al. concluded that a capacity for intimacy among college males, as well as a readiness for long-term commitments, may derive from a "positive work orientation" and a "clarity of self-definition."

The majority of subsequent research has tended to confirm Orlofsky et al.'s findings (e.g., Fitch & Adams, 1983; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Kacerguis & Adams, 1980; Marcia, 1976b; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982; Zampich, 1980). For example, in Marcia's 1976 longitudinal study mentioned earlier, those males who were identity-achieved at the time of their follow-up interview were also found to report greater depth, commitment, openness, and so forth in their present interpersonal relationships. However, it must be emphasized that in both of the earlier investigations by Orlofsky et al. (1973) and Marcia (1976b), only male subjects were interviewed. Later studies, which involved both male and female samples, tended to find that the "intimacy contingent upon identity" relationship was often more reflective of male than of female development (Fitch & Adams, 1983; Hodgson & Fisher, 1979; Orlofsky, in press; Prager, 1977; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Zampich, 1981).

Schiedel and Marcia (1985) for example, using a sample of 40 male and 40 female subjects, found modest support for the notion that identity and intimacy issues tend to merge for some women. Specifically, they found somewhat more females than males in their sample who were both high in identity and high in intimacy

i.e., 14 females vs. 10 males); and more importantly, they found significantly more females than males who were high in intimacy and yet at the same time also low in identity (i.e., 6 females vs. only 1 male). The fact that 10 of the 11 males high in intimacy were also found to be high in identity lends support for the notion that identity achievement for males may be a necessary though not sufficient condition for establishing close relationships with peers. A subgroup of women on the other hand (6 out of 40), appear to be able to deal with intimacy issues prior to dealing with identity concerns (thus suggesting that for these individuals, identity achievement may not be a required condition for achieving intimacy). Consistent with Erikson's position, however, was the finding that in general, there was a positive association observed between identity and intimacy for the sample as a whole.

There have been some contradictory findings, however. Prager (1977) reported that identity status was virtually unrelated to intimacy status, although her study involved interviewing only college women. Also, Tesch and Whitbourne (1982), using a sample of adult men and women (mean age = 25), found that intimacy status tended to be associated with identity status in the areas of religion, politics, and sex roles; however, this relationship was not observed for occupational identity. Kacerguis and Adams (1980) on the other hand, reported that occupational identity achievement tended to be the primary predictive factor in the identity/intimacy stage resolution relationship (although their study did not include the sex role identity area, as recommended



by Matteson, 1977). More importantly, neither of these latter two investigations observed any significant sex differences in the identity/intimacy relationship. Kacerguis and Adams (1980) for example, found no support for the notion (as implied by La Voie, 1976, and others) "that occupational and political identity resolution, as male-dominated arenas of life, would be more predictive of intimacy development for males than females; while religious identity, as an affiliative, nurturant, and expressive life dimension, would be more predictive of intimacy development for females than males" (p. 119). Similarly, Tesch and Whitbourne (1982) concluded that Erikson's theory regarding the patterns of identity and intimacy formation "may be extended from men to women, at least for the type of sample studied in the present investigation" (p. 1041). It is recommended, however, that future researchers exploring the identity/intimacy question utilize both male and female subjects, of all ages, and from all walks of life (including individuals who may be somewhat reluctant to disclose intimate aspects of their relationship--possibly because they are currently experiencing relationship difficulties). It is further suggested that researchers score and analyze all content areas of the interview--both separately as well as combined--in order to gauge the exact nature of the identity/intimacy relationship (Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982; Whitbourne & Weinstock, 1979). In addition, Craig-Bray and Adams (1986), as well as Craig-Bray, Adams, & Dobson (1988) have also strongly recommended to researchers that they distinguish between intimacy in same-sex versus opposite-sex contexts when attempting to study the

potential correlates of intimacy. As an example of this, Craig-Bray et al. (1988) in their own study, observed an association between identity and interview-based intimacy, but only with respect to the same-sex intimacy context; a distinction which has traditionally been blurred in past research by collapsing across the same-sex versus opposite-sex intimacy contexts.

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that while previous research has tended to support the Eriksonian viewpoint that "one must first know oneself before coming to know another," the issue is far from resolved. As Kacerguis and Adams (1980) explain, only longitudinal data can adequately address the question of whether identity formation is a necessary prerequisite for the development of intimate relationships. It must be further emphasized that the interaction which is likely to exist between identity and intimacy is a very complex one. Perhaps Matteson (1975) states this best when he says: "There is no clear pattern to suggest that identity must precede intimacy; intimacy also alters identity...in every real sharing experience both persons grow; identities are rediscovered and altered" (p. 161). For this reason, an extreme interpretation of Erikson's theory: that a strong identity is an absolute prerequisite for intimacy, may not be warranted--perhaps not even among male subjects (Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982). In fact, as an example of this complex interaction which may exist between identity and intimacy, Tesch and Whitbourne (1982) note that many of the males in their sample who were weak in a particular interview area were nonetheless

located in the intimate status. In other words, although a strong identity among males was found to be associated with intimacy, a weak identity in a particular content area did not appear to preclude intimacy. In fact, Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979) have even gone as far as to maintain that two adults characterized as identity-diffused might form an intimate partnership in order to "compensate" for their lack of personal identity and self-direction (in which case, such a relationship might be viewed as providing some support for a similarity position in attraction and mate choice, vis-a-vis identity achievement). Such a relationship might also be compatible with the frequent observation in the psychoanalytic literature that "neurotics tend to unite in marriage with neurotics" (Tharp, 1963).

Although many of Erikson's notions regarding identity and intimacy can be clearly seen to have relevance to the marital context, surprisingly only a few studies have actually attempted to apply a measure of Eriksonian ego identity to a sample of married individuals. Lutes (1981), for example, modified the clinical interview technique into a paper-and-pencil mode, and then administered the instrument to a large sample of married and single college students, all of normal college age ( $M = 20.1$  years). She found the married students to be classified more frequently into the foreclosure status, whereas the single students showed a much more even distribution of individuals across the statuses. Additional personality measures also indicated that social desirability and the need to conform among the foreclosures, as well as their need to reduce anxiety and

their uncertainty, may have led these individuals to marry young. Lutes argued that achieving an identity in this society requires extensive time and effort, and that perhaps the married foreclosed subjects in her study may have been "willing to make earlier choices because they were less concerned with finding the ultimately exciting spouse and more willing to stop when they found what seemed to be a 'safe,' comfortable choice" (p. 814).

Meanwhile, Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Getzels (1985) have examined the relation between identity achievement in young adulthood and the establishment and stability of marital relationships at midlife. They administered a semantic differential identity measure (the Identity Scale; Henry & Sims, 1970) to a large sample of college students in 1963. Eighteen years later, in 1981, 166 of these original subjects were followed up, and data were derived for each subject's present marital status and number of previous marriages and divorces. It was noted that for the males in the sample, their achievement of ego identity appeared to be highly important for establishing later marital relationships. Specifically, those males who had never been married, were found to have scored the lowest in 1963 on the identity measure. Yet previous identity achievement in men was found to be largely unrelated to their future marital stability. However, for women, the opposite pattern prevailed: identity achievement in college was found to be associated with future marital stability, although identity achievement in the women did not appear to be related to their decisions to marry in the first place. Put more simply, those women who were low in ego identity

in 1963 were found to be just as likely to marry as those who were high in identity, yet the low identity women were found to experience significantly greater marital breakups in comparison to the high identity women.

Meanwhile, a study by Nettles and Loevinger (1983) attempted to examine spousal similarity in terms of sex role expectations and ego development among 107 married couples. Although this study did not include a measure of ego identity, it is still worth mentioning in this context because the design of the research closely resembles that of the present investigation, and also, because the model of ego stage development which was used in this investigation has generally been assumed to parallel Marcia's identity status paradigm. The sample for this study consisted of 52 "problem" couples who were in counselling at the time of the study (or who were presently separated and had recently been in counselling), as well as 55 "nonproblem" couples who were not presently in counselling and were not separated. Homogamous mating was strongly supported for the sample as a whole, with only 23 of the 107 couples being "mismatched" (i.e., the partners being one or more ego stages apart). However, contrary to expectations, similarity in ego stage development did not appear to distinguish the problem from the nonproblem couples. Also, there were no significant differences observed between the two marital groups or between the two sexes in terms of their mean ego levels.

It is important to note, from the standpoint of the present investigation, that to date, only two previous studies have attempted to address the similarity/complementary issue within

the context of Eriksonian identity formation. Rim (1986) investigated the exercise of power (i.e., the manner in which husbands and wives changed their spouse's mind when a dispute arose) among 120 Israeli couples who had been married an average of 7 years. It was noted that when the husbands and wives obtained similar scores on the Inventory of Psychosocial Development (IPD; Constantinople, 1969) the husbands tended to use less "authoritative" means of influence. The effect was most prominent when both the husband and the wife scored high on the IPD. The authoritative score was based on the endorsement of items such as "make my spouse realize that I have a legitimate right to demand that he/she agrees with me," and "make my spouse realize that I know more about the matter--that I have expert knowledge" (Kipnis, Castell, Gergen, & Mauch, 1976). It is not entirely clear how the use of such influence tactics would relate to the overall perceived quality and stability of such relationships, and both Rim (1986) as well as Kipnis et al. (1976) fail to elaborate on this issue. One must also realize that the IPD, as it was used in this study, cannot be considered to be a "true" Eriksonian measure of ego identity, since the instrument typically measures the degree of successful versus unsuccessful resolution of each of the first six stages of Erikson's developmental theory. In the case of Rim's (1986) study, scores were computed for each subject's degree of positive resolution for all of the first six developmental stages combined (rather than just using the identity subscale).

Also worth mentioning in this context, is a study by Goldman,

Rosenzweig, and Lutter (1980) which attempted to determine if similarity in ego identity status was related to interpersonal attraction. 84 college seniors were interviewed and then assigned to an overall identity status. Subjects were then asked to judge four hypothetical same-sex college students, each described by a bogus one-page summary of that person's values and goals in the areas of occupation, religion, and politics. Subjects in effect, provided differential evaluations or "ratings" of the identity statuses through their degree of attraction towards a hypothetical stranger: who was either an achiever, a moratorium, a foreclosure, or a diffusion.

Specifically, the study found that "judges" with commitments (i.e., achievers and foreclosures) preferred "targets" with commitments; while noncommitment judges (especially diffusions) tended to prefer noncommitment targets. Thus, similarity between judge and target in the area of ideological commitment was found to moderate interpersonal attraction. It was also noted that the strangers with commitments were viewed by all of the judges as being "more knowledgeable of current events and more moral" (p. 161). Goldman et al. speculated that the reason that the diffuse individuals tended to prefer strangers without commitments may be because these strangers tend to be viewed by the diffusions as being less critical of their own lack of commitments. Meanwhile, analyses of likability ratings also indicated that all subjects (regardless of identity status) tended to prefer strangers who had or were undergoing a crisis (i.e., achievement, moratorium) to those who had never experienced a crisis. Such "crisis targets"

were also viewed by the sample as being more intelligent, more knowledgeable about current events, and more "adjusted" in contrast to those targets who had not yet undergone a crisis, particularly the diffuse targets. Goldman et al. (1980) concluded that their results lent support to both the similarity/attraction hypothesis (Byrne, 1969,1971), as well as the Eriksonian model, which tends to view identity as a foundation for intimacy in interpersonal relationships. Although the authors reported that there were no significant Sex X Identity interactions in their results, it was suggested that such interactions may emerge in studies where subjects are asked to judge both their own-sex as well as opposite-sex targets. Goldman et al. also concluded that future research should assess whether such findings could be generalized to social interactions found in the real world.

The present study attempted to do just that; by examining the effect of ego identity status (and its similarity) on the stability and quality of marital relationships. This study was unique in the sense that it involved testing actual married couples on their levels of identity achievement rather than just testing individual subjects. This allowed the study to assess the degree of similarity or complementarity of identity status that existed in marital relationships, and moreover, to determine how such patterns of similarity and complementarity may relate to the overall perceived quality and stability of such relationships. But before I describe the specific methodology in this study, it may be beneficial to first review some of the previous marital research which has examined, in more general



terms, the issue of complementarity versus similarity in married couples; that is, with respect to other more "traditional" personality measures besides ego identity. It was proposed that by critically reviewing a number of these studies, that it may become possible in the present investigation to eliminate some of the shortcomings of the previous research. Therefore, for the benefit of those readers who are not familiar with this extensive area, a summary is provided in the next section.

#### Research on the Issue of Complementarity Versus Similarity in Mate Choice and Marital Satisfaction

As previously mentioned, similarity can be a potent force in attraction and mate selection. Couples typically show far above chance similarity on a variety of social factors; including race, religion, social class, education, age, and so forth (Murstein, 1976; Vandenberg, 1972). However, Robert Winch (1958, 1967), and his associates (Winch, Ktsanes, & Ktsanes, 1954) have also argued that individuals may in some respects also look for a "complementary" partner, that is, a partner whose pattern of needs is likely to result in the gratification of one's own important needs. Although homogamy or similarity of social characteristics is said to establish a so-called "field of eligibles," it was suggested by Winch and others that heterogamy of motives (i.e., complementarity of needs) may determine selection within this field. Complementary needs are said to provide maximum and mutual need satisfaction because the

behavioural expression of one member's needs presumably results in the gratification of the opposing but interdependent needs of the other partner. Specifically, Winch (1958) defined this need interaction as "when A's behavior in acting out A's need X is gratifying to B's need Y, and B's behavior in acting out B's need Y is gratifying to A's need X" (p. 25). In fact, Winch and his associates have even defined "love" as "the experience of deriving gratification for important psychic needs from a peer-age person of the opposite sex" (Winch, Ktsanes, & Ktsanes, 1954, p. 241). From these rather simplistic statements has emerged an incredible volume of research.

Winch proposed two basic types of complementarity. "Type I" complementarity results when the needs are of the same type, but the partners differ in intensity. For example, if an individual is high on the need for dominance, he or she will supposedly be attracted to a person with a low need for dominance. "Type II" complementarity is one in which the personality needs are different in type, but of similar intensity. An example of Type II complementarity would be the mutual attraction within a couple where one member has a high need for nurturance while the other has a high need for succorance. Winch unfortunately, did not provide a strong, explicit, theoretical basis for deciding a priori which needs are complementary with which others (Levinger, 1964; Rosow, 1957). In his own research, he conceptualized needs largely on the basis of Murray's (1938) definitions and classified such needs as complementary on the basis of so-called "common sense" and Freudian psychology. In

later work, Winch (1967) empirically derived three complementary dimensions which he termed nurturance-receptivity, dominance-submissiveness, and achievement-vicariousness. It should be noted here that Winch was actually the first researcher to make explicit a mate selection theory based on Freudian and neo-Freudian beliefs. It is often said that with the formulation and testing of his theory of complementary needs, the modern era in mate selection research was ushered in (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981).

Winch (1955a, 1955b) and his associates (Winch, Ktsanes, & Ktsanes, 1955; Winch & More, 1956) published several empirical articles, all of which were derived from a single study of 25 white, middle-class, undergraduate couples who had been married for less than two years. Five measures of needs were collected or derived from each spouse. First, a structured need interview was conducted by a clinician. It included responses to behavioural situations of the type, "How do you feel when someone steps in front of you in a queue in a crowded restaurant?" (Winch, 1958). Second, a case-history interview was conducted assessing each subject's early memories of developmental experiences. Third, eight TAT cards were administered and scored for needs. Fourth, a clinician analyzed the need interview, wrote a report, and rated the subject on each of 44 subvariables based on Murray's needs. And last, there was a full-case "final conference" in which five analysts read all reports and agreed on a final set of need ratings.

The primary statistical technique used in the study was the

interspousal Pearson product-moment correlation. Of the nearly 2,000 possible correlations, Winch (1955a) predicted that 388 of these would be positive (involving different types of needs, or Type II complementarity), while 44 would be negative (i.e., Type I complementarity). Thus, the general validity of the complementary needs (CN) theory was based on a chi-square test for greater-than-chance occurrence of signs of correlations in the hypothesized directions. Although the specific relationships were never published, Winch reported that the results were supportive for the need interview, the content analysis of the need interview, and the full-case final conference ratings. However, the results for the case history did not reach statistical significance, and the TAT results were in the wrong direction. Winch claimed support for his theory, since the results for three of his five measures were positive.

Criticism of Winch's research has occurred in abundance (e.g., Katz, Glucksberg, & Krauss, 1960; Levinger, 1964; Murstein, 1976; Tharp, 1963). In particular, the inability to replicate Winch's findings has led many later investigators to question the size and representativeness of his sample. Tharp (1963) for example, argued that the 25 post-war, early-marrying, undergraduate couples in Winch's study may not have been typical of mate-selecting individuals. Murstein (1976) has even suggested that Winch's sample may have contained a higher proportion of wife-dominant couples than typically occurs in the general population. Several reviewers have also pointed to the potential problem of inadequately trained interviewers and possible "rater

subjectivity" in Winch's study. As Katz et al. (1960) among others have explained, the significant correlations between ratings may have simply reflected the raters' personal "pet theories" regarding trait organization among spouses, rather than the actual need patterns of the ratees.

With regard to Winch's statistical analysis and his conclusions, reviewers have been especially harsh. Tharp (1963) suggested that Winch's data had been "badgered...[and] exhausted into submission" (p. 107). He challenged Winch's results on the basis of statistical nonindependence of the 388 (Type II) interspousal correlations. Tharp also noted that the need interview, the ratings derived from the content analysis of the need interview, and the full-case conference ratings (i.e., the three measures which produced positive results) were all derived from a common datum: the need interview. The first two were based on the same observations and both were clearly important components of the full-case final conference ratings, and hence correlated highly with it (i.e.,  $r = .6$  and  $.8$ , respectively). As a result, Campbell (1980) states: "instead of supportive results on three of five measures, one could argue that only one of three measures was supportive" (p. 78). Thus, while Winch claimed that his research was generally supportive of his theory, it has been criticized heavily on a variety of methodological and interpretational grounds.

Levinger (1964) and others have also noted several basic conceptual problems with Winch's theory. Levinger, for example, states that Winch failed to take into account the possibility that

two spouse's needs might be similar in both kind and quantity, and yet still complement each other, such as when both partners are high on a need such as achievement or status striving, but in different content areas. Many reviewers have also pointed out that an individual's general needs can be satisfied in many ways, and moreover, that there may be some degree of "substitutability" among different sources for one's gratification (e.g., Bowerman and Day, 1956; Campbell, 1980; Levinger, 1964; Rosow, 1957; Rubin, 1970). As an example of this, an individual with a high need for dominance might fulfill his need at work or his recreational activities, but not necessarily with his wife (Rubin, 1970). Although Winch did recognize that needs could be gratified both inside and outside of a marriage, he lacked the means for detecting when such "external gratification" was taking place. On this basis, Levinger (1964) and others have proposed that measuring needs within a specific interactional context (i.e., measuring marital needs, or marital need-relevant behaviour) might be preferable to using a more general personality measure. For a more comprehensive recent consideration of this issue, refer to Campbell (1980).

As a result of these and other problems, it is not surprising to note that the majority of research has tended to yield either no support, or at best, mixed support, for the theory of complementary needs. In fact, several researchers in attempting to replicate Winch's findings, have actually obtained evidence supporting the similarity of partner's needs (e.g., Schellenberg & Bee, 1960; Banta & Hetherington, 1963; Blazer, 1963). It should be

noted here as well, that the large majority of studies which yielded either negative or null evidence for the complementary needs hypothesis, used the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS: Edwards, 1954), a paper-and-pencil test that was designed to measure the 15 general personality needs as defined by Murray (1938).

The first attempt at replication of Winch's results came from Bowerman and Day (1956). Their study involved administering the EPPS to 60 college couples who were either engaged, or in courtship (rather than newly-married as in Winch's study). It was found that on same-need matching (i.e., Type I complementarity), only a small proportion of the correlations were significant in either direction, with only slightly more evidence for homogamy than for complementarity. With respect to Type II complementarity, there were no consistent patterns. Noting the discrepancy between Bowerman and Day's use of courtship couples, and Winch's use of newlyweds, Schellenberg and Bee (1960) decided to use both types of couples in their study. As it turned out, they found no evidence for complementarity in either group, and the correlations of the spouse's needs in fact indicated a slight similarity effect, although it was nonsignificant in the premarried group.

Several other studies have provided much stronger support for the similarity of partner's needs. Katz et al. (1960) administered the EPPS to 56 couples who had been married for 6 to 22 years. They analyzed correlations within the context of a husband-wife versus a random-pair design. Their results indicated

no support for Winch's hypothesis. In fact, on same-need (i.e., Type I) pairings, spouses tended to be on the same level (i.e., similar), while for different-need (i.e., Type II) pairings they tended to be on different (i.e., non-complementary) levels. A study by Banta and Hetherington (1963) measured the personality needs of 29 engaged couples, along with a male and female friend of each fiance. Type I correlations were computed for every combination of each fiance with every other person. Results indicated that engaged couples and friends tended to have similar needs. Once again, there was no evidence for complementarity. As a sideline, Banta and Hetherington observed, curiously enough, that engaged males in their sample tended to choose the same type of women as both friend and fiance, but that this did not apply to engaged women. Meanwhile, Blazer (1963) studied the EPPS need patterns in 50 "well-adjusted" married couples. He concluded that there was some support for Type II complementarity in specific need patterns, but that overall support tended towards homogamy. In particular, couples in his sample tended to be similar in their needs for abasement, nurturance, aggression, and exhibition. This approximated the earlier findings by Katz et al. (1960) in which positive correlations were found on abasement, affiliation, autonomy, and nurturance.

An interesting study by Murstein (1961) compared the need patterns of a group of 20 "newlywed" couples (married less than 2 years) with those of 48 non-newlywed couples and a control group of randomly-matched couples. Personality variables in this study were assessed using the EPPS and the Bass Famous Sayings Test.



Murstein found that the newlywed couples tended to be somewhat more similar in their need patterns than the group of randomly-paired couples (mean  $r$  .24 vs. .04, respectively). However, the longer-married couples were found to be the most homogamous of the three groups, with several of their positive correlations being significantly greater than those of the random controls. In a subsequent study, Murstein (1967) administered a revised version of the EPPS to 99 couples who were either engaged or going steady. In this particular study, he found no effect for complementarity, and this time, only slight support for homogamy.

Other results in favor of the similarity position were reported by Izard (1960), who used sociometric data to form 30 pairs of close same-sex friends; and by Reilly, Cummins, and Stefic (1960), who administered the EPPS to 50 pairs of mutual female friends. Reilly et al. also observed that friends tended to have similar values when comparing their scores on the Allport-Vernon Study of Values. These results also closely approximated some of the earlier findings by Richardson (1939), who noted positive correlations among both spouses and same-sex friends in their attitudes, values, and opinions.

Even prior to the appearance of Winch's theory, a small number of studies had already been conducted looking at the similarity and complementarity issue in married couples (e.g., Schooley, 1936; Burgess & Wallin, 1953). However, in these earlier investigations, similarity was assessed primarily with respect to traditional personality "traits," rather than Murray's needs per se. Also, rather than attempting to "find"

complementarity (i.e., attempting to replicate Winch's results), these earlier investigations were somewhat more exploratory in nature.

By far, the most impressive of the early research was the classic study by Burgess and Wallin (1953) in which a large number of husband-wife comparisons were made using a sample of 1000 engaged couples and 666 married couples. Overall, the evidence tended to support homogamy. On the Thurstone Neurotic Inventory, for example, 14 of 31 self-ratings paired between spouses supported homogamy at above the level of chance. Nevertheless, Burgess and Wallin (1953) concluded that similarity was "a descriptive rather than an explanatory concept. At least there seems to be insufficient evidence to indicate any psychological impulsion of like to mate with like" (p.211). Burgess and Wallin (1953) summarized some of their other results (as well as the results of several earlier investigations, including Terman, 1938) by stating that happily-married couples tend to be more emotionally stable, more considerate of others, yielding rather than dominating, more self-confident, and yet more emotionally dependent when compared to unhappily-married couples. Not surprisingly, neurotic traits were concluded to be predictive of marital disharmony. An even earlier study by Schooley (1936) found positive correlations between spouses on a number of measures of personality traits, values, and neurotic tendencies. However, in this study (as in some of the other studies which were to follow), all of the couples were allowed to fill out their questionnaires together. Thus, there is no way of knowing under

these conditions, to what extent the couples had knowledge of each others' answers; a problem which could possibly lead to spuriously high correlations (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981).

Aside from the evidence cited by Winch and his associates, there have been several studies which have provided some support for the complementarity hypothesis. The first of these is the classic and often-cited longitudinal study by Kerckhoff and Davis (1962). This study involved 103 couples who were either engaged, "pinned," or "seriously attached" early in the school year. A measure of "value consensus" (i.e., Farber's [1957] "index of consensus") asked subjects to rank in order of importance, 10 standards by which family success could be judged. Need complementarity was assessed using Schutz's FIRO-B scales (Schutz, 1958), which measures the types of behaviour that a person likes to express and wants to receive from others in the areas of inclusion, control, and affection. The dependent variable in this study was the "perceived progress toward a permanent union" reported by the couple the following May. It was found that for short-term couples (i.e. those having gone together for less than 18 months), value consensus was significantly related to progress towards permanence whereas need complementarity was not. However, for long-term couples (more than 18 months), the opposite pattern prevailed: progress towards permanence was significantly related to need complementarity but not to value consensus. Thus, need complementarity did not appear to be particularly important in the early stages of a relationship, but became increasingly important during the later stages. This led Kerckhoff and Davis

(1962) to suggest that the mate selection process may be viewed as a series of "successive filters," with need complementarity being the final "quality control" filter. However, Levinger et al. (1970), in attempting to replicate the Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) results (using 234 "steadily attached" state university couples), found no evidence whatsoever for either value consensus or need complementarity in either short-term or long-term couples. Levinger et al. speculated that their results may have differed from those of the earlier Kerckhoff and Davis study due to differences in the two studies' samples. It should be noted here as well, that the filter theory advanced by Kerckhoff and Davis in their 1962 article was actually a post hoc explanation of unpredicted results.

However, Lipetz, Cohen, Dworin, and Rogers (1970) reported positive support for complementarity when they addressed some of the conceptual and methodological issues noted by Tharp (1963) and Levinger (1964). Their study involved 50 stable couples as well as 50 couples who were seeking professional help due to marital difficulties. All couples completed the EPPS as well as a marriage-specific need scale which consisted of 60 items rewritten from the Edward's scale to pertain specifically to the marital context and to one's spouse. For example, the item "I like to be independent of others in deciding what I want to do" was rewritten (for the male form) as: "I like to be independent of my wife when making decisions." Results indicated that need complementarity discriminated the stable from the help-seeking couples and was positively associated with scores on the

Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (Locke & Wallace, 1959). However, these effects were only apparent when EPPS needs were assessed via the marriage-specific need scale.

Meanwhile, Schutz (1958) reported that different patterns of need compatibility were required for different role relationships. Using his FIRO-B scales, Schutz measured needs in members of a fraternity at M.I.T.. Pairs of men were formed by asking each man to name which three men he would choose for his roommates next semester as well as which three he would select as travel companions for a hypothetical car trip across the country. Schutz reported that different types of compatibility and different needs characterized the choice for roommate and travel companion. For example, in the choice of roommate, similar needs for affection were most important, whereas complementary needs for control were more important for the choice of a travel companion. In a similar vein, Rychlak (1965) found that highly nurturant subjects preferred a highly succorant subject for the most-liked neighbour role. However, nurturance was not related to succorance in the boss or employee role relationships. Thus, enough evidence has accumulated to suggest that specific role expectations may mediate the circumstances under which complementarity leads to attraction (Seyfried, 1977).

In view of the large number of failures to find complementarity through the traditional approach, several investigators have tested hypotheses that went far beyond Winch's original theory. In particular, attempts have been made to determine whether complementarity is a more important determinant

of marital satisfaction than it is of mate selection (e.g., Blazer, 1963; Katz et al., 1960; Murstein & Beck, 1972). Although Winch (1958) did not include any references to adjustment or marital success in his original formulations (some speculation about it was included in later statements), it seems only a natural extension of his theory to suggest that individuals who select their mates on the basis of need complementarity might also experience greater adjustment in their marriages as compared to those who do not take complementarity into account (Katz et al., 1960; Meyer & Pepper, 1977). In fact, in the Lipetz et al. (1970) study just mentioned, this was found to actually be the case. However, more often than not, evidence has indicated that it is the similarity of partners' needs which is associated with enhanced marital adjustment (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Meyer & Pepper, 1977; Pickford, Signori, & Rempel, 1966).

Using this approach, Blazer (1963) as well as Murstein and Beck (1972) found a positive correlation between marital adjustment and a global measure of need similarity. However, Katz et al. (1960), when analyzing for individual needs, found that marital adjustment was related to complementarity for some needs and to similarity for others. They concluded that "it would appear that the nature of the husband-wife relationships, as measured by the EPPS, is different for various need pairs, for different degrees of satisfaction, and for the sexes" (p. 207). In accord with these findings, Bermann and Miller (1967) reported that important need relationships emerged among nursing-student roommates, but only when their level of adjustment was taken into

account.

Meanwhile, an interesting study by Cattell and Nesselroade (1967) examined interspousal correlations on 16 PF scores between a group of stably and unstably married couples. Their sample comprised 139 couples, 102 of which were defined as "stable" on the basis of having made no known step towards dissolution, and 37 defined as "unstable" on the basis of being either separated or engaged in marital counselling. In the stable group, 15 of the 16 correlations on personality traits were positive, with 8 of these being significant. For the unstable group, there were 3 significant negative correlations, and only 2 significant positive ones. In all, the correlations for 11 of the 16 personality factors for the unstable group were lower or more negative than those for the stable group, and 4 of these differences were significant. On the basis of these correlations, as well as analyses involving husband-wife difference scores, Cattell and Nesselroade concluded that personality homogamy was strongly associated with marital stability.

However, there have been several studies examining the role of personality factors in marital satisfaction, which have managed to obtain little evidence for either the complementarity or the similarity positions. Heiss and Gordon (1964) for example, attempted to compare personality match with "interpersonal satisfaction." This latter variable was assessed using the Leary Interpersonal Adjective Checklist. In their study, 62 couples who were either going steady or engaged were dichotomized as being either similar or different in their EPPS need profiles. Results

indicated little relationship between interspousal need pattern and mutual interpersonal satisfaction. Only 1 of 15 possible group differences emerged, suggesting that couples differing in need of autonomy were the most likely to show high interpersonal satisfaction. Heiss and Gordon concluded that the needs examined were largely unimportant as influences of interpersonal satisfaction. Meanwhile, Zybon (1965) examined EPPS need patterns in 72 couples who were applying for divorce. The sample was divided into those couples who eventually did divorce, and those who dismissed the suit and continued marriage. In addition, there were 30 couples who were described as being "without apparent marital problems." Although it was predicted that complementarity would increase along with marital stability, the data indicated instead, that neither complementarity nor similarity distinguished between marital groups. Specifically, it was found that stable marriages tended to be associated with factors such as husbands' high self-esteem, wives' low dominance and low need for achievement, and low scores for both on autonomy. These findings are consistent with some earlier studies which had indicated that individual traits or needs could sometimes better predict marital outcome than spousal personality match per se (e.g., Bittenweiser, 1935).

More recently, Meyer and Pepper (1977) undertook an ambitious study which was designed to assess the role of both need complementarity and need similarity in marital adjustment. Meyer and Pepper began by reviewing previous attempts to demonstrate complementarity, and attempted in their own research to eliminate



some of the methodological and conceptual shortcomings which had plagued the earlier studies. First, they studied only couples in their first few years of marriage (Winch, 1967, had argued that newlywed couples were the most appropriate subjects for testing his hypothesis). Second, instead of using the EPPS to measure Murray's needs, they used the Personality Research Form (PRF; Jackson, 1967), by most accounts, a psychometrically-superior instrument (Anastasi, 1972). Third, following the suggestions of Levinger (1964) and Tharp (1963), some of the PRF items were reworded to make them more applicable to the marital context. And lastly, they stated their hypothesis much more generally in terms of "need compatibility," predicting that some needs should be complementary (i.e., opposing) and some should be similar.

Of the 66 married couples in their sample, 51 were designated as high adjustment, and 15 as low adjustment, on the basis of their Locke-Wallace marital adjustment scores. Couples responded to a revised version of the PRF under four instructional sets: (a) self, (b) ideal self, (c) spouse, and (d) ideal spouse. It was predicted that spouses would express greater marital adjustment to the extent that they were similar on 9 particular needs, as well as complementary on 3 other needs (Type I) and 14 other need combinations (Type II). In fact, the results yielded no support for either Type I or Type II complementarity. Some support, however, was found for need similarity, with the well-adjusted couples being similar in their needs for affiliation, aggression, autonomy, and nurturance. Meyer and Pepper conceptualized these four needs as forming a single bipolar dimension which they termed

"interpersonal warmth" (with nurturance and affection defining one pole and aggression and autonomy comprising the other). It was suggested by the authors that similarity on this dimension may be important for marital adjustment, although some of the support for this similarity effect came from combining the PRF measures with the interpersonal perception ratings. Meyer and Pepper concluded that their overall results seriously brought into question the basic credibility of Winch's theory, since every attempt had been made in their study to ensure that complementarity would be manifested.

