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PERCEIVED CONTROL AND POWER IN MARRIAGE:
A STUDY OF MARITAL DECISION MAKING
AND TASK PERFORMANCE

A Dissertation Presented

By

Margaret E. Madden

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
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Psychology

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FOR MY PARENTS:
TO
Ross M. Madden
and
Magdalen Clarke Madden
AND IN MEMORY OF
Margaret Willie Madden

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ABSTRACT

The question of whether the balance of power in a marriage is associated with marital satisfaction has been investigated for many years without clear findings. Usually power has been defined in terms of which spouse makes the most final decisions, but decision making may reflect only one aspect of power. Because power may also involve who performs task activities, the present study asked respondents both about who makes decisions and about who performs tasks. Also, perceptions of personal control over decisions and activities were investigated because perceived control may be a mediator between marital power and satisfaction. It was hypothesized that marital satisfaction is more highly correlated with perceived control over decisions and activities than is frequency of decision making or task performance.

Thirty-seven married couples completed questionnaires regarding marital satisfaction, gender role attitudes, decision making, activity performance, perceived personal control over decisions and activities, and power. Most couples reported sharing decisions equally, but they described varied patterns of task performance. For both husbands and wives, only perceived control over activities was positively correlated with marital satisfaction. Exploratory models for each sex identified how other factors were related to satisfaction through their associations with perceived activity control. Perceptions of activity control were more important for women than for men. Women, but not men, also

indicated a negative correlation between task performance and perceived activity control: wives who performed more tasks felt they had less control over whether they did those tasks.

Thus, this study found that control over activities, rather than making final decisions or performing activities, was related to marital satisfaction, and that perceived activity control was a more important factor among wives than among husbands. This and other findings were discussed in regards to changing expectations about marital roles and general issues concerning the study of power in marriage.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The issue of how family power influences satisfaction with family life has been the focus of research for thirty years. This issue has probably been of continued interest to researchers for so long for a number of reasons. Generally, most researchers of human behavior would probably like to benefit people and are concerned about making people happier with their lives. Family relationships are surely a central feature in most lives and satisfying family relationships are likely to contribute greatly to a satisfying life. And because marriages are a core of family life, a happy marriage is often considered central to a happy individual life.

Also generally, power relationships between individuals both outside and within the family have been of great interest to researchers. Power and its concomitants, such as status, dominance, and influence, have a great impact on our society. Awareness of differential status probably begins early in childhood when one realizes that one's parents command tremendous power over one. Thus, understanding family power relationships is important for understanding power in the larger society.

Furthermore, changing norms about family roles include altered views of power in families. As childhood has become idealized, giving women's childcare role more status (e.g., Lomax, Kagan, & Rosenkrantz, 1978), and as women strive for greater equality, inequities in family

power patterns have been reduced. But the reduction of patriarchal authority patterns has accompanied conflict within families. It is a truism that marriage and the family are under stress today and one source of stress is probably the redefinition of power in these institutions. The question of whether marital power patterns influence satisfaction is more than theoretical, therefore, because it has implications for individual lives and societal structure. Yet, although we know quite a lot about particular aspects of family power, the literature is not entirely coherent concerning the connection between marital power and satisfaction.

Overview of Introduction

One reason that questions about marital power and satisfaction have not been answered adequately is that research on marital power, like other research on marriage, has not been integrated with any general theoretical conception of interpersonal relationships. Recently, Kelley, Berscheid, Christensen, Harvey, Huston, Levinger, McClintock, Peplau, and Peterson (in press) have proposed a theoretical conceptualization of relationships which may help to illuminate associations among variables that affect power. Kelley et al. propose that each partner's activity in a close relationship is composed of a chain of events that has "multiple strands" which consist of acts, feelings, and thoughts (for a more detailed discussion see pp. 20-21 below). Within the mind of an individual, these strands produce a personal chain of interconnected events. But in a close relationship, there are also relational causal connections between individuals' chains of

events. Two general processes exist, then, which may be of interest to students of close relationships, personal and relational events. One can take a "cross-section" of a relationship at either the relational or personal level and gain some useful information, but it may be difficult to compare two relationship variables if one is personal and the other is relational.

In the past, investigators of marital power have tended to focus on relational events, e.g., self-reports of spouses' behavior. Marital power has often been defined in research in terms of decision making and task performance. Decision making measures of power are most frequently used, defining the powerholder as the spouse who makes the most decisions (see pp. 8-12 below). But some researchers have utilized activity power definitions, in which the powerholder is considered the spouse who performs the majority of family activities (see pp. 12-13). Both of these definitions regard power as a relational event, describing what one partner is believed to do that influences the other partner.

Many studies have addressed the question of how power is associated with marital satisfaction (see pp. 18-19 below). However, the answer to that question has not been clear. For one thing, power has usually been defined solely in terms of decision making, ignoring other aspects of marital interaction that are connected with power. For another thing, marital satisfaction has been measured as a personal phenomenon involving the thoughts and feelings of individuals concerning their relationships, whereas power has been measured as a relational event. Therefore, because most power measures are at the relational level of

analysis, research may not be tapping personal events associated with power that influence the personal event of marital satisfaction (see pp. 21-31). Perhaps a personal construct related to power would be more highly associated with marital satisfaction than previously used measures of marital power.

One possible way to tap personal events that are correlated with power is to investigate the individual's interpretation of marital events rather than actual or reported interaction. The social psychological concept of perceived personal control refers to the individual's perceptions of control over his or her own outcomes. On one hand, perceived control is a personal facet of the concept of power; on the other hand, it is associated with other personal phenomena such as satisfaction (see pp. 5-8). Perceived control may be a mediator between power in marriage and marital satisfaction. Therefore, this dissertation study tested the propositions that: (a) perceived control is more highly correlated with marital satisfaction than are other measures of family power, and (b) that perceived control is of particular importance regarding women's feelings about their marriages because women's traditional subordinate marital position has made their influence less evident than that of men.

The remainder of this chapter consists of five sections: (1) a discussion of previous work on how perceptions of control influence satisfaction; (2) a review of literature concerning three definitions of marital power, decision making power, influence over activities, and resource possession; (3) a presentation of a conceptual framework (Kelley et al., in press) for understanding the association between

marital power and perceived control, and an analysis of similarities and differences between marital power and perceived control; (4) a proposal that perceived control has special importance for the marital satisfaction of wives; and (5) a description of the hypotheses that were studied in the research described in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

Perceived Control and Satisfaction

One general goal of the present exploration was to investigate the importance of perceptions of personal control in marriage. In this section, I will introduce the concept of personal control and discuss previous work concerning its role in marriage.

Perceived personal control. Perceived personal control is the extent to which one believes that one can control one's own outcomes. It is a feeling of being able to influence events. The particular outcomes of importance at a given time depend on the current situation. In the case of physical ailments, for instance, the relevant outcomes which people seek to control can be recovery or avoiding a recurrence of the disease (e.g., Wortman, 1975); in the case of criminal victimization, the relevant outcomes are preventing a repetition of the incident (e.g., Janoff-Bulman, 1979). In the context of marriage, outcomes which spouses need to control could include all decisions and activities that influence marital interaction. The outcomes that are relevant to a particular event depend on the situation. Despite the vagueness of the phrase "control over outcomes," research verifies that the perception is one

which people can identify with and feel is important (e.g., Madden & Janoff-Bulman, 1981).

A belief in one's control enhances one's ability to cope with negative events by permitting effective manipulation of the environment through feelings of efficacy and responsibility. Perceptions of control have been cited as motivators of behavior (e.g., Adler, 1930), as necessary for attempts to manipulate the environment (e.g., Wortman, 1975, 1976), or as facilitating coping with negative events (e.g., DeCharms, 1968).

Many psychologists believe that perceived control is important for the development of a well-adjusted personality (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Rotter, 1966; White, 1959; Wortman & Brehm, 1975). There is also experimental evidence that perceived control is important. Laboratory studies have indicated that subjects preferred experimental conditions in which they believed that they had control to conditions in which they thought they had no control, and that subjects evaluated an experimental task more favorably, or experienced less pain or stress, when they believed that they had control (Bowers, 1968; Corah & Boffa, 1970; Davison & Valins, 1969; Geer, Davison, & Gatchel, 1970; Kanfer & Seidner, 1973; Lefcourt, 1973; Pervin, 1963; Sogin & Pallak, 1976; Watson, 1967; Wortman, Panciera, Shusterman, & Hibischer, 1976).

Descriptive studies of negative events suggest that people cope better with unfortunate circumstances when they have minimal control over daily routines or minor events, such as scheduling meals or recreation, even when the major negative circumstances are uncontrollable. Among the events for which this seems to be true are one's own

impending death (Abramson & Finesinger, 1953; Kübler-Ross, 1969; Pattison, 1977); bereavement (Averill, 1968; Chadoff, Friedman, & Hamburg, 1964); aging (Bengston, 1973; Butler, 1967; Langer & Rodin, 1976; Lieberman, 1965; McMahon & Rhudick, 1964; Rodin & Langer, 1977); other physical ailments (Bulman & Wortman, 1977; Langer, Janis, & Wolfer, 1975); rape (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Janoff-Bulman, 1979; Langley & Levy, 1977); crowded residential conditions (Rodin, 1976); financial setbacks (Gurin & Gurin, 1970, 1976; Strumpel, 1976); and large-scale disasters like earthquakes and war (Bettelheim, 1943; Bucher, 1957; Janis, 1951; Lifton, 1963).

Perceptions of control in marriage. There is little question that spouses attempt to explain their disagreements and other aspects of their relationships (Harvey, Wells, & Alvarez, 1978; Madden & Janoff-Bulman, 1981; Orvis, Kelley, & Butler, 1976). There is some evidence that attributions of control are related to marital satisfaction. Madden and Janoff-Bulman (1981) asked wives to rate their control over the resolution of hypothetical and actual marital conflicts. They found that wives' perceived control was positively correlated with ratings of the resolvability of conflicts and with marital satisfaction.

In the Madden and Janoff-Bulman study, perceptions of control that were important concerned control over conflict resolution, since that was the topic under investigation. Because the outcomes that one would feel a need to control vary with the situation, in a study of marital power, the relevant outcomes would include consequences of decision making and other activities in which spouses potentially influence one

another. The more important a potential influence situation is to one, the greater the association between perceived control and marital satisfaction.

Marital Power

Because there have been few studies of perceptions of control in marriage, I sought literature on related questions. Considerable work has been done on power relationships in marriage. Briefly, it would seem that perceived control is necessary in order to feel that one has power over another, although one could have a sense of personal control without having power (see the detailed comparison of personal control and power on pp. 21-31). In this section of this report, I will consider conceptualizations of marital power that investigators have used and previous work on the association between marital power and satisfaction.

In more than thirty years of work, family researchers have suggested and used numerous theoretical and operational definitions of marital power, ranging in complexity from the deceptively simple to the absurdly complicated. Several different concepts have been used to define marital power, including authority, decision making, resource possession, influence over activities, and process control. In this dissertation, the concepts of decision making power, activity power, and resource possession will be discussed.¹

¹Authority and process control are sometimes used as operational definitions of marital power. Family norms dictate the authority structure in a family. There is evidence that when asked about their family's authority structure, people describe what they see as the socially desirable authority structure, rather than what their family

Decision making power. In research the powerholder in a marriage is usually defined as the person who makes the most decisions. In the most commonly used method, the questionnaire, one or both spouses indicate who makes the decision in a number of different areas (Bauman & Roman, 1966; Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Empey, 1957; Hammond, 1954; Heer, 1963; Raven, Centers, & Rodriguez, 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967). Each spouse's decision making power is then defined as proportional to the percentage of decisions he or she makes.

Often measures of decision making power have been used to classify marriages in terms of their power relationships. Probably most frequently cited is Blood and Wolfe's (1960) analysis based on couples' reports of who made a number of decisions often required of married people. Blood and Wolfe classified families on decision making power. They noted that there is considerable variation across families and across decision areas, but the husband's job, and car and insurance purchases, tended to be his decision, whereas the wife's work, food purchases, and choice of doctor tended to be hers.

Following a typology suggested by Herbst (1952), Blood and Wolfe classified couples into four categories on the basis of who made the most decisions: husband dominant, wife dominant, autonomic (i.e., spouses made decisions and acted independently of one another), and

actually does. Because it taps norms rather than actual practice, authority will not be used as a measure of marital power in the proposed study.

Process control belongs to the spouse who uses the most successful influence attempts in an interaction. Although process control is an important and useful way to define power, it is not considered in the proposed study because one must observe spouses' interactions to investigate it.

syncratic (i.e., spouses made decisions together). In contradiction to their hypothesis that husband dominance would be the norm, Blood and Wolfe found that 46 percent of their total sample of couples had equalitarian balances of power (autonomic and syncratic combined), 22 percent were husband dominant, and 22 percent were wife dominant.²

Like other researchers (e.g., Gold & Slater, 1958; Herbst, 1952), Blood and Wolfe concluded that there was very little uniformity in authority patterns across couples, although husbands were somewhat more likely to make final decisions than wives, even in couples that were labeled equalitarian. This tendency to husband dominance concurs with assessments by several other writers (Bauman & Roman, 1966; Hammond, 1954; Hawkes & Taylor, 1975; Hurvitz, 1959; Waller & Hill, 1951).³

Because attempts to identify decision making patterns have not been successful, research regarding decision power has been criticized. Most recent work has questioned defining power solely in terms of decision making (e.g., Heer, 1963). Also, methodological and

²Blood and Wolfe (1960) did not report the percentages of equalitarian marriages that were autonomic or syncratic, although they did discuss these two types of equalitarianism. They also did not say why the balance of power in ten percent of their sample was not described.

³Scanzoni (1972, 1979a) pointed out that the label "equalitarian" may be a misnomer for many relationships, which are often somewhat husband-dominant. Scanzoni suggested that such marriages might more appropriately be called "senior partner-junior partner" marriages, because the wife is like a subordinate colleague to her husband. Although this point seems well taken, Scanzoni presented no new data to support the idea, so I will continue to use the term equalitarian as other researchers had used it.

psychometric problems with power measures make it difficult to trust classifications based on them (e.g., Douglas & Wind, 1978; Hadley & Jacob, 1976; Olson & Cromwell, 1975a, 1975b; Olson & Rabunsky, 1972; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970b; Scanzoni, 1979b).

The major conceptual criticism of power research concerns whether decision power really represents a more general authority structure. That is, does a person who has decision power also have the power to influence other aspects of the marital interaction? Many writers have noted that the patterns that are found vary when different decisions are included and that there is great variability within families across decision areas (e.g., Centers, Raven, & Rodrigues, 1971; Dyer & Urban, 1958). Families also report fluctuations between power structures as they negotiate for a balance of power (Scanzoni, 1978).

Because of such evidence, some investigators have questioned whether decision patterns are related to authority patterns. Douglas and Wind (1978) said that "most families do not have clearcut, consistent patterns of authority across different areas" (p. 35). Data indicating that wives participate in some decisions, even in patriarchal families, also implied that husband dominance is limited to certain kinds of decisions (Johnson, 1975; Scanzoni, 1979b).⁴

⁴As well as the limitation of the use of decision making measures, a problem with classifying authority patterns lies in the rapidly changing norms of our society (Hawkes & Taylor, 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970b; Tomeh, 1975). Rodman (1972) suggested that the United States is currently in a transition state in its family power ideology; because equalitarian norms are replacing patriarchal norms, there is great role flexibility and variability. If he is correct, then it is not surprising that researchers have had trouble identifying authority patterns, particularly in middle class families where change is currently occurring (Komarovsky, 1963a).

This brief review of decision making power literature indicates that attempts to use decision making to assess family power patterns have not been terribly successful because decision making may be too narrow a definition of power and because couples do not appear to have consistent patterns of decision making.

Activity power. In order to overcome the narrowness of the decision making definition of power, some researchers have argued that marital power consists of both influence over decisions and influence over activities. Herbst (1952) defined power patterns in terms of an "activity variable," i.e., who does various things in the family, and a "decision variable," i.e., who decides what things should be done. Using these variables, Hammond (1954) found in one large study that wives dominated two-thirds of family activities, although husbands dominated their families' decision making patterns. These researchers felt that decision making measures may underestimate the marital power of wives, because wives have such great influence over family activities.

Recently, Safilios-Rothschild (1976b) differentiated orchestration power from implementation power; orchestration power is control over infrequent but important decisions, which determine the family life-style, whereas implementation power is control over decisions within those orchestrated bounds. Both contribute to one's overall marital power, but the orchestration power component carries more weight than the implementation power component.

This distinction between activity, or implementation, power and decision, or orchestration, power is important, yet activity power

has been studied by only a few researchers interested in rather specific variables related to power (Hammond, 1954; Herbst, 1952; Hoffman, 1963; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976b). For instance, the effect of wife employment on activity power has been studied. Contrary to findings concerning decision power, Hoffman (1960) found that a wife's influence over the family's daily activities was decreased by her employment. Hoffman and others felt that employed wives' loss of activity power was due to increased participation in household tasks by the husband and other family members when the mother worked (Aldous, 1969a; Blood, 1963; Blood & Hamblin, 1958; Hoffman, 1960; Middleton & Putney, 1960; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970a; Szinovacz, 1977). Recent evidence suggests that employed wives still do much more in the household than their husbands (Pleck, 1977), however, and therefore working wives should still maintain greater activity power than their husbands, though they may have less activity power than nonemployed wives.

Resource possession. Wolfe (1959) said that power stems from control of resources, which are "properties of a person or group which can be made available to others as instrumental to the satisfaction of their needs or to the attainment of their goals" (p. 100). Power is, then, the ability to deliver or withhold reward or punishment. Exchange or resource theories concerning marital power have been influenced by general social exchange theories about relationships (e.g., Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Social exchange theories suggest that people interact on the basis of rules, similar to those of an economic exchange, in order to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs.

Resource theories are not distinct from decision making and activity performance conceptualizations of power. Resource theories propose that the possession of resources gives one power. In studies of marital power, researchers have often attempted to use resource possession as the independent variable in order to predict the dependent variable of decision making power (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960). Therefore, resources are thought to give one decision making power.

It is plausible that possession of resources could also underlie activity power. For instance, a woman's cooking skills may give her influence over the activity of planning meals. But more often, although without much supporting data, investigators have regarded activity power as a resource, particularly activity power held by a spouse who lacks decision power (Turner, 1970), because she or he thereby controls the extent to which a decision is enforced. Burgess, Locke, and Thomes (1971) pointed out that suburban families are matri-centric by virtue of wives' control over family activities, despite husbands' decision power.

There have been numerous attempts to describe the exchange principles and resources that influence marital decision power. Social exchange differs from economic exchange because the resources and obligations available are difficult for researchers and respondents to specify (Blau, 1964). Obligation, gratitude, trust, and affection can be used as resources, but the exchange may not be observable. Socioeconomic resources (such as income or education) are easier to identify and quantify than less tangible resources, so these are the ones which have most often been researched.

The relative socioeconomic resources of spouses influence their decision power, at least in industrially developed western cultures (Gillespie, 1971; Rodman, 1972). Generally, if a spouse has greater income, education, occupational success, career involvement, or social organization involvement than his or her spouse, power will also be greater (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Centers et al., 1971). In our society, men have greater access to these resources and therefore tend to have greater power (Gillespie, 1971).

The degree of a wife's powerlessness may vary with fluctuations in her predominant role in the family. Several researchers noted that changes in resources may occur throughout the family life cycle (e.g., Feldman, 1971). A wife with small children, who is unlikely to have many resources, will be relatively powerless, but her power will increase with the growth of her children, her increasing knowledge of her role, and perhaps her return to work (LaRossa, 1977; Wolfe, 1959). Not only are her resources limited and her alternatives unpleasant when she has young children, but also a high ratio of women to men (as is presently the case among people of childbearing age) will limit alternatives by decreasing the possibility of remarriage (Heer, 1963).

Unlike other kinds of resources, economic resources have been studied extensively. Generally, the literature has focused on two issues: the effect of a husband's income on his family power, and the effect of a wife's employment on her family power.

A number of authors have suggested that the husband's occupation and income affect characteristics of the family that are broader than the power structure. Even when the wife works, the husband's primary

role is that of provider (Nye, 1976). This role is given priority, defines the family's status (Nye, 1976), and orchestrates family behavior (Axelson, 1963; Edwards, 1969; Kanter, 1977; Luckey, 1963; Miller & Swanson, 1958; Poloma & Garland, 1971; Rapoport, Rapoport, & Thiessen, 1974; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976b; Scanzoni, 1979b; Turner, 1970).

