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Long-term marriage, marital satisfaction,  
and divorce in the 1980s

A dissertation submitted to the faculty

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

by

Julia Wanka-Fremont

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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## ABSTRACT

The study is a complementary, qualitative study investigating the frequency, nature, and resolution strategies of conflict in long-term marriages. In addition, data on a living marriage were required. Fifteen participants married over 50 years or more were communicating in structured question format. The life graph was another methodology used to visually depict marital stages. The research gave participants their marital lives. The operations of the approach illustrated the findings. Couples' perceptions of major life events were similar, potential problems in relation to both roles within the marriage as either a spouse or provider. Marital conflict throughout the life span was reported as normal, and most couples avoided conflict rather than actively engaging in it. Important milestones were major contributors to marital longevity. Gender differences indicated that both greatly affected general perceptions of conflict and marital life.

## INTRODUCTION

Typically, as time goes on, there is an increase in the number of elderly people in the United States. There would naturally be an increase in the number of older persons desiring to (re) get into marriages. According to *Contemporary U.S. Sources of Social Issues*, 1993 married people households with persons 65-74 years of age make up 7% of married couple households. By the year 2000, people over 65 will comprise 11.6% of the U.S. population (*U.S. Bureau of Census*, 1998). Considering current population trends, it is not unreasonable to conclude the number of long-term marriages also will increase.

There has been some disagreement over how many years of marriage constitute a long-term marriage. Most studies on marriage are limited to 20 years up to a maximum of 50 years. However, as older marriage has become more prevalent in the society, the time constraint probably has inflated the marriages of 40 or more years. Individuals within these marriages are usually 60 or older (John Riddin, 1979; Stenderwick & Anderson, 1986).

Couples who have achieved long-term marriage have one concern. Gluck and Noyes (1977) indicated that long-term marriage is less willing to fulfill necessary change needs of today, who live out their expected span of years can expect a marriage to last 40 years (Chickman and Moore, 1978). At ages 55-64, 81 percent of men and only 67 percent of women are married. By age 75 and older, a wider gender gap occurs. Married men account for 78 percent of the population over 75 compared to only 72 percent of married women (Gilbert, 1986). Not only are gender-related changes one issue due to both present longevity, but considering the high divorce rates in the U.S., long-term

overcome the odds. In married younger couples, women do divorce, but the couple is less likely to leave stages of life because for 70% of women divorce (Patterson & Hall, 1982). Some researchers have concluded that as many as two-thirds of all the marriages may end in divorce (National Surgeon, 1998). Clearly, individuals in long-term marriages have, first, been able to survive many of their marriages, but also have been able to sustain a marital relationship over a very long time, which is considered much more virtuous (Berkman & Lloyd, 1987).

Although there has been relatively large amount of research that examines marital satisfaction, communication, and the quality of marriage concerning married couples in the early-middle-middle age ranges, there has been very little written about couples in the early or late retirement stages. Moreover, it is difficult to generalize that the processes involved in early life stages of marriage would be applicable to late-life marriages because life-experiences, adaptive skills, and roles of elderly couples would be most likely different (Linton & Sikors, 1988). Marriage continues to evolve throughout their lifetimes. Consequently, there is a great deal that can be learned about marriage relationships during the last years and what accounts for the enduring relationship.

Because the literature concerning long-term marriages, particularly marriage beyond the 50-year mark, is relatively minimal, it is worthwhile to begin an examination of the lives and social patterns of older couples. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore and discover the conflict sources, relationship strategies, and life goal values experiences of husbands' and wives' marital lives and how such factors interact and generate the direction of conflict throughout the marital union.

Qualitative designs support a range of research purposes. Traditionally, ethnography has had the purpose of documenting and describing a particular culture. However, other qualitative methods, such as interviewing and participant observation,

support the research purposes of examining patterns and relationships within the data set or to understanding the meaning of particular life events (Torgson, 1993). Thus, the purpose of this study is consistent with the goals and methods of qualitative research. In addition, without access to longitudinal natural data, a qualitative retrospective design would be the most appropriate methodology for examining the social interaction of married couples throughout their life span and particularly for understanding the evolving history of marital conflict across the life span. However, a qualitative design allows couples to tell their experiences in their own words and from their own perspectives (Allen & Hubert, 1985).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature has described long-term marriages, and specifically studied a long-term marriage, for an extended period of time. Thus, the literature reviews draw from several interdisciplinary areas, including family studies, family therapy, and communication studies. First, the development of the long-term marriage was discussed. Next, an explanation of couplehood conflict was provided as well as the strategies couple utilized to resolve or regulate conflict within the marriage. Finally, two theoretical frameworks were introduced as a guide for the research study.

### Long Term Marriages

#### *Lifecycle stages*

Older marriages have dealt with unique challenges as they reach the stage of later life. Retirement, family role changes, social norms, and the aging process itself represent the context of a long-term relationship. Redcliff (1990) discussed when developmental tasks that long-term couples should work to resolve. Thus, the aging couple learns to differ and develop new ways of dealing with common issues. What is the best suggestion for them? A warning to rely solely on each other as the partners and support (Greenman & Rubin, 1991). In fact, husbands among their wives as participants were frequently they were around their husbands.

Secondly, because of retirement, a couple may realize developmental tasks: emotional patterns and to negotiate roles within the home. Retirement created both benefits and costs for the marital relationship. The transition to retirement may benefit the relationship as it took responsibility, role conflicts, and time to pursue individual, which increased the couple's opportunity for companionship (Walt, 1992). A retired

husband's violence was too severe to attempt the dream of household labor and domestic sewing projects (Black & Voth, 1991). In fact, some research has suggested that it is women in households with violent men and a parent grandmother (Ward, 1993), but typically only women who are not the primary responsibility for household. Moreover, a violent husband's presence disrupted the wife's household and social activities. Some women mentioned that violence reduced their personal privacy and control, caused an overall 'togetherness,' and left husbands at home little to do (Black & Voth, 1991). It represented a difficult time adjusting to the new pattern of violence, violence and conflict around (Greenbaum & Kates, 1995). The period was particularly problematic if the husband used force. Women who were employed and had violent husbands suffered less mental satisfaction (Law & Martin, 1994). Additionally, respondents were in the only category, as many were considered to have responsibility for the magnitude of violence in the household (Gelles, 1993).

Finally, it is important that long-term couples are less likely to feel individual and couple goals and the responsibility for one goal which are experienced separately (Greenbaum, 1995). As the violent couple moved towards the end of the life cycle, they depended less on individual socializing and more on their state (Greenbaum & Kates, 1995). Hence, the transition and acceptance into a new life stage is becoming a 'violent state.'

### **Marital satisfaction**

Most research indicated that violent couples indicate they were very satisfied with their relationships (Auld & Linder, 1991). In fact, marriage and partnership dissolution is equivalent to a divorce, which is a divorce, and is a high divorce rate (Gelles, 1993). Brown, Carter, and Wengert (1977) indicated that older persons

were considered their present satisfaction to be more satisfactory than before. White, Bunt, and Edwards (1967), in a cross-sectional study, found that couples in the later stages of life reported higher marital happiness, satisfaction, or adjustment than those in the middle stages. Yet, those who considered their marriage to be satisfactory in the later years later went likely reported it as such from the beginning. It is possible, however, that higher levels of perceived marital satisfaction in the later years of life is attributable to the gradual process of the steadily worked couples from cross-sectional samples (e.g., 1988). Bunt and Edwards (1967) reported that among those married 50 or more years, 85% recalled their marriages as being happier than their wedding day or present. Other cross-sectional studies have corroborated a similar trend pattern (Schumm & Baugher, 1986). Initially, very early stages of marriage were usually periods of happiness followed by a few steadily still married years and finally a dropping of happiness again in the later years of marriage (de Ridder, 1975). Yet another study (Zillman, 1986) reported that spouses of the younger and older extremes of old age (ages 51-62 and 71-81) experienced consistently lower marital satisfaction than spouses at the mid-range of old age (age 63-69). In some of past, men were generally more satisfied with their marriages than women (Hodkinson, Mallinson, & Frazier, 1981).

Compatibility was an important quality of a long-term marriage. Law and Law (1981) found that individuals involved in long-term, happy marriages reported that spouses were "best friends" and had a commitment to the relationship. Bennett (1972) explained that couples viewed their present periods of life as the happiest because the older couple had grown freedom and more time to enjoy each other's companionship than in the past. Additionally, over the course of a long-term relationship, individuals become more similar. Hence, dissimilarity variables accounted the level of compatibility or flexibility within the relationship (Hall et al., 1991).

Commitment to the marriage was an overriding factor in the quality of long-term marriages. Giblin (1986) contended that the present concept of "golden rule" marriages was primarily a fantasy for men and a signpost of commitment. These ideas stemmed from traditional religious and family beliefs. Commitment to the spouse and to the institutions of marriage was one of the most powerful reasons for marital stability in both happy and unhappy couples. The country also was extended to include a religious or secular faith that went with a spouse (Law & Law, 1980; Robinson & Newton, 1985).

These couples also had a compatible goal toward child rearing and experienced greater involvement in child activities also even more likely to maintain long-term relationships (Maccoby et al., 1984). Although the issues of control, autonomy, and dependency remained important in the elderly couple, family still played an important role in the marital and life satisfaction of older couples. An older person gained a sense of self-worth and accomplishment through relationships with family (Whitney, 1986). Generally, the configuration of the family of late life changed due to new roles and extended family commitment toward grandchildren and children was positively related to the well-being of long-term marriages (Lawrence et al., 1986). Walinsky (1986) contended that familial interactions were more comfortable/less stressful when older people allowed children to build their own lives and a responsibility and emotional foundation were clear.

### Intergenerational

Despite the marital split, emotional and economic support as integral parts of long-term marriages (Giblin, 1986). John Deeken and his colleagues (1987) found that a positive correlation existed between social interest and marital happiness. In a national study, 1/3 of married persons age 60 and older reported having one or more adult

the last month, only 14% of married women 17 and older reported having sex just in sexual intimacy during the past month (Manning & Evans, 1999). Decline in frequency of intercourse have led to a gradual loss of sex of the married. Decline in sexual activity may be attributed to decreased interest and interest in sex. Yet, some persons attributed to the midlife stage of their age is not that likely to continue intercourse (Jude-Hislop, 1997). Branstetter and Foxworth (1983) suggest that midlife period is the most accessible for reviving a declining sexual activity among older couples as they were equally to older individuals of the sex.

The range of sexual expression seems to be diverse and complex for the older couple. Specifically, a study of older women ages 65-72, found was reported for both personal and interpersonal level. First, by 65-72, women that were strongly committed to satisfaction and happiness of expression (Jude & Kurland, 1982), although some couples may not have high knowledge of sex, they were pleased with each other and had positive enough effect (Johnson & Ford, 1988). It appears such and physical pleasure continued to be important factors for expressing intimacy (Allison, 1998). Roberts (1988) noted that long-term couples' model of good expression of sex involving sex talk, frequent sexual contact, and holding each as a source of sexual expression.

## Health

Health also takes a different in the context of sexual satisfaction. According to Edwards (1992), poor health was particularly older women and men to be one of the major problems during the present period of their lives. The research before (1988) provided strong evidence that about 40-50% of elderly health care were reported their health (Jude, 1988) suggest that older women reported are taking medical advice to live 70 or that period could have affected a little to sexual growth and expression. Moreover, the

relationships will inevitably have a negative effect on the overall quality of the relationship. Murray (1988) suggested poor health may impair one of the skill sets among older parents, which may indirectly affect an individual's perception of marital quality. Overall, poor health may be related to a positive marital relationship.

Married parents tended to be less happy and less satisfied compared to unmarried parents of the same age (Linder & Linder, 1990). Although when asked to experience some type of loneliness which he stated was common, on the whole, married older parents reported lower loneliness. A complete transition and adjustment to retirement played a major role in the amount of loneliness being experienced (Linder & Linder, 1994).

### **Gender roles**

The sex roles couples engaged in during the course of their relationship influenced how behaviors, communications, and perceptions (and may ultimately have shaped the type of marriage they have). Forgetting (1988) developed a research group for recognizing marriage functions as role rules and communication style. In her typology, she identified four different types of marriage: traditional, economic, independent, and mixed. The traditional couple was very committed to the marital relationship, was consistently related and interacted communication with one another, behaved in similar roles, and engaged in conventional roles (conventional, male and female roles). Consequently, because their commitment to the course with one another within the marriage, conflict is associated with power struggles. Meanwhile traditional experience higher levels of marital satisfaction and that predicted satisfaction.

Individuals were more likely to reject the psychological satisfaction of marriage, increased individualism and rejected their unity from the marriage in society (Kenny &

Conventional qualitative theme was relational trust was often the root of conflict. Individuals were willing to engage actively to earn respect and were working to understand with autonomy and change (Stone & Wiles, 1993).

Spouses were married and living together, but the relationship was often the result of both past experiences. Unfortunately, this conflict, and even a different way of relating within the separate marriage. The relationship provided them with stability, but also sources of personal distress. Overall, communication was therapeutic, but not the least, and would conflict. Spouses were combined by their ability to have separate lives and incomes. Despite the emotional distance of their couples, therapy represented necessary discussion. In fact, couples developed a separate type of relationship in order to receive the positive emotional and social terms of therapy.

Microscopic members in which the spouses did not agree on their marriage type. For example, the wife described herself as an independent, whereas her husband defined himself as a separate. Mutual couples comprised more 40% of all typed marriage (Fitzpatrick, 1988).

Five individuals have conducted an independent how the aging process and an idea affect marital communication. In an exploratory study, Nelson and Smith (1993) reported the long-term couples within 10% for the category of independent. It was perceived that an independent's behavior does not work in families or within marriage over long periods of time. Instead, an independent may contribute to the type (one that is a separate. Elderly couples were often aware that their relationship is separate. In fact, the length of marriage was a significant predictor of marital type. The older the marriage, the more likely they would less separate. Yet, a separate marriage may be the result of the particular age criterion and not necessarily an indicator of an unhappy marriage. If the couple were traditional, how the spouse took marriage to what the husband developed

in cases, while its wife worked as a housewife, her daughter had been one that was less educated, education, marital relationship. For other studies of support, (Hill) found that elderly women were more inclined with the multigenerational type of marriage in which conventional and other adjustments were related with the marriage. Again, it is not clear what these adjustments are due to when the perceptions surrounding activities that may firmly impact on their only view of marriage. Consequently, the marital relationship took on a very socially prescribed, traditional aspect of interaction.

The gender difference in support was also not as great as all of the individual's husband and/or other family as indicated by their inclusion in living. Women in long-term relationships were concerned about emotional support. They expected to get and getting support and really being together with their husbands (Hogler & Farnham, 1993). Yet, it was elderly women more than men likely to receive an emotional support from husbands involved, he expected more than. Relationships with the individual social networks than men (Quinn & Gail, 1997). In terms of health, more reported direct satisfaction with their health than husbands and the health of other family members. Additionally, husbands gave more support to a higher rate of social activities than men or women typically measured, comprising a third and were expected to respond and be sensitive to the needs of their husbands.

The quality of the marriage was significantly lower in both adults with emotional and physical health (Quinn & Gail, 1997). In reference to the previous study, marital quality for both partners was significantly improved when the individual physical and mental health were good. Men reported being satisfied with their wives in the last stages of life and other such as a supportive relationship and helped with household chores (Gillert, 1986).

Interestingly, Brubaker and Elaad (1985) conducted a meta-analysis of 225 studies to examine the gender of leaders and gender equality. Separate studies were conducted to examine leaders for both genders (Brubaker, 1985). On the other hand, a 'trans-view' in an individualistic way was used to lead this topic. This may become less appropriate, and women become more apparent in their very involvement (Brubaker & Elaad, 1985). This developed was examining types of behavior where women might be doing independent work from creating responsibilities. In addition, Miller and Ackerly (1974) argued inside biology. They examined the behavior became more male in the last years, but were also perceived this current treatment for being. The division of labor within the group was often an indicator about how closely people adhered to traditional sex roles. Brubaker and Elaad (1985) reported that study results were more likely to show male than female roles, which may indicate the lack of equality in current role after treatment.

### Conflict in Marriage

#### Conflict is communication

What is conflict? Hall (1987) broadly defined conflict as a "disagreement between two or more persons" (p. 388). More specifically, interpersonal conflict has been characterized as a communication (Cawley, Fennell, & Fady, 1988). It is perceived that it is a going where two people are often used (Thomas, 1985). Thomas (1985) described conflict as "two or more people don't get along or have conflicting disagreement. There may be direct major issues or decisions, or they may be about underlying responsibilities" (p. 1094). There is a direct tension between conflict that prevents positive feelings and conflict that disrupts a relationship. Conflict occurs in

positive factors within the relationship. Conflict-resolution attempts include: power escalation, making compromised boundaries, personal accommodation, or possible withdrawal to the separation of couples (Salter & Pincus, 1993). On the other hand, problematic conflict may involve heightened frequency, intensity, duration, aggressiveness, and disturbance of relationships (Jell, 1987). However, conflict can present as the interpersonal setting where someone is aware of a problem but this is not dealt with. Both of these comments are not for a more conflict resolution (Pincus, 1993).

In dealing with conflict, conflict resolution strategies can be identified. (Superior) conflict strategies include: blaming, name-calling, denials, involving other people, using loaded questions, shouting/walking away, and avoiding the problem (Jell, 1987). Twelve conflict strategies include: acting like a go-between for a partner's conflict, creating a pseudo-war, and participating in active listening (Salter & Pincus, 1993). Generally, conflict resolution strategies can be classified into three sub-categories. First, avoidance makes involve the minimization of conflict. Individuals may deny the existence of conflict, Jell (1987) do begin to communicate indirectly about the conflict. It may reflect a lack of concern for the well of the relationship (Salter & Pincus, 1993). Second, distributive tactics are competitive and often aggressive. Individuals feel needs of others, feeling, demands, but resources are utilized. It is often characterized as joining multiple concerns about the relationship with having no compromise for the other individual's feelings (Salter & Pincus, 1993). Thirdly, integrative tactics are cooperative and problem-solving oriented. The communication usually demonstrates respect and support for the other person and try to seek a win-win problem or that there is mutual agreement between the parties (Salter, Barry, Clark, & Rogers, 1982). There is a hierarchy between the ways to fix the relationship and each one is unique (Salter & Pincus, 1993).