The most recent, large-scale study examining the role of similarity versus complementarity of personality factors in mate choice and marital satisfaction has been provided by Lewak et al. (1985). Their study involved 39 volunteer couples and 42 counselling couples obtained from a marital therapy clinic. All subjects were tested on the WAIS-R, the MMPI, and the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. As expected, couples showed significant similarity for some IQ variables (including Full-scale IQ's,  $r = .35$ ). However, the prediction that IQ would be associated with marital satisfaction was not borne out. Likewise, similarity or complementarity in IQ scores was found to be virtually unrelated to marital satisfaction (this was determined by correlating Locke-Wallace scores with husband-wife IQ difference scores). Couples did show some significant similarity on some personality variables--but for different variables in the "Clinic" and "Non-clinic" couples, and only on a small minority of variables--all of which made the results

difficult to interpret. Only on the psychopathic deviate (Pd) scale, was there a strong positive correlation between spouses in both the Clinic and Non-clinic samples. This is consistent with an earlier MMPI similarity study by Gottesman (1965), as well as with the previous marital literature which has noted that couples tend to be similar in their need for control and their level of impulsivity (Blank & Blank, 1968), as well as in their maturity level (Meissner, 1978). These are factors which are measured by elevations on the Pd scale. Lewak et al. (1985, p. 477) speculated that married couples may "select for some elevation on Pd and that this results in stress in the relationship. This stress may then further elevate the Pd scales for both partners," thus resulting in a positive correlation (an interpretation which agrees well with Eysenck and Wakefield's [1981] findings for psychoticism). Yet while it was found that couples in the study appeared to select for Pd, it was also noted, paradoxically, that Pd was clearly associated with poor marital adjustment. A few of the other scales, meanwhile, tended to predict weakly the marital satisfaction of their owners but not their spouses.

As far as similarity or complementarity of personality variables was concerned, this was found to be virtually unrelated to marital satisfaction in the Lewak et al. study. The authors concluded, on the basis of their data, that marital adjustment and marital choice are clearly two separate and distinct issues, and therefore, should be treated and measured as such. They emphasized that researchers "need to identify those dimensions of personality which tend to be seen initially as attractive (the mate

choice issue) yet which eventually become destructive of marital harmony (the marital satisfaction issue)" (p. 477).

Conclusions. Of course, a exhaustive review of all the complementarity/similarity research is far beyond the scope of this paper. The preceding discussion was intended mainly to simply introduce the basic concepts, issues, and findings in this extensive area. For a more detailed treatment of this subject, the interested reader is referred to excellent reviews by Seyfried (1977), Berscheid and Walster (1978), Campbell (1980), and especially Fishbein and Thelen (1981). Nevertheless, the question remains, what can one conclude after reviewing all of this research? The answer would most likely be "very little." As Fishbein and Thelen (1981) state: "Research into marriage has occurred without a paradigm. About the only conclusion that has generated agreement among researchers is that if the study of the individual is a complex and multifaceted endeavour, the study of two individuals in tandem is that much more difficult" (p. 3). Moreover, Fishbein and Thelen have noted that in attempting to review an area of research that spans over 30 years, one should not be surprised to discover that there are changes over time in theory, methodology, statistical analysis, and even in the way questions are posed and in the basic way variables are conceptualized. As a result, the reviewer, in attempting to summarize the data from many different types of studies is sometimes left with the difficult task of having to compare proverbial "apples and oranges." Nevertheless, on the basis of previous research, several tentative conclusions and

recommendations can be drawn:

1. Despite the pioneering efforts of Winch and his associates, and despite the intuitive appeal and plausibility of their theory, the majority of subsequent research has failed to substantiate the theory of complementary needs. Put more simply, couples tend to be more alike than different (Campbell, 1980; Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). While some studies have found modest support for Type II complementarity (e.g., Blazer, 1963), the bulk of the evidence suggests (even when specific role expectations and so forth are taken into account) that Type I complementarity has a very low incidence in marital populations, and may in fact have been an artifact of Winch's rating system (Meyer & Pepper, 1977; Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). Certainly, there is no evidence to suggest that mate selection is precluded by similarity on important needs. In fact, there is enough evidence to indicate that similarity may play an important role in marital selection, although the evidence is at times far from overwhelming (and possibly in need of replication).

2. The revision of the complementary needs theory by Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) remains unresolved, with one study providing support and one study providing evidence against. While the idea of a sequentially-ordered series of filters is certainly appealing, there is currently little evidence to suggest that relationship length mediates any possible complementarity effects (Campbell, 1980). In fact, it is more often the case that studies find an effect for length of the relationship on the similarity of partner's needs (e.g., Murstein, 1961). Moreover, attempts to

introduce other possible mediating variables besides relationship length into the complementary need equation have been met with only mixed success (Campbell, 1980; Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). It has been shown that certain variables, particularly "family ideology" (Holz, 1968), as well as degree of self-acceptance (Goodman, 1964), can have a mediating effect upon interspousal need patterns. However, Trost (1967) in attempting to identify such potential "mediators," found no effects for education, social class, occupation, number of friends, or even a host of secondary factors, including the degree to which a marriage was forced, or the level of interaction before a marriage. Nevertheless, Fishbein & Thelen (1981) have suggested that grouping subjects according to such potential mediating factors may provide more fruitful and persuasive demonstrations regarding the personality patterns governing mate selection.

3. In a review of the literature on personality similarity and marital success, one also tends to encounter somewhat inconclusive findings. Of course, when similarity and complementarity are compared on a relative basis, most of the evidence tends to support the former. However, when one considers the weaknesses of certain studies, as well as the fact that significant similarity effects often occurred on only a minute percentage of the total variables studied, this tends to render the evidence for the similarity position somewhat unimpressive as well (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). It is sometimes suggested that one reason for a lack of consistent findings may lie in the different criteria used to judge marital success

(i.e., the Locke-Wallace measure versus the more objective criteria of counselling or separation). Nevertheless, studies by Corsini (1956) and Luckey (1960a, 1960b) have suggested that similarity between self-perception and the perception by one's spouse may be predictive of marital satisfaction. These studies also suggest that marital success may be dependent on the congruence between the husband's self-concept and his concept of the ideal husband, as well as on the congruence between the wife's perception of her husband and her perception of her father.

4. A number of researchers and reviewers have commented upon the inappropriateness of the correlational method in complementarity research (e.g., Fishbein & Thelen, 1981; Glass & Polisar, 1987; Holz, 1968). It is suggested that while correlations may be appropriate if one wishes to determine the strength or the "linearity" of a relationship between spouses' scores in a sample, such a method tends to provide little information about the size of actual husband-wife differences in scores. As a result, Holz (1968) rejected the correlational analysis, and argued that mean husband-wife differences should be examined instead. However, Murstein (1976) and others have argued that the use of mean differences may be inappropriate as well, since the presence of a few extreme scores in a distribution might produce a statistically significant difference even when most of the other scores were only moderately or minimally different. Actually, Murstein (1976) as well as Bentler and Newcomb (1978) have both amply demonstrated that vastly different findings may occasionally arise from the same sample, depending on which of

these two statistical approaches is used. A number of researchers have also pointed out that it may only be those couples who reside in the "extreme groups" on a particular trait that might be expected to complement one another, whereas those couples in the middle ranges might not (Cattell & Nesselroade, 1967; Katz et al., 1960). As an example of this, two extreme high dominance personalities would more than likely be incompatible as spouses, whereas spouses in the medium range may be better able to share dominance need satisfaction (Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). Yet a simple correlational analysis of all the couples in such a sample may be found to mask any complementarity effects. As a result, Fishbein & Thelen (1981) have suggested that removing the middle values from such a sample and then performing a chi-square test might make more conceptual and statistical sense.

6. There exists a need to relate more fruitfully the content of similarity/complementarity research to what actually occurs in relationships (Campbell, 1980; Duck, 1981; Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). As Fishbein and Thelen (1981) explain, the "scattergun approach" to marital research might produce some significant correlations, but interpretation becomes very difficult, and hence, they conclude that such an approach "does not offer much promise for understanding the marital process" (p. 22). They suggest that researchers may be wise to limit themselves to specific personality factors where a distinct pattern of similarity or complementarity can be justifiably predicted. This has actually tended to have been more the approach in interpersonal attraction research, where studies have found



attraction to be positively related to similarity across a wide variety of personality characteristics; including repression-sensitization (Byrne & Griffitt, 1969), dominance-submissiveness (Hodges & Byrne, 1972), androgyny (Pursell & Banikiotes, 1978), and even Jungian personality types (Carlson & Williams, 1984). However, as with the marital research, the findings in this regard have not always been consistent (e.g., Orlofsky, 1982; see especially Weiner, 1970). Of course, most social psychologists are in agreement that attitude similarity leads to attraction and mate choice (e.g., Baron & Byrne, 1987). The social comparison model (Sanders, 1982) as well as Newcomb's balance theory (Newcomb, 1981) have traditionally been evoked along with other theories to explain these findings. Along a similar line, several recent studies involving married couples have managed to obtain a modest similarity effect when examining the role of a single personality variable in the marital process. For example, Antill (1983) observed that married couples tended to be similar in terms of their sex-role orientation (i.e., androgynous vs. traditional), while Lesnik-Oberstein and Cohen (1984) reported on homogamy with respect to cognitive style and sensation-seeking. Similarly, Watts (1982) found that similarity in circadian activity was important for the compatibility of college roommates. The key point here, is that in each of the above investigations, there was some rationale provided by the authors as to why their particular personality variable was chosen in the first place, as well as some insight provided as to the possible mechanisms by

which similarity could operate with respect to the variable.

A final note. In the present investigation, the following steps were taken in an attempt to eliminate some of the shortcomings of the previous marital research:

1. This study deliberately avoided any kind of a "shotgun approach" in order to understand the processes of mate selection and marital satisfaction. Instead, the study focused on just one variable: ego identity. More importantly, this was a variable which had not been studied exhaustively by previous marital researchers, and yet which paradoxically, was expected to play a role in the maintenance and success of intimate relationships.

2. Unlike the previous marital satisfaction research which had typically employed a test such as the Locke-Wallace in order to index marital success, the present study was unique in the sense that it involved using both a paper-and-pencil test as well as objective criterion groups in order to gauge marital success. This provided a measure of concurrent validity to the study and also helped to reduce the possibility of reporting findings that were somewhat methodologically specific. Furthermore, congruent with Point 4 mentioned earlier, the analyses for this study involved using both continuous scores as well as the categorical data in the form of the identity statuses. This allowed for a greater degree of flexibility in attempting to study the role of ego identity status in marital relationships.

In short, it was proposed that the similarity/complementarity issue need not be declared a dead area of research, provided that researchers pursue hypotheses which were more limited in scope,

more detailed in conceptualization, and more exacting in execution. The present study, in examining the role of ego identity status in relationships, attempted to do just that.

### The Present Study: The Development of Recent Self-Report Measures of Identity

Instruments which have been developed to assess the nature and level of ego identity have typically focussed on a variety of possible facets of identity, including such diverse concepts as "a sense of confidence in one's future," "a clear sense of self-definition," "a feeling of personal uniqueness," and so forth (Waterman, 1982). Perhaps, part of the success of Marcia's identity status paradigm lies in Marcia's decision to focus on just two key dimensions of identity: crisis and commitment.

Although Marcia was not the first nor the only researcher to suggest a clinical interview procedure to assess identity (see also Bronson, 1959; Ciaccio, 1971) his method has proven to be clearly the most influential. Of course, there is certainly more to ego identity than can be assessed in a 30-minute semistructured interview. Yet many still feel that Marcia's system comes the closest to measuring Erikson's complex identity concept (e.g., Bourne, 1978b; Simmons, 1973). The interview technique is judged to be particularly useful when one wishes to gain "indepth information" concerning subjects' identity choices and the reasoning behind them (Adams et al., 1987). However, several notable problems exist when attempting to utilize the

interview procedure to classify subjects:

1. The clinical interview technique requires a great deal of time to administer and score (due in part, to the necessity of individual, face-to-face administration). It also requires the elimination of a good number of "unclassifiable" subjects from a study's sample. These two factors alone, mean that the size of research samples is likely to be very limited, which in turn, may interfere with random-sampling procedures and the external validity of findings.

2. The interview technique requires the training of interviewers who must be able to: (a) establish a rapport with each subject; (b) engage in a standardized, unbiased interview with each subject, by employing adequate probing that avoids directing or biasing responses, and (c) make very difficult decisions regarding the coding of verbal behaviour. The interview procedure also requires that the scoring rules for the interview be applied in a highly standardized fashion for all subjects and that they be applied uniformly from one testing session to the next. Furthermore, it is unclear at this time to what extent the identity or intimacy statuses are reliable across studies, or from one group of researchers to another. Such difficulties in engaging in a reliable and valid interview may account for some of the so-called "anomalous" changes in identity formation that are occasionally seen in the identity status literature; such as the small number of achieved subjects in Marcia's 1976 study who became foreclosed by the follow-up interview (see also Waterman et al., 1974 for a discussion).

3. It has been suggested that Marcia's classification scheme may tend to express each subject's identity data in a somewhat "gross" way; that is, that the paradigm may tend to misrepresent or "oversimplify" the complexity of identity change. Rest (1975) and others have argued that the notion of a fixed typology inherent in Marcia's system fosters the misconception that individuals move through one status and only one status at a time. Rest (1975) has suggested that "instead of asking what stage [or status] is a subject in, the question should be to what extent and under what conditions does a subject's thinking exhibit various stages of thinking?" (pp. 739-740). For this reason, the use of several continuous measures of identity formation in a study may be preferable to using a single or overall identity status classification.

With these and other problems in mind, several investigators have attempted to develop alternative instruments to assess identity (e.g., Constantinople, 1969; Rasmussen, 1964; Simmons, 1970, 1973). Such instruments are relatively easy to administer and score, and have established forms of reliability and validity. As mentioned earlier, both Rasmussen's scale as well as the IPD were designed to assess the relative degree of successful and unsuccessful resolution of each of the first six stages of Erikson's theory, that is, up to and including the intimacy stage. One test of the epigenetic principle is furnished by the pattern of intercorrelations among the various stage scales of these measures (e.g., La Voie & Adams, 1982). Such instruments have also been used in longitudinal studies to provide further evidence of

identity development during the college years (e.g., Constantinople, 1969). Likewise, Simmons (1970, 1973) took the sentence completion measure of ego identity developed by Marcia (as a supplement to his interview method in his 1964 dissertation) and developed his own multiple-choice alternatives for each sentence stem. The resulting Identity Achievement Scale (IAS) displayed reasonably good psychometric properties and was significantly related to interview-based assessments of identity. Although such measures have been criticized in the past for poorly-demonstrated construct validity, they are still preferable to the interview method when a researcher is interested in a convenient measure with established psychometric properties and which also has a relative ease of comparability of findings from one study to the next. Of course, the basic assumption underlying such self-report measures is that identity formation is a largely "conscious" process that subjects have an awareness of and can readily report on (Adams et al., 1987).

A practical measure was needed for the present investigation which would be more-or-less compatible with Marcia's conceptualization of ego identity. Fortunately, there has been a great deal of interest in recent years in the development of just such a measure which could assess Marcia's four identity statuses in a reliable and valid fashion. Early attempts by Adams et al. (1979) have resulted in a promising paper-and-pencil scale called the "Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status" or OM-EIS. This "prototype" instrument consists of 24 items drawn from a pool of nearly 300 identity interviews. Much like the identity interview

procedure, the OM-EIS assesses the self-reported presence or absence of a crisis period and/or reported commitments in the domains of Occupation, Politics, and Religion. For example, an identity achievement item taken from the OM-EIS in the area of Occupation or career would go as follows: "It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career" (Adams et al., 1987, p. 82). Meanwhile, an identity diffusion item in the political domain might best be exemplified by this item: "I haven't really considered politics. They just don't excite me much" (p. 81). In the case of the first item, an endorsement of this statement would suggest the presence of a crisis or exploration period in one's occupational beliefs which was followed by a sense of firm commitment; whereas the latter item would indicate the presence of neither a crisis period nor a commitment in one's political beliefs. Subjects who are tested on the OM-EIS respond to a six-point Likert-format scale for each item, with an overall status score computed for each identity status category. Subjects may then be classified into one of the four identity statuses by using a series of categorization rules which will be described in detail later.

In their original four validation studies, Adams et al. (1979) demonstrated test-retest reliabilities ranging from .71 to .93. Predictive validity of the scale has been shown with a variety of personality constructs; including self-acceptance, locus of control, rigidity, and authoritarianism (Adams et al., 1979); as well as social influence behaviour (Read et al., 1984); and conformity behaviour (Adams et al., 1985). Strong evidence

for concurrent validity between the OM-EIS and Marcia's Incomplete Sentence Blank was established in the original validation studies, while a more recent investigation (Adams et al., 1984) has demonstrated that comparison categorizations between the OM-EIS and Marcia's identity interview may reach 80% agreement or higher. In addition, O'Neil, 1986 (as reported in Adams et al., 1987) has recently obtained a significant positive correlation between achievement subscale scores and IPD identity achievement scores; while Adams and Montemayor (in submission, as reported in Adams et al., 1987) have also recently used the instrument in a 3-year longitudinal study to identify five basic developmental trajectories in identity formation (relating to progression, regression, and stability). In their study, the classification agreement between Marcia's interview procedure and the OM-EIS ranged from 73% to 80% across the four statuses.

As an extension of the OM-EIS, Grotevant and Adams (1984) made a distinction between ideological (personal) and interpersonal (social) identity. Their 64-item (EOMEIS-1) scale utilizes 32 items to assess ideological identity in the domains of Occupation, Politics, Religion, and the newly-added domain of Philosophical Lifestyle (Erikson himself, stressed that an individual's philosophical viewpoint and general lifestyle are central to an ideological identity). Meanwhile, "interpersonal identity" is assessed in this extended scale by using 32 items in the newly-added domains of "Sex Roles," "Friendship," "Recreation," and "Dating." This is similar to the approach used by Grotevant, Thorbecke, and Meyer (1982) in extending the



identity status interview into the interpersonal domain ( Note: Grotevant et al. have proposed that identity formation consists of both ideological and interpersonal aspects; their division of identity into these two distinct components closely parallels Erikson's [1968, pp. 211-212] distinction between "ego identity" and so-called "self-identity"; the former term referring to one's occupational and ideological commitments, the latter term referring to an individual's self-perceptions of social roles).

The extended (1984) version of the OM-EIS also allows for the assessment of two identity frameworks that may be more appropriately representative of potential gender differences in identity formation (see Gilligan, 1982, for a thorough discussion). However, although this study utilized this revised or "Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status" (EOMEIS-1) to assess the identity levels in couples, only the 32 ideological items from this scale (see Appendix C) were administered to the couples in this study. This is in keeping with Adams et al.'s (1987, p. 29) guideline that the interpersonal items are only appropriate for single persons. It must be emphasized that eliminating the interpersonal items did not interfere in any significant way with the routine scoring procedures for the EOMEIS-1, since the ideological and interpersonal status classifications are almost always computed separately anyways.

At first glance, it would appear that including the interpersonal identity items in a study such as this would constitute an absolute necessity (despite the recommendations of Adams et al., 1987) if one wished to thoroughly examine the

role that ego identity status may play in interpersonal relationships (B. O'Connor, personal communication, 1988). However, several notable problems exist when attempting to apply such interpersonal items to a sample of married subjects, and the rationale for excluding them in this study goes as follows:

1. The Dating content area items are clearly inappropriate for sample of married individuals. Items such as: "My Preferences about dating are still in the process of developing. I haven't fully decided yet" (Adams et al., 1987, p. 95) would simply not apply to those individuals who had been married for any substantial period of time (and virtually no amount of rewording would make such items applicable to married individuals).

2. The Sex Role area items were originally geared towards young, single individuals who may be currently thinking about their future sex roles in marriage (or who may be thinking about mens' and womens' marital sex roles in general). It is not entirely clear how well these questions would apply to individuals who had been already married for some period of time, and thus, may have been "forced" by their long-standing marital status to consider the issue of sex roles in marriage (and therefore, may score spuriously high on these items).

3. The Friendship content area questions tend to resemble quite closely some of the items found in the psychosocial intimacy measure which was employed in this study (i.e., Rosenthal, Gurney, and Moore, 1981; see also Appendix E). For example, a Friendship diffusion item such as "I don't have any real close friends, and I don't think I'm looking for one right now," sounds

remarkably similar to some of the items found in the intimacy questionnaire, such as "I'm basically a loner," or "I think it's crazy to get too involved with people." In other words, both questionnaires are beginning to tap into the same basic behavioural pattern: the presence or absence of close relationships. A suspicious degree of item overlap in these measures may make interpretation of the results very tricky.

4. Although it may be feasible to administer the Recreation content area items to a sample married individuals, it would not be possible to classify subjects into an interpersonal identity status on the basis of just one content area alone (Adams et al., 1979). Moreover, any interpersonal content areas that are explored in a study such as this, would only serve to greatly increase the study's workload (for both the experimenter and the subjects). A resulting longer questionnaire, moreover, might also make it even more difficult than it already was to sell the subjects on this study. The ideological content areas on the other hand, must be examined in this study, since virtually all of the previous research employing the identity status paradigm has utilized these ideological items, and has only tended to look at the interpersonal areas in addition to or as a supplement to the ideological areas.

As with the earlier prototype version of the scale, the EOMEIS-1 was found to be relatively uncontaminated by social desirability, and to have acceptable reliability (both internal consistency and test-retest) and validity (content, factorial, discriminant, and concurrent) when administered to a sample of 317

college students at the University of Texas at Austin, and 274 students at Utah State University. Once again, the instrument was found to correlate modestly in the predicted direction with interview-based ratings of identity exploration and commitment. A final revision of the OM-EIS by Bennion and Adams (EOMEIS-2; 1986) has provided stronger interpersonal identity items, as well as an added feature of an SPSS program for computer scoring, and further evidence of reliability and validity. It should be noted here as well, that there are no differences between the EOMEIS-1 and the EOMEIS-2 in terms of the ideological items found in these latter two versions of the scale, and that the computer scoring procedures (as reported in Adams et al., 1987) can be applied to both forms.

Overall, among the 40 or so published studies which have employed the OM-EIS, the findings from these studies have been generally comparable with those of the previous investigations involving the more traditional interview method. Clearly, the three versions of the OM-EIS would appear to represent an ambitious attempt to broaden the scope of identity studies and would seem to be quite useful instruments in a number of situations where administration of the interview method is highly impractical--such as in the case of the present study.

The Operationalization of Relationship Quality and Stability, Psychosocial Intimacy, Passionate Love, and Spousal Identity Content Similarity

Marital satisfaction. Clearly, the notion of "marital quality" dominates the attention of marriage researchers (Norton, 1983). In fact, Spanier and Lewis (1980) report in a ten-year review of the marital literature, that this dependent variable was embedded in 150 journal articles and 182 doctoral dissertations.

A wide range of criteria for assessing marital quality has been used in past research; including communication, happiness, sexual satisfaction, consensus on issues, adjustment, companionship, and so forth (Scott & Fincham, 1988). It is not surprising, therefore, that individual measures of marital quality often contain a wide variety of different types of items. For example, the widely used Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale, contains items ranging from self-reports of specific descriptive behaviours in different domains of marital life to a global judgement of the marriage itself. Likewise, in the increasingly-popular Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976) subjects are asked to describe a variety of dimensions or properties of their relationship. Yet despite the immense popularity of such instruments (i.e., even in similarity/complementarity research; e.g., Antill, 1983), several critical problems exist when attempting to utilize these multidimensional measures to assess marital quality:

1. A researcher who wishes to operationalize the concept of

marital quality by using a scale such as the DAS or the Locke-Wallace, may find it difficult to precisely determine the correlates of marital quality. This is because such multidimensional assessments frequently include items which are also included in the measures of the correlates being investigated. This in turn, may lead to spuriously-high correlations in studies (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Norton, 1983).

2. If a multidimensional descriptive scale such as the DAS or the Locke-Wallace is used as a dependent measure in a study, a researcher may find it very difficult to precisely determine "what" in his dependent measure is changing with respect to changes in his independent variable. This is because the scores from many different types of marital quality items are simply added together to give each subject a total marital quality score. The problem is further complicated when such a scale's items are not weighted equally--as in the DAS (Norton, 1983).

3. A further problem with multidimensional descriptive scales, is that by definition, they imposes certain specific criteria on marital success (such as sex, finances, communication, and so forth) which may not have uniform relevance for the happiness of many married persons at various points in the social structure (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Scott & Fincham, 1988).

With these and other problems in mind, it is not surprising to note that Lively's original call in 1969 to abandon the marital adjustment concept continues to be heard in the literature (e.g., Trost, 1985). It is proposed that what is needed instead in

marital research is a short, practical, marital satisfaction measure which is less susceptible to item overlap with other measures of theoretically-related constructs (Norton, 1983; Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Scott & Fincham, 1988). Such an index should produce only self-report data that exclusively evaluates the relationship as a whole (Norton, 1983). It is proposed that interesting covariates of marital quality can be better understood when a shorter, "cleaner," and more focussed measure of marital quality such as this is employed (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Scott & Fincham, 1988). It may also be useful at a practical level as well to conceptualize marital quality as being the overall evaluation of one's marriage, since it is this overall evaluation, or "satisfaction" associated with a marriage which in the final analysis determines more than anything else whether a couple will seek out a marriage counselor--or worse, a divorce lawyer (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987). Of course, a short marital satisfaction index may also constitute a quicker, more convenient measure in a study which is already laden with numerous other measures.

The research approach being advocated here was the one used by Robert Norton (1983) in his development of the Quality Marriage Index (QMI); the measure of marital quality which was used in this study. The QMI is a six-item, Likert-type global index for assessing marital quality. The scale was constructed using self-report data gathered over a period of three years from 430 people across four U.S. states. In his original validation studies, Norton (1983) used the instrument to investigate a number

of interesting covariates of marital quality. It was noted, for example, that as the perceived quality of a marriage increases, the perceived similarity of attitudes between spouses also increases. Not surprisingly, respondents with the lowest QMI scores were also found to have "seriously discussed ending their relationship with their partner" more often than respondents with higher QMI scores.

The original version of the Quality Marriage Index contained 20 items, and was eventually reduced to its present 6-item format by selecting those items which satisfied a number of psychometric criteria, in addition to the previously mentioned semantic criteria of "reflecting the overall, global evaluation of a marriage." Thus, the final six QMI items (also found in Appendix D) went as follows: (a) "We have a good marriage," (b) "My relationship with my partner is very stable," (c) "Our marriage is strong," (d) "My relationship with my partner makes me happy," (e) "I really feel like part of a team with my partner," and (f) "on a scale from 1 to 10, state the degree of happiness, everything considered, in your marriage." One can easily see, how by indicating their level of agreement with each statement, subjects are in effect providing a global evaluation of the quality of their present marital relationships.

Marital Stability. In addition to marital satisfaction, it was also proposed that the stability of a marriage may be an important factor which is also associated with ego identity. Unfortunately, "marital stability" has not been traditionally an easy concept to either understand or measure, and the literature



on this topic is replete with inconsistent conceptualizations and a lack of standardized measures (Booth et al., 1983). Perhaps the simplest and most eloquent definition has been provided by Booth et al. (1983) who conceive of marital instability as "a couple's propensity to dissolve an existing marriage, even though dissolution may not be the final outcome" (p. 388). This was basically the same conceptualization as was adopted for this study.

Like most previous empirical studies, the present study relied heavily on the two most readily available indicators of marital distress, namely separation and counselling, in order to index marital instability. Specifically, the study utilized two groups of couples in which the assignment of a couple into one group or the other was based on an objective criterion. Those couples who reported in Question #5 of the Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix A) as having made (at any point in the previous 18 months) some known step towards dissolution in their marriage and/or having been involved (at any point in the previous 18 months) in some form of marital counselling, were considered to be "unstably married." A comparison group of "stable" couples, meanwhile, comprised married couples who had not recently made any known step towards dissolution in their relationships and had not recently been involved in any form of marital counselling. Thus, the distinction here between stably and unstably married individuals was very similar to the one employed by Cattell and Nesselroade in their 1967 study involving the 16PF. Clearly, one can see that those couples who were in the

unstable group should be expected to have a higher propensity or likelihood of divorcing in the near future when compared to those in the stable group. In fact, in many of these unstable couples, counselling or separation may have actually represented a kind of "last ditch effort" to try and save their relationship.

Psychosocial intimacy. In this study, intimacy was viewed as a potential mediating variable in the relationship between identity status and marital satisfaction. Specifically, it was proposed that if a strong sense of identity has been shown in past research to impact positively on one's capacity to be intimate, and if intimacy in turn, has been shown in previous research to be positively related to marital satisfaction, then this would lead one to suggest that identity achievement may be related to marital satisfaction.

Intimacy, it will be recalled, was conceptualized by Erikson and his followers as the capacity to form open, close, and caring relationships with both same-sex friends and members of the opposite sex. This is basically the same conceptualization as was adopted by Rosenthal et al. (1981) in their recent development of the intimacy subscale of their Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory (EPSI). This subscale was chosen as the measure of psychosocial intimacy for this study because of its concise, convenient, questionnaire format, as well as its reasonably good psychometric properties. As with other similar measures (like the IPD) the EPSI intimacy subscale in this instrument represents just one of six subscales in the measure, each designed to tap the successful versus unsuccessful resolution of each of the first

six stages of Erikson's developmental theory. Subjects respond to the EPSI using a five-point Likert rating scale in which they indicate their level of endorsement to statements such as "I'm warm and friendly," "I care deeply for others," and, "I find it easy to make close friends" (Rosenthal et al., 1981, p. 537).

The first phase of scale development of the EPSI involved deriving key words and phrases from Erikson's original (1959, 1963, 1968) theoretical statements. These in turn, were used by Rosenthal et al. in selecting items from several previous measures (like the IPD) as well as to generate additional items. All items were thoroughly screened for ambiguity and face validity, and after further item elimination, the subscales were found to demonstrate good internal reliability ( $\alpha = .73$ ) when administered to a sample of high school students in Melbourne, Australia. In accordance with Erikson's theory, it was noted that each subscale tended to be correlated with its predecessor, while older students tended to score higher than younger students on the various subscales. Overall, females were found to score higher than males on the intimacy subscale.

Craig-Bray and Adams (1986) have also recently found the EPSI intimacy subscale to be positively associated with interview-based assessments of intimacy, and negatively correlated with self-reports of loneliness. More importantly, Bennion and Adams (1986) in their original validation work with the EOMEIS-2, found identity-achieved subjects to score the highest on the EPSI intimacy subscale, with foreclosures and diffusions scoring the lowest. Also, EOMEIS-2 ideological identity achievement subscale

scores (in males) were found by Bennion & Adams to be positively related to EPSI intimacy scores; while for both males and females, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion scores were seen to be negatively correlated with intimacy scores.

Although the EPSI intimacy subscale normally consists of 12 Likert items, it was felt, for the purposes of this study, that 2 of these 12 items would be inappropriate for a sample of older, married individuals, and therefore, should be eliminated from the questionnaire package that was administered to the subjects in this study (see Appendix E). These two items: "I'm ready to get involved with a special person" (p. 537, Rosenthal et al.), and, "I have a close physical and emotional relationship with another person" (p.537), were judged to be more appropriate for a sample of younger, single individuals; rather than older, married couples--who by definition, must have already been involved for some time in a "close emotional relationship with another person." Thus, the emphasis throughout this research was on measuring the subjects' capacities to be intimate in general; that is, towards individuals of both sexes in a variety of social situations. The study did not specifically ask subjects to disclose how intimate they were in their present marital relationships.

Passionate love. It was proposed that Hatfield and Walster's (1978) conceptualization of "passionate love" may provide another variable worth studying within context of the identity status-relationship success equation. Specifically, passionate love has been defined by Hatfield and Walster as:

...a state of intense longing for union with another. Reciprocated love (union with the other) is associated with fulfillment and ecstasy. Unrequited love (separation) with emptiness; with anxiety or despair. A state of intense physiological arousal. (1978, p. 9)

Passionate love has been labeled a variety of terms in the past by theorists, including "puppy love," "infatuation," "love sickness," and "obsessive love" (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986). Traditionally, it has been viewed as an adolescent phenomena (Farber, 1980), or a phenomena which tends to be more characteristic of the earlier stages of a relationship (Baron & Byrne, 1987). In fact, popular folklore has it that many relationships begin as passionate love affairs, only to give way in the latter stages of the relationship to the more enduring, stable, and "deeper" form of affection, often referred to as friendship or "companionate" love. This latter type of love is said to involve factors such as common interests among partners, a sense of mutual respect between partners, and a concern for the other partner's happiness and welfare (Baron & Byrne, 1987; Hatfield & Walster, 1978). Passionate love, in contrast, has traditionally been viewed as being an emotional, haphazard, or even physiological reaction to a loved one.