Generally, evidence suggests that employment increases a wife's power in decision making, particularly regarding decisions related to economic matters (Aldous, 1969a; Blood, 1963; Blood & Hamblin, 1958; Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Brown, 1978; Heer, 1958, 1963; Michel, 1971; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970a; Scanzoni, 1978, 1979b; Weller, 1971). The extent of the increase in decision power depends on several factors. The effect was larger in middle class families than in working class families (Heer, 1958, 1963). When the number of children had by employed and unemployed wives was held constant, the effect was reduced somewhat, since unemployed wives tended to have more children (Heer, 1958, 1963; Hoffman, 1960; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970a; Weller, 1971). The longer a woman had been employed the greater her decision power. Even the number of years that an unemployed woman had previously been employed was positively correlated with power (Blood & Wolfe, 1960).

In order to investigate the causal direction of the association between decision power and wives' employment, Brown (1978) assessed whether women's employment enhances their marital power or egalitarian power structures give women the freedom to work. Brown analyzed marital advice articles from 1900 to 1974 for attitudes about several aspects of marital power and wives' employment, and found that

employment was correlated with advice about decision making of fourteen years later, but that egalitarianism of other roles was correlated with wife employment at the same time. Brown suggested that wives' employment may cause increases in decision making power, but not vice versa, and that other roles are a product of a broader attitude change which permits women to work.

Socioeconomic resources are not the only possible resources, though, and they fail to account for power variations entirely (Scanzoni, 1979b). Many researchers have discussed other sources of power, but there has been little systematic research comparing variations in noneconomic resources. Safilios-Rothschild's (1976b) classification of resources gave much greater weight to noneconomic resources than previous discussions. She defined seven categories of resources: socioeconomic, affective, expressive, companionship, sex, services, and power in the relationship.⁵ Safilios-Rothschild noted that very few of these resources are controlled by only one spouse, though in most marriages the give and take may be unequal on most dimensions. Reciprocation of resources is likely not to be in kind, but rather one resource is usually exchanged for another.

In general, then, research based on resource theories of marital power indicates that the possession of resources is associated with a spouse's decision power. Most of the empirical research has involved

⁵"Power in the relationship" is not well defined in Safilios-Rothschild's (1976b) paper, and it is not at all clear how it differs from relative resources.

socioeconomic resources that husbands are more likely to possess than wives, however (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960). Recent theoretical work has proposed that noneconomic resources, such as the provision of affection or services, also contribute to a spouse's power (Safilios-Rothschild, 1976b; Scanzoni, 1979b).

Power and marital satisfaction. The present study is primarily concerned with the use of power measures to predict marital satisfaction. Are marital power structure and marital satisfaction related? Because family researchers would like to benefit individuals by improving family life, because power and status are so pervasive in our society, and because changing family norms involve reducing imbalances in power that are produced by our society's patriarchal history, much research on marital power has dealt with the question of which power arrangements are most satisfying to individuals in families.

This question has probably received more attention in the marital power literature than any other. Investigators have usually attempted to identify which patterns of power are most satisfying (see pp. 9-11 for a discussion of patterns of marital power). Generally, equalitarian relationships are more satisfying than asymmetrical ones. Some studies have shown that the most satisfying marriage is syncratic, in which spouses share both decisions and tasks (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Wolfe, 1959); other studies have shown that the most satisfying marriage is autonomic, in which spouses make "separate but equal" decisions (Centers et al., 1971; Herbst, 1952); most studies combined the two kinds of equalitarianism (Bean et al., 1977; Hall-Smith & Ryle, 1969;

Hill, 1963; Kirkpatrick, 1963; Locke, 1951; Locke & Wallace, 1959; Middleton & Putney, 1960; Rapoport et al., 1974; Waller & Hill, 1951).

Several studies reported that husband-dominant marriages are most satisfying (Corrales, 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967; Wolfe, 1959). When equalitarian power structures were most satisfying, husband dominance was always second; wife dominance was invariably the least satisfying sort of relationship (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Centers et al., 1971; Kirkpatrick, 1963; Kolb & Straus, 1974; Platt, 1970; Waller & Hill, 1951; Wolfe, 1959). It may be that unsatisfying relationships become wife dominant, rather than vice versa (Wolfe, 1959).

Thus, marital satisfaction measures show that equalitarian marriages tend to be more satisfying than husband- or wife-dominant marriages, although sometimes husband dominance is seen as most satisfying. There are a number of problems with traditional measures of marital power which may contribute to the confusion regarding which power structures are most satisfying. In the present study, I will investigate whether perceptions of control are a construct which mediates power structure and marital satisfaction and reduces some of this confusion. To clarify abstract issues concerning power, perceived control, and marital satisfaction, I will introduce a theoretical framework proposed by Kelley et al. (in press) that illuminates methodological and conceptual issues in the study of close relationships generally, and in the present research specifically.

A Theoretical Analysis of Power and Perceived Control

One of the major difficulties of interpreting marital power literature is that studies of marital power have not been integrated well with any broad theoretical view of marriage or close relationships. Therefore, before I discuss connections between power, control, and marital satisfaction in detail, I will describe a theoretical perspective that will facilitate understanding those associations.

Kelley et al. (in press) proposed a conceptualization of close relationships which may serve as a framework for understanding particular features of relationships, for instance, variables associated with marital power. Their scheme focused on the causal analysis of relational dynamics. They suggested that there are causal connections among events in relationships, which include virtually all actions, feelings, and thoughts of participants in the relationship.

Kelley et al. postulated that the basic data of dyadic relationships are "two chains of events, one for P and another for O, that are causally interconnected" (p. 2:12). They identified several features of these chains:

(1) each person's chain of events consists of multiple strands (several things go on simultaneously for each person, such as acting, thinking, feeling), (2) events differ in their duration, (3) events are causally connected within each person's chain, and (4) events are causally connected between the two person's chains, this last being the basic feature of interpersonal relationships. (p. 2:12)

Thus, there are causal links within each person's chain, as well as causal links between the two partner's chains. The causal interconnections between P's and O's chains constitute the relationship

between the two persons.

As a defining characteristic of interpersonal relationships, the interchain causal linkage is well summarized by the term "interdependence," which refers to causal connections in both directions between P's and O's chains. (p. 2:14)

For the present research, the most important concept in this theory is the distinction between personal, or intrachain, causal connections, and relational, or interchain causal connections, which constitute different levels of analysis in the study of relationships. My thesis is that marital power researchers have often mixed personal and relational analyses without clearly recognizing that two different levels of analysis are involved.

Kelley et al. also identified a number of properties of interdependence in relationships. There are numerous kinds of events and causal connections that display interdependence. Patterns of causal interconnections may vary also. The strength, frequency, diversity, and symmetry of causal interconnections influence the properties of interdependence. And, most relevant to this analysis of power, interchain causal connections between partners may either facilitate or interfere with the intrachain events of either partner (see pp. 30-31).

Power measures and perceived control. Power, as conceived of in previous research, involves the assumption of interchain connections. Essentially, power has been treated as only a relational variable. For example, decision making measures assume that when one spouse makes a particular decision, that decision both reflects interchain events involving that person's influence over the other's chain and influences the other's chain of events in the future. Activity power and resource

theory notions also imply that by possession of some resource or control over some activity a spouse gains interchain influence that affects the other's chain of events. Thus power has been measured at the interchain level of analysis.

Marital satisfaction, however, is an individual, intrachain construct. Measures of marital satisfaction focus on individuals' thoughts and feelings regarding their marriages. Although this intrapersonal construct is influenced by interchain events, it is measured as a private, internal perception of an individual.

Because power and satisfaction have been measured on different levels, it should not be surprising that the association between them has been difficult to detect. Perhaps what is needed, then, is an intrapersonal construct related to power, which might be a mediator between the intrachain perceptions of satisfaction and the interchain measures of power. Perceived personal control is such an intrapersonal construct.

Perceived control is an intrachain phenomenon, an individual variable. It involves individuals' thoughts about their ability to control outcomes in the future. Marital satisfaction is also an intrachain phenomenon, whereas marital power is interchain. Therefore, one would expect that perceived control would be more highly associated with marital satisfaction than power. Nevertheless, there are certainly connections between marital power and perceived control, so it seems important to analyze how the two concepts are different and similar.

Perceived control differs from marital power in several important ways. Perceived control involves perceptions of control over one's

outcomes, rather than perceptions of control or power over another person's behavior, which would be "perceived power." A number of researchers have discussed the point that, in an interpersonal situation like marriage which has a history and defines its own norms, the perceptions of the participants are vital for determining the nature of the interaction (Ballweg, 1969; Blood, 1960; Burr, Ahern, & Knowles, 1977; Goode, Hopkins, & McClure, 1971; Hadley & Jacob, 1976; Heer, 1958, 1962; Larson, 1974; Lasswell, 1948; Olson, 1969; Olson & Cromwell, 1975b; Olson & Rabunsky, 1972; Ryder, 1970; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970b; Sprey, 1972, 1975; Turk, 1975; Turk & Bell, 1972). In studies of perceptions of power, however, researchers generally asked respondents about who would make a decision concerning some problem. This is a perception of the interchain events, rather than of intrachain events. Perceived power, therefore, differs very little from any self-reports of power variables.

Perceived control differs in particular ways from specific marital power measures also. Although control over one's own outcomes and control over the outcomes of decision making are sometimes confused (e.g., Kipnis, Castell, Gergen, & Mauch, 1976, call decision power "perceived control") they differ in important ways. First, one may substantially affect the outcomes of decision making without winning the decision. Feelings of control involve how a decision is reached as well as what the decision is. A person may feel that she has a great deal of influence over a decision even if her first choice was not selected, particularly if a compromise has been made eliminating her least favorite choice. Second, even if one has been opposed to a

decision, one may influence implementation of it (i.e., have activity power) and therefore effectively control the relevant outcomes. For instance, a wife who overtly assents to an unwise purchase knowing that her husband will never get around to making it may feel that she controls the outcome by not reminding her husband to make the purchase.

Perceived control may also be compared to resource conceptualizations of marital power. Resource theorists have generally agreed that marital power is affected by intangible resources, needs, and attitudes. But these intangible factors are difficult to measure. How can one assess the relative love of two spouses? How can needs for affection, attention, security, or even power be measured? Do questionnaire measures of ideology or perceptions of relative deprivation really tap what is important for marital power? How can one measure a powerholder's dependence on subordinates? Many investigators have noted the difficulty of accounting for these sorts of factors, but there are few answers provided in the literature. Measures of perceptions of control include these factors because they all contribute to feelings of control. Subsequent research could deal with how such variables influence perceptions of control and therefore marital satisfaction.

Indirectly, many researchers interested in marital power have discussed the need to assess intrachain meanings of resources within relationships. One's perceptions of another's influence over one's intrachain events may differ from one's perception of the other's interchain power. As Lasswell (1948) indicated, a power situation is defined by people's expectations. Even when one spouse seems to have some clear

resource with which to exercise power, his or her power must be perceived by the other spouse (Rollins & Bahr, 1976). Authority, as a perceived norm, must be recognized by both spouses, and some researchers maintain that these norms (perceptions) strongly influence interactions (Burr et al., 1977; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970b).

Writers investigating the resource theory of marital power have considered a number of issues regarding spouses' perceptions of their power. The subjective nature of many resources suggests that spouses' perceptions of their relative contributions influence their power structure. Several factors have been noted which would affect how spouses view their resource exchange. Two such factors are expectations concerning marriage (e.g., Thibaut & Kelley's (1959) comparison level) and available alternatives (e.g., comparison level of alternatives). Safilios-Rothschild (1976b) noted that influence may often involve attempts to change a spouse's comparison level, e.g., "Look at Mr. X if you think you've got it bad." And expectations may account for why participants are satisfied with a relationship which outside observers consider unsatisfactory. For example, in her interviews with working class wives, Rubin (1976) mentioned that they often commented they might like more affection from their husbands, but that they should not complain because their husbands work steadily and do not drink excessively or beat them.

Theorists utilizing exchange notions also have considered the issue of spouses' perceptions of the value of various resources. Heer (1963) stated that power should be measured by the difference between the value to the wife of the husband's resources and the value to the

husband of the wife's resources, rather than by some weight assigned by the investigators. Safilios-Rothschild (1976a) said that the degree of these relative values will be influenced by the extent to which a spouse has direct access to the resource or an alternative (cf. Blau, 1964), i.e., a spouse will give more for a resource that is important and unavailable elsewhere. It has traditionally been argued that wives need marriage more than husbands and therefore may value husbands' resources more than husbands value wives' resources (e.g., Raush, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974).

Furthermore, intrachain perceptions may even contradict interchain events. In some unequal relationships, the "subordinate" may have reason to feel powerful towards the powerholder. A paradox of power is that a powerholder may become dependent on flattery from subordinates and other aspects of power that enhance self-esteem (Emerson, 1962; Kipnis, 1976; Schopler & Bateson, 1965; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Winter, 1973). Several factors give subordinates power over powerholders. The cost of getting others to perform services may be greater than the cost of performing them oneself (Ryder, 1972). When power use is unrestrained, a subordinate would require monitoring, which would increase the powerholder's costs (Gergen, 1969; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Abilities to supply services or to perform service roles well may also give one power; roles define an accepted exchange of services in marriage, so fulfilling one's role gives one normative power (Blau, 1964; Edwards, 1969; Hallenbeck, 1976). Indeed, the subordinate may actually gain power over his or her superior as his "gifts" of services become larger and larger (McClelland, 1975). A

wife who has given everything to her family may derive a great deal of power from family members' accumulated obligation to her (Bach & Goldberg, 1974). Thus, she may feel that she has a great deal of control over events despite very low power.

In summary, several differences between power and perceived control have been discussed: (1) Although power and control both involve spouses' perceptions, perceived power is an impression of relational events, whereas perceived control is an impression of personal events; (2) feelings of control may sometimes require decision making power, but one may influence a decision, and thereby feel control, without actually making the decision; (3) perceived control may be enhanced by possession of resources, but only if a spouse views particular resources as valuable; (4) and, finally, possible resources that spouses perceive in marriage may include a wide variety of subjective resources which have not often been included in marital power research.

Despite these differences between the two constructs, marital power and perceived control are similar in several ways. It seems likely that a spouse with great power will also have relatively high perceived control. The association is probably a circular one: some sense of personal control is necessary before one will attempt to exercise power and successful influence attempts will enhance one's feelings of control. Rollins and Bahr (1976) noted that the more one feels that one has power, the more attempts one will make to influence one's spouse, and the more decision power one will end up with. This is like the idea that perceived control permits effective manipulation

of the environment. Also, several writers have noted that powerless family members, particularly battered wives, lack confidence in their own efficacy (Frieze, 1980; Johnson, 1975; Langley & Levy, 1977; Strodtbeck, 1963; Rainwater, Coleman, & Handel, 1963).

One can make deductions about the association between perceived control and marital types identified by power investigators. In marriage, to have personal control, one may sometimes need to control one's spouse's behavior and outcomes also. Power and control probably are associated differently in different sorts of marriages. In autonomous marriages (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960; see pp. 9-11 for a discussion of marital power types), in which spouses make decisions and engage in activities separately, one's outcomes are often not highly related to one's spouse's behavior. If husband and wife each go out with their own friends on a Friday night, the decision of one about where to go has very little impact on the perceived control of the other. Thus, the less autonomous the marriage, the more interrelated are spouses' outcomes and the more power over one's spouse would be necessary for feelings of control.

In syncratic marriages, in which decisions are made and activities are performed jointly, equal levels (either high or moderate) of perceived control of both spouses would probably produce greatest marital satisfaction, and perceived control would be highly related to perceived power. If a husband and wife always spend Friday nights together, each one's perceived control over the decision of where to go will be highly correlated with the power s/he has over that decision.

In husband- or wife-dominant marriages, the dominant spouse would

probably have higher perceived control than the subordinate spouse. If a husband always makes decisions about where to go when a couple goes out, the wife will feel that she has very little control over where she spends Friday evenings, and may feel dissatisfied with her social life, and, perhaps, her marriage.

One can also make deductions about the associations between perceived control, power, and marital satisfaction. Perhaps the associations among these three factors can be seen best when perceived control is low. A person with low perceived control is also likely to have low power by traditional measures. A person with a feeling of lack of control will be likely also to feel hopeless and dissatisfied with his or her lot. A person with perceptions of even moderate control may feel quite powerful and hopeful about future events. Even if one had little decision power, one may feel that one has moderate control over outcomes. Thus, even moderate perceived control in marriage may be enough to prevent power imbalances from decreasing marital satisfaction. In a more or less equalitarian marriage, both spouses may feel that they have sufficient control over intrachain events, even though neither has complete power over interchain connections.

In order to understand power in marriage, ideally one should understand both intrachain events and interchain events. That is, to gain a comprehensive view of any phenomenon, one must attempt to understand it on all levels. Although no study of complex interactions can be totally comprehensive, assessing both perceived control and more traditional power measures provides some knowledge of both sorts of variables. The association between control and power may be clarified

by one of the properties of interchain connections postulated by Kelley et al. (in press). Interpersonal connections may be either facilitative or interfering. A connection made by one person is facilitative to the other person when it increases the other's ability to reach intrachain, personal goals; it is interfering when it decreases the other's ability to reach intrachain goals.

One spouse's power over another may also be facilitative or interfering to the other. As Kelley et al. (in press) define power, it is the ability of one person to influence the other's chain of events. That influence can be facilitating or interfering for the other's intrachain events. Implicit in this discussion of perceived control is that one goal for most individuals is to maintain a feeling of control over outcomes. Influence from another could enhance feelings of control if the other's goals are similar to one's own, e.g., a wife may feel that she can control breakdowns of her car if her husband makes intelligent decisions regarding its upkeep. In this example, because spouses share the goal of maintaining the car well, the husband's "decision power" regarding automotive matters is facilitative to the wife's goal, and she may not feel deprived by her lack of control.

However, influence attempts may decrease feelings of control if they mean that one cannot avoid decisions which interfere with a personal goal or outcome. This is the case in which extremely asymmetrical power relations would decrease perceived control and thereby decrease marital satisfaction. For example, if a wife has complete power over dinner menus and her goal is to make her husband eat less meat and more

vegetables (while her husband's goal is to avoid vegetables), the husband may well feel dissatisfied with his lack of control. Because wives have often had less decision power than husbands in marriage, perhaps perceived control is particularly associated with wives' marital satisfaction.

Perceived Control of Wives

If lack of control creates marital dissatisfaction, perceived personal control may be especially important for wives because of norms against autonomy for women, particularly married ones, and because of authoritarian norms favoring husbands. On the surface of the argument, one would expect wives of dominant husbands to feel that they lack control and therefore to be dissatisfied with their marriages. Yet this has not been the case (e.g., Corrales, 1975). For several reasons, wives in husband-dominant marriages may feel that they have personal control even though they seem to lack power. In Kelley et al.'s terms, factors affecting intrachain events may make lack of interchain power tolerable.

Alternatives to the marriage. One reason that husband dominated wives may actually feel that they have personal control is that the alternatives to their marriages represent situations in which they feel that they would have much less control over events. Thibaut and Kelley (1959) connected perceived control and comparison level: they said that people who feel that they have a great deal of control over their fate will have a high comparison level and will be more likely

to assign causality to themselves. Thibaut and Kelley described matrices in which a task has fate control over a person because of lack of skill, inability to discriminate states of the task, or inability to see contingencies for various outcomes. "Task" could include the marital decision making task. In fact, some influence attempts are actually attempts to manipulate comparison level, rather than to induce compliance directly.

Since unequal resources are seen as the norm in marriage, women may not perceive their potential control, and therefore may not exercise their options fully (Arnott & Bengston, 1970). Thus they may perceive themselves as high in personal control relative to other wives. Battered wives seem to have a particularly low comparison level of their alternatives, since lack of confidence in their ability to support themselves economically or to be independent is often cited as a reason for remaining with their husbands. Evidence that characterological self-blame, which is frequently seen in battered wives, is related to low perceived control is also consistent with this analysis (Frieze, 1980; Janoff-Bulman, 1979).

Relative deprivation and sex role attitudes. A second factor that may influence wives' perceived control is relative deprivation. Block (Note 1) drew on Crosby's (1976) model of characteristics dictating perceptions of relative deprivation. Block had subjects rate the relative deprivation of a woman who was passed over for promotion in favor of a man. When causality was given as internal to the woman, subjects saw the woman as less deprived as when causality was described

as external to the woman. Androgynous women were more likely to see the woman as deprived than the more feminine women. Both of these results would seem to imply factors that might influence comparison level as well as relative deprivation. Women who expect equality from marriage would also be more likely to feel relatively deprived than women who expect husband dominance, perhaps because they expect higher levels of control to begin with (cf. Bernard, 1972).