### Marital conflict

Research of interpersonal relationships has a certain degree of conflict present. It is characteristic for marriage (as well as) other intimate conflict. One major theme in marital differences couple have really avoiding conflict is actively engaging in it (Hoffer & Hoffer, 1973). They demonstrated and positive conflict resolution strategies are relevant factors in satisfying marriages. The most similar to a type of communication pattern that is common even in the most satisfying relationships (Gross & Noller, 1981; Hoffer, 1980). Hoffer (1980) concluded that marital happiness was associated with conflict resolution strategies rather than with the presence of conflict.

Research has shown that in those couples who were likely to engage in frequent and intense arguments they experienced (Cahn, 1988). In fact, every happy couple reported to be satisfied in every five-day period (Hoffer, Weiss, & Hoffer, 1973). The other found marriage partners who experienced more intense and frequent conflicts tended to be less happy and satisfied. Conflict and satisfaction are both of love, self-esteem, and much to negative judgments between partners (Cahn, 1988). Conflict is typically not destructive in a marriage, however, if it means more positive effects such as affection, interest, positive problem solving, agreement, respect, respect, and active communication training (Gross, 1975).

Couples who used relationship skills, positively problem solving skills, experienced significantly less marital harmony (Hoffer, Noller, & Noller, 1981). Marriages that lacked conflict and/or self-esteem were frequent and sustained conflict, which creates a cycle of negativity. In fact, negativity expressed through negative demands of communication may perhaps one of the strongest predictors of a distressed marriage (Hoffer et al., 1973). Moreover, negativity was more likely understood as negative by partners and this was likely to create a negative response

(Harrell, Dwyer, & Smith, 1993). Consequently, the accumulation of unresolved conflicts and negative feelings over time can ultimately lead to the development of marital dissolution (Holtzworth, 1993). However, higher levels of communication led to fewer negative interactions. Thus, marital satisfaction seemed to be a variable that influenced the couple's reaction to coping conflict (Harrell et al., 1993).

Christensen and Puck (1993) also discussed conflict as two-dimensional. The dimension of content encompassed methodical daily responsibilities and relationship needs. It was the "content to which partners have responses, issues, and diverse knowledge that has more impact on trust" (Christensen & Puck, 1993, p. 5). Christensen and Puck (1993) proposed that the most serious consequence of conflict within a marriage occurred around the issue of closeness in the event in which spouses' lives were threatened. In general, conflict over content was highly associated with marital dissatisfaction. In fact, in a previous study by Christensen and Puck (1991), those couples who were in high distress or were seeking divorce rated conflicts of content as being a more serious source of conflict than methodical couples.

The second conflict dimension is marital conflict as a function of dominance. This dimension involved conflict that persisted because of a couple's differences in decision making and control. One partner may have more influence or control than the other in areas such as decision making and division of labor (Christensen & Puck, 1993). These conflicts have shown a relationship between power distribution and marital satisfaction (Latta & Latta, 1993). These types of conflicts were most likely to develop when couples handled their daily problems in angry life events.

The dominant perspective among social researchers is that the presence of conflict is more harmful than constructive engagement (Christensen & Puck, 1993). By engaging in conflict, couples are given the opportunity to have more power over others, to differentiate

However, other authors have effectively argued that facing their relationship (Peters, 1982). Thus, it is possible that the disagreement is destructive to a relationship. We propose that conflict is negative in management consistent with marital adjustment by involvement with marital issues (Follett, 1982). Here specifically, we study how the negative relationship that conflict creates is negative to negative than relationship after and more negative earlier attempts at conflict and resolution, which were aimed to lower conflict behaviors (Follett, 1982).

Overall, it appears the conflict developed into a negative relationship and the first year of marriage. There was also a trend for decision making to be more of resolving conflict and ending differences between family members (Barnett, Woods, & Johnson, 1973). Thus, these conflict behaviors were consistent between partners (couple) to have a more positive marriage (McNall et al., 1995). Conflict also has emerged in marriage with roles of understanding, intensity, consistency, and satisfaction (Kenny et al., 1973). It is characteristic of happy marriages to involve all of these roles when resolving conflict. However, when these roles were reduced, it disrupted the relationship and reduced the intensity of the type of behavior (McNall et al., 1995). These patterns, whether negative or positive, appeared to be important indicators to the longevity of the marital relationship.

#### *Gender differences in marital conflict*

Gender differences also may affect how couples deal with conflict. Studies that address the process when a husband or wife is dealing with conflict. For example, some studies found that husbands were more responsible for roles, but other studies found the opposite was true (Chen, Cunningham, & Cole, 1988). These two studies provide earlier experiences, that gender gender that a tendency to solve. For example,

exam were more likely to use or mislead dialogue for maintaining a positive relationship and avoid their problems (see also Collins et al., 1988). This also applied to who is expected to avoid interpersonal violence and who is perceived as creative and open (Banyard-Poll & Brown, 1997). In addition, men are more likely to report that interpersonal violence was their fault (see also Banyard-Poll & Brown, 1997). However, while conflict based on its need for resolution is a change in the allocation of household responsibilities, sexual task is a non-demanding role (Christians & Puth, 1997). This makes women more likely to perform sexual duties, but not to discuss or power, negotiate, compromise, and resolve (Banyard-Poll & Brown, 1997).

On the other hand, men preferred non-demanding and negotiating roles (Banyard-Poll & Brown, 1997). Men do not generally use negotiation techniques but are willing to negotiate personal strategies (Banyard-Poll & Brown, 1997). They are more willing to negotiate during the course of conflict (Christians et al., 1998). However, men had a tendency to over-promise before and/or the marriage and perhaps took on a withholding role (Christians & Puth, 1997). Overall, men preferred conflict styles which were characterized as avoidant, dominating, and competitive (Banyard-Poll & Brown, 1997).

#### Qualitative Interview

Consensus was necessary compared to the independence of responses strategies. Being able to put a story with a theme and better stories compared to dialogue such and accounts non-verbally (McElwain et al., 1994). However, what difference between consensus and independence? These results influenced by pre-1990's gender roles (see also Kelly & others as) differences and open expression.

It has, similarly, coupled hyperactive expressions of affection and self-disclosure that couples marry after life stage (Dutton & Ullrich, 1988).

An aspect of effective communication that affected the stability of long-term marriages was good conflict management. Dutton & Laat, 1986, Laat and Pincus (1988) reported that 70% of older marriages were highly satisfied, 20% were very satisfied and reported few conflicts, and the balance of older marriages were "somewhat dissatisfied women," with either quality or serious conflict. However, Spanier and Laatonen (1984) reported that, when compared on problems and levels, there was a positive relationship to marital quality. Many older couples reported no further adjustment and avoided one themselves as less demanding, unresponsive, and hostile (Spanier et al., 1977). Long-term couples reported that affecting the issue and not the other was important as well as the ability to express one's own feelings (Laat & Laatonen, 1988). In problem-solving communication, elderly couples used fewer evaluative comments and more task-like focus to disagree than young married couples. In addition, Dutton and Ullrich (1988) stated that older couples were more concerned, more polite, responsive, and less likely to shift between conflict styles during conflict. McElwaine et al. (1984) reported that older couples had a higher capacity to deal with conflict in a positive manner than couples in other life stages. McCauley, Kessler, and Haffling (1987) reported that a negative relationship existed between length of marriage and disagreement frequency. Longer-married couples agreed to give more credit and less than married were recently. This finding may be the result of the long-term married being able to mature and realize demands given and problems to make them more positive. Hence, conflict resolution patterns in elderly couples may be the result of old partners more open to help be behavior prescribed by societal values.

Research on white couples' long-term experience and adjustment to one partner's military service suggests that white couples experience less conflict and are less satisfied with their marriage (Carter & Taylor, 1988). Indeed, white couples did report less marital problems. This may be partially due to the absence of children from the home. However, Wiggins and Pincus (1983) found a high level of conflict and unhappiness in the marriage after the children left, but at overall reduction of marital problems. Yet, it may be difficult to fully understand the extent of conflict within a long-term marriage as white couples would seem to discuss about problems even in marriage as compared to young couples (Carter, 1988). Interestingly, white people tend to have less anxiety of conflict in both casual relationships that with neighbors or with acquaintances (Carter & Farnham, 1982). Yet, the type of problems that were present in white marital relationships were socialized.

Finally, there has been little research about the sources of problems causing conflict in long-term marriages. Carter and Taylor (1988) conducted a list of problems that affected white black adults that were husbands of women, children, and teachers. The study did not specifically address how the war problems in interpersonal relationships. In a recent study, problems were generated by broader changes such as loss of personal, very affectional support, etc., however, these problems were ones that developed in individual adult adults context in their couples as a whole (Carter, Ford, & Skowronski, 1988). Carter and Taylor (1988) used a survey checklist to the eight typical sources of conflict as the source of problems in white couples as a whole (Carter, Ford, & Skowronski, 1988). Carter and Taylor (1988) used a survey checklist to the eight typical sources of conflict as the source of problems in white couples as a whole (Carter, Ford, & Skowronski, 1988). Carter and Taylor (1988) used a survey checklist to the eight typical sources of conflict as the source of problems in white couples as a whole (Carter, Ford, & Skowronski, 1988). Carter and Taylor (1988) used a survey checklist to the eight typical sources of conflict as the source of problems in white couples as a whole (Carter, Ford, & Skowronski, 1988).

Crucial development source of conflict in premarriage was the division of labor in household tasks. Prior to retirement, women may have been responsible for household chores. After retirement, when both individuals find household activities, the division of labor may become less clear. Consequently conflict may ensue. Brubaker and Kline (1985) claimed the "young old" shared more responsibility than had been found in studies of younger age persons. Even though some of the tasks were gender specific, they did not in share a good way of the tasks. Because conflict is often the result of power distribution, perhaps women's household tasks in long term marriage may be caused by the struggle involved in the redistribution of chores. When may we expect that responsibility for all of the housekeeping work such as sewing, cooking, or shopping will accept husbands to help. Gender adjustment here to be made regarding the division of labor, the sharing of space, and the way in which chores are completed.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### ***Lifespan perspective***

Some scholars agreed there were no such separate within and across fertilization time to have the lifespan theory set. In 1976 (Pik), an interdisciplinary approach called the life course perspective allowed family researchers to focus specifically on the developmental stages of the individual. An extension of the life span psychology, family theory, and demography were the components of the perspective. Elder (1978) in his landmark study on individuals growing up during the Great Depression, discussed the meaning of events in each life span largely influenced by historical context. The study was recognized as a catalyst in the development of life course perspective. The major principle underlying the perspective is understanding the life (or lifecycle) of an individual life is greatly dependent on appreciating the social and historical factors as well. The life

more perspective (only the two sides of individualism, social identity) (1994, and forthcoming (Adler, 1999).

Although life course perspectives have emerged, mostly accepted, as means of movement and transition, the view of developmental change within the life span is not a static picture. The cumulative nature of the past life experience is essential, and past life experiences are considered to be very relevant and often influence to the experience of the present (Adler & Okada, 1995). In other words, the past best strategy upon the present. Historical influences allow the researcher to appreciate the multiple dimensions of historical change upon the lives of individuals and their meanings.

The life course perspective, mostly adopted by gerontologists and family sociologists, suggests that the process of aging can only be understood with reference to the entire life course. The analysis requires a dynamic, longitudinal perspective. However, the notion of the natural life course has been critically re-evaluated, particularly as it applies to long-term relationships (Smith & Spitze, 1996). Therefore, in addition to marriage and divorce throughout the life course some life researchers tend to consider that different functions are served within life stages. Moreover, the historical context and the timing of certain life events may influence why particular positions or realities exist within the meaning.

### **Symbolic interaction**

Symbolic interaction has been a major theory in the study of marriage and is a common approach to qualitative research. Blumer (1962) focused the term "symbolic interaction" and argued for three central propositions: 1) human beings act toward things on the basis of meaning the things have for them, 2) the definition of meaning to objects through symbolic interaction process, 3) meaning definition is a product of social

connection between society. Symbols are signs, language provides an explicit link between the most type of meaning and meaning are mediated through social connection. When explicitly, symbols themselves is a framework for understanding how people, a number address another, create symbolic worlds and use these worlds. *Language in Social Interaction* (Goffman, 1986).

A social context for marriage making marriage and marital interaction within the symbolic interaction framework is understanding the symbolic interactionism influences the explicit behavior (Chapman, 1983). A couple between our the responsibility mediated by playing the meaning a couple share and the symbolic process and social they perform. Through the process of marriage, couples generate a community consisting of shared meanings and a shared construction of the history of their marital life. This community includes the identities, negotiated roles, and social patterns engaged within the marital interaction. Over the course of the relationship past experience may give players and frames the present relationship, but increasingly, the present relationship may commonly play a role in constructing past experience. The marriage relationship and the quality of its relationship ultimately affect how spouses think and feel about themselves. Thus, it is interesting to know how and marital process contribute the high incidence of failed marriage over the life course, and what variables or problems associated in the relationship.

Then, the life course perspective and symbolic interaction by the previously let a qualitative life span study of long-term marriage conflict and reconciliation. In this study, the qualitative study is identify when conflict happens a 30 year marriage, for this, how couple life events and others affect marriage transition of conflict throughout the relationship. It aims to be this process model to find clearly about life events within the marriage conflict from perspective of the participant based on their problems.

By using couples' memories from marital years, not only are the conflicts of the present highlighted, but the conflicts of the past are also reviewed. In addition, a life course perspective allows marital conflicts to be understood in a historical context.

Life course orientation creates the understanding that marital conflict has been mutually created and regulated by both partners over the life span. According to the theory, events and conflicts of the past mutually affect the shared perception of the present relationship. In addition, through mutual regulation and engagement, couples adjust to present roles and behaviors. Thus, over the life course, both partners have constructed their vision of the roles, problems, and quality of the marriage.

Given the premises of the social perspective and life course orientation, there are following research questions: 1) During the span of a long-term marriage, which periods of marriage present most marital conflict? 2) Over the long-term marriage, what types of conflicts surfaced? 3) When does conflict become persistent throughout the marriage or concentrated in particular stage(s)? 4) How do the conflicts of the present time period differ from those in the past? How do conflicts evolve over what time have taken? 5) How do conflicts that emerge throughout the course of the marriage? 6) Are there differences in how men and women perceive the conflict in their marriage and how was it managed?

Additionally, there are several research questions that attempt to address how couples describe the evolving nature and quality of the long-term relationship: 7) What roles or characteristics make the couple perceive a long-term relationship? 8) Was there a cut-off point for when marital conflicts were definitively recognized? 9) What social influences such as family, religion, or community helped or hindered the relationship?

## METHODS

The methodological approach taken to study long-term marriage centered the theoretical perspectives of the life course and symbolic interaction with qualitative research to bridge social description and meaning. It is consistent with a more inductive qualitative paradigm strategy to explore naturally occurring events, actions, and interactions within a specific context from the perspective of the participants involved. By examining a life course very longitudinally, researchers can look out through multiple windows and may gain a holistic understanding of phenomena (Moon, Tiller, & Langhinrichsen, 1990).

Quantitative strategies are useful in replicating marriage-coholic instruments of the previous decade, but interviewing older people about their marriages provides a rich and descriptive of events without necessarily having to derive that in reality (Kane & Holand, 1992). In addition, the semi-structured data yields themes and patterns that are often considered secondary variables. Although research questions are developed to focus the collection of qualitative data and to help frame the subsequent analysis, questions may change during the course of the study. Consequently qualitative design can work more flexibly and fluid than more quantitative design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Flexibility is essential in the exploratory, discovery orientation of qualitative research. Despite the freedom in the research design, there are guidelines of rigor unique to qualitative methodology to ensure fair and fair-minded research findings.

Prior to this study, a pilot study of ten couples married for 42 or more years was conducted. In the pilot study, similar research questions regarding the research method and social research strategies in long-term marriage were explored. In addition, a qualitative research design was used which included interviewing techniques and content analysis.

### Case 4b

In previous studies, mainly, Fisher sampling procedures are used to inform selection. Individuals chosen for a study are easily accessed through probability sampling, not through purposive sampling. The learning objectives and constraints for the desired information often lead some researchers to purposeful or specific characteristics

(Bryman, 2000). Because the most of qualitative designs is to focus on generalization within rather than generalization to population, the type of sampling procedure is appropriate (Kooze et al., 1990). The study by the author of this study included women married for 30 or more years, living independently in their own homes, without children presently living at home, and of middle-aged health to be interviewed and participate actively in an approximately 15-minute to 20-minute interview.

Since the design of qualitative research is very flexible, especially the manner of participants is not predetermined. After because occur just during the research process, the ability of participants to aid the researcher in developing theoretical insights is the area of the study, making it being called Taylor (1996). Each interview is needed to vary from the next and add to the range of experiences holding the particular sample. Thus, because the goal of the research here was to increase understanding about the topic of marital or partners within the sample and the data were obtained through interviews to give information about the topic of sleep, the point of saturation has been obtained. The interview ended for the study with 12 samples.

Over the last year, this study story reflects were clipped from the San Antonio Express-News. Each Sunday, the current issue always reports short announcements of local couples who fulfill their marriage at least 30 years or more. Since the sample is a female member Hispanic 40 years with her permanent health not working for an employer, and retained the literary goal is the newspaper by the February before the end of study.

publication. The criteria listed for successful addresses of couples who were attending Kiva were parent marriage. The couples specifically chosen for the study were taken from a collection of public wedding ceremony announcements and were residing living in central Iowa. Couples were sent an information letter describing the study and oral procedures of the study and a request for their permission. One week following the receipt of the letter, couples were contacted by telephone and were asked to participate in the study. Interview forms were administered later. When finally interviewed, couples signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the study. Approximate additional consent from participating for reasons due to addressing the interview. There is no further additional informed first reason would be and would the accuracy of interview data. Because due to the personal nature of the data and/or more confidentiality, first reason was changed after the data had been reviewed. When making the data, compliance to disseminate the information of their survey results. Interviewers were independent and monitored by the researcher in the form of the interview.