Clearly, one can see that developing an instrument which could assess a construct as broad as passionate love would not be an easy task. Nevertheless, Hatfield and Sprecher (1986) have recently developed and introduced just such a measure. Their 30-item Passionate Love Scale (PLS) consists of a series of nine-point Likert items which are said to reflect "an intense

longing for union with another" (p. 389). The instrument is designed to tap into the various emotional, cognitive, and behavioural factors which have traditionally been hypothesized to accompany passionate love. For example, the PLS includes a number of statements which are said to reflect the intense emotions typically experienced by passionate lovers (e.g., "since I've been with \_\_\_\_\_ my emotions have been on a roller coaster"). The PLS also includes a number of statements which are intended to reflect the degree of intrusive thinking or preoccupation typically associated with passionate love (e.g., "sometimes I feel I can't control my thoughts, they are obsessively on \_\_\_\_\_"). There are also a number of items in the PLS which relate to the behaviours or actions which passionate lovers typically engage in; such as the tendency for adolescent lovers to continually serve and help one another (e.g., "I feel happy when I am doing something to make \_\_\_\_\_ happy").

Overall, research with the PLS has shown the instrument to be reliable, valid, unidimensional, uncontaminated by social desirability response bias, and strongly correlated with other similar measures of love and intimacy; such as Rubin's "Love" and "Liking" scales (Rubin, 1970). Few sex differences or cultural differences have been observed in either the frequency or intensity of passionate love. Some studies have even found that children as young as 4 years of age may experience passionate love (Hatfield & Rapson, 1987). In addition to their 30-item version of the PLS scale, Hatfield and Sprecher (1986) have also provided researchers with a shorter 15-item version of their scale (see

Appendix E). This latter version of the scale was judged to be more appropriate for the needs of the present study.

Passionate love was expected to be strongly associated with marital satisfaction in this study, in part, because Hatfield and Sprecher (1986) observed a strong correlation ( $r = .86$ ) between PLS scores in male undergraduates and their relationship satisfaction scores. Passionate love, on the other hand, was not necessarily expected to be positively associated with ego identity. In fact, Sperling (1987) has already reported on an interesting study in which a self-report measure of ego identity (i.e., Tan, Kendis, Fine, & Porac, 1977) was found to be negatively correlated with a measure of so-called "desperate love" (Sperling, 1985). Sperling (1987) has also observed, as part of the same study, that a measure of "a romantic attitude towards love" (i.e., Knox & Sporkowski, 1968) was found to be negatively correlated with the previously-mentioned Tan et al. identity measure, while being positively correlated with desperate love. Sperling (1987) has suggested, much like Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979), that identity-diffused adults who view love objects as being inconsistent, may attempt "a desperate style of fusional love relations" (p. 601). Similarly, Sandours and Rosenthal (1986), in attempting to relate the EPSI identity subscale to J. A. Lee's "six types of love," found the ego identity measure to be negatively correlated with Mania, which they defined as "an obsessive, jealous, emotionally intense love style characterized by preoccupation with the beloved and a need for repeated reassurance of being loved" (p. 200). Thus, it would

appear that a number of concepts which are somewhat relevant to the concept of passionate love, may not be all that consistent or congruent with Erikson's theoretical statements concerning identity and intimacy. It was suggested that the concept of companionate love may better describe what Erikson meant when he wrote about true intimacy with the opposite sex and the ability to maintain one's relationships (E. Hatfield, personal communication, October 3, 1988 [see Appendix J]). Moreover, it should follow that those individuals who are passionately in love with their partner may tend to report very high levels of relationship satisfaction regardless of the levels of identity achievement found in either themselves or their partner. In other words, passionate love may be found in some cases to be masking or suppressing the relationship between identity achievement and marital success, and that if one wished to determine if a correlation actually exists between ego identity status and marital satisfaction, it may be necessary to first control for the possible confounding effects of those couples who score very high in passionate love (B. O'Connor, personal communication, September, 1988).

Identity content similarity. It could also be argued that among a large proportion of young married couples in which neither partner is identity achieved, that once both partners have "found themselves" so-to-speak, and have grown up a bit, that they may split up because they have grown more aware of their various incompatibilities and "irreconcilable differences." In other words, identity achievement in some cases may actually be found



to lead to divorce (B. O'Connor, personal communication, August 21, 1988). In these instances, such distressed partners would also be classified as "similar" in their identity statuses, since both members of the couple would be classified into the same identity status, namely the identity achievement status. Yet there may be vast differences between these two individuals in terms of the content of their identity-related commitments, which may only serve to mask any positive effects of identity status on marital satisfaction (this argument, however, assumes that these initially low identity partners both subsequently achieved an identity at roughly the same period in their relationship before divorcing, as opposed to a situation where one partner achieves an identity much sooner than the other partner and then this leads to divorce soon afterwards). In order to assess this possible confounding factor, it was necessary to administer a question to couples which asked the partners to provide an "attitude similarity rating," or stated another way, "an overall rating on a scale from 1 to 10 of the general degree of similarity in attitudes that exists in your relationship" (see Appendix E). This similarity rating item was embedded within a much larger open-ended question which asked the subjects to mention in a short paragraph "any key similarities or differences" that they felt existed in their relationship. These responses were then each coded according to the basic theme of the response, that is, whether the response indicated either a similarity or a difference, and also, whether this similarity or difference was mentioned as playing a key role in the success of the relationship. Attempting to analyze and interpret such

qualitative data always represents a tremendous challenge to a researcher (see Patton, 1987, Chap. 6, for helpful guidelines). A further limitation of such an open-ended question was that the personal nature of the item dictated that it would have to be made "optional" for all of the subjects in this study.

Summary. Although the various measures which were employed in this study would appear at first glance to refer to variables with somewhat overlapping domains, one can still show that these measures were tapping into more-or-less distinct concepts. As a convenient overview, these variables are once again identified and briefly defined below:

1. Ego Identity Status: The self-reported presence or absence of a crisis/exploration period and/or reported commitments in one's ideological and occupational beliefs.

2. Marital Satisfaction: The global evaluation or overall satisfaction/happiness associated with one's present marital relationship.

3. Marital Stability: The likelihood of maintaining one's present marital relationship, as evidenced by the presence or absence of marital counselling and/or a recent step towards dissolution in the relationship.

4. Psychosocial Intimacy: The ability of an individual to establish open, close, and caring relationships with other individuals of either sex.

5. Identity Content Similarity. The degree of spousal similarity in attitudes and beliefs perceived by the partners as existing in their marriages.

With the exception of marital stability, which was operationalized using objective criterion groups, all of the other key concepts in this study were measured using paper-and-pencil, self-report instruments. Throughout this section, as well as in the previous section, I have emphasized the extent to which these Likert-type instruments have been used in previous research, as well as the extent to which such instruments have obtained adequate forms of reliability and validity (with the exception of the open-ended question, which was designed specifically for this study). In the case of each measure, a thorough analysis was given as to why the particular measure was chosen in the first place over other comparable instruments. Reasons were also provided as to why certain modifications may have been done to the instruments.

### Hypotheses and Issues

On the basis of the preceding literature reviews, several tentative hypotheses were proposed regarding the possible role that ego identity status may play in marital relationships:

Hypothesis 1. Spousal similarity in terms of ego identity status should be expected to influence marital selection. In other words, among married couples, the partners in such dyads should be found to be more similar in terms of their identity status classifications and/or scores than one would expect by chance. It is suggested that during the dating or "courting" phase of a relationship, that individuals may select for a certain degree of

ego identity similarity in their potential spouse, that is, that they may select their partner, in part, on the basis of whether or not this individual has experienced (or is currently experiencing) a crisis or exploration period in his or her identity, which may or may not have also been accompanied by a sense of firm commitment. A modest similarity effect such as this can be tentatively hypothesized in this study for the following reasons:

1. There exists a preponderance of studies, in both interpersonal attraction research, and in marital research, which have obtained a clear similarity effect when examining a wide variety of personality characteristics. Couples tend to be more similar than one would expect by chance on a large number of variables. In fact, the "similarity effect" is so pervasive that Byrne (1969, 1971) has even suggested that it may mediate attraction with respect to any personality or non-personality variable. Secondly, although no previous empirical study has attempted to apply a measure of Eriksonian ego identity to a sample of actual heterosexual couples, the previously mentioned interpersonal attraction study by Goldman et al. (1980) as well as the study of 107 problem and nonproblem couples by Nettles & Loevinger (1983) have provided some valuable indications as to the possible directions of the results in this study. Recall that Goldman et al. observed that similarity between judge and target in the area of ideological commitment was found to moderate interpersonal attraction, while Nettles and Loevinger observed a strong homogamy effect for Loevinger's ego stages. This is not

to say that the present study was expected to encounter exactly the same effects, but it did indicate that a similarity effect looked promising.

2. Among courting or engaged couples, it was suggested that individuals in such relationships may be more "compatible" with each other (and hence, more likely to get married) if they perceive themselves as being similar in identity status. Specifically, it is proposed that when the partners in such relationships are at similar levels of identity formation, that they may feel more comfortable with each other, and they may be better able to understand each other's points of view. In short, they may be more likely to enter into such relationships with roughly the same expectations regarding themselves, their relationships, and their lives in general. On the other hand, it is proposed that when the partners in such relationships are at different levels of identity formation, that an unstable situation may exist, in which one individual may be highly critical, or is perceived by their partner as being highly critical, of the partner's lack of ideological commitments and/or lack of exploration attempts.

Hypothesis 2. For the same reasons as stated above, it is proposed that once a couple has gotten married, that this same spousal similarity in terms of ego identity status may be found to continue to impact positively on the subsequent marital stability of that couple. However, it is further proposed that among those couples who begin their marriages at roughly similar levels of identity formation, that at some point later in their

relationships, one (or both) of the partners may change in their identity status levels. As an example of this, two identity diffused adults might enter into a relationship which remains quite stable for some time, possibly because both partners possess a mutual understanding as to why each individual has not yet formed any ideological commitments. Yet once one of the partners begins to experience the "identity crisis" so-to-speak, the situation may become highly unstable and may eventually result in breakup. It is further suggested that if one of the partners in a relationship is currently high in moratorium, that this individual may be too distracted or too "self-preoccupied" to adequately meet the social and emotional needs of the other partner, which in turn, may result in stress to the relationship, and eventual breakup. This also implies that as the identity levels of the two partners in a marital relationship begins to change during the course of a marriage, that the optimal situation in a such a case would be to at least have the two partners' identity levels change at roughly the same pace.

Hypothesis 3. Identity scores should be found to be related to marital satisfaction scores. Specifically, identity achievement subscale scores should be seen to be correlated positively with one's marital satisfaction scores (and possibly with the marital satisfaction scores of one's partner); while moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion scores should tend to be negatively correlated with marital satisfaction. This is predicted on the basis of previous research which has obtained a link between identity and intimacy, as well as a link between intimacy and

marital satisfaction (these latter two findings are also expected to be observed in the present study). Also related to this same prediction is the prediction that those individuals who are classified into the more advanced identity statuses should tend to report greater intimacy and marital satisfaction than the individuals in the lower identity statuses.

Hypothesis 4. For similar reasons as stated above, one should see differences between the stable and unstable marital groups in their "absolute" levels of their identity. Put another way, it is expected that the stably-married individuals should be found to have higher identity achievement scores and higher intimacy scores in comparison to the unstable individuals. One might also see lower moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion scores in the stable group as compared to the unstable group. It should also follow that the stable marital group may have a higher proportion of identity-achieved subjects in comparison to the unstable group.

Hypothesis 5. With regard to Hypotheses 3 and 4 as stated above, it is expected that these same effects (i.e., the identity-marital satisfaction correlation, and the differences in scores between the two marital groups) may be found to be more prominent among the husbands in the sample and less prominent in their wives. In some cases, these effects may even be found to occur only in the husbands. This relative greater importance of the husband's identity scores as compared to the wife's scores in predicting marital satisfaction and/or stability may be hypothesized on the basis of previous research which has tended to

obtain stronger and more consistent intercorrelations between ideological ego identity, psychosocial intimacy, and marital satisfaction variables when studying male samples as compared to female samples (e.g., Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; White et al., 1986). In fact, Orlofsky (in press) has noted that five of the six studies which have utilized the identity and intimacy status interviews with both male and female subjects have noted a stronger identity/intimacy relation emerging for men than for women (Fitch & Adams, 1983; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982; Zampich, 1981).

Hypothesis 6. Passionate love should be found to be correlated with marital satisfaction scores, but not necessarily with identity achievement scores. In fact, it is suggested that this variable may be masking or "suppressing" to some extent the correlation between marital satisfaction and identity achievement, and that controlling for this variable, therefore, may be found to enhance this correlation.

Hypothesis 7. As with passionate love, it was hypothesized that spousal attitude similarity may also be masking this correlation between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. It was proposed, therefore, that it may be necessary to first control for this variable as well, in order to observe a significant relationship between ego identity and marital satisfaction.

A secondary issue which was also explored in this study related to the various intercorrelations which may exist between identity achievement, psychosocial intimacy, and marital



satisfaction. The specific question which was posed was: "To what extent is the predicted correlation between identity achievement and marital satisfaction mediated by intimacy, and to what extent is this correlation independent of intimacy (i.e., a direct relationship, or one which is possibly mediated by other factors which have been typically associated with identity achievement)? Another interesting question related to this issue of a correlation between identity achievement and marital satisfaction, concerned the role of the specific content areas of ego identity. It was proposed that certain content areas (e.g., Life Philosophy, Occupation) may be found to account for the overall correlations observed between the identity subscale scores and marital satisfaction (as well as any possible similarity effects), whereas other content areas may be found to be relatively unimportant with respect to these correlations. This was predicted on the basis of: (a) previous research which has occasionally obtained different findings when examining the different content areas of ego identity status separately (e.g., Kacerguis & Adams, 1980), and (b) other research which has demonstrated that the different interview areas may have a lower rate of classification agreement than has generally been thought (e.g., Kroger, 1986; Rogow, Marcia, & Slugowski, 1983). Although the specific relationships involving these various content areas were not formally hypothesized here, they were still considered to be interesting enough to warrant investigation in this study.

## Method

### The Sample

The sample for this study consisted of 78 legally-married volunteer couples obtained from a variety of settings in the Thunder Bay area as well as elsewhere. Of these 78 couples, 40 were designated as "stable," and 38 as "unstable" on the basis of the previously described criteria of counselling and/or separation. To reiterate briefly, those couples who had reported some evidence of marital counselling and/or a step towards dissolution (in most cases separation) at any point in the previous 18 months prior to testing were considered to be unstable. Those couples, on the other hand, who had reported neither counselling nor a step towards dissolution occurring recently in their marriages were considered to be stable.

The stable couples. The 40 stable couples in this study were obtained in a variety of ways. With 7 of these couples, one of the members of the dyad was a student in Introductory Psychology (PSYCH 1100) at Lakehead University (LU) in Thunder Bay, and was therefore eligible to receive a 1% bonus on his or her final mark in the course by participating in the research. In addition to the Introductory Psychology subject pool, 3 other stable couples were acquired by approaching students in an undergraduate social psychology (PSYCH 3351) class at Lakehead University. In all cases, interested subjects were approached on an individual basis immediately after class (or possibly during their break) and then

invited to participate in the research. All that was required of potential subjects was that they provide just their first name, as well as a phone number where they could be reached (and possibly a time when it would be convenient to call). In this way, subjects could be given ample time to discuss with their spouse the issue of whether or not to participate in the research. Needless to say, the research was approved by both the Department of Psychology at Lakehead University, as well as the Senate Research Ethics Committee. Included in Appendix F is a copy of the "Research Proposal" and the consent form which were submitted to the Senate Ethics Advisory Committee, while Appendix G contains a photocopy of the letter of sanction which was received from the University after the review of my four-page Research Proposal.

With the exception of the Introductory Psychology students and their spouses (who were enticed by offering bonus marks to one of the partners) all of the other potential subjects in this study were told that they could earn \$5 (i.e., \$10 per couple) as a reward for their participation. However, despite the fact that this monetary reward was offered to all of these potential subjects, a surprising number of individuals actually flatly refused the money, stating that they wished to participate in the research simply for the sake of "interest" (or possibly because they felt obligated).

As an additional source of subjects, leaflets were also handed out to students enrolled in classes at the School of Education at Lakehead University (special permission was granted from the Faculty to do this). In fact, three of the stable

couples were acquired in such a manner. Similarly, two other stable couples were acquired through posters which had been put up on the bulletin boards all throughout the LU campus. These posters and leaflets simply described the study in very brief, general terms (i.e., that it involved married couples filling out a brief, anonymous questionnaire for \$10). Thus, by phoning the number which was provided, individuals could express their interest in the research, as well as obtain more information about it.

To help ensure that the sample for this study would be more representative of the general population, it was felt that it would be necessary to obtain some of the couples from other settings in addition to the Lakehead University campus. For this reason, 4 of the stable couples were acquired through a notice which had been placed in a local neighbourhood newsletter serving the Castlegreen and Superiorview housing co-operative neighbourhoods in Thunder Bay. Similarly, 6 other stable couples were located through a classified ad placed for a period of about one week in both the morning and evening editions of the local daily newspaper: the Chronicle-Journal/Times News. There were also 4 other couples in the stable group who were obtained by approaching potential subjects in a "door-to-door" fashion for a period of about 2 weeks in the "Academy neighbourhood" near the LU campus. Also, 7 other stable couples were obtained in a much more "indirect manner," by getting in touch with those individuals (see Appendix I) who themselves were not eligible to participate in the research, but who knew of other couples who might be willing and

able to participate. These individuals (who were not familiar with the hypotheses themselves) acted as "go-betweens" or liaisons so-to-speak in order to get in touch with the eligible couples that I did not know personally. Such individuals were also useful for helping to explain the nature of the study to couples, in working out arrangements for testing, and in some cases, in even helping to administer the questionnaires themselves. Of the seven couples who were acquired in such a manner, two were presently living in the Thunder Bay area at the time of the study, four were residing in southern Ontario, and one of the couples consisted of a husband who was a student at LU while his wife resided in Manitoba. It should be noted here as well that one of the previously-mentioned couples who had responded to the leaflets passed out at the Education Building, consisted of a husband who was a foreign student at LU while his wife resided in Nigeria. In both of these latter two cases, the husband was tested in person (by myself), while his wife had to be mailed the questionnaire package, as well as a stamped, self-addressed envelope which could be used to mail back the completed questionnaires.

A similar strategy was also used to get in touch with married couples, who at the time, were living in residence at the University of Western Ontario (UWO) in London, Ontario. Questionnaire packages were mailed out to Barbara Ferrazzi, secretary of the married student's association in residence, or PLERA. Two couples were then administered the test by Barbara, after which their completed questionnaires were returned to me in

the mail. Similarly, Reverend Francis Clarke, of the Metropolitan United Church (also in London, Ontario) was sent a copy of the questionnaire package, which was then distributed to one of the couples who regularly attends church functions. This questionnaire package, once completed, was also returned to me in the mail. It should be noted that whenever an individual was mailed the questionnaire packages in order to have the materials administered to someone else on my behalf, that a clear set of instructions was always included in a letter which accompanied these questionnaires. This letter, along with the previously-mentioned letter of sanction from the Ethics Committee, as well as a copy of the Research Proposal mentioned earlier, helped to further clarify the nature of the research to those individuals who administered the questionnaires on my behalf. Such individuals were also sent a copy of a second letter of sanction (see Appendix G) which had been certified by the Department of Psychology. This second letter explicitly stated that the research in question pertained to my master's thesis in psychology at Lakehead University, and that the study had been approved and endorsed by the Department of Psychology.

A final note. It was decided that the sample for this study should be restricted to only those couples in which both partners were at least 22 years of age or older. This is because after this particular age group, most studies have tended to observe a general stability over time in individuals' identity scores or classifications (e.g., Marcia, 1976b; see also Adams et al., 1987, for additional references). Likewise, in this

investigation, only one of the four identity status subscales was found to vary significantly with age, that being the moratorium subscale. However, even in this case, the correlation was found to be relatively weak,  $r(156) = -.19$ ,  $p < .05$ . This lack of association between the identity scores and age, effectively meant that the matching of couples in the two marital stability groups by their ages had become a somewhat moot issue. Furthermore, considering that the whole notion of Eriksonian intimacy does not seem to be particularly relevant to the study of "short-term" relationships (B. O'Connor, personal communication, September, 1988), it was further decided that a minimum of six months would be required for a married couple to have been involved with each other on an exclusive basis (either married or premarried) for that couple to be seriously considered as potential subjects in this study. Surprisingly, only one married couple which had expressed an interest to participate in this research had to be turned away for the above reasons. Apparently, the partners in this particular relationship were found to be relatively young (husband 20 years, wife - 19 years) and moreover, the individuals were found to have only been involved with each other on an exclusive basis for about 4 months. Other than this couple however, no other married or separated couples had to be arbitrarily excluded from the sample. There were however, a small number of interested couples who could not participate in the research because they were not legally married at the time of the study, but instead, were classified as being "cohabitating" or "engaged " ( Note: with two of the stable couples and with one of

the unstable couples in this study, the partners in these relationships had not been formally married, but nonetheless, were included in the sample because they had been cohabitating long enough [i.e., more than 2 years] to be considered legally married). Although some of these cohabitating or engaged couples which had been excluded from the sample may have considered themselves at the time of the study to be already, in effect, "married," there would also, no doubt, have been a good number of other such cohabitating/engaged couples who would not have considered themselves to be married. In fact, there is much evidence to indicate that cohabitation in particular, may not be viewed by its participants as a unitary phenomenon (Yllo & Straus, 1981). There also existed a strong need in this study to "draw the line somewhere" so-to-speak regarding which types of couples to test. Perhaps these other types of relationships may be examined within the context of ego identity in a future study. One might be tempted to suggest, for example, that a cohabitating relationship may be affected differently by identity factors than would a typical marital relationship--since the former tends to require less of a commitment from the partners (i.e., "it's easier to get in and out of"), and because the cohabitation decision generally tends to involve less parental or societal input as compared to the marital decision (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, July 9, 1990).

The unstable couples. Like the stable couples, the 38 unstable couples in this study were obtained in a number of different ways from different settings. However, for obvious



reasons, these unstable couples were considerably more difficult to obtain than the stable couples, and the majority of the data-collection time in this study was spent searching for them.

Attempts were made, whenever possible, to acquire such unstable couples through many of the same locations and ways in which the stable couples had been acquired. For example, 1 of the 38 unstable couples was obtained by approaching subjects in a door-to-door fashion in Thunder Bay. Another unstable couple was located through the Introductory Psychology subject pool at Lakehead University. Still another couple was found using a poster that had been put up on the Lakehead University campus. There were also three unstable couples who had responded to posters which had been put up on the campus at Confederation College in Thunder Bay. Meanwhile, another unstable couple was found using a similar poster which had been put up on the bulletin board at the Thunder Bay Family and Credit Counselling Agency (on Donald St, in Thunder Bay). Also, two other unstable couples were located using classified ads placed in the Chronicle-Journal and the Times News for a period of about 10 days. Another couple was found using a similar ad placed in the classified section of Lakehead Living, a weekly community-oriented newspaper. In all of these cases, the ads or posters which were used to entice subjects contained the following brief message:

RECENTLY SEPARATED COUPLES or MARITAL COUNSELLING  
COUPLES are URGENTLY NEEDED as subjects in an LU  
research study. If you and your spouse wish to earn \$10  
filling out a brief, anonymous questionnaire, please  
call George, at 767-6370.

In spite of the success of these strategies, it was still necessary to use other means in order to obtain a sufficient number of unstable couples to complete the sample. In particular, attempts were made, as had been done with some of the stable couples, to obtain some of these unstable individuals by getting in touch with individuals who knew of such couples who would be willing and eligible to participate. As with the stable couples, these individuals could act as go-betweens in order to gain access to the unstable eligible subjects. Also included once again, with the test materials that were sent to these individuals, was a letter of instructions, as well as a stamped, self-addressed envelope which could be used to mail back the completed questionnaires. In four of these cases, the individuals who acted as go-betweens were students at Lakehead University, and in two of these four cases the couples who were acquired came from the Thunder Bay area, while in the other two cases, the couples came from southern Ontario.

However, it also became apparent during the data-collection phase of the study that if we hoped to obtain a sufficient number of unstable couples to complete the study, we would also have to get in touch with those individuals who were presently affiliated with various agencies and institutions where marital counselling was being practiced in some form or another. It was proposed that these individuals could distribute the anonymous questionnaires on my behalf to couples who were presently involved in marital counselling. In this way, subjects could be acquired indirectly without any violation of client-therapist confidentiality. In

fact, 24 of the 38 unstable couples in this study were acquired with the help of such practitioners.

The typical procedure for obtaining the cooperation of an agency, involved first getting in touch with the individual by phone who was regarded within the agency as being the "final authority" in deciding whether the institution would be willing and able to assist me with my data collection. In attempting to "sell" such agencies on this study, it was emphasized that the research could provide marital-counselling couples with an interesting activity to participate in, which in turn, may enhance the couples' degree of communication and earn the couples some extra money. If a particular agency agreed to help me with this study, they would then be sent enough materials for two couples to be administered the questionnaires ( Note: I did not want to overly burden any one agency with more than one or two questionnaire packages). A letter of instructions concerning how to test the couples (see Appendix G) was always included with these questionnaire packages. This was similar to the letter sent to those individuals who helped me to obtain some of my stable couples. Also included with the questionnaire packages was the previously-mentioned Research Proposal which had been approved by the Ethics Committee, as well as the letter of sanction obtained from the University, and the letter of sanction obtained from the Department of Psychology. Occasionally, an agency had to first view all of the testing materials and supporting documents before they could reach a decision regarding whether or not to cooperate. In some cases, the agency notified me of their

willingness to cooperate with an official letter. There were however, many agencies which had stated that they were eager to help me, but then later discovered that they were unable to find any couples who were either willing or eligible to participate in this study. Altogether, of 60 or so agencies and/or counselors which were approached by phone to determine if they were interested in participating in the research, 25 of these agencies agreed to be sent the questionnaire packages; and of these 25 agencies, exactly 15 were successful in finding at least one unstable couple for me.

Of the 24 couples who were acquired through counselors, 9 of these couples were acquired through practitioners who were affiliated with agencies in the Thunder Bay area. These included three couples obtained through Dr. Hewchuck of the Psychology Department at the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital, as well as two couples obtained through Jerry Cosgrove of the Social Work Department at St. Joseph's Hospital. Two other local unstable couples were acquired through various marital counselling workshops organized by the Catholic Family Development Center in Thunder Bay. Also, two local counselors, Dr. Limbert and Ron Schilke, were each able to provide me with one unstable couple to be tested. A complete listing of all the names, phone numbers, and addresses of the individuals and agencies, both locally and out-of-town, which were able to help me to distribute the questionnaires and/or find subjects in this study can be found in Appendix I.

As for the 15 unstable couples who were acquired from

agencies outside of the Thunder Bay area, 6 of these were obtained from 5 different agencies located in southern Ontario (including 2 couples from Family Services in London). Two other unstable couples were acquired from two different counselors in the Winnipeg area, while one couple was acquired through a counselor stationed in the town of Geraldton (situated in Northwestern Ontario). There was also a couple which was found through a counselor in Ottawa. In addition, there were five unstable couples who were living in the United States at the time of the study; including three couples residing in Chicago, and two in Duluth.

The three unstable couples found in Chicago deserve special mention here, since they were obtained through a unique workshop that began three years ago to cater to those couples who were experiencing extreme marital problems--particularly problems related to infidelity and poor communication skills. The workshop, also known as the "We Saved Our Marriage" or WSOM workshop, is organized by Richard and Elizabeth Brzeczek of Chicago, and is comprised mainly of couples who have been referred to the workshop by other marital counselors in the city. As a support group (i.e., much like alcoholics anonymous) the group also consists of a few couples whose marriages have already "stabilized" (i.e., no recent marital counselling or legal proceedings). Such stable couples, however, still continue to attend the meetings and provide their moral support to the other couples. One such "stable" couple was given the questionnaires at one of the meetings, and the data for this couple, once returned

to me in the mail, was included with that of the 39 other stable couples, thus resulting in a total of 40 stable couples in this study's sample.

A final note. After conferring with a number marital counselors on this issue, it was decided that the criteria of 18 months was a reasonably valid time period by which to gauge the stability of a marriage, since most professionals agree that after a year or so has passed in a marriage without any marital counselling or separation taking place, that the marriage can be considered in most cases to have "stabilized"; whereas prior to a year or so passing after counselling or legal proceedings taking place, the marriage can still be considered to be in an unstable state. Question #5 of the Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix A) which assessed this criterion, did not specifically ask subjects to disclose whether it was counselling or a step towards dissolution which had occurred recently in their marriages, nor did it ask subjects to disclose which type of counselling or step towards dissolution had occurred, nor the exact date when it had occurred. The question was worded as broadly as possible so as to not require subjects to disclose anything more than was absolutely necessary about intimate or sensitive aspects of their marriage. However, in occasionally talking with couples informally, either before or after testing, it became apparent that many of the couples had experienced both counselling and legal problems recently in their marriage--suggesting that these two indicators of a problem marriage may typically go hand-in-hand. It may therefore be futile to try to attempt to separate these two

criteria. Such a broad criterion of marital instability, which included both separation and counselling, may have also helped to increase the number of potential couples who would be eligible to participate in this study.

Prior to testing the unstable couples, these individuals were first asked verbally if they felt that their relationship with their partner was officially "terminated" (i.e., "Is divorce merely a formality that remains, or do you still hold at least some hope that your relationship will continue?"). The purpose behind such a question (which was also recommended to the individuals who administered the questionnaires on my behalf) was to weed out any couples whose marriages were considered by the participants to be already in effect, "over," that is, couples who considered themselves to be "already divorced" (rather than intact but unstably-married). It was proposed that the presence of such "terminated" couples might confound this study's design, since there might be a greater tendency towards seeing a "sour grapes effect" in their marital satisfaction scores, and moreover, the marital satisfaction questionnaire itself would probably have to be reworded in order to accurately refer to these individuals (i.e., "my relationship with my partner made me happy"). Of course, such a rewording of the questionnaire might be a very risky procedure, especially when one considers that subjects' present-day perceptions of their past experiences can be notoriously inaccurate (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, 1988). One could also argue, that among those distressed couples whose relationships are already in effect terminated, that the

termination of the relationship in itself, may tend to spur on an identity search (rather than the identity crisis leading to marital instability). As an example of this, a recently-divorced woman may be forced to go out and find herself a career after her relationship with her husband has failed (B. O'Connor, personal communication, 1988). Fortunately though, no unstable couples had to be turned away for this particular reason in this study. It would appear that very few divorced individuals are enthusiastic about participating in a research project with their former spouse.

#### General Testing Procedure

Time and location. Once both members of a couple had agreed to participate in this study, arrangements were then made regarding where and when to test each couple. Every effort was made to test the couples as quickly as possible, so as to avoid losing potential subjects because of couples' either changing their mind about participating, or changing their relationship status classification (i.e., separated individuals becoming divorced, counselling individuals becoming stable with time, etc.).

Couples were told to schedule about half-an-hour of their time in order to comfortably complete the questionnaires. Actually, pilot work had indicated that many of the subjects could complete the questionnaires in as little as 18-20 minutes, with the average person taking about 25 minutes. Few individuals



required more than 35 minutes to complete their questionnaires.

The couples were tested in a number of different possible locations. The only requirement here was that the subjects could be comfortably seated at a desk in a relatively quiet, undisturbed environment for a period of about half-an-hour. The upstairs' psychology testing rooms on the Lakehead University campus (i.e., SNX 2002 E/F) were considered to be ideally suited for this purpose. Thirteen of the 78 couples were tested in this facility. Another eight couples were administered the test at the Waverly Resource Library, and four couples were tested at the Brodie Resource Library (both of which are centrally located and comprise part of the Thunder Bay Public Library system). There were also a number of couples who were willing to be tested in their own homes, particularly those couples who had been approached in a door-to-door fashion. A few other couples, most notably those who lived close to me, were even willing to be tested in my own home. In addition, some of the unstable couples who had been acquired through various marital counselors, were conveniently tested at the agency where they were currently receiving their marital counselling. Typically, such couples were asked to stay an extra half-an-hour at the agency (in some spare room or waiting room) where they could complete the questionnaires under the watchful eye of either a secretary or a counselor. Regardless of where a couple was tested, however, at no point in this study was any group testing done. Only one couple (or individual) was tested at a time.

Since a good number of the unstable couples were legally

separated at the time of the study, the partners in these relationships were typically living apart from each other. In some cases, therefore, it was necessary to test each person in the dyad individually, often in their own home. In other cases, one of the partners could be tested individually in person, while the other partner had to be mailed the questionnaire package--as had been done with some of the stable couples. This was a necessary procedure in those situations where one of the members of a separated couple was living in Thunder Bay, while the other partner resided in some other city (such as Kitchener, White River, etc.).

