

THE EFFECT OF A CHRISTIAN FAMILY COURSE
ON MARITAL READINESS

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Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
May, 1987

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PREFACE

There has been very little evaluation of family life courses in the past 15 years. Although the evaluation before that time showed positive results, it would seem to be time for further research considering the changes in our society since the 1950's and 1960's. This is especially true in light of the continual rise in the divorce rate and the nation's renewed search for successful marriages. It is hoped that with this study the field of Family Life Education will begin to note whether family life courses really promote marital success.

I have long been interested in marital success, and especially interested in helping young adults to strive toward marriages of quality and stability. I hope that this study will provide some insight as to how christian family classes at church-related colleges are affecting the students as they prepare for marriage. I also hope the study will provide some direction for improvements in family life education.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to all the people who assisted me in my work at Oklahoma State University. The faculty provided me with some insights that will help me to be more effective both in my career as an educator and in the daily activities of life.

In particular, I am especially grateful to my thesis adviser, Dr. Althea Wright, for her time, guidance, concern, and encouragement. I am also thankful to my committee chairman, Dr. Godfrey Ellis, and the other committee members, Dr. Margaret Callsen and Dr. Brent Snow, for their time, advisement, and encouragement. My thanks also goes to Dr. Jo Campbell for her willingness to help me with the statistical methods of the study and to Dr. Norman Durham for his special concern for my program.

Special thanks are due the two instructors at Oklahoma Christian College, Dr. Raymond Kelcy and Dr. Lynn McMillon, who aided me in my study by providing me with

special help, encouragement, and class time for administering the instrument. Further thanks goes to Dr. McMillon for his teaching at the undergraduate level and for his friendship and encouragement to go on with graduate work.

I am extremely grateful, also, to my parents for their continuing encouragement and support. I am especially thankful for their financial commitment which has provided my educational opportunities.

My deepest appreciation is reserved for my husband, Bill, for his constant support, understanding, and encouragement to complete the work involved in this advanced degree. Special thanks for his time spent in computer work and proofreading for me at a time when he was also involved in writing his own dissertation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Need for Research

Education for family life has been in existence, at least informally, as long as the family has existed. Even when no formal lessons are taught, education takes place through example and role modeling (Christensen, 1958). In twentieth century America, however, education for family life became a movement, and eventually a recognized field of study and research.

As family life education gained popularity and began to spread to the majority of colleges and universities in the United States, many researchers worked to evaluate the effectiveness of the courses being offered (Avery & Lee, 1964; Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Duvall, 1965; Dyer, 1959; Finck, 1956; Gillies & Lastrucci, 1954; Moses, 1956). Only one of these studies (Bardis, 1963) was conducted at a church-related college. A quick glance at the dates of all of these studies shows that the majority of research in effectiveness of family life education was conducted from the mid 1950's to the mid 1960's. A minor amount of evaluative research was also conducted in the early 1970's.

Since that time, the research in family life education has focused on other areas within the field and has not often evaluated the family life courses themselves. This is quite surprising considering the tremendous changes that have taken place in our society, in the family, and in college students since the mid 1960's. There are at least two possible explanations for the drop in interest in evaluating family life courses. It may be that after the more than 80 studies conducted in the 1950's and 1960's all indicated positive changes in the students who participated in the courses, researchers concluded that these courses

were indeed effective for the students of that time period and thus focused their research energy and money on more pressing matters. On the other hand, this decline in evaluative research may be related to the failure of researchers to find a way to effectively predict marital success. This, however, is unlikely since, as Bowman (1952), Duvall (1965), Sporakowski (1968), and Stinnett (1969) noted, studies of the effectiveness of family life courses and studies of marital prediction are not necessarily the same. In fact, very few of the evaluative studies of family life courses focused on marital prediction.

Many changes have occurred in the America society and family since the majority of the evaluative research was conducted. Divorce rates and the median age at the time of first marriage have increased, while birth rates and average family size have decreased. The number of one parent families rose by 107% between 1970 and 1983. The percentage of women over 16 who are engaged in full-time employment outside the home rose from 37.8% in 1960 to 53.7% in 1984. In addition to these changes within the family, the population has become more educated and more pro-establishment minded. The passing of the last 15 to 30 years has also seen a revival of feminism, desegregation, and a sexual revolution along with greater acceptance of the homosexual, legalized abortion, and "no fault" divorce laws.

In a 1981 discussion of the effectiveness of the classroom as a vehicle for bringing about behavioral changes, Mace made a plea for more research: "We really need to know, with greater degree of precision than we do at present, to what extent our students are really learning for living" (p. 605). Indeed, it would seem to be appropriate to once again assess the effectiveness of family life courses in light of the new generation of college and university students who are coming into the courses from a very different society than did those students of the 1950's, 1960's, and early 1970's.

Statement of the Problem

A major question in evaluating the effectiveness of family life courses is what effect those courses have on marital success (Longworth, 1953). The primary difficulty in answering this question comes in defining a successful marriage. While many laymen consider the intact marriage to be a successful marriage and are watching for a decrease in the divorce rate, family life educators place more emphasis on mental health, commitment, devotion, and relationships (Blood, 1962; Bowman, 1952; Byron, 1985; Christensen, 1958; Keeler, 1962; Landis & Landis, 1968, Luckey & Neubeck, 1956). For now, there continues to be a lack of agreement on just exactly what does constitute a successful marriage.

Concerning themselves with marital success, and defining a successful marriage both in terms of stability and quality, Sporkowski (1968) and Stinnett (1969) found marital success to be significantly related to marital readiness. In spite of these findings, the theme of marital readiness has not been a major one in the marriage and family literature. Stinnett conducted two further studies (1973; 1977) with the instrument he developed, but other researchers seem to have ignored this relationship and its significance. Noticeably absent from the literature are research studies concerned with the effect of family life education courses on marital readiness.

With the continually rising divorce rate, accusing fingers are being pointed at the colleges and universities of our nation. "Colleges and universities are . . . falling down on the job. They are failing, at least, on their portion of the large, long, and complicated job of preparing the young for the responsibilities of marriage and the family" (Byron, 1985, p. 25). With no current research to defend the effectiveness of family life education courses, the institutions of higher education can do little but shrug their shoulders and point to the research of the 1950's and 1960's for consolation.

Obviously, there has been a lack of evaluative research in the past 15 years, as well as a void in the study of marital readiness. In addition, the history of evaluative research is

especially lacking in the church-related institution, where the christian family courses are among the most popular. At this time, no evaluative research has been conducted to determine if, in fact, these family life education courses with a spiritual emphasis are effective in promoting positive change in marital readiness in the students participating in the course. It is these facts that provide the need for the study of the following research question: What is the effect of an undergraduate level "Christian Family" course on the marital readiness of those students participating in the course for one trimester?

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to assess the impact of the "Christian Family" course on the marital readiness of the participants in the course. The results of this study should provide information for effective curriculum evaluation and planning, and development of teaching strategies designed to provide the students with better preparation for marriage.

While preparation for marriage is one of the purposes of christian family courses at religious institutions of higher education, no empirical study has been conducted to see if, in fact, the courses are significantly affecting marital readiness of the students and/or in what areas students are being impacted. The current study is designed to provide a basis for evaluation in order that courses can be more effectively planned in the future.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated to provide specific direction to the current study. Each hypothesis is stated in null form following a brief discussion of the expected findings. A more complete review of literature as a background for these hypotheses is presented in Chapter II.

Hypothesis Number One

Although the research was all conducted quite some time ago, several studies have been concerned with the effectiveness of family life courses (Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Duvall, 1965; Finck, 1956; Gillis & Lastrucci, 1954; Moses, 1956). Some of these studies reported increases in knowledge (Bardis, Crosby, Gillis & Lastrucci), while others reported changes in attitude and personal adjustment (Duvall, Dyer, Crosby, Finck, Gillies & Lastrucci, Moses). In every report reviewed, the courses in family life were found to be effective in bringing about measurable changes.