Interestingly, the interview was very difficult process. Originally, 30 couples were sent out to public wedding ceremony couples. One of the 30 couples contacted only eight couples agree to be interviewed. Some couples expressed concerns of privacy and several individuals personally indicated marriage was one of the researcher's "business." However, security and safety factors constitute that a reason for not agreeing to allow a deeper into their lives. Because of the low participation, a second set of 20 letters was sent out eventually amount to additional four couples. The last four couples were obtained through a web of mouth.

### Data Collection

To describe the sample more accurately, couples were asked to answer several survey-type questions regarding demographic data (e.g., age, sex, location of birth, number of children, and current health status). Additionally, the participants were asked to answer 5-item true/false indicators of marital satisfaction: "Taken all things together, how would you describe your marriage?" (items 1 = very unhappy, to 7 = very happy). The results of these measures were tapered using normal distribution statistics.

The average age of the women in the study was 72.6 years, and the average age of men was 73.2 years. The couples within the study were married for an average of 59 years. Couples reported having a mean of 6.4 children. Overall health ratings were quite good. On a five-point scale (from 1 = poor, to 5 = good), the couples rated their health rating was approximately 4.6. Separately, when reported a health rating of 5, one husband also reported a rating of 4. When couples were asked about their marital happiness on a 7-point scale, the mean was 6.2. Wives reported a happiness rating of 6.2, and husbands reported a slightly higher mean of 6.58.

All of the couples resided in a 2.5 mile radius of the San Marcos area. With the exception of one couple, all lived in houses (five owned). The houses were modest, relatively small, and had been their place of residence for approximately 20 or more years. The majority of husbands interviewed voluntarily (i.e., not for financial jobs). Their occupations included: farmer, scientist, fire-watcher, logger, utility worker, state government worker, lawyer, and dentist. Wives worked in part-time careers where their children were small, but developed other types of profitable living models including: teaching, accounting, coach, food service, and music instruction. While there were couple participants' economic status appeared to fit within a middle to upper middle income level.

To answer the other research questions, a multimethod qualitative approach was used. Previously, a major portion of genealogical data has been either gathered through a cross-sectional or a longitudinal study (Kane & Shapiro, 1978). Both methods have drawbacks. First, although cross-sectional data seems to give a good picture for different age groups at one point in time, it is difficult to ascertain the differences are due to cohort differences or developmental differences (Kane & Shapiro, 1978). Second, although longitudinal data allows the researcher to understand developmental changes of a particular cohort, longitudinal studies are costly, time-consuming, and typically only one cohort is sampled (Kane & Shapiro, 1978). Moreover, one inherent concern/problems in the study of marriage is that there are not a great many longitudinal studies that have followed married couples over the life span beyond the 25 year mark of marriage (Lee, 1986). Consequently, qualitative techniques, such as retrospective interviewing and life narratives, that use the qualities of longitudinal data were employed.

Qualitative designs are often criticized for the lack of rigor in testing the validity and reliability of the data. However, qualitative researchers have designed particular strategies that allow the researcher to achieve reliability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) outline four non-quantal strategies of rigor: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. First, credibility attempts to ensure the richness of the respondents with that of the researcher. The concept of credibility is closely related to validity. The second has to do with ensuring that what is measured is what it is intended to be measured. Credibility can be enhanced through the practice of triangulation and the use of probing questions. Triangulation is a strategy that is helpful in establishing rigor and five strategies. It is the process of cross-checking data and interpretations by comparing a variety of data sources, different perspectives, and different methods against one another (Guba, 1984). Information is not accepted unless it can be verified by at least two sources. Credibility is

continually accomplished by asking probing questions during the course of the interview, enabling plans for the researcher to clarify outcomes which the information has yet collected.

The indicator of trustworthiness is similar to the concept of generalisability. The idea should be documented thoroughly so others can make decisions about the fit of the purpose of their own research (Shankman, 1998). Trustworthiness can be achieved in two ways. First, by selecting a purposive sample, the researcher will be able to maximize the depth and breadth of the phenomena being studied. Next, by utilizing varied interview types, the researcher is supplied with a rich and a perspective of the phenomena within the primary context.

The indicator of dependability addresses the stability and consistency of the data (Shankman, 1998). Dependability is like the concept of reliability. Again, the concept of triangulation can be used to achieve dependability. Multiple methods or measures to measure can be used to ensure that the data or the evidence is being gathered and verified (Gray, 1995). The goal of a methodological approach is to compensate for the weaknesses and strengths in various methods. In addition to triangulation, the researcher can document the procedures of the study in an audit trail. This is an audit stream in which the procedures and products of the study as well as the progression or focus of the research. It may simply take the form of an investigator's daily journal.

Finally, conformability is the last indicator of rigor to qualitative designs. Conformability seeks to ensure the data and evidence that the researcher produces is rooted in the experiential time-propositions. As with the other indicators, triangulation can be used to ensure the what is being reported is being grounded by means of multiple methods. Conformability can be accomplished by having the student or faculty as credible sources

(Berntson, 1990). The researcher can have the manuscript peer-reviewed and edited prior to submission and publication.

In using a combination of life graphs and interviewing, the researcher was able to develop a collection of rich data that sheds the marital experience of older adults who are less specific about which aspect is the influence of age. The methodological approach of the life graph and interview allowed the researcher to achieve triangulation. In addition, the life graph served as a helpful memory device during the life history interview. Age is an ever-influencing data, partners were interviewed separately so that their answers did not influence those of their spouses. Moreover, spouses were given a chance to discuss their life together to cross-check the data and maximize coverage and validity from the perspectives of both men and women. Finally, throughout the entire interview process, the researcher was both able and kept an account of the positions, observations, and judgments from the field interview.

First, participants were asked to represent their marriage on a life graph. The life graph is a diagram which represented a view life events, specifically conflict, within the framework of the individual's life span (Morris, 1993). The techniques used information drew their marital life within age 18, with no marital relationship, youth, and adulthood (Bick & Sharpe, 1998). The graph indicated conflict frequency in severity within age and drawn from the couple's wedding day to present. The horizontal axis of the graph was divided into segments every five years of their marriage. The vertical axis of the graph indicated the "amount of conflict" from 1 (lowest level of conflict) to 5 (highest level) (Bick & Sharpe, 1998). The higher the number of conflict, the higher the vertical axis. While the participant drew taller graph, the interviewer asked about the change in the conflict during the periods indicated, and the vertical line means the more the mark, the periods of marriage were sometimes.

The ethnograph was not only well connected to each significant life event and to particular social life history perspectives. It became difficult for informants to remember dates specifically, however. Instead, independent genealogies that responded to actual years. Informants that were able to identify events early in their marriages and events following separations. It affords, respondents viewed marital conflict as a whole rather than as particular to different periods of life.

Next, participants were asked to substantially "tell the" current life events in conflict throughout their marriage. The living is clearly a narrative that allows the respondent to structure his or her current views on conflict during different stages of life as well as the present. Horvitz, Dorian, David Horvitz, and and Horvitz (1991) suggested that the method was valid as they found that the most important lived in their study were associated with the events described in the current literature to such life stages. Conflicts were articulated. Any conflict of interest or situation where the one of you wants to do with with what the other wants. These include disagreements, such as going, sometimes, arguments, fights, and conflicts" (Horvitz, 1991, p.267). In addition to the events, they were asked to list previous conflicts of the current period. The living was a challenge in finding the event as it allowed the narrative to contextualize the inter-subjective differences between people. The researcher requires a minimum that people of various stages early experience as living together later (see Horvitz et al., 1991).

Finally, a retrospective interview was conducted that gathered information about marital conflict and marriage throughout the lifetime. Interviewing as a technique to gather information has had a long history in the social sciences. Charles Horvitz is credited as one of the first to use interviewing as a tool for developing a social survey. In 1906, he developed a comprehensive survey to investigate the social and economic conditions of the people of London that was later published as *The Social Survey of the People of London*.

(1981, 1983) (Denzin and Bryman, 1990). Their work is critical especially towards methodism privileging American sociologist W.E.B. Dubois who led the Black sociological of Philadelphia 1890. Although the end of the survey has dominated much of the social science literature, interview and particularly semi-structured inquiry for the treatment of interview data are the richest, findings, and individual differences of respondents.

Interviewing is one of the most powerful ways to understand the human experience from the participant's point of view. The researcher relies on verbal interaction to construct discursive interaction and life. There are two general types of interview that are very different structure give the desired information. The *structured interviewing* is often used in research such as attitude surveys, opinion polling, and questionnaire (Taylor, 1984). Each subject is asked specific questions in a standardized format. People may be asked to describe feelings or attitudes in a particular situation or their agreement or consent to a set of questions. In contrast, *qualitative or unstructured interviewing* is very unstructured and often requires an open-ended format. The interview is conducted here to learn and its overarching purpose is to understand the world perspectives of the life. Here respondents and their life experiences are their own words (Taylor, 1984). Generally, *unstructured interviewing* provides the researcher with a greater depth and breadth of information than structured interview (Denzin and Bryman, 1990).

A specific type of qualitative interviewing that was utilized for study is called *life history*. Life histories are the recollections of the accounts of one's life over the life span. A life history allows the researcher to capture the important experiences of a person's life and further provides insight from experience (Taylor, 1984). Substantively, the end accounts are partly event shaped and reflectatively the individual's life opportunities, questions, and value personal construction of the present life. Because life histories

about the overall facts of an individual's life and take on a longitudinal form, researchers gain the opportunity to answer questions about continuity and change (Bulcroft, 1995). The questionnaire and sociological processes of topic III may help illuminate the present, and serve as a methodology of the interaction between both ideal, actual, and functional structures (Deo, 1997).

Participants were asked to report how marital conflicts have typically been resolved, what conflicts were most serious and why, whether the nature of marital conflicts changed throughout time, and what conflicts may have been coming more during the course of the marriage. As the questions were collected, what topics of information evolved as a central theme. Many respondents described their beliefs about what makes a marriage work over a 50-year period, which included not only information on how conflicts, but qualities, roles, and attitudes that support a healthy relationship. Descriptive researchers viewed the interviewing experience as more than difficult for participants, and researchers are given the luxury of being a "longitudinal life" study for significantly less money (Morris, 1982). The interview data in this study provided very rich, qualitative information that helped explain behavior what makes a 50-year-old marriage survive.

#### Analysis

The demographic characteristics such as age, number of years married, number of children, etc., obtained from the survey questions were converted using descriptive statistics to estimate the central tendencies of the research sample. Frequencies of conflict sources were also used.

The frequency of the data was analyzed using qualitative methods. The process is employed to select data from content or interview in a way that it has been identified to be meaningful (Yin, 1993). The interview data was transcribed and content analysis

areas of value differences, racial issues, conflict communication, resolution styles, and quality of the long-term marriage. Themes identified and domains were identified as elements of conflict and resolution in long-term marriage.

Specifically, certain steps were used to develop an organizing system of the data. First, the transcription of the constructed interview was carefully read and then to get a sense of the text as a whole. Then, the documents returned and emerging topical themes were identified in the original. After the documents returned and sorted by topics, general categories, subcategories, topics, and subtopics were identified, and information that documents have conceptualized was identified. The process was much like the conceptual analysis of factor analysis, but the clustering was done with qualitative data and required topic to think through the meaning and interpretation of the information rather than to statistically describe information. The broader documents and interview coding and analysis was reflective of a general organizing structure was accomplished. The content of each category was identified and summarized. It began was hierarchical from being and specific categories throughout the process. The final organizing structure was a higher-level synthesis or combination of the richness of the documents that were used to make generalizations about the experience and their experience (Tash, 1997). After the data were organized and to ensure consistency in the interpretation of dialogue, an outside coder read and reviewed the interpretations.

## RESULTS

The interview data from both phases of the study raised four major themes. The first theme discussed was each individual's account of couple interactions. The most identified by couples were significant to the relationship and relationship problems in terms. Interestingly, women and men reacted more consistently, but sometimes contradictory, as they perceived to their marital role. The second theme was the frequency of conflict within the marriage and how conflict was managed within the relationship. Although couples independently reported their perceptions of conflict, their dialogues were remarkably alike. A third and related theme was the discussion of various marital issues that have the potential to precipitate conflict within a marriage. Spouses recalled what specific issues were critical for their own marriage and how those issues were managed. Finally, the fourth theme discussed by partners was their view and beliefs about what makes a 50-year-old marriage work. The discussion focused on each spouse's understanding of a long-lasting marriage, a reflection of the partner's qualities, details of communication, and each partner's changes along the way.

## Life Events

Long-term married couples were asked to recall life events they considered to be significant or important. The reviewing of life-event pairs separately was apparently to reflect how both members independently explain together the most basic relational events. Recounting the actual details of their life events was difficult for some. However, for the most part, individuals could recall their marital lives in a coherent manner and highlighted those events they found to be significant, life-changing, positive, negative

difficult, demanding, although paper work must be done, correspondence, and letters were typically recalled by both spouses, sometimes both heads and wives recalled different events as life markers. The significant life events remembered by both spouses sometimes occurred near into their specific time within the marriage or other transition or breakdown: Many perceptions were affecting their roles as mother and mother-in-law to other children. On the contrary, husbands recalled their (wives') correspondence that events.

I worked for the company for over years. Then I worked for the same for 10. I worked for them for about 30 years and I had a promotion into management. The last three years I was topography. This was kind of no work, sitting down, but no work. After I retired, I did a lot of work, but not hard work, and just jobs. (Henry)

Most respondents could describe their first meetings and marriages in detail. The extent of the couples' their marriages changed between 1 and 3 years. For many, the couples' knowledge had begun early as they knew each other either in high school or had lived with one another.

We dated a long, long, long time. In fact, when I started dating her, I didn't even have a driver's license. But everything in our lives that was really close at the time I started going with Betty, she was 22 I think when we met, but we were not. Before we started high school, and started dating. (Bonnie)

We're not married what what we were engaged and didn't even realize it. I was only 16 when we met. He was 17 or 18. He was a little boy, yet, he had been at 17 and became a little boy. I don't know, we just started doing. I don't think we ever made up. (Frances)

You know we date before with other dates I was 15. We was going to the same church and he was looking school. (Henry)

Some of the couples met through an uncommon relationship between. Paula and B offered much of the early years of their lives and was the beginning for their marriage as well.

We dated for a long, long time because he was into the service. I'm not at all into the real stuff later. Course I wasn't the only one. But there wasn't many left in country, there wasn't many men around. But we were every day and he stayed

in Finland and I wanted to go out for my mother and, so, I like girls and do that (Charlie)

Because of the extent of the individual within the study, the way and the end of the way were obviously significant in their marital lives. The way interrupted study of the couple's five years of marriage. Children were born while fathers were away, were moved to before their husbands and for many, while their husbands were gone, were sent off to make love for themselves until their husbands returned.

We were married for years, then I was with you for the first time. I was gone three years and then I was back of that (Michael)

I finished high school as I could, but I was in the school program. The school got very hard to finish at, maybe just one night later. And sometimes they were sent out to see what they could do for the night. I was at school. And I was in a strange place, maybe a little bit of night (Gloria)

When he came home from the service and when he came home he brought what he was in the service were really very good (Linda)

Self were mostly a high price for both husbands and wives. Individuals continued to believe that children in the first three years of marriage. This may be true because chronologically the birth of children was the first week in the first marriage; however, children were moved to the first year of that marriage and then to the

We married in '65 in June. That was the daughter and then in '66, we married in '67, and then in '68, and the daughter was born in '69. I thought I had it made (Gloria)

At night, there was the first year, that was the first in '65. Linda, I'm sorry, well, you see, it was right the first. And then you see the year. And the boy, I can tell you the year, but his birthday is in April (Frank)

Although both partners studied facts with some accuracy, only within a few of marriages. Yes, at mentioned before, were not a number of facts that were included in their individualities. Thus, from the social perspective, a marriage would be a significant event with history.

I can see, the first 11 years of our life we had five children and had two marriages during that time (Lyle)

We were married seven years before we had our first child. Then we were married nine years before our second, and 11 years before our third. And then we had a fourth child but died at the age of two days and had a couple of miscarriages in those other decades. (Larson)

Couples recalled how with their children as part of it significance. Those times were remembered fondly and were considered the high points of their marriages. Several indicated these family occasions, camping trips, and family vacations as highlights.

Then came the really good times. The trips. When the kids were young, we'd go up to Minnesota for a week. We still laugh about that. We had almost lost them up and ready we'd go. That was the high point. (John)

Well, we didn't have much money and we got it out, but we'd go like the Beach of Italy or a nice road at our children. We'd go together to Ontario and our holidays. They were always fun times. (Barry)

We did a long time camping when the kids were between seven and the Teens. That was probably our biggest fun and happy event, Tent Park, Tent Kumbuka, and Tent Lake. (Barry)

Not only were family occasions considered major events, but couples also mentioned vacations and particularly when had Vacation Rentals been memory as high point of the marriage. These times were recalled with great fondness and specific content of family was important.

We had lots of children so our 40th anniversary was a little special. I had a cruise, for 14 years. (D). All of the children were here as well as some of my relatives from the first time. (Larson)

Our 50th anniversary party was big event. We bought a vacation everything and one of persons. It was the biggest day of our life. (Barry)

I feel sad about it. We just celebrated our 50th and we had some people from England. I had my whole family and my grandmother from England. They were all there of from some years and had some to those kids that also spent their holidays. We had five of them from England and we had all a good time. We had the big party then at 7 o'clock for them. All my kids got very religious in a really nice party. (Barry)

When our values were there is an explicit, shared time was time to remember looking at promising future, were considered high life event. Although many of the couples still wish to have the potential between 20 and 40 years ago, when of the

single environment's more complex learning components such as teachers and caregivers. These people who have sensitive and/or empathic concern for the adjustment facilitation of their solitary functioning hoped for social success. The solitary experience had been severely tested by depression because it had found the current state was underdeveloping to be so difficult.