Testing materials: The consent form. Prior to testing, subjects were first presented with copies of a consent form (see Appendix F) which had been approved by both the Department of Psychology and the Senate Research Ethics Committee. This form stated that the experiment that they were about to participate in, pertained to my master's thesis in psychology at Lakehead University, and that the research was being supervised by Dr. Ken Rotenberg and by Dr. Brian O'Connor of the Psychology Department. The consent form also stated (in accordance with strict APA guidelines) that the participants would not be seriously harmed in any way by the study (either psychologically or physically). This form, however, did acknowledge that some of the participants might experience a certain degree of "discomfort" due to the "personal nature" of some of the questionnaire items. The consent form also described in very general terms what the research involved (i.e., "a straightforward [25 minute] anonymous

questionnaire which asks me to evaluate, in general terms, the attitudes that I have about myself and my present marital relationship"). It also emphasized that total anonymity of responses would be ensured, and that the subjects could withdraw from the research at any point in time for whatever reason--and that even if they did withdraw, they would still receive their monetary or academic reward as promised.

Only one couple that I knew of actually withdrew partway through the experiment. There were however, two instances in this study where one of the partners of a separated couple had changed their mind about participating after the other partner had already provided me with his or her data. In such cases, the data which had already been provided were disregarded, although the person who had participated in the study was still rewarded with \$5 for their efforts.

Although all of the Introductory Psychology students who wished to receive bonus marks for their participation in this study were required to sign the consent form, this procedure was considered to be strictly optional for all of the other subjects in the study. These other individuals were requested to merely read the consent form so that they understood what the study involved, and then were given the option of whether or not to sign it (copies of this consent form were also included with the questionnaire packages that were mailed out to various individuals or agencies). Altogether, 42 of the 156 subjects in this study agreed to sign the consent form.

The Demographic Questionnaire. Once both members of a couple

had viewed the consent form, the couples were then asked to complete the preliminary Demographic Questionnaire, which asked the spouses to disclose certain background details about themselves; such as their ages, their marital lengths, their religious affiliations, occupational statuses, whether they had recently received counselling and/or become separated, and so forth. This background questionnaire generally only required a few minutes for most couples to complete. The items on this questionnaire were chosen by myself after reviewing several established instruments. Rather than describing each item on this questionnaire in detail here, the interested reader is referred instead to Appendix A, where the questionnaire itself is presented in a rather self-explanatory manner.

The cover letter. On the front page of the remaining portion of the questionnaire package, was included a cover letter (see Appendix B) which provided subjects with some preliminary instructions about the questionnaires that they were about to complete, as well as further details concerning procedures for ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The cover letter, for example, mentioned that all of the identifying information for each subject would be "blacked out" and then eventually removed and destroyed, after which point each couple in the study would be identified by a single random number. This precluded the possibility of anyone being able to associate the identifying information for a particular subject with that person's responses. The cover letter also mentioned, in general terms, what the study involved, and that the results of the research

might hopefully some day provide insight into the role of certain personality factors in long-term relationships. There were also a number of spaces provided on this cover letter where subjects could sign their own name, as well as provide the name of their partner. This helped to ensure that the papers would be matched correctly in the event that they became mixed up later. The cover letter also included a space where subjects could indicate the precise date when they had completed their questionnaires. Such testing dates were then compared against the birth dates which had been provided in the Demographic Questionnaires, so as to arrive at an exact age for each subject.

As with the consent form, subjects were given the clear option of whether or not to identify themselves on this cover letter (most subjects, however, did choose to identify themselves on the cover letter). In fact, throughout this study, subjects were consistently told (even when they were first approached about participating in the research) that they need not identify themselves in any way on any part of the questionnaires if they felt uncomfortable about doing so. If they wished, subjects could sign the consent form or the cover letter using just their initials, or they could choose to not sign at all. It was even specified in writing on the front page of both the consent form and cover letter that providing any identifying information in this study was strictly optional. The only exceptions to this general rule were: (a) the couples acquired through Dr. Hewchuck at the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital, who were specifically instructed by Dr. Hewchuck (prior to testing) that they should

not identify themselves in any way on any part of the questionnaires; and (b) the Introductory Psychology students at Lakehead University (but not their spouses) who were required once again, to identify themselves on the cover letter in order to receive their 1% bonus credit. The Introductory Psychology students, like all of the other subjects in this study, were told that the identifying information on their cover letters and consent forms would eventually be destroyed. However, the names of these individuals were still kept on file for a limited period of time with the Psychology Test Librarian as a record of participation in a psychology experiment for a 1% bonus.

As an additional measure to ensure that the couples' questionnaires would be matched up correctly, each pair of questionnaire packages was given a matching number that was written discretely in pen on the top right-hand corner of the questionnaires themselves. Also written on the back of the questionnaires was a short form representing the city where each subject had completed the questionnaires, as well as the initials of the person who had obtained and/or tested the subject. This information was found to be particularly useful in the small number of cases where the partners had not identified themselves on the questionnaires, and where they had not been tested at the same time.

The primary measures. After completing the preliminary Demographic Questionnaire, the consent form, and the cover letter, subjects were then requested to complete the remaining portion of the questionnaire package which included: (a) The

Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOMEIS-1; Grotevant & Adams, 1984); (b) The Quality Marriage Index (QMI; Norton, 1983); (c) the intimacy subscale of the Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory (EPSI; Rosenthal et al., 1981); (d) The Passionate Love Scale--short version (PLS; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986); and (d) the optional open-ended question. Since these measures have been described in detail previously, there is no need to reiterate here what each involves. Suffice it to say, that with the exception of the open-ended question, all of the other items in this remaining portion of the questionnaire package were Likert-format questions in which subjects were required to report their level of agreement with the various statements. Subjects could indicate their responses to the items directly on the questionnaires themselves, as opposed to say using a separate (e.g., computer) answering sheet which would have been somewhat cumbersome and distracting to many subjects. It was also decided that it would be less confusing or distracting to subjects if the questionnaires were presented in their respective original formats, that is, without mixing or randomly-presenting all of the items found throughout the entire questionnaire package--as is occasionally recommended to researchers (e.g., R. Norton, personal communication, October, 1988 [see Appendix J]).

It should be noted here that the EOMEIS-1 and the QMI were always presented first to subjects in their questionnaire packages, while a third questionnaire (see Appendix F) consisting of the intimacy subscale, the Passionate Love Scale, and the optional open-ended question (always presented in that order) was

consistently placed last. It was decided that the ego identity and marital satisfaction measures should always appear first in the questionnaire packages because these measures were felt to be somewhat more important or "central" to this study in comparison to the other measures of intimacy, passionate love, and identity content similarity. It was proposed, therefore, that subjects should be less fatigued when answering these more critical measures. Furthermore, it was proposed that if the open-ended question were placed earlier in the questionnaire package instead of last, that this might prime or "tip-off" subjects that they were participating in what was to a large extent a similarity/complementarity study.

Yet while the QMI and the EOMEIS-1 always appeared earlier than the other measures in the questionnaire packages, the order of these first two questionnaires was deliberately counterbalanced to control for any possible order effects. Specifically, about 25% of the couples in each marital stability group were administered a questionnaire package where both the husband and the wife filled out the EOMEIS-1 prior to filling out the QMI. Another 25% of the couples in each group completed the QMI prior to filling out the EOMEIS-1; and in another 25% of the couples, the husband filled out the EOMEIS-1 prior to completing the QMI, while his wife filled out the questionnaires in the reverse order. For the remaining 25% of the couples, the husband filled out the QMI prior to filling out the EOMEIS-1, while his wife filled out the questionnaires in the reverse order.

Basic methodology. With most couples, the partners were



usually intact, and living in the same house. In such cases, it was proposed that it would be quite easy for both partners to discuss the items as they answered them. Thus, every attempt was made in such cases to test the couples under more-or-less standardized and supervised conditions. Wherever possible, both members of a couple completed the questionnaire package in the same place, at the same time, and in most cases, under the supervision of either myself or someone else.

Couples were encouraged by whomever was administering the test to confer with their partner when answering the Demographic Questionnaire. This helped to ensure as much as possible, that the background data for each couple would be reasonably correct. There were however, a few instances where a couple could not reach a consensus on a particular background issue (such as how long the couple had dated prior to getting married) and an average had to be taken of both partners' responses to the same question.

When answering the remaining portion of the questionnaire package, which included the critical identity and marital satisfaction measures, it was essential that both members of the couple be separated in such a way that they could no longer discuss the items on these questionnaires as they answered them. This helped to ensure that the spouses would respond to the items more-or-less independently of each other, that is, that they responded without conferring. It was felt that such a practice, in addition to possibly increasing the chances of the subjects providing responses that were more valid and honest, might also reduce the possibility of spouses getting into a heated verbal

argument at some point during the testing session.

Separating the spouses was accomplished by having one of the partners stay where he or she was seated after both members of the couple had already completed the Demographic Questionnaire. The other partner was then taken to a nearby room or area where he or she could no longer see the other spouse. This procedure was also clearly explained in the instructions given to the individuals who administered the questionnaires on my behalf (as an additional reminder to practitioners, this procedure was also clearly specified in writing on the front page of the questionnaires).

Other than the need to separate the spouses when being tested on the primary measures, there were few other requirements for effective testing. The questionnaires themselves were essentially self-explanatory, and were in effect, "self-administering." All that an experimenter really had to do was tell the couples verbally beforehand that they could discontinue their participation in this study at any moment if they felt in any way embarrassed or offended by the test items (as had already been clearly explained to subjects in the consent form). Occasionally, clarifications of test instructions or of individual items were allowed. However, care was also taken to ensure that standardized testing procedures would not be overly compromised. In administering the EOMEIS-1, it was very important to indicate in the instructions given to the subjects (both verbally, and in the questionnaire itself) that there may be more than one element to each question, and that the respondents should be encouraged to

read the full item and respond to each item in its totality (as recommended by Adams et al., 1987). However, J. P. Meyer (personal communication, May 16, 1990) has argued that such "two-part" EOMEIS-1 statements may still be highly confusing to many subjects. He suggests that future research may need to clarify the specific problems that this might create for respondents and for the interpretation of their responses.

The participants were also strongly encouraged, by whomever was administering the test, to not leave any questions blank. This procedure (as well as checking to make sure that persons who were tested in person did not leave any questions blank) helped to greatly reduce the amount of missing data in this study. In fact, not counting the optional attitude similarity rating item, there were only two instances in this study where a Likert item had been left blank. In both of these cases, the missing data was handled by simply prorating the total score for the remaining Likert items that were answered in the respective scale or subscale.

After both members of each couple had completed and signed their respective questionnaires, the individuals were thanked, their papers were matched, and then their names or other identifying information were "blacked out," as previously promised (after having already transferred the names and addresses of the couple to a separate sheet for the purposes of mailing out a post-test information package which will be described later). All completed questionnaires, after being collected, were placed in large, sealed envelopes for

safekeeping; which in turn, further helped to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

After handing in their respective questionnaires, each couple was paid \$10 for their participation (unless the couple had specifically requested not to be paid, or one of the spouses was receiving bonus marks). When paying the couples, it was important to use two separate \$5 bills to pay each spouse; so as to reduce the possibility of spouses getting into an argument about who should get the money, how the money should be spent, etc.. As for the questionnaire packages which had been left off with various counselors or other individuals, these almost always included two \$5 bills that were already paper-clipped to the testing materials themselves. In a few cases, couples were paid with a money order for \$10 that was sent to them immediately after I had received their completed questionnaires in the mail.

Interestingly enough, four of the counselors that I got in touch with; Gene Hewchuck, Richard Brzeczek, Bob Brassington, and Don Pettit, specifically requested that no money be sent in the questionnaire packages that they wished to distribute. Apparently, these counselors felt that the monetary incentive was not an absolute necessity in order to entice subjects. Some of these counselors even suggested that the token monetary reward might offend some of their clients (e.g., G. Hewchuck, personal communication, April, 1989).

Dissemination of research results. After the study was completed and thoroughly reviewed, a brief (2-page), easy-to-read information package was mailed out to all of the interested

participants who had indicated an address on their cover letter where information could be sent. This was in keeping with the promise which had been made to the subjects (both verbally and in the cover letter) that a standardized memo describing the results and implications of the research would be sent to them some time after the study was completed. It was felt that such a promise to send information would provide a further degree of incentive to some of the subjects to participate in this study, particularly if they were curious about what the research might uncover (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, October, 1988). Similarly, once the study was completed, all of the individuals who helped me to administer the questionnaires in this study and/or find subjects (see Appendix I) were each sent, as promised, a copy of this same information package. Moreover, it had been proposed that if a paper based on this study's findings becomes accepted for publication by a reputable journal in psychology, then these same individuals who helped me to administer questionnaires and/or find subjects should also be sent a copy of this journal article (once again, as previously promised). It should be noted that the list of names and addresses of the subjects was promptly destroyed once the standardized memo had been mailed out to all of the subjects.

A final note. Although all of the counselors and other individuals who administered the questionnaires to subjects on my behalf were specifically instructed to give out the questionnaires to couples under more-or-less standardized and supervised conditions, in some instances, this requirement could simply not

be met. For example, with approximately 9 of the unstable couples in which the partners were living together, and with 2 of the stable couples where the partners were living together, the individuals in these relationships were allowed to take home their respective questionnaires to complete, with the option of returning them to me in the mail if they wished. This was a necessary procedure in those situations where a counselor was experiencing extreme difficulties in finding just one couple who would be willing to stay an extra half-an-hour at their agency in order to complete their questionnaires (but where the particular counselor was having no trouble in finding couples who would be willing to take home their questionnaires to complete). In general, however, this practice was seriously frowned upon. In fact, in the early stages of the data-collection process, all of the counselors that I got in touch with were strongly discouraged from doing this. However, as the study wore on, it became apparent that in order to obtain a sufficient number of unstable couples to perform a meaningful analysis, the counselors had to be permitted, at least as a last resort, to allow some of their their couples to take home their questionnaires. It must be emphasized, however, that this practice was kept to an absolute minimum. Even among those couples who took home their questionnaires to complete, specific instructions were always provided by their counselors explaining that the couples should not confer when completing the major portion of the questionnaire package, but that they could sit together and confer when answering the Demographic Questionnaire.

Although there is no way of knowing for sure the extent to which the partners in these situations answered the questionnaire items independently of each other, in my opinion, there was probably little motivation on the part of these individuals to discuss the items when answering the ego identity measure. This is because this particular instrument, which asks individuals to disclose the attitudes that they have about themselves and their backgrounds, tends to be more "personal," and doesn't directly involve the other partner. In fact, Adams et al. (1987) in their manual to the OMEIS, have stated unequivocally that the instrument is appropriate for both group testing and individual testing. It was noted in this study, that when the subjects were asked if they needed any clarifications to the EOMEIS-1 items or instructions, many individuals gave me the impression that they just wanted to be "left alone" so-to-speak to complete this particular lengthy questionnaire. A good number of subjects even remarked to me that the EOMEIS-1 tended to be somewhat redundant or "boring" (i.e., "it asks me the same kinds of questions over and over again"). Some subjects even went as far as to ask how a questionnaire like the EOMEIS-1, which deals with individuals' political beliefs and so forth, could be included in a study of marital functioning ( Note: it was only after the subjects had completed their respective questionnaires that I informed them about my hypotheses--if they were interested).

As for the Passionate Love Scale and the marital satisfaction measure, there may have been some tendency on the part of the 11 or so couples who took home their questionnaire packages to have

conferred when answering these items. However, even if this was a potential factor in their responses (and it remains to be seen if it was), it would still not have affected the more objective criterion of marital instability which was used in this study to operationalize marital success. Keep in mind, that most of the emphasis throughout this study was placed on the comparisons drawn between the two objective marital groups.

### Scoring

The dependent measures. The procedures for scoring the Quality Marriage Index, the intimacy subscale of the EPSI, and the Passionate Love Scale are relatively straightforward. In the case of the Quality Marriage Index, the first five items are scored on a seven-point rating scale, ranging from "very strong disagreement," scored as one point, to "very strong agreement," scored as seven points. The sixth QMI item, however, is scored on a 10-point scale. The scores from each of these six QMI items may then be summed to produce a total marital satisfaction score. Each subject's total score may then be added to that of his or her partner in order to produce a "couple" marital satisfaction score ( Note: Spanier, 1976, also recommends summing husband and wife dyadic adjustment scores to produce a couple adjustment score). As for the 15 items found in the short version of the Passionate Love Scale, these may be scored in a similar manner along a nine-point scale--ranging from "Not at all true," scored as one point, to "Definitely true," nine points. Likewise, the spousal



attitude similarity rating item found in the open-ended question may be scored along a 10-point scale; while the 10 EPSI psychosocial intimacy items may be scored on a similar five-point rating scale. However, with 6 of these 10 EPSI intimacy items (refer to Appendix E) the wording of these items has been reversed, that is, Rosenthal et al. (1981) have keyed the items in the opposite direction so as to control for possible acquiescence responding. In contrast, the items found in the QMI and the PLS are all worded in the same direction throughout these questionnaires.

Socioeconomic status. In order to gauge the approximate socioeconomic level of each subject, Hollingshead's Two-Factor Index of Social Position (Hollingshead & Redlich, 1957; as reported in Bonjean, Hill, & McLemore, 1967) was administered to subjects in the Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix A). This index has traditionally been quite popular in research, since it is relatively easy to administer and score, containing only an occupational scale and an educational scale. Subjects are merely asked to provide a brief "job title" or "job description" pertaining to "the job that they had held for the majority of the past 5 years." Subjects were also asked in this study to provide some indication of the "highest level of education" that they had ever attained. These job descriptions and educational levels were then each coded into any one of seven possible socioeconomic levels or "ratings." The interested reader is referred to Bonjean et al. (1967, pp. 442-448) for a thorough description of these various categories. As an example of this, a secretary with a high

school diploma would be given an occupational rating of "4" and an educational rating of "4." Hollingshead has recommended using the following equation in order to arrive at a total ISP or "Index of Social Position" for each subject:

$$\text{ISP} = (7 \times \text{occupational rating}) + (4 \times \text{educational rating})$$

Thus, the hypothetical secretary from above would have an ISP score of  $(7 \times 4) + (4 \times 4) = 44$ . ISP scores can range from a low of 0 to a high of 77. Normally, Hollingshead's scale is organized such that higher occupational and educational SES categories will receive lower ratings (i.e., much like a rank ordering procedure). However, in this study, it was decided that it would make much more sense if the scoring of these categories was reversed, that is, if higher SES individuals received higher ISP scores, and lower SES individuals received lower ISP scores. Also, in order to avoid any missing data, housewives were given the same occupational ratings as were their husbands (but not necessarily the same educational ratings). The logic behind such a measure, assumed for example, that a housewife who was married to a doctor would be essentially at the same socioeconomic level as her husband--simply due to the fact that she was a "doctor's wife." Also, full-time students in this study were rated according to the job that they expected to obtain shortly upon graduation (this was assessed simply by asking the students verbally what kind of job they expected to obtain shortly after graduating). It should be kept in mind that students and

housewives are typically very difficult to classify in terms of their socioeconomic levels, and that the aforementioned steps were taken only as a last resort in order to avoid any missing data.

The identity measure. The scoring procedures for the EOMEIS-1 are somewhat more complex than those of the other measures that were used in this study. Of the scale's 32 ideological items, 8 items were constructed for each of the four identity statuses. These eight items consist of two items drawn from each of the four ideological domains (i.e., Occupation, Politics, Religion, and Life Philosophy). Individual items are scored on a six-point scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (6). On this basis, four identity status "subscale" scores can be derived by totaling all eight items, across the four content domains, into a summated subscale score for diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and identity achievement. Subscale scores can range from a possible low of 8 to a possible high of 48. Each item (refer to Appendix C for full ideological scale) is identified in Table 2 under the appropriate identity status subscale that is summed to provide the raw subscale score. For example, in Table 2, item #17 would refer to an identity achievement item in the domain of Occupation. The score from this item would typically be added to the scores from the seven other identity achievement items in order to produce an identity achievement subscale score for each subject.

Subscale scores can be used in either correlational analyses, in longitudinal designs, or less frequently, in studies where a researcher is interested in assessing differences between

Table 2

Items Representing Each of the EOMEIS-1 Subscale Raw Scores

Ideological domain	Identity status			
	Achievement	Moratorium	Foreclosure	Diffusion
Occupation	17, 25	5, 29	9, 21	1, 13
Religion	10, 22	14, 18	26, 30	2, 6
Politics	4, 20	16, 24	12, 32	8, 28
Philosophy	11, 31	7, 19	15, 23	3, 27
	8 Items summed	8 Items summed	8 Items summed	8 Items summed

Note: The numbering of the ideological items has been changed from the numbering that appeared in the original scoring key (Adams et al., 1987, p. 26), due to the omission of the 32 interpersonal items.

experimental or objective criterion groups in their identity status levels (such as between normative vs. clinical samples). However, most researchers familiar with Marcia's clinical interview procedure are also interested in using the categorical or identity status distinction developed by Marcia as an operationalization of Erikson's identity stage. Therefore, a series of explicit rules have been developed (and thoroughly tested in validation studies; see Adams et al., 1979), which allow a researcher to classify a subject into a "single identity status categorization." These rules were modeled after the framework used in the MMPI for deriving subscale scores at a given level of interpretability. That is, in the MMPI, scores on raw subscales are only deemed appropriate for interpretation if they exceed a certain "threshold" or magnitude above the norm or mean. Using a similar strategy, EOMEIS-1 means and standard deviations were derived for each of the four raw subscale scores, such that a "cut-off point" was generated for each subscale. By adding the mean and standard deviation, one arrives at a "cut-off score" that is one standard deviation above the mean for each subscale. It should be noted that the mean is unique for each subscale, as is the standard deviation. These statistics were derived from the study mentioned earlier (Grotevant & Adams, 1984) in which hundreds of college students from samples in Texas and Utah were administered the EOMEIS-1 (tests of significance revealed no major differences between the two samples' descriptive statistics). Table 3 presents the actual means, standard deviations, and ranges for the EOMEIS-1 ideological subscales as

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges for the Ideological Identity Scales (Texas/Utah Sample)

	Texas sample			Utah sample		
	Mean	SD	Range <sup>a</sup>	Mean	SD	Range
Achievement	32.8	5.3	20-47	33.1	5.6	19-48
Moratorium	26.5	6.3	8-44	25.9	5.9	12-44
Foreclosure	19.6	6.3	8-36	20.9	6.4	8-41
Diffusion	22.1	5.7	10-41	22.0	5.5	8-41

<sup>a</sup>Theoretically possible range for ideological scales, 8-48.

derived from the Texas and Utah samples (adapted from Grotevant & Adams, p. 424). A subsequent study involving 106 undergraduate subjects in Utah (Bennion & Adams, 1986) obtained almost identical norms as those which had been reported by Grotevant and Adams (1984). This latter study, however, utilized a revised version of EOMEIS-1 (i.e., EOMEIS-2) in which the interpersonal items had been strengthened while the ideological items remained unchanged.

Adams et al. (1987) have proposed that by using a series of three rules, an individual's raw subscale scores can be compared against the normative cut-off points, such that the individual be classified into a single identity status. These classification rules are as follows:

#### Pure Identity Status Rule

1. Individuals scoring one standard deviation above the mean (or higher) on a given subscale are scored as being in that identity status if all remaining scores are below their appropriate subscale cutoff comparison. These cases are referred to as "pure" identity status types.

#### Low Profile Status Rule

2. Individuals with scores falling less than one standard deviation above the mean on all four measures are scored as the "low profile" moratorium. (This is to distinguish an individual from being a "pure" moratorium.)

#### Transition Status Rule

3. Individuals with more than one score above the standard deviation cutoffs are scored as an individual in transition and are given a "transition status" category (e.g., diffusion-foreclosure). (Occasional subjects will score above three cutoffs. Given the manner of test development, these subjects are thought to not be discriminating between items and are dropped

from further consideration in research studies.) (Adams et al., 1987, p. 24)

Adams et al. (1987) have also suggested, on the basis of empirical evidence (Adams et al., 1979) that the transition types may be appropriately collapsed into a single identity status classification by using the procedure of "collapsing downward" into the less sophisticated identity statuses. For example, when a "diffusion-moratorium" transition appears, this may be appropriately expressed as a diffusion subject; when a "moratorium-achievement" blend occurs, this may be collapsed downward into a moratorium subject, and so forth. Adams et al. (1987) have also suggested that there is generally no harm in treating the pure moratorium and the low profile moratorium subjects as "identical moratorium types," since throughout their research they have usually found the pure and low profile moratorium individuals "to appear as very similar in their attitudes, values, behaviours, and developmental trajectories" (p. 25). Yet they recommend (p. 25), that whenever possible, "a test of significance be applied on dependent variables to test for equivalence" ( Note: Abraham, 1983, found a significant difference between pure and low profile moratorium subjects on their locus of control scores). Of course, collapsing the pure and low profile moratorium subjects into a single identity status may often result in an unusually high proportion of moratorium subjects in a study's sample.

A final note. Adams et al. (1987) have mentioned in their manual to the OM-EIS that the previously described Utah and/or



Texas cut-off points are only offered to researchers as a general guideline for classifying subjects into the four identity statuses. They imply that it is quite possible for a researcher to classify subjects on the basis of the norms provided by his or her own sample, particularly if it is felt that such a sample differs markedly from the one on which the instrument was originally validated.

### Design and Analysis

The data for each completed questionnaire was coded and then loaded into a MicroVAX II (VMS) computer system at Lakehead University. All data were then analyzed using the SPSS-X (Release 3.1) Statistical (software) Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Inc., 1988). Two SPSS-X control files had to be written: (a) one to analyze the data on a "couple-as-the-case" basis, and (b) one for treating each individual subject as the case in the analysis. Stated another way, in the "couple" SPSS-X control file, the husbands' and wives' scores on the same measures were consistently identified as separate variables in the data list. For example, a husband's identity achievement score would be identified as "HIDACH1" in the data list, while his wife's score for this same measure would be designated as "WIDACH1" ( Note: the data file, the two SPSS-X control files, and the raw data [with the identifying information removed] are all available from Dr. Ken Rotenberg of the Department of Psychology at Lakehead University).

-A large number of compute statements were required in the control file in order to sum individual Likert item scores into subscale and questionnaire totals, as well as to produce summed "couple" scores for the various measures. In addition, the SPSS commands provided by Adams et al. (1987) were found to be quite useful in terms of classifying subjects into the four identity statuses in accordance with the previously-described OM-EIS scoring rules. However, after close inspection of the frequencies of the various OM-EIS typologies (i.e., the number of subjects in each of the 16 possible categories prior to collapsing into the four basic identity statuses) it was noted that one of the unstable husbands had scored above all four possible cut-off points in his subscale scores. The data for this individual, therefore (see "Transition Status Rule," previous explanation) had to be eliminated along with the data from his wife ' Note: had this couple's data been included in the sample, there would have been 39 couples in the unstable group instead of 38).

After examining the descriptive statistics for each variable, it was noted that square root and logarithmic transformations would be necessary to control for the skewness in the distributions of some of these variables. These transformations were done in accordance with the guidelines suggested by Tabachnik and Fidel (1983, see Chap. 4). Specifically, square root transformations were performed on the marital length and courting length values in order to adjust for moderate positive skewness in their distributions; while for marital satisfaction, passionate love, psychosocial intimacy, and spousal attitude similarity, the

opposite problem prevailed: extreme negative skewness. These variables had to first be "reflexed" (by subtracting each value from the "largest value + 1" in the distribution) in order to convert the negatively skewed distribution into a positively skewed one before applying the appropriate transformation for positive skewness. In the case of the spousal attitude similarity measure, this new reflexed variable was then square root transformed; while for marital satisfaction, psychosocial intimacy, and passionate love, the new variables had to be log transformed (these values were then multiplied by -1 in order to compensate for the reflexing procedure, which otherwise, would have made the values in the tables somewhat confusing).

A final procedure before analyzing the data involved producing two randomly-paired groups of couples. A Fortran program was written (with the help of Computer Services at Lakehead University) which provided a series of random pairings of numbers. This was then used as a guideline to pair each husband in the stable group with a randomly-selected wife from this same group. For example, husband #1 in the stable group, instead of being paired with wife #1, was now being paired with say, wife #17, and so forth. The "cut-and-paste" functions on the MicroVAX II computer terminals were found to be quite useful in creating these new couples in the data file. The only restrictions here were that: (a) no spouse could be randomly-paired with his or her actual spouse, and (b) no spouse could be randomly-paired twice. This same procedure was then performed on the unstable group of couples. Altogether this resulted in four groups of couples in

this study's design: (a) the actual stable couples, (b) the actual unstable couples, (c) the randomly-paired stable couples, and (d) the randomly-paired unstable couples.

The first phase of the analysis involved determining the background characteristics of the sample; which included the ages of the participants, their marital lengths, socioeconomic status levels, religious affiliations, and so forth. The next phase of the analysis involved determining (with the help of chi-square analyses and  $t$  tests) how well matched the stably and the unstably married individuals were on these various background characteristics. Reliability analyses were also performed to determine the internal consistencies of the questionnaire scales (or subscales). This was necessary to determine if the questionnaire measures could be treated as more-or-less homogeneous scales in the upcoming analyses. A series of 2 X 2 (Sex X Marital Stability) ANOVA's were then performed to determine if there were any significant sex differences, or significant differences between the stable and the unstable groups on the various measures (i.e., Hypotheses 4 & 5). A chi-square analysis also compared the two marital stability groups in terms of their proportions of subjects which had been classified into the four identity statuses. This was done to determine if the stably-married group contained a higher proportion of identity-achieved subjects as compared to the unstable group (i.e., Hypotheses 4 & 5). Also, Pearson product moment correlations attempted to relate identity scores to marital satisfaction, passionate love, and psychosocial intimacy scores

(i.e., Hypotheses 3 & 5). Attempts were also made to correlate intimacy scores with marital satisfaction and passionate love scores. One-way ANOVA's then compared the subjects in the four identity statuses on their marital satisfaction, passionate love, and psychosocial intimacy scores to determine if the individuals in the higher identity statuses tended to report greater levels of psychosocial intimacy and/or marital satisfaction than the individuals in the lower identity statuses (i.e., Hypothesis 3).

To examine if spousal similarity in ego identity status was related to either mate choice (i.e., Hypothesis 1) or to marital stability (i.e., Hypothesis 2) correlations between the husbands and wives in their identity subscale scores were computed for each of the two marital stability groups, as well as for the two randomly-paired groups. It was suggested that if spousal similarity in terms of ego identity status impacts positively to some extent on both mate choice and on marital stability, then one may begin to see a modest "correlation gradient effect" emerging, whereby the highest correlations between the husbands and wives in their identity subscale scores are seen in the stable group, followed next by the unstable group, and then the randomly-paired groups. As an additional test of this similarity/complementarity issue, a chi-square analysis compared the proportions of couples in each marital group who were "matched" versus "mismatched" in their identity status classifications, that is, the number of couples per group in which both partners of the dyad were located in the same identity status, versus the number of couples per group in which the partners were not classified into the same

identity status. A series of multiple regression analyses were also performed to examine the correlations between identity achievement and marital satisfaction which were independent of either passionate love (i.e., Hypothesis 6), couple attitude similarity (i.e., Hypothesis 7), or psychosocial intimacy.

## Results

### Characteristics of the Sample

The sample for this study was largely Caucasian (approximately 90%) and was obtained primarily from the Thunder Bay area, and to a lesser extent as well from various parts of southern Ontario and surrounding U.S. areas. Responses to the Demographic Questionnaire indicated that the subjects ranged in age from 22.0 years to 59.7 years with a mean age of 35.7 years ( $SD = 8.2$ ). As expected, the husbands were on average about 3 years older than the wives ( $M = 37.3$  years vs. 34.0 years),  $t(154) = 2.51$ ,  $p < .05$ . The average couple reported that they had been married for about 10.4 years (range 7 months to 36.5 years,  $SD = 8.3$ ), and that they had "dated on an exclusive basis prior to getting married" for about 1.6 years (range week to 6.5 years,  $SD = 1.6$ ).

The sample appeared to represent a broad spectrum of couples with regard to socioeconomic status, although on "average," the sample might be characterized as being generally "middle class." The mean SES rating of the couples on a scale from 11 to 77 was found to be 49.9 (range = 18 to 77,  $SD = 13.2$ ). Approximately half of the subjects (54.5%) had indicated that they were fully-employed at the time of the study (i.e., working more than 25 hours per week). Another 14.1% had said that they were currently full-time students (i.e., enrolled in three or more full university/college courses); while the remaining 31.4% reported

being neither fully-employed nor full-time students during the period of the research (i.e., housewives, unemployed workers, part-time workers, part-time students, etc.). With regard to the "incentive" given to the subjects to participate in this study, a little over half of the sample (57.1%) had participated for the sake of the \$5 monetary reward, another 38.5% participated out of interest, and the remaining 4.5% received a 1% bonus mark in Introductory Psychology for their efforts.

As far as the subjects' previous backgrounds was concerned, around 21% of the sample had said that they were "originally from the Thunder Bay area and had spent most of their youth there." Another 28.2% reported having come from from a "small town background," while 21.2% reported coming from an "urban background" other than Thunder Bay. Also, 16.7% of the subjects reported that they were from some "suburban background" (other than Thunder Bay), and 12.8% had said that they were from a "rural background." With regard to the subjects' current religious affiliations, 46.2% of the sample reported that they were Protestant, another 35.9% had said that they were Catholic, and 17.9% indicated either some other religious affiliation, or no affiliation at all.