Three research studies reviewed (Bardis, 1963; Dyer, 1959; Moses, 1956) utilized a control group design. In every case, the experimental group made significantly greater gains than did the control group.

With these reports in mind, it is expected that the marital readiness posttest scores of the students in the "Christian Family" class should increase significantly over their pretest scores. In addition, it is expected that the differences between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness for the students in the "Christian Family" class should be significantly greater than those for the students not enrolled in the course.

This research leads to hypothesis one:

- a) There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course and those students not enrolled in such a course.

Hypothesis Number Two

Moses, 1956, was the only researcher reviewed who reported differences between males and females in a pretest/posttest design. In her 1956 study, both the pretest and the

posttest scores of females were significantly higher than those of males. There was not, however, a significant difference between the gains of males and females. Bardis, 1963, also reported that the family life education seems to be an "equalizer" of knowledge across the sexes.

Stinnett, Hall, and Walters (1973) reported that females scored higher in all four need categories of the RMC Index than did males. On the other hand, Sporakowski (1968) reported no significant relationship between marital preparedness and sex of the respondent.

With the exception of the Sporakowski study, the past research would suggest that we might find a significant difference between the pretest scores of males and females as well as between their posttest scores. No significant difference is expected, however, in the change in scores of males and females.

These background studies lead to hypothesis two:

- a) There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in the posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- c) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Hypothesis Number Three

In addition to his statement that a family life education course was an "equalizer" of knowledge across the sexes, Bardis (1963) also found that to be true in regard to dating status. This was not true, however, of any other study. Sporakowski (1968) and Stinnett (1969) both found marital readiness scores to be significantly related to courtship stage,

with those respondents who were closer to marriage reporting a higher degree of marital readiness. Moses (1956) also found courtship status to be related to the gains in learning derived from a family life course. She noted that those students who were engaged made significantly greater gains than did those going steady, those going steady made significantly greater gains than did those dating often, and those dating often made significantly greater gains than did those dating less often.

In the current study, as well, it is expected that there may be a significant difference in marital readiness scores and in gains in marital readiness scores between students in various stages of courtship. Those students who are closest to marriage are expected to make the highest prescores and postscores. Likewise, those students who are engaged are expected to make the greatest gains, while those who are not dating are expected to make the smallest gains.

These studies lead to hypothesis three:

- a) There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship (not dating, dating several, dating one not seriously, dating steady, engaged) enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- c) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Hypothesis Number Four

A final indication of past research is that there may be a difference in the gains made in different areas tested. Bardis (1963), who was only testing for gains in sex knowledge,

noted a significant increase in that knowledge during a one-semester course. Gillies and Lastrucci studied changes in both knowledge and attitude. In their 1954 study of college juniors, they reported that there were changes in both, but the changes in knowledge were appreciably greater than the changes in attitude. Crosby (1971) also combined the two in his study, but separated attitude into two categories. He found a significant increase in knowledge and in positive attitude toward self, but a positive yet nonsignificant gain in attitude toward family life.

Although they did not conduct a pretest/posttest experiment, Stinnett, Hall, and Walters (1973) reported that the subscores in the four need areas covered by the RMC Index indicated a difference in readiness between those specific need areas. In their study, the students felt most prepared to fulfill the need of "love" in a future mate, and least prepared to fulfill the need of "personality fulfillment." This, along with the research studies noted in the previous paragraph, indicates that there should be a significant difference between the subscores on both pretests and posttests, and that there should be a significantly greater gain in some need areas than in others as is measured by the RMC Index. There is not enough past research, however, to predict which need areas will show the greatest gain.

This research background leads to hypothesis four:

- a) There are no significant differences in pretest subscores, in the four need areas (love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication) covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There are no significant differences in posttest subscores, in the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- c) There are no significant differences in the change between pretest and posttest subscores, between the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Variables

The independent variable for the first three hypotheses is group membership. Groups will be determined in three different ways corresponding to those three hypotheses. The first grouping based on the primary research objective is to compare the changes in marital readiness scores collected from two subgroups of respondents. One subgroup will be drawn from the "Christian Family" course at a church-related college. The second subgroup will be drawn from another general education course at that same college. Other groupings for analysis will be based on sex and dating status. The independent variable for the fourth hypothesis is "need area" as measured by the Readiness for Marital Competence Index.

The dependent variable for which data will be collected and analyzed for the first three hypotheses is the marital readiness score that the respondents will provide using the Readiness for Marital Competence Index (Stinnett, 1969) and the Marital Preparedness Instrument (Sporakowski, 1968). The dependent variable for the fourth hypothesis is subscores of respondents on the Readiness for Marital Competence Index.

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions

The following factors delimit the study:

- (1) Only one church-related school was included in the study. This school was in the state of Oklahoma. These findings are applicable to other institutions only in so far as this institution is representative of the other institutions of its type.
- (2) Only one type of family life education course, the "Christian Family", was included in this study. The findings of this study are only applicable to this type of course.

(3) The majority of students involved in the study were college juniors and seniors. The findings of this study, therefore, should only be applied to students in similar developmental stages.

This study will be limited by the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the samples of students drawn from the "Christian Family" classes are representative of the entire population of junior and senior students.
- (2) The extent to which the samples of students drawn from the second general education course are representative of the entire population of junior and senior students.
- (3) The extent to which the Marital Preparedness Instrument (MPI) and the Readiness for Marital Competence Index (RMC) adequately measure marital readiness.
- (4) The ability of the respondents to identify their marital readiness by completing the MPI and the RMC.
- (5) The extent to which the respondents report their true feelings on the MPI and the RMC. Since there is no penalty involved, students could report what they think their feelings should be rather than what their feelings actually are.

The following assumptions were necessary in order to conduct the study:

- (1) That the MPI and the RMC truly measure marital readiness.
- (2) That respondents will be able to understand and report their true feelings at the time of questioning.
- (3) That the study of marital readiness is a significant study because it has been shown to be related to marital success.
- (4) That the students enrolled in "Christian Family" at Oklahoma Christian College in the Spring Trimester, 1986, are representative of all classes of "Christian Family" at Oklahoma Christian College.

Definitions

There are a few terms which need to be defined at this point in order that the reader may understand these terms in much the same way as does the researcher. Those terms include the following:

Marital Readiness: a) Sporkowski -- preparedness expressed in terms of self-perceptions and expectations relating to roles in marriage (1968); b) Stinnett -- the degree to which an individual is prepared to identify and meet the basic emotional needs of a marriage partner (1969); c) Operationally defined as the sum of the scores from the MPI and the RMC.

Family Life Education: A field of study which includes education and research in various areas of family life. FLE is especially concerned with strengthening the family.

"Christian Family": A family life education course offered at Oklahoma Christian College with an emphasis on the spiritual aspect of family life.

Summary and Overview

This study was designed to study the effects of a "Christian Family" course on the marital readiness of the students in the course. The results of this study are expected to have implications for curriculum evaluation and development, and teaching methods. A problem was stated, variables were identified, and hypotheses were formulated in order to provide a framework for this study. The findings that were expected, based on the review of literature, were also discussed.

Beginning with Chapter II, the ideas presented in this introductory chapter will be more fully developed and discussed. Chapter II is a literature review made up of four major sections. The chapter begins with a discussion of some of the changes in American society and family life that have taken place in the last 15 to 30 years. The second section completes the historical background of the study with a discussion of the history and

development of family life education. The chapter continues with an exploration of marriage preparatory classes and ends with a look at marital readiness as a specific part of marriage preparation.

