

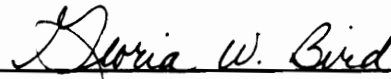
Marital Equity Among Dual-Career Couples:  
A Longitudinal Perspective

by

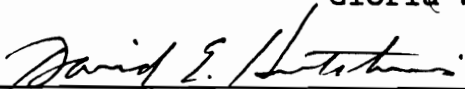
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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Family and Child Development

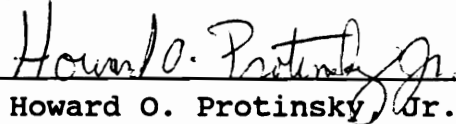
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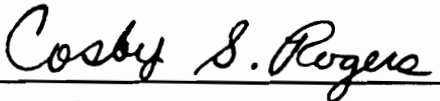
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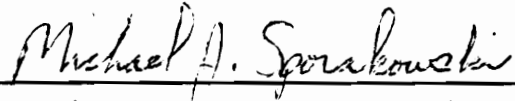
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(Abstract)

Longitudinal data from 113 dual-career couples are used to explore the relationship between perceptions of marital equity and well-being and distress in marital, professional, and parental roles, how perceptions of equity change over time, and to examine efforts to restore equity. Differences in well-being and distress in roles are identified by gender and equity group. Study results indicate that for both spouses, perceptions of inequity are associated with lower marital well-being and higher marital distress; however, underbenefited wives reported higher professional well-being and underbenefited husbands reported higher parental well-being. Couple perceptions of equity decreased between 1986 and 1990; underbenefited husbands were more likely to use threats and bargaining to negotiate for relationship changes while wives sought counseling. Results demonstrate the importance of using multiple measures of well-being and distress and including gender and equity type in investigations of marital equity.

### Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my committee members, Gloria W. Bird, David. E. Hutchins, Howard O. Protinsky, Jr., Michael J. Sporakowski, and Cosby S. Rogers for their time, suggestions and expertise. Particular thanks to Gloria for giving freely of her writing talent and experience, her knowledge of the family studies area, her many hours of reading and editing, and her encouragement. I would also like to thank the Women's Research Institute for funding the T<sup>2</sup> data collection and analysis and the respondents for their time and interest in the continuation of this project.

Special thanks to my friends, Sharon Dwyer and Scott Johnson, and my daughter, Shelly for listening, supporting me, loving me and never letting me give up on myself. Thanks also to Mitch, Jeff and many others who played a part in making it happen.

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## Introduction

The marital relationship is the focus of much of the theoretical work on interpersonal equity (Hiller, 1988; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Walsh, 1989). Marital equity is generally defined as a feeling of fairness which accrues from evaluation of the overall balance of rewards and costs in a relationship (Rachlin & Hansen, 1985). Equity theory, as well as theories of marital quid pro quo and couple interdependence, suggests that achievement of marital equity is associated with partners' reports of greater well-being and less distress (Fish & Fish, 1986; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Berschied, 1978; Weingarten, 1978), as well as the willingness of partners to remain in relationships (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982). Perceptions of inequity have been theoretically associated with efforts to restore or attain relationship equity (Walster et al., 1978). There also is support for the notion that personal events and family transitions (e.g., job changes, child birth) affect partners' perceptions of equity (Walsh, 1989).

Rapoport and Rapoport (1982) and Hiller (1988) argue that marital equity, based on relationship needs and individual interests and abilities of marital partners, will become increasingly important to marital stability as more couples seek to combine dual careers with marital and parental roles. The empirical application of equity theory

to dual-career couples, however, is sparse (Rachlin & Hansen, 1985; Rachlin, 1987).

An additional concern of this research is that marital equity, well-being, and distress are generally conceptualized as global perceptions, thus ignoring the multidimensional nature of people's lives. The present study uses multiple indicators of both well-being and distress and assesses perceptions across marital, professional, and parental roles. Moreover, marital equity is envisioned as encompassing the interpersonal components of relationships (e.g., support, listening, concern for partner). Further, this research relies on longitudinal data and identifies individuals by level of marital equity, explores how perceptions of equity change over time and examines efforts to restore equity. Attention also is directed to understanding how personal events and family transitions occurring across time affect perceptions of equity and, concomitantly, whether those perceptions influence spouses' reports of relationship stability.

## Review of Literature

Equity theory is often used to explain partner perceptions of unfair or inequitable behavior in relationships. Equity, as a concept important to the successful conduct of human relationships, evolved from the social exchange perspective into a theory in the 1960's and 1970's (Adams, 1965; Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1973; Walster et al., 1978). Equity theory predicts that individuals will perceive their relationships as inequitable when they compare their investments in and rewards from a relationship with those of their partner, and they do not balance.

Equity theory also posits that individuals in equitable relationships will report greater well-being and less distress than those in inequitable relationships (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Walster et al., 1978). Some studies make a distinction between being overbenefited and underbenefited in inequitable relationships (Cate, Lloyd, & Long, 1988; Davidson, 1984; Felmlee, Sprecher, & Bassin, 1990; Rachlin, 1987). Data demonstrate that individuals in equitable relationships are most content and least distressed, compared to those who are overbenefited or underbenefited.

In this study, perceptions of well-being are conceptualized as deriving from feelings of gratification and reward in marital, parental, and professional roles as

well as from perceptions of self-esteem (Baruch, Barnett, & Rivers, 1983). Rachlin and Hansen (1985) found that dual-career women who perceive greater marital equity report higher well-being than do women in inequitable relationships. In a later study, Rachlin (1987) found that dual-career men, but not women, perceive higher well-being when in equitable, compared to overbenefited or underbenefited, relationships. Other research reports that the higher the self-concept the greater the marital partner's perception of marital equity (Schafer, 1988).

Distress is viewed as feelings of frustration and tension emanating from major social roles and also includes assessments of role overload, role conflict, and depression. Role overload, having more work and family responsibilities than can be comfortably managed, and role conflict, having difficulty fulfilling the sometimes incompatible expectations of multiple, highly salient roles, are associated with lower perceived marital equity among dual-career women (Guelzow, Bird, & Koball, in press). Recent studies also indicate that dual-career men report similar feelings (Bird, Dwyer, & Geasler, 1988; Gilbert, 1985). However, research has found that dual-career women are more vulnerable than are men to feelings of role overload and role conflict (Yogev, 1981). In addition, a negative

relationship has been found between depression and feelings of equity in married couples (Schafer & Keith, 1980).

According to equity theory, when partners perceive relationship inequities, they are inclined to take action (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Hatfield, Utne, & Traupmann, 1979). Theoretically, they "(a) try to make their relationship actually more equitable, (b) try to convince themselves (and their partners) that things are fairer than they seem to be, or (c) withdraw from their relationship" (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982, p. 235). In order to increase equity, couples may negotiate for change and/or seek professional help (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Walsh, 1989). Partners who choose to try to restore psychological equity, may "close their eyes and reassure themselves that really, everything is in perfect order" (Hatfield et al., 1979, p. 120). Leaving the partner is considered the final alternative to living in an inequitable relationship.

Personal events and family transitions usually require reconsideration and renegotiation of the marital quid pro quo (Walsh, 1989). Rules and bargains conducive to perceptions of equity may become obsolete when dual-career family members encounter changes in family size, or experience job changes, a serious health problem or a death in the family. Women have been shown to be particularly affected by such events (Kessler & McLeod, 1984).

No longitudinal studies have addressed the issue of relationship equity over time; however, Schafer and Keith (1981) found in a cross-sectional study that perceived equity increased over the family life-cycle stages. From a theoretical perspective, relationships perceived as equitable are expected to continue and remain stable (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982). However, very little empirical work has examined the relationship between equity and relationship stability, none with dual-career couples. In an early longitudinal study of dating couples, duration of relationships (stability) was observed to be inversely related to relationship inequity (Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978). In a more recent longitudinal study of premarital relationships, equity was found to be a significant contributor to "involvement" of participants at Time 1, but not at Time 2 (Cate et al., 1988).

Hiller (1988) and Walsh (1989) believe that the prototype for the equitable marital relationship is the dual-career couple. This family type is defined as one in which both spouses pursue careers and at the same time maintain a family life together (Hiller, 1988; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975). The implicit agreement between dual-career partners is that the job investments of wife and husband will be of equal importance to the couple, and that each

will share responsibility for family roles as a matter of equity (Gilbert, 1987; Walsh, 1989).

While equity in dual-career relationships was given theoretical attention in the 1970's (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Rice, 1979), it has only recently been empirically examined (Rachlin, 1987; Rachlin & Hansen, 1985). The present study adds to the theoretical and empirical literature by examining marital equity among dual-career partners utilizing a longitudinal design to explore the following propositions:

1. Gender and equity type (underbenefited, equitable, overbenefited) will differentiate among individual reports of well-being and distress in both 1986 ( $T^1$ ) and 1990 ( $T^2$ ).
2. Higher well-being in marital, professional, and parental roles in combination with higher self-esteem will be related to perceptions of greater marital equity (less reported underbenefit or overbenefit in relationships) for wives and husbands at both  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ .
3. Lower distress in marital, professional, and parental roles in combination with less frequent reports of depression and less intense role overload and role conflict will be associated with perceptions of greater marital equity (less reported underbenefit or overbenefit in relationships) for husbands and wives at both  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ .

4. Women and men who indicated being in more inequitable marital relationships at  $T^1$  will report trying to achieve greater equity, either in reality or psychologically, at  $T^2$ .
5. Personal events and family transitions occurring between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$  will affect individual perceptions of equity.
6. Couples will report an increase in global equity between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ .
7. Persons who are separated or divorced at  $T^2$  will have reported perceptions of greater inequity at  $T^1$  than did those who stayed married, and relationship stability and perceptions of equity will be positively related for those still together at  $T^2$ .

## Methodology

### Sample and Procedure

Data from 113 dual-career couples who completed independent surveys in both 1986 and 1990 are represented in this study. Of the original sample of 136 couples, 132 were relocated. An initial contact letter and telephone call invited the couples to participate in the follow-up study. Survey booklets were sent to the intact couples (7 couples had separated or divorced, and the husband had died in another). A postcard and two follow-up letters were sent as reminders. Of those recontacted, 93% responded.

Criteria for inclusion in the 1986 study included having a college degree, being employed full time in a job designated by the Hollingshead Index (Hollingshead, 1958) as professional, and being married to a person of similar description. In 1990 the average age of women respondents was 42 and of men 45; mean length of marriage was 16 years. Both husbands and wives averaged more than 50 hours per week at work. The mean annual income for women was \$30,000 and for men was \$45,000. The average number of children per family was two.

### Measurement

All measures used in this study, except the checklist of personal events/family transitions, and the restoration of equity scale, were also used in the 1986 study. For all items, response categories ranged from 1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree, unless otherwise indicated.

Relationship equity was assessed by a 13-item measure developed by Blumstein and Schwartz (1983). Respondents indicated the balance between their contributions to various interpersonal components of equity in comparison to those of their marital partners. Sample items included: "Alter habits and ways of doing things to please the other", "Begin to talk about what is troubling our marriage when there is tension between us", and "Listen and offer advice when the other is faced with a problem". A 7-point response scale was used, ranging from (1) Spouse does much more to (7) I do much more. Cronbach's alpha at T<sup>1</sup> was .73 and at T<sup>2</sup> was .70.

Thirty-six items assessed marital, parental and professional well-being and distress (Guelzow et al., in press). For well-being, responses reflected extent of positive affect experienced in the respective roles. Items were prefaced by an introductory statement asking respondents to think of themselves in the role and then indicate how often they felt: supported, understood,

appreciated, etc. Coefficients alpha for well-being were: marital, .87 at T<sup>1</sup>, .88 at T<sup>2</sup>; professional, .86 and .82, respectively; and parental, .90 and .87, respectively. For distress, items were prefaced by an introductory statement asking respondents to think of themselves in the selected role and then to indicate how often they felt: worried, tense/anxious, frustrated, etc. Coefficients alpha for distress were: marital, .87 at T<sup>1</sup>, .86 at T<sup>2</sup>; professional, .86 and .85 respectively; and parental, .90 and .89 respectively. Self-esteem was measured using items from the Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Coefficient alpha at T<sup>1</sup> was .75 and at T<sup>2</sup> was .78.