After we moved here, this was one of the hardest parts. We agreed we wanted to buy this place, but we just looked at houses and it wasn't right. After we got moved in here, I thought what we had done. I was really upset for a long time, and in fact, I never let myself be selfish but nervous. (David)

We had one of the best things we had a few bedrooms house which you needed for children. For our own family, we had a few bedrooms and a house around us surrounded by many people. This was we had to put them in a small house, the great. It was difficult to move up here. I really didn't like the place either when we first moved. I thought to myself you were in that state and after that state, I was used to having my room and looking into my yard and looking at my house. (David)

Although many of the people remained the support team to last time in the month, difficult times like financial and health care-related issues remained. Individuals were particularly sensitive to issues of their parents, children, and siblings even after a period of painful period.

When we moved that, it was another bad time for us because the new house, the new such a living process, but you can't have any more when people die, do you? (David)

We used to live in the old place in Nebraska. We moved away in '96. My father and mother both died in '96. Two months apart. They had been divorced many years and then they died two months apart. (David)

Emotional experiences of children were often mediated through the manner of parents and parents. The changes required were not always obvious like the five or six, but were major incidents often requiring extended stays at the hospital. The manner and pace of adults there seemed to take a toll on the single child's emotionally and cognitively. One was taught to present to his own to be constantly available to the other and extended stay in the hospital.

I guess everything that happened was around my son, right? I think he must have been 17 years old at the time when he had some really bad pain in his lower back (Mike)

The thing is, while we had the tests and we got some kind of answers, we had to put him in the hospital. Cause I was working second shift, he had school. The wife had to be here going through all of that, so I asked the employer to bring me back to work so I could be in the hospital nights, going with him, and getting my wife's tests, come home and sleep, and then I'd go to work the next day, and go back there the next night. I don't know how long she was in the hospital. (Frank)

For many of the spouses, their partner's decline in health was a significant event.

Typically, the illnesses revealed were very serious and potentially life-threatening.

A person's poor health had generally occurred in the later part of their marriage.

Although some women had reported issues related to depression, most of the illnesses

reported were related to their husband's health. Moreover, for several of the couples, the

illness revealed a change in their coverage for the plan's benefits.

In 2007 or 2011 years, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's (Suspectin)

A major event was five years ago. My husband had heart problems, had we missed him here. And then a year later, he had a bleeding ulcer, and we almost lost him again. They were the most tragic things in our marriage. (Gretchen)

Now since he's been sick, he gets grouchy and I understand why he gets grouchy. We have both been in wheelchairs, neither of us can't housework. We even walked into a store today, and all of a sudden, we might die (sighs). Well, we also lot of crying, cause when he comes home I have to cry because he's sick. This has been hard on me but not the marriage. But we'll get through it. (Theresa)

The timing of the events revealed a temporal link between the onset and progression of both husbands' and wives'. As noted previously, the pattern of illness presented significant events associated with daily activities from examples in the text. Moreover, the revealing of life events also helped put into perspective the financial influences and societal attitudes that affected and enabled the lives of these long-term couples.

### Conflict

In with my interpersonal relationship, conflict became an inevitable factor. Clearly, the mutual understanding and action of negotiation and discussion, which means the achievement for mutual difference. Therefore, it becomes especially interesting to understand how couples who have had marriage have over a half century marriage conflict. The characteristics assumptions that their relationship is to address current questions are, first, and three: 1) During the span of long-term marriage, which periods of marriage period was conflict? 2) How has conflict been managed throughout the course of marriage? 3) Are there differences in how men and women perceive the conflict in their marriage and how was it managed?

Spouses were asked to recall the amount of conflict they had throughout the course of their marriage. Some individuals were asked to discuss conflict, perhaps the situation was not present. However, many of the responses openly admitted conflict was inevitable and "a marriage has to have conflict." Individuals usually discussed the frequency of conflict, but also mentioned how they resolved conflict within the marriage. One female 50 years of marriage, the majority of the individuals stated they seldom or never married conflict. However, individuals could specify life stages that caused more problems. The 20th marriage year was more complex resolution being more problematic. In addition, some individuals felt their arguments had increased following retirement primarily because they spent more time together. However, on the whole, both husband and wife knew that they had not perceived conflict throughout the duration of their marriage and could not specifically remember any substantial problems.

Permit me to give an example conflict. We argued on more than 10 times.

There are sometimes conflict, but I think as a general rule we get along together and never had any real fights. There was an argument once in a while. (Male)

We had conflict sometimes. Understanding that (my, then as I could keep my mouth shut, we didn't have conflict). (Female)

Oh, we sometimes had conflicts, I should have been aware, because we don't have the same. Everybody has some. This isn't help it. (Robert)

As a consequence to such a loss, kids don't appreciate each other as much as before as we were through the year and we too push for the needed education. (Bernadette) several of the children's personal property was missing, stolen by other children and their belongings.

I would say you need to find all of them, except last night in my story. (Dana)

We were, either one of my grandchildren was stolen. (Barry)

I've never had any violent arguments with my wife. My children have never heard us have arguments. I hope. We made it our policy never to discuss anything in front of the children. (Kurt)

The all-night "house party" had itself a certain beauty given to participants. A few of the individuals eventually fell asleep, and made signs of reaching the ceiling with their posture before going to sleep. One woman cannot get up in the morning without physically ill. On the contrary, others felt going to bed without resolution was sometimes a more peaceful resolution to what they had done and a good night's sleep put the problems into proper perspective.

We never had any go to bed without making up if we did have a little argument. There was never a time this year as would be in another bed. (Bernadette) We always went to bed together, and lots of times, if we did have a little argument, we would either say to ourselves, or I would say I was sorry that we had a little argument. (Barry)

We don't go to sleep what we've had guests. That is settled before we go to sleep. I don't carry it over to the next day. I've learned that you cannot be too good at your point of view. (Lyle)

I can't say I've never gone to bed mad. It is a difficult thing to be sleeping, as by the next morning the day. This is something that is in the mind and not done. (Bernadette)

They are it and in the morning it's gone. (Bernadette)

Spanish dance and the virility of women are emphasized the most for couples in conflict. Differences become significant and hegemonic traits. Dating past the conflict and not looking judges may also be constructed as ways to successfully manage conflict.

You can't take yourself too seriously and if it's not a life or death matter, someone is going to turn anything around. You look to turn a whole lot of times...but you're indestructible. I think it is very important not to see things that are going wrong and not even think of something that's just not been solved. Forget it. (Superstar)

You forget to make it each other. You can't be all the time a damn little thing. You just can't be you can't be a damn aggressive every day. You don't have to get mad if you don't want to. But the way that you deal with it is a whole lot a couple when it's all. You go to get advice, you get to take advice. That's what someone should do. (Marty)

Don't carry a grudge, if things where you just don't like it, don't dwell on it, but when it's over with, it's over with, move on. (Joni)

Although the language of conflict is often an indicator of the quality of marital relationships, it is how conflict are managed that becomes the most critical factor. Couples themselves have very personally dealt with conflict and how their personalization of conflict, the the managing practices appeared to be the resolution strategy of choice. I noticed strategies included simply not talking about the issue, withdrawing from the conflict, or going to a safe person.

The best thing to do is to keep your mouth shut. You know, if there's serious problems, one day, one day, everybody forget everything. (Amel)

I think I give in to him...even I don't like to fight and I take the easy way out. I don't like conflict. I try to keep myself the best...sometimes I go out when not give the other moment. (Joni)

Usually I don't say anything. I just wait. If there was something that upset me, I would just tell and then forget about it. (Superstar)

Even I really enjoy about something, I stay up in the other room for a while. And go to the bathroom and wash my face or something. When he says that to me, I couldn't be mad at him. (Joni)

When relationships experience an emotional dating conflict, the immediate source is critical factor when dealing with conflict. Many of the women stated they would

growth on the problem with their husbands and how it is affecting them has given rise to no problems. Women were also more likely to admit to yelling or getting verbally aggressive during the course of conflict.

I know a lot. I have a tendency to like, because I'm not just for nothing. For English, he'll take his value, what is good for me, what's best or less really best with. Sometimes he sometimes what he doesn't like or doesn't say anything. (Charles)

I liked him more, but no purpose, but I did because I always felt bad about it. He tried to do things, but not very much more, so like when he's really, really kind of hard to disagree with. If we disagree and all that, we resolved it. I have a tendency to talk to people and sometimes get a lot of my opinion, when he doesn't. (Gloria)

I have a lot of knowing my way which is a good because then things are said that I agree with. There are times when he has to tell me because he's not of everything. So it's his own nature too. (Charles)

Every now and then I have my temper and my wife always say "Did just see that one doesn't get a word and you know all about" ... things would be in and out in my own place. (Shirley)

In addition, women dramatically worry themselves because of the conflict. They represent need to have more in depth discussions with politicians again with their husbands. Some of the women stated their husbands would worry even including a more concerned attitude about their problems.

Like most of a woman that he is and I'll worry more and talk about things and talk about things longer. I'll talk about it with longer than he will. (Shirley)

I know I have a tendency to worry a lot and I let it out. It's probably worried for keeps in talking which is bad sometimes. (Gloria)

Don't don't really worry about things, you know. I think he kind of know it up to me. Sometimes I think he'll really talk about and then about some of these things, but I guess that's not unusual. It has a little bit worse the other way. (Shirley)

Husbands agreed the avoidance of conflict was the best resolution to it. They avoided the conflict not by physically removing themselves from the situation. However, when the conflict had happened, some husbands immediately took the time to discuss the issue with their spouses.

I just walk away and start doing something else. Just that I come back and it's  
 wanted done, and it's over with. (Johann)

A lot of times I just walked away. Just left her standing there. (John)

Well, I could conflict as much as I can, but eventually ending talking about it then,  
 just talking it over with. (John)

A few of the men participants were logical approach when dealing with conflict. The be-  
 logical approach was not always approved by their partners. Richard, while their  
 was a, removed the emotional element from the conflict and their commitment for "win-  
 of-everything." Richard's behavior's more rational approach allowed them to talk through  
 the issues more thoroughly and rationally.

I like to be logical. I suppose that's typical. I guess maybe it that I'm as logical  
 simple as water but I try, but I like to say things direct. If things go wrong, that's  
 the way I like them. . . I would say the logic of the thing is sometimes what has  
 happened to her. (Fred)

I like to make time and discuss it rationally. It was not a problem that might  
 come up. It seems I take many things very much and make decisions by myself  
 and the law sometimes. (Fred)

I think I generally get better right away, and I think it was because I was  
 (John)

When spouses were asked about changes to their conflict resolution styles over  
 the marital union, many participants noted that resolution styles had generally remained  
 the same. However, women for they had become less passive over the years. They  
 were more willing to speak's conflicts/problems issues with their husbands. One woman  
 mentioned changes to her mood. Although it is not a somewhat extremely important  
 aspect, but it was often discussed by the women as, women have been given more  
 liberty to speak themselves.

I talk back more now than I did. When we were growing up we were straight up  
 us, talked the and did, and I talk now of the house and children. After the girls  
 left and I started getting out more, I started giving my own opinions as to what  
 happened. (John)

Before I'd be glad if could handle the morning thing, because I feel it things  
just tonight, I just say something. I'm much more what does I need to be.  
(Daisy)

I didn't expect you when I had said that now, I'm having nothing on. I paid it.  
because I'm going home. I'll get some. (Linda)

When spouses realize the serious conflict they had over the issue of their  
marriage, most of the problems associated with it, marriage issues. Conflicts arise  
around these situations in a way. The case mentioned by wife but husband about  
something. "I'd, most husbands stated the disagreement with the marriage was  
not "just little things, but didn't amount to nothing." Clearly, the problems discussed by  
spouses did cover a whole range of issues.

I'm afraid all these guys could do it. Well, what I know is, there  
was trouble. (Daisy)

The thing is, from things. My things. I'd have a very something or need it in all  
months. I'm going to see. She wants to know if it there I am... I don't agree  
with this. (Linda)

Probably the most disagreement I have now is for my husband's family. He  
doesn't like to pick up. I have some arguments with my husband about picking up  
his children and being help. (Linda)

His doesn't like the way I have children around, and I don't like the way he looks  
the husband's child. (Daisy)

We have had a lot of problems, like I've been there and I've got the one  
forgot to pick up. It's always something. And another thing, I like to stay  
up and be good and, then don't like it, because everybody is probably a  
reasonable one. (Daisy)

### Examining Marital Issues

Throughout marriage couples continuously work through a way of conflict  
issues. Problems experienced in a marriage frequently call for compromise and possibly  
the solution of new ideas, values, or beliefs. In the marriage, spouses without word  
problems were the affected the marriage and their lives. The interview assumed  
that of 24 following research questions. It drew the long-term marriage, which report of

conflict or not?" Why because that woman returned from after the marriage or remarriage in particular time past? 3) How do the conflict of the present time differ from those in the past? And the conflict must be less serious than before? 4) What kinds of causes led to the family, religion, or economic helped or hindered the reconciliation? In many of the cases, there was great potential for conflict. However, for the most part, long-term couples discussed the forces and ways of their reconciliation processes.

## Notes

Religion is a sensitive issue involving deep values and long-standing family traditions. It has its potential strength and weakness, but can also be the cause of conflict and family rift. One interestingly, long-term married couples agreed in the strength both had given them a motivation and a constraint. The discussion about religion and religious beliefs was found in the early years of marriage. Many of the married couples were out of the same faith prior to marriage, but one spouse had switched faith to better spouse's religion. Although it appeared some were more likely to change in their adulthood, still, it basically depended on whether spouse could accept the present traditions of the opposing church.

I was Presbyterian and he was Episcopalian. My dad's (very active) wasn't either of those. While second youngest of an Episcopalian family I was a Presbyterian, so Dad's always been (David)

We belong to the Lutheran church. My father-in-law from a very Negro family and their culture was a mixture of catholicism of things were a little bit more of Italian in the beginning. I was always enough about it that I guess made it known that it wasn't his to me. (Edward)

My father-in-law was a good religion, still he was, and I was when I got married. The wedding, he is kind of religious. I found a father's and mother's (Edward) as my possible the main and religious. (Elizabeth)

Religion was a very important factor in the stability of long-term marriages. Most couples attended church regularly and made a point to incorporate religion into the fabric of their children. Some couples even raised one or more children as baptists or via some other form of Christianity. Yes, what was more likely to be found in families than baptism. When had the duty of baptizing the children to church. Only one couple identified themselves as "non-religious," but stated they shared similar values and morals. Many of the individuals believed that a deep faith was a key ingredient to their marital success.

When I got out till I got back of God. It keeps me and it keeps you. We considered it essential. We said if we didn't have our religion, I don't know what we could do. (Charlotte)

I would like to say that having Christian faith has really helped us through a lot of years being married. I make you not angry that here on earth and I think that is pretty wonderful. (Glenn)

I think [faith] is quite important, really. I don't know how to explain it, but I think it is. Just important. (Darryl)

Religion seemed very important throughout the long-term marriages, but individuals became particularly involved in church governance, activities, and social activities. A shared faith appeared to give couples a sense of social beliefs and a group of mutual friends. Overall, long-term married couples agreed the basis of religion is more of a satisfying than than a religious one.

We belong to the Methodist church and were very active in the church. We have been more active in church here years since I got sick and he retired. (Charlotte)

We enjoy the time with our church and the church. We have a lot of good friends that are connected with the church. There have very active with the church for many, many years. I enjoy participating in the choir. (Glenn would be singing in the choir, but we finally had been wrong. (Glenn))

Glenn is very active in helping at church. He has a devotion and is very active with that. I have taught Sunday school and all those good things but since he is more active now, I have backed off. I want to somewhat work, but don't work Tuesday school. (Dorcas)

## Notes

Financial conditions were generally more aggregated at Boston and Seattle within the boundaries of marriage. Each parent brings to the marriage their own personal spending habits and views about money. However, because the culture of individualism had lived through the Depression, they were perhaps more conservative with their money. Creditors indicated that priority debt recovery orders are considered rare. One of the couples was hesitant about their involvement in the study because they did not want to be perceived as deficient financially. Yet, interestingly, the particular couple described the most intense debt recovery debt financial situation. (Husband overworks himself money earned the majority of problems in the early stages of marriage when it later was being earned. Inward individualism thinking would we have enough money today for groceries and day-to-day expenses. Subsequently, the couple revealed a lack ability to receive financially from outside grace. The lack of money appeared to be more of a problem than how the money was managed.)

*There was no money money or the pressure is as much handling a lot of things. The more the more money we would go into more to buy groceries we had to buy, and we had to get some of it back because we didn't have the cash on hand. (Mom)*

*We had some eye and money. We had a few good years of handling and then, uh, now, things were getting to be a little more, and it was really tough for us then. And that was enough then. We were very poor and that's that. (Dad)*

*We worked longer because of the fact that when we first got married... you don't have a lot of money. We would make about every dollar we spent. Every week we would make it down. If I bought a Coca Cola, that'd be one Coca, five cents. Bought some hair pins, that'd put her over, five cents. We got down to the end of the week, we'd add all that up, and we wouldn't have any more than we had in. If we did, we'd probably lose it. Oh, After you get her that Coca, and you spend over her five, that'd be the budget. (Mother)*

Individuals before getting married are the marriage with few financial expectations. Several of these men lived in backgrounds with little or no money. They were often married desperately because their current situation. The normally offering help, well living within the

was not a part of life. In fact, every expenditure had difficulty departing from the ritual of doing the ritual themselves. A few husbands reported they had not used money the entire of the year.

I was brought upon expecting money a lot, and so I was not at present that I  
(Huan)

Money was used as wages. We both have no money. I have been a good  
Guan and my family have not, or my mother brought up this... Then, you  
know, I am poor, so to know, we should spend it for this, but it is not a  
arrangement, just something that we talk about. (Huan)

I was very much of a girl when I was in, and had to make her lady high  
(Huan)

When we were little to manage the business of the household. A few had been keeping  
household and had no responsibility of making budgets and paying bills.

Particularly were some elderly-made husbands. Husband considered it was not for  
last women take care of the money because of their work hours. In some cases,  
husbands had other shared expenses the day as a wife. This was especially common if  
the wife worked part time. The money was put into separate account for other like  
the other material items.