Chapter III includes a discussion of the methods and procedures utilized in this study. A detailed description of the sample and the courses involved in the research is given. Also included is an explanation of the survey instrument, the data collection methods, and the statistical methods used for evaluation of the hypotheses.

The results of the study along with discussion and analysis are presented in Chapter IV. There are five major divisions in this chapter, the first four each relating to one of the hypotheses of the study, and the fifth discussing additional findings. Within each of the first four divisions, three major sections exist. The first section is devoted to reporting the findings. The second section provides a discussion of the findings. The third section in each division summarizes the results for the hypothesis.

Chapter V begins with a summary of the procedures and findings of the study. A synopsis of the major findings along with conclusions and recommendations of the researchers complete the paper.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of the literature that is related to this study revealed four major themes and provides a theoretical base for the current study. First, some major changes which have taken place in the society and the family during the last 15 to 30 years are noted. Second, the history and development of family life education is discussed. These sections provide the historical background for this study. Third, the specific area of marriage preparatory courses is explored. Specific research and the relationship of marriage preparation and marital success is noted. Finally, marital readiness as a specific part of marriage preparation is given special emphasis. This section attempts to establish the importance of marital readiness to marital success. Previous studies of the effectiveness of family life courses are reviewed.

Familial and Societal Changes

The American family, as a part of American society, is continually undergoing changes. A study of documents such as The World Almanac and Book of Facts and the Statistical Abstract of the United States presents almost endless sets of numbers which indicate the extent of those changes. Historians such as Christopher Lasch (1977) would suggest that none of these changes is totally new and that they all are in some way related to each other.

As far as they may be from describing the emotional and attitudinal changes of the population, statistics are one fairly concrete way of noting changes that occur. Some of those found in the resource books mentioned above which may be relevant to this study are

presented in the following paragraphs along with the reactions of several authors and researchers.

One change that most people are aware of, and that family life educators are asked to explain, is the increase in the divorce rate. Between 1955 and 1985 the divorce rate almost continually increased. In 1955 the divorce rate was 2.3 per 1000 persons. By 1965 that rate had increased to 2.5, and it continued to increase to 4.8 in 1975 and 5.0 in 1985. Now there is approximately one divorce for every two marriages (Cox, 1981). In connection with the rising divorce rate, the number of one parent families rose by 108% between 1970 and 1985. In 1980, 20% of all American children lived with only one parent. It is estimated that 33% of those children born in 1970, and 45% of the children born in 1985 will live with a single parent for some time period before they reach the age of 18.

Researchers are not yet sure of the results of the rising divorce rate and the subsequent increase in single parent families. At one time considered a totally negative situation, divorce is now becoming accepted as a reasonable lifestyle. There are now arguments for getting a divorce rather than remaining in a "stale" or "strained" marital relationship. There remain, however, the continuing arguments that the parents should stay married for the sake of the children. At this point there is little consensus among researchers as to the impact of divorce. Most researchers seem to agree that there is some impact, however, on all parties involved, including the children, and that the impact is a combination of positive and negative factors (Coleman, 1984; Cox, 1981; Hart, 1982; Rice, 1983).

The reasons for the increase in the divorce rate are also mixed, but several factors have been suggested to be closely related to this increase. These include the changing role of women, changing divorce laws, and rising marital expectations (Coleman; Cox; Griffitt & Hatfield, 1985; Rice). According to Coleman and Rice, the rising marital expectations come primarily from an increased emphasis on the individual. As late as the 1950's,

marriages were formed primarily for three purposes: meeting sexual needs, rearing children, and providing for economic needs. Today people are marrying to meet the needs for companionship, emotional support, friendship, and romantic love (Coleman). In traditional marriage, the purpose of the husband and the wife was to serve the marriage, while in new marriage, the purpose of the marriage is to serve the needs of the husband and wife (Rice). If the needs of one or both partners are not being met as expected, the marriage is often dissolved and the search for a new relationship begins. Often the high expectations are taken into a second marriage and are not met there either. As a result, the divorce rate for second and subsequent marriages rises with the number of times the individuals were married before (Coleman; Cox; Griffitt & Hatfield; Rice). The remaining two changes listed above as relating to the increase in the divorce rate are discussed further in later paragraphs.

During this time period not only did the divorce rate increase, but the marriage rate increased as well. The marriage rate rose from 9.3 per 1000 in 1955 to 10.2 per 1000 in 1985. In addition, in 1960, 76.4% of males and 71.6% of females were married while 2% of males and 2.9% of females were divorced. By 1984, only 65.8% of males and 60.8% of females were married while 6.1% of males and 8.3% of females were divorced. The median age at first marriage increased from 22.8 years for males and 20.3 years for females in 1960 to 25.5 years for males and 23.3 years for females in 1985.

Another major change in society and in the family has resulted from the increased number of women in the work force. In 1950, 33.9% of women over 16 were employed full-time. This number rose to 37.8% in 1960, 46.4% in 1975, and 54.7% in 1985. The largest increase in recent years has been in mothers of preschool children. In 1960, 18.6% of married mothers with children under 6 years of age were employed outside the home. By 1985 that number had increased to 53.4%. In addition, 53.2% of those mothers who were separated from their spouse, and 67.5% of those divorced, with children under 6 years of age, were employed in 1985. "These data, perhaps more than any other, suggest

how fundamentally the roles of women have evolved in recent years" (Hayes & Kamerman, 1983, p. 130).

Here again, researchers are divided as to the direction and the degree of the impact of this change on the woman, the children, the marriage and the family. There does, however, seem to be a general consensus that some impact is there. In fact, in a poll conducted in 1981, Daniel Yankelovich (1981) found that norms concerning whether wives should work outside the home had been reversed within a single generation. Now, rather than the working mother feeling guilty, it is often the mother who chooses to remain at home who experiences the most guilt (Coleman, 1984; Fasciano, 1985; Levine, 1985; Pistrang, 1984). Other changes that have been brought about partially by the changing role of women are a change in marital power and more power struggles in marriage, and a change in parenting styles which are influenced by the work environment (Voydanoff, 1984).

The reports of the effects of the working mother on her children are mixed, with some researchers reporting increases in self-esteem (Rice, 1983; Shreve, 1984), and others reporting increases in problems such as juvenile delinquency (Coleman, 1984; Cox, 1981; Hayes & Kamerman, 1983). One effect about which there can be little doubt is the increased number of children at home alone during the day -- "latch-key" kids. According to Coleman (1984), there are an estimated 4 million latch-key kids in America today. While some women go to work for economic reasons and others return to work for emotional reasons, the increased numbers of women in the work force are causing some people to wonder about the future of the family. "Few social scientists think the family is going to disappear. However, the lower birth rates and increased labor force participation of women will almost certainly continue to change their personal rewards, their power relationships, their role expectations, and ultimately perhaps the definition and prevalence of marriage" (Voydanoff, 1984).

Related to the change in the role of women is the decrease in average family size. In 1955, the average number of persons per household was 3.34. By 1983, this number had decreased to 2.73. Partially as a result of the decrease in family size, the American population is also getting older. In 1955, the birth rate was 25 per 1000 population, while the death rate was 9.3 per 1000. By 1983, the birth rate had decreased to 15.5 per 1000 and the death rate was 8.6 per 1000.

Not only has the number of children per family decreased, but the influence of parents on those children has decreased as well. This is partially due to time pressures, advancing technology and the resulting electronic environment, and the increased emphasis on the individual. More hours at work, and more hours in front of the television or the computer have squeezed "family time" into smaller and smaller units. In addition, Yankelovich (1981, p. 72) found in his survey of contemporary Americans that parents today "expect to make fewer sacrifices for their children than did parents in the past." One result is a loss of influence of the parent on the child. "Even as recently as twenty years ago, young people rated parents as the primary influence in their lives, but today a child's beliefs and values are determined to a greater extent by friends and peer group members than by parents" (Johnson, 1981).