Depression was measured by the item "How often in the past week were you bothered by feeling depressed?" Role overload and role conflict were assessed using the Dual-Career Role Strain Scale (Bird, 1988). Respondents indicated extent of agreement with statements such as: "I have to rush to get everything done each day" and "Because of career demands, I find it difficult to be the kind of spouse I'd like to be". Alphas for role overload were .77 at T<sup>1</sup> and .82 at T<sup>2</sup>, and for role conflict were .77 at T<sup>1</sup> and .76 at T<sup>2</sup>.

Efforts to restore/attain equity included 3 components: psychological efforts to restore equity, operationalized as selective ignoring; efforts to negotiate with the partner by

bargaining, manipulation, or threatening; and seeking professional help. The selective ignoring items were from the Ways of Coping scale (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). The five items included such statements as: "Try to ignore how I feel" and "Go on as if it doesn't affect me". The alpha for this factor was .81. Bargaining, manipulation and threatening were three factors which resulted from a principal-components factor analysis with varimax rotation of a negotiation strategies scale adapted from Falbo and Peplau (1980). Bargaining items included such statements as : "Talk about it; discuss our differences and needs", "Try to negotiate something agreeable to both of us"; manipulation included "Ignore him/her; refuse to respond until he/she sees reason", "Withdraw; become cold and silent"; and threatening included "Threaten to get a divorce", and "Threaten to move out". Alphas for the factors were: .78, .87, and .90, respectively. Seeking professional help was ascertained by asking respondents to indicate whether they had thought about or sought individual, marital, or family counseling or marital enrichment since the last survey.

Personal events and family transitions were assessed by a 12-item scale based on the work of Lavee, McCubbin, and Olson (1987) and Kessler and McLeod (1984). Participants were asked: "Have any of the following events happened to

you since you last responded to the survey?". They responded with a "yes" or "no" and circled the year when the event(s) took place. Events included such things as: "Major illness or injury", "Birth of a Child" and "Lost Job".

Stability of relationship was assessed in two ways: first, during the initial telephone call, the status of the relationship was ascertained (together, separated, or divorced); second, by extent of agreement with the statement "I expect to still be in my marriage in five years".

#### Data Analysis and Scoring of Relationship Equity

Two analytic strategies were used in this study: MANOVA and multiple regression. MANOVA was used to get an overall picture of differences in reports of well-being and distress by gender and equity group. For the MANOVA, responses on the relationship equity scale from 1 = Spouse does much more to 7 = I do much more were used to divide study participants into three groups; overbenefited, equitable, and underbenefited. The overbenefited group consisted of those whose mean scores were less than 3.75, the equitable group included those whose mean scores were from 3.75 to 4.25, while the underbenefited group consisted of those whose scores were over 4.25.

For the multiple regression analysis, two sets of scores (indexes) were derived, one set indicating departures

of equity toward overbenefiting and the other set indicating departures of equity toward underbenefiting. The underbenefited index represented the degree of underbenefit an individual reported in their marital relationship. Responses were coded as -1, -2, or -3, with -1 indicating I do slightly more, and -3 indicating I do much more. Respondents indicating equity or overbenefit received a 0 on the underbenefited index. Correspondingly, the degree of overbenefit perceived was coded as +1, +2, or +3, with +1 indicating my spouse does slightly more and +3 indicating my spouse does much more. Equitable and underbenefited responses received a 0 on this index.

These two indexes were then used as dependent variables in regression models examining the relationship between perceptions of equity and the selected independent variables. This method has been used by others in investigations of relationship equity (Davidson, 1984; Felmler et al., 1990; Sprecher, 1988).

To determine changes in couple perceptions of equity over time, responses on the original equity scale of 1 (Spouse does much more) and 7 (I do much more), 2 and 6, and 3 and 5 were collapsed because they represented the same overall levels of marital equity. The resulting scale ranged from 1 (One spouse does much more) to 4 (Both spouses do equally). The degree of equity perceived by the couple,

then, was the sum of a husband's and wife's score using this scale (2 = least equitable to 8 = most equitable).

Differences in equity between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$  were derived by subtracting  $T^1$  equity scores from  $T^2$  equity scores; a positive number denoted an increase in perceptions of equity between 1986 and 1990 and a negative number denoted a decrease.

## Results

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for well-being and distress by equity group and gender. MANOVAS (Table 2) demonstrate that there were significant equity group and gender effects for well-being at  $T^1$  and a significant equity group effect at  $T^2$ . Although there were significant effects by gender across distress at both  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ , there were no main effects by equity group. These results, then, partially support proposition 1 that well-being and distress differ by gender and equity group.

Univariate results indicate that marital stress and well-being differ significantly by equity group, but not by gender: the equitable group reports less stress and higher well-being than the overbenefited group and higher well-being than both the over and underbenefited groups at  $T^1$ ; the equitable group also reports higher marital well-being and lower marital stress than the underbenefited group at  $T^2$ . Post hoc Tukey results confirmed that at  $T^1$  women, compared to men, reported higher self-esteem and at  $T^2$  overbenefited men reported lower self-esteem than all other equity groups. Univariate  $F$  tests also indicate that this same group of overbenefited men reported significantly lower professional well-being than all other groups at both  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ .

Simple main effects tests showed that role overload was significantly greater for women than men at both T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup> and that the equitable group reported significantly less role conflict at T<sup>1</sup> than the underbenefited group. No interaction effects were significant across distress at either T<sup>1</sup> or T<sup>2</sup>.

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Tables 1 - 3 about here

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Multiple regression models for T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup> are presented in Table 3. Observation of the regression models discloses that although six of the eight models were significant, the relationship between parental and professional well-being and equity is primarily the converse of that stated in proposition 2. Results indicate that professional well-being was higher for more greatly underbenefited husbands and wives at T<sup>2</sup>, and higher parental well-being was associated with greater underbenefit for husbands at both T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup>. Lower marital well-being was associated with greater underbenefit for wives and husbands at T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup>, as was proposed. There were no relationships between reports of underbenefit and parental well-being for wives, however, wives reporting higher parental well-being at T<sup>1</sup> indicated greater overbenefit. Additionally, higher marital well-being is associated with greater overbenefit for wives at T<sup>1</sup>

and husbands at T<sup>2</sup>. No relationships were found between self-esteem and perceptions of equity.

### Distress

The regression models at T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup> for distress are presented in Table 4. Because only one model examining distress in relation to equity was significant (wives at T<sup>2</sup> who reported being more greatly underbenefited indicated significantly more marital distress and less professional and parental distress), these findings cannot be said to support proposition 3, that lower distress is associated with greater marital equity. No relationship was found between depression and equity for either husbands or wives at T<sup>1</sup> or T<sup>2</sup>. An observation of the results across the various regression models from T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup> suggests that, like well-being, the relationship between perceptions of equity and distress varies by life role.

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Tables 4 and 5 about here

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### Efforts to Restore/Attain Equity

Regression models are presented in Table 5. Efforts to restore/attain equity were significantly related to underbenefit for husbands at both T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup>. Degree of overbenefit was unrelated to efforts to restore or attain equity.

Looking at the findings across the regression models, four of the six ways to restore or attain equity examined in this study were significantly related to perceptions of equity. Husbands reporting greater underbenefit at T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup> used threats more often as a negotiation strategy. Wives at T<sup>1</sup>, who perceived greater underbenefit, reported significantly less use of threats. Underbenefited men were also more likely to report using bargaining at T<sup>2</sup>.

Persons more likely to seek counseling were wives in underbenefited relationships at T<sup>1</sup> and husbands in overbenefited relationships at T<sup>2</sup>. The more underbenefit husbands perceived in their relationships at T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup>, the more likely they were to report thinking about seeking counseling. These results provide limited support for proposition 4, that women and men who perceive inequity in their marital relationships will make efforts to achieve greater equity. They also suggest that the use of various strategies differs by gender.

#### Personal Events and Family Transitions

One-hundred seven of the 113 couples reported occurrence of at least one event or transition in their relationships between T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup> (20 reported 1 event, 25 reported 2, and 62 reported 3 or more). Regression models used to examine the relationship between changes in equity

from T<sup>1</sup> to T<sup>2</sup> and personal events and family transitions occurring in the interim are presented in Table 6.

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Table 6 about here

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Neither of the models was significant for either husbands or wives, indicating no support for proposition 5, that personal events and family transitions affect individual perceptions of equity. However, observation of the individual variables indicates that changes in family structure were negatively related to reports of increased equity for wives.

#### Relationship Equity Over Time

Paired Comparisons *t*-tests were used to test whether there was a difference between husbands and wives in likelihood to report inequity. Results indicated no difference by gender in mean scores of perceived equity at T<sup>1</sup> ( $t = 1.52, p = .13$ ) or T<sup>2</sup> ( $t = 1.17, p = .24$ ). Couples' perceptions of relationship equity at Time 1 (mean = 6.54) and Time 2 (mean = 6.37) were correlated ( $r = .49, p < .01$ ), however, there was a significant decrease over the 4 years ( $t = -2.45, p = .02$ ). When examined by gender, husbands' perception of equity decreased ( $t = -2.05, p = .04$ ), while wives' perceptions did not change ( $t = -1.40, p = .16$ ). There were no significant changes by gender in degree of

underbenefit or overbenefit between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ . These results fail to support proposition 6, that perceptions of marital equity increase over time.

#### Relationship Stability

The mean equity score at  $T^1$  for the seven couples separated/divorced by  $T^2$  was 6.11 (out of 8), compared to 6.54 for those 113 couples still together at  $T^2$ . Wives who were separated/divorced by  $T^2$  had reported an equity mean of 3.13 (out of 4) at  $T^1$ . Wives still in their relationship at  $T^2$  had reported a mean equity score of 3.23 at  $T^1$ . The mean equity score indicated by husbands who were separated/divorced by  $T^2$  was 3.02 at  $T^1$ , 3.30 for those still in their marriages at  $T^2$ . When the underbenefited/overbenefited indexes are examined, 6 of the wives and 5 of the husbands who were separated/divorced by  $T^2$  reported some degree of underbenefit at  $T^1$ .

For the 113 couples still together at  $T^2$ , perceptions of equity contributed to wives' positive assessments of the stability of their marriages ( $F = 12.95$ ,  $p = .001$ ), but were unrelated ( $F = 1.93$ ,  $p = .17$ ) to husbands' assessments of relationship stability. Although the mean score of those seven couples who separated/divorced between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$  was lower than the mean of those together at  $T^2$ , the small number precludes the use of statistical analysis to provide support for proposition 7, that perceptions of inequity at

T<sup>1</sup> are related to marital instability. Relationship stability does, however, appear to be positively related to perceptions of equity among wives, but not husbands, still in their marriage.

## Discussion

Dual-career men and women in this study, as in other studies (Schafer & Keith, 1981; Rachlin & Hansen, 1985), did not differ by gender in likelihood to report equity. Yet, examination of well-being and distress in various life roles and by gender was essential to understanding individual perceptions of marital equity. There were gender differences in how parental and professional well-being, as well as esteem, contribute to feelings of equity. And results showed that dual-career women continue to experience higher role overload and role conflict than do men in these couples.

A major finding is that perceptions of inequity are not necessarily related to lower well-being and higher distress in all roles and may even affect some roles positively. Equity type differentiated between individual reports of marital well-being and distress, supporting the proposition that in dual-career couples, perceptions of equity are important to both the husband's and wife's feelings of well-being or distress in marital roles. Some findings, however, were unexpected. For example, overbenefited men reported lower self-esteem and professional well-being compared to men in equitable or underbenefited relationships. This seems to indicate that the costs of marital inequity in these two areas are greater for men in more traditionally

oriented families. Additional unexpected findings were: underbenefited husbands reported higher parental well-being than equitable or overbenefited husbands or equitable wives; and the more underbenefit women reported, the higher their professional well-being. These findings provide evidence that marital inequity is not necessarily associated with lowered well-being in all roles and that, as proposed, an examination of the effects of marital equity across multiple social roles can enhance understanding of equity theory.