Although no attempts were made in this study to deliberately match the stable and the unstable couples with respect to these various background characteristics, the two groups were found, nonetheless, to be reasonably well-matched on the characteristics. For example, whereas the average husband in the stable group was found to be 36.5 years old, the average husband



in the unstable group was 38.2 years old,  $t(76) = -0.97$ ,  $p > .10$ . Likewise, the average wife in the stable group was 32.9 years old, whereas the average wife in the unstable group was found to be 35.3 years old,  $t(76) = -1.25$ ,  $p > .10$ . When the two sexes were collapsed, the marital stability groups were still found to not differ significantly in terms of their mean ages ( $M = 34.7$ , stable vs  $36.7$ , unstable),  $t(154) = -1.55$ ,  $p > .10$ . The two groups were also found to be very similar in terms of the mean marital lengths of the couples ( $M = 10.3$  years, stable vs.  $10.5$  years, unstable), as well as remarkably similar in terms of the couples' courting lengths ( $M = 2.1$  years, for both groups). In fact,  $t$  tests involving the square root transformed values for both marital length and courting length indicated that there were no significant differences between the two marital groups on either variable,  $t(76) = -.18$ ,  $p > .10$  (marital length);  $t(76) = .11$ ,  $p > .10$  (courting length). Likewise, the socioeconomic status ratings of the two groups did not appear to differ significantly ( $M = 50.4$ , stable vs.  $49.3$ , unstable),  $t(154) = .55$ ,  $p > .10$ . There were also no significant differences found between the two marital groups in terms of their proportions of individuals who were said to have participated in the study for money, for interest, or for bonus marks,  $\chi^2(2, N = 156) = 3.64$ ,  $p > .10$ . The two groups were also found to be very similar in terms of the previous demographic backgrounds of the subjects (i.e., whether the subjects had reported coming from a rural, urban, suburban, small town, or Thunder Bay background),  $\chi^2(4, N = 156) = 3.33$ ,  $p > .10$ . There were also no differences observed

between the two groups in terms of the subjects' reported religious affiliations. Whereas in the stable group, 41.3% of the subjects in this group were found to be Protestant, another 41.3% were Catholic, and 17.5% reported either no religious affiliation or some other religious affiliation; in the unstable group, the corresponding percentages were: 51.3%, Protestant; 30.3%, Catholic; and 18.5%, "other, or no religion,"  $\chi^2 (2, N = 156) = 2.18, p > .10$ .

Two significant differences, however, did emerge between the two marital groups with respect to key background characteristics. In the stable group, 77.5% of the subjects were found to be presently living in the Thunder Bay area at the time of the study, another 17.5% were living in southern Ontario, and a very small proportion of these individuals (5.0%) resided elsewhere besides either Thunder Bay or southern Ontario. In contrast, the unstable group was characterized as having a much more even distribution of individuals coming from these three different regions; with 52.6% of the subjects living in Thunder Bay, another 22.4% living in southern Ontario, and 25.0% residing elsewhere,  $\chi^2 (2, N = 156) = 14.73, p < .001$ .

A second difference which emerged between the two groups was with respect to their proportions of subjects in the different "occupational" statuses (i.e., fully-employed versus unemployed, a student, etc.). In the stable group, 41.3% of these individuals were found to be fully-employed at the time of the study, another 20.0% were said to be full-time students, and 38.8% reported being neither fully-employed nor full-time students during the

period of the study. In contrast, 68.4% of the subjects in the unstable group were found to be fully-employed, while only 7.9% of these individuals were found to be students, and 23.7% were neither full-time students nor fully-employed,  $\chi^2(2, N = 156) = 12.15, p < .01$ .

A number of reasons may account for these two differences between the groups. Clearly, the difficulty in obtaining a large number of unstable couples made it necessary to go out much more frequently into various off-campus, and sometimes even out-of-town locations in order to find such individuals. This resulted in a large proportion of the subjects in the unstable group who were: (a) not from Thunder Bay, and/or (b) not full-time students. Of course, one could also argue that fully-employed couples may be more likely to participate as unstable subjects in a study such as this, since their "steady income" makes them more capable of affording traditional marital-counselling services.

Another curious discrepancy which emerged between the two marital groups was the tendency for the unstable group to contain a somewhat higher proportion of couples in which the wife was found to be older than her husband. In fact, whereas in the stable group, only 12.5% of the couples in this group were characterized by the wife being older than the husband, in the unstable group, this situation occurred in 31.6% of the couples,  $\chi^2(1, N = 78) = 4.16, p < .05$ .

As a final note, homogamy with respect to these background characteristics was strongly supported for the sample as a whole. For example, the correlation between the stable husbands' and

wives' in their ages was found to be .90 ( $n = 40$ ,  $p < .001$ ); while for the unstable group, this spousal correlation in terms of ages was found to be .81 ( $n = 38$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, the correlation between the spouses in the stable group on their SES ratings was found to be .41 ( $n = 40$ ,  $p < .01$ ); while in the unstable group, this same correlation was found to be .59 ( $n = 38$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In addition, 80% of the couples in the stable group, as well as 81.6% of the couples in the unstable group were found to be matched in terms of the partners' current religious affiliations (i.e., both members of the couple reporting the same religious affiliation). As for the subjects' previous demographic backgrounds (i.e., Thunder Bay vs. rural, suburban, etc.) 60% of the couples in the stable group, as well as 71% of the couples in the unstable group, were found to be matched on this particular variable.

In short, it can be said that the sample for this study appeared to be fairly typical and representative of mate-selecting individuals found in North American society. The sample did not appear to be extremely "unusual" in any particular way. Moreover, it was shown that the two marital stability groups tended to be fairly similar in most regards, that is, with respect to the subjects' previous backgrounds, their demographic characteristics, their motivations for participating, etc.. It was felt, therefore, that any comparisons drawn between these two groups would have at least some utility.

## Estimates of Reliability and Validity

Reliability. Estimates of reliability can be derived in many forms. Although it would be somewhat impractical in a study such as this to attempt to measure the test-retest reliabilities for each of the measures that were used (some preliminary data on this is already available from Grotevant & Adams, 1984; Bennion & Adams, 1986), it would still be quite useful in this context to attempt to measure the internal consistencies of the various questionnaire scales by using Cronbach alphas (Cronbach, 1951) and Guttman split-half reliability coefficients.

For the EOMEIS-1, the Cronbach alphas were found to be generally impressive for all of the subscales. The Cronbach alpha for the identity achievement subscale, for example, was found to be .63 ( N = 156); while for the moratorium subscale, the alpha was found to be .73; for foreclosure, .82; and for the diffusion subscale, .71. Likewise, Guttman split-half reliability coefficients were found to be generally high across all the subscales. The coefficients here included: .58 for achievement ( N 156); .76 for moratorium; .75 for foreclosure; and .62 for diffusion. Overall, these values were fairly consistent with those which had been reported previously by Adams et al. (1979), Grotevant and Adams (1984), and Bennion and Adams (1986) in their original validation studies using college-aged subjects. In fact, in a number of instances, the reliability values which were obtained in this study were found to be even stronger than those which had been reported previously by the original authors in

their validation work.

As for the Quality Marriage Index, the internal consistency of this scale was expected to be quite strong. A Cronbach alpha of .95 and a split-half reliability coefficient of .94 confirmed this (one could even go as far as to argue that just using one or two of the items from this scale would have been equally as valid as using the entire marital quality scale). Similarly, for the Passionate Love Scale, the Cronbach alpha was found to be .93, and the split-half reliability coefficient was found to be .89. Meanwhile, for the EPSI intimacy subscale, the alpha was found to be .83, and the split-half reliability coefficient was .84. Once again, these estimates of internal consistency demonstrated that the instruments tended to be fairly homogeneous, and in general, confirmed the estimates of internal consistency which had been reported previously by the original authors in their validation work with the instruments (i.e., Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986; Norton, 1983; Rosenthal et al., 1981).

Validity. Convergent-divergent correlations among the subscales of the EOMEIS-1 can be used to provide some indication of the construct validity of this scale (Adams et al., 1987). Stated another way, the correlations among the identity subscales should be expected to show some degree of divergence, since it is not theoretically expected that an individual should exhibit the thought processes associated with all of the identity statuses simultaneously (Adams et al., 1987). For this reason, a consistent finding among studies which have employed the EO-EIS, is that the identity achievement subscale tends to be either

negatively correlated, or uncorrelated, with the other subscales (e.g., Adams et al., 1979; Bennion & Adams, 1986). Similarly, the identity achievement subscale was found in this investigation to be negatively correlated with the moratorium subscale,  $r(156) = -.25, p < .01$ ; as well as being negatively correlated with the foreclosure subscale ( $r(156) = -.21, p = .01$ ); and negatively correlated with the diffusion subscale ( $r(156) = -.21, p = .01$ ).

Another frequent finding in previous research has been a theoretically unexpected positive correlation that emerges between the moratorium and diffusion subscales. In fact, in factor analyses, the two subscales have typically been found to load onto a common factor, thus producing three factors, where four would be theoretically expected (e.g., Bennion & Adams, 1986). Similarly, in this study, the correlation between the moratorium and the diffusion subscales was found to be  $.49 (N = 156, p = .001)$ . This was actually the highest correlation obtained among the identity subscales. Adams et al. (1987) have proposed three possible explanations to account for this unusually close association observed between the moratorium and diffusion subscales: (a) the moratorium and diffusion statuses may be more conceptually similar than has previously been thought, (b) the OM-EIS may be unable to finely discriminate between subjects in the two identity statuses, and (b) "clear" cases of diffusion may not appear frequently in college samples.

Meanwhile, the foreclosure subscale was found in this study to be positively correlated with both the diffusion and the

moratorium subscales ( $r$  [156] = .39,  $p$  < .001, diffusion;  $r$  [156] = .32,  $p$  < .001, moratorium). The positive correlation observed here between the foreclosure and diffusion subscales, however, is somewhat unexpected; especially considering Adams et al.'s (1987) observation that the two subscales typically are found to be either negatively correlated, or uncorrelated with each other. Possibly this is a reflection of how inadequately (or differently) the foreclosure items may apply to a sample of older, married individuals.

The intercorrelations among the other measures which were used in this study can be used to provide some evidence of the construct validity of these scales as well. As expected, spousal attitude similarity was found to be moderately associated with both marital satisfaction,  $r$  (127) = .42,  $p$  < .001, and with passionate love,  $r$  (127) = .36,  $p$  < .001; thus confirming a great deal of work done in interpersonal attraction research (in addition to the correlation between QMI marital satisfaction scores and spousal attitude similarity values that was reported by Norton, 1983). Also as expected, passionate love and marital satisfaction were found to be positively associated with each other  $r$  (156) = .46,  $p$  < .001. The significant correlation observed here between the passionate love measure and marital satisfaction was found to be particularly robust when analyzing just the husbands,  $r$  (78) = .53,  $p$  < .001; while for the wives alone, the correlation was found to be less strong, but still significant,  $r$  (78) = .39,  $p$  < .001. Interestingly enough, a significant negative correlation did not emerge between marital



length and passionate love,  $r(156) = -.07, p > .10$ . This suggested that longer-married individuals were just as likely to be passionately in love with their partners as were newly-married individuals. However, when the unstable couples were analyzed separately, a significant negative correlation then emerged between passionate love scores and marital duration,  $r(76) = -.25, p < .05$ . As far as marital satisfaction was concerned, this did not appear to be related in any systematic way to marital length,  $r(156) = .07, p > .10$ . However, when the stable couples were analyzed alone, it was noted that the marital satisfaction scores did tend to increase somewhat with marital length,  $r(80) = .30, p < .01$ . Inspection of the scatterplots for these correlations also indicated that there were no clear curvilinear relationships as well between either marital duration and passionate love or marital duration and marital satisfaction--although passionate love scores, for the sample as a whole, did tend to become more varied or extreme over the course of a marriage. As for psychosocial intimacy, this did not appear to be significantly related to marital length,  $r[156] = -.01, p > .10$ ; a finding which was consistent whether one examined the marital stability groups separately, or combined, or whether one examined the two sexes, separately or combined. However, spousal attitude similarity ratings were seen to be significantly related to marital length. For the stable group, the attitude similarity ratings were found to increase with marital length,  $r(73) = .31, p < .01$ ; while for the unstable group, the similarity ratings were seen to decrease slightly with marital length,  $r(56) = -.26, p =$

.055.

### Ego Identity Status and Marital Stability

Table 4 presents the mean scores for both marital stability groups on the various measures. These means were computed for the husbands and the wives separately, as well as for the two sexes combined. A series of 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability) ANOVA's were performed to determine if there were any significant sex differences or significant marital group differences on these various measures (summary tables of these ANOVA's may be found in Appendix K).

One might be tempted to argue that by entering counselling, or by becoming temporarily separated from one's spouse, that this may be indicative of a "strong marriage," in the sense that the partners recognize that there is some problem in their relationship, are willing to do something about it, and have reached a consensus on this important decision (Nettles & Loevinger, 1983). Yet when one examines the mean marital satisfaction scores for the two marital stability groups, one clearly sees that the stably married individuals, on average, were found to report significantly greater marital satisfaction than the unstable individuals ( $M = -1.80$ , stable vs  $-3.67$ , unstable),  $F(1, 155) = 109.96$ ,  $p < .001$ . This was found to be the case for both the husbands and the wives in the sample. In fact, when a nonparametric median test was performed (for all 78 couples) on couple marital satisfaction (i.e., husband-wife "summed" marital

Table 4

Differences in Measures as a Function of Sex and Marital Stability

Groups <sup>a</sup>	Measures							
	Achievement	Moratorium	Foreclosure	Diffusion	Psychosocial intimacy	Marital satisfaction	Passionate love	Attitude similarity <sup>b</sup>
<u>Stable</u>								
Husbands	35.22	21.15	17.02	22.98	-2.95	-1.79	-5.98	-1.94
Wives	33.60	22.92	16.65	21.98	-2.72	-1.80	-5.71	-1.88
Total	34.41	22.04	16.84	22.48	-2.84	-1.80	-5.84	-1.91
<u>Unstable</u>								
Husbands	32.50	24.42	17.82	23.74	-3.79	-3.60	-6.86	-2.09
Wives	33.26	25.66	16.50	22.82	-2.73	-3.74	-7.67	-2.19
Total	32.88	25.04	17.16	23.28	-3.26	-3.67	-7.27	-2.14

Note. Negative values for intimacy, marital satisfaction, passionate love, and attitude similarity were caused by multiplying each score by -1 to compensate for the reflexing procedure used in handling the negatively skewed data.

<sup>a</sup>n = 40 husbands and 40 wives in the stable group, 38 husbands and 38 wives in the unstable group. <sup>b</sup>For just the attitude similarity measure, n=36 husbands and 37 wives in the stable group, 28 husbands and 28 wives in the unstable group.

satisfaction scores) by couple marital stability, it was noted that only 7 of the 40 stable couples were located below this median on couple marital satisfaction, and only 6 of the 38 unstable couples were located above the median,  $\chi^2(1, N = 78) = 32.07, p < .0001$ . Keep in mind, that the marital satisfaction questionnaire included items which asked subjects to disclose whether they felt that their relationship with their partner was "strong," "stable," "good," "happy," and so forth. In a similar manner, the stable couples were also found to report significantly greater passionate love in comparison to the unstable individuals ( $M = -5.84$  vs.  $-7.27$ , respectively),  $F(1, 152) = 7.822, p < .01$ ; as well as significantly greater spousal attitude similarity ( $M = -1.91$  vs.  $-2.14$ ),  $F(1, 125) = 10.74, p < .001$  (Note. 18.6% of the sample did not respond to this spousal attitude similarity item which was optional). Once again, these effects were found to occur in both the husbands and the wives within the groups. In short, it was shown that the stable and unstable couples represented two clearly distinct groups of couples in terms of their marital quality, and that the criteria of counselling and/or separation which was used to classify couples in this study provided a reasonably good indicator of a poorly functioning or unhappy dyad.

Overall, there were no significant sex differences observed in the above measures. The husbands and wives, on average, were found to report very similar levels of marital satisfaction, passionate love, and spousal attitude similarity. Likewise, within each couple, the correlation between the husbands and the wives in

their marital satisfaction scores was found to be .74 ( $N = 78$ ,  $p < .001$ ). For spousal attitude similarity, this husband-wife correlation was found to be .46 ( $n = 62$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, for passionate love, the spousal correlation was found to be only .18 ( $N = 78$ ,  $p > .10$ ).

Table 4 also indicates that unlike the other measures that were just discussed, psychosocial intimacy did appear to be significantly related to both gender and marital stability. Specifically, the wives were found to report greater psychosocial intimacy than their husbands ( $M = -2.73$  vs.  $-3.36$ ),  $F(1, 155) = 9.44$ ,  $p < .01$ ); and the stably-married individuals, on average, were found to report greater psychosocial intimacy than the unstable individuals ( $M = -2.84$  vs.  $-3.26$ ),  $F(1, 152) = 4.26$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This difference, however, between the two marital groups in terms of their intimacy scores appeared to be largely associated with just the husbands in the sample. This was suggested by a significant two-way (Sex x Marital Stability) interaction,  $F(1, 152) = 4.181$ ,  $p < .05$ . Specifically, the husbands in the stable group were found to report greater levels of psychosocial intimacy than the husbands in the unstable group ( $M = -2.95$  vs.  $M = -3.79$ ) yet the wives in the two marital stability groups were found to be remarkably similar in their psychosocial intimacy scores (i.e.,  $M = -2.72$  vs  $-2.73$ ).

With respect to EOMEIS-1 identity subscale scores, the results of 2 X 2 ANOVA's were generally in the expected directions. Stably-married individuals, on average, were found to score higher than the unstable individuals on the identity

achievement subscale; while being found to score lower on the moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion subscales. However, of these differences between the two groups, the only one that was statistically significant at the .05 level was with respect to the moratorium subscale ( $M = 22.04$ , stable vs.  $25.04$ , unstable),  $F(1, 152) = 9.54$ ,  $p < .01$ . As for the identity achievement subscale, the difference here between the two marital groups on this subscale was found to approach significance ( $M = 34.41$ , stable vs.  $32.88$ , unstable),  $F(1, 152) = 3.601$ ,  $p = .06$ . It was expected, however (see Hypothesis 5) that this difference between the two groups in terms of their identity achievement scores may be found to be more prominent in the husbands than in the wives. A priori comparisons examining the husbands and the wives separately confirmed this. Specifically, the stable husbands were found to score higher on the identity achievement subscale in comparison to the unstable husbands ( $M = 35.22$  vs.  $32.50$ ),  $F(1, 152) = 5.705$ ,  $p < .025$ . The stable and the unstable wives, however, were found to be fairly similar in their identity achievement scores ( $M = 33.60$ , stable vs.  $33.26$ , unstable),  $F(1, 152) = 0.087$ ,  $p > .10$ .

One of the advantages of consistently using heterosexual couples throughout the design of a study such as this, is it allows one to accurately examine potential sex differences with respect to key identity issues. This is because a sample of married couples, no matter how it is subdivided, will consistently be matched with respect to the number of males and females in it, and moreover, the general tendency for "like to marry like" ensures that the two sexes, when being compared on

some dependent measure, will be found to be fairly similar in most other regards. Interestingly enough, however, no significant sex differences emerged on any of the ideological identity subscales. On average, the husbands and the wives in this study were found to be fairly similar in their mean identity subscale scores. Thus, this study can be added to the long list of other previous investigations which have failed to find any significant sex differences in identity levels when employing a paper-and-pencil measure of ideological identity formation (e.g., Abraham, 1983; Adams et al., 1979; Adams et al., 1985; Bennion and Adams, 1986; Constantinople, 1969; La Voie, 1976; O'Neil, 1986 [as reported in Adams et al, 1987], Simmons, 1970; Waterman and Whitbourne, 1981).

The identity statuses. Inspection of the descriptive statistics for each of the identity subscales indicated that the means and standard deviations which had been provided by this study's sample, differed noticeably from those which had been provided previously by Bennion and Adams (1986) in their Utah sample, or Grotevant and Adams (1984) using their Texas and Utah samples (see also Table 3, p. 115, this manuscript). It was decided, therefore, that for this particular study, the classification of the subjects into the identity statuses should be based upon the norms of this study's own sample (at some later point in the research, however, the data may be reanalyzed using the Utah norms as recommended by Bennion and Adams, if this is deemed necessary for comparison purposes). Specifically, the means, standard deviations, and ranges of the ideological

identity subscales as obtained in this study were: (a) achievement,  $\underline{M}$  = 33.67,  $\underline{SD}$  = 5.90, range = 14-48; (b) moratorium,  $\underline{M}$  = 23.50,  $\underline{SD}$  = 6.24, range = 8-40; (c) foreclosure,  $\underline{M}$  = 16.99,  $\underline{SD}$  = 6.16, range = 8-33; and (d) diffusion,  $\underline{M}$  = 22.87,  $\underline{SD}$  = 6.38, range = 8-39. Thus, the cut-off points which were generated for the purposes of classifying subjects in this study were: (a) achievement, 39; (b) moratorium, 30; (c) foreclosure, 23; and (d) diffusion, 29. In contrast, the Utah cut-offs which had been suggested by Bennion and Adams (1986) and which had also been adopted by Adams et al. (1987) for their computer scoring procedures, were: (a) achievement, 38; (b) moratorium, 33; (c) foreclosure, 26; and (d) diffusion, 28 ( Note: the cut-off score for the achievement subscale in this study should have been set at "40" instead of "39"; however, in the writing of the SPSS-X control file, which occurred partway through the data-collection process, the cut-off point for the achievement subscale in the computer scoring procedures was erroneously set at 39 on the basis of the descriptive statistics which were available at that time; it was only after the analyses involving the identity statuses had been completed and thoroughly reported in Tables 5 and 7 that it was discovered that the achievement subscale's cut-off point had actually risen slightly with the inclusion of the later data--a minor error which was judged to be not important enough to warrant reanalyzing the data nor redoing the tables).

When employing the cut-offs based on this study's sample, it was noted that 34.6% of the subjects, or roughly one-third, were classified as OM-EIS "pure" identity types (i.e., scoring at or



above the cut-off score on only one of the subscales); another 16% were classified as "transition types" (i.e., scoring at or above the cut-off on more than one subscale); while 49.4% were considered to be "low profile moratorium types" (i.e., scoring below the cut-off on all four subscales). After collapsing the various OM-EIS typologies into the four basic identity statuses, it was noted that 12.8% of the subjects were classified as identity achievers, another 53.8% were considered to be moratoriums, 16% were foreclosures, and 17.3% were diffusions. Unfortunately, the small number of transition moratorium and pure moratorium types made it virtually impossible to compare these individuals with the more frequent low profile moratorium types on the various dependent measures (as recommended by Adams et al., 1987).

Table 5 presents the frequencies of husbands and wives classified into each of the four identity statuses for both marital stability groups. Chi-square tests compared the distributions of these individuals in the four identity statuses for the stable and the unstable groups. This was done for the husbands and the wives separately, as well as for the two sexes combined. Overall, it was noted that the marital stability groups did not appear to differ greatly in terms of their distributions of subjects in the four identity statuses,  $\chi^2(3, N = 156) = 6.04, p > .10$ . However, when the husbands and the wives were analyzed separately, it was noted that the stable group possessed a much higher proportion of identity achieved husbands in comparison to the unstable group (i.e., 27.5%, stable vs. 2.7%,

Table 5

Frequencies of Husbands and Wives in the Identity Statuses

Groups	Identity Statuses				Total
	Achievement	Moratorium	Foreclosure	Diffusion	
Stable					
Husbands	11	13			40
Wives	4	25		6	40
	—	—	—	—	—
Total	15	38	12	15	80
Unstable					
Husbands		24			38
Wives	4	22	7	5	38
	—	—	—	—	—
Total	5	46	13	12	76

unstable), as well as a much lower proportion of moratorium husbands as compared to the unstable group (32.5%, stable vs. 63.2%, unstable),  $\chi^2(3, n = 78) = 11.89, p < .01$ . Stated another way, whereas 11 of the 40 stable husbands were found to be located in the identity-achievement status, and another 13 were classified into the moratorium status; only 1 of the 38 unstable husbands was found to be identity achieved, while 24 of these unstable husbands were classified in the moratorium status. However, for just the wives in the sample, there were no significant differences observed between the proportions of stable and unstable wives in the different identity statuses,  $\chi^2(3, n = 78) = 0.56, p > .10$ .

Overall, there were no significant sex differences observed in the distributions of the subjects classified in the identity statuses,  $\chi^2(3, N = 156) = 2.96, p > .10$ . However, when the stable couples were analyzed separately, it was noted that the husbands in this group tended to be located somewhat more frequently than their wives in the identity achievement status, while being classified less frequently into the moratorium status,  $\chi^2(3, n = 80) = 7.99, p < .05$ . This underscored the general tendency throughout this study for the stable husbands to score higher on the identity achievement subscale in comparison to the rest of the sample. In general, the results of these analyses employing the identity status classifications were fairly consistent with those which had been reported earlier involving the raw identity subscale scores. Both sets of data tended to suggest that self-reported identity achievement in husbands appeared to be at

least modestly associated with marital stability.

Correlations Between Ego Identity Status and Marital Satisfaction,  
Passionate Love, and Psychosocial Intimacy

Table 6 presents the Pearson product moment correlations performed between EOMEIS-1 identity subscale scores and marital satisfaction, passionate love, and psychosocial intimacy scores. These correlation coefficients were computed for the stable and the unstable couples separately, as well as for the two groups combined. The correlations involving the husbands' identity scores will be reported here first, followed next by the wives' correlations.

As with marital stability, identity achievement in husbands was found to be associated with marital satisfaction. Husbands' achievement scores (for all 78 couples) were found to be positively associated with their own marital satisfaction scores ( $r [78] = .31, p < .01$ ) as well as positively associated with the marital satisfaction scores of their wives ( $r [78] = .33, p < .01$ ) and with the satisfaction scores of the couple as a whole ( $r [78] = .34, p < .01$ ). Husbands' achievement scores were also found, as expected, to be positively correlated with their own psychosocial intimacy scores ( $r [78] = .35, p = .001$ ). All of the above correlations were present when analyzing just the stable couples separately (and in some cases were found to be even slightly stronger when analyzing just this group, as in the case

Table 6

Correlations Between Identity Scores and Martial Satisfaction,  
Passionate Love, and Psychosocial Intimacy Measures

Identity scores	<u>Marital satisfaction</u>			<u>Passionate love</u>		<u>Psychosocial intimacy</u>	
	Husband	Wife	Couple	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Stably married couples (n=40)							
Husband							
Achievement	.36 <sup>a</sup>	.32 <sup>a</sup>	.38 <sup>a</sup>	.22	.18	.46 <sup>b</sup>	-.05
Moratorium	-.26	-.23	-.27	-.08	-.24	-.16	-.29
Foreclosure	.14	-.07	.03	.14	-.12	.15	.06
Diffusion	-.17	-.27	-.26	-.10	-.20	-.29	-.08
Wife							
Achievement	.20	.15	.20	.21	-.04	.31 <sup>a</sup>	-.10
Moratorium	-.46 <sup>b</sup>	-.18	-.35 <sup>a</sup>	-.26	-.09	-.53 <sup>c</sup>	-.33 <sup>a</sup>
Foreclosure	-.13	.02	-.06	.16	.20	.05	.00
Diffusion	-.31	-.27	-.32 <sup>a</sup>	-.08	-.06	-.33	-.34
Unstably married couples (n=38)							
Husband							
Achievement	-.08	-.04	-.07	-.05	.04	.09	.00
Moratorium	-.28	.02	-.16	.23	.11	-.40 <sup>a</sup>	.18
Foreclosure	-.14	-.15	-.16	.31	-.06	-.23	.01
Diffusion	-.28	-.09	-.22	.18	.04	-.40 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Wife							
Achievement	.16	.21	.21	-.24	.05	-.01	.14
Moratorium	-.30	-.31	-.35 <sup>a</sup>	-.11	.03	-.18	.06
Foreclosure	-.17	-.22	-.22	.15	-.21	-.07	-.42 <sup>b</sup>
Diffusion	-.30	-.20	-.29	-.14	-.31	-.13	-.31
All couples (N=78)							
Husband							
Achievement	.31 <sup>b</sup>	.33 <sup>b</sup>	.34 <sup>b</sup>	.14	.19	.35 <sup>c</sup>	-.02
Moratorium	-.37 <sup>c</sup>	-.27 <sup>a</sup>	-.34 <sup>b</sup>	.03	-.14	-.34 <sup>b</sup>	-.07
Foreclosure	-.03	-.12	-.08	.21	-.10	-.04	.04
Diffusion	-.21	-.19	-.22	.02	-.10	-.33 <sup>b</sup>	-.04
Wife							
Achievement	.16	.15	.17	-.03	.02	.14	.03
Moratorium	-.43 <sup>c</sup>	-.32 <sup>b</sup>	-.40 <sup>c</sup>	-.21	-.09	-.41 <sup>c</sup>	-.15
Foreclosure	-.11	-.06	-.09	.15	-.02	-.01	-.22
Diffusion	-.27 <sup>a</sup>	-.22	-.27 <sup>a</sup>	-.12	-.21	-.23 <sup>a</sup>	-.33 <sup>b</sup>

Note. All correlations are two-tailed. <sup>a</sup> $p \leq .05$ . <sup>b</sup> $p < .01$ . <sup>c</sup> $p \leq .001$ .

of the stable husbands' identity achievement scores and their own psychosocial intimacy scores,  $r [40] = .46, p < .01$ ). However, when the unstable couples were analyzed alone, none of the correlations here involving the husbands' achievement scores and the other measures were found to reach statistical significance, and in fact, many of these correlations tended to be negative.

As expected, the husbands' moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion subscale scores tended to be negatively associated with both their own and their wives' marital satisfaction scores--although the correlations here were only significant for the moratorium subscale, and only when the two marital groups were combined (as in the case of the husbands' moratorium scores and their own marital satisfaction scores,  $r [78] = -.37, p = .001$ ). Not surprisingly, the husbands' moratorium and diffusion subscale scores were also found to be negatively correlated with their own psychosocial intimacy scores. This was particularly true in the unstable group, where the correlations for both of these subscales with the intimacy measure were found in both cases to be  $-.40$  ( $n = 38, p = .05$ , in both cases). However, these same correlations when performed in just the stable group did not reach statistical significance (e.g.,  $r [40] = -.16, p = .10$  [moratorium with intimacy]).

As for the wives' identity achievement scores, this factor appeared to be only weakly related to marital satisfaction scores. In fact, the wives' scores on this subscale were not found to be correlated significantly with their own marital satisfaction scores, nor with the marital satisfaction scores of

their husbands, nor with the satisfaction of the couple as a whole. In general, the correlations here involving the wives' identity achievement scores and the marital satisfaction measure tended to be low, positive, and in all cases, nonsignificant. Likewise, the wives' identity achievement scores did not appear to be related in any systematic way to their own psychosocial intimacy scores (e.g.,  $r$  [78] = .03,  $p$  > .10).

The wives' moratorium scores, on the other hand, did tend to be negatively correlated with the marital satisfaction measure. This was found to be the case in both marital stability groups when analyzed separately, as well as when the two groups were combined. Of particular interest, was the tendency for the wives' moratorium scores to be actually a slightly better predictor of their husbands' marital satisfaction than of their own marital satisfaction,  $r$  (78) = -.43,  $p$  < .001 vs.  $r$  (78) = -.32,  $p$  .01. Likewise, the wives' diffusion and foreclosure subscale scores were also seen to be negatively correlated with both their own and their partners' marital satisfaction scores (although for the foreclosure subscale, these correlations never reached statistical significance, while for the diffusion subscale, the correlations were only significant when the two marital groups were combined). As for the wives' moratorium scores, these were also found to be negatively associated with their own psychosocial intimacy scores; although the correlations here were only significant in the stable group,  $r$  (40) = -.33,  $p$  .05. Meanwhile, in the unstable group, the wives' foreclosure scores were seen to be negatively correlated with their own psychosocial

intimacy scores,  $r(38) = -.42, p < .01$ ; while in the combined group, the wives' diffusion scores were seen to be negatively correlated with their psychosocial intimacy scores,  $r(78) = -.33, p < .01$ . A somewhat unusual finding which emerged in the combined group, was a negative correlation found between the wives' moratorium scores and their husbands' psychosocial intimacy scores,  $r(78) = -.41, p < .001$ . Although this correlation was not statistically significant in the unstable group when analyzed separately, it was found to be fairly robust when analyzing the stable couples,  $r(40) = -.53, p < .001$ .

In conclusion, it can be said that the prediction in Hypothesis 3 that the identity subscales would be correlated in the expected directions with marital satisfaction scores was generally well supported. Identity achievement scores tended to be positively correlated with self-reports of marital satisfaction, while moratorium, diffusion, (and to a lesser extent) foreclosure scores tended to be negatively associated with marital satisfaction reports. Furthermore, the fact that this pattern was apparent in the husbands' identity achievement scores, but not in their wives' achievement scores, did lend some support to Hypothesis 5. However, the lack of any relationship observed between the identity subscales and the passionate love measure, although not totally unexpected, was quite interesting, and represented one of the issues which will be addressed later in this section.