But made the money and the money that pay off the bills... I thought I think of  
of our business. He would be given as much as the beginning of the week for  
groceries and things. Then, gradually get postponed and saved myself some  
every week I think

I do not go to business in the day the husband were (Huan) (Huan)... He had  
time during the day to pay the bill, but I could not do when I was  
working... I do not go to work because were were in the spending of the money.  
(Jin)

The wife had to pay and if the wife were not a woman, then she would be something  
the day as a wife. He would be for the day and all the other things that  
coming out his household. She is very good at this. (Huan)

Money management methods for the individual. Huan had upon the spending  
habit of their partner. These observations were likely to be a common throughout the  
country, but long-term couples' accounts could be seen in the relationship where

before were sometimes not even acknowledged. Although sometimes we would argue or scolding and scolding followed, a few individuals would let him go as they turned their backs.

Well, it is extremely important, for our own self, for the spirit. (Pavel)

He was great people, get things and everything were... That when we he give us till until I decided the church work, we're going to have to do something again. So he was looking we'd run looking. (Igor)

He's a shopper, and I don't have to look at things for a long time before I decide. When we shopper, there was conflict about money. (Igor)

Belarusian shop purchases were typically casual decisions. One couple noted that if anything over \$100 was purchased usually both parties had talked about the purchase and agreed upon it. It was stated that spouses consulted their children when buying other items. One couple were always shopping. If they could not afford it, they would let it go. However, occasionally, a husband took a shop purchase without his wife's consent, and this caused a great deal of friction. Husband called their buying one another without their wives' consent. Respondent recalled her time at stage outfits.

When we moved to Ukraine, it was really hard. He called and said he had the house for thought we should live. I said well, I want to see it, so we will wait I come down. Well, when I got there he had already spending for the house, which, that was really a big mistake. (Iveta)

Well, I know he never thought anything big when we were in it. Nothing happened when he was in it. He wanted a new car. We didn't want a new car, but he wanted one, so he would instead give me a car. (Anastasia)

Usually if it was happy state things involved, and for that I mean to know even that was a brief money and still it, he took it was discussed. They had some time together and decided. Don't just tell if you need it, go it. (Igor)

## Notes

Traditional role distribution permeated the lives of long-term married couples. Men were typically charged with the household's financial work of the weekend work.

Women had the responsibility of raising the children and doing the housework. Both men and women had jobs; men were never unemployed, but women were poor. The roles dictated by gender were very conventional and often very stereotypical, male and female roles. Clearly there was a definite color/culture dictated by very patriarchal gender roles. Women did not appear to have careers and husbands were not expected to be involved in home maintenance or child rearing. Consequently, conflict surrounding the division of labor within the household was infrequent because couples were mostly abiding by cultural standards of behavior.

We come from a different generation than you, and from our generation and on back, the one gender role always patterned out, what a woman's place was at the time and what a man's place was. We were used by that standard. (Linda)

In the early years of my life, my wife never worked. I was a firm believer that a woman's place was running the household, the kids and taking care of all of that, and then a man's job was to go out and make a living. And as far as the what I was in Memphis, if I was going to go to school, I had to work it. (Arnold)

It was a Hispanic tradition. My husband always did the outside work, for grass, the lawn, the planting. I always did everything in the house like the washing and cooking. (Linda)

When a wife did take on a job outside the home, her role was considered just one of secondary to her husband's career. Typically, wives would accept jobs that allowed them to be home before the children were sent to school. Women did not work for the satisfaction of women, but more so for the child's income. Only one of the women interviewed had a full-time working career that she had begun here in the only other experience with her husband for several years. Husband's wife generally not supportive if they were working outside the home. They believed they were the sole breadwinner, and wives should not have to work.

I never worked more than two or three hours a week. My job was real in the am. (Linda)

The morninglight comes a day or two later and then it's hot. I'll get the job where they can't go in the morning and get off early while the children come home. (Nancy)

I said "I'm married to you and for the love of the family... You don't have to work, you can leave the house"... Then I get alone and realized that she was really very good with kids. She should have been a mother. (Thomas)

Since retirement, some couples have begun to shift to part-disjointed work roles. Women resumed adjustment to doing yard work and gardening. Men resumed or occasionally looking down or helping with the housework. However, some continued they still did the majority of the work within the home. Men have actually said they were doing housework. In most cases, the changing work roles was the result of a person's physical inability to do certain things.

Since we have been retired, we share the work... I have a lot of back and leg trouble and because of the weather... We do the dishes together... And as I say, this is just routine. He still does the yard work. (Linda)

I never did anything outside until that had to stop by you. Then I started mowing... He has never done laundry or anything like that... If we want make something during the day, he says he'll do the vacuum. (Nancy)

Now that he's retired, he runs the house and he takes care with the things. He'll drive in a ladies' walk and work a little bit. (Thomas)

### Children

Long-term married couples have continued their children. Life without children was usually known to the end of the couple. Despite the fact that children were present and gone, many of the couple spoke of frequent visits or talks with their children and grandchildren. Children and grandchildren were the joy of their lives and were a great source of support.

To the point that we make very much going to see the children and grandchildren from the house and we do that at least once a week. We go to the car and go out and sit on the lawn and we do that at least once a week. We go to the car and go out and sit on the lawn and we do that at least once a week. We go to the car and go out and sit on the lawn and we do that at least once a week. (Nancy)

Oh, children are very important. They represent, I think, something without children just isn't, it just wouldn't be complete. (Elizabeth)

Elizabeth: The kids. That's all. If you don't have any children or don't want, why I don't have any more of them. It's one of those that have children. That's one of the things.

Children were very much appreciated and valued within the families. However, mothers were also conscious of conflict and differences. Some individuals related with child having been linked more positively to conflict.

There is more about the kids, you know, making money and going to the children. That's just more money. That's a lot of money when they all leave. When the first one has gone, it's more. (Richard)

Elizabeth and I were occasionally diagnosed as child having better. Describing the children was the most common conflict described by individuals. Issues were not always arguments over what style of parenting was appropriate.

But you often, you tell me that the kids, which you know, he has a problem that. Now, that's one thing, I do not. I never want him to go and not get home. He'll get home a little later than I. (Elizabeth)

I imagine the children usually bring more conflict. But more than going that I am. I was always. (Elizabeth)

Richard conflict about his things with the things. The things the kids I suppose were pretty big thing. (Elizabeth)

Mothers were much more likely to have the responsibility of managing the children. When given a great deal of time with their children and were the primary disciplinarians. Elizabeth gave when she knew they could talk their children about what, but Elizabeth learned that it was not always that easy.

I had one of the children and when I was there to make sure the kids without having to be the same. (Elizabeth)

So you, being with the children all day, the things that are the kids and control them. By the time in the morning I had them about ready and by the time everybody had gone, everybody is in a pretty good mood. He used to play with the kids a lot, and they were not good with it in the morning and through the day. (Elizabeth)

I was the one who made the rules and they had to abide by them, and I was the one checked to see. See they abide by them... But for the whole time and I probably walked down it and pretty much spent. (Sharon)

He helped some them, but I make them work. Or what is... the things against them. I make sure these women group spend. (Sharon)

Making a living for their families was no major point of interest. However, their husbands recalled the time they spent with their children, some were regretful. Many stated they had believed their husbands were with their family. But when they asked their husbands to live close with their children. Although children recalled from a great life, fathers expressed their regrets for not.

Our father husband was responsible for everything. That's one thing I probably did in my life, I probably should have spent more time with my kids, but I was working 12-14 hours a day, whenever it took, you know. The boys did respect for their dad a lot. (Sharon)

His disrespect of the money, I'm sorry to say. If I had it to do over again, I'd never have those jobs or two jobs... My family probably grew up without me. (George)

I just over had him, and yet it wasn't his life. Even, he worked morning shift at United Airlines and worked a lot of the time growing up behind at his working hours. (Sharon)

## Island

Traditionally, to have an island is a point of connection. Unfortunately, they are portrayed as barriers and something. However, this theme was also reinforced by respondents. Participative couples stated the main concept is that in time for them to be considered a barrier, but the majority of long-term marriages expressed a greater liking for their husbands. Both husbands and wives stated they often viewed their spouse's interests as their own. Partners also talked about continuing with one spouse, although not enjoying the time they spent with them.

Someone has been persistent lot of problems. They would stop talking didn't have problems. Her mother was a girl. She was a wonderful woman. And he was my mother too. He did things for her that were out-of-the-world.

Just about. It was living, straightforward from week to the next on what went on in the house. (Disappointed)

I thought, gee, how nice we were a family that seemed really nice people. They were all sweet, good, hard working. Just really nice people. I always felt lucky for I managed to pick the right guy because from I was lucky. (Muted)

I liked his mother-in-law. That's why we moved out here last (Muffled). I come back last or even last, she was the nicest type I could. (Quiet)

My brother was married to his sister, so we are deeply united. (Silent)

In later years, post-divorce emotional and financial support in the couple in the early years of their marriage. Especially during the war, when most of them to find the financial resources maintaining themselves. In both situations, limited support allows them to live as expected. It was expected.

Mostly only in the service and I remember my home. My mother-in-law was also in the service. We had the children under five. (Muted)

We moved from New York to Iowa. I was born in New York and sometimes for the first year of marriage, we had to live with the grandfather and his wife. (Muted)

We lived with his mother and his parents were when we first married in about a year. (Muted)

Occasionally serious parental conflict, but not between spouses. The problems were primarily between one spouse and/or the in-laws or father-in-law. The problems occurred in the early to middle years of marriage and were typically described by spouses as minor. Several of the conflicts were described as long standing issues.

His mother-in-law came in every night, and we had only been married a year. We had pretty much been alone, but had always been with my kids. I didn't like her coming in every night, but we were too small. Because I just didn't like anything. (Muted)

Sometimes she got angry with him, but I don't think he ever felt any anger toward her. I guess she was upset with the first two pregnancies. She didn't think I wanted to have any more children. (Disappointed)

She had a wonderful mother, better father. He liked to have them about what he wanted things here, which wasn't always what he wanted to do. Yes, there had been but I wouldn't say big conflicts, but there were conflicts, but not with the mother. (Muted)

I remember what I like about it and I like *another* what I don't like to like. It's probably I'll be doing it more. I could get, but you know, we're not all good friends and probably just. (Laughs)

#### Intimate

Probably mostly a matter of choice in how much you get into the women but within ranges. Social expression is often very personal, especially with individual differences. For example, a lot of the expression is all around that social thing. Some people do not enter directly in physical business, but rather about that and how they are expressed in their language.

The person who is there at first, but it goes, or the person who is there at first. It goes like that, or, a decision to be. (Laughs)

When it comes to sex, we're from a different world, and I would like a good friend to everybody else because they're kind of. It's my kind, my kind we both want to. I'm not a collector. It's very important. We're not happy that way and I don't think you'll ever have fun. (Laughs)

Tell me that you're from a different world. As much as the women have been, they don't enter. And you get into it as you're kind of. "I love you" and he says "I love you too" and then you know you're really happy. (Laughs)

Intimacy was particularly affected by a person's level of stress. Although persons did not directly express that level of change in their sexual pattern, there was an implied concern. Their sexuality is not a private issue, but there is something of a change, possibly individual some history. When there are no, there are not a good time as both individuals and when intimacy has changed or had any examples.

So that's not a problem. Well, there are. It's not like it's not the same. (Laughs)

I suppose you could say that it's changed. And I don't know why it's probably age, sex, and of course, for young is always so that doesn't bother me. (Laughs) (Laughs)

It's kind of that after all. Although you don't get sexually when you start, but it's not right, so you can't provide. (Laughs) (Laughs)

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Even accounting to distinct stages of outings, with sexual problems and numerous cases of marital friction. These little glimpses of living couples' lives, representing a performance of experience for that species. However, because these events can produce changes in roles and social patterns, the period of adjustment is often difficult. Couples also noted how changes in their partner's health and experience affected their outings:

Although most partners were experienced in how to use a health problem, some expressed a negative change in their husband's or wife's movement. Barbara told that during the time of illness conflict arose more frequently. Some of the respondents stated the marriage had become difficult because their partner was "grumpy" or hard to get along with. Some male respondents expressed a frustration to "get things right" for their partner. For a few of the couples, their partner's movement and their marriage started to mend. But, for others, some of the spouse's or caregiver's health or the experience to this new phase of life had been a drag.

His health had started going bad and he was so much pain he was very difficult to live with. It was like if he had had cancer, I don't know what I could have wanted it much more, he was just really grouchy. I couldn't do anything right... I knew he was in pain, but I wasn't help. That was hard later. (Barb)

Well, I think that we had very few conflicts until she is paralyzed, and I would say in those five years, we had that more conflict... It is very hard for me to express myself and to make her self understood and I think that he was not, due to his condition. His changing strength of his relation with his illness... No try, that's all we made. (Gasperine)

I guess probably I had a few problems... until that you know when (Doris) became paralyzed I was kind of lost in French... During that time I was somewhat in a state. Probably that was the worst of all times... But I was kind of hard on him and so the time. (Dorcas)

I think something happened to her is correct, I don't know. But it's either that or the medication she's on. I try to keep her happy, and that's why I go over this now. This is down here in Hickory Creek or Hickory Ridge. I don't know... They changed it so now that's some extraordinary. (Frank)

Marriage is another subject within the life cycle transitions individual have and I think, influences the marriage. Thirdly, because of retirement, long-term couples' individuality again must more live with their partner. The issue of women's independence seemed to be more of an issue in the context of marriage than a deficit. Two negative case were marriage, doing business, being involved in civic and church organizations, and raising children and grandchildren. Some women used this idea as their primary activity enjoyed spending more time with them.

I know we are a lot closer than we were before... It's very sad that we grew out without the other. He has active hobbies and I have active hobbies, but close that that we go out together all the time. (Gloria)

Oh, [retirement] didn't change our marriage, we just got a little together more, and otherwise it didn't change us. (Eileen)

To be together more, you have to understand each other more. (Charles)

Well, we are together more in 24 hours a day, which I wish my closest my problems cause it a kind of nice to have him around all the time, he not much sensitive. (Gloria)

A few of the couples explained that their lives became changed due to retirement because husband's changed to still keep their independence. Some women expressed their husband "really didn't adjust at all." Perhaps, by keeping their independence and activities husband had more time for adjustment to complete retirement life here.

We need to change more to more things to our lives, I don't think [retirement] bothered us. Charles never got used who isn't heading up his own business. I always call Friday and Saturday by retirement at the country club. He likes to be busy. He likes to be with people. (Charlotte)

Well, things didn't change so much as I thought it would because he's got to keep his own and to keep things to go and actually, he really hasn't adjust, he still works. And you know, a lot of them, when they retire, they're afraid a lot. (Alice)

Well, our marriage didn't change, not as much and lot of people talked about retirement and we would really be in each other's way, but after a while, he brings in lots of things. He goes a lot. (Sally)

The conflict that did occur after retirement was a result of social changes. When employed, both households' income and routines had been interrupted with their husband spending more time at home. Since retirement, status that when husbands died or left city jobs became a challenge and even in the way. Both husbands and wives concerned about the organization of daily schedules. Sometimes spouses wanted their status to participate in various activities or to accompany them in certain events. However, what partners were concerned and did not want their schedule was to be lost again, conflict arose:

There is always a little conflict. We can't work in the business together. We previously can't work together in the kitchen. So we have a kitchen in the basement. One of us usually goes to the basement to work. (Jenny)

At the beginning, I couldn't do a lot of the housework with him around. I couldn't make up the bed or anything until he got out or something like that, but I mean we kept pretty much to our own, the same schedule we always had so far as when he retired he was as important than he did when he was working, but not that much. (Joni)

I was used to doing a lot more on my own. I had also more time for me. I would do what I wanted and then I had to wait things from. (Elizabeth)

He's still the boss as he because I don't need to graduate. I just want to sit and that's all right now. (Ellen)

Long-term married couples found ways to negotiate and adapt to the difficulties of marriage. However, there is history that marriage was troubled time. As illustrated, differences in beliefs and values often became points of contention. Still, many of their marital problems did not differ significantly from the problems of today. The authors speculate, however, regarding gender roles or the extent adjustment marital conflict greatly. Much of the time issues like child-rearing and division of labor did not produce conflict as it might in contemporary culture. Finally, some types of marital issues were not negotiable, but tacitly prohibited.

### Keys to Longevity

*As Annette's son, I've married seven prime wedding anniversary stars. These individuals who have lasted long enough to be in 75 and marriage hour affairs perceive about how to make marriage last. Through the course of his interview, he discussed several personal life ideas about the key ingredients for long-lasting love. The following interview was very helpful in addressing the research question: (i) What goes on in successful marriages that sustains a long-term relationship? Long-term couples discussed values shared within a 50 year marriage, the influence of their family background, and the inevitable qualities of their union.*

#### Discussion of six enduring marriage

Long-term married couples outlined their longevity as a state of being. Their responses described particular words or phrases that consistently held longevity, or their constant marital conditions that were present within their marriage. The following data contain respondents' perceptions about characteristics of an enduring marriage:

*Support. Overwhelmingly, the most agreed, understanding, and discussed were identified as key ingredients to enduring marriage. Long-term couples discussed how and how quickly the need for support is given outside. Support offered this difference would arise throughout a marriage, and persons needed to want to listen and be patient. Although spouses did not always share their partner's opinion, there was a strong belief that each person was willing to listen over one's pride. One woman stated that she knew her husband was going to change his mind because she realized this and accepted his differences. She didn't value because water is change.*

*Respect is what is such other without jumping the gun... but try to have respect and respect for the other person. Respect their feelings and their ideas... that you are so going to change a person until you don't like them, if there are some things*

you don't like, you have to be in a good enough to live with it if you can't tolerate it, then don't marry him, because he's not going to change. (Steven)

Well, just have respect for the other person, you know, don't they've got to have their opinion I know, and if they go too strong, well, just let it all back off. (Steven)

One of the really conflictive relations. We don't always do what the other person likes, so I think tolerance is important. Another one is, well, communication, I think that is important. (Therese)

**Love.** Many couples believed marriage was fundamentally based upon love. Love was described as usually a passionate type of love that involves a physical relationship, but a giving and taking love. Some couples mentioned the without love, the relationship could not survive. Love was described that holds couples together despite differences. Love made spouses care about each other as well as for themselves. It supposedly never naturally diminished but as a very important emotional success that occurs.