As Hiller (1988) and Walsh (1989) predicted, dual-career husbands and wives seem to derive some benefit from changing attitudes and behavior relative to work and family roles. Men who perceived themselves as more greatly underbenefited reported higher parental well-being. These men may be similar to those Gilbert (1985, 1987) characterized as role-sharing or participant fathers. In her study, this type of father placed greater importance on being a parent and being involved in the family than did those she described as traditional fathers. Role-sharing fathers believed that greater parental rewards were a benefit of their parental involvement and thus derived feelings of enhanced well-being from their parenting roles.

The finding that greater underbenefit is related to higher professional well-being and less stress in the professional and parental roles for wives supports research

suggesting that employment and parenting roles are important sources of well-being for women (Barnett & Baruch, 1985). These results also strengthen previous research conclusions that having positive experiences in one role may offset the stressful effects associated with negative experiences in another role (Spreitzer, Snyder, & Larson, 1979). For example, satisfaction as a parent has been shown to compensate for men's dissatisfaction as a marital partner. However, it was thought that women's dissatisfaction with their marital roles was not as easily compensated for by satisfaction in any other role (Spreitzer et al., 1979). Results of this study indicate that perceptions of underbenefit in the marital role may be compensated for by feelings of well-being in the parental and professional roles for men and in the professional role for women.

Overall, it seems that the dual-career husbands and wives sampled are deriving benefits from participation in non-traditional roles, even when they perceive a lack of support in their marital roles. These couples seem to be transcending social role conditioning and taking on tasks that have been traditionally associated with the spouse of the opposite gender (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975). Husbands' feelings of equity are associated with well-being as parents. Women, on the other hand, who have been traditionally expected to invest heavily in family roles may

be increasingly valuing their own individualistic achievement vis a vis their careers (Scanzoni, Polonko, Teachman, & Thompson, 1989) and the consequent feelings of professional well-being affects perceptions of marital equity.

There is a movement towards more egalitarian role-taking (Scanzoni et al., 1989). These changes in family functioning may explain why perceptions of marital equity did not increase between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ , as expected, and even decreased for husbands. If wives are moving more quickly towards implementing their expectations for marital equity than are husbands, then men are facing increased pressure to give more support at home than husbands have historically been asked to give; possibly leaving husbands with the feeling that they are giving more than they are receiving. Or it may be that feeling underbenefited is preferable to espousing a traditional conceptualization of equity which is likely less comfortable for men than it once was (Scanzoni et al., 1989). Recall that men's reports of being more overbenefited are associated with having lower self-esteem, lower professional well-being, higher marital well-being and more frequent use of counseling services.

While the men in this sample were more likely than women to report a decrease in perceived equity between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ , the underbenefited among them were also more likely

to report efforts to try to restore or attain equity. Husbands more greatly underbenefited at T<sup>1</sup> or T<sup>2</sup> reported bargaining and threatening when negotiating for relationship changes. Underbenefited women at T<sup>1</sup> reported less frequent use of threats and more often sought counseling between T<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>2</sup>. Greater use of bargaining and threats by husbands could be explained by perceptions of power in the relationship. Research shows that persons feeling more powerful relative to their partners report using strategies involving persuasion and reasoning, while partners in more equitable relationships rely on bargaining, a cooperative strategy (Falbo & Peplau, 1980). Threats are usually used when other means of negotiation are not successful (Scanzoni & Polonko, 1980). It may be that underbenefited husbands first bargain for changes in their relationships, failing that they may threaten to move out or get a divorce. Results (means) show that threats were used much less frequently than bargaining. Lower marital well-being and higher marital distress among this group of men may be evidence of the discomfort men feel when faced with changes, even changes that have some benefit. Underbenefited wives may choose to seek counseling as a way of gaining power through an advocate, the counselor or therapist (Walsh, 1989).

Although this sample of dual-career couples experienced a number of life events between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$ , these events were not collectively related to changes in perceptions of equity in the interim. However, the number of changes in family structure experienced by women was negatively related to an increase in perceptions of equity. This finding supports reports that women are more likely than men to feel the effects of change in the family (Kessler & McLeod, 1984).

As expected, individual perceptions of equity at  $T^1$  were lower for those who divorced/separated between  $T^1$  and  $T^2$  than for those who are still together at  $T^2$ . However, because of the low number of couples who divorced or separated (7), the significance of these differences could not be empirically tested.

Perceptions of equity contributed positively to wives', but not husbands', assessments of stability. For husbands, being underbenefited may be an indication that they are contributing more to the relationship, thus their investments and therefore their perceptions of stability are higher. Past research suggests that increased investments are positively associated with relationship stability (Rusbult, 1983). For men, perceptions of equity may be less important to marital stability than are investments (Sprecher, 1988). For women, on the other hand, husbands'

contributions (as evidenced by perceptions of marital equity) are important to assessment of stability.

Societal and individual changes in perceptions of what is considered equitable may contribute to the complexity of the relationship between equity, well-being, and distress particularly among dual-career couples. Hiller (1988) argues that "significant social and economic forces have changed human life in ways that urge both new behaviors in the context of daily living and modified self-concepts for men and women" (p. 1). Dual-career couples tend to be highly educated, socially involved and informed dyads (Walsh, 1989). Because of these characteristics, they are among those persons most likely to be affected by, and to effect social changes (Hiller, 1988). Both husbands and wives in this sample seem to be experimenting with non-gender-based roles and deriving a sense of well-being as well as some distress from them. These results may be an indication that the conceptualization of marital equity is changing; that for both husbands and wives, experiencing well-being in nontraditional roles will lead to increased perceptions of marital equity as couples find a comfortable balance in their many life roles. Additional longitudinal research is needed to adequately test this hypothesis.

Qualitative research which explores the perceptions of dual-career couples relative to equity and performance of

non-gender-based roles would be informative. For example, do husband's who concomitantly report overbenefit and lower self-esteem and professional well-being also espouse more traditional attitudes towards work and family roles? And do wives who perceive underbenefit in their marital relationship, as well as higher professional well-being, and husbands, who perceive underbenefit, but also higher parental well-being, view themselves as consciously moving towards a goal of equity? Answers to these questions are important to understanding the process by which couples transcend traditional social roles and redefine marital equity to more adequately reflect life in contemporary marriages where both spouses are employed.

Additional research utilizing larger samples of various family types is also needed so that a multivariate model including well-being and distress across roles, as well as efforts to restore equity and personal events and family transitions might be employed. This larger model would facilitate identification of the contribution each variable makes, in relation to the others, as they jointly contribute to perceptions of marital equity.

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**Table 1.**  
**Means by Equity Group and Gender**

|                     | <u>Husbands</u> |           |             | <u>Wives</u> |           |             |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
|                     | <u>Under</u>    | <u>Eq</u> | <u>Over</u> | <u>Under</u> | <u>Eq</u> | <u>Over</u> |
| 1986 n              | 27              | 61        | 25          | 61           | 38        | 14          |
| 1990 n              | 36              | 54        | 23          | 57           | 49        | 7           |
| <b>Well-being</b>   |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| <b>Marital</b>      |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 4.93            | 5.65      | 4.87        | 5.28         | 5.78      | 5.91        |
| 1990                | 4.88            | 5.40      | 5.30        | 5.06         | 5.73      | 5.49        |
| <b>Professional</b> |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 5.24            | 5.29      | 4.55        | 5.37         | 5.28      | 5.63        |
| 1990                | 5.39            | 5.28      | 4.73        | 5.46         | 5.27      | 5.86        |
| <b>Parental</b>     |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 4.47            | 3.06      | 2.88        | 3.37         | 2.91      | 4.34        |
| 1990                | 3.93            | 2.81      | 2.89        | 3.07         | 3.12      | 3.86        |
| <b>Esteem</b>       |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 5.69            | 5.61      | 5.40        | 5.93         | 5.81      | 5.95        |
| 1990                | 5.93            | 5.73      | 5.20        | 5.81         | 5.71      | 6.05        |
| <b>Distress</b>     |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| <b>Marital</b>      |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 3.16            | 3.00      | 3.36        | 3.34         | 2.82      | 3.66        |
| 1990                | 3.31            | 3.09      | 3.50        | 3.70         | 3.05      | 2.84        |
| <b>Professional</b> |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 3.48            | 3.59      | 3.57        | 3.65         | 3.30      | 3.87        |
| 1990                | 3.53            | 3.52      | 4.05        | 3.65         | 3.71      | 3.10        |
| <b>Parental</b>     |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 2.56            | 1.96      | 1.87        | 2.25         | 1.75      | 3.17        |
| 1990                | 2.36            | 1.63      | 2.39        | 2.28         | 2.18      | 2.21        |
| <b>Depression</b>   |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 2.96            | 2.92      | 3.35        | 3.14         | 2.66      | 3.57        |
| 1990                | 2.17            | 2.26      | 2.87        | 2.49         | 2.31      | 1.86        |
| <b>Overload</b>     |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 4.04            | 4.04      | 4.11        | 5.29         | 4.76      | 5.32        |
| 1990                | 4.09            | 3.89      | 3.89        | 5.41         | 4.76      | 4.36        |
| <b>Conflict</b>     |                 |           |             |              |           |             |
| 1986                | 3.40            | 3.28      | 3.71        | 3.98         | 3.18      | 3.71        |
| 1990                | 3.58            | 3.41      | 3.89        | 4.31         | 3.64      | 3.49        |

**Note.** Under = underbenefited; Over = overbenefited; Eq = equitable.

Table 2.

Summary of MANOVA Results for Well-Being and Distress

| Source                  | df | F             | F        |                     |         |
|-------------------------|----|---------------|----------|---------------------|---------|
| <b>Well-Being</b>       |    |               |          |                     |         |
| Multivariate F Tests    |    | 1986          | 1990     |                     |         |
| Gender                  | 1  | 3.82**        | 1.93     |                     |         |
| Equity Group            | 2  | 3.67***       | 3.89***  |                     |         |
| Interaction             | 2  | 1.91          | 2.07*    |                     |         |
| Univariate F Tests      |    | <u>Gender</u> |          | <u>Equity Group</u> |         |
|                         |    | 1986          | 1990     | 1986                | 1990    |
|                         |    | F             | F        | F                   | F       |
| Marital Well-Being      |    | 2.87          | 1.44     | 9.76***             | 8.72*** |
| Professional Well-Being |    | 4.39*         | 3.19     | 1.99                | 2.37    |
| Parental Well-Being     |    | .01           | .02      | 2.05                | .78     |
| Esteem                  |    | 7.24**        | .86      | .52                 | 3.43*   |
|                         |    |               |          |                     |         |
|                         | df | F             | F        |                     |         |
| <b>Distress</b>         |    |               |          |                     |         |
| Multivariate F Tests    |    | 1986          | 1990     |                     |         |
| Gender                  | 1  | 3.92***       | 3.26**   |                     |         |
| Equity Group            | 2  | 1.05          | 1.41     |                     |         |
| Interaction             | 2  | 1.03          | 1.22     |                     |         |
| Univariate F Tests      |    | <u>Gender</u> |          | <u>Equity Group</u> |         |
|                         |    | 1986          | 1990     | 1986                | 1990    |
|                         |    | F             | F        | F                   | F       |
| Marital Distress        |    | .40           | .65      | 3.81*               | 4.34*   |
| Professional Distress   |    | .00           | .00      | .49                 | .51     |
| Parental Distress       |    | .25           | .84      | 1.81                | 1.51    |
| Depression              |    | .01           | .01      | 2.03                | .81     |
| Role Overload           |    | 26.08***      | 26.17*** | .76                 | 2.21    |
| Role Conflict           |    | 2.16          | 4.71*    | 3.00*               | 2.67    |

\* p &lt; .05 \*\* p &lt; .01 \*\*\* p &lt; .001

Note: Tukey's Studentized Range (HSD) Test used for Univariate F Tests and Wilks' Criterion used for Multivariate Tests.