The issue of personal control might be more highly related to marital satisfaction for role-modern women than for traditional women. Madden and Janoff-Bulman's (1981) respondents were not rated on gender ideology, but they were selected from a progressive college town sample, and their perceived control was related to their marital satisfaction. Scanzoni (1978) indicated that marital power and satisfaction are more highly associated among role-modern women than among traditional women.

The most extensive research concerning the relationship between spouses' sex role attitudes and power is found in the literature about wife employment. The relative value that a woman places on her family role influences the effect of employment on her power in the family (Hoffman, 1960). For instance, Safilios-Rothschild (1976) found that employed women who were highly committed to working reported having greater decision power and having more freedom inside and outside of their homes than low work commitment women.

A number of studies indicate that a husband's interpretation of his wife's employment also influences its impact on the marriage. When a wife's employment during the Depression was viewed by both spouses as temporary, the husband did not view it as a threat to his authority

(Cavan, 1959; Komarovsky, 1953). And more recently, couples in which the husband disapproved of his wife's employment reported more conflict over money than couples in which the husband approved (Gianopoulos & Mitchell, 1957; Locke, 1951; Szinovacz, 1977).

Generally, husbands of working wives have been found to be less traditional in their views about equal pay for women, initiation of sex, and men's participation in household tasks, than husbands of non-employed wives (Axelson, 1963). In addition, husbands of women highly committed to work held less traditional views than the husbands of women less committed to work (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970a). This literature suggests, therefore, that the views of both spouses about women's and family roles may be associated with the expectation of control. Women who expect control will feel more deprived and less satisfied with their marriages than women who do not expect to feel control.

Control over careers is probably most important early in marriage. The importance of perceived control may vary across phases of the family life cycle, also. For instance, marital satisfaction is lower among couples who have had their first child than among childless couples (Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976) and the issue of control is mentioned often by spouses during a first pregnancy (Ballou, 1979). Perhaps the dependence of infants raises the issue of one's own autonomy. At any rate, expectations for, and perceptions of, control may well vary at different life stages.

Do women have control? A third reason that women perceive themselves as having control is that they may actually exercise greater control

over their own outcomes than power measures have implied. Perhaps women's perceived control has never been so low as decision power measures sometimes suggest it is, for instance, in husband dominant marriages, or even in slightly husband dominant "equalitarian" marriages.

A number of factors imply that women have greater personal control than has been indicated: observed influence processes in decision making are more equalitarian than people report (Corrales, 1975; Johnson, 1975; Kenkel, 1963) and recalled power is highly correlated with measures of authority, so that when asked about decision making people describe norms rather than actual behavior (Olson & Rabunsky, 1972); decision making measures are not representative of all decisions, but rely heavily on economically related decisions, about which the traditional nonworking wife would have least power (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960); women have a great deal of activity or implementation power (e.g., Hoffman, 1960; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976b; Turner, 1970), even to the extreme case of suburban families, which have been called matricentric (Burgess et al., 1971); women have many less tangible resources than those that are commonly measured, including love, attention, and provision of services (Blau, 1964; Blood, 1960; Cromwell & Olson, 1975; Scanzoni, 1978; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970a, 1976b) and women may sometimes use legitimate dependency as a resource (Bach & Goldberg, 1974; Collins & Raven, 1969; Kelvin, 1977; Kipnis, 1976; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959); women generally occupy the center of the family communication network (e.g., Turner, 1970), and form coalitions with their children more readily than men (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Heer,

1963; O'Connor, 1975; Sprey, 1972; Turner, 1970); women do have influence strategies available, albeit less direct ones than those available to their husbands⁶ (Caplow, 1954; Corrales, 1975; Johnson, 1975; Kenkel, 1957, 1961, 1963; Raven et al., 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976a; DeTores, Note 2); and women's power gradually increases as they use "nonlegitimate" resources against their husbands rather than legitimate ones, so that husbands may find that the easiest way to reduce conflict is to remove the inequities seen by their wives (Kanter, 1977; Scanzoni, 1978).

Thus, comparison level, relative deprivation notions, and wives' actual control over their outcomes indicate that wives may frequently experience rather high perceived control, even in husband dominant relationships. Although it is too late to assess the perceived control of wives of thirty years ago, I expect it would have been greater than decision power measures indicated. In the 1980s, one would expect that many women would report feelings of control equal to those of their husbands, and that these feelings of control would be more highly correlated with marital satisfaction than the power structure measured in other ways.

In conclusion, I argue in this paper that marital power has been measured solely as a relational, interchain event, whereas marital

⁶There is limited evidence obtained from married people concerning the influence strategies that they use (Kenkel, 1957, 1962, 1963; Raven et al., 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976a; DeTores, Note 2). But research on general sex differences extends the findings on marriage. In general, men tend to use more direct power tactics than women (Falbo & Peplau, 1980; Falbo, 1977; Johnson, 1976, 1978), and the use of direct power strategies is associated with having power in a relationship (Cowan, Note 3).

satisfaction is an individual, intrachain construct. Therefore, I hypothesize that perceived control is more highly correlated with marital satisfaction than marital power, as measured in previous research. Furthermore, because wives have often had less power than their husbands, I hypothesize that perceived control may be of particular importance for wives' marital satisfaction.

Hypotheses

The present study was an attempt to assess the associations among the following concepts: perceived personal control, decision making power, activity performance, gender role modernity, and marital satisfaction. The following hypotheses were derived from a consideration of relevant literature:

1. A respondent's marital satisfaction is positively correlated with her or his perceptions of her/his (a) decision making power, (b) activity performance, (c) decision control, and (d) activity control.
2. (a) Perceived decision control is more highly correlated with satisfaction than is decision making power; and (b) perceived activity control is more highly correlated with satisfaction than is activity performance.
3. Perceived control over decisions and activities are more highly associated with marital satisfaction among wives than among husbands.
4. The correlations between satisfaction and decision making, activity performance, and decision and activity control are stronger

for men with traditional gender role attitudes and weaker for traditional women than for men and women with modern role attitudes.

5. Decision making and activity performance and control over decisions and activities are more highly predictive of satisfaction regarding important decisions and activities than regarding unimportant decisions and activities.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Respondents

Recruitment. Potential respondents were selected from the residents of two Western Massachusetts towns, twelve and twenty miles from the university community. From street lists which included all adult residents of each dwelling and their ages, couples were selected in which both husband and wife were between thirty and forty years old. If they were also listed in the phone book, they were included in the population of potential respondents. From this population, every fourth couple was selected for the sample. These people were sent a letter explaining the study and then were telephoned about a week later. Over the phone, they were given more information about the study, an opportunity to ask questions, and were asked if they would be willing to participate. Many individuals wanted to consult with their spouses, so a second phone call was required.

Of the original sample of 187, 37 couples (20%) agreed to participate, 115 (61%) declined, and 35 (19%) either had disconnected phones or could not be reached by phone in repeated attempts. Of those who were actually contacted by phone, then, 24 percent agreed to participate, and an interview was scheduled at a time and place convenient to the respondents. Most interviews took place in the respondents' homes, but two were done at the husband's office.

Participant characteristics. The participants in this study were both members of 37 couples. The length of their marriages ranged from five to 21 years, with a mean length of 11.37 years. Thirty-four (92%) of the husbands and 32 (86%) of the wives were in their first marriages; for the others, the present marriage was the second. Thirty (81%) of the couples had children, ranging in age from one to 24 years old; the modal number of children was two (38%), and the largest family size was four children. Most of the respondents reported either a Protestant (39% of women, 51% of men) or a Catholic (53% of women, 41% of men) religious background. The modal family income fell between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per year (51%); one quarter of the couples had joint incomes below \$20,000, and the other quarter had incomes greater than \$30,000 per year. About one-third of both the husbands and wives had attended only high school; one third had attended two-year college or technical school; and one-third had a bachelor's or graduate degree.

All but one of the husbands and three-quarters of the wives were employed outside the home. Occupations of the respondents are shown in Table 1: the modal occupational category of the husband was factory/construction work (43%); wives were divided equally among several occupational categories, most of them "traditionally female." The number of hours worked per week are presented in Table 2: ninety-four percent of the husbands and 64 percent of the wives worked more than thirty hours per week. Ninety-seven percent of the men had always worked full time, except when they were in college; 22 percent of the wives had always worked full time. Of those with children, 20 (67%) of the wives had quit work when their children were very young, one

Table 1
 Percentage of Respondents in
 Each Occupation Category

Occupation	Women	Men
Housewife	22	0
Student	8	0
Clerical	22	5
Retailer	8	14
Factory/Construction	0	43
Supervisor - Factory	0	11
Professional	14	19
Teacher	5	8
Miscellaneous ^a	22	0

^aThis category included a number of traditionally female-dominated occupations, such as teacher's aide, cafeteria worker, and waitress.

Table 2
Percentage of Employed Respondents in
Each Category of Hours Employed Per Week

Hours Employed Per Week	Women ^a	Men ^b
1-10	4	3
11-20	12	0
21-30	20	3
31-40	48	40
41-50	16	37
51 or more	0	17

^aN = 25

^bN = 35

(3%) of the husbands had done so, and another five (17%) of the wives had changed from full time to part time work when their children were born. Most of both men and women (95% of each) reported that they were in excellent or good health.

Procedure. When I arrived at the couple's home, I first introduced myself and explained the project again. I answered respondents' questions and they signed a consent form. Then, I gave each spouse the written materials to complete alone. Occasionally, someone would ask for elaboration about a question, but for the most part couples filled out the questionnaires in silence. Once in a while, one spouse would jokingly comment about an item or question, such as "I know what you're going to say about the ironing," and a few people made comments that were more serious. For example, one husband said, "Gee, I don't do much around here, do I?" and his wife returned a look that implied that this was a sore point between them. The written portion of the interview took an average of 1 1/2 hours to complete, although the times ranged from 45 minutes to three hours.

When both husband and wife had completed the questionnaire, I discussed the general issues of decision making, task performance, and power with them together. These discussions also varied in length: some couples elaborated very little on my questions, whereas others commented in tremendous detail. Some discussions lasted for 15 minutes and others lasted for as long as an hour.

When this discussion was concluded, I explained the hypotheses of the study in detail, offered to mail a summary of my findings, and

thanked the participants profusely for helping me. Many of the participants said that they enjoyed thinking about issues that they wouldn't ordinarily consider. For a few couples, the survey seemed to raise sensitive issues and I made every effort to soothe tensions and to suggest that these are areas which can be difficult to deal with, but which can be resolved. Of course, I have no way of knowing what happened after I left, but I didn't feel that I left any of the respondents in a state of great tension.

Materials. The written materials for this study are presented in Appendix A. First, respondents were asked about background information such as marriage length, number of children, education, income and employment history. Second, as a measure of Gender Role Modernity, participants filled out Spence and Helmreich's (1978) short Attitudes Toward Women scale, which asks one to rate agreement or disagreement to items like "It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks," or "Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades." Third, each person completed a Marital Satisfaction scale adapted from Locke (1951) and from Madden and Janoff-Bulman (1981). This included fairly direct questions like "How often are you highly satisfied with your marriage?" and a checklist of things that "have caused serious difficulties in your marriage."

After finishing these preliminary surveys, respondents completed the lengthy series of questionnaires regarding decision making and activity performance. On all of these questions, they rated each of a

series of items on a 9-point Likert response scale. Regarding decision making, they first were asked to "indicate who makes the final decision concerning the following" items. A list of 29 items followed, which contained the eight decisions that Blood and Wolfe (1960) inquired about, as well as 21 other decisions taken from Douglas and Wind (1978) and pilot testing. This included major decisions like husband's or wife's choice of job, and minor decisions like choice of general magazine subscriptions. The sum of responses to these items produced a Decision Making score.

For the same 29 decision items, participants then rated "how much control you feel that you have over decisions regarding the following areas," and "how much control you feel that your spouse has over decisions regarding the following areas." Summed item responses for these scales constituted Decision Control and Spouse's Decision Control scores. Finally, they indicated "how important each of the following decisions is to you."

Regarding activity performance, each respondent rated 31 items on "the extent to which each of the following activities is performed by you or your spouse." The tasks in this list were chosen from items used by Douglas and Wind (1978), time budget studies (e.g., Pleck, 1977), and pilot testing. They included a variety of household and childcare tasks commonly done by many people. The total of responses to these items yielded an Activity Performance score for each respondent.

For the same 31 activities, respondents then rated "how much control you feel that you have over whether or not you perform the following activities," and "how much control you feel your spouse has

over whether he or she performs the following activities." These were summed to produce Activity Control and Spouse's Activity Control scores. Finally, they indicated "how important each of the following activities is to you."

The next section of the questionnaire involved open-ended questions about perceived control. Question 1 asked:

Is there an area in which you don't have to make the final decision, but do feel that you have at least some control over decisions? What is the area? In what sense do you feel that you have some control, even though you don't make the final decisions?

Question 2 asked:

Is there an area in which you don't perform activities, but do feel that you have at least some control over whether or not you perform activities? What is the area? In what sense do you feel that you have some control, even though you don't perform activities in that area?

Questions 3 through 6 asked about areas in which the person feels that they do or do not have control when they do or do not want control:

(3) Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you have control when you don't particularly want control? (4) Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you have control and in which you want control? (5) Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you don't have control, but in which you would like to have control? (6) Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you don't have control and in which you don't want control?

Respondents indicated what the area was and then checked reasons for having or not having control from a list that included things like "Generally wives (husbands) do things in that area," "I enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area," and "My spouse feels that that area is too trivial to worry about."

The last page of the questionnaire presented questions about power. On 9-point scales, respondents indicated:

How important is the issue of power in your marriage to you? How important is the issue of power in your marriage to your spouse? How much time do you spend thinking about power issues in your marriage?

Then they answered a free-response question which asked, "Over the course of your marriage, has the issue of power changed in importance to you or your spouse?"

During the discussion with both spouses, each couple was asked, regarding decision making and activity performance separately:

Do you have a philosophy for dealing with decision making or activity performance? Do you talk about it much? Previously in your marriage was it more of an issue than it is now? Previously, did you talk about it much?

They also were asked about power, "Do you think much about power? Have you in the past?" Finally, I noted who did most of the talking after the interview was finished.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The results chapter of this dissertation is organized into three major sections: (1) analyses of variables related to marital satisfaction among male and female subjects combined, (2) analyses of gender differences in perceptions of marriage, in reported behavior in marriage, and in gender role attitudes, and (3) analyses concerning some issues less central to major hypotheses, including discussions of husbands' and wives' consensus about their marriage, the importance ratings of decision and activity items, and responses to open-ended written and oral responses.

Before discussing the results, I will review the major variables which were used in the analyses. Most of the main variables were composites based on the sums of responses to scale items: Marital Satisfaction and Gender Role Modernity were based on scales used in previous work (Locke, 1951; Madden & Janoff-Bulman, 1981; Spence & Helmreich, 1978). They were coded so that a higher score represented greater satisfaction or a more modern attitude. Decision making was calculated from responses to the question asking who makes the final decision regarding each item and Activity Performance was the total of responses to the question asking who performs each of the listed activities; Decision Control and Activity Control were answers to the questions asking how much control the participant feels s/he has over each of the decisions or activities; and Spouse's Decision Control and

Spouse's Activity Control were the totals of responses to the questions asking how much control the respondent's spouse has over each of the decision or activity items.⁷ Each of these scales was coded so that a higher score indicated greater decision making, activity performance, or control. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed to determine the inter-item reliability for all main scales, shown in Table 3. The satisfaction measure had an alpha of .90; alphas for other measures ranged from .67 to .93.

In addition to scaled variables, several other variables were used in a number of analyses: Activity and Decision Control Difference scores were calculated by subtracting a respondent's Spouse's Decision Control from his/her own Decision Control and by subtracting Spouse's Activity Control from own Activity Control. Finally, some analyses used responses to individual questions regarding power, the Importance of Power to Self, the Importance of Power to Spouse, and the Time Spent Thinking about Power. Table 4 gives means and ranges of responses per item for all major variables.

⁷In order to draw parallels to suggestions that power measures should include both decision making and activity performance variables, Decision Making and Activity Performance scores were also summed for most analyses, as were Decision Control and Activity Control, and Spouse's Decision Control and Spouse's Activity Control. However, these combined decision and activity variables did not illuminate the investigation because often the decision scale and the activity scale were differentially related to other variables. Thus, analyses with these combined decision and activity scales will not be discussed further in this dissertation.

Table 3
Inter-Item Reliability for All Scales

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha
Marital Satisfaction	.90
Gender Role Modernity	.84
Decision Making	.67
Activity Performance	.83
Decision Control	.93
Spouse's Decision Control	.92
Activity Control	.92
Spouse's Activity Control	.93

Table 4
Means and Ranges of Responses per Item for Major Variables

Variable	Mean Response per Item	Range per Item
Gender Role Modernity ^a	6.43	4.13 to 8.00
Marital Satisfaction ^b	7.12	3.22 to 9.00
Decision Making	5.06	3.79 to 7.72
Decision Control	6.66	4.55 to 9.00
Spouse's Decision Control	6.53	3.79 to 8.83
Activity Performance	5.19	2.87 to 7.90
Activity Control	5.82	2.90 to 9.00
Spouse's Activity Control	6.34	3.13 to 9.00
Importance of Power to Self	4.69	1.00 to 9.00
Importance of Power to Spouse	4.78	1.00 to 9.00
Time Spent Thinking about Power	2.77	1.00 to 9.00
Decision Control Difference	-.56	-2.81 to 2.19
Activity Control Difference	.57	-3.19 to 5.61

^aGender Role Modernity responses were given on an 8-point scale; they were coded so that a higher score represents a more modern attitude.

^bResponses to the remaining variables were given on a 9-point scale; they were coded so that a higher score indicates greater satisfaction, decision making, activity performance, control, or importance.

Marital Satisfaction

Hypotheses 1 and 2 stated that:

(1) A respondent's marital satisfaction is positively correlated with her or his perceptions of her/his (a) decision making power, (b) activity performance, (c) decision control, and (d) activity control.

(2) (a) Perceived decision control is more highly correlated with satisfaction than is decision making power; and (b) perceived activity control is more highly correlated with satisfaction than is activity performance.

Pearson Product-Moment Coefficients measuring intercorrelations among all of the major variables are shown in Table 5. Among all 74 respondents, only Activity Control was positively correlated with Marital Satisfaction ($r=.45$, $p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was only partially supported, since Decision Making, Activity Performance, and Decision Control were not correlated with satisfaction, but Activity Control was. Hypothesis 2 was supported in regards to activities, but not concerning decisions, since Activity Control was correlated with Satisfaction and Activity Performance was not. Furthermore, the difference between the Activity Control and Satisfaction correlation and the Activity Performance and Satisfaction correlation is statistically significant ($t(73)=3.15$, $p < .01$; see Lindemann, Merenda, & Gold, 1980, pp. 51-53, for tests of differences between correlations).

A negative correlation between Activity Control Difference Score and Marital Satisfaction ($r=-.29$, $p < .05$) indicated that the larger the discrepancy between one's perceived Activity Control and one's perception of one's Spouse's Activity Control, the lower one's Marital Satisfaction. A t-test using high and low Marital Satisfaction groups

Table 5
Correlations Among Major Variables for All 74 Respondents

	Gender Role Modernity	Marital Satisfaction	Decision Making	Decision Control	Sp. Decision Control	Activity Performance	Activity Control	Sp. Activity Control	Imp. of Power to Self	Imp. of Power to Spouse	Time Thinking about Power	Decision Control Difference	Activity Control Difference
Gender Role Modernity													
Marital Satisfaction	-.06												
Decision Making	.15	.11											
Decision Control	.35**	.13	.51***										
Spouse's Decision Control	.40***	.15	-.04	.60***									
Activity Performance	.16	-.06	.49***	.37**	.14								
Activity Control	.10	.45***	.11	.45***	.41***	-.17							
Spouse's Activity Control	.30*	.14	.21	.32***	.38***	.38***	.37**						
Importance of Power to Self	-.07	.17	-.17	-.09	.02	-.14	.03	.10					
Importance of Power to Spouse	-.10	.17	-.09	-.02	-.06	-.26*	.16	-.02	.91***				
Time Spent Thinking about Power	.00	.19	-.12	.09	.08	-.17	.13	.05	.51***	.51***			
Decision Control Difference	.05	.00	-.58***	a	a	-.26*	-.06	.10	.11	-.03	-.01		
Activity Control Difference	.17	-.29**	.08	-.13	-.04	.48***	a	a	.04	-.16	-.08	-.14	

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aCorrelations of Decision Control and Spouse's Decision Control with Decision Control Difference, and of Activity Control and Spouse's Activity Control with Activity Control Difference are not shown because the Difference variables were computed from the Control variables, so the correlations are not independent.

divided at the median shows that low satisfaction subjects reported Activity Control less than their Spouse's Activity Control and high satisfaction subjects reported Activity Control approximately equal to that of their spouses ($t(70)=-2.58, p < .05$); among low satisfaction respondents, $M=-32.44$, and among high satisfaction respondents, $M=-2.61$. Therefore, people who were unhappy with their marriages felt that they had less control over activities than their spouses, whereas those who were happy with their marriages viewed themselves and their mates as having equal control.