Educational achievement has been on the increase in the United States during the last 25 years. In 1960, 41.1% of those Americans 25 years of age and older had completed 4 years of high school or more. At that time 7.7% had also completed 4 years of college or more. In 1984, however, 73.3% of those Americans 25 years of age and older had completed 4 years of high school or more, while 19.1% had completed 4 years of college or more. Even with this increased emphasis on educational achievement, however, the pleasures of life often take precedent. According to Coleman (1984), Americans spend more on tobacco, alcohol, and beauty treatments than on their children's education.

Other trends which occurred between 1955 and 1985 include a revival of feminism and the "sexual revolution." Along with these has come the realization of "no fault"

divorce laws in 47 states, greater acceptance of the homosexual, and legalized abortion. According to Griffitt and Hatfield (1985), premarital intercourse has increased steadily over the past two decades. Along with this has come an increase in the number of teenage pregnancies and teenage parents.

The anti-establishment "hippies" are now the parents of today's pro-establishment "yuppie" college students. This time period has also brought the Viet Nam War, desegregation, and the passing of the "me" generation. All of these changes and trends, working together, have created a society that would seem quite different to the average American than that of 30 or even 15 years ago. There can be little doubt that the college student of 1986 has a somewhat different background than the college student of 1955 to 1970 (Coleman, 1984; Cox, 1983; Griffitt & Hatfield, 1985; Rice, 1983).

Family Life Education

Development of the field.

"Although family life education, by that name, is primarily a product of mid-twentieth century America, in various of its forms it is at least as old as written history. The Bible as well as the works of the early Mediterranean and far eastern philosophers are replete with advice regarding the rearing of the young and the role of the family within the state" (Gaylin, 1981, p. 51).

As noted by Gaylin, family life education is probably as old as the family itself. In twentieth century America, however, family life education has become a formalized and recognized movement.

In a very real sense, there has always been need for marriage and family life education. The difference today is that there is less informal training provided by the culture itself and that other socio-cultural changes have added new problems to be solved. Here are the major arguments.

1. An important institution is in trouble.
2. Modern complexities make for added confusion and tension.
3. Instinct and tradition are insufficient guides.
4. Less preparation is provided by the family itself.
5. Today's goals are different and more difficult than formerly.

(Christensen, 1958, pp. 4-7)

In the early 1900's, educators began to recognize the need for formal education for family life. As early as 1894 a course in marriage preparation was offered by Barnard College. However, the first credit-giving college-level family life course began February 4, 1924. That course was offered by Boston University and taught by Ernest R. Groves (Groves, 1941; Womble, 1966).

From the early preparatory classes has grown an entire field of study. Through the years family life education (FLE) has experienced the normal growing pains of a developing discipline. Research has been conducted, definitions and goals have been defined and redefined, and the very effectiveness of FLE has been questioned and defended.

The greatest majority of the research assessing the need for and effectiveness of FLE was conducted in the 1950's and early 1960's. There are at least two possible explanations for the drop in interest in evaluating family life courses. It may be that after the more than 80 studies conducted in the 1950's and 1960's all indicated positive changes in the students who participated in the courses, researchers concluded that these courses were indeed effective for the students of that time period and thus focused their research energy and money on more pressing matters. On the other hand, this decline in evaluative research may be related to the failure of researchers to find a way to effectively predict marital success. This, however, is unlikely since, as Bowman (1952), Duvall (1965), Sporakowski (1968), and Stinnett (1969) noted, studies of the effectiveness of family life

courses and studies of marital prediction are not necessarily the same. In fact, very few of the evaluative studies of family life courses have focused on marital prediction.

Since the early 1970's, the research in FLE has focused on the many areas of FLE rather than the effectiveness of the field itself. With the continually changing American family, however, along with the growing field of FLE, further investigation of the effectiveness is appropriate.

Family life education has long been seen by many as valuable and consistent with the entire education process in America. A task force for the National Council on Family Relations noted that "building strength in individuals and families is an underlying goal of much of United States education and services" (1968, p. 211). This is a goal of FLE as well. Gaylin (1971) went a step further suggesting that all education is and should be family life education. While it is true that education for family life is much bigger than the field of FLE, this paper will be primarily concerned with formal programs in FLE.

Goals, objectives, and definitions.

Many definitions and goals of FLE have surfaced through the years. Some of them introduce new concepts while others refine the old ones. In order to better understand the study at hand, however, a review of those goals and definitions is appropriate.

In 1966, the American Social Health Association defined FLE as "a body of knowledge and an active process as well -- includes what we know, feel, and do as family members. In other words, family life education deals primarily with the behavior of people not merely as individuals but as members of a family and of other groups" (Somerville, 1971, p. 18). Gaylin took a somewhat looser approach in his definition, stating that "family life education is a myriad of lifelong educational opportunities at each developmental phase" (1971, p. 515).

No matter which type of definition is preferred, relationships are seen as the "crux" of FLE (Christensen, 1958; Kerckhoff, 1964). This fact is noted in the various statements of the goals of FLE. In 1968, an NCFR task force stated that the main purpose of FLE is

"to help individuals and families learn what is known about human growth, development, and behavior in the family setting throughout the life cycle" (p. 211). This was a refinement of Luckey's goal statement of 1965 -- "It is the mature individual, able to feel genuine concern for the welfare of others, eager to and capable of establishing an intimate and permanent relationship with others, and desirous of creating and rearing children" (p. 687). In 1984, Arcus further defined the major goal to be "to develop the potentials of individuals for their present and their future family roles and, through such education, to promote individual and family well-being" (p. 151).

Obviously, the goals of FLE assume that the students are presently members of families and will likely continue to be family members in the future. The realization of those goals, or the real hope of FLE, is that the students will put in to practice the things they learn through education for family life (Mace, 1981). "Any valid system of teaching aims at a radical alteration of the student's deeper patterns of behavior and not merely at his acceptance of supposedly valuable precepts on a shallow level" (Bee, 1952, p. 97).

The aim, then, of the field of family life education is to be a field of study focused on prevention.

We do not have to wait until people develop symptoms when we are in the process of repair, which is commonly called therapy. If we want to, through good family education we can enrich and prevent through education. Then we will not need as much repair. (Satir, 1975, p. 8)

Educators have identified several objectives of family life education, including : (a) giving students a broad knowledge of the family relations field, (b) increasing students' understanding of society's attitudes about the family, (c) increasing students' competency in relating to others, and (d) increasing students' understanding of the opposite sex (Avery, Ridley, Leslie, & Handis, 1979). In 1971, Crosby found that FLE was meeting these objectives through a one semester course for adolescents.

The foremost implication of the study . . . is that family life education . . . acquaints students with the developmental aspects of human growth and development, sexual functioning, dating, mate selection, marital interaction, and familial relationships, and in addition, may serve as a means whereby the student acquires a more realistic and positive self-image. (p. 139)

Other studies (eg. Behlmer, 1961; McFadden, 1981; Moses, 1956) have also indicated that the goals and objectives of FLE are being met through specific educational experiences, and that students are impacted individually by the family relations courses.

In spite of these studies, the numerous studies mentioned later in this discussion, and the many other "successful" studies concerning family life education, historian Christopher Lasch (1977) argued that there is no program which significantly impacts the student and ultimately the family. He stated that the family is merely a victim of society and industry and will change only as these larger groups dictate. It was his belief that these "successful" empirical studies only created false hope within students and people helpers such as family life educators, and in fact had very little if any value.

On the one hand, Lasch makes a good point. There is no guarantee that family life education courses or any other program will indeed have a positive impact on each and every individual. In fact, empirical studies such as those reviewed in this paper show that while some individuals indicate a positive change from various educational experiences, others indicate no change or even a negative impact from those experiences. On the other hand, the studies reviewed in this paper indicate that the majority of the individuals involved in various family life education programs are impacted in a positive way by those programs. Therefore, Lasch's argument must be considered, but it must be considered in light of the evidence of empirical research which has indicated that family life education courses do have a positive impact on students as a group.