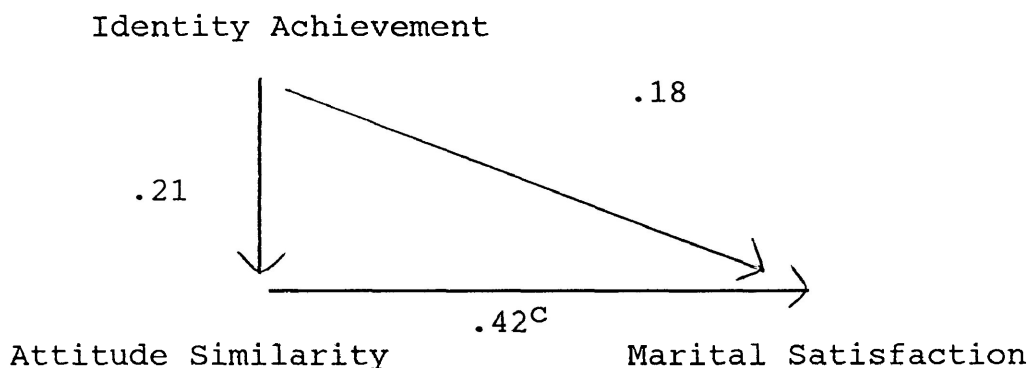
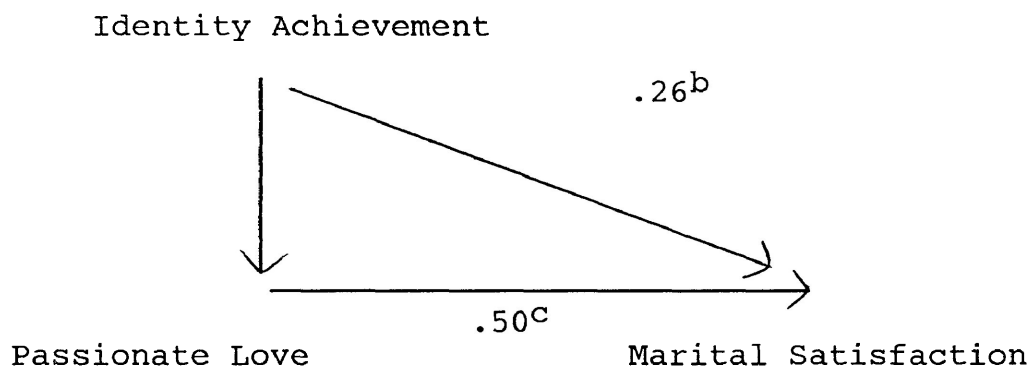
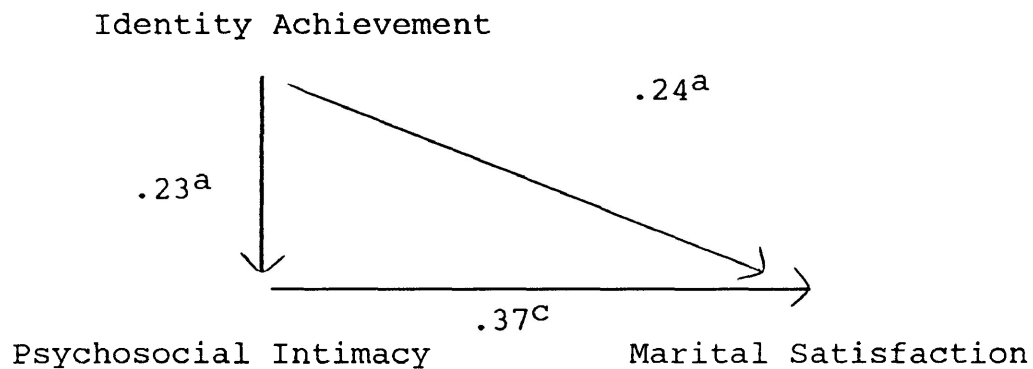
Supplementary issues. As mentioned before, a secondary issue which was explored in this study concerned the assumption that one



may be better able to examine the relationship which exists between identity achievement and marital satisfaction scores by partialling out the correlations for psychosocial intimacy. It was further hypothesized that by also partialling out the correlations for passionate love (i.e., Hypothesis 6) and spousal attitude similarity (i.e., Hypothesis 7) that this may further clarify, and to some extent even enhance, the relationship which may exist between identity achievement and marital satisfaction.

Figure 1 summarizes the results of multiple regression analyses, performed on all 78 couples, which attempted to predict couple (i.e., husband-wife summed) marital satisfaction scores from couple identity achievement; while controlling for couple psychosocial intimacy (i.e., Model A), couple passionate love (i.e., Model B), and couple attitude similarity ratings (i.e., Model C).

In Model A, the vertical arrow refers to the regression correlation between couple identity achievement and intimacy,  $r(78) = .23, p < .05$ ; the horizontal arrow, meanwhile, indicates the correlation ( $r = .37, p < .001$ ) between psychosocial intimacy and marital satisfaction when controlling for identity achievement; and the diagonal arrow refers to the relationship ( $r = .24, p = .05$ ) between identity achievement and marital satisfaction when controlling for psychosocial intimacy. This model illustrates that the association between couple identity achievement and couple marital satisfaction when controlling for intimacy, although somewhat weaker than the usual correlation of .33 when not controlling for intimacy, is still statistically



**Figure 1.** Models A, B, and C summarize the results of multiple regression analyses used to predict couple marital satisfaction from couple identity achievement when controlling for couple psychosocial intimacy, couple passionate love, and couple attitude similarity. Model A illustrates the relationship ( $r=.24$ ) between identity achievement and marital satisfaction when controlling for psychosocial intimacy, as well as the relationship ( $r=.37$ ) between psychosocial intimacy and marital satisfaction when controlling for identity achievement, and the correlation ( $r=.23$ ) between identity achievement and intimacy. Models B and C illustrate the same procedures using passionate love and attitude similarity respectively instead of psychosocial intimacy as the variables being controlled for. Note that <sup>a</sup> refers to  $p<.05$ ; <sup>b</sup>  $p<.01$ ; and <sup>c</sup>  $p<.001$ . All correlations are two-tailed. The  $n$  sizes for Models A, B, and C are 78, 78, and 62 couples, respectively.

significant; and much stronger than the "indirect relationship through intimacy" of  $.23 \times .37 = .09$ . This model also suggests that the correlation between identity achievement and marital satisfaction may also be mediated by other factors in addition to psychosocial intimacy.

Model B indicates, contrary to expectations, that controlling for passionate love also tends to diminish slightly this relationship between identity achievement and marital satisfaction (i.e.,  $r = .26$ ), although the regression correlation here still remains significant at the .01 level. Thus, the prediction in Hypothesis 6 that passionate love may be "suppressing" in some way the relationship between identity achievement and marital satisfaction, and that controlling for this variable may be found to enhance this relationship, was apparently not well supported. Likewise, Model C indicates that controlling for spousal attitude similarity also did little to enhance the identity achievement-marital satisfaction relationship, and in fact, caused the correlation here to be even weaker and nonsignificant (i.e.,  $r = .18$ ,  $p > .10$ ).

Another supplementary issue which was cautiously explored in this study concerned the possible role that the different content areas of ego identity may play in influencing the overall subscale correlations between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. It was felt that three of the previously-reported stronger correlations from Table 6 which might be worth investigating in this manner were: (a) the correlation between the stable husbands' identity achievement scores and their own

psychosocial intimacy scores ( $r_{[40]} = -.46$ ), (b) the correlation between the stable husbands' identity achievement scores and their own marital satisfaction scores ( $r_{[40]} = .38$ ), and (c) the correlation between the stable wives' moratorium scores and their husbands' marital satisfaction scores ( $r_{[40]} = -.43$ ). In order to address such issues, separate scores had to be computed for each of the four pairs of Likert items that constituted the four content areas of the achievement and the moratorium subscales. For example, an "achievement-religion score" was computed on the basis of two Likert items, as was an "achievement-politics score," an "achievement-occupation score," and so forth.

For all three of these correlations, it was noted that the Life Philosophy and Religion content areas tended to account for the overall subscale correlations with the marital satisfaction and intimacy measures; whereas the Politics and the Occupation content areas were found to be relatively unimportant with respect to these correlations. For example, the stable husbands' achievement-philosophy scores were found to be significantly related to their own marital satisfaction scores (i.e.,  $r_{[40]} = .46$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Likewise, their achievement-religion scores were also seen to be correlated with their marital satisfaction scores ( $r_{[40]} = .37$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, the achievement-politics and the achievement-occupation scores of these individuals were not found to be significantly related to their marital satisfaction scores (i.e.,  $r_{[40]} = .15$ ,  $p > .10$  [Politics];  $r_{[40]} = -.14$ ,  $p > .10$  [Occupation]). Similarly, the correlation between the stable wives' moratorium-philosophy scores and their husbands' marital

satisfaction scores was found to be  $-.44$  ( $n = 40, p < .01$ ); while the correlation between the stable wives' moratorium-religion scores and their husbands' marital satisfaction was found to be  $-.36$  ( $n = 40, p < .05$ ). Yet the correlation between the stable wives' moratorium-occupation scores and their husbands' marital satisfaction was found to be nonsignificant ( $r [40] = -.24, p .10$ ); as was the correlation between their moratorium-politics scores and their husbands' marital satisfaction ( $r [40] = -.31, p .05$ ). This latter correlation, however, was found to approach significance (i.e.,  $p = .052$ ). Similar results were also obtained when correlating the stable husbands' identity achievement scores with their psychosocial intimacy scores. For example, the correlation between the stable husbands' achievement-philosophy scores and their psychosocial intimacy scores was found to be  $.41$  ( $n = 40, p < .01$ ), as was the correlation between their achievement-religion scores and their intimacy scores (i.e.,  $r [40] = .41, p < .01$ ). However, the correlation between the stable husbands' achievement-politics scores and their intimacy scores, as well as the correlation between their achievement-occupation scores and their intimacy scores was found in both cases to be nonsignificant (i.e.,  $r [40] = -.02, p > .10$  [Politics];  $r [40] = .25, p = .119$  [Occupation]).

The identity statuses. Table presents the results of one-way analyses of variance which compared the individuals in the four identity statuses on their marital satisfaction, passionate love, and psychosocial intimacy scores (once again, summary tables of these ANOVA's may be found in Appendix K). Due to the

Table 7

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Marital Satisfaction, Passionate Love, and Psychosocial Intimacy by Identity Status

Variable	Mean for identity statuses				
	Achievement ( <u>n</u> =20)	Moratorium ( <u>n</u> =84)	Foreclosure ( <u>n</u> =25)	Diffusion ( <u>n</u> =27)	
Marital satisfaction	-1.74	-2.83	-2.64	-3.11	4.13 <sup>b</sup>
Passionate love	-6.14	-6.91	-5.66	-6.47	1.09
Psychosocial intimacy	-2.50	-3.03	-2.86	-3.67	3.37 <sup>a</sup>

Note. See explanation in Table 4 regarding negative values.

<sup>a</sup>  $p < .05$ .

<sup>b</sup>  $p < .01$ .

relatively large proportion of subjects which had been classified into the moratorium status, it was decided that these analyses should only be performed on the entire sample of 156 subjects, as opposed dividing the sample into the two groups of couples or into the two sexes; which would have resulted in a very small number of subjects in some of the identity status groups.

A significant one-way effect for marital satisfaction by identity status emerged,  $F(3, 152) = 4.13, p < .01$ ; with an a posteriori Duncan's multiple range test indicating that those subjects who were identity-achieved, tended to report significantly greater marital satisfaction than those individuals who were not identity achieved. However, among the other three identity status groups, no two groups were found to differ significantly at the .05 level in terms of their marital satisfaction scores. As far as passionate love was concerned, no significant differences were observed among any of the four identity status groups on this particular variable,  $F(3, 152) = 1.09, p > .10$ . This confirmed the results reported earlier (see Table 6) which had suggested a lack of any relationship whatsoever between the identity subscales and passionate love. However, psychosocial intimacy did appear to show a significant one-way effect with identity status,  $F(3, 152) = 3.37, p < .05$ ; with a Duncan's multiple range test indicating that the diffusions in the sample tended to report significantly less psychosocial intimacy in comparison to the individuals in the other three identity statuses. However, once again, among the other three identity statuses, no two groups were found to differ significantly at the

.05 level.

Correlations Between Psychosocial Intimacy and Marital Satisfaction, Passionate Love

Table 8 presents the correlations between psychosocial intimacy scores and marital satisfaction and passionate love scores. Once again, these correlations were performed separately for the husbands and the wives, and separately for each marital stability group as well as for the two groups combined.

One sees the continued importance of the husbands' scores in predicting marital satisfaction. For all 78 couples, positive significant correlations emerged between husbands' psychosocial intimacy scores and their own marital satisfaction scores ( $r = .47, p < .001$ ) as well as between husbands' intimacy scores and the marital satisfaction scores of their wives ( $r = .39, p < .001$ ), and the satisfaction scores of the couple as a whole ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ). When examining these same correlations performed within each marital group separately, the correlations were still seen to be significant (i.e.,  $p < .05$ ), especially in the stable group. However, the correlation between the husbands' intimacy scores and the marital satisfaction scores of their wives was found to be no longer significant in either group when analyzed separately (i.e.,  $p > .10$  for both groups). One also sees the husbands' intimacy scores to be related somewhat to their own passionate love scores (i.e.,  $r [78] = .26, p < .05$ ), albeit, only when the two marital groups were combined.



Table 8

Corelations Between Psychosocial Intimacy and  
Marital Satisfaction, Passionate Love

Psychosocial intimacy	Marital satisfaction			Passionate love	
	Husband	Wife	Couple	Husband	Wife
Stably married couples ( <u>n</u> =40)					
Husband intimacy	.39 <sup>a</sup>	.25	.35 <sup>a</sup>	.27	.05
Wife intimacy	.24	.26	.28	.13	.44 <sup>b</sup>
Unstably married couples ( <u>n</u> =38)					
Husband intimacy	.32 <sup>a</sup>	.23	.32 <sup>a</sup>	.18	.17
Wife intimacy	.06	.03	.05	.00	.43 <sup>b</sup>
All couples ( <u>N</u> =78)					
Husband intimacy	.47 <sup>c</sup>	.39 <sup>c</sup>	.46 <sup>c</sup>	.26 <sup>c</sup>	.21
Wife intimacy	.11	.12	.12	.06	.42 <sup>c</sup>

Note. All correlations are two-tailed.

<sup>a</sup><sub>p</sub> < .05.

<sup>b</sup><sub>p</sub> < .01.

<sup>c</sup><sub>p</sub> < .001.

As far as the wife's capacity to be intimate is concerned, this factor appears to be only weakly related to marital satisfaction scores, although a trend towards a significant positive correlation does emerge in the stable group when examining the wife's intimacy scores in relation to couple marital satisfaction ( $r [40] = .28, p = .08$ ). Actually, the only statistically significant correlations involving the wives' psychosocial intimacy scores occurred with passionate love. Here, a moderately strong positive correlation was observed between the wives' intimacy scores and their own passionate love scores. This was found to be the case in the stable group ( $r [40] = .44, p .01$ ); as well as in the unstable group ( $r [38] = .43, p < .01$ ); and in the sample as a whole ( $r [78] = .42, p < .001$ ).

#### Similarity Versus Complementarity of Ego Identity Status in Mate Selection and Marital Stability

One method of determining if spousal similarity in ego identity status is related to either mate choice (Hypothesis 1) or to marital stability (Hypothesis 2) is to examine the correlations between the identity scores of the husbands' and wives' within each marital group. Table 9 presents such correlations which were computed for the stable and the unstable couples separately, as well as for the randomly-paired stable and unstable couples. Two significant correlations were found in the stable group: (a) the husbands' moratorium scores were found to be positively correlated with their wives' moratorium scores ( $r$

Table 9

Intercorrelations Between Husbands and Wives on Identity  
and Intimacy Measures

Marital Group	Measures					Mean <u>r</u>
	Ach <sup>a</sup>	Mor	Fore	Diff	Intimacy	
Stable ( <u>n</u> =40)	.19	.33*	.13	.34*	-.03	.19
Unstable ( <u>n</u> =38)	.10	-.17	.09	-.07	-.19	-.05
Randomly-Paired stable	.06	-.10	.14	-.19	.12	-.05
Randomly-Paired unstable	-.02	.14	-.27	.02	-.27	-.08

Note. All correlations are two-tailed.

<sup>a</sup>Ach, Achievement; Mor, Moratorium; Fore, Foreclosure;  
Diff, Diffusion.

\*  $p < .05$ .

.33,  $p < .05$ ); and (b) the husbands' diffusion scores were seen to be positively correlated with their wives' diffusion scores ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In contrast, these same correlations performed in the other three marital groups did not reach statistical significance, and in fact, many of the correlations for the other three marital groups were found to be negative.

When using the conservative Fisher's  $z$  transformation to test the significance of group differences in the strength of the correlations, it was noted that the stable group's husband-wife correlation on their moratorium scores (i.e.,  $r = .33$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was found to be significantly greater ( $p < .05$ ) than this same correlation performed in the unstable group ( $r = -.17$ ,  $p > .10$ ), as well as somewhat greater ( $p > .10$ ) than the same correlation for the randomly-paired stable group (i.e.,  $r = -.10$ ,  $p > .10$ ). Similarly, for the diffusion subscale, the husband-wife correlation in their scores in the stable group (i.e.,  $r = .34$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was found to be stronger ( $p < .05$ ) than this same correlation performed in the randomly-paired stable group ( $r = -.19$ ,  $p > .10$ ). However, the spousal correlations for the other three identity/intimacy subscales were not found to be significant in any of the four marital groups ( $p > .10$ , in all cases). Nevertheless, the general tendency among the spousal correlations was for the stable group to have higher correlations in comparison to the other three marital groups. In fact, of the 15 possible comparisons which were made between the stable group's correlation and that of the other three marital groups on the five subscales, the stable group's correlation was found to be higher

in 13 of these 15 comparisons. Table 9 also indicates that the average spousal correlation for the five measures in the stable group was found to be somewhat higher than that of the other three marital groups (i.e., .19 vs. -.05, -.05, and -.08). It is also worth noting here that when the psychosocial intimacy measure is no longer included in with these averages, the mean spousal correlation on the remaining four measures for the stable group rises to .25. Thus, there was some support obtained in this study for a modest similarity or "correlation gradient" effect with regard to ego identity status in mate choice and marital stability. However, the effect was not as strong or as pervasive as was anticipated. Perhaps the most unexpected finding of all, however, was the apparent lack of any relationship found between the husbands and wives in terms of their psychosocial intimacy scores. This is somewhat inconsistent with the results reported by White et al. (1986), who observed modest support for homogamy with respect to several interview-based dimensions of Eriksonian intimacy.

When examining the different content areas of the moratorium and diffusion subscales separately, it was noted that the stable group's significant spousal correlation on their moratorium scores appeared to be associated to some extent with significant spousal correlations in the Religion content area ( $r_{[40]} = .35, p < .05$ ) and in the Politics content area ( $r_{[40]} = .32, p < .05$ ); although not in the Philosophy nor Occupation content areas (i.e.,  $r_{[40]} = .25, p = .115$  [Philosophy];  $r_{[40]} = .09, p > .10$  [Politics]). Similarly, the stable group's significant diffusion

subscale spousal correlation appeared to be influenced to some degree by significant spousal correlations in the Religion area ( $r [40] = .48, p < .003$ ), the Occupation area ( $r [40] = .34, p < .05$ ), and in the Politics area ( $r [40] = .32, p < .05$ ), but not in the Philosophy area ( $r [40] = .03, p > .10$ ). It is worth noting, however, in this discussion regarding the content areas of ego identity, that the EOMEIS-1 items which load onto common factors in factor analyses with an older adult population may be found to be quite different than those items which typically comprise the factors in a younger sample of college-aged individuals. Therefore, the similarity effect which was apparent in this study may be found to be somewhat stronger when examining the spousal correlations for these particular clusters of items which apply specifically to older, married individuals (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, July 8, 1990). At the very least, these analyses involving the specific content areas of ego identity would tend to suggest that similarity between spouses with respect to the extent of identity formation surrounding their religious beliefs (as well as to some extent their political beliefs) would appear to be associated with enhanced marital stability.

It was proposed that a second way of addressing the similarity/complementarity issue in this study would be to examine the proportion of couples in each marital group who were matched versus mismatched in their identity status classifications. Stated another way, one may examine the proportion of couples in each marital group where both members of the couple are classified into

the same identity status, versus the proportion of couples where the partners are said to be mismatched in terms of their identity status classifications. It was proposed that the stable group should have a higher proportion of matched couples in comparison to the other three marital groups. Contrary to expectations, however, the four marital groups did not appear to differ greatly in terms of their proportions of matched versus mismatched couples. In the stable group, 12 of the 40 couples in this group were found to be matched; whereas for the other three marital groups, the corresponding proportions of matched couples were: (a) 18 of 38, unstable; (b) 12 of 40, randomly-paired stable; and (c) 13 of 38, randomly-paired unstable. Thus, homogamy with respect to the identity statuses was not observed, since the stable group was found to have exactly the same proportion of matched couples as the randomly-paired stable group (i.e., 30% in both groups). Similarly, the actual unstable group did not appear to have a significantly greater proportion of matched couples as compared to the randomly-paired unstable group (i.e., 47.4% vs. 34.2%),  $\chi^2(1) = 1.36$ ,  $p > .10$ . A curious pattern which emerged, however, was the tendency for the unstable group to actually possess a somewhat greater proportion of matched couples than the stable group (i.e., 47% vs. 30%). This difference in the two groups' proportions, however, was not found to be statistically significant,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.48$ ,  $p = .115$ . One reason for this trend may have lied in the fact that the unstable group possessed a much lower proportion of identity achieved males and a much higher proportion of moratorium males in comparison to the stable group.

It was suggested that by being classified more often into the moratorium status, that this may have then put the unstable husbands more frequently into the same identity status as their wives (i.e., the moratorium status). Thus, it would appear that sex differences with regard to the "absolute levels of identity issue" may have confounded to some extent the similarity/complementarity issue in this study. One might also be tempted to argue, moreover, that if any homogamy effect does exist with regard to ego identity status, that such an effect may be simply too weak or "subtle" to be picked up by the more general identity status classifications. This is particularly true when one considers that just over half of the sample in this study was classified into only one of the four identity statuses: the moratorium status.

#### The Open-Ended Question

Each subject's data were categorized according to the basic "theme" of his or her responses to the open-ended question. Of the sample's 156 subjects, 14.7% were classified as reporting more differences than similarities existing in their relationships, and moreover, as saying that these differences "hurt the relationship" in some key way. Another 14.1% reported that there were more differences than similarities, but did not say if this helped or hurt the relationship. Also, 5.8% reported that there were more differences than similarities, but said that the partners were able to work out their various marital differences;



and 19.1% reported that there were more differences than similarities, but said that this may have actually helped the relationship. On the other hand, 7.1% of subjects reported that there were more similarities than differences, and said that this helped the relationship; while another 12.8% reported that there were more similarities than differences, but could not say if this helped or hurt the relationship. Also, 27.6% of the sample left this question blank; while for the remaining 16% of the sample, it could not be unequivocally determined from their responses whether similarities or differences played the more prominent role in the relationship.

Clearly, the subjects were more eager to report any differences that they felt existed in their relationships than they were any similarities. In fact, when these eight categories or themes of the responses as just described were collapsed into three much more general categories of similarity/complementarity, it was noted that 36.5% of the sample were classified as reporting more differences than similarities existing in their relationships; another 19.9% reported that there were more similarities than differences; and the remaining 43.6% did not respond, or gave a response which was ambiguous. Overall, there was a trend towards the wives reporting more differences in comparison to their husbands, while the husbands tended to leave this question blank, or gave an answer which was ambiguous somewhat more often than their wives,  $\chi^2(2, N = 156) = 5.11$ ,  $p = .078$ .

Perhaps the major finding with respect to the open-ended

question was the tendency for the unstable group to report a greater number of spousal differences and a smaller number of spousal similarities in comparison to the stable group. In fact, 44.6% of the unstable subjects were classified as reporting more differences than similarities in their relationships, whereas in the stable group, only 28.8% of the individuals were classified as reporting more differences than similarities. Likewise, in the stable group, 31.3% of the subjects reported that there were more similarities than differences in their relationships, whereas in the unstable group, only 7.9% reported more similarities than differences,  $\chi^2 (2, N = 156) = 13.91, p < .001$ . This concurs with the finding reported earlier of the stable group providing higher 10-point spousal attitude similarity ratings in comparison to the unstable group.

When examining the different possible husband-wife combinations of responses to the open-ended question, it was noted that in a slight majority of the couples (i.e., 52.6%), both partners' responses to this question had been coded in the same basic way,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 78) = 21.86, p < .001$ . Thus, there appeared to be a modest degree of agreement among partners as to the extent of spousal attitude similarity that existed in their relationships, which was consistent with the significant husband-wife correlation in 10-point attitude similarity ratings that was reported earlier (i.e.,  $r = .46$ ). Also, those individuals who were classified as reporting more similarities than differences existing in their relationships, as expected, were also found to report significantly higher 10-point attitude

similarity ratings as compared to those individuals who reported more differences than similarities in their relationships,  $t(76) = -4.27, p < .001$ .

In the process of coding the open-ended question responses, a "tally-sheet" was also kept which recorded the frequencies of typical examples of spousal similarities/differences provided by the spouses through their answers. For example, it was recorded each time that a husband reported a difference in attitudes with his wife regarding the issue of "finances," or each time that a wife reported a difference with her husband regarding the issue of "politics," and so forth. This was done for a large variety of topics or "content areas" of identity and personality. Separate tallies of these similarities and differences were kept for each of the two marital stability groups, as well as for the two sexes.

Overall, the stable group was found to report 124 specific examples of similarities (i.e., 58 from the husbands, 66 from the wives), while reporting only 87 instances of spousal differences (31 from the husbands, 56 from the wives). In contrast, the unstable group was found to report 75 examples of similarities (32 from the husbands, 43 from the wives), while reporting 119 examples of differences (50 from the husbands, 69 from the wives). Clearly, these tally sheets indicated that once again, the unstable couples were found to be more willing to report spousal differences and less willing to report spousal similarities in comparison to the stable couples. It was also suggested that the wives in general, seemed to be more willing

than their husbands to report either spousal differences or similarities. In fact, out of a total of 405 responses which were obtained from the sample, 234 of these were provided by the wives, as compared to 171 from the husbands.

A typical example of a characteristic where the unstable couples were found to be more likely to report spousal differences and less likely to report spousal similarities was on the trait of "extraversion," or what one might also call, the ability to be "outgoing" and to "socialize." Here, the unstable individuals reported 16 specific examples of spousal differences and no instances of spousal similarities. In contrast, the stable individuals reported only 7 such examples of spousal differences in this trait, while reporting 3 instances of similarities.

In general, this tended to be the common pattern throughout the subjects' responses to the open-ended question. For example, whereas 12 of the individuals in the unstable group were found to report spousal differences in terms of their "childhood experiences," "home life," or "upbringing," only 3 such spousal differences were reported in the stable group. Likewise, on the dimension of behaviour which might be best described as "dedication to the family," or "staying at home versus going out," there were 16 specific examples of spousal differences reported in the unstable group, as compared to only 8 differences reported in the stable group. As for the dimension of personality which might be described as degree of "stubbornness," "firmness," or "strong-mindedness," it was noted that there were 10 instances of spousal differences reported in the unstable group on this

dimension, as compared to only 5 instances reported in the stable group. Regarding the spouses' attitudes toward "financial matters," there were no instances of similarities reported in the unstable group on this dimension, as compared to six instances reported in the stable group. Similarly, there were twice as many reports of similarities in the stable group compared to the unstable group concerning the spouses attitudes towards "parenting," "raising children," "applying discipline," and so forth. There were also twice as many reports of differences in the unstable group compared to the stable group regarding spouses' attitudes towards "sex roles." As for the dimension of personality which could be described as "openness," or "the ability to communicate and to share," 11 instances of spousal differences were reported in the unstable group on this dimension, as compared to only one instance in the stable group. However, when examining these 11 differences in the unstable group further, it was noted that in 9 of these 11 reports, it was the wife who had indicated a discrepancy in openness or ability to communicate with her spouse, rather than the other way around (i.e., that she could communicate, but that her husband couldn't).

A word of caution must be expressed here about the comparisons which were drawn between the two marital stability groups in terms of their tallies of spousal similarities and differences. In many of the content areas in which tallies were recorded, often no apparent disparities were observed when comparing the two marital groups in terms of their reported numbers of either similarities or differences. For example, with

regard to the spouses' attitudes toward "politics" or "current events," no appreciable differences were observed when comparing the two groups in their reported numbers of differences on this dimension (i.e., 5, stable vs. 6, unstable). Likewise, no major discrepancies were observed when comparing the two groups in terms of their reported numbers of either similarities or differences regarding the spouses' attitudes toward "work" or "career." However, for no content area was the stable group found to greatly outnumber the unstable group in terms of the number of reported spousal differences; and likewise, for no content area did the unstable group appear to greatly outnumber the stable group in terms of the number of reported similarities. Of course, a thorough interpretation of the tally sheets was hampered somewhat by a large number of blank responses to this question, as well as by the infrequent occurrence of many topics in the subjects' responses. For example, only two instances of a similarity and only one instance of a difference emerged between the spouses with regard to the partners' attitudes concerning "fidelity," or "monogamy."

## Discussion

### Overview and Interpretation of the Results

It is sometimes said that psychology has failed miserably in its attempts to understand the complex marital process. Much of the research to date has been basically atheoretical or exploratory in nature, with often little to guide it except the almost reflexive notions of "like marries like" and "opposites attract" (Barry, 1970; Fishbein & Thelen, 1981). It was proposed in this study, however, that the relatively newer variable "ego identity status," which has been almost completely neglected in previous marital research, may provide a valuable fresh perspective on understanding marital relationships. The rationale for choosing ego identity as a variable for studying within the context of marital relationships, was based in part on Erik Erikson's epigenetic principle, which had stated that the achievement of a strong sense of identity during adolescence may provide a foundation for one's later heterosexual relationships.

The two major hypotheses which were pursued in this study, namely, that spousal similarity in terms of ego identity status may be found to impact positively on both mate choice (i.e., Hypothesis 1) and on marital stability (i.e., Hypothesis 2) were modestly supported. Significant correlations emerged between the husbands and the wives in the stable group on their moratorium and diffusion subscale scores. Although such significant correlations did not emerge on any of the other identity or intimacy subscales,

the general expectation that a consistent "correlation gradient effect" would be found when comparing the correlations among the four marital groups was to some extent observed. As an example of this, the stable group was found to have higher spousal correlations when compared to the other three groups in 13 of the 15 possible comparisons which were made (with 2 of these 13 differences being statistically significant at the .05 level when using the Fisher's  $z$  transformation, and with a third comparison being found to approach significance, i.e.,  $p < .10$ ). Although this similarity effect was "modest" (i.e., nowhere near as strong as the similarity between spouses with regard to their ages, SES levels, backgrounds, etc.), the effect was nonetheless indisputable; and pointed to the basic need for couples to be at roughly similar levels of identity formation for their relationships to have a good chance of succeeding. At the very least, the results of this study seemed to indicate that even among those couples where both partners have begun the marriage at relatively low levels of identity formation, that such relationships may be found to succeed, provided that: (a) the partners are at similarly low levels of identity formation, and (b) the partners eventually increase their identity levels at roughly the same pace during the course of their marriage. In other words, this study seems to suggest that couples should in effect, "grow old together" during the course of their marriage; a proposition which has been frequently put forth in the marital literature, but rarely operationally defined (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, July 8, 1990).



Although spousal similarity in ego identity status was evident to some extent in the subjects' subscale scores, it was not evident whatsoever in terms of their identity status classifications. It was suggested that this may have been due in part to the "grossness" of the identity status classifications, as well as the fact that the absolute-levels-of-identity issue may have confounded to some extent the similarity/complementarity issue in this study. This also represented a case where a researcher may get inconsistent or even contradictory findings when employing both the OM-EIS classifications and the continuous identity subscale scores in research. Although such a situation does not appear to emerge frequently in studies which have used the OM-EIS (see however, Fregeau & Barker, 1986, for a good recent example) it is nonetheless worth mentioning here. Perhaps this underscores the need for future identity researchers to critically reexamine their practice of adhering to the identity status classifications in their research, and to choose instead, to emphasize the more precise continuous identity subscale scores.

One must also keep in mind, that the relative "modesty" of the spousal similarity effect in this study, is basically in keeping with the modest evidence in general in marital research for spousal similarity via paper-and-pencil measures of personality. In fact, when one examines the literature on personality similarity in mate choice and marital satisfaction, one tends to observe significant positive correlations emerging between spouses on their various personality scores. However, such correlations are almost always found to be modest (i.e., 0.2

to 0.4), and almost always tend to occur on only a small minority of the personality variables being explored in a particular study (and generally not on the same variables from one study to the next--not even among studies which have used the same personality inventories with similar-appearing samples). Certainly, the results of this research would tend to disprove any notion of "opposites attracting" with regard to ego identity status; or at least if this occurs, it is only found in a small minority of couples, or possibly among some dating couples, but rarely in married couples. Yet one cannot help but suggest, that perhaps the similarity effect in this study could have been even stronger had the measures of ego identity and/or marital stability been improved (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, July 27, 1990). Future research, involving such superior measures, if available (perhaps including behavioural observations and/or interview techniques) may be better able to answer this question.