Because only perceived activity control was directly related to marital satisfaction, I wanted to explore associations among the major variables further.⁸ Using linear regression techniques, I developed a post hoc model, shown in Figure 1 and Table 6. This model is a heuristic device designed to organize the correlational data. Since one cannot determine the direction of causality between associated variables, one cannot assess the causal ordering within the model. Indeed, causality is probably bilateral between any two variables. Thus, although the regression equation determines statistical predictors of dependent variables, they should not be interpreted as causal predictors.

In the development of the exploratory model in Figure 1, first Marital Satisfaction was used as the dependent variable and all of the

⁸Using simple linear regression, all decision, activity, and control scales were used to predict marital satisfaction. Since all variables were included in the equation, this regression equation was not very informative and the modeling technique described below was used.

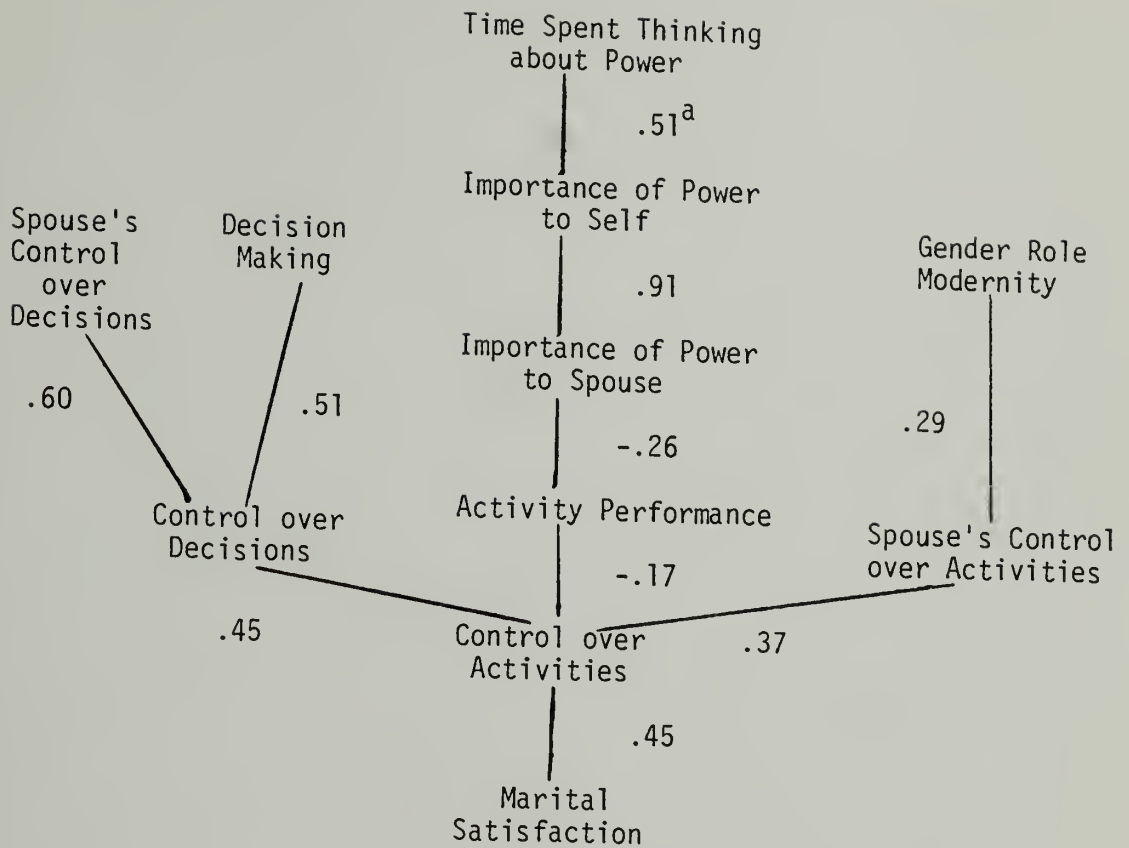


Figure 1. Husbands' and Wives' Combined Regression Model of Variables Associated with Marital Satisfaction

^aSimple correlation coefficients are shown for each pair of variables.

Table 6

Steps in Regression Model of Associations between Marital Satisfaction
and Other Variables for Males and Females Combined*

Dependent Variable	Statistical Predictors	Simple r	B	F to Enter	p
Marital Satisfaction	Activity Control	.45	.15	15.84	.001
Activity Control	Decision Control	.45	.37	15.71	.001
	Activity Performance	-.17	-.55	11.34	.001
	Spouse's Activity Control	.37	.48	14.20	.001
Decision Control	Spouse's Decision Control	.60	.70	35.97	.001
	Decision Making	.51	1.03	49.30	.001
Activity Performance	Importance of Power to Spouse	-.26	-9.88	4.65	.035
Spouse's Activity Control	Gender Role Modernity	.29	.88	6.01	.017
Importance of Power to Spouse	Importance of Power to Self	.91	.86	321.44	.001
Importance of Power to Self	Time Spent Thinking about Power	.51	.61	22.14	.001

* A regression equation was formulated for each of the dependent variables tabled below (also see Figure 1).

remaining variables were entered as statistical predictors for a step-wise regression series. Activity Control emerged as the only variable with an "F to enter the equation" significant at less than .05 ($r=.45$, $B=.15$, $p < .001$). Next Activity Control was used as the dependent variable and the remaining variables were entered as predictors. Decision Control ($r=.45$, $B=.37$, $p < .001$), Activity Performance ($r=-.17$, $B=-.55$, $p < .001$), and Spouse's Activity Control ($r=.37$, $B=.48$, $p < .001$) met the criterion to be retained in the model. Each of these was then treated as a dependent variable and remaining variables were entered as predictors until no variables remained that met the designated criterion. Decision Control was predicted by Spouse's Decision Control ($r=.60$, $B=.70$, $p < .001$) and Decision Making ($r=.51$, $B=1.03$, $p < .001$). Activity Performance was predicted by Importance of Power to Spouse ($r=-.26$, $B=-9.88$, $p < .05$), which then was predicted by Importance of Power to Self ($r=.91$, $B=.88$, $p < .001$), which in turn was predicted by Time Spent Thinking about Power ($r=.51$, $B=.61$, $p < .001$). Spouse's Activity Control was predicted by Gender Role Modernity ($r=.29$, $B=.88$, $p < .05$).

Gender Differences

Satisfaction. Hypothesis 3 stated that:

Perceived control over decisions and activities is more highly associated with marital satisfaction among wives than among husbands.

Tables 7 and 8 present correlations among all major variables for women alone and for men alone. Among women, but not among men, Activity

Table 7
Hives' Responses: Correlations Among Major Variables

	Gender Role Modernity	Marital Satisfaction	Decision Making	Decision Control	Sp. Decision Control	Activity Performance	Activity Control	Sp. Activity Control	Imp. of Power to Self	Imp. of Power to Spouse	Time Thinking about Power	Decision Control Difference	Activity Control Difference
Gender Role Modernity													
Marital Satisfaction	-.18												
Decision Making	.09	.06											
Decision Control	.42*	-.31	.39**										
Spouse's Decision Control	.27	.25	-.13	.58***									
Activity Performance	-.20	-.16	.15	-.33**	-.29								
Activity Control	.17	.51***	.25	.68***	.56***	-.49**							
Spouse's Activity Control	.27	.05	.15	.30	.36*	.13	.31						
Importance of Power to Self	-.16	.20	-.01	-.13	-.13	-.11	.07	.05					
Importance of Power to Spouse	-.14	.18	.04	-.02	-.13	-.24	.22	.01	.93***				
Time Spent Thinking about Power	.02	.22	-.20	.11	.20	-.32	.16	.09	.52***	.45**			
Decision Control Difference	-.05	-.09	-.56***	a	a	.02	-.03	.25	-.06	-.16	.04		
Activity Control Difference	.05	-.46**	-.13	-.45**	-.27	.55***	a	a	-.05	-.20	-.10	-.22	

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

a Correlations of Decision Control and Spouse's Decision Control with Decision Control Difference, and of Activity Control and Spouse's Activity Control with Activity Control Difference are not shown because the Difference variables were computed from the Control variables, so the correlations are not independent.

Table 8
Husbands' Responses: Correlations Among Major Variables

	Gender Role Modernity	Marital Satisfaction	Decision Making	Decision Control	Sp. Decision Control	Activity Performance	Activity Control	Sp. Activity Control	Imp. of Power to Self	Imp. of Power to Spouse	Time Thinking about Power	Decision Control Difference	Activity Control Difference
Gender Role Modernity													
Marital Satisfaction	.09												
Decision Making	.04	.27											
Decision Control	.18	.03	.18										
Spouse's Decision Control	.50**	.02	-.33*	.58***									
Activity Performance	.28	.04	.07	.06	.13								
Activity Control	.01	.33*	.00	.40**	.23	.17							
Spouse's Activity Control	.25	.28	-.10	.06	.30	.33	.56***						
Importance of Power to Self	.13	.10	-.25	.13	.29	.00	-.07	.25					
Importance of Power to Spouse	.02	.11	-.09	.21	.13	-.21	-.01	.04	.88***				
Time Spent Thinking about Power	-.01	.16	-.02	.18	-.01	-.11	-.08	.04	.51**	.59***			
Decision Control Difference	.30	.06	-.40*	a	a	.10	-.17	.26	.18	-.03	-.10		
Activity Control Difference	.27	-.02	-.12	-.33*	.11	.20	a	a	.35*	.06	-.04	-.47**	

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aCorrelations of Decision Control and Spouse's Decision Control with Decision Control Difference, and of Activity Control and Spouse's Activity Control with Activity Control Difference are not shown because the Difference variables were computed from the Control variables, so the correlations are not independent.

Control Difference was significantly negatively correlated with Satisfaction ($r = -.46$, $p < .01$), but not among men ($r = -.02$, $p < .001$). A test of the difference between two correlations showed that Activity Control Difference and Marital Satisfaction were significantly more highly correlated among women than among men ($z = -2.04$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was supported only with regard to wives' estimates of their relative activity control, compared to their husbands', since wives' impression of the difference between their own and their spouse's activity control was related to satisfaction, whereas husbands' was not.

Using a procedure identical to that used to develop the model of satisfaction derived from combined male and female responses, models were developed for men and women separately, shown in Figures 2 and 3 and Tables 9 and 10. Among both men and women, Activity Control was the only statistical predictor of Satisfaction, although it was only marginally significant among men (for women, $r = .51$, $B = .19$, $p < .01$; for men, $r = .33$, $B = .14$, $p = .055$).

The predictors of Activity Control differed across the two genders, however. Among women, Decision Control and Activity Performance predicted Activity Control ($r = .68$, $B = .56$, $p < .001$, and $r = -.49$, $B = -.75$, $p < .05$, respectively), and Spouse's Decision Control then predicted Decision Control ($r = .58$, $B = .51$, $p < .001$). Among men, Spouse's Activity Control and Decision Control predicted Activity Control ($r = .56$, $B = .67$, $p < .001$, and $r = .40$, $B = .41$, $p < .01$, respectively) and, in turn, Spouse's Decision Control ($r = .58$, $B = .93$, $p < .001$) and Decision Making ($r = .18$, $B = .87$, $p < .01$) predicted Decision Control. On one hand, women felt

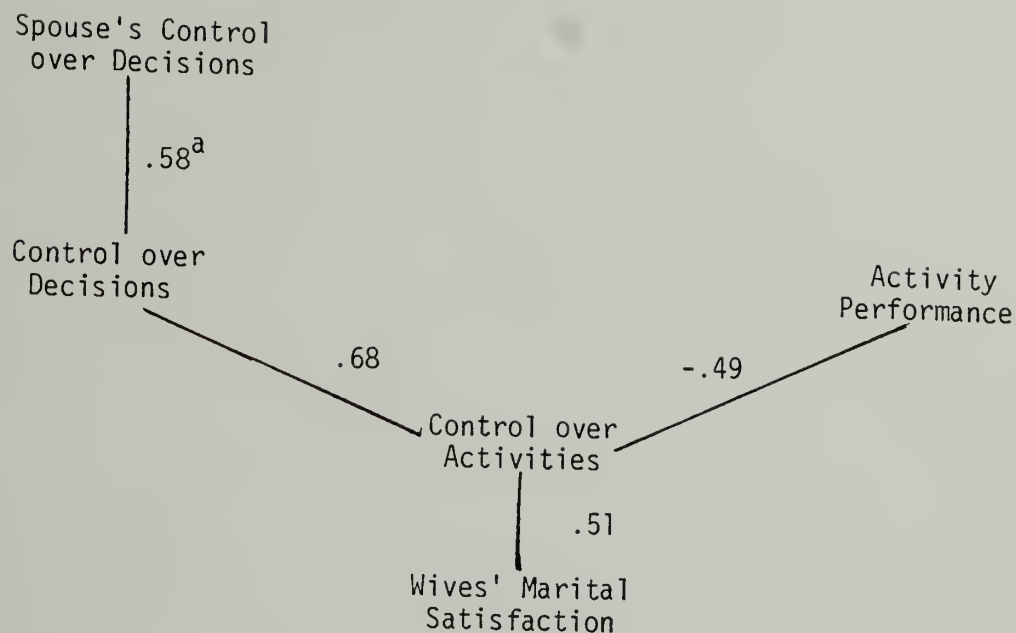


Figure 2. Wives' Regression Model of Variables Associated with Marital Satisfaction

^aSimple correlation coefficients are shown for each pair of variables.

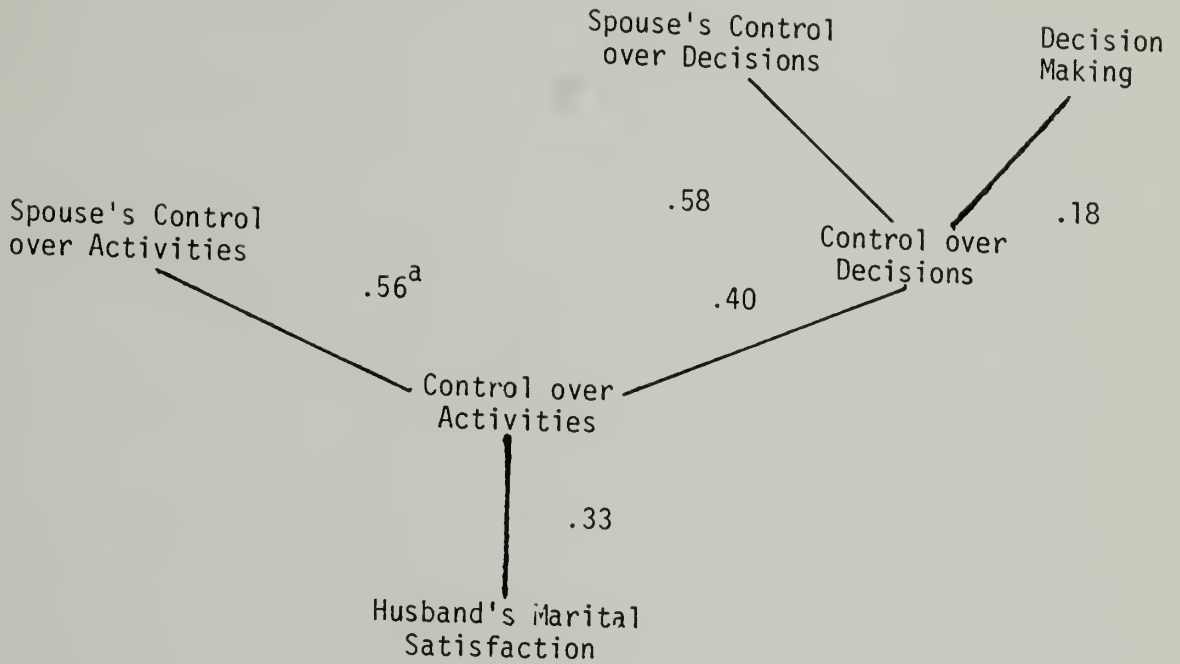


Figure 3. Husbands' Regression Model of Variables Associated with Marital Satisfaction

^aSimple correlation coefficients are shown for each pair of variables.

Table 9
Steps in Regression Model of Associations between Satisfaction
and Other Variables for Female Respondents*

Dependent Variable	Statistical Predictors	Simple r	B	F to Enter	p
Marital Satisfaction	Activity Control	.51	.19	11.54	.002
Activity Control	Decision Control	.68	.56	27.70	.001
	Activity Performance	-.49	-.75	5.43	.026
Decision Control	Spouse's Decision Control	.58	.51	16.36	.001

*A regression equation was formulated for each of the dependent variables tabled (also see Figure 2).

Table 10

Steps in Regression Model of Associations between Satisfaction
and Other Variables for Male Respondents*

Dependent Variable	Statistical Predictors	Simple r	B	F to Enter	p
Marital Satisfaction	Activity Control	.33	.14	3.97	.055
Activity Control	Spouse's Activity Control	.56	.67	14.77	.001
	Decision Control	.40	.41	7.48	.010
Decision Control	Spouse's Decision Control	.58	.93	16.02	.001
	Decision Making	.18	.87	9.56	.004

*A regression equation was formulated for each of the dependent variables tabled (also see Figure 3).

there was a negative association between performing activities and controlling activities, and men did not. On the other hand, men thought that one's own and one's spouse's control over activities was related, and that decision making is associated with control over decisions, and women did not. These men and women emphasized different factors in their analyses of perceived control over activities.

Perceptions of control in marriage. T-tests demonstrated a number of sex differences in men's and women's perceptions of their marriages (see Table 11). Wives' Decision Control was greater than husbands' Decision Control ($t(71)=-5.51$, $p < .001$), and wives viewed husbands as having more activity control ($t(70)=-2.77$, $p < .01$) and more decision control (i.e., wives' Spouse's Activity and Decision Control) than husbands saw themselves as having (i.e., husbands' Activity and Decision Control). Therefore, it appears that women generally viewed most events in marriage as more controllable since they thought that both husbands and wives have more control than men thought husbands and wives have.

But women also saw their husbands as having greater control over activities and less control over decisions than they do, as shown by their Decision Control Difference ($t(70)=-3.36$, $p < .001$) and Activity Control Difference ($t(70)=2.79$, $p < .01$) scores, whereas men saw no differences between their own and their wives' control over activities or decisions. Thus, men felt that husbands and wives are equally in control of both decisions and activities, although women felt that husbands dominate activities and that wives dominate decisions.

Table 11
 Mean Item Values Comparing Women's and Men's Scores
 on Decision, Activity, and Control Variables

Variable	Women	Men
Decision Making	5.39	4.74***
Activity Performance	6.01	4.38***
Decision Control	7.33	6.02***
Activity Control	5.76	5.88
Spouse's Decision Control	6.80	6.25*
Spouse's Activity Control	6.78	5.91**
Decision Control Difference	-.57	.21***
Activity Control Difference	1.05	.02**

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

Reported behavior. In addition to differing perceptions of marriage, husbands and wives reported differences regarding Decision Making and Activity Performance. First, women said that they perform more activities ($t(72)=-10.30, p < .001$) and make more decisions ($t(70)=-5.70, p < .001$) than men said they do (see Table 11). Second, a comparison of the frequencies of decision and activity items dominated by either men or women indicates that women are responsible for more decisions (11) than men (6) and perform more activities (19) than their husbands (5) ($\chi^2(3)=14.18, p < .01$). Men and women agree, then, that wives take care of more tasks and decisions than husbands do.