Effectiveness.

While the actual benefit of FLE courses has been continually questioned through the years, family life educators have stood fast their ground. Avery and Lee (1964) indicated that while some critics have argued that FLE courses are so functional that they have little academic value, others argue that the classroom situation limits the functionality of the courses. After a thorough survey of family life educators, Avery and Lee defended the academic as well as the functional value of FLE while noting the dangers of both. In response to that survey of family life educators, David Mace, at that time Executive Director of the American Association of Marriage Counselors, further discussed those dangers of extremes while defending the value of FLE.

I think in the field of family life education we have made a mistake, under pressure of short term demands, in allowing this field to become almost completely functional. We have been pressurized into trying to sell high school courses in the expectation that they would cut down sexual promiscuity and premarital pregnancy; and college courses in the expectation that they would greatly increase the marital happiness of the students concerned. I'm quite sure that good family life education *can* do these things. But if we make these the sole criteria to justify such education, two embarrassing consequences follow. First we virtually remove such courses from the field of academic content, and make them good mass counseling projects, whereas there is in fact quite a good deal of highly important academic content about marriage and the family that *does* have a proper place in the broad field of education.

The second trap into which we fall is that the classroom is really a limited vehicle for the functional operation. Intensive personal counseling and guidance, if we could afford to provide it, would be much better. So if our emphasis is wholly functional, what we are in effect saying is that we are offering a cheap substitute for a comprehensive counseling program, until such time as this can be made available. (Avery & Lee, 1964, p. 34)

While critics question FLE courses and argue against their effectiveness, alumni suggest a different picture. In a 1956 study by Moses, married alumni were asked to respond to a questionnaire concerning a specific course in family relationships. In addition to completing the questionnaire, a large number of those alumni voluntarily stated that "Family Relationships 130" had proven to be the most valuable course they had ever taken while in college. Of graduates surveyed in a similar study by Behlmer (1961), 48.3% of the respondents said the course had been highly useful in everyday living, 40.2% said that they regularly applied the information they had received in the course to their present life, and 67.6% stated that the information they received in the course would not have been received from any other source.

Indeed, "young people believe that instruction in marriage and family living is highly desirable Their recommendations tend to center around problems of human relations rather than material resources. They ask for a realistic consideration of sex, premarriage problems, accord in family relationships, and family economics" (Drummond, 1942, p. 4).

Family life educators and young people are not alone in their desire for the continuation of effective education for family life. Better family life leads to development of attitudes, values, and techniques of cooperation needed for effective social action, more success and less problem behavior in school, and vocational efficiency. Because of these ramifications of FLE, teachers, employers, and community leaders are all interested in seeing it continue. They all have much to gain if education for marriage and family life can be made more effective and truly result in better family life (Drummond, 1942).

Through past experience we have come to realize that the essential content of family life education is the mastery of those arts, skills, and wisdoms that make for good family living. "Good" being defined as that which produces growth for the individual, for the family unit, and consequently for society as a whole. (Luckey, 1978, p. 71)

Marriage Preparation and Marital Success

While various types of FLE courses are popular, college students seem particularly interested in marriage preparation courses or those courses which include units in marriage preparation. "Whenever and wherever a functional marriage course is made available and is taught by acceptable personnel, students tend to flock to it There is no doubt about the need for marriage education and student interest in it Sooner or later, most schools which profess to meet student needs in education for life will incorporate marriage education into the curriculum" (Bowman, 1952, p. 258-259).

With nine out of ten Americans getting married, some family life educators have insisted that marriage preparation courses are second in importance only to English usage courses (Bowman, 1952; Womble, 1966). Perhaps because of the great importance placed on this area of FLE, marriage preparation courses have fallen under tremendous scrutiny through the years. Lantz (1953) indicated that the biggest problem with marriage education is that the instructors try to cover too much with too little expertise. In addition, he argued that marriage courses cover areas of common sense, familiar materials, or easily acquirable materials which is apt to result in boredom. According to Bowman and Womble, this final argument is unfounded.

Lantz suggested that marriage education should be concerned with sources of difficulties and how to cope with those difficulties. This idea is in keeping with the prevention focus of the field and is evident in his statement of the two major objectives of marriage preparation courses: "(1) to sensitize the student to those areas in which (very often unrecognized) values are to be had, and (2) to sensitize him to those areas in which interpersonal difficulties may be encountered" (Lantz, 1953, p. 118). In 1965, Duvall expanded on this statement of objectives.

The objectives of marriage education are usually stated in terms of knowledge -- of facts, behavior, social norms, expectations, and principles; of attitudes -- toward

self, others, sex, love, marriage, family; of competence in interpersonal relations and specific skills predictive of success; and values -- in line with personal identity and marital integrity. (p. 179)

In spite of honorable objectives, and along with incredible popularity, has come tremendous criticism of marriage preparation courses. Here again, family life educators defend their existence.

People often ask: "Do students who take marriage courses have fewer divorces than those who do not?" The divorce rate is a false criterion of success. To attempt to evaluate a marriage course by the divorce rate of alumni would be similar to evaluating a hygiene course by the death rate of alumni or a social science course by the incidence of alumni crime. (Bowman, 1952, p. 262)

"Education for marriage cannot work miracles, but it can make a difference, and it does" (Duvall, 1965, p. 183).

Problems in evaluation.

A major problem in evaluating the marriage preparation course in relation to marital success lies in the definition of a "successful marriage" (Longworth, 1953). As Bowman noted, many laymen measure success by the divorce rate of the alumni. Family life educators, on the other hand, tend to consider other factors such as mental health, commitment, devotion, and relationships (Blood, 1962; Byron, 1985; Christensen, 1958; Keeler, 1962; Landis & Landis, 1968; Luckey & Neubeck, 1956).

Family life educators are concerned with the success and stability of the marriages of their students. Byron (1985) stated, "My concern is with the preparation of persons, as persons, for the marriage commitment. . . . My assumption is that family stability rests on the strength of the marriage commitment" (p. 27).

While that statement indicates the concerns of most family life educators, it also notes a second problem in evaluation of the "success" of marriage preparation courses. The second problem is persons -- individuals.

Marital success is dependent upon both people and circumstances -- upon the quality of the persons who enter it and upon the nature of the environment that surrounds it. But the most crucial of these two is people, for they are the very elements of society and the only sources from which initiative for social change can come. If marriage and family living are to be improved, it will be because of the insights and efforts of individuals, first as applied to themselves and their own families and second as applied to society generally in the building of a better environment. (Christensen, 1958, p. 20)

Blood (1962) also noted the importance of the individual, suggesting that marital success depends on both partners and their ability to devote themselves to each other.

Once again, however, family life educators do believe that education can make a difference in marital success. This difference comes through an increased knowledge and understanding. Research has shown that individuals who are able to more accurately evaluate themselves and who have more realistic expectations of marriage are most likely to achieve greater marital success and happiness (Landis & Landis, 1968). Reuben Hill believed that this truly is a result of marriage education and he stated this clearly in a paper read at the Social Scientists' Advisory Meeting in 1960:

Persons who have had marriage education are somewhat more realistic in their anticipation of problems and in their general marriage expectation. Marriage education also seems to result in an ability to verbalize somewhat more freely about marriage, its problems, solutions, and nature. Marriage becomes objectified, a vocabulary is learned along with some concepts and principles. (Duvall, 1965)

In addition, in spite of the tremendous obstacles to evaluation of the effectiveness of marriage education, some family life educators believe it can and should be done. Bee (1952) noted two main aspects of the evaluation problem. First is the teacher's evaluation of the student through various testings and observations. Second is the student's personal evaluation through self-observation and understanding. The present study is consistent

with the second aspect listed by Bee as the researcher encourages the student in self evaluation through the use of a survey instrument.