Table 3.  
Well-Being Regression Models

| Underbenefited Index | Husbands (N = 113) |          |                |          | Wives (N = 113) |          |                |          |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------|----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|----------------|----------|
|                      | 1986               |          | 1990           |          | 1986            |          | 1990           |          |
|                      | Beta               | t        | Beta           | t        | Beta            | t        | Beta           | t        |
| Marital              | -.33               | -3.55*** | -.41           | -4.26*** | -.37            | -4.03*** | -.55           | -6.43*** |
| Professional         | --                 | --       | .29            | 3.09**   | .13             | 1.36     | .17            | 1.98*    |
| Parental             | .26                | 2.87**   | .27            | 3.16**   | -.03            | -.35     | -.07           | -.87     |
| Esteem               | .07                | .72      | --             | --       | .09             | 1.01     | .14            | 1.57     |
| Model                | R <sup>2</sup>     | .15      | R <sup>2</sup> | .23      | R <sup>2</sup>  | .15      | R <sup>2</sup> | .29      |
|                      | F                  | 6.29***  | F              | 10.72*** | F               | 4.56**   | F              | 11.23*** |
| Husbands (N = 113)   |                    |          |                |          |                 |          |                |          |
| Overbenefited Index  | Husbands (N = 113) |          |                |          | Wives (N = 113) |          |                |          |
|                      | 1986               |          | 1990           |          | 1986            |          | 1990           |          |
|                      | Beta               | t        | Beta           | t        | Beta            | t        | Beta           | t        |
| Marital              | --                 | --       | .21            | 2.12*    | .23             | 2.43*    | .09            | .90      |
| Professional         | -.18               | -1.71    | -.42           | -4.22*** | .10             | 1.09     | .14            | 1.42     |
| Parental             | -.07               | -.76     | .01            | .16      | .19             | 2.02*    | -.08           | -.83     |
| Esteem               | .07                | .70      | --             | --       | .01             | .06      | .05            | .52      |
| Model                | R <sup>2</sup>     | .04      | R <sup>2</sup> | .14      | R <sup>2</sup>  | .10      | R <sup>2</sup> | .05      |
|                      | F                  | 1.42     | F              | 5.96***  | F               | 2.79*    | F              | 1.50     |

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

Nota. Husband's marital and professional well-being were highly correlated at T<sup>1</sup> (r = .66). Since the influence of the two variables was in opposite directions, the alternative of combining the scores was counterproductive to study goals and empirically unsound. Marital well-being made a greater contribution to the underbenefited model and professional well-being made a greater contribution to the overbenefited model, therefore, these variables were retained in the respective models. Husband's marital well-being and esteem were highly correlated (r = .67) at T<sup>2</sup>, thus, in keeping with study goals, esteem was excluded from the analysis.

Table 4.  
Distress Regression Models

| Underbenefited<br>Index | Husbands (N = 113) |              |                    | Wives (N = 113) |              |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|
|                         | 1986<br>Beta       | 1990<br>Beta | t                  | 1986<br>Beta    | 1990<br>Beta | t                  |
| Marital                 | --                 | --           | --                 | .13             | 1.02         | .39 3.47***        |
| Professional            | .02                | -.10         | -.72               | -.13            | -1.20        | -.30 -2.89***      |
| Parental                | .24                | 2.30*        | .21 2.00*          | -.13            | -1.18        | -.19 -1.94*        |
| Depression              | .05                | .45          | -.08 .73           | -.15            | -1.31        | -.03 - .26         |
| Role-Overload           | -.04               | -.36         | .12 .93            | .16             | 1.32         | .19 1.76           |
| Role-Conflict           | -.01               | -.08         | -.04 .33           | .18             | 1.42         | -- --              |
| Model                   | R <sup>2</sup>     | .06          | R <sup>2</sup> .05 | R <sup>2</sup>  | .07          | R <sup>2</sup> .17 |
|                         | F                  | 1.30         | F 1.23             | F               | 1.35         | F 4.34**           |

| Overbenefited<br>Index | Husbands (N = 113) |              |                    | Wives (N = 113) |              |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|
|                        | 1986<br>Beta       | 1990<br>Beta | t                  | 1986<br>Beta    | 1990<br>Beta | t                  |
| Marital                | --                 | --           | --                 | .03             | .24          | -.06 - .48         |
| Professional           | -.13               | -.99         | .13 .95            | .14             | 1.29         | -.12 -1.12         |
| Parental               | -.17               | -1.62        | .08 .81            | .28             | 2.64**       | -.02 - .15         |
| Depression             | .02                | .19          | .21 1.84           | .07             | .65          | -.01 - .09         |
| Role-Overload          | -.07               | -.64         | -.08 - .65         | -.22            | -1.80        | -.17 -1.55         |
| Role-Conflict          | .27                | 2.28*        | .01 .03            | -.16            | -1.27        | -- --              |
| Model                  | R <sup>2</sup>     | .06          | R <sup>2</sup> .09 | R <sup>2</sup>  | .10          | R <sup>2</sup> .08 |
|                        | F                  | 1.33         | F 2.16             | F               | 1.78         | F 1.95             |

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

Note. Husbands' marital and professional distress ( $T^1 r = .72$ ;  $T^2 r = .76$ ) were highly correlated, therefore marital distress was excluded from the analysis. Wife's marital distress and role conflict ( $r = .67$ ) were highly correlated, therefore wives' role conflict was excluded from the analysis.

Table 5.  
Regression Models for Efforts to Restore/Attain Equity

| <u>Underbenefited</u><br><u>Index</u> | Husbands (N = 113) |       |                |        | Wives (N = 113) |        |                |       |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|----------------|-------|
|                                       | 1986               |       | 1990           |        | 1986            |        | 1990           |       |
|                                       | Beta               | t     | Beta           | t      | Beta            | t      | Beta           | t     |
| Bargaining                            | .17                | 1.80  | .19            | 2.07*  | .07             | .72    | -.12           | -1.17 |
| Threats                               | .24                | 2.48* | .24            | 2.53*  | -.21            | -2.04* | -.02           | -.17  |
| Manipulation                          | .08                | .82   | -.06           | -.66   | -.13            | -1.18  | -.05           | -.42  |
| Sel. Ignore                           | .07                | .71   | .08            | .81    | -.02            | -.20   | .11            | 1.03  |
| Counseling                            | .06                | .63   | .09            | .99    | .24             | 2.42*  | .14            | 1.34  |
| Thought/Couns.                        | .20                | 2.22* | .27            | 3.04** | .03             | .28    | .02            | .22   |
| Model                                 | R <sup>2</sup>     | .14   | R <sup>2</sup> | .16    | R <sup>2</sup>  | .09    | R <sup>2</sup> | .03   |
|                                       | F                  | 2.81* | F              | 3.48** | F               | 1.84   | F              | .64   |

| <u>Overbenefited</u><br><u>Index</u> | Husbands (N = 113) |       |                |       | Wives (N = 113) |       |                |      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|----------------|------|
|                                      | 1986               |       | 1990           |       | 1986            |       | 1990           |      |
|                                      | Beta               | t     | Beta           | t     | Beta            | t     | Beta           | t    |
| Bargaining                           | -.17               | -1.67 | -.15           | -1.55 | -.14            | -1.35 | .12            | 1.21 |
| Threats                              | -.11               | -1.15 | -.11           | -1.11 | .05             | .47   | -.04           | -.33 |
| Manipulation                         | .14                | 1.34  | .03            | .26   | .01             | .07   | .06            | .52  |
| Sel. Ignore                          | -.01               | .04   | .05            | .47   | .06             | .60   | .14            | 1.31 |
| Counseling                           | .03                | .27   | .19            | 2.07* | -.12            | -1.17 | .01            | .09  |
| Thought/Couns                        | -.05               | -.49  | -.08           | -.84  | .08             | .83   | -.02           | -.15 |
| Model                                | R <sup>2</sup>     | .06   | R <sup>2</sup> | .08   | R <sup>2</sup>  | .04   | R <sup>2</sup> | .04  |
|                                      | F                  | 1.11  | F              | 1.50  | F               | .76   | F              | .74  |

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 6.  
Regression Models for Changes in Equity as Related  
to Personal Events and Family Transitions

|                  | Husbands |          | Wives |          |
|------------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|
|                  | Beta     | <i>t</i> | Beta  | <i>t</i> |
| Illness/death    | .00      | .01      | -.02  | -.17     |
| Job Changes      | .12      | 1.21     | -.14  | -1.48    |
| Family Structure | .07      | .69      | -.21  | -2.17*   |
| Model            | $R^2$    | .02      | $R^2$ | .05      |
|                  | $F$      | .64      | $F$   | 2.07     |

\*  $p < .05$

**Appendix A**  
**Literature Review**

## Review of Literature

The purpose of this review is to more fully describe the literature relevant to this study.

### Equity Theory

Equity theory is often used to explain the behavior which is likely to occur in a relationship which is perceived by either partner to be unfair or inequitable. Equity, as a concept important to the successful conduct of human relationships, evolved from the social exchange perspective into a full-fledged theory in the 1960's and 1970's (Adams, 1965; Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1973; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). It was formulated as an explanation for social behavior, particularly as it related to monetary exchanges (Adams, 1965), but soon was found useful for exploring other social relationships (Walster et al., 1973).

While some have rejected the usefulness of equity theory for explaining interpersonal relationships (Morris, 1971; Rubin, 1973; Thompson, 1989), others have argued that perceptions of equity are as salient in love relationships as in other social relationships (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Hatfield, Utne, & Traupmann, 1979; Kelley, 1979; Lederer & Jackson, 1968; Walster et al., 1973, 1978). Empirical work has demonstrated that close friends and married couples are

concerned about equity in relationships (Rachlin, 1987; Rachlin & Hansen, 1985; Schafer & Keith, 1980, 1981).

Equity theory (Walster et al. 1973, 1978) predicts that when individuals compare their inputs and outcomes (both negative and positive) in a relationship with those of the partner, and they do not balance, then they perceive the relationship as inequitable. Perceptions of relationship inequity lead to feelings of distress--the more inequity, the more distress. Once inequity is perceived, theory predicts that individuals will try to restore equity in reality, try to convince themselves that things are fairer than they seem to be, or leave the relationship (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Walster et al., 1978).

Equity theory has been used in studies which have explored the relationship between perceptions of equity and self-disclosure (Chelune, Rosenfeld, & Waring, 1985), marital adjustment (Davidson, 1984), sexual satisfaction (Hatfield, Greenberger, Traupmann, & Lambert, 1982), older men's and women's relationships with adult kin (Peterson & Peterson, 1988), extramarital sexuality (Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978) and differences between Mexican- and Anglo-American couples in perceptions of equity (Hartzler & Franco, 1985).

Some studies using equity theory make a distinction between those who report being overbenefited and those who

indicate being underbenefited in inequitable relationships (Cate, Lloyd, & Long, 1988; Davidson, 1984; Hatfield, Greenberger, Traupmann, & Lambert, 1982; Rachlin, 1987; Sprecher, 1986). For the most part, the data demonstrate that those in equitable relationships will be most content, those who are overbenefited will be slightly distressed and the underbenefited will be most distressed.

### Equity in the Marital Relationship

While equity theory has been used to examine friendships and dating relationships, it has only recently been employed in the study of marital relationships (Gilbert, 1987; Hatfield, Greenberger, Traupmann, & Lambert, 1982; Hiller & Philliber, 1989; Rachlin, 1987; Rachlin & Hansen, 1985; Schafer & Keith, 1981; Sexton & Perlman, 1989). Marital equity has also been described in the literature as interdependence (Kelley, 1979; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Weingarten, 1978), and as marital quid pro quo (Fish & Fish, 1986; Jackson, 1965; Walsh, 1989). While there are differences in these conceptualizations, they have in common an emphasis on a balance acceptable to both partners in the relationship.