Not only did the magnitude of Decision Making and Activity Performance differ between the sexes, but the kinds of matters delegated to husbands and wives followed rather traditional gender roles. Table 12 shows decisions and activities that male and female respondents both indicated were performed primarily by either husband or wife, as well as those that men and women do equally often. Women make decisions about their own employment, food, and number of other household matters; men make decisions about their jobs, cars, and only a few other areas. Women perform most traditionally female household and childcare chores, and men tend the lawn, and make house and car repairs. (Men's and women's mean ratings of individual items of the scales for Decision Making, Activity Performance, Decision and Activity Control, and Spouse's Decision and Activity Control are attached in Appendix B.)

Gender Role Modernity. Correlates of Gender Role Modernity for males and females combined are shown in Table 5. A high Gender Role Modernity

Table 12
Distribution of Decisions and Activities by Gender

Decisions Made by Women	Decisions Made by Men	Decisions Made by Either Sex
whether wife should work wife's choice of job amount of money to spend on food choice of doctor choice of wife's clothing to purchase choice of wife's toiletries to purchase choice of household furnishings to purchase kinds of food to eat kinds of food to purchase whether to have friends to dinner choice of general magazine subscriptions	husband's choice of job whether to buy life insurance choice of car to purchase choice of husband's clothing to purchase choice of liquor to purchase who to socialize with	amount of money to save or invest choice of credit card choice of bank amount of money to spend on major appliances choice of apartment to rent or house to purchase brand of major appliances to purchase whether to go on vacation where to go on vacation what movie to see whether to go out for entertainment when to have sex
Activities Done by Women	Activities Done by Men	Activities Done by Either Sex
washing dishes drying clothes cleaning carpets laundry ironing mending clothes personal care cleaning bathroom food shopping purchasing clothing for wife purchasing household furnishings buying gifts for relatives personal correspondence babysitting evening baby care care of older children taking children to doctor indoor play with children outdoor play with children helping children with studies driving children around preparing meals for children	planning investments or savings tending lawn repairs around the house getting car serviced purchasing liquor	paying routine bills banking (such as making deposits) purchasing clothing for husband outdoor play with children

score represents a liberal perspective. Gender Role Modernity was negatively correlated with respondent's age and number of children ($r = -.25$, $p < .05$, and $r = -.42$, $p < .001$, respectively) and was positively correlated with education ($r = .39$, $p < .001$). In addition, Gender Role Modernity was positively correlated with Decision Control ($r = .35$, $p < .01$), Spouse's Decision Control ($r = .40$, $p < .001$), and Spouse's Activity Control ($r = .29$, $p < .05$).

Among men and among women, different variables were associated with Gender Role Modernity (see Tables 7 and 8). For men, Gender Role Modernity was positively correlated with Spouse's Decision Control ($r = .50$, $p < .01$) and was negatively correlated with age ($r = -.37$, $p < .05$). For women, Gender Role Modernity was positively correlated with Decision Control ($r = .42$, $p < .05$). Thus, attitudes about roles are related to women's decision control and men's perceptions of women's decision control; that is, ideas about roles are associated with both males' and females' perceptions of women's control regarding decisions, rather than their perceptions of men's control.

Hypothesis 4 stated that:

The correlations between satisfaction and decision making, activity performance, and decision and activity control are stronger for men with traditional gender role attitudes and weaker for traditional women than for men and women with modern role attitudes.

To test Hypothesis 4, an analysis was done to assess whether people with modern gender role attitudes reported different correlates of marital satisfaction than people with traditional gender role attitudes (see Table 13). Among women, modern women reported a positive correlation between Satisfaction and Decision Making ($r = .30$), whereas traditional

Table 13

Correlates of Marital Satisfaction
by Wives' and Husbands' Gender Role Attitude

Variable	Wives		Husbands	
	Modern ^a	Traditional	Modern	Traditional
Decision Making ^b	.30	-.46	.33	.29
Decision Control	.48*	.26	-.03	.04
Spouse's Decision Control	.23	.45	-.15	.07
Activity Performance	.24	-.23	-.14	.10
Activity Control	.64***	.44	.54*	.11
Spouse's Activity Control	.15	.02	.45	.08

*p < .05

***p < .001

^a Respondents were divided into Modern and Traditional at the median for the entire sample. This produced 23 modern women and 15 modern men and 14 traditional women and 22 traditional men.

^b Regarding the correlation between decision making and marital satisfaction, the difference between the correlation among modern women and the correlation among traditional women is statistically significant ($z=2.15$, $p < .05$).

women reported a negative correlation ($r = -.46$). The difference between the correlations in these two groups was significant ($z = 2.15$, $p < .05$). Because of very small numbers, other differences did not reach statistical significance, although for modern men and women, Satisfaction and Activity Control were positively correlated (for modern men, $r = .54$, $p < .05$; and for modern women, $r = .64$, $p < .001$), when they were not significantly correlated among traditional men and women (for traditional men, $r = .11$; for traditional women, $r = .44$).

Hypothesis 4 did not receive support in these data, therefore. The only statistically significant difference between modern and traditional respondents was in the correlation between Decision Making and Satisfaction among women; but the negative correlation for traditional women had not been predicted. Apparently, traditional women would prefer to have their husbands make decisions more often. In regards to Activity Control, a trend is suggested in which modern respondents of both sexes prefer greater control over activities, whereas traditional respondents do not emphasize control over activities. However, a larger sample is needed to confirm this finding.

An attempt was also made to discover other interactions between sex, Gender Role Modernity, and the other major variables by dividing each of the other variables into two groups with a median split and performing a 2X2 analysis of variables on the dependent variable of Gender Role Modernity. Only one such interaction appeared: men and women who perform more activities didn't differ on Gender Role Modernity, but men who perform fewer activities were more conservative than others and women who perform fewer activities were more liberal ($F(1,72) = 5.60$,

$p < .05$). However, this analysis is not meant to indicate causality, since this correlational study is not an experimental design such as analysis of variance requires. Yet it does imply that a person's view of gender role influences actions in marriage. Liberal women are shifting away from having primary responsibility for household tasks and liberal men are contributing more in the household.

Categorization of couples. In order to draw comparisons with previous decision making research (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960), attempts were made to classify couples as equalitarian, wife dominant, and husband dominant, with the intention of comparing the marital satisfaction of different classes of couples. However, when equalitarian couples were defined as couples in which both wife and husband reported that they made decisions equally, 34 of the 37 couples fit in the equalitarian category. The classification of equalitarianism was very conservative: the midpoint of the 9-point scale was 5, which was labeled "both make decisions equally often;" a mean item response ranging from 4 to 6 was defined as indicating equal decision making. Since even with this conservative procedure nearly all couples fell in one category, it was impossible to compare classes of couples. Similar attempts were made dividing couples into two or three groups on Activity Control and Decision Control, but the frequencies in the possible categories were too small for further analysis.

Activity Performance was also used to classify couples and a more varied pattern emerged. In 46 percent of couples, both spouses agreed that they performed activities about equally; in 24 percent, wives said that they performed most activities and husbands said they performed

relatively few activities; in 19 percent, wives said they performed most activities, and their husbands said they performed tasks equally; and in 8 percent, wives said that they performed activities equally and husbands said that they performed fewer activities than their wives. Thus, in about half of the couples, respondents felt they divided household tasks equally, and in the other half of couples, at least one spouse felt that wives did more.

Because husbands and wives often did not agree that the wife dominated task performance, a comparison of couples in which activities were shared equally and couples in which one spouse felt the wife dominated tasks should be considered tentative. When a t-test was used to compare these groups on all major variables, the groups differed on three variables: wives said they had greater Decision Control when tasks were shared (Mean/item=7.68) than when the wife did more (Mean/item=6.77; $t(26)=-2.46$, $p < .05$); wives said the Activity Control Difference between herself and her husband was minimal when tasks were shared (Mean/item=.32) compared to when she did more (Mean/item=2.19, $t(26)=-2.94$, $p < .01$); and husbands said that power was less important to them when tasks were shared ($M=3.12$) than when the wife did more ($M=4.92$; $t(26)=-2.34$, $p < .05$).

Miscellaneous Additional Issues

I performed a number of other analyses which involve several disjointed conceptual and methodological issues and which are combined in this final section of this Results chapter.

Husband and wife consensus. Table 14 presents correlations between husbands' and wives' perceptions of their marriage. Husbands' and wives' Marital Satisfaction ($r=.50$, $p < .01$) and Gender Role Modernity were positively correlated ($r=.44$, $p < .01$). Mates' Decision Making ($r=-.48$, $p < .01$), and Activity Performance ($r=-.66$, $p < .01$), were negatively correlated, which indicates agreement since it means that when one mate reported that s/he makes decisions or performs tasks, her/his spouse also reported not doing those things. The Decision Control Difference ($r=-.51$, $p < .001$) and Activity Control Difference ($r=-.41$, $p < .05$) were also negatively correlated, which also indicates agreement because it implies that when one spouse felt that the other has greater control, the other spouse reported having greater control.

Because respondents estimated their spouse's control as well as their own, the relationship between a person's own perceived control and their spouse's estimate of their control could be calculated. Wives' Activity Control and husbands' Spouse's Activity Control were positively correlated ($r=.37$, $p < .05$), and wives' Decision Control and husbands' Spouse's Decision Control were marginally related ($r=.30$, $p=.07$). Husbands' Activity Control and wives' Spouse's Activity Control were also marginally related ($r=.32$, $p=.052$). Thus, respondents' perceptions of their spouse's control were barely correlated with the spouse's view.

Since self-reports of decision making and activity performance represent descriptions of behavior, but attributions of control represent descriptions of personal mental processes, it seemed likely that spouses would show greater consensus regarding decision making and activity performance than regarding attributions of control over

Table 14
Correlations between Husband's and Wife's
Perceptions of Aspects of Their Marriage

Variable	Correlation Coefficient
Gender Role Modernity	.44**
Marital Satisfaction	.50**
Decision Making	-.48**
Decision Control	.09
Spouse's Decision Control	-.01
Decision Control Difference	-.51***
Wife's Decision Control/ Husband's Spouse's Control	.30
Husband's Decision Control/ Wife's Spouse's Control	.23
Activity Performance	-.66***
Activity Control	.13
Spouse's Activity Control	.17
Activity Control Difference	-.41*
Wife's Activity Control/ Husband's Spouse's Control	.37*
Husband's Activity Control/ Wife's Spouse's Control	.32
Importance of Power to Self	.03
Importance of Power to Spouse	.19
Time Spent Thinking about Power	.13

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

decisions and activities. Indeed, the intracouple correlation on Activity Performance was significantly greater than the correlation between wives' Activity Control and husbands' Spouse's Activity Control ($z=2.35$, $p < .05$) and than the correlation between husbands' Activity Control and wives' Spouse's Activity Control ($z=2.61$, $p < .01$). The intracouple Decision Making correlation was greater than the intracouple perceptions of Decision Control, also, but the differences were not large enough to be statistically significant. Mates agreed more concerning behaviors than they agreed concerning attributions.

Consensual perceptions of marriage may be one factor contributing to marital satisfaction, so a comparison of intracouple perceptions in high and low marital satisfaction groups was performed. Couples were divided into two groups according to the spouse's combined satisfaction scores and correlations between spouse's perceptions were computed for each group (see Table 15).¹⁰

High satisfaction couples' perceptions were correlated positively regarding Gender Role Modernity ($r=.60$, $p < .01$) and Decision Control ($r=.48$, $p < .05$). Also, respondents' Activity Control and Spouse's Activity Control were positively correlated among more satisfied couples (for wives' Activity Control/husbands' Spouse's Activity Control, $r=.48$,

¹⁰This may not be the ideal way to classify couples. Any couple in which either spouse is very unhappy would be included in the low satisfaction group and all couples in which both spouses are very happy would be included in the high satisfaction group, but couples in the middle could be in either category. It would have been clearer to use three or four groups to distinguish couples in which only one spouse is unhappy from those in which both are unhappy, but the size of the sample precluded more than one division of the total.

Table 15
Within-Couple Correlations in High and Low Marital
Satisfaction Groups

Variable	High Satisfaction Couples	Low Satisfaction Couples
Gender Role Modernity	.60**	.24
Decision Making	-.62**	-.43
Spouse's Decision Control	.48*	-.40
Decision Control Difference	-.04	-.74***
Wife's Decision Control/ Husband's Spouse Control	.45	.46
Husband's Decision Control/ Wife's Spouse Control	.30	.11
Activity Performance	-.52*	-.82***
Activity Control	-.30	-.33
Spouse's Activity Control	.22	.25
Activity Control Difference	-.54*	-.38
Wife's Activity Control/ Husband's Spouse Control	.48*	.19
Husband's Activity Control/ Wife's Spouse Control	.55*	.24
Importance of Power to Self	.03	.15
Importance of Power to Spouse	.19	.13
Time Spent Thinking about Power	-.12	.21

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

$p < .05$; for husbands' Activity Control/wives' Spouse's Activity Control, $r = .55$, $p < .05$). A negative correlation concerning Activity Control Difference also implies consensus regarding relative Activity Control ($r = -.54$, $p < .05$). Thus, satisfied respondents showed agreement regarding sex role attitudes and attributions of control, especially control over activities.

Highly satisfied respondents also agreed regarding the behaviors of making decisions and performing tasks. Decision making ($r = -.62$, $p < .01$) and Activity Performance ($r = -.52$, $p < .05$) were negatively correlated between satisfied mates, indicating that when one spouse reported making decisions and performing activities the other spouse said s/he didn't make decisions and perform activities.

Among low satisfaction couples, the only significantly correlated within-couple perceptions were negative correlations regarding Activity Performance ($r = -.82$, $p < .001$) and Decision Control Difference ($r = -.74$, $p < .001$). Low satisfaction couples agreed only regarding task performance and control over decisions, whereas high satisfaction couples agreed regarding most aspects of decision making, activity performance, and perceived control. However, none of the correlations differed significantly between the high and low satisfaction groups, since the N s were so small. Because the size of these groups is very small for correlational analyses, these results can merely suggest a trend towards greater consensus in more satisfying marriages.

Importance of decisions and activities. Hypothesis 5 stated that:

Decision making, activity performance, and control over decisions and activities are more highly predictive of

satisfaction regarding important decisions and activities than regarding unimportant decisions and activities.

Table 16 lists the mean importance ratings of each decision and activity item by gender.

Among all respondents, the ten most important decisions were, in rank order: the husband's choice of job, the choice of apartment to rent or house to buy, the wife's choice of job, amount of money to save or invest, choice of doctor, whether the wife should work, the choice of car to purchase, when to have sex, kinds of food to eat, and kinds of food to purchase. The ten most important activities were, also in rank order: care of older children, evening baby care, daytime baby care, taking children to the doctor, helping children with studies, preparing meals for children, paying routine bills, planning investments and savings, indoor play with children, and outdoor play with children. New decision making, activity performance, and decision and activity control scores were calculated using only the ten most important items and analyses were done to see if ratings on these ten important items would be more highly correlated with marital satisfaction than ratings on the full decision and activity scales.

Correlates of marital satisfaction using the scales composed of the important items are presented in Table 17. None of these correlations were significantly different from correlates of satisfaction using the full 29- or 31-item scales, except for Decision Control among women (for ten important items, $r=.23$; for all 29 items, $r=-.31$; $z=2.28$, $p < .05$), and Decision Making among men (for ten important items, $r=-.37$; for all 29 items, $r=.27$; $z=-2.74$, $p < .01$). Therefore, no interpretable

Table 16
 Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of Importance
 of Decisions and Activities

Items	Wives	Husbands
Decisions		
husband's choice of job	7.31	8.69***
whether to buy life insurance	6.31	5.69
whether wife should work	8.00	5.67***
wife's choice of job	8.47	5.74***
amount of money to save or invest	7.08	6.82
choice of credit cards	5.62	4.91
choice of bank	5.51	4.91
amount of money to spend on food	6.73	5.39**
amount of money to spend on major appliances	6.60	5.97
choice of car to purchase	6.43	7.25
choice of apartment to rent or house to buy	8.33	7.35***
choice of doctor	7.81	6.03***
choice of husband's clothing to purchase	4.41	6.33***
choice of wife's clothing to purchase	7.00	4.67***
choice of husband's toiletries to purchase	3.75	5.07*
choice of wife's toiletries to purchase	6.49	3.36***
choice of general magazine subscriptions	4.41	3.52
brand of major appliances to purchase	6.14	5.31
choice of liquor to purchase	3.52	4.25
choice of new household furnishings to purchase	6.78	5.75*
kinds of food to eat	6.65	6.31
kinds of food to purchase	6.70	6.20
whether to take a vacation	6.27	6.20
where to go on vacation	5.89	5.97
whether to have friends for dinner	5.30	5.20
what movie to see	4.86	4.83
whether to go out for entertainment	5.03	4.97
when to have sex	6.73	6.37
who to socialize with	6.27	5.83

Table 16 (continued)

Items	Wives	Husbands
Activities		
paying routine bills	7.33	7.24
banking (such as making deposits)	6.87	6.62
planning investments or savings	6.95	7.20
washing dishes	5.31	4.35*
cleaning carpets	4.92	3.72**
tending lawn	4.68	5.41
drying dishes	3.78	3.73
laundry	6.54	4.76***
ironing	4.74	3.62*
mending clothes	5.12	3.97*
animal care	6.97	5.47**
repairs around the house	6.47	6.92
cleaning bathroom	6.81	5.22***
food shopping	7.16	5.89**
getting car serviced	6.14	6.97
occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)	4.18	4.69
purchasing clothing for husband	5.30	5.75
purchasing clothing for wife	6.44	4.50***
purchasing liquor	3.21	4.12*
purchasing household furnishings	6.60	5.27***
buying gifts for relatives	6.14	4.60***
personal correspondence	5.68	4.23***
daytime baby care	8.69	6.50***
evening baby care	8.65	6.75***
care of older children	8.56	7.19***
taking children to doctor	8.47	6.59***
indoor play with children	7.75	6.36***
outdoor play with children	7.29	6.47
helping children with studies	8.19	6.79***
driving children around	6.69	4.97***
preparing meals for children	8.30	6.39***

Table 17
 Correlates of Marital Satisfaction using Scales
 Consisting of Only the Ten Most Important Items

Variable	Women	Men	Women and Men Combined
Activity Performance	-.08	.02	-.06
Activity Control	.51***	.08	.38***
Spouse's Activity Control	.06	.22	.12
Decision Making	.06	-.37* ^a	.01
Decision Control	.23 ^b	-.20	.05
Spouse's Decision Control	.32	.08	.17

* $p < .05$

*** $p < .001$

^aFor the 31-item decision making scale, the correlation between decision making and satisfaction was .27, which is statistically different from this correlation using the 10-item scale ($z=2.74$, $p < .01$).

^bFor the 31-item decision control scale, the correlation between decision control and satisfaction was -.31, which is statistically different from this correlation using the 10-item scale ($z=2.28$, $p < .05$).

pattern emerges that suggests that feelings about important items are more indicative of marital satisfaction than feelings about trivial items.

Perceived reasons for having control. Although responses to open-ended questions will be used mainly for descriptive purposes, frequencies of respondents answering "yes" to the various questions were computed. Table 18 shows the percentages of men and women who checked "yes" in response to the questions asking about areas in which respondents felt that they do and do not have or want control. Because of the length of the survey, some participants were obviously "burnt out" and answered "no" to some questions just to get through the thing. Thus, whether those who checked "no" really had thought about the questions is uncertain and only "yes" responses will be considered meaningful. Moreover, I have two reasons to believe that these questions were misinterpreted by at least some respondents. First, from comments made as I talked to the couples afterwards, I thought that the word "control" was interpreted in these questions as meaning "influence." Second, the actual responses seem more consistent with an influence interpretation of control (see discussion chapter, pp. 101-103).¹¹

When people responded affirmatively to questions asking about areas where they did or did not have control, they were asked to check reasons

¹¹In the earlier questions concerning control over activities and control over decisions, the meaning of the questions were elaborated so that the use of "control" more clearly implied personal control and respondents' comments as they filled out those scales indicated that they interpreted the questions as I intended. However, the open-ended questions were not elaborated and therefore control was apparently interpreted as meaning influence.

Table 18

Percentages of "Yes" Responses to Questions
About Control over Decisions and Activities

Question	Women ^a	Men ^a
Is there an area in which you <u>don't make the final decision</u> , but <u>do feel</u> that you have at least some <u>control over decisions</u> ?	70	65
Is there an area in which you <u>don't perform activities</u> , but <u>do feel</u> that you have at least some <u>control over whether or not you perform activities</u> ?	67	54
Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you have control when you don't particularly want control?	70	24
Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you have control and in which you do want control?	84	67
Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you don't have control, but in which you would like to have control?	27	16
Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you don't have control and in which you don't want control?	49	43

^aN=37

for having control or not having control on a list of possible reasons. The frequencies with which each of these items was checked are shown in Tables 19 and 20. Table 19 displays the reasons that were indicated for having control that was wanted and not wanted; Table 20 shows the reasons that were checked for not having control that was wanted and not wanted.