In spite of the difficulties in defining marital success, most family life educators as well as laymen would probably agree that one important factor in marital success is the quality of the relationship within a marriage. Landis and Landis (1968) stated:

Many things affect the quality of the relationship within a marriage. The personality traits of the husband and wife, and their family backgrounds, are major factors. Their conceptions of marriage, what it will require of them, and what they hope to receive from it, will also significantly affect their happiness in marriage. Their attitudes toward marriage and their ability to cooperate unselfishly will carry more weight over the years than will how much in love they are at the start. (p. 3)

Because of the importance placed on attitudes and unselfishness by family life educators, it is appropriate to consider how these might actually be affected by a family life course. It is the effect of a "Christian Family" course on attitudes and unselfishness as measured by marital readiness instruments that is the primary focus of this study

Marital Readiness

If there is one primary goal for marriage preparation courses, it is getting the student ready for marriage. In spite of this fact, very little research has been conducted in the area of marital readiness. While marital readiness includes various aspects of individual development, most family life educators agree that it is first and foremost emotional maturity (Blood, 1962; Keeler, 1962; Landis, 1965; Landis & Landis, 1968; Levy & Munroe, 1938; Sporkowski, 1968; Stinnett, 1969).

Many definitions of emotional maturity have been developed and promoted. There are, however, several commonalities to the majority of the definitions. First, the emotionally mature individual is able to see oneself and others objectively. He/she is able to look beyond feelings to the facts and to act on those facts. Second, the emotionally

mature individual is able to establish and maintain personal relationships. In addition, he/she can act with empathy and responsibility within those relationships. Finally, the emotionally mature individual exhibits stability, both in relationships and in attitudes.

Levy and Munroe were among the first to recognize the importance of emotional maturity to marital adjustment and success. In their book The Happy Family, published in 1938, they made the following statement: "Emotional readiness for marriage is much more important than any particular personality traits -- persons who have the proper mental attitude toward marriage can adjust together" (p. 43).

In the 1960's, three other researchers expressed an interest in marital readiness and a few research studies were conducted in the 1960's and early 1970's (Keeler, 1962; Sporakowski, 1968; Stinnett, 1969; Stinnett, Hall, & Walters, 1973; Stinnett & Pyles, 1977). Keeler developed the Marriage Readiness Rating Scale (MRRS) for her research. This scale was developed primarily for evaluation of high school females and included statements in three basic areas -- (1) physical, social, and emotional maturity, (2) skills and abilities of getting along with people, (3) homemaking skills and abilities. Keeler noted that the main purpose of the scale was to help the student realize the importance of maturity in all areas.

Sporakowski was the next researcher to develop an instrument for evaluating marital readiness. His efforts resulted in the development of the Marital Preparedness Instrument (MPI) for use with single, unengaged college students. The purpose of his 1968 study was to discover whether there is a relationship between marital readiness, marital prediction, and adjustment. His research indicated that there is indeed a significant relationship between marital readiness and prediction of marital success, but that they are not necessarily the same variable. The present study assumes from this that marital readiness is important for marital success.

Stinnett was also interested in marital readiness and its relationship to success in marriage. It was his conviction that "youth who are prepared to fulfill the needs of love,

personality fulfillment, respect, and communication in a future mate have already established a strong foundation for later marital success" (1969, p. 683). To conduct research in this area, Stinnett developed the Readiness for Marital Competence Index (RMC) It, too, was developed for use with the unmarried college student.

Although Sporakowski included some items dealing with abilities on his MPI, the majority deal with attitudes. The 36 items of the RMC Index represent the four need categories of love, respect, communication, and personality fulfillment. Both Sporakowski and Stinnett emphasized the relationship of emotional maturity and unselfishness to marital readiness and marital success.

Readiness further defined.

There has been very little discussion of marital readiness in the marriage and family literature. As has been noted, the majority of that discussion considers the primary aspect of readiness to be maturity, but that definition is too vague for a reasonable understanding of marital readiness. Stinnett (1969) expanded the definition of marital readiness as he related it to marital competence. He defined marital competence as "the ability to perform marital roles in such a manner as to fulfill in the mate certain important needs involved in the marital relationship" (p. 683). Success in marriage then, is greatly dependent on the individual's readiness to perform those roles.

Especially in Stinnett's work, an emphasis on the "other" is noted. Rather than emphasizing the importance of selecting the right partner, Stinnett emphasized being the right partner. Further, he suggested that the way to be the right partner is to "identify and seek to meet the needs of the mate" (1969, p. 683). According to Stinnett, there are four basic needs -- love, personality fulfillment, respect, and communication. For better understanding, he broke the need areas down in the following way:

love -- providing such qualities as affection, admiration, optimism, security, and emotional closeness;

personality fulfillment -- helping mate to achieve potential and autonomy, and assisting in the mate's personality, social and intellectual development;

respect -- treating mate as an individual, avoiding habits which annoy mate, being a good listener, and providing encouragement and understanding;

communication -- expressing true feelings to mate and finding satisfactory solutions to disagreement. (1969, p. 683)

If, as Stinnett and Sporkowski indicated, marital readiness is significantly related to marital success, then it should be worthwhile to evaluate the effect of marriage and family education on marital readiness. This provides the theoretical base and the purpose of the present study.

Past Research

While there has been little research in the specific area of marital readiness, quite extensive research has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of marriage and family courses. As stated earlier, the majority of this research took place in the 1950's and early 1960's. Because of this, Mace (1981) has made a plea for a renewed effort in this area. He stated that "we really need to know, with greater degree of precision than we do at present, to what extent our students are really learning for living" (p. 605). The present study strives to add to our knowledge in this area.

This researcher reviewed many research studies evaluating the effectiveness of marriage and family courses. Some of these were Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Dyer, 1959; Finck, 1956; Gillies & Lastrucci, 1954; and Moses, 1956. Of the studies reviewed, only one was conducted at a church-related college (Bardis). In that 1963 study, Bardis evaluated the influence of a family life course on the sex knowledge of the students in that course. Utilizing a pretest/posttest control group design, he found that sex knowledge did increase significantly throughout the semester. Using a similar design, Moses (1956) found that students enrolled in a family class for one semester at Syracuse University made

significant gains in their understanding while the control group did not. Moses did further evaluation of the scores of males and females and found that while both the pretest scores and the posttest scores of females were significantly higher, there was no significant difference between the gains of males and females. She also found gains in knowledge to be positively related to dating status of the respondents.

The 1954 study by Gillies and Lastrucci utilized three classes of college juniors. In their attempt to validate the effectiveness of a college marriage course, they found that changes in behavior did take place, "presumably as a result of a college course in Home and Family Living" (P. 58). They also noted that the changes in information were appreciably greater than the changes in attitude and personal adjustment. Crosby (1971) conducted a similar study with junior high and high school students. He found that the students achieved a significant increase in knowledge and in positive self-attitude, but not in positive attitude toward family life. He did note a nonsignificant gain in attitude toward family life.

Two longitudinal studies were noted in the review of the literature, Dyer (1959) and Finck (1956). In his 1956 study, Finck surveyed graduates of Florida State University. He chose a group who had participated in the course "Marriage and the Family" between the years 1930 and 1946, and a matched control group who had not taken the course. Through his evaluation he found that 34.8% of the experimental group believed the course had helped them "a great deal" in their family life, 52.8% believed it had "helped somewhat," and 12.4% said that it had made no difference. Dyer surveyed graduates of the University of Minnesota. She found that a significantly greater number of the control group rated themselves as "less-than-happy" in their marriages than did the group who had participated in a family life course. She also found evidence to indicate that the family life course was instrumental in effecting happier marriage relationships for participants in the course.