In addition to this modest support obtained in this study for a similarity effect with regard to ego identity status, some evidence was also obtained (as predicted in Hypotheses 3 & 4) to indicate that the absolute levels of identity may play a key role in influencing both marital satisfaction and marital stability. Identity achievers, for example, were found to report greater levels of marital satisfaction and psychosocial intimacy as compared to the individuals in the other identity statuses. Diffusions, on the other hand, were found to report the least marital satisfaction and psychosocial intimacy among the four status groups. Two of these differences: (a) the greater marital

satisfaction reported by the identity achievers, and (b) the lower intimacy reported by the diffusions, were found to be statistically significant. This could be interpreted as lending some support to Erikson's notions regarding epigenesis. The Passionate Love Scale, in contrast, failed to discriminate between the identity statuses.

In a similar manner, identity subscale scores were found to be correlated in the expected directions with measures of intimacy and marital satisfaction. Specifically, identity achievement scores tended to be positively correlated with marital satisfaction and intimacy scores, whereas moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion scores tended to be negatively associated with marital satisfaction and intimacy. This pattern, however, while quite prominent in the wives' moratorium and diffusion subscale scores, was not apparent whatsoever in their achievement subscale scores, thus providing some support for the notion in Hypothesis 5 that the husbands' identity scores may play a more prominent role than the wives' scores in predicting marital satisfaction. In addition, the correlations between the foreclosure subscale and either intimacy or marital satisfaction (with only one exception) were found never to reach statistical significance in either group. Also, the correlations among just the unstable couples, although found to be generally in the expected directions, tended to be weaker than those of the stable group or when the two groups were combined. As an example of this, the husbands' identity achievement scores among just the unstable couples were found to be uncorrelated to either their own or their

partners' marital satisfaction or intimacy scores, whereas the stable husbands' achievement scores were found to be significantly related to both their own and their partners' marital satisfaction scores (as well as to their own intimacy scores). In fact, 6 of 24 correlations performed in the stable group between the identity scores and marital satisfaction were found to be significant, while only 1 of the 24 correlations performed in the unstable group was found to be significant. It is quite possible that these correlations for the unstable couples may have been masked to a greater degree than those of the stable group by a marked "sour grapes effect" in the spouses' marital satisfaction reports. It is also quite possible that other factors in addition to ego identity status, such as irreconcilable differences in the content of the spouses' identities, or poor communication skills, may have played a greater role in determining the marital satisfaction of the unstable couples than of the stable couples; thus effectively masking any effects for identity status on marital satisfaction. It is further proposed that the lower marital satisfaction scores provided by the unstable couples may have greatly reduced the variability in their scores; thus producing a restricted range or "basement effect," which may have reduced the strength of the correlations between the marital satisfaction measure and the identity subscales for this group. These are issues which need to be addressed further in subsequent research.

Similar results were also obtained when examining the mean scores on the various measures for the two marital stability

groups. The stable group (as predicted in Hypothesis 4) was found to have higher identity achievement scores and higher intimacy scores in comparison to the unstable group, while the unstable group was found to have higher moratorium scores (the means for the diffusion and foreclosure subscales, although in the expected directions, were not found to differ significantly between the two marital groups). It must be noted, however, that the differences here between the two groups in terms of their achievement and intimacy scores appeared to be largely associated with just the husbands in the sample. The stable and the unstable wives did not appear to differ greatly in terms of either their achievement or intimacy scores (thus providing further support to Hypothesis 5). Also consistent with this, was the finding that the stable group possessed a much higher proportion of identity-achieved males, and a much lower proportion of moratorium males in comparison to the unstable group; whereas the stable and the unstable wives did not appear to differ appreciably in terms of their proportions of subjects classified into the four different identity statuses. However, the difference between the two marital groups in terms of their moratorium scores was found to be associated with both the husbands and the wives in the sample, thus indicating that for both males and females, being high in moratorium may be associated with somewhat poor marital functioning or stability. This reiterated the negative correlations observed among both sexes between moratorium subscale scores and marital satisfaction scores. In fact, for the sample as a whole, the correlation between the moratorium subscale and

one's own marital satisfaction was found to be  $-.34$  ( $p < .001$ ). This was somewhat higher than the corresponding correlation between the identity achievement subscale and marital satisfaction,  $r = .23$ ,  $p < .01$  (this correlation being almost entirely associated with just the stable husbands in the sample). Likewise, the correlation between summed husband-wife moratorium scores and summed couple marital satisfaction scores was found to be  $-.47$  ( $N = 78$ ,  $p < .001$ ); while the corresponding correlation between couple identity achievement and couple marital satisfaction was found to be  $.33$  ( $p < .01$ ). Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in this study was the tendency for the wives' moratorium scores to be actually a slightly better predictor of their husbands' marital satisfaction (i.e.,  $r = -.43$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than of their own marital satisfaction (i.e.,  $r = -.32$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In addition, the wives' moratorium scores were also found to be a slightly better predictor of their husbands' marital satisfaction, than were the husbands' own moratorium scores of their own marital satisfaction. This association between the wives' moratorium scores and their husbands' marital satisfaction was found to be particularly robust in the stable group ( $r = -.46$ ). Perhaps this represents another issue which may need to be addressed further in subsequent research. Also interesting as well, was the observation that the husbands' intimacy scores tended to be negatively associated with their wives' moratorium scores. Perhaps the inability of certain husbands to be intimate--which in turn, causes some of the wives in these relationships to be unhappy--may spur some of these

unhappy wives to go on an identity search in order to "compensate" for their lack of satisfaction or intimacy found in their relationships.

Also worth exploring further, is the apparent lack of any relationship found between the identity measure and the Passionate Love Scale--a somewhat surprising finding when one considers that both variables were found to be associated with intimacy and with marital satisfaction. This would tend to suggest that marital satisfaction and passionate love, although no doubt closely associated with one another (i.e.,  $r$  [156] = .46,  $p < .001$ ), are still distinct concepts. This also tends to suggest that passionate love may be fairly distinguishable from other similar concepts which have been proposed in the past to relate to "obsessive" attitudes towards love; such as "desperate love," Lee's "Mania" love, and a "romantic attitude towards love"; all of which were found in previous research to be significantly negatively correlated with various measures of ego identity (e.g., Sandours & Rosenthal, 1986; Sperling, 1987). Also worth exploring further was the observation that while the husbands and wives in the sample tended to be fairly similar in terms of their marital satisfaction scores (i.e.,  $r$  .74), there was an apparent lack of agreement in their passionate love scores (i.e.,  $r$  = .18). Furthermore, while the husbands' intimacy scores tended to be correlated with the marital satisfaction scores of both themselves and their wives, the wives' intimacy scores were seen to be largely unrelated to marital satisfaction scores (a finding which is consistent with White et al.'s [1986] results). Yet the

wives' intimacy scores did appear to be related to their own passionate love scores. Thus, it would appear that the husband's capacity to be intimate may be far more important than the wife's capacity to be intimate in terms of predicting a couple's marital satisfaction; yet if the wife is not intimate, she may have difficulty in experiencing passionate love. All of this clearly underscores the need for researchers to carefully distinguish between various measures of marital quality and functioning in their studies; such as between passionate love and marital satisfaction, and so forth. It may not be wise in research to use such concepts or measures interchangeably, especially when one considers that the variables in question do not always appear to have the same correlates, despite the fact that they may be highly intercorrelated with one another (see especially Fincham & Bradbury [1987] for a thorough discussion on this).

A number of interesting secondary issues were also explored in this study. It was noted, for example, that the association between identity achievement and marital satisfaction, although no doubt mediated to some extent by psychosocial intimacy, appeared to be far more independent of this mediating variable than was anticipated (although it may be necessary for future research on this issue to utilize only stably-married husbands--since the intercorrelations among the measures were found to be the highest for this group). It would appear that other correlates of identity achievement in addition to psychosocial intimacy may also be contributing to this relationship between identity achievement and marital



satisfaction. It remains for future identity researchers to determine which actual correlates of ego identity may be influencing marital satisfaction. It is quite possible, for example, that spouses who are identity-achieved, may be less rigid or constricted in their various thinking patterns as compared to non-achieved individuals, and therefore, more flexible in their social behaviours (Read et al., 1984). Such individuals may be better able to compromise on issues related to their marriage, and may be better able to "work out" their various marital problems. Identity-achieved spouses may also have a greater tolerance for frustrating situations that routinely arise in marriages, and hence, may also feel less anxious or "overwhelmed" by their marital problems in comparison to non-achieved individuals.

In a similar vein, passionate love and spousal attitude similarity were also examined as potential factors which may be influencing to some extent this relationship between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. However, contrary to the predictions in Hypotheses 6 and 7, it was noted that controlling for these two variables did little to enhance the identity status-marital success relationship, and in fact, caused the correlations here to be even weaker. Perhaps future identity researchers may choose instead to study other variables which are presumed to be influencing this relationship between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. One must also keep in mind, that if passionate love and spousal attitude similarity are in fact masking or suppressing in some way the relationship which exists between identity achievement and marital satisfaction, that

perhaps such masking effects are only operating at certain "extreme" levels of the variables (such as only among those couples who are at extremely high levels of passionate love).

Another issue which was tentatively explored in this study concerned the possible role that the different content areas of ego identity may play in influencing the overall subscale correlations between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. When examining the correlation between the stable husbands' achievement subscale scores and these subjects' marital satisfaction scores, as well as the correlation between the stable husbands' achievement scores and their intimacy scores, and the correlation between the stable wives' moratorium scores and their husbands' marital satisfaction scores, it was noted that all three of these correlations appeared to be largely associated with just the Life Philosophy and the Religion content areas. In contrast, the Politics and the Occupation content areas were found to be largely unimportant with respect to these correlations. In fact, it will be recalled that the correlation between the stable husbands' achievement-occupation scores and their own marital satisfaction scores was observed to be slightly negative (i.e.,  $r = -.14$ ,  $p > .10$ ).

As previously stated, it could not be unequivocally determined if the similarity between the spouses in terms of the content of their identity-related commitments was effectively masking in any way the complex relationship which exists between identity achievement and marital satisfaction. It was clear, however, that this identity content factor, in itself, appeared to

be moderately associated with both marital stability and marital satisfaction. As an example of this, spousal attitude similarity ratings were found to be positively correlated with marital satisfaction scores  $r [156] = .42$ ), while the stable group was found to have significantly higher spousal attitude similarity ratings in comparison to the unstable group. The stable group was also found to have reported fewer specific examples of spousal differences and a greater number of spousal similarities in comparison to the unstable group. In particular, discrepancies between partners in terms of their ability to "socialize" and to "communicate" appeared to characterize the unstable couples more so than the couples in the stable group. Other examples of spousal discrepancies which appeared to be more prominent in the unstable group than in the stable group included differences between partners in terms of their "previous homelife or upbringing experiences," "degree of dedication to the family," "degree of firmness or stubbornness," "childrearing attitudes," "attitudes toward finances," and "sex role attitudes." On the other hand, the two groups were not found to differ appreciably in terms of their reported numbers of either similarities or differences concerning the spouses' attitudes towards "career" or "politics." This would tend to suggest that discrepancies between partners concerning interpersonal issues rather than ideological issues may play a more prominent role in determining the marital dissatisfaction among such couples.

The greater number of spousal differences reported in the unstable group concerning the partners' abilities to communicate

was particularly interesting, since most of the discrepancies here (9 of 11) were reported by the wives in the group. Even when one considers that the wives in general in this study were found to be more willing than their husbands to report either similarities or differences of any kind, this discrepancy in communication ability between the two sexes is still striking. It may also help to explain why it was the husbands' intimacy scores and not the scores of their wives which appeared to be the more critical factor in determining couple marital satisfaction and stability. In other words, although effective spousal communication has been shown in previous research to be strongly related to marital satisfaction and adjustment (Boland & Follingstad, 1987), the key question remaining is: "in problematic marriage which is characterized by poor communication, where does the cause of this lack of communication reside--in the husband, or in the wife? The results of this study at least, seem to indicate that much of this lack of communication ability in many marital relationships may stem from the husbands. Also, the fact that the husbands in general in this study were found to score lower on the psychosocial intimacy measure in comparison to their wives, would tend to suggest that it should in fact be the husbands' intimacy scores and not the scores of their wives that would be the more critical factor in determining marital satisfaction, since most of the wives in general, were found to score high on the intimacy measure to begin with (thus confirming previous research by Hodgson & Fischer [1979] and Schiedel and Marcia [1985] who noted a substantially larger proportion of women

than men in their college samples who were rated high in intimacy status). Whether this overall pattern is an artifact of the predominantly Thunder Bay sample, or possibly some unknown reporting bias, remains to be determined (although it is fairly well-established in the literature that women, on average, tend to be more relationship-oriented than men and more expressive of their feelings, Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Orlofsky, in press). It is also unclear why the increased number of husband-wife discrepancies in spousal communication ability which were reported in the unstable group's open-ended question responses should not also be reflected to a greater extent in this same group's husband-wife correlation on their intimacy scores. Perhaps this is an indication that the psychosocial intimacy measure may be too "general" a measure of intimacy to pick up disparities in intimacy ability which tend to occur specifically in the marital context.

Of course, as mentioned before, the predominant pattern which was apparent through much of the sample's identity subscale scores was the importance of the "absolute levels of identity" in influencing both marital satisfaction and stability. For both sexes, scoring high on the moratorium subscale appeared to be associated with poor marital functioning and stability, whereas scoring high on the achievement subscale, at least for the males in the sample, seemed to be associated with a decrease in marital problems. These findings tended to be fairly consistent, regardless of whether one expressed the identity data in terms of Marcia's identity status classifications or via the raw subscale scores; or whether one used the subjective marital satisfaction

questionnaire or the objective marital groups to operationalize marital success (the only exception here, possibly being the diffusion subscale, which was found to be negatively associated with marital satisfaction scores, but not to be associated significantly with the marital stability groups--perhaps due to the grossness of the categorical marital-stability distinction). Possibly the most striking finding of all in this study, was the observation that while 11 of the 40 stable husbands were found to be identity-achieved, only 1 of the 38 unstable husbands was located in the identity achievement status. What made this effect particularly interesting as well, was the finding that the wives in the two marital stability groups appeared to be remarkably similar in terms of their proportions of subjects which had been classified into the four identity statuses. This was the case despite the fact that like their husbands, these individuals would have also been subjected to the same sampling and/or testing biases which characterized the quasi-experimental distinction in this study between the stable and unstable couples. It would be interesting to see if this tendency for stably-married husbands to score high on the identity achievement subscale can be replicated in other marital populations.

#### Limitations of the Study and Possible Directions for Future Research

Since this is the first study of its kind which had systematically attempted to apply a measure of Eriksonian ego

identity to a sample of actual heterosexual couples, the study had to be first designed literally "from scratch," with few available models to go by. In attempting to design such a study, and in selecting the appropriate measures and methodology, a number of very difficult decisions had to be made.

We had hoped in this study to be able to examine in a very thorough manner how ego identity status impacts on both mate choice and on marital success. Yet at the same time, we were also acutely aware of the need to take into account a number of very important practical concerns if we wished to complete the research within a reasonable time frame. For these reasons, the study when looked at in hindsight, is far from flawless. Below, are outlined some of the major problems associated with the research, as well as some of the key ways in which it could have been improved.

The sample and testing procedures. Although a sample of 78 married couples can be considered respectable for a study such as this, and possibly even "impressive," in my opinion, the sample could still have been even larger for the results to have had more credibility. This becomes especially apparent when one considers that most of the analyses in this study tended to view the "couple as a whole" as the case, and moreover, tended to divide the sample into the two groups of couples. Possibly the study of 107 "problem versus nonproblem" couples by Nettles and Loevinger (1983) or the study of 100 "stable versus helpseeking" couples by Lipetz et al. (1970) have provided better examples of what might be a more appropriate n size for a study such as

this.

Even more important than the size of the sample, however, is possibly the manner in which it was obtained. It could be strongly argued that the couples in this study should have been acquired in a much more standardized and uniform fashion; that is, that the couples should have all come from the same general location or city, and been all approached about the study in the same basic way by the same individuals. As an example of this, all of the couples could have been approached in a random door-to-door fashion in the same city. Likewise, with regard to the testing procedures that were employed, one could legitimately argue that the couples in this study should have all been tested by the same person in the same location, and then offered the same basic reward afterwards. The problem of course, with such procedures, is that they virtually preclude the possibility of using objective criterion groups to index marital success. This is because counselling or separated couples like those which were used in this study, are typically very difficult to obtain (unless an experimenter has outstanding cooperation from a very large agency). Such couples, therefore, must almost certainly be acquired in a variety of ways from different settings; often in a helter-skelter, improvisational fashion. When this occurs, it becomes virtually impossible to test for differences due to conditions of testing and/or sampling procedures--unless an experimenter has subgroup sizes which are considerably larger than those which were available for the present study (and where the testing and/or sampling issues being examined are not confounded



in any significant way by the presence of the marital stability groups--as was the case in this study).

However, if the objective criterion distinction is dropped from the design of a study such as this, then it could be legitimately argued that this might seriously weaken the strength of the research; since at this point, all of the key variables in the study would now be operationalized by using only paper-and-pencil, self-report measures; a form of research, which is generally regarded as having a variety of limitations. However, if the objective criterion distinction is maintained, then one solution could be to at least ensure that the two marital stability groups are as well-matched as possible with respect to key background and procedural factors. These could even include factors that the present study did not take into account at all, such as the number of children per couple, the number of previous divorces, a familial history of divorce, etc.. Such matching procedures, of course, would require a great deal of time and patience, and would be very difficult to implement in a small city such as Thunder Bay where one cannot as readily choose among couples. Perhaps by treating some of these background or procedural variables as covariates in a subsequent study's analysis, one may be better able to control for them. Variables such as age and marital length in particular, have been identified by researchers as important factors which should be controlled for when attempting to identify potential correlates of marital quality (e.g., White, 1987).

The measures. Although marital stability was operationalized

in this study by using objective criterion groups, unfortunately, the same cannot be said of most of the other key concepts in the research. To date, no researcher has been able to successfully resolve all of the problems associated with such self-report measures (Norton, 1983). The EOMEIS-1 was chosen, nevertheless, as the measure of identity for such a study because it was felt that it possessed reasonably good psychometric properties, and because it appeared to represent the best available practical instrument in current identity research. At the present time, I am not aware of any established instrument which can examine Erikson's identity stage from a purely objective, either physiological or behavioural standpoint. As far as marital satisfaction is concerned, this variable would appear to be clearly distinguishable from marital stability, and certainly worth studying on its own merit. Presently, the only method that I am aware of for measuring marital satisfaction among married couples, is to simply ask such couples (via an interview or questionnaire method) how satisfied they are with their present marital relationships.

Even if the EOMEIS-1 did appear to be the best or the most "logical" choice of an identity measure for this particular study, in hindsight, it would have made much more sense if the foreclosure items had not been administered to the subjects. Put more simply, these items do not seem particularly relevant to a study of older, married individuals (as was aptly pointed out to me by some of my subjects). In fact, the foreclosure items tended to almost always evoke low responses from most of the subjects.

Perhaps in a future study, a questionnaire could be developed in which most of the items have been appropriately reworded in order to refer to older individuals. In addition, the foreclosure subscale did not seem to be particularly predictive of anything in this study, with the possible exception of socioeconomic status which was found to be negatively associated with it,  $r$  (156)  $-.26$ ,  $p = .001$  ( Note: the diffusion subscale was also found to be negatively correlated with socioeconomic status,  $r$  [156] =  $.28$ ,  $p$   $.001$ , however, the other subscales did not correlate significantly with SES).

In the place of the foreclosure subscale items, a future researcher may choose instead to include some of the EOMEIS-2 interpersonal identity items, such as those in the areas of Recreation or Sex Roles ( Note: the Dating content area items, as mentioned before, should probably never be included in a study involving married individuals; also, it is unclear at this time to what extent one can validly compute identity status classifications on the basis of just two interpersonal content areas). It is quite possible that when such interpersonal items are included in a subsequent study with married individuals, that one may even begin to see a stronger correlation emerging between the wives' identity achievement scores and their intimacy and/or marital satisfaction scores. Such a prediction would be consistent with the findings reported by Bennion and Adams (1986), who noted a significant positive correlation emerging between EOMEIS-2 interpersonal identity achievement scores and EPSI intimacy scores among both sexes (i.e.,  $r$   $.54$ , males;  $r$   $.36$ , females),

although a significant positive correlation was found between ideological achievement scores and intimacy scores for only the males in their sample (i.e.,  $r = .47$ ,  $p < .001$ , males;  $r = .17$ ,  $p > .05$ , females). However, if the interpersonal identity items are included in a subsequent study, it is strongly recommended that the EOMEIS-2 be chosen over the EOMEIS-1 as the measure of identity for such a study, since this latter version of the scale is regarded as having stronger and more internally-consistent interpersonal items in comparison its predecessor (Adams et al., 1987). Meanwhile, if the interview method is used, one may administer Archer and Waterman's (1982) expanded version of the interview procedure, which includes interview questions in the content areas of marriage and the role of the spouse, as well as children and the role of the parent. In a similar vein, it might also be tempting to examine, in much greater detail than was done in this study, the role specific content areas of identity in influencing the overall subscale correlations between identity status and marital satisfaction. This could be accomplished, once again, by computing separate subscale scores for each of the EOMEIS-2 content areas being examined.

A strong case could also be made that other measures of ego identity besides the EOMEIS-1, may not yield the same results as this measure when applied to a sample of married individuals. Work must be done, therefore, to replicate this study's findings using other comparable identity instruments. In particular, a future study may be done which utilizes a more "general" measure to assess ego identity levels among married couples, including

perhaps, a measure like the EPSI identity subscale which attempts to measure ego identity along a single bipolar continuum of ego identity achievement versus identity diffusion. Unlike the EOMEIS-1, such an instrument would be less "constrained" by Marcia's identity status paradigm.

It would also be interesting to attempt to relate an identity measure to other measures of relationship functioning or satisfaction which have never been examined previously in relation to ego identity. For example, after noting the lack of any relationship found between the identity measure and passionate love, a future researcher may decide instead to examine the possible association between companionate love and ego identity. Other indicators of relationship functioning which may also be examined in relation to ego identity might include: couple communication patterns, conflict resolution styles, frequency of sexual relations, frequency of spousal abuse, and so forth.

The design. A few points must be made here about the basic design of this study, which was essentially correlational. It could be strongly argued that incorporating a longitudinal design as well into a study such as this would have been an essential feature if one had hoped to determine unequivocally if ego identity status impacts on the subsequent marital stability of couples. As an example of this, a sample of newlywed or engaged couples could be administered the EOMEIS-1 to determine if their identity levels early on in their relationships were in any way predictive of later marital disharmony (e.g., 5-10 years later). Such an approach would be somewhat reminiscent of that used by

Kahn et al. (1985) to study ego identity in young adulthood and its potential relation to marital stability at midlife. Of course, a longitudinal study such as this would be difficult to complete, but in the final analysis would probably be necessary; since at the present time it is unclear to what extent the identity factors in this study were responsible for influencing the couples' marital problems (or lack of them), or whether the marital problems influenced the couples' identity levels. As an example of this, one could legitimately argue that being in an unstable marital situation may cause an individual to be in a state of crisis regarding his or her values and to score higher on the moratorium subscale--rather than the other way around. To explain further, individuals who are no longer satisfied with their present marital relationships, may begin to question their own values, or may even begin to look elsewhere outside of their relationships (such as in their careers, hobbies, etc.) for alternative sources of gratification that were once present in their relationships. Likewise, it could be argued that an unstable marital situation may perhaps cause a husband who was previously identity-achieved to lose his sense of identity, and to score lower on the identity achievement subscale. This may be particularly true if the husband's sense of identity has been strongly associated with the marital context that he has been in (J. Jamieson, personal communication, July 9, 1990). In a similar manner, a stable marital situation may perhaps be found to foster identity achievement among certain individuals who are currently in a state of crisis regarding their beliefs. Marital stability

may even be found to cause the partners in such relationships to become more similar in their identity status levels (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, July 8, 1990). These arguments, however, assume that identity status can be considered to be both a stable "trait" variable (at least after the college years), as well as to some extent a fluctuating "state" variable; that is, a variable which is capable of influencing, and at the same time of being influenced by, the relationships that individuals are currently involved in. While both perspectives on this issue are probably very important in this discussion (with the trait perspective, in my opinion, being perhaps the more important of the two perspectives) only a sound longitudinal study can adequately address this issue of causality between the variables.

Identity content versus process/structure. The thorny issue of spousal identity content similarity, and how this may be masking or "clouding" the identity status-marital success relationship, needs to be addressed further in subsequent research. Perhaps a separate study could even be devoted to just this one topic. Such an approach would be consistent with Grotevant and Adams' (1984, p. 437) suggestion that identity researchers should "coordinate their efforts more closely with domain-specific literatures that already exist" (see also Waterman, 1985, for a thorough discussion). It might be necessary, however, for a future study on this issue to include a more structured and comprehensive questionnaire which could assess individuals' attitudes and identity commitments in a much more precise manner, that is, more precise than the measures which were

used in this study. Keep in mind, that one problem with the open-ended question and the accompanying similarity rating item that were administered to the subjects in this study, was that these measures tended to be too vague and unstructured. Specifically, they allowed for the possibility that unhappy spouses might provide lower similarity ratings (or a greater number of spousal differences and fewer spousal similarities) because the marital unhappiness experienced by these individuals may have caused them to become more "aware" of their various marital differences and/or more willing to disclose them--rather than the spousal differences leading to marital instability (K. Rotenberg, personal communication, April, 1988). Once again, a longitudinal design may be applicable here.

Concluding remarks. To summarize briefly, future researchers who wish to explore further this relationship between ego identity status and marital success, may wish to drop the objective criterion group distinction as was used in this study, and simply attempt to obtain a very large, more random sample of couples which could then be tested under highly standardized and supervised conditions. A long-term longitudinal study involving such a sample of couples might also circumvent some of the problems associated with having to match two groups of volunteer couples on their background/procedural/sampling characteristics. For example, a longitudinal study could be undertaken in which a single cohort sample of cohabitating/engaged couples are tested on their identity levels and then followed-up approximately 10 years later to determine if their earlier identity scores were useful in



discriminating between: (a) the couples who became married versus those who did not, and (b) the married couples who became divorced (or unstably-married) versus those who remained married.

It might also be interesting to see if the results of this research can be replicated in other marital populations, particularly in a large sample of couples obtained from a major American city. One could argue, for example, that the inability of this study to observe a significant relationship between the wives' identity achievement scores and their intimacy and/or marital satisfaction scores, may have been due in part to the traditional sex role attitudes that still persist in Thunder Bay in 1990. Along a similar line, research could be done with married couples which tends to treat the housewives and the career women in the sample separately, in order to see if this distinction affects the correlations between the wives' identity scores and their intimacy and/or marital satisfaction scores (W. T. Melnyk, personal communication, July 9, 1990).

Of course, one might also suggest that this study's findings should be replicated in a sample of couples obtained from outside of the North American culture. It could be argued, for example, that the results of this research may have turned out quite differently had the study been undertaken in another culture or era--particularly in a culture possessing somewhat different attitudes than contemporary North American society concerning identity/intimacy issues, divorce and its associated stigma, and the relative importance of parental influence on mate choice (Erikson, on the other hand, might argue that many of the effects

observed in this study should hold for most couples in most cultures).

It might also be worthwhile to attempt to replicate this study's findings using a much younger sample of couples; including perhaps, a sample of college-attending or college-aged couples who may not necessarily be married, but who are exclusively dating (or exdating). This is actually an important consideration, since it was primarily this very age group that the identity status paradigm was originally geared for. One may even begin to see stronger correlations emerging when studying a much younger sample of couples. In fact, with a younger sample of couples, one might even begin to see an increased role for the women's identity achievement scores in helping to predict intimacy and/or relationship satisfaction. Along a similar line, research could also be done which involves other types of relationship dyads, such as same-sex college roommates, or even homosexual couples, to determine if ego identity status is related in any way to the functioning in these types of relationships as well.

#### Possible Clinical Implications

In the opinion of this author, by the time a couple has entered marital counselling or become legally separated, chances are that their relationship in most cases cannot be salvaged, and divorce is an inevitable event. Although this is a somewhat cynical position to take on this matter, it is one which I and many others feel is correct (e.g., W. T. Melnyk, personal

communication, October, 1988). For this reason, many marital counselors have elected to get out of the marriage counselling business so-to-speak, and have chosen instead to focus their efforts on providing quality marriage preparation classes to young couples. The logic behind such an approach states that "an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure."

It is quite possible that the results of this research may actually have some relevance to this basic approach of educating and preparing couples for marriage. For example, during such marriage preparation classes, engaged individuals (especially men) could be made more aware of the important need that they should have achieved a secure sense of their own identities before they embark on a lifelong union with another person of the opposite sex. Couples could also be informed about the dangers involved when one or both of the partners in a relationship is currently experiencing the full-blown identity crisis. To achieve this, OM-EIS questionnaires could even be administered directly to such couples during their classes. Couples could also be told, that in addition to the need that the partners score at low levels on both the moratorium and the diffusion subscales for their relationships to have a good chance of succeeding, that it may also be beneficial if both they and their partner score at similar levels on these measures. In other words, couples may be informed of the requirement that there not be too great a disparity in the two partners' degree of current thinking or struggling about their identity concerns; such that one of the partners may be too self-preoccupied with his or her own thoughts

or problems to meet the relationship needs of the other partner. In a similar manner, couples could also be administered the EPSI intimacy subscale and similarly informed about the importance of spouses (especially the husbands) scoring high on this measure for their relationships to have a good chance of succeeding.

Of course, engaged couples who are subsequently flagged as "danger couples" on the basis of their test scores, cannot be realistically told by a respectable counselor that they "should not get married." However, such couples may be tactfully informed about the implications of their test scores, and possibly even recommended to "delay" their date of matrimony until the particular identity issue in question can be successfully resolved (possibly through the help of counselling). In providing their recommendations, however, counselors should attempt as always to refrain from being overly judgmental. In particular, counselors should avoid any sort of "finger-pointing" behaviour which specifically puts all of the blame squarely on the shoulders of just one of the partners in a relationship; possibly because that person's test scores appear to be problematic, whereas the scores of the other partner appear not to be. As is generally the case in marital counselling, attempting to treat the couple as a whole as the "patient," rather than just treating the individuals in it, may be a wise practice.

Raskin (1985) has recently elaborated on such potential applications of both the identity status and the intimacy status paradigms to counselling with couples. She has presented several hypothetical case histories of couples who are said to have

experienced varying degrees of marital conflict. Raskin suggests that such conflicts may arise out of deficits or "mismatches" among partners in terms of their identity or intimacy concerns. She proposes (much like Blank and Blank, 1968) that current marital problems may be reflective of unresolved early developmental difficulties, and that encouraging spouses to explore and increase their self-knowledge, as well as to increase their capacity for mutual empathy, may yield gains in identity and intimacy formation which may prove beneficial as well for the present marital relationships that these individuals are in. Raskin goes on to argue that interventions which have been designed to enhance psychosocial maturity have been shown to be effective in school settings, and she proposes that similar strategies may also be applied to marital counselling situations. In short, rather than viewing the early developmental deficits of spouses as being largely unresponsive to change (as many counselors do) Raskin suggests that counselors instead, should attempt to incorporate such factors into their present conceptual frameworks for understanding couples and their various marital problems. Yet at the same time, Raskin concedes that her notions would probably only apply to a very limited age range of couples, perhaps ages 21-35. She suggests that after this age group, there may be only limited potential for enhancing individuals' capacities for either identity or intimacy growth.

But what specifically could be said to such couples during their counselling sessions? Perhaps couples could be interviewed, one spouse at a time, much in the same way that subjects are

interviewed using Marcia's interview technique. This would allow a particular counselor an opportunity to determine the relative identity levels of each partner in a relationship, and then in turn, to perhaps provide the couple with some insight into the key identity issues and concerns as they pertain to the marital context. In particular, all concerned parties could be made more aware of any potential mismatches or deficits that may exist in the identity levels of two partners in relationship. Perhaps counselors could also ask such couples if these mismatches or deficits are affecting in any adverse way the perceived quality of the marital relationship, and if so, in what way could such a situation be rectified? Counselors could work closely with couples to encourage the partners in such relationships to talk openly with each other about their identity concerns, and they may even suggest possible resolutions to such identity issues. For example, a counselor could encourage one partner in a relationship who is currently in a state of crisis (and may have been for some time) to try to eventually seek closure on his or her identity issues, and to in effect, "catch up" to the other partner who may have already long ago achieved a strong personal sense of identity. Similarly, the partner in such a relationship who has already achieved an identity, may be encouraged by the counselor to be more "patient," and to allow the other partner sufficient time to find his or her own identity.