Couples' oral comments. The discussions after participants had completed their surveys were fairly free-form. However, after a few interviews, some patterns in peoples' comments emerged and I began to ask a standard set of questions in addition to whatever each pair mentioned spontaneously. Therefore, it was possible to code the discussions in terms of some general questions that most couples answered. Table 21 shows these questions and the frequency of responses to each one. Most couples said that they talk most decisions over (63%), but do sometimes divide decisions according to sex roles or interest (56%). In addition, 20 percent said they made decisions independently, 11 percent said the husband usually made decisions, and six percent said the wife usually made decisions. For most, decisions have not been a problem in their marriage (67%).

Regarding activities, most couples report that they have a specialized division of labor (65%). Many reported specializing according to traditional sex roles (54%), but most others felt that they specialized by interest rather than by roles (43%), even though the task allocation appeared rather sex-role-traditional. In those couples who did not specialize regarding tasks, 19 percent said the

Table 19

Percentages of Wives and Husbands Who Checked Each Reason for Having Control
When Control was Wanted and When Control was Not Wanted

Reasons	Wanted Control		Unwanted Control	
	Wives ^a	Husbands ^b	Wives ^c	Husbands ^d
Generally wives (husbands) do things in that area	22	24	54	33
I know something about that area	58	64	38	67
I have resources to contribute in that area (for instance, skills or financial resources)	55	76	27	44
My spouse doesn't want the responsibility	6	8	50	44
My spouse doesn't care about that area	6	12	27	11
My spouse shouldn't have to worry about such things	6	24	8	22
It's my job, as a wife (husband)	6	24	11	11
My spouse doesn't want to take the trouble	6	8	35	22
I enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area	61	72	19	11
Someone has to do it and I don't dislike it as much as my spouse	6	20	42	22
I have the time to spend doing things in that area	32	20	27	11
I have been persuaded that I should do things in that area	3	0	11	0
Someone has to do it and it's not worth the trouble to convince someone else (for instance, my spouse)	6	0	23	0
I've always done things in that area	35	44	42	33
I have higher standards in that area than my spouse	13	8	19	44
My spouse feels that area is too trivial to worry about	100	100	27	0
I feel it should be my choice to do things in that area	64	32	19	0

^aN=31
^bN=25
^cN=26
^dN=9

Table 20
Percentages of Wives and Husbands Who Checked Each Reason for Not Having Control
When Control was Wanted and when Control was Not Wanted

Reasons	Wanted Control		Unwanted Control	
	Wives ^a	Husbands ^b	Wives ^c	Husbands ^d
generally wives (husbands) don't do things in that area	10	17	12	33
my spouse knows something about that area	40	17	88	61
my spouse has resources to contribute to that area (for instance, skills or financial resources)	50	17	56	44
I don't care about that area	0	0	38	22
I don't want to take the responsibility	20	0	44	22
I shouldn't have to worry about such things	10	0	31	17
it's my spouse's job, as a wife (husband)	10	0	31	17
I don't want to take the trouble	10	17	38	11
I don't enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area	20	0	50	17
somebody has to do it, and my spouse doesn't dislike it as much as I do	0	0	31	17
I don't have time to spend doing things in that area	10	17	25	28
my spouse has been persuaded that he or she should do things in that area	20	0	19	6
somebody has to do it, and my spouse feels it's not worth the trouble to convince me to do it	0	0	0	11
I've never done things in that area	10	0	31	11
my spouse has higher standards in that area than I do	0	17	31	17
I feel that area is too trivial to worry about	0	0	0	0
my spouse feels it should be his/her choice to do things in that area	50	17	25	22

a. N=10
b. N=6
c. N=16
d. N=18

Table 21
Percentages of Couples Responding "Yes"
to Questions Asked During Interviews

Question	Percent Responding "Yes" ^a
Decisions	
Do they ever specialize during decision making? ^b	56*
Are decisions currently a problem?	8
Do they ever talk about decision making?	16
Have decisions been a problem in the past? ^c	33
Did they talk about decisions in the past?	31
Activities	
Do they specialize in activity performance?	97**
Are activities currently a problem?	11
Do they talk about activities much?	14
Have activities been a problem in the past?	30
Did they talk about activities much in the past?	35
Power	
Is power a problem?	5
Do they talk much about power?	8
Has power been a problem in the past?	22
Have they talked much about power in the past?	14

^aN=37, except where noted

^bN=34

^cN=36

*Of those responding yes, 53 percent said they specialized according to traditional sex roles and 47 percent said they specialized according to areas of interest.

**Of those responding yes, 56 percent said they specialized according to traditional sex roles and 44 percent said they specialized according to areas of interest.

wife did most tasks and 16 percent said they did most things together.

The majority of couples (95%) said that power is not a problem in their marriage, but 43 percent of those said that power would be a problem if it were not equal. Twenty-two percent of all couples said that marital power had been a problem previously. Thus, respondents generally felt that power was not an issue in their marriages, or wouldn't admit that it was in front of their spouses.

Finally, I coded which spouse did most of the talking: in 41 percent of the couples, both spouses talked equally often; in 29 percent, the husband talked more than his wife; and, in the other 29 percent, the wife talked more than her husband. Analyses of variance comparing these three groups on all major variables for each sex showed that they differed only concerning wives' Activity Control: when spouses talked equally, wives reported greater Activity Control (Mean/item=6.82) than when either the husband (Mean/item=5.25) or the wife (Mean/item=5.72) did most of the talking ($F(2,29)=5.72, p < .01$).

Summary of Results

In this results chapter, several findings are of particular importance for the discussion of the study in the next chapter:

(1) Among males and females combined, only control over activities was highly related to marital satisfaction. Other variables included in the study were associated with satisfaction through their relationships to activity control.

(2) Men and women indicated that different variables were related to satisfaction. Activity control was important for satisfaction among

both husbands and wives, but it was of greater importance to wives. Women emphasized the association between activity performance and activity control, and men did not. Men emphasized their spouses' activity control and decision making and women did not. Men and women also both reported that wives are generally responsible for more decisions and tasks than are husbands. The division of labor in these marriages follows traditional gender roles, too.

(3) Although gender role attitude was not correlated with marital satisfaction in this sample, it was related to both men's and women's perceptions of wives' control over activities, in that more modern people felt that wives had greater control over whether they perform tasks. Moreover, women with modern views of gender roles perform fewer tasks than women with traditional views, and modern men perform more tasks than traditional men. Generally, the classification of couples by who makes decisions indicated that nearly all couples shared decisions equally; the classification by who performs tasks suggested two categories, that couples either share tasks or else wives perform most tasks, but patterns were not clearcut.

(4) Within couples, husbands' and wives' reported perceptions of behaviors and attributions were moderately correlated. Mates displayed greater consensus in their views of the behaviors of decision making and activity performance than in their views of each others' attributions of control regarding decisions and activities. Respondents who were satisfied with their marriages agreed more than those who were less satisfied.

(5) Responses to scales composed of only important decisions and

activities were not more highly correlated with marital satisfaction than responses to the full scales composed of both important and unimportant items.

C H A P T E R I V

DISCUSSION

The present study is an analysis of associations among several factors that are related to marital satisfaction: whether one makes decisions or performs task activities in marriage, perceived control over the outcomes of decision making, and perceived control over whether one performs activities. This discussion chapter is composed of four sections, each dealing with a main issue in the dissertation, including: (1) the associations among marital satisfaction and decision making, task performance, and perceived control over decisions and activities; (2) differences between men's and women's perceptions of and behaviors in marriage, gender roles, and attitudes towards gender roles; (3) connections between the concepts of perceived control and power; and (4) methodological issues which were raised by this project regarding consensus between husbands' and wives' views of marriage, the use of important and trivial decision and activity topics, and the use of oral interview data to study power.

Marital Satisfaction and Perceived Control

Two hypotheses were the major focus of this research. One hypothesis was that marital satisfaction is positively correlated with (a) decision making, (b) activity performance, and perceived control over (c) decisions and (d) activities. The other hypothesis was that (a) marital satisfaction is more highly correlated with perceived

decision control than with frequency of decision making, and (b) that satisfaction is more highly correlated with perceived activity control than with frequency of activity performance. These hypotheses were partially supported by the findings; only control over activities was significantly correlated with either spouse's marital satisfaction. The general notion that intrapersonal events such as attributions of control are more likely to be related to the intrapersonal event of satisfaction than reports of interpersonal behavior is confirmed by these results (Kelley et al., in press). But not all personal events were found to be related to satisfaction, because control over decisions was not correlated with satisfaction and control over activities was.

Further evidence of the importance of activity control was found in a comparison of people's own activity control relative to their perception of their spouse's activity control; people high in marital satisfaction reported no difference between their own and their spouse's control, whereas people low in satisfaction reported having much less control than their spouse. Thus, the most satisfying marriages were those in which both spouses said they have relatively equal, and moderately high, control over activities.

Because only control over activities was correlated with satisfaction, a model was developed to determine how other variables might relate to satisfaction through activity control. The model identifies statistical predictors of marital satisfaction through their associations with control over activities. Because these data are correlational, the model does not inform us about the direction of causal influence among these variables, and, indeed, causality is probably circular among them.

Nevertheless, the model indicates where there are links among the complex array of factors involved in this study.

The emergent model included three lines that contributed to activity control. First, control over activities was predicted statistically by decision control, and decision control was predicted by spouse's control over decisions and frequency of decision making. Decision making was only indirectly related to marital satisfaction, therefore, through perceived control over decisions and activities. Perceived control may well be a mediator between satisfaction and making decisions, although these data cannot be used to claim causal mediation.

That marital satisfaction was more closely linked to attributions about decision making than to decision making itself supports the prediction, derived from Kelley et al.'s (in press) analysis of close relationships, that there are two levels of analysis represented in this research. Decision making is a self-report of a relational behavior representing interaction between the individuals, but marital satisfaction and attributions of control are personal events representing an individual's private cognitions about the relationship. Because attributions of control and satisfaction are both personal events, whereas reported frequency of decision making and task performance are relational events, it was predicted that control would be more closely connected to satisfaction than is decision making. This model confirms this prediction since perceived control over decisions and activities links decision making with marital satisfaction.

The second chain in the model shows that whether one performs

activities was negatively related to control over activities; people who felt that they perform more activities also felt that they have less control over whether they perform activities than those who do fewer tasks. As with decision making, attributions about activities may mediate between performing tasks and satisfaction, although this study merely suggests a link that may or may not be causal in nature. That perceived control over activities mediates between satisfaction and activity performance is consistent with Kelley et al.'s (in press) formulation of various levels of analysis in close relationships. Just as perceived control over decisions connects frequency of decision making with marital satisfaction, perceived control over activities connects frequency of task performance with marital satisfaction.

The negative correlation between activity control and performance in this model contradicts the proposal that performing activities confers power, since perceived control necessarily accompanies power (e.g., Hoffman, 1960; see more detailed discussion about power on pp. 105-107). That is, in order to have power, one must feel that one can control outcomes. Therefore, since perceived control declines with greater task performance, task performance does not indicate power.

It was through activity performance that perceptions of power indirectly link to satisfaction: respondents who perform fewer tasks said power was more important both to their spouses and to themselves. This odd association was clarified during discussions with the couples. Many said that they weren't sure how to answer the question about the importance of power because having equal power was important to them, but having more power than their spouse was not important to most.

Therefore, a response indicating that power was extremely important meant that a person wanted more power than her/his spouse, or that s/he wanted equal power. The ambiguity of the question, then, makes its interpretation unclear. The last element in the chain from activity performance was time spent thinking about power, which was, through importance of power, negatively connected to activity performance. Again, people who say they think about power perform fewer activities. Discussions with couples afterwards implied that those who were aware of power issues in their marriage did intentionally do less around the house. For instance, one man who said that men should have power felt it was his right to tell his wife to rinse the dishes before putting them in the sink, and his wife agreed; other couples who emphasized equal marital power had elaborate schedules to insure equal task performance.

The third chain in the model indicated that one's own control over activities was positively associated with one's perception of one's spouse's control over activities. People seem to vary in how controllable they believe both activities and decisions are, since those who felt that they could control activities and decisions also felt that their spouses could control activities and decisions. Perhaps viewing events in relationships as controllable is indicative of a more general perception that interpersonal matters are negotiable and flexible. If that is the case, family therapy literature would consider those with high perceived control as better able to cope with stresses on close relationships because they are more open to change (e.g., Napier & Whitaker, 1978).

Attitudes toward gender roles were related to spouse's activity

control, such that people with more liberal views of women's roles felt that their spouses had greater control than those with more conservative views of women. Traditionality regarding sex roles, then, seems to be associated with low perceived control over activities for one's spouse and oneself, and may also accompany a less flexible view of roles and relationships.

Gender Roles in Marriage

Activities. The gender differences found in this study were intriguing. On the average, women reported making more decisions and performing more tasks than husbands reported doing, but women also reported that both they and their husbands have more control than men indicated. Unless women use response scales differently from men, it seems that women actually see their marital relationships are more controllable than do men. Perhaps because women's lives as more relationship-centered, as has been suggested in research on affiliation needs (e.g., Booth, 1972; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Simmons & Rosenberg, 1975), or women have more to lose from poor heterosexual relationships (e.g., Rubin, 1973), they view interactions as negotiable and changeable, but men view interactions as taking their courses by themselves. (This is stereotypic and speculative, and needs to be analyzed empirically.)

In this sample, activity control was more highly correlated with satisfaction among women than among men, and having activity control equal to their spouses was important for satisfaction among women, but not among men. The models for association to marital satisfaction among males and females suggested that different factors are important

to husbands and wives. Among women, activity control was related to decision control and activity performance. Decision control, in turn, was related to spouse's decision control. Among men, activity control was associated with spouse's activity control and decision control, which was predicted by spouse's decision making and frequency of decision making. Thus, men and women attached importance to different aspects of marriage. Perceived control over tasks is important to both, but women with high perceived control are those who perform fewer tasks. Task performance and control were not correlated for men. Rather, men's perceived activity control was related to their perception of their wives' activity control, but women's perceived activity control was not associated with their view of their husbands' activity control.¹²

The negative link between activity performance and personal control among women contradicts proposals by previous researchers that women's control over family activities gives them power. Instead, women who execute the most tasks feel that they have the least choice over whether they do them. Assuming that a perception of control is a prerequisite of power, these data indicated that it is more likely that women lose power from greater participation in household tasks. Other writers have suggested that decision making measures of power underestimate women's power by ignoring the activity component of power (e.g., Burgess et al.,

¹²There is a suggestion that modern and traditional women emphasized decision making differently: for modern women, decision making was positively correlated with marital satisfaction, and for traditional women, the correlation was negative. This needs further investigation, since the sample size, again, made analysis difficult.

1971; Hoffman, 1960; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976b), but the present study implies that the more activities a woman does, the less power she will have. Furthermore, it has been posited that employed wives lose power in the family because of their decreased activity power compared to nonemployed wives (Hoffman, 1960), yet this study indicates that employed wives should have greater power both because they perform fewer household tasks than housewives and because they influence financial matters. Yet, working probably does not give wives equal power with their husbands since employed wives still perform more housework than their husbands, both in the present research and in large-scale surveys (e.g., Pleck, 1977). Hartmann's (1981) contention that the inequitable division of labor in families reflects the persistence of patriarchal power is consistent with these findings.

In addition to attaching different importance to activity performance and control, men and women differ in the nature and quantity of the activities for which they are responsible. Women perform all of the childcare tasks, which they considered important, and most household chores, such as washing dishes, laundry, and shopping, which they did not consider very important. But the relationship between control and satisfaction remained the same for women, regardless of task importance. Even when considering only important tasks, women viewed control and activity performance as negatively correlated.

Gender role attitudes. Although gender role modernity did not emerge as a predictor of marital satisfaction for either males or females, it seemed to be related to control variables differently for men and

women. Among men, it was correlated with their perceptions of their wives' control over decisions. For both men and women, gender role attitude is associated with their perceptions of the wife's control rather than the husband's. This seems logical since an important component of changing women's roles is the acceptance of women's greater control over their own lives.

One can speculate that perceived control over decisions may have changed over the past thirty years as attitudes toward women's roles have changed. Perhaps this is why decision control was not directly correlated with marital satisfaction. The more modern a society's views of sex roles, the more couples accept the norm that they should make decisions equally (Rodman, 1972). Because decision making is less variable than in the past, it may be less important as a correlate of marital satisfaction. Most couples in this study reported making decisions together, especially major decisions, and other researchers have recently drawn similar conclusions (e.g., McDonald, 1980). Perhaps decision making was a crucial power issue in marriages in the 1950s, but has faded as a power issue as equalitarian decision making has become valued. A recent Harris (1981) poll confirms the proposition that equalitarian decision making is valued by people, as approximately 80 percent of Americans said that decision making should be shared by spouses.

The notion that equalitarian decision making is now normative is also confirmed in the present study by attempts to classify couples in terms of decision making. There was so little variability in decision making that over 90 percent of the respondents fell in an equalitarian

category, whereas Blood and Wolfe (1960) reported that 46 percent of couples shared decisions equally in the late 1950s. The current lack of variability regarding decision making provides further evidence that decision making is no longer an area where couples differ much, and hence may no longer contribute to variation in marital satisfaction.

Unlike decision making, the division of labor was a source of variation among couples in the present study, and the interaction between gender and activity performance in predicting gender role attitude underscored its importance. Men and women who performed many activities had similar, rather moderate, views of women; but men who performed few activities tended to be conservative, whereas women who performed few activities tended to be liberal. In addition, gender role modernity was positively correlated with activity control of spouse among all respondents, suggesting that sex role attitude influences one's perception of one's spouse, rather than one's feelings about one's own control.

Since there was variability in the classification of couples by frequency of husband's and wife's task performance, variability regarding activities may contribute to variation in marital satisfaction (also see McDonald, 1980). With a larger sample, one might be able to detect differences in marital satisfaction and control variables among various task performance patterns. If this sample is indicative of a larger population, the two most common activity patterns would be equal activity performance by husbands and wives and greater activity performance by wives. Perhaps wives are happier in equalitarian couples and husbands are happier when their wives take major responsibility for

household tasks.

The influence of gender roles in marriage and variability in attitudes about roles were also reflected in response to open-ended questions concerning areas in which participants had, or wanted to have, control. Unfortunately, respondents interpreted the word control as meaning total influence in these questions, a common semantic confusion regarding the word control. (In any case, as I discuss these data, I will use "influence" instead of control in this context, to avoid confusion with the distinct concept of personal control.) But the responses are relevant to the issue of gender roles.

When asked to identify areas in which they don't make decisions or perform activities, but do have some influence, women most often listed their husband's job, paying bills, getting the car serviced, repairs on the house, and tending the lawn. But some women said that they didn't have, and didn't want influence over matters, and other women indicated that they didn't have influence over these matters, but wished that they did. Thus, women vary concerning whether they do influence, and want to influence, traditionally masculine tasks. However, although most men agreed that they influenced those masculine tasks, men also varied regarding whether they wanted control over those domains: some men reported having and wanting influence regarding their own jobs, planning savings, and home repairs; other men said that they didn't like their influence over house repairs and car servicing.

The picture concerning "feminine" tasks is somewhat different. Men indicated that they have influence over, but don't make decisions or perform activities regarding, their wives' jobs and general household

tasks, but they also indicated that they didn't particularly want greater influence over these matters. Women said that they wanted influence concerning jobs, but they didn't want more influence over household matters. Thus, women were not happy with their responsibility for housework and men were not interested in gaining greater influence over household matters.

When participants gave reasons for having control over areas where they wanted control, all respondents checked as one reason that their spouse felt the area was too trivial to worry about, and more than half said that they enjoyed making decisions regarding that area. Thus, everyone felt they had influence because their spouse let them have it and because they liked that ability to influence. With unwanted influence, the reasons given were more variable. Most commonly cited were that husbands or wives generally do things in that area, one's spouse doesn't want the responsibility, one has knowledge about the area, and habit. These reasons speak strongly of roles, perhaps traditional sex roles, and perhaps a couple's emergent, unique roles.

The reasons for not having influence when it was wanted were also variable, but most commonly cited were that a person's spouse had knowledge or resources in the area and felt it should be his/her choice to do things in that area. When influence was wanted, apparently, it was conferred upon one by one's spouse and one's skills. The most common reason for not having influence that was also not wanted was that the spouse had knowledge or resources in the area. Generally, then, skills and resources seemed to dictate who controlled particular activities in a marriage, consistent with the ideas of resource theories of power

(e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960).