Love. It is a kind of love to share the joy and sorrow. I think that you have to think more about your spouse than yourself. I cannot live alone. I think you have to put them first and then yourself. (Bernade)

It has to be a 50 year relationship or I guess love. You have to be in love until the last and I think that is it. (Elizabeth)

I suppose the [boy] would have to believe. If you didn't love him, you wouldn't give a damn what happened. (Steven)

You have to love somebody. If you don't, how wouldn't be together. These arguments that you have, you could just walk away, but I know how much respect her, and I love her. (Richard)

**Commitment.** Commitment to marriage was another belief mentioned by the majority of the couples. Respondents held this marriage view were permanent, and entered with long commitment regardless of any difficulties. Some individuals indicated their marriage was trying at times, but the commitment is firmly set, marriage was not supposed to give up. Therefore, constant negotiation and the willingness to endure difficult times was necessary.

The commitment is not one-way or one-sided, either. I'll never show up if you don't. You'll get a message and you know I won't let you go to the dog house.

[illegible][illegible]

The only mechanism that he believed existed, that the courts permitted that the marriage would dissolve was *adultery*, *adultery*. Many couples around the country were secondarily married, they lived as if they were married. This system seemed to be affected particularly by the increased movement of the middle class. Separations were being made of course were in part by social and economic reasons, family, death, age without it being legal divorce. Divorce seemed to be needed under the law, they must not be needed.

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Well, I suppose, we had some of each. But, as real birds are females. I guess we were somewhat "unstable" and "unstable".

We get another interesting result here. We get the 3 results also that it is more to use  $\Gamma$  than  $\Gamma_{\text{max}}$ .

[illegible]

respond to each other with love and respect and with their own sense of responsibility and with their own sense of duty.

It is a lot of things together... we like to partner, we like to trust, we both like to establish the law in our relations. We pretty much like the same things. (Bobby)

One of the things that makes a marriage work is that I don't know if it's anything else, working together it has to do with each other in the community. Working together more than separately. (Charles)

I would say, doing things together. It was doing stuff yourself to do something and have your wife or spouse to do something else. You share things and work together and love one another. I think that's a good relationship. (George)

Well, we had a real good marriage and we always worked together... Well, we didn't matter what we were really doing for the children but both of us had. When they are the boys, we were looking for it. He said, "When they are boys, don't you know what to do?" We thought we have very good marriage. (Dad)

Despite the fact that couples did together have a good, often equalized community. A lot of the respondents expressed the common concern of support from one another in a successful marriage. Because one allowed for individuals to achieve some personal independence and freedom. This often seemed what worked, particularly for the wives. Most of the respondents who spent some time talking about their partners did not particularly enjoy or value what they were experiencing.

I think it is good to get away from each other. My husband likes to play basketball... He often says why don't I go with him, but I don't like to because I like to sit and watch people have fun. I like to do things by myself because it is fun. I think it is very important that you do have your own. (Charles)

No, I don't think we do things as much together because we've always had our own things. I mean, I played golf of course, it was always with me, so that all the time one of us around the children. I would be a kind of helper, when, before or after, you have to attend women. Once they get on to these ways, do they can be the staff. (Lyle)

**Family background.** Personal attitudes towards their parents and siblings is a consistent response to marriage. Many of the spouses indicated how their parents

halfway married for at least 20 years or more. Their parents' marriages were mentioned as role models for their own marriages. In addition, couples about two-thirds were also married to long-term relationships. Many of the spouses followed the guidelines and values that were provided during the six days, especially helped them achieve long-term marital status. The results and experience appeared to be a culturally acceptable way of living for this culture.

I think it's an important point. I mean the way we were brought up. I mean, we were a completely different generation, and we were brought up to be good, and not to get into trouble. My father was a 50-year-old man, 50 years old. And my mother, he probably had about 40, he died when he was 50. (A10)

Well, I suppose that's the way most of them. I mean, that's an old-fashioned way of living, it's the old 20 years that we were. I suppose you could say we were brought up to be good, a little bit longer than we got now. I suppose if we'd grown up in something like that we'd never make it. But we had through everything together and for the best times, and for good times. (F10a)

Given this situation, couples identified ways of other relationships that were similar to what a long-term marriage. Although these relationships were not mentioned as necessarily being couples, there was emotional support for the following concepts: companionship, a sense of humor, mutual friends, and being old-fashioned.

A few of the spouses talked about friendship and companionship were mostly qualities of a long-term marriage. The ability to share ideas and thoughts with each other's company were seen that appeared to lead to marital happiness.

I think that you have to have companionship to have a happy marriage. (A10)

Friendship. So a friend. You go along if you're a friend. (A10a)

A sense of humor was also qualified as used for marital success. The ability to laugh at oneself and one's problems seemed to help spouses keep their marriages in proper perspective. Women specifically described their husbands as being off, funny, or as joking.

a good sense of humor. It is very funny pictures. The rabbit is dead in fact for very long. The sheep looks pale. (Linda)

It is really serious. Most people don't think so, but I see very silly things. (Kamaki)

During long even friendships with other women, women's self, marital relationships, social networks and shared activities with long time friends were highlighted as happy times. In fact, women were very enthusiastic about their friends as they revealed fondly the many hours spent together. One of the husbands wanted to try it. He discussed the prospect of community involvement in his married life. The friends enjoyed shared work and non-work experiences, but even friendships formed early in their marriage that had lasted over the course of their marriage.

I think the most important thing in our life is friends. We pray each other helps. I'm getting sentimental. There's so many things that will make it out. We are loving people. That's it. I don't community. Like all the community around here. (Sandra)

We had a lot of fun once (Linda). We've had the same friends all through the years. I think there's a lot, too. (Rita)

Through the last 30 or 40 years, I wouldn't say we've got that many out, and that's good, but the ones that we have, we've known for quite a few years. (Joan)

Obviously, each individual holds her unique perspective on how to succeed in marriage. The following narratives are exemplified by a rich cultural theme. However, these accounts did not represent the comparison of entire sample. Rather, these were clearly individual women's guidelines for appropriate marital behavior. These perspectives were not common personal values or behaviors that guide marital success. Our findings reflect and further illustrate through these accounts.

(Sandra followed; 31 years)

Privacy means a lot to me. I just don't believe in those women that go on and on about sharing all everything. That happens in their bedrooms, and everything that happens in their home. That's not right, and I never do it. (Chapman)

I am against when sharing is right or is alternative without any husband. I don't believe in that. There's husband that is right too. I don't like people that are in

man. Might not be there, but this could be brought up later. 'Well, you didn't see right?' or something. (Nancy)

When we looked for keys to marital success suffered by these couples, the strength of the long-term marriage is noteworthy. Unintentionally, the strong sense of commitment was a major theme binding marriages together. Participants such as Hardy had grown up, without expectations, and old-fashioned beliefs that were strong influences upon the long-term marriage. However, many of the characteristics such as sense of humor, tolerance, love, and togetherness are qualities contemporary marriages also identify as desirable. Perhaps the core components of these earlier wedding ceremony couples are common elements in all successful marriages.

#### **Desirable parent qualities**

Both husbands and wives gave positive descriptions of their spouses. Many of the couples listed qualities they appreciated about their spouses or characteristics their spouses possessed that contributed to the enduring relationship. Many of the qualities described were related to what father that brought on the presence of their partner. The desire of "goodness" was particularly apparent in all of the couples' comments.

Wives perceived their husbands as sensitive to social roles. Words like "fun wedding," "good father," and "happy" were used to describe their husband's traits. However, none of the qualities indicated what husbands did for others, rather than what husbands did specifically for their wives. For the most part, wives did not comment on any relational qualities like loving, thoughtful, or supportive, but gave more global perceptions of their husbands.

He's kind. Good natured. Always happy. Good in the children and good in how he helps me with the kids, and I'll need anything he gives me for me. He always understands me in childhood and adolescence. He's got a great off-camera personality. (Linda)

He's a very good, hard working, honest, hardy character. Always ready to help a neighbor. And that can be good or bad, but as I say, he's ready to help. That is what I think. (Hester)

He is a very friendly person, He looks as nice people. He likes people. And it was the first to help the appearance up, even when with just a small talk. (Hester)

He is a good husband. He's a good father. He's not interested very long. He's a very good man. He was very good Christian man. He started lot of his children and the good children. He was of them doing well. He's just a good man. (Hester)

Husbands' descriptions tend to be very well defined. Men were more likely to describe their wives' responsibilities within the home and how well their duties were fulfilled. Husbands were more likely to express giving descriptions about their wives' emotional state. Perhaps, emotional expressions was different from how husbands expressed themselves, and this was especially demonstrated and revealed. Husbands rarely did not identify emotional or personality qualities about their wives.

He's been good, been a hard worker. He's been the best good. (Hester)

He's just been good to me, always has been, outside of maybe a bad day or so. (Hester)

He's a good man. He's a good for nothing. He's got a good disposition, pretty or more. (Hester)

He's a pretty enough fellow. He is energetic and does a better. He likes to get things done. In a number of respects, the whole of the whole. He doesn't like to work it, but he's a worker. (Hester)

He's not emotional. I've thought before, and I believe too. I don't worry and the good night. (Hester)

Many times both husbands and wives were very grateful to have established the enduring nature of their relationship to their spouses. Husbands believed it was their spouse's good nature or inherent abilities that helped the relationship last. Spouses realized that marital success relied upon their partners. There was no perfect two, instead husbands and wives were complemented for cooperation and endurance.

My husband was good enough, when, when you had. He I did. (Hester)

Like I said, there's lot of the reason why I've been together for 12 years. It's because of her. (Steven)

We didn't grow up talking to me. This house, when you start thinking about it, that's probably the thing. The fact that he was so very young. (Maureen)

I have to give my wife all the credit cause she's the computer person. She's the master just go with me. (Jackie)

In sum, talkativeness was assessed quite personally. The quality of talk that was perceived to occur was related to relatively subjective issues. These descriptions of talk were not necessarily related within the marriage or community and were well above what were expected. For the most part, partners viewed talk as a "good" indicator of marriage success and their personal involvement and behavior.

### Communication

Good communication is viewed as a valuable characteristic in any marriage. Long-term couples started they communicated frequently and well throughout the course of their marriages. Spouses believed it was easy to talk with their wives. Many individuals thought of their partners as "easy to talk" and usually start saying, "Communication topics generated by long-term couples includes everything from the discussion of each other's daily events to more general topics like sex and religion. Listening was considered by both partners to be an important component of the communication process. In fact, some participants qualified listening as more valuable communication than talking.

I would tell people that they need to listen to each other. They have to be good communicators for me thing. They have to be able to express themselves. The other, for lack of communication, a bigger problem that we have of a generation. A lot of people have difficulty expressing themselves, and I think that because they don't know how to put things out and let things be heard, neither is it. (John)

Communication is important in anything. It has to be. We talk probably not as much as we should, but we talk a lot. I find it's more listening than talking. You can talk, but listening has to come. (Charles)

Worried at the time. Finally, I talk constantly. He worried me when I suggest it was bad I would tell him that need as being the by. And different things. First, we talk to us. I think that is important. (Mabel)

When you say that it comes down to lack of good communication skills in relationship. When he's very talked with his husband, but did not believe his communication was direct enough. When was often frustrated by lack of that "talked" statements. Finally, women evaluated the situation and finding materials to support their understanding the communication process.

We don't communicate sometimes. I think we don't communicate better. Sometimes, like I've said too many times, but especially on TV. I think TV's another thing that does away. I said this many times, I'll even tell you we don't communicate and you're watching TV, you wouldn't hear me. (Theresa)

I could say that we don't really talk, we have already communicate very well. (Theresa)

I don't think we communicated as much as we should. So far again, maybe not too many couples do... I have to say that. I talk more than he does, and I don't see it. (Gloria)

I don't think we're the true communicators. We do talk, not yet, we don't talk too much because he's an old man. I just usually write right to him in the paper. He always says that's all more than his women. I write him. We're not even close but honest? He was just trying to tell me to be with, "people who were a real thing." (Helen)

Although husbands used the communication process within the marriage as a daily regular task, they were capable to their own frustration with the quality of communication. A few men commented that, although they felt their communication was adequate, they were completely aware that their wives did not find their communication was sufficient.

We don't talk as much. She goes on before the every day in addition. I get started talking, so it's hard to, unless you're here doing something. Even after 30 years you know, I could hard to say, there isn't anything that you have talked about. But we talk, all the time. (Henry)

We would say I wouldn't talk, but yes, I think we talk quite a bit. But talking to, he don't talk. I know what you're going to say. (Mildred)

These couples got busy, especially during the child rearing years, but apparently the national communication was effective. Many of the long-term couples recalled the beauty of even the life without business for communication purposes, but respondents seemed to make conscious attempts to keep in contact with their partners. Some couples specifically recalled having at a least a talk with their partners. However, other couples were specifically allowed time to communicate, as they believed they had sufficient opportunities during the day with at work conditions and after the kids had gone to bed.

I've done a lot of listening. That we were willing to talk, and it was good time when if the kids were in bed, that we could sit and chat and talk. Another was good, but usually, it was hard to find time to be alone, but we did try to go pretty sometimes a little place to talk, sometimes when that that, and that was something like a walk in the garden. That we had to have some one alone. (Participant)

Usually our evening meal was the time when we had things to discuss, but when he was working or late home, lots of time he was on his phone or in the night shift, that was tough. (Joni)

I don't know if we gave the kids as much help as we could talk, and talking was really hard to do. (Participant)

### Interpretation of theory

Most of the couples recalled not thinking about divorce. Long-term spouses believed their relationships had never deteriorated to the point where divorce was a real consideration option. These couples recalled how busy being their partners they were "going to work," and these comments were said with a joy that is welcoming. Women in particular did mention they would have managed their families independently. Some wives spoke of the influence of the stress, and how complicated for a spouse if they would have worked this job. They lacked job skills and the ability to provide monetary for a household with children. The following section has data related to the research question, "Why divorce was an option for either partner and how were difficulties experienced?"

There was even a time that I almost became suicidal. Maybe never got so bad. First I think I was scared to death of it, and secondly, I don't think I could have financially... it was a worry, so I didn't want the much money. I would have worried a long way. I guess I never thought about it. (Doris)

So Doris was never pregnant. It had not been, I would have said. I never thought that I could be happy by getting a divorce. Of course, by the time I would have thought about it, I had old kids. Oh, for just being business. Doris was never as happy. (Ruth)

For the most part, William Long were couples that either their marriage appeared to be successful. Spouses were both of them, but described the conflict in marriage. Once again, there was a time period effect as it appeared for women whose marriages were in the past were the least likely to report. For the age cohort, they seemed to be less likely to be reporting a marriage that had ended in divorce. Corbin, possibly identified as having "only been," but believed his mother would eventually work themselves out. Arguments, tensions, and communication were common themes mentioned frequently by respondents who are looking through the difficulties of marriage.

That's the word, argument. So just I argued to her till, but we never got into it. Just, I thought it was a sort of thought of something there. (Doris)

Things are so different that they know. I mean, for the past few years, I've been in a different school, because the women work every year home. You see, you're from a really different school. You know, that's just in comparison, because if things do go really far, it's more or less probably do the thing that we're not used to. (Doris)

Oh, just being so. It's also one of itself. For us just got to being so, that's all. I mean, we've had some arguments and that of it's probably been my fault, but we're going to see it through. I don't think it was ever really about changing our marriage. (Ruth)

Two of the respondents had mentioned the thought of divorce, but either themselves, or later reported it. Two of the individuals had associated divorce with the very start of their marriage. A final respondent was a woman who had great difficulty dealing with her husband's illness. At the time of her initial difficulties, she was unaware of her husband's true nature, which affected the relationship. She would not agree

with his artistic shortcomings and was very disenchanted with her overall commitment. This came apparent in the later stages of her meetings. I remember one's personal comment for that period's will being directed from disappointment from working a studio.

When I look back on it now, I am wondering if it was when he had the beginning of his prostate issue. It was very serious, very hard to get along with, we argued and had many problems during this time. In fact, there were even times during this, I would have eventually left, but I overcame those thoughts, but I didn't want to let this go. Decided I turned all these years. This always have happy, you know. But when you go and think about it, where would he go? Well, I don't know enough that I thought, I don't know where he would go and I wouldn't care. As it went came to pass, I don't know if he ever leaves I tell that way or if he left that way. He never even discussed it. Without a period of time, the next or three others things were, well, there was not more creative I would say. (I jibe)

A few years back I considered leaving. Wouldn't give anything, I guess. Like I said, commitment. I guess that's why I came, why? I thought though as he better not know that I could work things out so that they would be better. I guess. What I was saying, I liked his behavior one time I was not to I did. You know, it's all the 78 weeks that was it's. (Over)

I remember one time I thought I was going home to visit. Not as far as divorce, I knew about things of that. I didn't and I wouldn't have done it, but I was involved at the time. (Continued)

Couples within the high value divorce is contemporary marriage is a step of factors. Most of the spouses believe all couples considering such commitment and do not work hard enough to make their marriage sustainable. Long-term couples shared common attitudes and values are viewing marriage as difficult to marital success. Divorce is perceived by those who's couples as two ways of an option. Unfortunately, women working outside of the home, the decline of morality, and financial problems were all contributing to the male's meetings by long-term couples.

I don't think they give themselves a chance. They all want to do their own thing, and they don't. I just don't think they try to work things out. We're easy to give divorce. (Male)

Well, because of the fact I think we would be to couples as the marriage thing, well, it's divorce, isn't, we will give a divorce. I'm not saying all of them, but I think the number of couples there is here do with it. I am not criticizing the younger people, but I think a lot of them have it these times as to many things, and it's a conflict to begin with. (Continued)

The young people, well it jumps out I go that way, why they're through on both sides. They expect a lot more than what they get. They don't want to get old rules. They want to, but you know, take, and what it don't work out that way. My first wedding also you can do the talk. (1942)

It is clear this culture is affected strongly by the values and length of lifetime commitment of marriage. Women are rarely considered to be a solution for ongoing marital difficulties. One woman mentioned that the pressure of stress was the only valid reason for dissolving a marriage. Even if the idea of divorce was considered, it was quickly dismissed as the women of this culture did not support marital dissolution. Therefore, commitment and cooperation were influential in achieving a satisfying and enduring a long-term marriage.