Interdependence is used by Weingarten (1978) to describe a style of interaction that enables dual-career partners to cope with their demanding lives. In qualitative interviews with 54 dual-career couples who were judged

successful in both work and family areas, Weingarten searched for commonalities which could explain marital success. She found repeated reference to terms like "strength, sharing, mutual respect and regard, help, cooperation, dependence, reliance, activity, energy, taking over, picking up the slack, letting go, give and take, and willpower" (p. 148) by the couples to describe their marital relationship. She conceptualized this combination of qualities as interdependence.

While admitting that achieving interdependence was difficult, the couples who had evolved into this style felt successful in meeting their needs in both work and family roles. In Weingarten's (1978) sample, the older the couple, the more likely they were to use interdependence as an interactional style. Couples reported learning to sustain a balance of giving and taking, not through maintaining mental "tally sheets" of what had been given and received, but through acceptance of a wide range of behaviors in each other, open communication and a desire to share.

Marital relationships, like all other social relationships, are grounded in rules which develop as the relationship evolves (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Fish & Fish, 1986; Neil & Kniskern, 1982; Walsh, 1989). In a marriage these rules, whether consciously negotiated or not, form an agreement, or quid pro quo for the relationship. What

Weingarten (1978) described as interdependence is a form of quid pro quo discussed by Walsh (1989).

Quid pro quo literally means "something for something" (Walsh, 1989, p. 268). Like interdependence, quid pro quo does not imply exact equality i.e., you do the dishes tonight and I'll do them tomorrow night, but rather that each party receives something for what they give. The relationship quid pro quo is the basis for partners defining themselves "in relation to each other" (Jackson, 1965, p. 591). It is not dependent upon the individual differences of the partners, but on how they collaborate on a wide variety of tasks to arrive at a definition of self in relation to the partner (Fish & Fish, 1986; Walsh, 1989). If one partner is unsatisfied with the collaboration, i.e., judges it to be inequitable, then the quid pro quo is one of inequity. The quid pro quo is a descriptor of the interaction in the relationship, and, like interdependence, its basis is the couple rather than the individual.

The marital quid pro quo then, is idiosyncratic to the relationship, is a function of the couple rather than the individual partners, and may not be easily assessed by outside observers (Fish & Fish, 1986). Satisfaction with it or perception of its equity by the couple has implications for the success of the relationship (Walsh, 1989).

Awareness of the bargain or quid pro quo may only come when a partner fails to live up to an expectation (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982), or when family transitions, such as the birth of a baby, occur (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Walsh, 1989). It is at this point that an individual may begin to question if what he or she is putting into the relationship is greater than the rewards from it. In other words is it fair?

Perceptions of equity in relationships have been assessed most often in previous studies with Hatfield's Global Measure of Equity/Inequity (Hatfield, 1978), or adaptations of that measure (Cate, Lloyd, & Long, 1988; Davidson, 1984; Felmler, Sprecher, & Bassin, 1990; Rachlin & Hansen, 1985; Rachlin, 1987; Sprecher, 1986). In a global measure, the participant is asked, after considering what they and their partner put into a relationship compared to what they get out of it, who is getting a better deal, ranging from 1, I am getting a much better deal to 7, my partner is getting a much better deal. Schafer and Keith (1981) use a more specific assessment of equity which utilizes a comparison of the individual's own efforts with the partner's efforts in five marital roles: cooking, housekeeping, provider, companion, and parent (Schafer & Keith, 1981).

Another way to conceptualize equity, which may be more conducive to the application of equity theory to interpersonal relationships, is to focus on the balance partners perceive in the components which make up the interpersonal domain. Blumstein and Schwartz (1983) use such a measure in their book American Couples. Their instrument requests partner's assessment of who does more "favors for the other, even when not asked", "listening", and "considering the partner", among others. Since these characteristics coincide with those terms which Weingarten's (1978) interdependent dual-career couples used to describe why their marriages worked so well, it is proposed that this instrument will reflect interpersonal equity more effectively than global or role specific measures.

#### Equity in dual-career marriages

According to Hiller (1988) and Walsh (1989) the prototype for the equitable marital relationship is the dual-career couple. This family type is defined as one in which both husband and wife pursue careers and at the same time maintain a family life together (Hiller, 1988; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Sekaran, 1986). The implicit agreement between partners in these couples is that the job investments of wife and husband will be of equal importance to the couple and each will share responsibility for family roles, as a matter of equity (Walsh, 1989, p. 273).

Theorists in human development suggest that the integration of instrumental and expressive dimensions within the individual leads to a personal wholeness, maturity (Jung as cited in Olds, 1981), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1970, 1971). Rapoport and Rapoport (1975) think of equity in the marital relationship as "a goal facilitating optimal self-realization and whole life satisfaction of people in family settings" (p. 422).

A sharing of nurturing and provider roles, while potentially leading to personal wholeness and self-actualization, can be difficult to attain however, since the old rules don't apply anymore. "What each owes to and wants from the relationship must be decided and expressed by partners" (Hiller, 1988, p. 15). Negotiation and renegotiation of both the rules of the relationship (basic) and the everyday decisions (non-basic), when successful, strengthens the bonds of the social relationship and makes it more equitable and rewarding (Scanzoni & Scanzoni, 1981).

While equity in dual-career relationships was given theoretical attention in the 1970's (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Rice, 1979), it has only recently been empirically examined (Rachlin, 1987; Rachlin & Hansen, 1985; Sexton & Perlman, 1989). Rapoport & Rapoport (1978) suggested that work on dual-career couples would be enhanced by longitudinal studies which investigate the consequences of

this life style. But only a few studies (i.e., Yohalem, 1979; Poloma, Pendleton, & Garland, 1982) have employed a longitudinal perspective; none which explored equity in relationship to the lifestyle.

Those writing about dual-career relationships from a clinical perspective have noted that conflict areas exist particularly around issues of equity (Gilbert, 1985; Rice, 1979; Tryon & Tryon, 1982; Walsh, 1989; Yogev, 1983). Rice (1979) suggests that the therapist's job is to "help the partners achieve or restore a sense of equity in the marital relationship" (p. 103); and Walsh (1989) believes that an examination of the current marital quid pro quo, and its constraints on interaction, can allow for negotiation of new relationship rules for a more "functional balance in the partner's lives" (p. 282). From the standpoint of clinical intervention, the equity model provides a means of helping dual-career couples to identify problem areas in their relationships and to renegotiate these issues.

Well-being and Perceptions of Equity. Equity theory posits that individuals in equitable relationships will have greater well-being and be less distressed than those in inequitable relationships (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Walster et al. 1978). Rachlin and Hansen (1985) found that dual-career women who perceived their relationships as equitable, reported a significantly greater degree of individual well-

being than those women who perceived their relationships as inequitable. No significant difference was found for men. In contrast, significant differences among equity groups in terms of general well-being were found for men, but not for women, in a later study by Rachlin (1987). These differences may be explained by differences in sample size (32 couples in 1985 and 112 in 1987) or a difference in the breakdown of equity groups--equitable vs. inequitable in 1985 and equitable vs. overbenefited vs. underbenefited in 1987. It is also possible that the measure of well-being used in these studies (General Well-Being Schedule, Fazio, 1977) was not adequate to capture the potential sources of well-being for those dual-career men and women sampled.

Perceptions of well-being for both men and women are derived from feelings of gratification and reward in various social roles performed in day-to-day living (Barnett & Baruch, 1987), as well as from perceptions of self-esteem (Baruch, Barnett, & Rivers, 1983). Assessment of well-being in the three major social roles (marital, parental, and professional) may therefore, more clearly delineate the effect of perceptions of equity than a more global measure of well-being. Additionally, given the results of recent research, an examination of well-being in the various social roles by gender may be informative.

For example, the role of paid employee, originally thought to be associated only with distress in women, is now considered to be a source of well-being for both men and women (Barnett & Baruch, 1987). And husbands' experiences in family roles have been found to be more important to psychological well-being than previously believed (Pleck, 1985). Furthermore, for both men and women, stress in the professional role has been found to have been compensated for by well-being in the marital role. However, well-being in the parental role offsets dissatisfaction in the marital role for men, but not women (Spreitzer, Snyder, & Larson, 1979). The role of husband appears to be pivotal to a man's psychological well-being and the professional role appears to be pivotal for a woman (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987). Therefore, in order to ascertain the effects of perceptions of equity on well-being, it seems necessary to focus on well-being and distress as they are experienced in the three major family roles, marital, parental, and professional, by gender.

Marital well-being, as defined here, includes feelings of spousal support and understanding. Parental and professional well-being include feelings of competence, being appreciated and in control.

Marital or spousal support is central to the successful maintenance of a dual-career family lifestyle (Gilbert,

1985, 1987; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1982). Affirmation from the spouse is considered a crucial component of marital well-being. There is a significant relationship between feelings of equity in the marital relationship and well-being among employed wives (Vanfossen, 1981). Marital adjustment (including dyadic satisfaction, cohesion, consensus and affectual expression) has been found to differentiate between couples in equitable and inequitable relationships (Rachlin, 1987). While feelings of marital well-being have been associated with perceptions of relationship equity, the connection has not been made between perceptions of equity and feelings of professional and parental well-being.

Research has demonstrated that self-esteem is positively associated with being equitably treated (Schafer, Keith, & Lorenz, 1984). Schafer, (1988) investigated the role of self-concept as a component of equitable/inequitable relationships and found that the higher the self-concept, the greater the marital partner's perception of equity. Husbands typically struggle with esteem issues stemming from a perceived loss of power and prestige or decreased freedom in their occupational pursuits, competition with spouses, or involvement in "women's work" within the family (Gilbert, 1987); an indication that their self-esteem may be affected by an equitable relationship. Reported self-esteem as a

measure of well-being should, therefore, differentiate between couples who perceive their relationships to be equitable or inequitable.

Distress and Perceptions of Equity. Distress, as conceptualized here, includes feelings of distress associated with the marital, professional, and parental role, as well as role-overload, role conflict, and depression. As stated before, the relationship between perceptions of equity and feelings of distress and well-being in dual-career couples has not been explored separately in previous studies.

In terms of the marital role, Guelzow, Bird and Koboll (in press) found that perceptions of equity are related to lower marital stress for both men and women in dual-career families. Distress, deriving specifically from the parental role, and its association with marital equity has not been addressed in the literature. A connection could be inferred, however, from an examination of the results of several studies (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Gilbert, 1985; Veroff, Douvan, & Kulka, 1981). Research suggests that the role of mother may be women's primary source of stress (Barnett & Baruch, 1987), particularly if the marital relationship is perceived to be inequitable. Parenting is a source of stress both for men who participate in child care, as well as for those who don't; those who help, feel it

interferes with their career and those who don't, feel that parenting responsibilities are a point of contention in their marital relationship (Gilbert, 1985). These feelings of stress for both men and women, relative to their parental roles, are likely to contribute to feelings of inequity.

A negative relationship has been found between depression and feelings of equity in married couples (Schafer & Keith, 1980), with equity being a more important factor relating to depression for employed wives (Vanfossen, 1981). It should be noted that while women, in general, experience higher rates of depression than men (Miller & Kirsch, 1987), those who are mothers, married, or employed have lower levels of depression than women who are not (Kandel, Davies, & Raveis, 1985).

Inequity experienced in intimate relationships is related to positive and negative emotions about the relationship and/or the partner. Inequity arising from feeling underbenefited was found to be the most important predictor of negative emotions for both men and women (Sprecher, 1986). Feelings of depression should then, differentiate between couples in inequitable and equitable relationships.

Role overload is defined as feeling time pressure from an inordinate number of responsibilities (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Guelzow et al., in press; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978).

Role conflict includes any situation in which difficulty is experienced fulfilling the sometimes incompatible expectations of multiple, highly salient roles (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Bird & Bird, 1986; Gilbert, 1985; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978).