Furthermore, skills and resources often were dictated by sex roles, but individuals felt they were making choices based on personal preference rather than gender typing. These couples apparently provide traditional role models for their children, either intentionally or unintentionally, which implies that family roles are not likely to change radically in the next generations. Specialization probably seems efficient to people who are happy with what they do and do not control, but it may be a source of dissatisfaction for men and women who would prefer to redistribute areas of control.

When couples were asked orally about decision making and task performance, very few reported that decisions or tasks were currently a problem (see discussion of methodological issues on p. 111). About one-third reported that in the past they had had difficulty with decision making and about one-third said that they had had problems regarding activity performance. These couples described a period of adjustment while they worked out effective behavior patterns.

Difficulty concerning the division of labor emerged at various times in the course of marriage, but it nearly always involved the wife wanting her husband to do more. For some couples, the rough period began early in marriage. Several couples said that their first few years together were rocky and that the division of labor contributed to the difficulties. The problems were resolved in a number of ways: some simply evolved patterns acceptable to both, others battled over the issue until the husband agreed to help more. One of the wives said that she remembered when her husband "suddenly realized that if he didn't put

the dishes away after washing them, I would have to do it." In other words, by not doing things, he was forcing her to do them. When he realized this, he began to help more. Another couple, who both worked full time, reduced constant bickering over tasks by hiring someone to clean for a few hours a week. The wife said, "The twelve dollars a week it costs to hire someone to clean is worth not arguing over chores."

For other respondents, the difficult period occurred when one partner, usually the wife, changed her attitudes about decisions and/or activities and demanded greater equality. For instance, a number of wives at the older end of the age range reported beginning marriage with very traditional expectations and roles, until they "became liberated" by the women's movement and personal circumstances. The importance of sociohistorical norms for perceptions of marriage is verified by these women, most of whom did not consider themselves feminists (e.g., Rodman, 1972). The unconscious liberation made these women want a redefinition of roles, although they did not see the issue as a political one. These couples implied, or stated explicitly, that they had considered divorce over the division of decisions and tasks, but had resolved their problems when the husband acquiesced and changed his behavior.

A few other couples mentioned rough times concerning activities when their situation changed, with the birth of another child, the wife's return to work, or a particularly demanding period in the husband's career (cf. Ballou, 1978; La Rossa, 1977). The conflicts were resolved through a combination of altering the irritating circumstances and redefining roles in the marriage.

In general, then, men and women seemed to interpret matters in

marriage differently. For women, a choice over whether they perform tasks was important for marital satisfaction. For men, choice over tasks was less important. Much of what has been written about the inequity of marriage for women has centered around activity performance, since wives spend more time doing housework than men (e.g., Hartmann, 1981). Gender differences in decisions and activities in this study supported the conclusion that women are responsible for more decisions and activities than men. Perhaps because they feel less control than husbands, wives are generally less satisfied with this area of marital interaction, although in this sample, wives were not more dissatisfied with their marriages than their husbands.

Because this issue of control seems to be more important to women than to men, one can imagine misunderstanding and conflict surrounding the fact that women feel they cannot control which tasks they perform, whereas men, who don't do as much, don't care about control in this context, and cannot understand why the issue is so important to their wives. The findings of this study could be useful to therapists by pointing out a potential trouble spot for many couples.

Power and Perceived Control

The last thing I usually discussed with respondents was power. Most said that power was not an issue, but many qualified this statement by adding that it would be an issue if their power weren't equal. A few had discussed power, but most reacted as if the issue had nothing to do with their marriage. This seems consistent with the lack of significance of the quantified questions concerning power. Some people expressed

doubts about the meaning of the term "power" in this context, but many said that they knew another couple who had power problems. In fact, as an example of friends engaged in a power struggle, one couple mentioned another couple who I had just interviewed, and who had also denied that power was an issue in their marriage.

I believe that people do not think about power in marriage, even when an observer might feel that they have an ongoing power struggle. As in other circumstances, suggestions that someone in a relationship may have power over one probably creates psychological reactance (e.g., Brehm, 1966), and people will not admit that power is an issue privately or publicly. Therefore, marital power is impossible to measure with direct questions. However, I am not suggesting that perceived control is identical to power. Lack of perceived control is probably only one consequence of powerlessness, although I believe it is a very important consequence for predicting coping and satisfaction in many situations. But perceptions of control over all issues are not necessarily correlates of power. Rather, perceptions of control are important only regarding issues that are currently sources of tension in the marriage. Activities are one such issue in many marriages currently; decision making may have been such an issue in the past, but is no longer.

This study cannot clarify the association between power and perceived control, though, since asking people direct questions about power was not a successful way to measure power. As other researchers have noted, power may be best defined as the ability to influence another (Kelley et al., in press; Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). Observations of couples' interaction during persuasion attempts may be a better indicator

of power than self-reports of decision making and task performance (Falbo & Snell, Note 4; Raush et al., 1974). Since there is some evidence that men use more direct and bilateral power strategies than women use (e.g., Falbo & Peplau, 1980), and that the use of such strategies is associated with having power (e.g., Cowan, Note 3), observations of spouses' interaction could yield evidence regarding the association between power and perceived control. Also, since some people in the present study appeared to be unwilling to admit power problems in their spouse's presence, in-depth interviews with individuals might give a clearer indication of how aware of marital power issues people really are.

If perceived control is a mediator of power, power may also be related to performing tasks. Doing things in marriage may not confer power, but rather may be an indication of lack of power, contrary to propositions by other researchers (e.g., Hoffman, 1963; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976a). Since wives dominate activity performance, perhaps lack of activity control reflects a continued lack of power despite the norm of equalitarian decision making that is used to claim equality of power. If power is an ability to influence another (Kelley et al., in press), wives' feelings of low control reflect a perception that their husbands can influence them into performing most household activities.

Methodological Issues

The final section of the discussion chapter deals with several methodological issues concerning this project. These three issues are not particularly related to one another, but all generally reflect

problems which emerged as I conducted this research.

Consensus of husbands and wives. The couples who participated in this study agreed only moderately in their reported marital satisfaction and gender role attitude. The moderate association between mates' marital satisfaction might be expected because it is consistent with other research on the similarity of spouses' marital satisfaction (e.g., Booth & Welch, 1978; Hawkins, Weisberg, & Ray, 1980; Kerckhoff, 1972), and because family therapy and divorce research indicates that one mate may be dissatisfied in a relationship that the other finds rather satisfying (e.g., Napier & Whitaker, 1978; Weiss, 1979). A higher correlation in gender role attitude also seems unlikely since women appear to demand more changes in sex roles than men (Scanzoni & Fox, 1980). Couples with highly discrepant attitudes about roles might be expected to have difficulty, but complete consensus regarding such roles seems unlikely, although I know of no research dealing with mates' consensus regarding roles.

Perceptions of the difference between one's own control over decisions and activities and one's spouse's control were also negatively correlated, implying that when one person felt that his/her spouse had a great deal more control, the spouse also reported having a great deal less control. Thus, husbands and wives agreed moderately regarding their perceived control relative to one another. Also, perceptions of each person's own control over activities and decisions were compared with his/her spouse's estimates of his/her control, and these were positively correlated, although the correlations were quite low.

Therefore, spouses agreed moderately in their perceptions of their marriages.

These low correlations between mates' perceptions are not tremendously encouraging, since spouses were describing the same marriage and one would expect high agreement between mates who communicate well. Married partners did not agree in their views of their marriages much and one wonders whether the lack of agreement implies lack of communication. One way of indirectly assessing this was to compare spousal agreement between high and low satisfaction couples. High satisfaction couples did perceive their marriages more consistently than low satisfaction couples. This was especially evident in people's perceptions of their spouse's activity control, on which high satisfaction couples had significantly and moderately correlated perceptions and low satisfaction couples' perceptions were not correlated.

Couples showed greater agreement in reports of behavior than in reports of attributions of control. Since behavior is an interpersonal event, one would expect mates to share their perceptions more accurately than in the individual event of attribution. Spouses were more consistent in their perceptions of behavior than in their feelings about those behaviors. The implied miscommunication regarding feelings confirms the wisdom of humanistic family therapists who attempt to get husbands and wives to communicate about how actions make them feel (e.g., Satir, 1967).

The perceived importance of decision and task areas. I hypothesized that associations among decision making, task performance, and control

variables would be stronger using scales composed only of matters regarded as important by respondents. Although other research has suggested that wives have less power over important decisions (Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1978), there were not differences in results utilizing important matters and results utilizing both trivial and important things.

Generally, using a scale composed of important items did produce correlates of satisfaction different from those produced by scales composed of all of the items. The only exception to this concerned decision control among women and decision making among men, where correlations for important items were opposite those for the full scales. For women, decision control was positively correlated with satisfaction regarding important items, but negatively correlated regarding all items. Perhaps wives' control over trivial items is a result of lack of communication and they view it simply as another burden, just as performing activities generally reflects lack of control over activities. For men, decision making was negatively correlated with satisfaction regarding important items, but was positively correlated with satisfaction regarding all items. When men must make important decisions, they are less satisfied, perhaps because they prefer to have their wives share in important decisions, but don't care to be bothered with sharing trivial decisions. However, these findings should be regarded as tentative since the correlations were generally small and nonsignificant, even though the differences between the correlations were statistically significant.

The use of interviews to study power. Couples varied tremendously in how forthcoming they were during the joint discussion at the end of the session. After several interviews, I began to notice a pattern in which, when one spouse said very little during the interview, s/he also reported being extremely dissatisfied with the marriage on the written questionnaire. One such respondent who had recently returned to school after working full time, wrote:

I feel a little powerless and trapped, not just in decision making, because I don't have a definite set income and am truly dependent on him now.... I am changing in many ways since going back to school and that is causing difficulty in our marriage.

The least satisfied respondents seemed to be saying the least about their problems, and satisfied people discussed their past and present experiences in detail. I often wished that I could speak with each spouse separately, but this was logistically impossible, so the interview material was probably not entirely honest.

Conclusion

Perceived control regarding activities, then, was the only variable which was directly correlated with marital satisfaction. Decision making, task performance, and perceived control over decisions were not directly associated with satisfaction in marriage. Furthermore, perceived activity control was more highly correlated with satisfaction among women than among men. Therefore, perceptions of control over activities seem to be an important issue for women in their evaluation of marriage. None of the factors measured in the present research was as important for men, although decision making did emerge as a variable

with a tertiary association with marital satisfaction.

These findings imply two general impressions of marriage in 1981: decision making is no longer a source of tension for many couples and choice over task performance is an issue of particular importance to many women. Perhaps the division of labor is a major battleground for power struggles in this decade. Issues surrounding the implied conflict over activities could be investigated with research concerning the role of perceived activity control in marriage, the associations between power, influence strategies, and perceived control, and the applications of findings regarding males' and females' differential perceptions of control.

Thus, there are a number of questions about men's and women's differing perceptions of control over activities and other aspects of marriage which need to be investigated further. For instance, do women feel that they should be able to negotiate the division of labor more than they do? What do their husbands think? Can the importance of the activity performance and control issue be used to promote greater understanding in troubled marriages? Family therapists indicate that couples sometimes get stuck in patterns that are maladaptive for individuals and their relationships; perhaps one such negative pattern involves the division of labor and couples should be encouraged to negotiate more often regarding this matter. I would like to explore implications for marital therapy further.

In addition, there are theoretical questions concerning power and control which could be studied more directly. If influence over others is a better way to define power than frequency of decision making or

task performance (cf. Kelley et al., in press), it may be possible to observe influence strategies of husbands and wives to see how they are associated with perceived control. There is a little evidence that women report using less direct influence strategies with their mates than men, such as hinting or manipulating subtly, but it is not clear whether less direct strategies are less effective than direct influence strategies. Therefore, the kinds of influence strategies used by wives and husbands, and the effectiveness of those strategies, could be examined to see if they are associated with perceptions of control and power.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This study is an investigation of how couples distribute decisions and activities in their marriages. You and your spouse will each fill out a questionnaire concerning various decisions and activities in your marriage. It will take about an hour.

Your responses to the questionnaire will be entirely confidential. Your questionnaire will be assigned a code number, and neither your name nor any identifying information will ever be associated with your records. Your spouse will not be told anything about your response to the questionnaire. After the questionnaires are completed, you and your spouse will be asked if there is anything on the questionnaire that you would like to discuss with the interviewer, but you will not be asked to comment specifically on any of your written responses. The interviewer may take brief notes, but the session is not being tape recorded.

You may refuse to answer any questions at any time during the study. Also, you may withdraw from the study at any time. The interviewer will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study at this time.

I have read the above statement, have had the opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this study.

Signature

Date

INSTRUCTIONS

The following questionnaires include questions about a variety of issues related to marriage. Answer the questions according to how you feel or what you think right now. (People's feelings and thoughts about close relationships change, sometimes within short periods of time, so please focus on your current opinions.) Feel free to ask the interviewer about any questions that are not clear.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

How long have you been married? _____

How many children do you have? _____ What are their ages? _____

What is your religious background?

- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Protestant
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None

What is your family's annual income?

- ☐ \$0-10,000
- ☐ \$10,001-20,000
- ☐ \$20,001-30,000
- ☐ \$30,001-40,000
- ☐ \$40,001-50,000

What is your occupation? _____

What is the highest educational level you completed?

- ☐ Some high school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Some college or technical school (including associate's degree)
- ☐ College graduate (bachelor's degree)
- ☐ Graduate degree

Are you employed outside of your home? _____yes _____no

If so, how many hours per week do you work?

- ☐ 10 or fewer
- ☐ 11-20
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51 or more

Employment history: Please briefly describe your employment history since you left high school. (Have you always been employed full time or part time? Were there any periods when you were not employed at all? If you have a degree beyond high school, have you been employed in your field?)

How would you rate your health?

☐ excellent

☐ good

☐ average

☐ poor

☐ very poor

Is this your first marriage? _____ ...second? _____ ...third? _____

QUESTIONNAIRE ONE

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the roles of women in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. Please express your feeling about each statement by placing the number of the response that best represents your view in the space provided, using the following scale:

: 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 : 8 :
 Agree strongly Agree mildly Disagree mildly Disagree strongly

- _____ 1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.
- _____ 2. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.
- _____ 3. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.
- _____ 4. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.
- _____ 5. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.
- _____ 6. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.
- _____ 7. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.
- _____ 8. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.
- _____ 9. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.
- _____ 10. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.
- _____ 11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.
- _____ 12. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

- _____ 13. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.
- _____ 14. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity.
- _____ 15. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

QUESTIONNAIRE TWO

Place a check in the space that best represents how you feel right now.

1) Have you ever wished you had not married?

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 very frequently sometimes occa- rarely
 frequently sionally

2) If you had your life to live over again, would you:

- _____ a. marry the same person?
 _____ b. marry a different person?
 _____ c. not marry at all?

3) How happy are you with your marriage?

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 extremely very happy unhappy very
 happy happy unhappy unhappy

4) How happy do you think your spouse is with your marriage?

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 extremely very happy unhappy very
 happy happy unhappy unhappy

5) How often does your spouse do things that you do not like?

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 very frequently sometimes occa- rarely
 frequently sionally

6) How often do things seriously annoy you about your marriage?

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 very frequently sometimes occa- rarely
 frequently sionally

7) How often are you highly satisfied with your marriage?

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 very frequently sometimes occa- rarely
 frequently sionally

8) How frequently do you and your spouse get on each other's nerves around the house?

: _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 never occasionally sometimes almost always always

9) Check any of the following items which you think have caused serious difficulties in your marriage:

___ Attempts by one spouse to control the other's spending money

___ Mate paid attention to (became familiar with) another person

___ Other difficulties over money

___ Desertion

___ Religious difficulties

___ Venereal disease

___ Different interests

___ Alcohol or drug usage

___ Lack of mutual friends

___ Gambling

___ Constant bickering

___ Ill health

___ Interference by in-laws

___ One of spouses sent to jail

___ Lack of mutual affection (no longer in love)

___ Division of housekeeping and other home chores

___ Unsatisfying sexual relations

___ Division of childcare duties

___ Selfishness and lack of cooperation

___ Unplanned pregnancy

___ Extra-marital relations

___ Other reasons

___ Desire to have children

___ Sterility of husband or wife

QUESTIONNAIRE THREE

Please indicate who makes the final decisions concerning the following by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (Note that the question asks who makes the final decision, rather than who contributes to the decision making process. If an item doesn't apply to you, place an NA--for "not applicable"-- in the space.)

: 1 :	: 2 :	: 3 :	: 4 :	: 5 :	: 6 :	: 7 :	: 8 :	: 9 :
wife		wife		both make		husband		husband
always		mainly		decisions		mainly		always
makes		makes		equally		makes		makes
decisions		decisions		often		decisions		decisions

NA = not applicable

- ___ husband's choice of job
- ___ whether to buy life insurance
- ___ whether wife should work
- ___ wife's choice of job
- ___ amount of money to save or invest
- ___ choice of credit cards
- ___ choice of bank
- ___ amount of money to spend on food
- ___ amount of money to spend on major appliances
- ___ choice of car to purchase
- ___ choice of apartment to rent or house to buy
- ___ choice of doctor
- ___ choice of husband's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of husband's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of general magazine subscriptions
- ___ brand of major appliances to purchase
- ___ choice of liquor to purchase
- ___ choice of household furnishings to purchase
- ___ kinds of food to eat
- ___ kinds of food to purchase
- ___ whether to take a vacation
- ___ where to go on vacation
- ___ whether to have friends to dinner
- ___ what movie to see
- ___ whether to go out for entertainment
- ___ when to have sex
- ___ who to socialize with

Please indicate how much control you feel that you have over decisions regarding the following areas by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (That is, how much could you affect decisions in each of the following areas, whether or not you make the final decisions? Could you choose to make a decision or to not make a decision in each area? If an item doesn't apply to you, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

: 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 : 8 : 9 :
 a great moderate some a little no
 deal of control control control control
 control

NA = not applicable

- ___ husband's choice of job
- ___ whether to buy life insurance
- ___ whether wife should work
- ___ wife's choice of job
- ___ amount of money to save or invest
- ___ choice of credit cards
- ___ choice of bank
- ___ amount of money to spend on food
- ___ amount of money to spend on major appliances
- ___ choice of car to purchase
- ___ choice of apartment to rent or house to buy
- ___ choice of doctor
- ___ choice of husband's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of husband's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of general magazine subscriptions
- ___ brand of major appliances to purchase
- ___ choice of liquor to purchase
- ___ choice of new household furnishings to purchase
- ___ kinds of food to eat
- ___ kinds of food to purchase
- ___ whether to go on vacation
- ___ where to go on vacation
- ___ whether to have friends to dinner
- ___ what movie to see
- ___ whether to go out for entertainment
- ___ when to have sex
- ___ who to socialize with

Please indicate how much control you feel that your spouse has over decisions regarding the following areas by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (That is, how much could your spouse affect decisions in each of the following areas, whether or not he or she makes the final decisions? Note that the questions ask about the control that you think your spouse has, not what your spouse thinks. If an item doesn't apply to your spouse, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

: 1 :	2 :	3 :	4 :	5 :	6 :	7 :	8 :	9 :
a great		moderate		some		a little		no
deal of		control		control		control		control
control								

NA = not applicable

- ___ husband's choice of job
- ___ whether to buy life insurance
- ___ whether wife should work
- ___ wife's choice of job
- ___ amount of money to save or invest
- ___ choice of credit cards
- ___ choice of bank
- ___ amount of money to spend on food
- ___ amount of money to spend on major appliances
- ___ choice of car to purchase
- ___ choice of apartment to rent or house to buy
- ___ choice of doctor
- ___ choice of husband's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of husband's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of general magazine subscriptions
- ___ brand of major appliances to purchase
- ___ choice of liquor to purchase
- ___ choice of new household furnishings to purchase
- ___ kinds of food to eat
- ___ kinds of food to purchase
- ___ whether to take a vacation
- ___ where to go on vacation
- ___ whether to have friends to dinner
- ___ what movie to see
- ___ whether to go out for entertainment
- ___ when to have sex
- ___ who to socialize with

Please indicate how important each of the following decisions is to you, by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (If an item doesn't apply to you, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

: 1 :	2 :	3 :	4 :	5 :	6 :	7 :	8 :	9 :
extremely		very		somewhat		not very		not at all
important		important		important		important		important