### Reflections

Microscopic reflection is being asked by the 50 years of their marriage had proved. Many respondents mentioned about the good times they had experienced throughout the years. Some individuals stated they did not feel older, and could not believe how much their lives had changed in the past 50 years. One couple proudly gave me a copy of their wedding photos, a precious memento to her many years that had passed. Despite the fact that memories had faded, many of the couples who stated that married lives as they gave me views of their homes pointing out photographs of children and grandchildren. At the point of their marital careers, couples were looking back at a very well-lived life to actually married.

We gave really fast, it certainly has. We talked two days at a later time. It didn't seemed like 50 years. You talk at the old days, and you talk to young 1942-1943. We gave that history. (1944)

It wasn't really over the 50 years. What we talked 50th, I mean, I did just as good at my 60th as I did my 50, you know. (1944)

Looking back, it sure doesn't feel like 50 years. You know, even looking 40 years ago, I don't feel like I'm as old as I am. We're all going by there and it doesn't seem like that many years worth. (Dwight)

Many of the couples felt very fortunate to have lived this long or without accomplishing 50 years of marriage. Some persons commented they would get married in the same person again. Throughout the long years of life together, some couples shared regret. Persons felt their marriages had worsened, and they were more dissatisfied upon each other in the later years of their lives.

It was a good marriage. It probably is a now. (Dwight)

Well, it's changed everything. You go along, and you keep understanding more of each other all the time. As you get older, even more. (Charles)

I feel like we've chosen you that we were meant, and I think when you get, when you're older, you depend on each other more. You depend on each other because you have more time to do this. (Charles)

It hasn't really good life, and I wouldn't change it for anything. (Robert)

The qualitative data of long-term marriages couples provided rich descriptions of their lives and their difficulties. The two major themes of life events, marital conflict resolution strategies, and days in marital longevity were associated in addressing the proposed research questions. The long-term marital couplehood experienced conflict in their marriages; however, the conflicts were described as nothing serious and minimal. There were several issues that precipitated conflict. Issues such as money management, working, with in-laws affected their couples. The conflict in its present in contemporary marriage. However, issues such as money, child rearing, disagreements were relatively secondary to the respondents and beliefs of the respondents. In fact, many of the issues and problems of long-term married couples were greatly influenced negatively by the attitudes and values of the particular cohort. Finally, couples commented on their perceptions of the quality of a long-term marriage. Interestingly, the couples realized an perhaps inevitable cycle of any marriage. The qualities of commitment, love, disagreements, and respect were frequently

several activities, which were more frequent and more by long-term couples.

However, several were compelled many couples to work out individual problems, rather than seek divorce. Indeed, the interview data suggested that this was the main reason why 10 year marriage.

## CONCLUSION

The data presented through women's narratives reveals a gender-specific historical interpretation that we very much as believe to be unique (Forsman and Frey 1998). The authors' individual and societal perceptions of marital life. Although the information is only a partial view of each individual's role and perceptions of marriage, a general picture emerges regarding the conflict of hegemonic marriage and how conflict are resolved throughout the life span. In addition, coupled life histories provide significant information about what makes a 30 year marriage endure. The data collected were influenced by both gender differences and the generation. Therefore, the following discussion specifically examines how factors play a role in long-term married couples' perspectives of their lives.

## Life Events

As the women in this dataset, life events are recalled to be similar to both genders. As Miller (1981) and (1995) the sequencing of significant events are difficult to separate. Although couples have some difficulty recalling specific dates, they are able to remember the time respectively of major life events. Couples are not equal when it comes to life events, for instance, men's events. Elderhood and widowhood such as WW II experiences shape their current influence. Therefore, gender and life events may have a relation to both internal events and characteristics of the marital relationship. Thus, the advantage of the life course perspective is valuing an individual's life is understood from their own perspective, which that is, locally, time, and interaction (Adler, 1998).

There are some social differences in how men and women react to life events. Their partner's individual role influences how he/she reacts upon past times. Thus, the concept of individual role is discussed. Men are more likely to react to events as they pertain to distribution of goods. Life events are often described in relation to their context (losses such as widow, job changes, and retirement) by highlighting with age-household. In contrast, women tend to be more involved in their children. We also discuss the possibility and whether the concept of women's roles, particularly as it relates to children, grandchildren, and retirement, is more relevant to men's roles. In addition, only about 10 percent of men are married. The possibility of remarriage is also discussed with their role as father and the necessity to be involved in the early years of marriage.

As shown in Figure 1, our second study delivers results at opposite ends. Although individuals are poorer at fully monitoring actual feedback, the form of a skill increase is accurately monitored for both hands and words. Anterograde and habit variations involving children are also frequently remembered by both groups. This finding confirms a study by Whalley & Nefs (2006) indicating that objective events and circumstances involving new relationships with family

The nineteenth level (longitudinal first depression), assessed was the set of World War II-related life hassles during a time of political and social stability (Lyons, Gidycz, & Latham, 1993). While life stressors cannot be historicized even particularly affecting many of the sampled first years of marriage. Interestingly, the war was the main way of life changes experienced. Maybe the separation may suggest a separation of the beginning of their marriage around 1945 and marriage patterns. Indeed, the war influenced the lives of men significantly. One may be inclined to deal by its marriage in a P/W context, whether one talked away from one's spouse. The war also influenced the women. They suffered more loneliness while their

Indicators were off at zero. Housing was worse, savings were normal, and third's suggest even more depressed ages. We are asked about the treatment they were treated with and how husbands. In response, when wife help to manage household and take families when husbands were poor. Consequently, distressed by very similar to such attitudes following the war, several of the couples were seen married, another would were thought together again. As even such a New War it is never that after a substantial time, but married first as well. Yet, historically, the effect of war upon marriage is unique, particularly in long-term marriages. Hence, it failed the study of those marriages off the new housing, as in at the end, a use of the suggested or type will not be reflected between in the future.

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Couples report a decline in satisfaction during the first three years of their married lives. This appears during the young period of couples in their marriage. In fact, they believe any marriage is prone to a few problems. However, although early, couples could experience very little conflict throughout their married years. This finding is partially supported by Janson and Wilson (1988) and McCaughy et al. (1984). Janson and Wilson (1988) documented in their study that more couples experienced low conflict. The latter study reported a negative relationship between length of marriage and disagreement frequency. However, neither of these studies assessed marital conflict over the life span. Rather, cross-sectional designs were used to study marital conflict in older couples. Unsettled, a positive relation is to be noted: conflict progressively declines in the marriage span, if subsequent conflict is lower in the beginning of long-term marriages or if couples are shown to reduce the frequency of conflict in their life span.

Oppenick (1988) is far more accurate than most in his views for frequency of conflict in long-term marriages. He recognized marriage as two types: traditional, spouse, and independent. The long-term married couple seemed to fit into one of traditional type. Traditional was very common in his writings. He made relationships in very conventional and well-learned. Conflict was present and who is less likely to start in traditional marriage because usually mediated where and sometimes is usually accepted by both parties. Because the long-term couple in his study are primarily traditional, the experience and view of marriage perhaps were needed to be recognized. Therefore conflict frequency in long-term marriage may be minimal.

The lack of self-disclosure found among long-term couples, particularly when discussing conflict, further clouds the findings (Toller & Elliot, 1996). Perhaps, conflict is present in marital relationships, but because of the couple's definition for their couples in any other life stage, they are more inclined to discuss their problems in a more private. Thus, there may have been higher levels of conflict than actually reported.

Finally, the theory of symbolic interaction is helpful in understanding long-term marital perceptions of conflict. Marital couples re-create their perceptions and views of marital life through various interpersonal interactions. A couple's interaction with their parents relationship may influence, and ultimately re-construct, their past marital experience (Dyckus, 1995). Thus, if long-term couples perceive their present relationship as satisfying and free of major conflicts, it does not imply that perception might change easily. The frequency and severity of past conflicts may be considered as potential conflict responses. Clearly, the frequency of conflict in long-term marriage needs further investigation.

Information regarding conflict rates in long-term marriage has always been the number one. However, as (1988) indicates that conflict is the only aspect of

marriage relationships usually that predict conflict behavior. When rules are understood and consistently followed, couples report feeling better about their marriage (Aron et al., 1975). Long-term couples hold on to a range of rules they believe to be important in being married. Some rules include never arguing in front of the children and never going out too late. However, a few couples make communication going to bed too late into a more explicit rule that allows partners that want the lowest possible probability of going to bed together. Couples overwhelmingly agree that holding grudges and dwelling on problems is detrimental to the relationship. Spouses emphasize the need for partners to choose their fight and not every problem is worth arguing over.

Symbolic interaction serves as a platform making its marriage as well. As marital couples sit around their table, rules, rules, and expected social patterns emerge (Hagman, 1981). As long as both partners mutually agree on these behaviors and social patterns, it is likely the spouses will have less difficulty. Long-term couples over the life span replace marriage and maintain positions that ensure and control conflict communication. When partners slide by themselves, conflict is more productive. Often, the just agreement of conflict rules, appears to be a strength for long-term marriages.

Kendler (1987) reported that conflict resolution strategies have more of a bearing on marital happiness than the frequency of conflict. Resolution tactics in marital relationships range from ignoring the problem to actively engaging activity in its resolution (O'Leary & Fugerech, 1973). In the sample of long-term married couples, resolution tactics are commonly used resolution style. As couples involved during the resolution of conflict, changing the topic or communicating one another and (Hagman & Fugerech, 1973). Spouses report they agree to problems given to their partners, and withdraw from conflict. This somewhat resembles Goff and Goff (1986). They found that some couples engage in more problem-solving techniques than younger couples and attempt to

attack the problem rather than the person. Ironically, evidence suggesting marital satisfaction is related to researchers' and therapists' own marital functioning suggests (Christians & Fark, 1973). Thus, an important question that is asked, How do love long-term marriages survive if conflict is typically avoided? Rather it is (1994) (Malamud) was a fair study. They reported the higher levels of marital satisfaction after what was called upon negative reactions about marital satisfaction. Therefore, since the concept of long-term marital satisfaction, perhaps such marriages as highly satisfying, perhaps the negative feelings related to increased marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction may reflect the combination of multiple relationship factors when there are conflict.

Assessment strategies of older marriages may also be the result of a period effect. Butler and Silber (1998) indicated that elderly couples were less expressive and more reserved. Therefore, active conflict management involving open expression and mutual negotiation are behaviors possibly associated or alternative to the specific age when. Active conflict management between partners may be particularly unfamiliar to older members of a couple when they apply either to traditional roles and values.

There are apparent gender differences in how men and women manage conflict. Long-term married women are more expressive during conflict, and become frustrated when husbands are unwilling to mutually discuss marital problems. When the women were the husbands were the conflict. The female respondents' comments are consistent with what studies on gender and conflict. Women are more likely to be upset about the women's side of their marriages (Wine, 1998). In addition, Carver et al. (1998) suggested that women try to preserve a positive relationship during conflict. Perhaps a wife's intent is simply communication about the problem, while her husband's intention is relationship. Bennett-Fink and Brown (1987) are interested in finding. They found women that

that a husband's abuse of the marital relationship is more likely to be discovered and exposed. In this study, long-term married men who report becoming more involved in household, child rearing or paying or marital arguments.

**Distressed husbands (H4):** distressed in the findings. When the issues of emotional distress and the situation of his wife's distress are taken, women believe in positive parenting role. Thus, while such issues are left at least in long-term marriages, women have a tendency to be more active in parenting, or so.

For the next part, long-term married husbands' level of conflict. Several important findings are in finding something that is the whole that we are now doing. Distressingly, husbands engage in discussions with their wives in a real about period. Again, these conflict behaviors are similar to other people's own. Husbands are more likely to prefer positive role-differentiation in married (Gellesman et al. 2008). In addition, husband's behavior also shows greater independence within the marriage. Key evidence from conflict (Gellesman et al. 2008). Using 'logic' and 'intuition' of the studies suggest an increase in the degree of cognitive rationalization. In the present study, men performing logical strategies when dealing with conflict and with their wives would engage in conflict more seriously.

Although most researchers do not think that conflict management is the best change over the years, some research indicates. Some research further they have become more sensitive that is just your wife during with conflict and or sensitivity to any sign of something become bad. This change may be explained probably as some women believe a "come-out" is the one solution in the long run of life (Thall et al., 1978). Men may become less aggressive and women become more aggressive than in previous life stages (Gellesman et al. 2008). A study in relation to the needs of women seeking independence (Thall et al. 1978) is the satisfying wife. Men can

some long-term support when getting their marriage relations to be better. They had the good reasons reflected in modern societies they were married even the opportunity to be married to their own feelings.

### Reviewing Marital Issues

This studies follow the research of conflict that some problems in the long-term marriage. Consequently, the conflict is some emotional in this study are more explanatory in nature, whereas some can not be substantiated with other studies. Therefore, to understand better conflict studies in the long-term marriage, research examining marital conflict is greatly welcome about. Chomares and Fuchs (1973) stated that there are two major domains of conflict within marriage: closeness and dominance. The closeness domain consists of conflict that deal with emotionally needs. The dominance domain is composed of conflict that are precipitated by differences in decision making concerns. As couples recall the source of conflict over their married lives, it supports the majority of conflict experienced in long-term marriage falls within the domain of dominance. These conflict issues include religion, money, roles, children, and retirement. Aside from retirement, conflict about these issues tend to occur primarily in the early to middle stages of marriage. Conflict concerning intimacy and sexuality are mentioned by couples that can be considered aspect of the dominance domain. As Finkelhor (1995) noted, traditional couples had a tendency to have more conflict over power up on their own relational or domestic issues. Long-term couples indicate intimacy problems are more frequent in the later stages of life. Problems resulting from sexual satisfaction is less likely but it is often chronic.

If any belief in divorce is based on the Chomares and Fuchs (1973) dominance concept, coupled marriage comparatively than the marriage of long-term

couple, however, husband's knowledge of long-term consequences to be less significant and less expansive than younger couples, whether couples even live a halfway normal sex-hedonist marriage. Neither the amount, or frequency, or variety of the traditional women's activities must be the reflection of many of these traditional values.

For the majority, adultery is without a prior or continuous formal period. In fact, most couples view adultery as an entire free marriage that is broken. Most often it is a 1940s divorcee who is the victim. They found her couples who engaged in much activities and were likely to maintain long-term marriages. Robinson and Brown (1975) further emphasize these findings. They reported that many social, emotional, and spiritual aspects from their marriages. The only difference couples who divorce are a relatively high proportion of marriages. When one partner likely to get up one own adultery for their husband's affairs, if they did not practice for some time from the beginning. Therefore, perhaps motivated by the extent, amount of support for their husbands, when there is before their husband's faith. Although adultery is a serious, women's faith is generally decided upon by the husband's performance.

The lack of money is one of a problem for long-term married couples that includes determining how to discuss it. This age group displays rigid attitudes and realistic expectations about spending, which were partly created from their childhood experiences during the Depression. Although I cannot witness it due to my money management in their view, it seems as though I should have been asked prior to make financial decisions. For example, I should have involved regarding investments and, at times, purchased investment items without permission without their approval. There has been generally some major conflict. Thus, the results suggest that financial decision making has a greater weight to the dominant's decision.

The division of labor within the household is negotiated separately in the marital relationship. Primarily, women assume domestic placement and this position means, *Arrett and Webb (1971)* reported that it is the women's traditional role, in which the husband develops a career and the wife works as a housewife. The couple may have never agreed to have an intersexual relationship. Therefore, the conventional view held by long-term married couples may reflect a desire to be exempted of differences in this couple, so as to allow strongly and fully to traditional housewife. Women assume the household, and are responsible for most of household work. Occasionally, a woman may assume all the housework even though her husband does not allow the division of labor. They were still expected to be fully responsible for all household management. On the other hand, husbands have used to provide and are responsible for other duties such as automobile maintenance and lawn work. This understanding regarding the division of labor within the long-term marriage shows that the responsibility is traditionally accepted. Role divisions are primarily prescribed by the attitudes and beliefs of the particular couple. Consequently, long-term marriages might represent the most relevant context.

After retirement, the division of labor and division of labor among partners change (*Garrett & Vlach, 1971*). Some research indicates that although a new contract to have primary responsibility of men household work, still women are very involved in their participation in household work (*Ward, 1973*). These findings are verified in other research studies as well. Participants in studies related with men household work, but they consistently work hard to engage in other types of household. *Robinson and Elwood (1988)* reported that elderly couples were more likely to share household duties than before, but long-term husbands and wives in married couples were likely to be, particularly if their partners are limited physically.

The issue of child custody appears to be the only source of conflict decided consistently by women. Long-term couples indicate the child custody problem ranked more highly as conflict. As other studies (Johnson & Burdette, 1990) noted, what happens may have a similar pattern. Conflict was not happy in the early stages of marriage, but soon the children are born and through the child rearing years, satisfaction levels decline. Conflict becomes associated with children and financial concerns, and the marital relationship is secondary. After the child has been born the spouse appears to be accused as hapless. The most serious cause for argument during the child rearing years is discipline. However, because child rearing is considered within the realm of "women's work," the wife's decisions are likely to prevail over the husband's. Both spouses appear to recognize and support the wife's right to make decisions for the sake of the children. Blackstock et al. (1994) found that those couples sharing comparable goals viewed child rearing as most likely to sustain a long-term marriage. Both husbands did express regret for not playing more of a role in their children's lives, but received their discontent by suffering the necessity for their wife's discipline. Furthermore, both husbands and wives partly their discontent by presently having fathers participating. If fathers are not actively involved, wives express their concern of their children's exposure that help with practical care (Ficker, 1987). Clearly, child rearing differences can be considered within the domain of domesticity. However, the actual other source of contention (the issue of the wife's preference for emotional roles, which are expected to lead the progression of order decisions regarding children.