Research has consistently found that women perform the major portion of domestic work, even when employed, making them particularly vulnerable to feelings of role overload and role conflict (Voydanoff, 1987; Yogev, 1981). Recent studies also indicate that dual-career men are beginning to report similar feelings (Bird, Dwyer, & Geasler, 1988; Gilbert, 1985) and that these feelings may be related to perceived equity (Guelzow et.al., in press). Given these findings, it is hypothesized that role overload and role conflict may differentiate between those who report perceptions of relationship equity or inequity in dual-career relationships.

Efforts to Restore Equity. According to equity theory, when partners begin to perceive that there are inequities in the relationship, they should be inclined to do something about the situation (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982; Hatfield, Utne, & Traupmann, 1979). Theoretically, they would "(a) try to make their relationship actually more equitable (b) try to convince themselves (and their partners) that things are fairer than they seem to be or (c) withdraw from their

relationship" (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982, p. 235). In order to increase equity couples can negotiate with the partner and/or seek professional help (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Rice, 1979; Walsh, 1989). Partners who choose to try to restore psychological equity, may "close their eyes and reassure themselves that really, everything is in perfect order" (Hatfield et al., 1979, p. 120), using selective ignoring as a coping strategy. Leaving the relationship is the final alternative to living with an inequitable relationship. We expect to find that couples who reported being in an inequitable relationship in 1986 will also report trying one or more of these options over the past four years.

Personal Events and Family Transitions. Personal events and family transitions usually require reconsideration and renegotiation of the marital quid pro quo (Walsh, 1989). While many couples develop equitable marital structures before children are born, substantial renegotiation may be required to sustain or create equitable relationships in parenting and other life roles after a birth (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Walsh, 1989). Among dual-career couples, the careers of wives are much more likely to be interrupted, deferred, or altered by the presence of children than are the careers of husbands (Heckman, Bryson, & Bryson, 1977)

increasing the likelihood of perceptions of inequity by the wife.

While theoretically the birth of a child would necessitate a re-balancing of marital roles, and may lead to at least temporary perceptions of inequity, no significant difference in equity based on parental status was found by Rachlin & Hansen (1985). Perhaps the sample was too small (13 out of 32 couples were parents), or sufficient time had elapsed between the birth of the child and their participation in the study, for them to have successfully renegotiated their marital bargain. This possibility is supported by the finding that perceptions of equity increased for both husbands and wives as they went from the life cycle stage with at least one child under the age of 6, to the stage of having children 6-18, and finally to the stage of having no children living at home (Schafer & Keith, 1981). It is unlikely that length of marriage would explain the lack of significance, since mean length of marriage for the two groups in the sample was 6.7 and 5.9 years.

Other personal events or family transitions such as retirement, job changes, major illness or injury, death of a child or parent, change of residence, or an additional person(s) moving into the home have been found to influence interpersonal tension and role strains in the family (Lavee, McCubbin, & Olson, 1987). Women have been shown to be

particularly affected by events such as ill health and death of loved ones (Kessler & McLeod, 1984).

While equity theory and conceptualizations of *quid pro quo* and interdependence postulate that family events create a need for renegotiation of roles and responsibilities within the marital relationship, no literature has been found which explicitly connects these events with perceptions of equity. It could be inferred that successful negotiation would not result in a change in perceptions; whereas unsuccessful or no negotiation would decrease perceptions of equity.

Relationship Equity Over Time. Perceived equity has been found to increase over the family life-cycle stages (Schafer & Keith, 1981; Traupmann & Hatfield, 1983). That is, the longer the couple has been married, the greater the perceived equity. In a retrospective study, older women recalled a moderate level of equity during their dating and newlywed years, lower equity in the middle phase of their marriages and increasing equity in the last years of their marriage (Traupmann & Hatfield, 1983).

Schafer and Keith consider alternate explanations for why equity in the marital relationship has been found to increase over time. First, it may reflect the perception of "averaging out" that takes place in a long-term relationship, as accommodations and adjustments are made by

each of the partners. Or it may be that a change in definition of selves from "me" and "you", to "we", occurs as the partnership evolves through years of identification and empathy; that concern with equity has shifted away from the husband-wife relationship to the relationship between spouses, as a unit or partnership, and other individuals or groups (Traupmann, Peterson, Utne, & Hatfield, 1981). Higher perceptions of equity over time may also reflect successful efforts by partners to restore equity psychologically, if not in reality (Walster et al., 1978). The final explanation offered by Keith and Schafer is that perceived equity has not increased for older couples, but that individuals who perceive inequity in their marital relationship may be more likely to divorce by the time they reach the later life-cycle stages and are less likely to be represented in their sample. No dual-career studies have addressed the issue of marital break-up in inequitable relationships. The current research adds to the literature by following-up the same couple four years later, thus providing a longitudinal perspective.

Stability of Relationship. Those relationships perceived as equitable by the partners are expected to continue and remain stable (Austin & Tobiasen, 1982). Evidence to support this proposition comes from a study by Walster, Traupmann, and Walster (1978) of 537 college students in

casual and steady dating relationships. Those men and women in relationships perceived as balanced were generally in stable relationships and were confident that they would be together 1 year and 5 years into the future. In a follow-up study, three and one-half months later, couples in fair relationships were more likely to still be dating than were other couples (Walster et al., 1978). No similar studies of married couples, dual-career or otherwise, were found in the literature reviewed.

It is expected that perceptions of equity at  $T^1$  will be associated with the couple being together at  $T^2$ . Additionally, we expect to find that couples who are separated or divorced at  $T^2$  were more likely to be in relationships which one or both perceived as inequitable at  $T^1$ .

In summary, the present study builds upon previous work by utilizing a longitudinal design to explore relationship equity in dual-career couples. Five propositions of equity theory are applied to the dual-career marital relationship: 1) men and women in equitable relationships will be more content and those in inequitable relationships will be more distressed; 2) individuals in inequitable relationships will make efforts to restore or attain equity; 3) family transitions will affect perceptions of equity; 4 relationships will become more equitable over time; and 5)

equitable relationships will continue and be more stable than inequitable relationships. Furthermore, gender differences are expected to influence the investigation.

**Appendix B**  
**Methodology**

## Methodology

This appendix describes in greater detail the research methodology utilized in this study. This project is a follow-up of a study done in 1986, therefore the sample and procedures for both 1986 and 1990 are described.

### Sample and Procedure in 1986

Data used in the 1986 study were collected from a purposive sample of dual-career couples drawn from the Roanoke, Blacksburg, and Christiansburg areas of Southwest Virginia using the following method. The five project researchers generated a list of approximately 25 dual-career couples meeting the study criteria from their professional and social networks. Those initially contacted were asked for names and addresses of other dual-career couples. This process continued until an expanded list of 310 couples was identified. The selection process allowed the inclusion of participants from a wide variety of professional occupation categories. Using the Hollingshead Occupational Scale (1958), it was ascertained whether respondents fit within the top three categories designated by Hollingshead as professional. Only respondents employed full time (more than 35 hours per week) were included in the study. Responses were received from 70% of the sample after three follow-up contacts. Examples of career positions held by those in the sample included: lawyer, professor, architect,

teacher, hospital administrator, social worker, bank manager, sales manager, counselor, registered nurse, and dentist. All respondents and their spouses had earned at least a bachelor's degree. Mean individual income was \$35,000.

The mean age of the men sampled was 41 years and of the women was 38 years. Forty-two percent of the sample had been married 10 years or less; 37% were married between 10 and 20 years. The average number of children in these families was two. Twenty percent of the sample had no children; 22% had one child; 42% had two children; 14% had three or four children. Of the children living at home, 24% were less than 5 years old; 21% were 13-18 years of age. Fourteen percent of the children were over 18 years old and not living at home. Seventy-four percent had been employed 20 years or less in their present position.

#### Sample and Procedure in 1990

Because the marital relationship was the focus of the current research, those couples for whom information was not available for both the husband and wife in 1986 were excluded from the 1990 follow-up. Telephone directories and former places of employment were consulted to relocate the 136 couples who fit that criterion. One hundred-thirty-two couples were located; of them, 47 had changed addresses and 12 had moved out of state. Letters were sent to these

couples telling them about the project and that we would be calling them within a week to ask for their participation. During this phone call, it was determined if they were still in the same relationship as they were in 1986. Eight couples were subsequently excluded from the follow-up because they were no longer living together or one of the couple partners was deceased. The format for the telephone call and all correspondence is included in Appendix D. One hundred-nineteen of the couples verbally agreed to participate (5 couples could not be contacted because of unlisted telephone numbers, or because they did not return messages).

The survey questionnaire was developed using the Total Design Method (Dillman, 1978) and printed as a twelve-page booklet, consisting of three, 8 1/2 by 11, sheets of paper and a cover page folded in the middle and stapled. Each page of the questionnaire was typed and then photographically reduced. The cover displayed the project title, Dual-Career Family Project, the study sponsor, Department of Family and Child Development, and a graphic illustration (Appendix C).

Separate survey booklets for husbands and wives, cover letters and pre-stamped return envelopes were mailed to those couples who reported being together and those whom we had not been able to contact by phone (sent with special

cover letter). One week after the initial mailing, a postcard was sent thanking those who had returned the survey booklet and urging completion by non-respondents. Three weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up letter was sent to non-respondents. Finally, five weeks after the original mailing, a third letter with replacement booklet and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope was sent to anyone who had not yet returned the booklet. Replacement booklets were sent certified mail, and resulted in one additional couple responding.

In summary, of the 136 couples for whom data were available for both husband and wife at T<sup>1</sup>, 113 completed the survey booklets in 1990 and are represented in this study. Of the rest, 4 could not be contacted, 7 were separated or divorced, 1 had a partner who was deceased. Survey booklets were completed and returned by only one partner and not the other in 5 couples, and neither partner responded in 6 couples. The 93% response rate was calculated by dividing the individuals for whom we have information at T<sup>2</sup> (231) by the individuals from the original sample who qualified for inclusion in the follow-up (248).

The average age of women in the final sample was 42 (range 30-64) and of men 45 (range 31-72); mean length of marriage was 16 years (range 5 years to 41 years).

Seventy-three of the 113 couples had children living at home in 1986, while 76 couples had children at home in 1990. During the 4 year period, 26 children moved out and 29 were born; 61 couples reported no changes in the number of children at home. Between 1986 and 1990, 15 men and 34 women attained additional education. Forty-one percent of the women and 70% of the men reported earnings of more than \$35,000 by 1990. For a more complete description of respondent's education and income see Appendix E, Table 7.

#### Data Analysis

Responses to questionnaire items were coded and keyed onto a computer disc. Negatively worded items were reverse coded to read in a positive direction where appropriate. All analyses were calculated using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) (Helwig & Council, 1986).

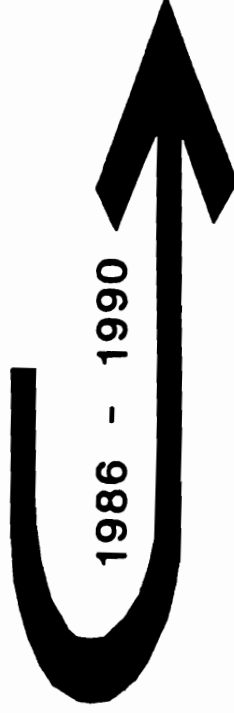
Correlation matrices for variables used in the multiple regression models and frequencies for counseling and personal events and family transitions are included in Appendix E.