As for the other measures which were employed in this study: the Quality Marriage Index, the Passionate Love Scale, and the open-ended question; practitioners may find these instruments to

be quite useful as well, specifically, in getting distressed spouses to open up and communicate their feelings about each other and their relationships. In fact, a few of the counselors that I spoke with, actually mentioned to me that the couple that they had given out their respective questionnaire package to, had felt that the questionnaires themselves appeared to enhance the the couple's degree of communication (e.g., J. Cosgrove, personal communication, April, 1989). It was suggested that filling out these measures may have given the partners in these relationships an interesting common endeavor to participate in, which in turn, may have gotten them thinking and talking about their relationships. Such a temporary form of "communication enhancement" may also prove beneficial as well to those couples who are presently in "average marriages," or who may find themselves to be presently happily-married but are currently attending some sort of "marital enhancement" workshop or retreat. In a similar manner, Elaine Hatfield and Richard Rapson have frequently used the Passionate Love Scale in their own clinical work with troubled adolescents (as reported in Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986). They find the instrument to be quite useful in opening up conversations with teens about the nature of love, sex, and intimacy. To quote Hatfield and Sprecher: "It gives therapists a chance to talk about the skills adolescents must develop if they are to be capable of shaping a passionate encounter into a relationship which is companionate and intimate as well" (1986, p. 406).

Of course, these are all interesting suggestions. But first,

considerably more work must be done to firmly establish the empirical validity of any such clinical applications. In particular, more work must be done to reaffirm the ability of the various measures which were used in this study (particularly the identity measure) to reliably distinguish between clinical versus normative samples of couples. Also, for any such clinical applications involving the identity measure to have credibility, future researchers must endeavour to formulate viable explanations to account for the observed relationships between the identity factors and the measures of relationship functioning. Perhaps by also interviewing couples, or by even video-taping them during their interactions, it may become possible to gain further insight into the possible mechanisms by which identity can impact on marital relationships. Of course, most importantly of all, future research must endeavour through sound longitudinal studies to determine if the measures which were used in this study can be used to reliably predict later marital dissatisfaction and instability among couples. If this can be accomplished, then it may become possible on a much larger scale to reduce such dissatisfaction and instability in couples, and in turn, reduce one of the major problems facing our society.



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## APPENDIX A:

(Pretesting) Demographic Questionnaire

Instructions: Your cooperation in answering the following questionnaire would be greatly appreciated. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and may be of use in a study dealing with the role of personality factors in relationships.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a full-time student? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you employed full-time? \_\_\_\_\_

- . Could you please briefly describe the job that you had over the majority of the past 5 years. Give a brief job title or description in the appropriate spaces provided below.

Part-time employment \_\_\_\_\_  
Full-time employment \_\_\_\_\_

- . How much education have you completed?

Some grade school \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade school diploma \_\_\_\_\_  
Some high school \_\_\_\_\_  
High school graduate \_\_\_\_\_  
Training beyond high school \_\_\_\_\_  
Some university \_\_\_\_\_  
University undergraduate degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Some postgraduate work \_\_\_\_\_  
Postgraduate or professional degree \_\_\_\_\_

- . If you are not originally from the Thunder Bay area, place a check (✓) beside the response which best describes the previous region that you came from (i.e., the place where you grew up or spent most of your youth).

\_\_\_\_\_ Rural \_\_\_\_\_ Small town \_\_\_\_\_ Suburban \_\_\_\_\_ Urban

- . What is your religious affiliation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Catholic \_\_\_\_\_ Greek Orthodox \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish  
\_\_\_\_\_ Protestant \_\_\_\_\_ None \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify)

- . Are you presently married (or separated)? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No.  
If Yes, have you or your spouse either seen a marriage counsellor (or some other similar professional regarding a problem in your marriage) within the past 18 months, or made any known steps towards dissolution in your relationship (i.e., sought out a divorce lawyer, filed for divorce, gotten separated, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No. [Note: if you are not presently married or separated, please return the questionnaire.]
5. What is your spouse's date of birth? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been married to your present spouse?

\_\_\_\_\_ Years          \_\_\_\_\_ Months          \_\_\_\_\_ Weeks

3. How long were you and your spouse "exclusively dating" prior to your marriage? [i.e., please give the total length of time that you and your partner were involved with each other on an exclusive basis prior to getting married.]

\_\_\_\_\_ Years          \_\_\_\_\_ Months          \_\_\_\_\_ Weeks

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B: PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS**

This questionnaire asks you to indicate the feelings and attitudes that you have about yourself and your present marital relationship. All answers will be kept strictly confidential and will hopefully provide information about the role of certain personality factors in relationships. Please be sure to state your name, as well as the name of your partner in the appropriate spaces provided below. After both you and your partner have completed the entire questionnaire, your papers will be collected and then your names will be "blacked out" and replaced with a random number in order to keep your responses anonymous. If you are interested in finding out about the results of the study once it is completed, an information package will be mailed out to all participants in several months which will provide more details.

While the questionnaire package appears at first glance to be somewhat lengthy, it requires only short answers and goes rather rapidly. Please be sure to read each item very carefully and try to answer all questions as honestly as possible.

Thank you very much for your participation in this study.

Sincerely,

George B. Schaut, M.A. candidate  
Department of Psychology  
Lakehead University

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C: EOMEIS-1

GROTEVANT &amp; ADAMS (1984)

Instructions: Read each item carefully and indicate to what degree it fits your own impressions about yourself. We are interested in knowing how these items either reflect or don't reflect how you perceive your own thoughts and feelings at this time. Indicate your answer on the questionnaire by either circling or underlining one of the six possible responses which are provided under each statement--ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." If a statement has more than one part, please indicate your reaction to the statement as a whole.

I haven't chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I'm just working at whatever is available until something better comes along.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- . When it comes to religion I just haven't found anything that appeals and I don't really feel the need to look.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

There's no single "life style" which appeals to me more than another.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- . Politics is something that I can never be too sure about because things change so fast. But I do think it's important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- . I'm still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what jobs will be right for me.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- i. I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- . I'm looking for an acceptable perspective for my own "life style" view, but haven't really found it yet.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

I haven't really considered politics. It just doesn't excite me much.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- . I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there's never really been any question since my parents said what they wanted.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

10. A person's faith is unique to each individual. I've considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I can believe.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

1. After considerable thought I've developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an ideal "life style" and don't believe anyone will be likely to change my perspective.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

2. I guess I'm pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

3. I'm really not interested in finding the right job, any job will do. It just seem to flow with what is available.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

4. I'm not so sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my mind but I'm not done looking yet.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

5. My own views on a desirable life style were taught to me by my parents and I don't see any need to question what they taught me.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------



16. There are so many different political parties and ideals. I can't decide which to follow until I figure it all out.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

- . It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

18. Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

19. In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self exploration.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

20. I've thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

1. My parents had it decided a long time ago what I should go into for employment and I'm following their plans.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

22. I've gone through a period of serious questions about faith and can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

23. My parents' views on life are good enough for me, I don't need anything else.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

24. I'm not sure about my political beliefs, but I'm trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

25. It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

26. I attend the same church as my family has always attended. I've never really questioned why.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

7. I guess I just kind of enjoy life in general, and I don't see myself living by any particular viewpoint to life.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

28. I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way or the other.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

29. I just can't decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many that have possibilities.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

30. I've never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parents it must be right for me.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

1. After a lot of self-examination I have established a very definite view on what my own life style will be.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

2. My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I've always gone along accepting what they have.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	---------------------	-------	----------	------------------------	----------------------

## APPENDIX D: THE QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX (QMI)

Norton (1983)

Instructions: Read each item carefully and indicate to what degree it fits your own impressions regarding the quality of your present relationship. Indicate your level of agreement with each statement by either circling or underlining one of the seven possible numbers which are provided in a scale under each statement -- ranging from "very strong disagreement" (1) to "very strong agreement" (7).

We have a good marriage.

very strong  
disagreement

very strong  
agreement

(1)      (2)      (3)      (4)      (5)      (6)      (7)

My relationship with my partner is very stable.

very strong  
disagreement

very strong  
agreement

(1)      (2)      (3)      (4)      (5)      (6)      (7)

Our marriage is strong.

very strong  
disagreement

very strong  
agreement

(1)      (2)      (3)      (4)      (5)      (6)      (7)

My relationship with my partner makes me happy.

very strong  
disagreement

very strong  
agreement

(1)      (2)      (3)      (4)      (5)      (6)      (7)

I really feel like part of a team with my partner.

very strong  
disagreement

very strong  
agreement

(1)      (2)      (3)      (4)      (5)      (6)      (7)

Instructions: On the scale below, indicate the point which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered, in your present relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness which most people get from a long-term relationship. The scale gradually increases on the right side for those few who experience extreme joy in a relationship and decreases on the left side for those who are extremely unhappy.

very  
unhappy

happy

perfectly  
happy

(1)    (2)    (3)    (4)    (5)    (6)    (7)    (8)    (9)    (10)

**APPENDIX E: SUPPLEMENTARY MEASURES OF INTIMACY, PASSIONATE LOVE,  
AND SPOUSAL ATTITUDE SIMILARITY**

**THE ERIKSON PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGE INVENTORY (EPSI), intimacy subscale items only**

Rosenthal, Gurney, & Moore (1981)

Instructions: Read each item below and indicate to what degree it fits your own impressions about yourself. Try to be as careful and as honest as possible when answering these questions (your responses will be kept strictly confidential). Remember, we are interested in how well these items either reflect or don't reflect the way you actually think, feel, and behave at this time. Indicate your level of agreement with each statement by either circling or underlining one of the five possible responses which are provided under each statement -- ranging from "hardly ever true" (1), to "almost always true" (5).

I get embarrassed when someone begins to tell me personal things.<sup>a</sup>

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever true				almost always true

I'm warm and friendly.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever true				almost always true

It's important to me to be completely open with my friends.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever true				almost always true

I keep what I really think and feel to myself.<sup>a</sup>

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever true				almost always true

I think it's crazy to get too involved with people.<sup>a</sup>

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever true				almost always true

<sup>a</sup>Reversed items.

I care deeply for others.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever				almost always
true				true

I'm basically a loner.<sup>a</sup>

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever				almost always
true				true

I prefer not to show too much of myself to others.<sup>a</sup>

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever				almost always
true				true

. Being alone with other people makes me feel uncomfortable.<sup>a</sup>

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever				almost always
true				true

10. I find it easy to make close friends.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
hardly ever				almost always
true				true

### THE PASSIONATE LOVE SCALE (PLS)

(short version)

Hatfield & Sprecher (1986)

Instructions: In this section of the questionnaire you will be asked to describe how you feel when you are "passionately" in love. Some common terms for this feeling are passionate love, infatuation, love sickness, a crush, puppy love, or obsessive love. Please think of the person with whom you are presently married to. Keep this person in mind as you complete this section of the questionnaire. Try to tell us how you feel during those times when your

feelings are the most intense (all of your answers will be kept strictly confidential). Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement below by either circling or underlining one of the nine possible numbers which are provided in a scale under each statement -- ranging from "Not at all true" (1), to "Moderately true" (5), to "Definitely true" (9).

I would feel deep despair if my partner left me.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

- . Sometimes I feel I can't control my thoughts; they are obsessively on my partner.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

I feel happy when I'm doing something to make my partner happy.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

I would rather be with my partner than anyone else.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

- . I'd get jealous if I thought my partner were falling in love with someone else.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

I yearn to know all about my partner.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

I want my partner -- physically, emotionally, mentally.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

I have an endless appetite for affection from my partner.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

For me, my partner is the perfect romantic partner.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

1. I sense my body responding when my partner touches me.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

. My partner always seems to be on my mind.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

2. I want my partner to know me -- my thoughts, my fears, and my hopes.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

3. I eagerly look for signs indicating my partner's desire for me.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

4. I possess a powerful attraction for my partner.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true

5. I get extremely depressed when things don't go right in my relationship with my partner.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Not at all				Moderately				Definitely
true				true				true





**APPENDIX F**

Research Proposal Sent to Participating Individuals, Agencies,  
Institutions, and the Senate Ethics Advisory Committee

## Research Proposal

### A Brief Report

Submitted by George B. Schaut

M.A. Candidate, Dept. of Psychology

Lakehead University

April 12, 1989.

The study being described here pertains to a master's thesis in psychology entitled: "Ego Identity Status in Stably and Unstably Married Couples." The research is being supervised by Dr. Kenneth Rotenberg and by Dr. Brian O'Connor of the Psychology Department at Lakehead University. The study has met the basic requirements of the department as a topic suitable for an M.A. thesis. In fact, included with this report is a "letter of sanction" which has been certified by Dr. O'Connor.

Briefly speaking, the study involves married couples being administered a straightforward personality and marital-quality questionnaire. The sections which follow in this report will attempt to summarize the specific nature of this project.

Purpose of the Research: In general terms, the study hopes to assess the relevance of Erik Erikson's theory of identity development to marital success. The proposed study represents the first significant attempt to apply a measure of Eriksonian ego identity to the study of actual heterosexual couples. The emphasis throughout this research will be on gauging the level of "similarity" that exists between spouses in the extent of crisis and commitment surrounding their ideological identity commitments. Thus, this study relates somewhat to the more general issue in marital research/social psychology of "similarity versus complementarity" (i.e., "birds of a feather flock together" vs. "opposites attract"). The study also hopes to assess whether such similarity in terms of "ego identity status" also enhances the present marital stability and/or marital satisfaction of a couple. "Marital stability," in this context, refers to whether or not a couple has reported some recent step towards dissolution in their relationship and/or some recent involvement in marital counselling. Marital satisfaction, on the other hand, relates more to a couple's overall "happiness," or the couple's global evaluation of the quality of their present relationship, as operationalized by a short paper-and-pencil test. Thus, the two primary hypotheses in the present study are: (a) that "stably-married" partners should be somewhat more

"similar" in their identity status classifications or scores than one would expect by chance (i.e., more similar than the same group of couples when "randomly-paired"); and (b) these same stably-married individuals should be somewhat more similar in terms of their identity status classifications and scores than a comparable group of "unstably-married" couples. It is further suggested that an interesting association may exist between ego identity status and marital satisfaction, and that this relation may to some extent be mediated by either Eriksonian intimacy or "passionate" love. It is hoped that the findings from such research will have some relevance to practitioners in marital counselling centres, as well as to researchers who are interested in more general issues concerning identity and intimacy formation. From the standpoint of the couples who are actually participating in this study, such a project could provide them with a greater degree of insight into themselves and their marital relationships. This study will also provide married individuals with an opportunity to participate in a common endeavor together with their partner which may enhance their degree of communication and earn the couple extra money. Moreover, a small proportion of our sample will consist of couples where one member of the dyad is an Introductory Psychology student at Lakehead University, and hence, will be eligible to receive a 1% bonus in his or her final mark in that course.

Research Instruments: In addition to providing some basic demographic sorts of data (i.e., age, gender, religious affiliation, etc.) subjects will also be asked to describe, in general terms, the attitudes that they have about themselves and their present marital relationships. This will be accomplished using self-report "Likert-type" questionnaires which are provided for your inspection with this report. These paper-and-pencil instruments will include: (a) "The Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status," or "EOMEIS-1"; (b) the "Quality Marriage Index," or "QMI"; (c) the intimacy subscale of the "EPSI"; (d) the "Passionate Love Scale," or "PLS," and (e) an (optional) open-ended question (devised by myself). If you closely examine these measures, you will notice, that although they are somewhat "personal" in nature, they are nonetheless basically "harmless"--that is, they contain no specific references to potentially-embarrassing aspects of a couple's relationship (i.e., aspects of a marriage which some might view as being sexual, illegal, humiliating, etc.).

Basic Methodology: In the proposed study, married and separated couples will be tested under more-or-less standardized and supervised conditions. Wherever possible, both members of a couple will complete the same questionnaire package, in the same place, and at the same time. Although couples should confer when completing the preliminary "Demographic" Questionnaire, they must answer the main questionnaire package independently of each

other, that is, they should be separated into different nearby areas when answering these questionnaires. Couples will be told to schedule about half-an-hour of their time in order to comfortably complete the questionnaires. Afterwards, couples will be paid \$10 each (i.e., \$5 per subject) as a reward for their participation (unless they are receiving bonus marks, or they have specifically requested not to be paid). Testing for this study can take place at any convenient time, and in any relatively quiet, undisturbed environment where subjects can be comfortably seated for about half-an-hour. In fact, many of the couples in this study will be tested in the upstairs' psychology testing rooms on the Lakehead University campus (i.e., SNX 2002 E/F). Although the questionnaires are essentially self-explanatory, and are in effect, "self-administering," subjects should be encouraged (by whomever is administering the test) to answer all Likert items, that is, to not leave any question blank. Whenever possible, subjects will be tested directly by myself, although in certain situations it may become necessary to approach practitioners at various community agencies in order to gain access to subjects who are in troubled marriages. In the majority of these cases, the staff at these agencies (e.g., counselors, secretaries, etc.) may act as "proxies" in order to help administer the questionnaires. This is, of course, a necessary step, in light of the pervasive constraints of confidentiality which exist in most mental health institutions and counselling centres.

Procedures for Obtaining Informed Consent: Subjects will be asked to examine and to sign a one-page "cover letter" that accompanies the questionnaire package. This letter will help to explain the basic nature of the study. A copy of this letter (entitled "Preliminary Instructions") is included along with this report. For those subjects who are not interested in receiving (or who are not eligible to receive) bonus marks for their participation in this study, the above procedure is strictly optional. Subjects will also be given the option of signing a one-page "consent form" which deals with many of the same issues as are dealt with in the cover letter. Once again, this consent form, like the cover letter, is strictly optional for those subjects who are not interested in receiving, or who are not eligible to receive, bonus marks for their participation in this study (Intro. Psyc. students will be told verbally that they must sign the consent form). Of course, the consent form, in accordance with strict APA guidelines, also clearly explains to subjects that they will not be "harmed" or "deceived" in any way by the study. The consent form does, however, acknowledge that some participants may experience a certain degree of discomfort due to the personal nature of the questions. Notice also, that the "consent form" and that the "cover letter" refer to two clearly distinct sheets of paper in this study's apparatus, and hence, are clearly labeled as such.

Procedures for Ensuring Anonymity and Confidentiality: Subjects will be told verbally that they do not have to provide their full names, signatures, addresses, or phone numbers on any part of the questionnaires or the cover letter if they feel uncomfortable about doing so. If requested, subjects will be allowed to sign the cover letter using just their initials, or even nothing at all. However, introductory psychology students who wish to obtain bonus marks for their participation in this study must clearly state their full names on the cover letter and the consent form in order to receive such credit. After the questionnaires have been collected, all of the cover letters will be removed (with the names etc. having already been "blacked out") and will eventually be destroyed; at which point each couple will be identified in this study's analysis by a single random number (this procedure is also mentioned in the accompanying cover letter itself). Notice also, that the consent form as well as the cover letter can be easily kept separate and distinct from the rest of the questionnaire package when it is being handed in to the researcher. This means that all of the identifying information for a particular subject can be kept completely separate from that person's responses (such that there is no way for anyone to associate a person's responses with that person's name, address, etc.). All completed questionnaires can then be placed in large sealed envelopes to further ensure anonymity and safekeeping.

Means of Discussing Risks/Benefits with Participants: Although all potential subjects will be told that they are being given the opportunity to earn \$5 (or a 1% bonus) by participating in an interesting, informative study; it will also be clearly explained to subjects at the time of testing that they may discontinue their participation in this study at any moment if they sincerely feel that the questionnaire items are in any way offensive, damaging, or personal. Of course, this option is also clearly explained to subjects in the consent form as well. Those subjects who do decide to withdraw partway through the experiment will still receive their monetary or academic reward as promised.

Process of Dissemination of Research Results to Participants: After the study has been completed, a brief, easy-to-read information package will be mailed out to all interested participants, including those individuals who helped to administer the questionnaires and/or find subjects. This standardized memo will attempt to summarize the basic results of the research (including its implications). Once again, this procedure is described in the accompanying cover letter. Of course, it is also hoped that a paper based on this study's findings may eventually become accepted for publication by a reputable journal in psychology. If this occurs, than all of the individuals who helped to administer questionnaires and/or find subjects on my behalf will each be sent a copy of this article.

"Consent Form"

To All Interested Participants:

I, (print your name) \_\_\_\_\_, hereby consent to participate in a psychology experiment which is being conducted by George Schaut, an M.A. candidate in the Department of Psychology at Lakehead University. I understand that this study pertains to George's master's thesis which is being supervised by Dr. Ken Rotenberg and Dr. Brian O'Connor of the Psychology Department at Lakehead University. I also understand that if I am a student in Introductory Psychology at Lakehead University, I will be eligible to receive a 1% bonus on my final mark in that course by participating in this study. If I am not an introductory psychology student, I understand that I will be eligible to receive \$5 for my participation. I fully understand that Lakehead University is the only institution which is directly sanctioning or endorsing this study.

I realize that this study involves a straightforward (25 minute) anonymous questionnaire which asks me to evaluate, in general terms, the attitudes that I have about myself and my present marital relationship. I understand that despite the personal nature of the questionnaire items (and the fact that some subjects may find some of the questionnaire items discomfoting), that this study does not involve any form of "deception," and that it will not harm me in any way, either physically or psychologically. I further understand that all of my results will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous, and that if I wish, I may withdraw from the research at any point in time for whatever reason. I realize that even if I do withdraw, I will still be eligible to receive a 1% bonus credit (or \$5, if applicable) for my participation.

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Experimenter's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX G:

## Letter of Introduction Sent to Participating Agencies

From: George B. Schaut  
221 Superiorview Dr., Apt 102  
Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7A 7W9.  
April 12, 1989.

To: (individual affiliated with participating agency/institution)

Regarding our phone conversation earlier, I decided to send you as quickly as possible the set of questionnaires pertaining to my M.A. thesis study involving married and separated couples. I've included a four-page report along with these questionnaires which will help to explain more clearly everything that you need to know about the research. This is basically the same report as was submitted to the Senate Ethics Advisory Committee here at Lakehead University in order to get my study approved for use with human subjects. I've even included a "letter of sanction," and an optional "consent form" for you to have a quick look at as well.

As far as the questionnaires themselves are concerned, they are basically self-explanatory, and are in effect, "self-administering." All that an experimenter really has to do, is tell the couples beforehand, that if they wish, they may discontinue their participation in this study at any moment if they feel in any way embarrassed or offended by any of the test items. Subjects should also be clearly told that they do not necessarily have to provide their full names, signatures, addresses, or phone numbers on any part of the questionnaires if they feel uncomfortable about doing so.

Of course, the easiest way to test a couple is to simply have that couple stay an extra half-an-hour at the agency. They can be seated in the agency's waiting room (or some other spare room) under the watchful eye of a secretary or a counselor. After each couple has completed the "Demographic Questionnaire," the partners must be separated in such a way that they can no longer discuss the items on the attitude and marital-quality questionnaires (I've reminded both couples and practitioners of this procedure by clearly writing it in pen on the front pages of the questionnaires). Notice also, that I've provided enough materials in this envelope for 2 couples to be administered the test. After each couple has completed their respective questionnaires, the materials can be put back in their original envelopes and then mailed back to me. Subjects should be encouraged to not leave any questions blank. By the way, make sure that when the questionnaires are being mailed back to me, that the envelopes are securely sealed, with either scotch tape or



APPENDIX H

Information Package Sent to Subjects and Participating Agencies  
 After the Completion of the Study

From: George B. Schaut  
 Box 432, Sudbury  
 Ontario, P3E 4P6.  
 July 9, 1990.

To: All individuals who participated in George Schaut's  
 M.A. Thesis study

On behalf of the Department of Psychology at Lakehead University, and myself, I would like to thank all of those generous individuals who participated in my M.A. thesis study involving married and separated couples. The study was a tremendous success, and we hope to publish the results of the research shortly.

Briefly speaking, my study involved married individuals filling out a brief questionnaire package which asked them to disclose the attitudes that they held about themselves, as well as their attitudes concerning their partner and their present marital relationships. One of the questionnaires ("The Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status") asked individuals to describe the degree of "exploration" and "commitment" surrounding their ideological beliefs in the domains of politics, religion, career, and general life philosophy. This questionnaire was designed to assess the extent to which individuals had gone through (or were going through) a "crisis period" in their personal ideological beliefs, as well as the extent to which such individuals had achieved a sense of "firm commitment" in their beliefs and had made "unwavering decisions" regarding what they believed in. A second questionnaire (the "Quality Marriage Index") asked individuals to describe, in very general terms, how satisfied or "happy" they were with their present marital relationships; while a third questionnaire asked individuals to describe the extent to which they could establish intimate relationships in general with individuals of either sex, where such relationships are characterized by caring, closeness, openness, and so forth. A fourth questionnaire, meanwhile, asked subjects to disclose the feelings of "passionate love" that they held for their partners, while a final open-ended question asked individuals to report the degree of similarity which they felt existed between themselves and their partners in terms of their attitudes, opinions, traits, abilities, etc..

The sample for this study consisted of 78 volunteer married couples, of which 40 were designated as "stable" and 38 as "unstable," on the basis of whether or not the couple had reported (in the pretesting "Demographic Questionnaire") any recent step towards dissolution in their relationship (e.g., separation) and/or any recent involvement in marital counselling. The couples were obtained with some difficulty from a large number of various settings, agencies, and regions, and every attempt was made to ensure total anonymity of their responses.

All of the data from the couples were coded in terms of numbers and letters and then loaded into a MicroVAX II mainframe computer system at Lakehead University. The data were then analyzed using the SPSS-X Statistical (software) Package for the Social Sciences. Overall, it was noted that spousal similarity in terms of identity formation levels tended to be associated with somewhat enhanced marital stability. Speci-

fically, the couples in the stable group were found to be somewhat more similar in comparison to those in the unstable group in terms of the two partners' moratorium and diffusion scores (which relate to the degree to which individuals are currently struggling or experimenting with their identity concerns). This modest spousal similarity effect suggested that in those relationships where only one of the partners had achieved a strong sense of personal identity while the other partner was still searching for his or her own identity, that such relationships may be more likely to be unstable. Similarly, among those relationships where one of the partners is still searching for an identity while the other partner has "given up" so-to-speak (or has never really attempted to find an identity) it is suggested that there may be a greater tendency for marital problems in these types of relationships as well. Perhaps in such relationships, the partner who is currently involved in the "identity crisis" may be too self-preoccupied or obsessed with his or her own identity thoughts or concerns to adequately meet the relationship needs of the other partner. Alternatively, a partner who has already achieved a strong sense of identity may be critical (or is perceived by the other partner as being highly critical) of the other partner's lack of identity commitments and/or exploration attempts. It is proposed that only a sound, long-term, longitudinal study involving more extensive measures can adequately address such issues.

In addition to this similarity factor, the data also suggested that the "absolute levels of identity formation" found in individual spouses (i.e., regardless of the degree of similarity within each couple) may also be a factor which helps to influence marital satisfaction and stability. Specifically, those husbands in this study who had achieved an identity with respect to their ideological beliefs were found to be more likely to be stably-married as compared to those husbands who were not identity-achieved (the identity achievement levels of the wives, however, did not appear to be significantly related to marital satisfaction levels, although for both sexes, being currently high in the identity crisis was associated with poor marital functioning). Similarly, the capacity of a husband to be intimate in terms of his relationships with other people in general was found to be positively associated with a couple's marital satisfaction and stability, although the wife's capacity for intimacy did not appear to be systematically related to marital satisfaction or stability. As expected, passionate love and spousal attitude similarity measures were found to be positively related to marital satisfaction and stability; however, contrary to expectations, passionate love did not appear to be systematically related to identity achievement. Thus, it was tentatively concluded on the basis of these results, that the chances of a marriage being successful may be enhanced to some extent if neither partner is currently experiencing the "identity crisis," and if the husband in particular has achieved a secure sense of his own identity and is capable of being intimate. In addition, the results of the study were also interpreted as lending some support to the popular notions of Erik Erikson and many others in psychology who have strongly contended that the achievement of a strong sense of identity in one's youth may provide a foundation for success in one's later heterosexual relationships--including perhaps one's marital relationship. The results also suggested a number of important clinical implications that should be carefully noted by both marriage counselors as well as those involved in marriage preparation classes. In particular, the study seemed to indicate that potential marriage partners should be at relatively advanced levels of identity formation before they seriously consider embarking on a life-long commitment to a single partner in a relationship. However, the results also suggested that even among those couples where both partners are found to be at fairly low levels of identity formation, that such relationships might still be found to

APPENDIX I

Names, Addresses, and Phone Numbers of Individuals  
Who Helped to Administer the Questionnaires and/or Find Subjects

(listed alphabetically according to individuals' last names)

Richard Brzeczek  
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Chicago, Illinois  
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35 Algoma St. N., Thunder Bay  
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John Cosgrove  
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Ron Schilke  
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Douglas Searle  
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Gail Selley  
Family Services of Peel  
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Mary Warmbrod  
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Winnipeg, Manitoba  
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(204) 943-3741.

APPENDIX J

Names, Addresses, and Phone Numbers of Individuals  
Who Developed the Tests Which Were Used in this Study  
(and who gave advice on how to use the tests)

Dr. Gerald R. Adams  
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Utah State University  
Logan, Utah  
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Dr. Elaine Hatfield  
Dept. of Psychology  
University of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
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117 TC Building  
Memphis State University  
Memphis, Tennessee  
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Parkville, Victoria  
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(011-61-3) 344-6343.

**APPENDIX K**

Summary Tables for Analyses of Variance



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Table K-1

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Marital Satisfaction

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	136.693	2	68.347	55.059	.000
Sex	.192		.192	.155	.695
Marital stability	136.501		136.501	109.963	.000
2-Way interaction	.152		.152	.122	.727
Explained	136.845	2	45.615	36.747	.000
Residual	188.683	152	1.241		
Total	325.527	155	2.100		

Table K-2

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Passionate Love

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	81.706	2	40.853	4.037	.020
Sex	2.537		2.537	.251	.617
Marital stability	79.169		79.169	7.822	.002
2-Way interaction	11.344		11.344	1.121	.291
Explained	93.051	2	31.017	3.065	.030
Residual	1538.352	152	10.121		
Total	1631.403	155	10.525		

Table K-3

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Spousal Attitude Similarity

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	1.786	2	.893	5.370	.006
Sex	.002		.002	.009	.923
Marital stability	1.785		1.785	10.735	.001
2-Way interaction	.216		.216	1.301	.256
Explained	2.003		.668	4.014	.009
Residual	20.789	125	.166		
Total	22.792	128	.178		

Table K-4

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Psychosocial Intimacy

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	22.697	2	11.349	6.851	.001
Sex	15.644		15.644	9.444	.003
Marital stability	7.053		7.053	4.258	.041
2-Way interaction	6.925		6.925	4.181	.043
Explained	29.623	2	9.874	5.961	.001
Residual	251.788	152	1.656		
Total	281.411	155	1.816		

Table K-5

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Identity Achievement Scores

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	99.653	2	49.826	1.964	.144
Sex	8.308		8.308	.328	.568
Marital stability	91.345		91.345	3.601	.060
2-Way interaction	55.571		55.571	2.191	.141
Explained	155.223		51.741	2.040	.111
Residual	3855.443	152	25.365		
Total	4010.667	155	25.875		

Table K-6

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Moratorium Scores

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	440.487	2	220.244	5.981	.003
Sex	89.256		89.256	2.424	.122
Marital stability	351.231		351.231	9.537	.002
2-Way interaction	2.822		2.822	.077	.782
Explained	443.309	2	147.770	4.013	.009
Residual	5597.691	152	36.827		
Total	6041.000	155	38.974		

Table K-7

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Foreclosure Scores

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	31.084	2	15.542	.404	.668
Sex	27.083		27.083	.705	.403
Marital stability	4.001		4.001	.104	.747
2-Way interaction	8.624		8.624	.224	.636
Explained	39.708	2	13.236	.344	.793
Residual	5841.286	152	38.430		
Total	5880.994	155	37.942		



Table K-8

Summary Table for the 2 x 2 (Sex x Marital Stability)ANOVA on Diffusion Scores

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance of F
Main effects	61.083	2	30.542	.743	.477
Sex	36.058		36.058	.877	.350
Marital stability	25.026		25.026	.609	.436
2-Way interaction	.061		.061	.001	.969
Explained	61.144	2	20.381	.496	.686
Residual	6249.029	152	41.112		
Total	6310.173	155	40.711		

Table K-9

Summary Table for the One-Way ANOVA on  
Marital Satisfaction by Identity Status

---

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>Sum of squares</u>	<u>Mean squares</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Significance of F</u>
Between groups	3	24.5367	8.1789	4.1303	.0076
With groups	152	300.9907	1.9802		
Total	155	325.5274			

---

Table K-10

Summary Table for the One-Way ANOVA on  
Passionate Love by Identity Status

---

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>Sum of squares</u>	<u>Mean squares</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Significance of F</u>
Between groups	3	34.4966	11.4989	1.0945	.3534
With groups	152	1596.9060	10.5060		
Total	155	1631.4026			

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Table K-11

Summary Table for the One-Way ANOVA on  
Psychosocial Intimacy by Identity Status

---

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>Sum of squares</u>	<u>Mean squares</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Significance of F</u>
Between groups	2	17.5591	5.8530	3.3718	.0201
With groups	152	263.8514	1.7359		
Total	155	281.4105			

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