In 1965, Duvall reviewed over 80 reports of the effectiveness of marriage courses. She found, in every instance, that the courses being evaluated were "effective in bringing about measurable changes in student understanding, attitudes, expectations, and/or the abilities being tested" (p. 183). With these reports in mind, it is expected that the findings of the present study will indicate positive measurable changes in the students involved in a one semester "Christian Family" course.

Hypothesis 1a: There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Among the studies evaluating course effectiveness are those who utilized control groups (Bardis, 1963; Dyer, 1959; Finck, 1956; Moses, 1956). In each instance, the control group made significantly less positive gain than did the experimental group. The present study also involves a control group and it is expected that this group will make less gain in marital readiness than will the experimental group.

Hypothesis 1b: There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course and those students not enrolled in such a course.

Among these research studies there were other significant findings which are relevant to the present study. In Moses' (1956) study at Syracuse University utilizing a pretest/posttest design, females scored significantly higher on both the pretests and posttests. There was, however, no significant difference between the gains of males and females in that study. Bardis (1963), utilizing a pretest/posttest design as well, also found the course to be an "equalizer" and that there were no significant differences in gains of males and females. Therefore, in the present pretest/posttest study, it is expected that females will score higher at both testing periods, but that there will be no significant differences between the gains of males and females.

Hypothesis 2a: There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

2b: There is no significant difference in the posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

2c: There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Stinnett (1969) and Sporakowski (1968) both found marital readiness to be positively related to the dating status of the student. Moses' 1956 study indicated that measurable gains resulting from the marriage and family course were positively related to the dating status as well. From these research reports, it would be expected that in the present study gains in marital readiness will be positively related to the dating status of the student, with each progressive category making significantly greater gains than the previous one.

Hypothesis 3a: There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

3b: There is no significant difference in posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

3c: There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Other studies indicated that marital readiness is also significantly related to happiness of childhood, authority pattern in the family of orientation, mother employment, parental values, relationship with parents, emotional stability, religious affiliation, and age

(Chaudhary, 1984; Sporakowski, 1968; Stinnett, 1969; Stinnett, Hall, & Walters, 1973; Stinnett & Pyles, 1977). The only factor listed here which is relevant to the present study is that of age. In her 1984 study, Chaudhary found that subjects over 22 years of age were significantly different in marital readiness than those under 19 years of age. Because of this finding, and because the majority of junior and senior students fall in the age bracket of 19 to 22 years, the sample for the present study has been limited to subjects in this age range.

Finally, through their research, Sporakowski and Stinnett found that "assessment of readiness for marriage [should] be described in terms of self-perceptions and expectations relating to roles in marriage, but not necessarily related to a specific mate or possible mate-to-be" (Sporakowski, 1968, p. 160). This is consistent with Rogers and Bee who hold that self-evaluation is the most desirable and most valid source of evaluation in a student-centered setting (Bee, 1952; Rogers, 1951). The present study was designed in keeping with these suggestions, utilizing the instruments of Sporakowski and Stinnett.

Summary

This literature review identified a theoretical base for the current study and established the positioning of the current study in the literature. It was shown that the study of marital readiness is based on sound research and that the measurement of marital readiness is possible. The impact of education on marriage preparation was established and the relationship of marital readiness to marital success was discussed. This study attempts to build upon that base of literature by comparing the change in marital readiness of students enrolled in a "Christian Family" course with students not enrolled in such a course.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES AND METHODS

The discussion of procedures in this chapter includes a discussion of the population and sample, the survey instrument, the data collection methods, and the statistical methods. A restatement of the hypotheses is also included.

Population and Sample of the Survey

The population of the survey was derived from two sub-populations. Unmarried Oklahoma Christian College (OCC) students between the ages of 19 and 22 who were enrolled in "Christian Family" during the Spring 1986 Trimester made up one sub-population. There were two sections of this class with a total of 150 enrolled at the beginning of the trimester. Both sections were taught by the same instructor. Unmarried OCC students between the ages of 19 and 22 who were enrolled in the first of three sections of "Great Christian Doctrines", a general education Bible course, during the Spring 1986 Trimester made up the second sub-population. Enrollment in this course totaled 62. The students enrolled in "Christian Family" made up the experimental group, while the students in "Great Christian Doctrines" made up the control group.

The Courses Involved

"Christian Family".

"Christian Family" is an elective general education Bible course offered at Oklahoma Christian College. As an elective general education course, students are not required to

take this course during their college career. They may, however, choose to enroll in this course to fulfill the requirement of one Bible course per trimester.

"Christian Family" is to be "a study of the marriage institution with emphasis on the characteristics of the "Christian Family" and the varied relationships of its members with each other" (OCC Catalog, p. 51). This is a junior/senior level course which the majority of OCC students choose to take. Further explanation of "Christian Family" is drawn from the course syllabus and presented in Appendix A.

"Great Christian Doctrines".

"Great Christian Doctrines" is also an elective general education Bible course offered at Oklahoma Christian College. As with "Christian Family," students are not required to take this course during their college career. They may, however, choose to enroll in this course to fulfill the requirement of one Bible course per trimester.

"Great Christian Doctrines" is to be "a systematic study of the Biblical teaching regarding the following doctrines: Revelation, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit" (OCC Catalog, p. 50). This, too, is a junior/senior level course which the majority of OCC students choose to take. It was chosen to provide the control group because of its similarity in course type, requirements, and popularity.

Experimental Sample Characteristics

Survey instruments were administered to a total of 149 of the 150 students enrolled in "Christian Family." Thirty-eight of those students were present for and responded only to either the pretest or the posttest. An additional 17 students (9 male, 8 female) were married and thus were eliminated from this study of unmarried college students. Also, 8 students were eliminated due to the age restriction. Six males and 2 females were 23 or older. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 76 students. No attempt was made to obtain a further randomized sample as such a procedure would have limited the sample size

greatly and the process of enrolling for a general education course was considered sufficient for the randomization procedure (Isaac & Michael, 1981). The reader should note that the randomization of the enrollment is listed as an assumption of the current study.

Thirty-seven (48.7%) of the students in the experimental group were male and 39 (51.3%) were female. Five students (6.6%) were 19, 31 (40.8%) were 20, 30 (39.5%) were 21, and 10 (13.2%) were 22 years of age. The sample consisted of 3 (3.9%) sophomores, 42 (55.3%) juniors, and 31 (40.8%) seniors. At the end of the semester, 15 (19.7%) were not dating, 14 (18.4%) were dating several, 11 (14.5%) were dating one, but not seriously, 24 (31.6%) were dating steady, and 12 (15.8%) were engaged. These characteristics of the experimental group are presented in Table I.

Control Sample Characteristics

Three sections of the general education Bible course, "Great Christian Doctrines" were offered during the Spring 1986 Trimester. The researcher decided that the section with the highest enrollment would be the section utilized for a control group. That section was section 01. The survey instrument was administered to a total of 60 of the 62 students enrolled in that section. Of those 60 students, 23 were present for and responded to only the pretest or the posttest. An additional 11 (8 male, 3 female) were eliminated because they were married. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 26 students. None of these students in the control sample were enrolled in The "Christian Family" during the Spring 1986 trimester. No attempt was made to obtain a further randomized sample as such a procedure would have limited the sample size greatly and the process of enrolling for a general education course was considered sufficient for the randomization procedure. The reader should note that the randomization of the enrollment is listed as an assumption of the current study.