**Appendix C**  
**Instruments**



Dual-Career Family Project  
Department of Family &  
Child Development

Virginia Tech



**Relationship Equity Scale\***

In this section we are interested in your description of the daily give-and-take that occurs in your marital relationship. Indicate the extent to which you and your spouse do each of the following things in your marriage. (Circle the X only if the item applies to neither of you).

|   | I do<br>Much More | He does<br>Much More |   |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1. Pay compliments to the other. . . . .  | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 2. Attempt to see the other's point of view<br>when we are having an argument. . . . .              | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 3. Do favors for the other, even when not asked. . . . .  | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 4. Begin to talk about what is troubling our<br>marriage when there is tension between us. . . . .  | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 5. Give the other a spontaneous hug or kiss. . . . .  | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 6. Try to bring the other "out of it" when one<br>of us is restless, bored or depressed. . . . .    | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 7. Listen and offer advice when the<br>other is faced with a problem. . . . .                       | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 8. Give in to the other's wishes when one wants<br>to do something the other doesn't. . . . .       | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 9. Confide one's inner-most thoughts<br>and feelings to the other. . . . .                          | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 10. Contribute the most in reaching a<br>solution when we face a problem. . . . .                   | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 11. Know how the other is feeling, even<br>when no words are spoken between us . . . . .            | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 12. Alter habits and ways of doing things<br>to please the other . . . . .                          | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |
| 13. See oneself as having more influence on<br>important decisions affecting our marriage . . . . . | . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   |                      | X |

\*  $\alpha = .70$

Well-being Scales\*

In general, when I think of myself as a WIFE/HUSBAND,  
I feel:

|                       | Never    |   |   |   |   |   |   | Always |
|-----------------------|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------|
| Supported. . . . .    | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Desired. . . . .      | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Appreciated . . . . . | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Understood. . . . .   | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Secure. . . . .       | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |

In general, when I think of myself as a professional,  
I feel:

|                       |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Competent . . . . .   | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| In Control . . . . .  | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Supported . . . . .   | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Confident . . . . .   | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Understood . . . . .  | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Appreciated . . . . . | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

In general, when I think of myself as a parent, I feel:

|                       |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| In Control . . . . .  | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Appreciated . . . . . | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Confident . . . . .   | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Understood . . . . .  | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

\*Marital  $\alpha = .88$ ; Professional  $\alpha = .82$ ; Parental  $\alpha = .87$ .

Self-Esteem Scale\*

It's important that we know more about how you view yourself. We would like for you to give an honest appraisal of your feelings about yourself by reacting to the next few items. Circle the number from 1 to 7 which indicates how much you Disagree or Agree with each statement.

- |  | Strongly<br>Disagree |   |   |   |   |   |   |  | Strongly<br>Agree |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|-------------------|
| 1. On the whole, I am<br>satisfied with myself. . . . .            | .1                   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |                   |
| 2. I feel I have a number of<br>good qualities. . . . .            | .1                   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |                   |
| 3. I am able to do things as well<br>as most other people. . . . . | .1                   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |                   |

\*  $\alpha = .78$

Distress Scales\*

In general, when I think of myself as a WIFE/HUSBAND,  
I feel:

|                              | Never |   |   |   |   |   |   | Always |
|------------------------------|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------|
| Inadequate. . . . .          | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Guilty . . . . .             | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Worried . . . . .            | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Tense/Anxious . . . . .      | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Frustrated. . . . .          | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Taken Advantage of. . . . .  | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |
| Emotionally drained. . . . . | . 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |        |

In general, when I think of myself as a professional,  
I feel:

|                               |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overwhelmed. . . . .          | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Frustrated. . . . .           | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Taken Advantage of. . . . .   | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Tense/Anxious. . . . .        | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Emotionally drained . . . . . | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Worried . . . . .             | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

In general, when I think of myself as a parent, I feel:

|                               |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inadequate . . . . .          | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Frustrated . . . . .          | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Taken Advantage of . . . . .  | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Tense/Anxious . . . . .       | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Overwhelmed. . . . .          | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Emotionally drained . . . . . | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Guilty . . . . .              | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Worried . . . . .             | . 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

\*Marital  $\alpha$  = .86; Professional  $\alpha$  = .85; Parental  $\alpha$  = .89.

Role Overload and Role Conflict Scales\*

Indicate how much you Agree or Disagree with each of the following statements. (Circle number)

## (Role Overload)

- |  | Strongly<br>Disagree |   |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly<br>Agree |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 1. Sometimes I feel like I never get a moment to myself. . . . . | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                   |
| 2. I have to rush to get everything done each day. . . .         | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                   |

## (Role Conflict)

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Because of career demands, I find it difficult to be the kind of spouse I'd like to be. . . . .    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |
| 2. My relationship with my spouse has suffered because we have so little time together. . . . .       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |
| 3. Managing the changing demands of my career, and everyday family life is a constant strain. . . . . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |
| 4. My career interferes with my ability to be the kind of parent I'd like to be. . . . .              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |  |

\* Role overload  $\alpha = .82$ ; Role conflict  $\alpha = .76$ .

Items Measuring Personal Events and Family Transitions

Have any of the following events happened to you since you last responded to the survey? (Circle answers)

| <u>Event</u>                                     | <u>Happened</u> |     | <u>If YES, Which year?</u> |            |            |            |            |
|--|-----------------|-----|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Major Illness or Injury                          | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Major Illness or Injury of your Child            | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Death of a Child . . . .                         | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Death of a Parent. . . .                         | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Moved to a New Home. . .                         | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Birth of a Child . . . .                         | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Began a New Job/<br>Started Business . . . .     | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Lost Job . . . . .                               | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Quit Job . . . . .                               | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Retired. . . . .                                 | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Child moved out. . . . .                         | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |
| Other person(s) moved<br>into your home. . . . . | NO              | YES | <u>'86</u>                 | <u>'87</u> | <u>'88</u> | <u>'89</u> | <u>'90</u> |

If yes, who moved in  
(child, parent, etc.)?

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Restoration of Equity by Negotiation Scales\*

In most marriages there are instances when both partners feel very strongly about a situation. Each feels compelled to influence the other to do what he/she wants or feels is right. When you want to influence your partner to do things your way, to what extent to you use the following strategies? (Circle number)

- | (Bargaining)   | Never | Very<br>Often |
|--|-------|---------------|
| 1. Talk about it; discuss our differences and needs. . . . .   | 1     | 7             |
| 2. Try to negotiate something agreeable to both of us. . . . . | 1     | 7             |
| 3. Use logic and reason; explain why my way is best. . . . .   | 1     | 7             |
| 4. Simply ask for what I want or need.                         | 1     | 7             |

## (Manipulation)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Be especially disagreeable. . . . .                                 | 1 | 7 |
| 2. Withdraw; become cold and silent. . . . .                           | 1 | 7 |
| 3. Discuss the issue heatedly; use harsh, angry words. . . . .         | 1 | 7 |
| 4. Ignore him/her; refuse to respond until he/she sees reason. . . . . | 1 | 7 |
| 5. Get very emotional; let him/her see this affects me. . . . .        | 1 | 7 |
| 6. Leave the room, house, etc.. . . . .                                | 1 | 7 |
| 7. Withhold something I know he/she takes pleasure in. . . . .         | 1 | 7 |

## (Threats)

- |                                       |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Threaten to get a divorce. . . . . | 1 | 7 |
| 2. Threaten to move out. . . . .      | 1 | 7 |

\* Bargaining  $\alpha = .78$ ; Manipulation  $\alpha = .87$ ; Threats  $\alpha = .90$ .

Restoration of Psychological Equity Scale\*

In other situations people see that their partner is not going to be influenced to see things their way; that further action would be unproductive. When those situations arise in your marriage, how often do you do the following? (Circle number).

- |   | Never    |   |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Often |
|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|
| 1. Make light of the situation;<br>don't take it too seriously. . . . | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |               |
| 2. Don't let it get to me; try to<br>ignore how I feel. . . . .       | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |               |
| 3. Try to look for something positive<br>in the situation. . . . .    | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |               |
| 4. Go on as if it doesn't affect me .                                 | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |               |
| 5. Try to forget the whole thing . . .                                | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |               |

\* Selective Ignoring  $\alpha = .81$

Restoration of Equity by Seeking Professional Help

Sometimes feelings can be so strong that people choose to seek outside help. Please indicate whether you have thought about or have participated in any of the following in the past four years. (Circle number)

If yes, how helpful was it?

|                          | No | Yes | Thought<br>About |         | Not<br>Helpful |   |   | Very<br>Helpful |
|--------------------------|----|-----|------------------|---------|----------------|---|---|-----------------|
| 1. Individual Counseling | 1  | 2   | 3                | . . . . | 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 5             |
| 2. Marital Counseling    | 1  | 2   | 3                | . . . . | 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 5             |
| 3. Family Counseling     | 1  | 2   | 3                | . . . . | 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 5             |
| 4. Marriage Enrichment   | 1  | 2   | 3                | . . . . | 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 5             |

Appendix D  
Contacts with Participants



COLLEGE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

## VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

*Blacksburg, Virginia 24061-0416*

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (703) 231-4794 or 4795

## Dual-Career Family Project

January 26, 1990

Dear :

Four years ago, you participated in a research study of dual-career couples. We are currently doing a follow-up to that study and will be contacting you during the next few days to ask if you will participate.

One hundred thirty six couples are eligible to participate in this project. It is, therefore, important that we reach as many of the former participants as possible. Since very little longitudinal work has been done with dual-career couples, this project will make a substantial contribution to knowledge about how dual-career families balance their work and family life across time.

Project workers will be telephoning you soon. Calls will be made from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. during the weeks of January 29th and February 5th, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 3rd. If you will not be available during these times, please call (703) 951-3167 and leave a message letting us know when would be a more convenient time to contact you.

We are looking forward to your continued participation in the project, and will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Project Coordinator:  
Margie Geasler

Gloria W. Bird, Ph.D.  
Project Director

### Narrative for Initial Telephone Contact

Hello. This is (name of caller) calling from the Department of Family and Child Development at Virginia Tech. Is Mr. or Mrs. (name of previous respondent) at home please? (If so, have them come to the phone; if not, find out when or where they can be reached).

We are conducting a follow-up survey of the couples who participated in our dual-career couple research project in 1986; do you remember being a part of this project?

A longitudinal perspective of the experiences of dual-career couples is very rare and it is important that we have participation in this follow-up survey by all of the persons who participated 4 years ago. As before, your answers will be completely confidential and identified only by number. The survey is about the same length as the one you responded to in 1986 and should take no more than about 30 minutes to complete. Would you be willing to respond to this new survey?

(If no, say): It is extremely important to our results to have follow-up responses or to know the reasons why people do not participate in the follow-up, would you mind giving me a reason?

(At this point we may find out that the couple has been separated, widowed or divorced. If so, record the

*information and thank the respondent for their previous participation. If they give another reason and a little friendly persuasion could help, tell them again about the significance of the study i.e. managing the lifestyle can be quite stressful and our research is designed to explore ways to help couples be more successful in their relationships. Their participation could help many other dual-career couples across the country). If they still say no, record other demographic information which will help describe those who refuse.*

*(If yes, go on) - Are you still married to (name)? (If yes, go on; if not see above).*

*Very good, thank you! Could you give me your current address, so that I can mail you the survey booklet. (Take information). The booklet should be reaching you in two to three weeks. Now, is your partner home? Could I talk with him (her)? (Go back to the top and get agreement from partner).*



COLLEGE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

## VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061-0416

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (703) 231-4794 or 4795

February 16, 1990

Dear :

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the follow-up study of dual-career couples. As you may remember, the emphasis of the last project was stress and coping. You will find that stress and coping continues to be an emphasis in this project, with additional information requested related to the marital partnership, and how couples make the dual-career lifestyle work for them.

As we told you on the phone, you are a partner in one of only 136 couples eligible for this project, thus your participation is extremely important to its success. Very little research with dual-career couples has used a longitudinal perspective; your response will make a significant contribution to knowledge about how dual-career families balance their work and family life across time.

In order for the results to be truly representative, it is important that each booklet be completed independently and returned promptly. The time (approximately 30 minutes) that you take to complete the booklet will be greatly appreciated.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. Booklets have a code number for two purposes. The first is to identify husbands and wives as couples. The second purpose is for mail identification. Your name will be checked off the mailing list when your booklet is returned and will never be associated with your responses in any way.

You may receive a summary of the results of this research by filling out the enclosed yellow insert and returning it with your survey booklet.