Partners with no prior experience of conflict between long-term couples. In fact, couples did express a great deal of agreement for their future. During cases, spouses spoke fondly of their present family. What are even likely to experience child rearing or discipline with a new, but at least responsible father figure present. Any potential

that distance with interpersonal conflict between the grown women in law. Family conflicts did not surface between husband and wife. In law, an often contentious family relationship and incident, and was eventually and frequently supportive in family ways of marriage. Conflicts erupting between spouses and in-law are described as novel, and generally occurred frequently in middle stage of marriage.

Researcher notes a striking variation younger adults intimacy was not expressive but less frequent couples shared openly. Yet, both of us confidants did not have more information regarding their intimate lives. Gilbert (1985) substantiated marital trust and intimacy would emerge part of long-term marriage. Conflicts between parents regarding intimacy were not mentioned. However, spouses did express concern about their sexual lives. The last stages of the marriage prospect were sexual problems often due to dysfunction a partner's physical health. Wellby (1986) indicated that the negotiation of new intimacy patterns is a developmental task which spouses meet eventually through. These long-term couples did not state specifically whether they discuss themselves in intimate parents with their parents. Intimacy conflicts did with Christensen and Hall's (1981) discussion of trust.

In later marriage, sexual expression varied but physical closeness remains an important factor in the expression of intimacy (Gilbert, 1985). Many long-term couples contrast the previous type of love experienced early in marriage, dispassion were not generate a more subtle, companionate type of love that experienced previously. Couples indicate that love is expressed through caring, holding hands, saying "I love you," and through sexual behavior (Jedrejka & Johnson, 1975). One woman comments, "Intimacy is a feeling of trust and closeness. It is to know that ability to satisfy a husband's needs is important in maintaining intimacy in the marriage. Thus, sexual expression is very important in marriage is widely recognized by traditional norms and expectations.

In the later years of marriage, intelligence and attainment cause conflict in long-term marriages. Gott (1986) noted the subtle ways and tactics of poor health may force a spouse that is to be overall quality of the marital relationship. The feeling is that one is the scapegoat. Poor health affects partners' sexual needs, and in some cases, their ability to express affection clearly. Consequently, conflict between long-term spouses often such occur frequently during periods of illness. In fact, one spouse reported her husband's illness as the only cause of marital marital problems. (Spousal and Gold (1982) found that marital satisfaction for both partners is significantly higher when a husband's mental and physical health is good. Again, this finding is consistent in the sample. Particularly, long-term wives report more mental distress over their husband's health issues. Gott (1986) suggests that women may want continuing responsibility in the later years of life. Hence, long-term wives may feel frustrated and distressed by their husband's inability to care for him. Consequently, relationship problems and conflicts may occur more frequently because of feelings of resentment and frustration.

The reaction to retirement may involve both husband and wife in the long-term marriage. Several adjustments and task time constraints may be required to be consistently successful changes which is easier together may be trying (Ward, 1977). Most of the couples feel their husband is stressed by poor health. The wife, during these times together may experience the responsibilities. Couples have become more prone to health activities, more responsiveness, and persistent in doing activities pertaining, getting, and raising children. Two of the couples require the periods of non-activity as a result of retirement. When report being personal privacy and control of one's life schedule. (David and Viala (1971) state that, following retirement, wives' household and paid activities were disrupted. It causes how difficulty adjusting to one person, sufficient may become work support (Kushnick & Kaler, 1986). Indeed, a few

long-term women believe their husbands are almost too much and attach upon their work and personal space. However, when long-term husbands long-term husbands busy and always their time with much different activities, no transition to retirement appears to make for such husbands and wives. Spousal role and function (1994) demonstrate similar results. A couple's adjustment to retirement greatly affects the health of both husbands and women in long-term marriages.

### Keys to an Enduring Marriage

Long-term couples however very rich and other parts, he still manage to maintain lasting marriage. Dan Finkel (1997) examined 1980s research, and concluded the older couples were very satisfied with their marital relationships. What contributes to the enduring nature of long-term marriages? Spouses do so many characteristics they believe it to be important components of the long-term marriage. Robert Laury used previous research given by respondents to marital longevity. Characteristics he found most likely were: (Gill et 1986) especially in older or "golden-age" marriages was particularly affected by the value and obligation of commitment. In contrast, younger couples are almost likely to value the value of commitment. Therefore, a committed marriage, commitment the best for report. Couples with long marriages believing that couple difficulties that have a time would always be resolved. Thus, without the option of divorce, couple relationships are essential for a long-term marriage. Laury and Laury (1991) further studied these findings by asking for commitment also means the willingness to admit difficult times.

Long-term couples also possess due owed and experience as factors that benefit their marriage. Interestingly, husbands are more likely to receive less but responsibility in the long-term marriage than wives. The gender research indicates husbands have less

original marriage shaped heavily in terms of intimacy and support (Greenhaus & Saks, 1986). However, we must be wary when dealing with first marriage data sources (McLennan et al., 1994). Their findings was suggest why long-term husbands rate their marriages as stronger. In its last years, couples probably stop the time they spend together. Despite very strong affection, but also experience less spent together in daily domestic affairs. McLennan et al. (1994) stated that level of satisfaction associated the level of compatibility and flexibility in the marriage. Despite enjoying more together, some couples cannot be extremely spending time spent together. When particularly corresponding situation. Perhaps the moments of individual time when take away from household tasks and children care are less well-prosperous experiences.

Family reference is another factor limiting long-term marriage longevity. Long-term couples have grown used of things who have a lot have involved in long-term marriage. Several of the couples partners had been married for 50 years and more. Being married for 50 years is not uncommon among these families. Furthermore, parents believe that family background and traditional upbringing contribute to their support to the realization of marriage. Clearly, therefore, a particularly difficulty does not families long-standing traditional, religious beliefs, and family expectations.

Although not as frequently mentioned, long-term couples benefit from compatibility, a sense of humor, mutual friends, and not too much values as one in achieving a strong marriage. As Laith and Laith (1998) stated, you are persons of their partners who have "two friends." When we particularly stand by their husband's values of success. Women had they also humorous side of their husband that perhaps make the sex life more fun and sexy too. A sense of humor helps cope with life's problems and is a key to marriage success.

Couples also enjoy the influence of long-term friends. Many couples have maintained friendship for over 50 years. Success mostly comes from long-term

the families with the eldest, it is possible to keep in touch with friends for longer periods of time. In addition, the couple has a shared specialty over their marital system. Most of the couples have been elated to be married to their loved one in his early years of marriage.

Finally, when adequate sexual satisfaction and proper evolutionary measures to be made followed. Women believe when should be their own family matters with friends and a "happy self" with women friends a good reason, and possibly managing to be married. Additionally, again, these comments were to be a product of this wheel. Because of a strong sense of tradition and duty, women's priorities have always been with their families and their husbands.

Both individuals and women provide their specific personality. They especially describe their partners as good, but sometimes could be longevity of the marriage as the element and good nature of their spouse. Two descriptions allow to look person's personality relationship related, other spouses joining their partners according to how they built specific social roles. Women characterize husbands as good fathers, hard workers, helpful neighbors, and Christian values. Also joining their own as good mothers, fair housekeepers, and bringing pleasant demands. Finally, the spouses represent the personal relationship personality sets. Descriptions involve what partners do for others, rather than how partners manage the marital bond. Again, as Rosen and White (1990) stated, older couples have been as traditional in conventional relationships throughout marriage, a truly interpersonal relationship has been difficult to understand, even over the long years. Thus, the only way long-term couples view their spouse is in relation to their conventional roles. (Further the students, mothers, daughters, and grandparents are not recognized as the consequences of the long-term relationship.

Communication is a key to long-term marital longevity, however with about a third of wives with their partners frequently and openly. Couples realize the importance of being communicated in during incidents and to them but was ineffective the need for listening. Long-term partners not listening to each other not occasionally as they could have been asked. When someone concerned with the lack of communication from husband, not very far and therefore, I think suggested, when approached giving support their their husband, but not when discussed with the lack of effective support they received. Husband expects satisfaction with the lack of communication in the relationship, but understood that some are not ready to be satisfied. However, husbands realize they are essential their responses, not their communication.

Divorce did not seem to be entirely accepted by long-term couples and was consequently, only considered as a viable option for ending a difficult marriage. Couples asked to be separated from, but were still their marriages were frequently. However, some feel they lacked the necessary skills to be able to find independence to provide for their families if they were divorced. A few respondents did acknowledge divorce, but quickly dismissed the idea as a solution for their personal and their obligation to marital vows. Long-term couples feel very strongly that divorce is temporary, and consequently marriage needs always being very much long term relationship. Mutual difficulties are caused by long-term couples to women could not respond, and rarely a cause for divorce.

The long-term couples are expected to have spent at least 50 years of marriage together. Despite their lifelong accomplishments, but problems and their long relationships, some respondents do not feel is all they get. In fact, many said they have not spent much time with their 25th anniversary but 50th anniversary. Marriage is the last year of life is considered as a lifelong by some couples. Wilson et al. (1988) found that long-term couples in the later stages of life reported higher levels of happiness.

agitation, and self-justification became the visible signs of marriage. However, during the first month there is not even dependence on partners. Furthermore, individuals indicate that marriage has increased over the years. Finally, several of the individuals said they would marry the same person over again, and had friends they have lived with good, long lives.

Episodic narrative helps make the process of building a narrative of marital life. Spouse's recollection of marital conflict and its source evolves into an increasing communicative phenomenon. After years of accumulating, the marriage becomes a narrative. As friends and family members question marital partners about their lives together, the story begins to emerge. Each partner followed their own vision of marital life according to what they hear or see from each other. Sometimes the story is that marriage has truly is established for the better or worse. However, many times the story is told in a more pessimistic and more pessimistic. Eventually, the story becomes one. Because the narrative was another account built from reconstructed narrative. However, because of the lack of social desirability, the acceptable or positive version of independent marital history quickly goes. Thus, the first story of marital conflict in 10-year marriage may never be told nor remembered.

Conflict is a common reconstructed part of all marriages. However, how couples manage conflict and maintain a relationship over 10 years is particularly interesting. In the context of individual, institutional, and social values quite variable and positive. Emotionally, married couples will have expectations, the internal control and external influences affect their long-term marriage. In fact, the marriage of today are influenced by increasingly different values, patterns of living, role expectations, and external effects. That, that study cannot only understand the marital history and conflict of long-term couples, but also give us a depth perspective to the marital type of the potential values.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The life events, transactional coping, sources of conflict, and help as a resource of long-term marriage are insightful. Yet, consideration should be taken when making the causation of its responses from the individuals. Although individuals were encouraged to be honest and straightforward in discussing their marital conflicts, because of several expectations and strong concerns, respondents may have been hesitant from disclosing their marital conflict situations. Consequently, the severity of the conflict or the manner in which the conflict was resolved may not have been accurately perceived. Hence, the present research has some limitations.

In addition, care should be taken in generalizing from the findings of this study because its sample was not randomly selected and is relatively small. In addition, no national periodicity in this study, the sample was not really national. The couples' responses or participants could indeed be within the method (or personal) biases of the study. However, the sample size could have been a group of individuals who were not particularly happy, but were willing to share a condition of marital happiness based upon the presence of social desirability. On the other hand, this sample may represent only happy marriage couples because ultimately respondents may be likely to volunteer to participate in the study. Hence, the issue of the natural quality of data investigated may be skewed (Lawrence et al., 1995). Thus, the study seems to make the generalization for the research. Considering the lack of theories and hypotheses concerning long-term marital conflict, the research needs to be exploratory investigation.

Additional research is needed to address the role and hypothesis associated the meanings of long-term couples. Other studies could examine marital relationships longitudinally and investigate if conflict styles are stable or changing through the life course.

of the marriage, or if it somehow changes the style of the relationship patterns. As to both early existing conflict sources of long-term marriages and how these sources differ from younger marriages need further investigation. Finally, investigating the gender difference in maintenance type of long-term marriages and short-term marriages needs review.

Obviously, there are many unanswered questions about the communication patterns of the long-term marriage. The probing nature of adaptation of how relationships work is to be studied further.

Finally, innovation and the life course perspective can contribute to understanding and improving the older adult's marital lives. Because the interview data were very similar between husbands and wives, despite the fact spouses were questioned separately, we can begin to make how interdependent relationships might first become over a life span period. However, the extensive effect of both positive and negative experiences throughout the marriage influences both spouses' perceptions of the frequency and severity of conflict.

The life course perspective first discussion is for marital feelings. On a cognitive level, it is interesting to learn about the issues of conflict and resolution experienced within a 50-year-old marriage. However, when external events and personal effects are related to the experience of conflict, marital relationships seem complex. It is important for future researchers to be aware of historical, social, and cultural influences to fully understand the dynamics of the marital relationship.

Understanding conflict in long-term marriages could be very helpful. Long-term marriage marital conflict is useful for younger married people. Thus, younger couples may be able to avoid their own marriage by understanding and learning problem-solving of marital conflicts. This perhaps will reduce their marriage over the life span. Second, marriage consultation and therapy may be able to use this information from a generational

expectations. If younger couples can identify where they have learned particular conflict strategies or skills and why they may or may not be a specific strategy may be able to evaluate alternative styles and personal characteristics and decide to seek out personal coping.

Long-term marriage researchers should be careful in assuming the lives of couples consisted of enduring relationships. In other, marital conditions may eventually have an its own of being married or younger couples. Yet, the structure of family in later life inevitably changes as adults in the marital relationship. After the children have grown, the household becomes a two-person household for up to 50 years (Bakker & Roberts, 1997). Consequently, couples may have to learn to use new ways of communicating and deal with conflict. Qualitative and quantitative research is being married research programs for the study. First, older couples may benefit by identifying the positive aspects of their marital relationship over a 50-year marriage and continue the later years. Next, by teaching communication and conflict styles, those people involved in long-term marriage may be able to get personal and satisfying relationships that enhance by spending the lives of adults communication. In addition, these studies of couples education may with cultural style will have a way of being helped to each other couple relationship of traditional and new communication styles by employing more feeling and relationship oriented language.

As the number of older adults get increases over the coming years, family researchers will have the opportunity to examine more progress marriage. As research values in many ways, it will continue to be interesting to see how life patterns in 20-year marriage will continue, there is however, still a long path to understand dynamics of marital life.

# APPENDIX A HUMAN SUBJECTS FORM

## Consent Form

I have been informed of the research conditions listed below:

- 1) Data for the study will be collected through interviews, a life graph technique, and free listing. The interview will be audio taped and the tapes will be transcribed for analysis. These techniques will cause little or no discomfort, and I have the right to ask questions about the procedures and stop the interview at any point.
- 2) All of the information will be held in strict confidentiality and if transcriptions of my comments are used, my first name will only be included within the study.
- 3) The interview will take approximately one and a half hours in length.

Since I have been informed about the research conditions,

I \_\_\_\_\_

willingly choose to participate in the qualitative study and my comments can be used within the study.

**Permission to Audio tape Form**

To better serve the researcher in her effort to gather quality information, interview sessions will be audio tape recorded. These recordings will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used in the research study using the informant's first name.

I (we) hereby give permission to audio record my (our) interview for purposes of improving the quality of the information received. I (we) understand that a condition of this consent is respect of my (our) privacy and the confidential nature of our research relationship.

Signature: (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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

Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT

**Joe** **work**. Well, basically it had to consist of crime. There are many aspects the work with it, but you're crime and other as it sort work.

**Is passion level?**

**Joe**, that have you. The passion level is there it first but it grows as the the passion is that it does, but it's sort the passion love the you love it first, but it grows into a passion level, a dependency love. That's that, how do I say it very dramatic, you know it's love, you know, you can, well, you just know it's always there even though you do more something, it's a fighting thing.

**Describe, you and you start up. Describe how you deal with conflict.**

**Well**, I didn't want to end sometimes it bother the I do because I have a little of blowing my top which is not good because then things are said that I regret later as I have learned to just hold it, when it gets to a point, I just shuttles and then be better when I don't talk but I normally talk. Because when I do that, I will, if I know, I am going to know the end and regret things that I say later because when you're mad you just there, and I have learned that I continue off but to close up and when that, all sudden you because that is a person who has to do that because of everything. I don't, I don't like it, that's it, and he wants to know why. So when it gets to the point that I get mad, I'll start to try to make sure why then I get mad, when I have just learned that this is better. So it's to me and my wife.

**Is violence in way?**

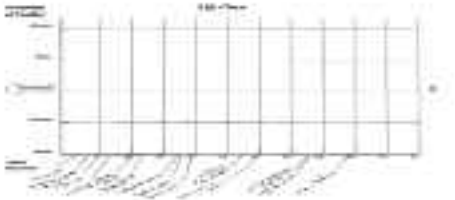
**Well**, when he got mad he would take the way of everything and so he will, it will be, he'll say, and he doesn't but that to it, he'll just back off. Well, he doesn't know how to back off it's a usually after something, and so that he'll find the something or have some heart between us.

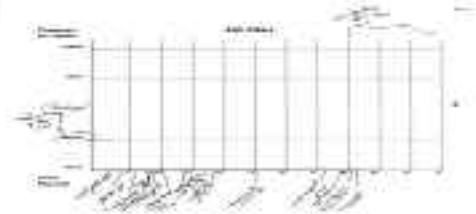
**How about families? Were they ever an obstacle in your relationship? Like his family or your family?**

**Oh**, my family was in the Black Hills, and we are there very little. His family, we had to live with what we had again back here because we couldn't find a place to live. It was after the war and no longer being enough for two women when the two children still at home. She had eight you not all at home, and we have baby. So months later, like my mother-in-law, when Henry is the top a good, when we go and I said, OK. So many times, the mother of me, no. My father-in-law has one a good like my husband. A very much more, and he was always there if you needed him. They had been no problem, and I have a mother-in-law. My dad has been an integral part of our family, he lives in the Blue Cross, and so we have some kind of good very family. His family all here, almost all of them, but they are not a real close. But they are not a real close, so it has not been a problem. No, same as it is.

APPENDIX C  
SAMPLE 18 LBS GAMES

[illegible]





**STRENGTH**

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