NA = not applicable

- ___ husband's choice of job
- ___ whether to buy life insurance
- ___ whether wife should work
- ___ wife's choice of job
- ___ amount of money to save or invest
- ___ choice of credit cards
- ___ choice of bank
- ___ amount of money to spend on food
- ___ amount of money to spend on major appliances
- ___ choice of car to purchase
- ___ choice of apartment to rent or house to buy
- ___ choice of doctor
- ___ choice of husband's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's clothing to purchase
- ___ choice of husband's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of wife's toiletries to purchase
- ___ choice of general magazine subscriptions
- ___ brand of major appliances to purchase
- ___ choice of liquor to purchase
- ___ choice of new household furnishings to purchase
- ___ kinds of food to eat
- ___ kinds of food to purchase
- ___ whether to take a vacation
- ___ where to go on vacation
- ___ whether to have friends to dinner
- ___ what movie to see
- ___ whether to go out for entertainment
- ___ what movie to see
- ___ whether to go out for entertainment
- ___ when to have sex
- ___ who to socialize with

Please rate the extent to which each of the following activities is performed by you or your spouse by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (That is, who does each of the following activities. If an item does not apply to you, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

: 1 :	: 2 :	: 3 :	: 4 :	: 5 :	: 6 :	: 7 :	: 8 :	: 9 :
exclusively		mainly		equally		mainly		exclusively
by me		by me		by both		by spouse		by spouse

NA = not applicable

- ___ paying routine bills
- ___ banking (such as making deposits)
- ___ planning investments or savings
- ___ washing dishes
- ___ cleaning carpets
- ___ tending lawn
- ___ drying dishes
- ___ laundry
- ___ ironing
- ___ mending clothes
- ___ animal care
- ___ repairs around the house
- ___ cleaning bathroom
- ___ food shopping
- ___ getting car serviced
- ___ occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)
- ___ purchasing clothing for husband
- ___ purchasing clothing for wife
- ___ purchasing liquor
- ___ purchasing household furnishings
- ___ buying gifts for relatives
- ___ personal correspondence
- ___ daytime baby care
- ___ evening baby care
- ___ care of older children
- ___ taking children to doctor
- ___ indoor play with children
- ___ outdoor play with children
- ___ helping children with studies
- ___ driving children around
- ___ preparing meals for children

Please rate how much control that you feel you have over whether or not you perform the following activities by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (That is, if you do perform an activity, could you choose not to perform it; and if you do not perform an activity, could you choose to perform it? If an item does not apply to you, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

: 1 :	2 :	3 :	4 :	5 :	6 :	7 :	8 :	9 :
a great		moderate		some		a little		no
deal of		control		control		control		control
control								

NA = not applicable

- ___ paying routine bills
- ___ banking (such as making deposits)
- ___ planning investments or savings
- ___ washing dishes
- ___ cleaning carpets
- ___ tending lawn
- ___ drying dishes
- ___ laundry
- ___ ironing
- ___ mending clothes
- ___ animal care
- ___ repairs around the house
- ___ cleaning bathroom
- ___ food shopping
- ___ getting car serviced
- ___ occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)
- ___ purchasing clothing for husband
- ___ purchasing clothing for wife
- ___ purchasing liquor
- ___ purchasing household furnishings
- ___ buying gifts for relatives
- ___ personal correspondence
- ___ daytime baby care
- ___ evening baby care
- ___ care of older children
- ___ taking children to doctor
- ___ indoor play with children
- ___ outdoor play with children
- ___ helping children with studies
- ___ driving children around
- ___ preparing meals for children

Please rate how much control you feel your spouse has over whether or not he or she performs the following activities by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (That is, if he or she does perform an activity, could he or she choose not to perform it; and if he or she does not perform an activity, could he or she choose to perform it? Note that the question asks about the control that you think your spouse has, not what your spouse thinks. If an item doesn't apply to your spouse, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

:	1	:	2	:	3	:	4	:	5	:	6	:	7	:	8	:	9	:
a great					moderate				some				a little				no	
deal of					control				control				control				control	
control																		

NA = not applicable

- ___ paying routine bills
- ___ banking (such as making deposits)
- ___ planning investments or savings
- ___ washing dishes
- ___ cleaning carpets
- ___ tending lawn
- ___ drying dishes
- ___ laundry
- ___ ironing
- ___ mending clothes
- ___ animal care
- ___ repairs around the house
- ___ cleaning bathroom
- ___ food shopping
- ___ getting car serviced
- ___ occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)
- ___ purchasing clothing for husband
- ___ purchasing clothing for wife
- ___ purchasing liquor
- ___ purchasing household furnishings
- ___ buying gifts for relatives
- ___ personal correspondence
- ___ daytime baby care
- ___ evening baby care
- ___ care of older children
- ___ taking children to doctor
- ___ indoor play with children
- ___ outdoor play with children
- ___ helping children with studies
- ___ driving children around
- ___ preparing meals for children

Please rate how important each of the following activities is to you by placing the number of the best response in the space provided, using the following scale. (If an item does not apply to you, place an NA--for "not applicable"--in the space.)

: 1 :	2 :	3 :	4 :	5 :	6 :	7 :	8 :	9 :
extremely		very		somewhat		not very		not at all
important		important		important		important		important

NA = not applicable

- ___ paying routine bills
- ___ banking (such as making deposits)
- ___ planning investments or savings
- ___ washing dishes
- ___ cleaning carpets
- ___ tending lawn
- ___ drying dishes
- ___ laundry
- ___ ironing
- ___ mending clothes
- ___ animal care
- ___ repairs around the house
- ___ cleaning bathroom
- ___ food shopping
- ___ getting car serviced
- ___ occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)
- ___ purchasing clothing for husband
- ___ purchasing clothing for wife
- ___ purchasing liquor
- ___ purchasing household furnishings
- ___ buying gifts for relatives
- ___ personal correspondence
- ___ daytime baby care
- ___ evening baby care
- ___ care of older children
- ___ taking children to doctor
- ___ indoor play with children
- ___ outdoor play with children
- ___ helping children with studies
- ___ driving children around
- ___ preparing meals for children

1. Is there an area in which you don't make the final decision, but do feel that you have at least some control over decisions? If you need to, look at the lists on the previous pages.
a) What is the area? ___yes ___no

b) In what sense do you feel that you have some control, even though you don't make final decisions? What factors give you control or what do you do that gives you control?

2. Is there an area in which you don't perform activities, but do feel that you have at least some control over whether or not you perform activities? If you need to, look at the lists on the previous pages.
___yes ___no
a) What is the area?

b) In what sense do you feel that you have some control, even though you don't perform activities in that area? What factors give you control or what do you do that gives you control?

3. Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you have control when you don't particularly want control?

___yes ___no

- a) If you answered yes, what is the most important example of such an area?

- b) Check any of the following that contribute to why you have control in that area:

___generally wives (husbands) do things in that area

___I know something about that area

___I have resources to contribute in that area (for instance, skills or financial resources)

___my spouse doesn't want to take the trouble

___my spouse doesn't want the responsibility

___my spouse doesn't care about that area

___my spouse shouldn't have to worry about such things

___it's my job, as a wife (husband)

___I enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area

___somebody has to do it and I don't dislike it as much as my spouse

___I have the time to spend doing things in that area

___I have been persuaded that I should do things in that area

___somebody has to do it and it's not worth the trouble to convince someone else (for instance, my spouse)

___I've always done things in that area

___I have higher standards in that area than my spouse

___my spouse feels that area is too trivial to worry about

___I feel it should be my choice to do things in that area

- c) Are there any other factors that contribute to why you have control in that area? Please explain.

4. Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you have control and in which you do want control?

___yes ___no

- a) If you answered yes, what is the most important example of such an area?

- b) Check any of the following that contribute to why you have control in that area:

___generally wives (husbands) do things in that area

___I know something about that area

___I have resources to contribute in that area (for instance, skills or financial resources)

___my spouse doesn't want to take the trouble

___my spouse doesn't want the responsibility

___my spouse doesn't care about that area

___my spouse shouldn't have to worry about such things

___it's my job, as a wife (husband)

___I enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area

___somebody has to do it and I don't dislike it as much as my spouse

___I have time to spend doing things in that area

___I have been persuaded that I should do things in that area

___somebody has to do it and it's not worth the trouble to convince someone else (for instance, my spouse)

___I've always done things in that area

___I have higher standards in that area than my spouse

___my spouse feels that area is too trivial to worry about

___I feel it should be my choice to do things in that area

- c) Are there any other factors that contribute to why you have control in that area? Please explain.

5. Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you don't have control, but in which you would like to have control?

___yes ___no

- a) If you answered yes, what is the most important example of such an area?
- b) Check any of the following that contribute to why you don't have control in that area:
- ___generally wives (husbands) don't do things in that area
 - ___my spouse knows something about that area
 - ___my spouse has resources to contribute in that area (for instance, skills or financial resources)
 - ___I don't want to take the trouble
 - ___I don't care about that area
 - ___I don't want to take the responsibility
 - ___I shouldn't have to worry about such things
 - ___it's my spouse's job, as a wife (husband)
 - ___I don't enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area
 - ___somebody has to do it, and my spouse doesn't dislike it as much as I do
 - ___I don't have time to spend doing things in that area
 - ___my spouse has been persuaded that he or she should do things in that area
 - ___somebody has to do it, and my spouse feels it's not worth the trouble to convince me to do it
 - ___I've never done things in that area
 - ___my spouse has higher standards in that area than I do
 - ___I feel that area is too trivial to worry about
 - ___my spouse feels it should be his/her choice to do things in that area
- c) Are there any other factors that contribute to why you don't have control in that area? Please explain.

6. Are there areas in your marriage in which you feel that you don't have control and in which you don't want control?

___yes ___no

- a) If you answered yes, what is the most important example of such an area?

- b) Check any of the following that contribute to why you don't have control in that area:

- ___generally wives (husbands) don't do things in that area
- ___my spouse knows something about that area
- ___my spouse has resources to contribute in that area (for instance, skills or financial resources)
- ___I don't want to take the trouble
- ___I don't care about that area
- ___I don't want to take the responsibility
- ___I shouldn't have to worry about such things
- ___it's my spouse's job, as a wife (husband)
- ___I don't enjoy making decisions and/or performing activities in that area
- ___somebody has to do it, and my spouse doesn't dislike it as much as I do
- ___I don't have the time to spend doing things in that area
- ___my spouse has been persuaded that he or she should do things in that area
- ___somebody has to do it, and my spouse feels it's not worth the trouble to convince me to do it
- ___I've never done things in that area
- ___my spouse has higher standards in that area than I do
- ___I feel that area is too trivial to worry about
- ___my spouse feels it should be his/her choice to do things in that area

- c) Are there any other factors that contribute to why you don't have control in that area? Please explain.

7. How important is the issue of power in your marriage to you? Place a check in the space below that best represents your opinion.

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 extremely very somewhat not very not at all
 important important important important important

Please explain your answer.

8. How important is the issue of power in your marriage to your spouse? Place a check in the space below that best represents what you think is his/her opinion.

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 extremely very somewhat not very not at all
 important important important important important

Please explain your answer.

9. How much time do you spend thinking about power issues in your marriage? Place a check in the appropriate space.

:_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ :
 a great moderate some a little no
 deal of amount of time time time
 time time

Please explain your answer.

10. Over the course of your marriage, has the issue of power changed in importance to you or your spouse? Please explain.

APPENDIX B

Table 22
 Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of the Extent
 to Which They Make Final Decisions^a

Decisions	Wives	Husbands ^b
husband's choice of job	2.06	7.63***
whether to buy life insurance	4.42	5.37**
whether wife should work	6.77	3.80***
wife's choice of job	8.22	2.09***
amount of money to save or invest	4.94	5.32
choice of credit cards	4.94	5.09
choice of bank	4.84	5.00
amount of money to spend on food	6.42	4.00***
amount of money to spend on major appliances	4.97	5.06
choice of car to purchase	4.30	5.68***
choice of apartment to rent or house to purchase	5.08	5.00
choice of doctor	6.20	4.44***
choice of husband's clothing to purchase	4.46	6.06***
choice of wife's clothing to purchase	7.64	2.30***
choice of husband's toiletries to purchase	3.97	6.52***
choice of wife's toiletries to purchase	8.37	2.41***
choice of general magazine subscriptions	5.56	4.52**
brand of major appliances to purchase	4.97	4.97
choice of liquor to purchase	4.50	6.41***
choice of new household furnishings to purchase	5.81	4.50***
kinds of food to eat	6.27	4.32***
kinds of food to purchase	6.60	3.86***
whether to go on vacation	5.07	4.81
where to go on vacation	5.20	4.78
whether to have friends to dinner	5.73	4.68***
what movie to see	5.08	4.70
whether to go out for entertainment	5.00	4.92
when to have sex	4.81	5.22
who to socialize with	4.92	5.19*

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aThese means are converted to a 9-point scale on which a higher score means one makes a decision more often.

^bAsterisks note statistically significant differences between wives' and husbands' mean ratings.

Table 23

Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of How Much
Control They Have Over Decisions^a

Decisions	Wives	Husbands ^b
husband's choice of job	4.44	8.67***
whether to buy life insurance	6.58	7.03
whether wife should work	8.39	4.34***
wife's choice of job	8.73	3.21***
amount of money to save or invest	7.09	6.78
choice of credit cards	7.12	6.70
choice of bank	7.37	6.49
amount of money to spend on food	8.08	5.62***
amount of money to spend on major appliances	7.26	6.49
choice of car to purchase	6.67	7.08
choice of apartment to rent or house to buy	7.55	6.47**
choice of doctor	8.40	5.89**
choice of husband's clothing to purchase	5.58	7.55***
choice of wife's clothing to purchase	8.79	3.49***
choice of husband's toiletries to purchase	5.24	7.06**
choice of wife's toiletries to purchase	8.88	2.65***
choice of general magazine subscriptions	7.40	6.06**
brand of major appliances to purchase	7.46	6.31**
choice of liquor to purchase	6.29	6.91
choice of household furnishings to purchase	7.67	5.75***
kinds of food to eat	7.97	6.11***
kinds of food to purchase	8.39	5.81***
whether to take a vacation	6.97	6.51
where to go on vacation	7.36	6.19**
whether to have friends to dinner	7.58	6.08***
what movie to see	7.26	5.89***
whether to go out for entertainment	7.17	6.00**
when to have sex	7.47	5.77***
who to socialize with	7.36	6.27***

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

^aThese means are converted to a 9-point scale on which a higher score means one feels one has greater control.

^bAsterisks note statistically significant differences between wives' and husbands' mean ratings.

Table 24

Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of How Much Control
They Feel Their Spouses Have Over Decisions^a

Decisions	Wives	Husbands ^b
husband's choice of job	8.69	3.91***
whether to buy life insurance	7.86	5.63***
whether wife should work	3.89	8.09***
wife's choice of job	3.20	8.45***
amount of money to save or invest	7.43	5.94***
choice of credit cards	7.28	5.64***
choice of bank	7.57	6.03***
amount of money to spend on food	5.71	6.53
amount of money to spend on major appliances	7.22	6.03**
choice of car to purchase	8.03	5.33***
choice of apartment to rent or house to buy	7.50	6.44**
choice of doctor	6.72	7.11
choice of husband's clothing to purchase	7.86	5.40***
choice of wife's clothing to purchase	4.03	7.94***
choice of husband's toiletries to purchase	7.89	4.77***
choice of wife's toiletries to purchase	3.23	7.82***
choice of general magazine subscriptions	6.62	6.12
brand of major appliances to purchase	7.44	5.91***
choice of liquor to purchase	7.72	5.23***
choice of new household furnishings to purchase	6.94	6.66
kinds of food to eat	6.42	6.92
kinds of food to purchase	6.11	7.00
whether to take a vacation	7.65	5.97***
where to go on vacation	7.38	6.11**
whether to have friends to dinner	7.24	6.47*
what movie to see	7.44	6.26***
whether to go out for entertainment	7.27	6.14**
when to have sex	6.89	6.29
who to socialize with	7.30	5.89***

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aThese means are converted to a 9-point scale on which a higher score means one feels one's spouse has greater control.

^bAsterisks note statistically significant differences between wives' and husbands' mean ratings.

Table 25
 Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of the Extent
 to Which They Perform Activities^a

Activities	Wives	Husbands ^b
paying routine bills	5.51	5.58
banking (such as making deposits)	5.30	5.27
planning investments or savings	6.81	5.89**
washing dishes	6.77	3.51***
cleaning carpets	6.39	3.32***
tending lawn	3.67	6.31***
drying dishes	6.64	3.66***
laundry	7.41	2.73***
ironing	8.17	2.16***
mending clothes	8.29	2.36***
animal care	5.45	4.84**
repairs around the house	3.06	7.38***
cleaning bathroom	7.32	3.46***
food shopping	7.11	3.41***
getting car serviced	3.46	6.92***
occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)	6.03	4.41***
purchasing clothing for husband	4.78	5.46
purchasing clothing for wife	7.44	2.78***
purchasing liquor	4.00	6.15***
purchasing household furnishings	5.46	4.81***
buying gifts for relatives	6.84	3.65***
personal correspondence	7.00	3.54***
daytime baby care	7.38	2.94***
evening baby care	6.65	4.29***
care of older children	5.89	4.36***
taking children to doctor	7.20	3.00***
indoor play with children	5.61	4.46***
outdoor play with children	5.25	5.19
helping children with studies	5.58	4.25***
driving children around	6.45	4.10***
preparing meals for children	6.87	3.33***

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aThese means are converted to a 9-point scale on which a higher score means one feels one performs more activities.

^bAsterisks note statistically significant differences between wives' and husbands' mean ratings.

Table 26

Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of How Much Control
They Feel They Have Over Whether They Perform Activities^a

Activities	Wives	Husbands ^b
paying routine bills	6.57	6.89
banking (such as making deposits)	6.35	6.64
planning investments or savings	6.51	6.66
washing dishes	5.31	6.06
cleaning carpets	5.27	6.46*
tending lawn	6.41	6.55
drying dishes	5.73	6.00
laundry	5.19	5.67
ironing	4.52	5.39
mending clothes	4.40	4.95
animal care	5.76	6.78
repairs around the house	6.36	5.92
cleaning bathroom	5.00	5.73
food shopping	5.49	5.64
getting car serviced	5.78	6.06
occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)	6.06	5.71
purchasing clothing for husband	5.95	6.65
purchasing clothing for wife	6.43	3.81***
purchasing liquor	7.33	6.63
purchasing household furnishings	6.51	5.92
buying gifts for relatives	5.70	5.64
personal correspondence	5.97	5.38
daytime baby care	4.63	4.60
evening baby care	5.06	5.72
care of older children	5.50	5.92
taking children to doctor	4.90	5.45
indoor play with children	5.75	4.69
outdoor play with children	5.97	6.04
helping children with studies	6.56	6.31
driving children around	5.45	5.72
preparing meals for children	5.17	5.63

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aThese means are converted to a 9-point scale on which a higher score means one feels one has greater control.

^bAsterisks note statistically significant differences between wives' and husbands' mean ratings.

Table 27

Wives' and Husbands' Mean Ratings of How Much Control They
 Feel Their Spouses Have Over Whether They Perform Activities^a

Activities	Wives	Husbands ^b
paying routine bills	6.56	6.36
banking (such as making deposits)	7.25	6.33
planning investments or savings	7.53	5.89***
washing dishes	7.40	6.03**
cleaning carpets	6.97	6.03
tending lawn	6.36	5.94
drying dishes	7.14	6.23
laundry	7.37	5.92**
ironing	6.74	6.22
mending clothes	6.88	5.89
animal care	6.80	6.03
repairs around the house	6.06	5.58
cleaning bathroom	7.44	6.22*
food shopping	6.58	6.00
getting car serviced	6.67	5.00**
occasional errands (such as delivering dry cleaning)	6.86	6.24
purchasing clothing for husband	7.06	5.61**
purchasing clothing for wife	4.78	6.31*
purchasing liquor	7.38	5.69***
purchasing household furnishings	6.36	5.95
buying gifts for relatives	6.81	6.14
personal correspondence	6.78	6.40
daytime baby care	6.31	4.60
evening baby care	6.35	5.79
care of older children	6.81	5.48*
taking children to doctor	6.62	5.34*
indoor play with children	6.89	5.74*
outdoor play with children	6.44	5.78
helping children with studies	7.38	6.17*
driving children around	6.75	5.50*
preparing meals for children	7.04	5.34**

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

^aThese means are converted to a 9-point scale on which a higher score means one feels one's spouse has greater control.

^bAsterisks note statistically significant differences between wives' and husbands' mean ratings.