We will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to write or call. You can leave a message with the project coordinator at (703) 951-3167 and we will return your call.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Margie Geasler  
Project Coordinator

Gloria W. Bird, Ph.D.  
Project Director



COLLEGE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

## VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061-0416

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (703) 231-4794 or 4795

February 16, 1990

Dear :

We have tried to reach you by phone to see if you would be willing to participate in the follow-up study of dual-career couples, but have been unsuccessful. Since our first letter to you was not returned, we are assuming that it has reached you and you are aware of our project. You are a partner in one of only 136 couples eligible for this project, thus your participation is extremely important to its success. Even if one (or both) of you is no longer working, your responses are important. If you are no longer in the marital relationship, simply say "no longer together" on one of the yellow insert sheets, write the code number from the booklet on it (it is not necessary to have your name) and return it in the enclosed envelope. If that is the case, you need not complete the survey booklet.

As you may remember, the emphasis of the last project was stress and coping. You will find that stress and coping continues to be an emphasis in this project, with additional information requested related to the marital partnership, and how couples make the dual-career lifestyle work for them. Very little research with dual-career couples has used a longitudinal perspective; your response will make a significant contribution to knowledge about how dual-career families balance their work and family life across time.

In order for the results to be truly representative, it is important that each booklet be completed independently and returned promptly. The time (approximately 30 minutes) that you take to complete the booklet will be greatly appreciated.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. Booklets have a code number for two purposes. The first is to identify husbands and wives as couples. The second purpose is for mail identification. Your name will be checked off the mailing list when your booklet is returned and will never be associated with your responses in any way.

You may receive a summary of the results of this research by filling out the enclosed yellow insert and returning it with your survey booklet. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to write or call. You can leave a message with the project coordinator at (703) 951-3167 and we will return your call.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Margie Geasler  
Project Coordinator

Gloria W. Bird, Ph.D.  
Project Director

Last week, two survey booklets were mailed to you seeking information about how dual-career couples cope with stress and manage their marital partnership. If each of you has already completed and returned them to us, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, your prompt response will be very much appreciated. It is important that your responses be included in the study if the results are to be truly representative.

If by some chance you do not have the booklets, please call me immediately (703) 951-3167, or send me a note. I will mail another set to you.

Sincerely,

Margie Geasler  
Project Coordinator



COLLEGE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

## VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061-0416

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (703) 231-4794 or 4795

March 9, 1990

Dear :

About three weeks ago I wrote to you requesting your participation in a follow-up study of dual-career couples. As of today we have not received a completed booklet from one or both of you.

The purpose of our study is to examine stress, coping and the marital partnership in dual-career families over time. Your responses will provide a unique contribution to a longitudinal perspective of the lifestyle of dual-career families.

I am writing to you again because of the significance each booklet has to the usefulness of this study. In order for the results to be truly representative of dual-career couples, it is essential that each person who participated in the original study return their booklet.

Because of your participation in 1986, you are one of only 136 couples eligible for this study. Please know that we understand your need for privacy. You may be assured of complete confidentiality. In no way will your responses be associated with your names.

In the event that your booklet(s) has been misplaced, please call me collect immediately, (703) 951-3167, or send a note. I will mail another to you.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Cordially,

Margie Geasler  
Project Coordinator



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

*Blacksburg, Virginia 24061-0416*

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (703) 231-4794 or 4795

Dual-Career Family Project

March 22, 1990

Dear :

Your assistance is important to our study of the marital partnership in dual-career families over time. If you have already completed and returned your survey booklets, please accept our sincere thanks and our apology for contacting you again.

The number of returned booklets is very encouraging. But whether we will be able to describe accurately dual-career relationships depends upon you and others who have not yet responded. Past experiences suggest that those of you who have not yet responded may hold quite different perspectives than those who have returned their booklets.

This is one of the first studies of this type ever conducted using a sample of dual-career couples. The usefulness of the results depends on receiving completed booklets from both of the partners in the couple. As we began this study we were very much aware of the time constraints facing families in which both spouses have careers. Yet, we were convinced that career couples would see the value of providing information useful to the ever-increasing number of families with similar lifestyles.

In case our other correspondence did not reach you, replacement booklets are enclosed. The time you take (approximately 30 minutes) to complete the survey will be sincerely appreciated. May I urge you to complete and return it before April 1.

Thank you for your contribution to the success of this study.

Sincerely,

Margie Geasler  
Project Coordinator

**Appendix E**  
**Supplementary Tables**

Table 7.  
Educational Status and Income of Respondents

| Demographic Category | Husbands |                | Wives |                |
|----------------------|----------|----------------|-------|----------------|
|                      | 1986     | 1990           | 1986  | 1990           |
| Educational Status:  |          |                |       |                |
| Some college         | 3.5%     | .0%            | 2.75% | .0%            |
| Bachelors Degree     | .9%      | .0%            | 1.8%  | .0%            |
| Some graduate work   | 22.1%    | 3.5%           | 15.6% | 8.3%           |
| Masters degree       | 26.5%    | 8.9%           | 33.0% | 19.3%          |
| Doctorate Degree     | 32.7%    | .9%            | 16.5% | 2.8%           |
|                      |          | Completed More |       | Completed More |
| Individual Income:   |          |                |       |                |
| < 15,000             | 1.8%     | .9%            | 7.4%  | 7.5%           |
| 15,000-24,999        | 25.7%    | 6.6%           | 48.9% | 22.6%          |
| 25,000-34,999        | 28.5%    | 22.6%          | 20.4% | 28.3%          |
| 35,000-44,999        | 13.7%    | 16.0%          | 8.4%  | 14.2%          |
| 45,000-54,999        | 11.9%    | 18.0%          | 6.5%  | 13.2%          |
| 55,000-64,999        | 4.6%     | 7.5%           | 2.8%  | 4.7%           |
| 65,000 and above     | 13.7%    | 28.3%          | 5.6%  | 9.2%           |

Note. Totals may not add to 100% due to missing cases.

Table 8.  
Correlations for Well-Being Variables - 1986

| Variables          | 1    | 2      | 3    | 4      |
|--------------------|------|--------|------|--------|
| 1. 86 Marital      |      | .66*** | .13  | .32*** |
| 2. 86 Professional | .11  |        | .21* | .43*** |
| 3. 86 Parental     | -.13 | .06    |      | .05    |
| 4. 86 Esteem       | .12  | .26**  | -.01 |        |

Note. Pearson product moment correlations for husbands are above the diagonal and for wives are below the diagonal.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$

Table 9.  
Correlations for Well-Being Variables - 1990

| Variables          | 1      | 2      | 3    | 4      |
|--------------------|--------|--------|------|--------|
| 1. 90 Marital      |        | .45*** | -.02 | .25**  |
| 2. 90 Professional | .14    |        | .07  | .67*** |
| 3. 90 Parental     | -.10   | .01    |      | .08    |
| 4. 90 Esteem       | .32*** | .37*** | -.13 |        |

Note. Pearson product moment correlations for husbands are above the diagonal and for wives are below the diagonal.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$

Table 10.  
Correlations for Distress Variables - 1986

| Variables      | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. 86 Marital  |        | .72*** | .42*** | .54*** | .45*** | .54*** |
| 2. 86 Prof.    | .44*** |        | .24**  | .58*** | .50*** | .50*** |
| 3. 86 Parental | .39*** | .18    |        | .12    | .20*   | .42*** |
| 4. 86 Depress. | .45*** | .35*** | .21*   |        | .30**  | .40*** |
| 5. 86 Overload | .42*** | .41*** | .47*** | .31*** |        | .40*** |
| 6. 86 Conflict | .56*** | .41*** | .33*** | .43*** | .47*** |        |

**Note.** Pearson product moment correlations for husbands are above the diagonal and for wives are below the diagonal.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$

Table 11.  
Correlations for Distress Variables - 1990

| Variables      | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. 90 Marital  |        | .77*** | .40*** | .55*** | .51*** | .57*** |
| 2. 90 Prof.    | .45*** |        | .28**  | .56*** | .57*** | .56*** |
| 3. 90 Parental | .33*** | .16    |        | .19*   | .28**  | .36*** |
| 4. 90 Depress. | .41*** | .34*** | .31*** |        | .18    | .23*   |
| 5. 90 Overload | .45*** | .38*** | .37*** | .24*   |        | .61*** |
| 6. 90 Conflict | .67*** | .35*** | .49*** | .29**  | .55*** |        |

Note. Pearson product moment correlations for husbands are above the diagonal and for wives are below the diagonal.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$

Table 12.  
Correlations for Efforts to Restore Equity

| Variables         | 1       | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5    | 6    |
|-------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|------|------|
| 1. Bargaining     |         | -.01   | -.19*  | .26**  | -.10 | -.09 |
| 2. Threats        | .01     |        | .32*** | -.07   | .08  | -.04 |
| 3. Manipulation   | -.31*** | .35*** |        | -.24** | .03  | .07  |
| 4. Sel. Ignore    | .26**   | -.22*  | -.30** |        | -.06 | -.10 |
| 5. Counseling     | -.07    | .33*** | .21*   | -.14   |      | -.03 |
| 6. Thought/Couns. | -.09    | .11    | .24*   | -.21*  | -.11 |      |

Note. Pearson product moment correlations for husbands are above the diagonal and for wives are below the diagonal.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$

Table 13.  
Correlations for Personal Events/Family Transitions

| Variables         | 1    | 2    | 3    |
|-------------------|------|------|------|
| 1. Illness/Death  |      | -.09 | .02  |
| 2. Job Changes    | -.05 |      | -.03 |
| 3. Family Changes | .01  | .15  |      |

Note. Pearson product moment correlations for husbands are above the diagonal and for wives are below the diagonal.

Table 14.  
Frequencies for Counseling

| Variable                    | Husbands |    | Wives |    |
|-----------------------------|----------|----|-------|----|
|                             | Yes      | No | Yes   | No |
| Thought About<br>Counseling | 29       | 80 | 44    | 66 |
| Sought<br>Counseling        | 24       | 88 | 32    | 81 |

Table 15.  
Frequencies for Personal Events and Family Transition Variables

| Variable                       | Husbands |    |    |      | Wives |    |    |      |
|--------------------------------|----------|----|----|------|-------|----|----|------|
|                                | 0        | 1  | 2  | More | 0     | 1  | 2  | More |
| Major illness/injury-self      | 90       | 22 | 1  | 0    | 95    | 16 | 1  | 0    |
| Major illness/injury-child     | 103      | 9  | 1  | 0    | 98    | 10 | 2  | 2    |
| Death of child                 | 112      | 1  | 0  | 0    | 112   | 0  | 0  | 0    |
| Death of parent                | 93       | 20 | 0  | 0    | 96    | 14 | 0  | 0    |
| Total Illnesses/Deaths         | 67       | 36 | 10 | 0    | 71    | 32 | 4  | 4    |
| Birth of Child                 | 89       | 22 | 2  | 0    | 85    | 24 | 1  | 1    |
| Child Moved Out                | 95       | 14 | 3  | 1    | 89    | 20 | 3  | 0    |
| Persons Moved into Home        | 106      | 6  | 0  | 1    | 103   | 8  | 0  | 0    |
| Total Family Structure Changes | 66       | 40 | 7  | 0    | 60    | 44 | 8  | 1    |
| Changed Job                    | 81       | 26 | 5  | 1    | 75    | 33 | 3  | 1    |
| Lost Job                       | 109      | 2  | 2  | 0    | 108   | 4  | 0  | 0    |
| Quit Job                       | 98       | 15 | 0  | 0    | 92    | 19 | 1  | 0    |
| Retired                        | 107      | 6  | 0  | 0    | 105   | 7  | 0  | 0    |
| Total Job Changes              | 74       | 22 | 11 | 6    | 66    | 24 | 19 | 4    |
| Grand Total of Changes         | 26       | 34 | 30 | 23   | 23    | 35 | 29 | 26   |

Appendix F  
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## Vita

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