The final control sample was made up of 11 (42.3%) males and 15 (57.7%) females. The beginning sub-population was made up of a more even distribution of the sexes (51% male, 49% female), but the elimination process brought a greater decrease in males than females. Of the 26 students in the control sample, 4 (15.4%) were 19, 7 (26.9%) were 20, 13 (50%) were 21, and 2 (7.7%) were 22. Six students (23.1%) in the control group were sophomores, 9 (34.6%) were juniors, and 11 (42.3%) were seniors. At the end of the semester, 9 (34.6%) of the control students were not dating, 6 (23.1%) were dating several, 6 (23.1%) were dating one, but not seriously, 4 (15.4%) were dating steady, and 1 (3.8%) was engaged. Twelve (46.2%) of those students in the control group reported having taken "Christian Family" course in a previous semester. Further background data in family life education for both the experimental and control groups can be found in Appendix B. The characteristics of the control sample are listed in Table II.

Survey Instrument

Demographic Data

The survey instrument consisted of three sections. A complete copy of the instrument used for males is in Appendix C, while Appendix D includes the instrument given to females. The instruments are identical with the exception of the words used to depict dating or marriage partners. While the Student Identification Number was requested for coding and bookkeeping purposes and was utilized for matching pretest and posttest scores, anonymity was assured on the front of the instrument.

Section One of the instrument was designed to gather demographic data concerning the respondent. This information consisted of age, classification, marital status, dating status, and background in marriage and family education. This section was designed in keeping with demographic data gathered in past research studies (Bardis, 1963; Gillies & Lastrucci, 1954; Moses, 1956; Sporakowski, 1968; Stinnett, 1969). Section one was also

critiqued for understandability by a college junior not enrolled in either "Christian Family" or "Great Christian Doctrines".

TABLE I

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN "CHRISTIAN FAMILY"
(EXPERIMENTAL SAMPLE)

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sex | | | | |
| Female | 39 | 51.3 | 39 | 51.3 |
| Male | 37 | 48.7 | 76 | 100.0 |
| Age | | | | |
| 19 | 5 | 6.6 | 5 | 6.6 |
| 20 | 31 | 40.8 | 36 | 47.4 |
| 21 | 30 | 39.5 | 66 | 86.8 |
| 22 | 10 | 13.2 | 76 | 100.0 |
| Classification | | | | |
| Sophomore | 3 | 3.9 | 3 | 3.9 |
| Junior | 42 | 55.3 | 45 | 59.2 |
| Senior | 31 | 40.8 | 76 | 100.0 |
| Dating Status | | | | |
| Not dating | 15 | 10.7 | 15 | 19.7 |
| Dating several | 14 | 18.4 | 20 | 38.2 |
| Dating one, not serious | 11 | 14.5 | 40 | 52.6 |
| Dating steady | 24 | 31.6 | 64 | 84.2 |
| Engaged | 12 | 15.8 | 76 | 100.0 |

TABLE II
CONTROL SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sex | | | | |
| Female | 15 | 57.7 | 15 | 57.7 |
| Male | 11 | 42.3 | 26 | 100.0 |
| Age | | | | |
| 19 | 4 | 15.4 | 4 | 15.4 |
| 20 | 7 | 26.9 | 11 | 42.3 |
| 21 | 13 | 50.0 | 24 | 92.3 |
| 22 | 2 | 7.7 | 26 | 100.0 |
| Classification | | | | |
| Sophomore | 6 | 23.1 | 6 | 23.1 |
| Junior | 9 | 34.6 | 15 | 57.7 |
| Senior | 11 | 42.3 | 26 | 100.0 |
| Dating Status | | | | |
| Not dating | 9 | 34.6 | 9 | 34.6 |
| Dating several | 6 | 23.1 | 15 | 57.7 |
| Dating one, not serious | 6 | 23.1 | 21 | 80.8 |
| Dating steady | 4 | 15.4 | 25 | 96.2 |
| Engaged | 1 | 3.8 | 26 | 100.0 |

Readiness for Marital Competence Index

Section Two of the instrument was the Readiness for Marital Competence Index (RMC) developed by Stinnett (1969). This instrument was developed to determine the readiness for marriage of the respondents, based on the definition that readiness for marital competence is "the degree to which an individual feels prepared to fulfill in a future mate the needs of love, personality fulfillment, respect, and communication" (p. 684). The RMC Index originally contained 46 items, but was later reduced to 36 items. Those 36 items are further divided into 4 categories representing the 4 need areas identified by Stinnett -- love, respect, communication, and personality fulfillment. In the present form of the RMC, items 1-9 evaluate the need area of love, items 10-18 evaluate personality fulfillment, items 19-27 evaluate respect, and items 28-36 evaluate communication. These categories are in no way identified on the instrument itself.

Respondents were instructed to report their own feelings as of "today." For each of the items, five degrees of response are possible. Those responses ranged from "very unprepared" to "very prepared" to perform the various functions delineated by each item. In scoring the items, the least favorable response was given the lowest score (1), and the most favorable response was given the highest score (5). This is a deviation from the method of Stinnett, who assigned the lowest score to the most favorable response and the highest score to the least favorable response. The scoring method utilized in the present study, however, seemed more appropriate and less confusing to this researcher and was consistent with the scoring of the Sporakowski instrument.

Validity data were obtained by Stinnett using an item analysis with a sample of 360 college students. That study indicated that all of the original 46 items discriminated at the .001 level between the upper- and lower-quartile groups. In addition, a split-half reliability coefficient of .97, corrected to .99 was reported (Stinnett, 1969). These figures suggest a substantial degree of validity and reliability for the RMC.

Further testing of the revised instrument was conducted by Stinnett, Hall, and Walters (1973) utilizing the chi-square test to determine if each item significantly differentiated those subjects scoring in the upper- and lower-quartiles on the basis of total scores. All of the 36 items on the revised RMC were found to be significantly discriminating at the .001 level. A split-half reliability coefficient of +.97 was obtained using the Spearman-Brown Correction Formula to determine an index of the reliability of the items on the RMC.

Marital Preparedness Instrument

Section Three of the survey instrument consisted of the Marital Preparedness Instrument (MPI) developed by Sporkowski (1968). The MPI consisted of 31 items which had been previously determined to be useful in marital prediction studies or which had been hypothesized to be functional attributes of marriage. Due to an oversight during the reproduction of the test for the present study, MPI item #2 -- Reproduction or child bearing -- was missing from the survey for males. Therefore, the answers given on that item were not considered in the final scoring of the instrument.

As with the RMC Index, respondents were instructed to report their own feelings as of "today." For each of the items, five degrees of response are possible. Those responses ranged from "very unprepared" to "very prepared" to perform the various functions delineated by each item. In scoring the items, the least favorable response was given the lowest score (1), and the most favorable response was given the highest score (5).

Reliability and validity data were reported by Sporkowski, utilizing a sample of 32 college students. Chi-square comparisons of the upper- and lower-quartiles, based on the total scores, showed that each of the 31 items discriminated between the two groups at the .001 level. A test/re-test administration over a seven-day interval yielded a Spearman Rank-Order Correlation of +.83, based on the total scores.

Collection of Data

Classroom Procedures

The students in both the experimental and control groups were given the survey instrument during normal class times, and the instruments were collected immediately upon completion. The pretest was administered during the first class period of the trimester, and the posttest was administered during the 11th week of the trimester. Any students who were absent the day of the testing were not able to participate. The instrument required 10-15 minutes of class time to complete.

In both cases, the instrument was administered by the instructor of the course. Both instructors were asked to administer the survey, giving no special instructions and making every effort to make the survey seem like a regular part of the course. This method of administration was utilized in hopes of reducing bias in the respondents (Isaac & Michael, 1981).

Data Entry

When completed instruments were obtained, they were checked for completeness, marital status, and age in order to determine if the responses could be used in subsequent analysis. The data from each instrument, including the rating of each individual item, were then entered into a computer data file using the Student Identification Number as the key field. The instruments were then filed into two groups -- experimental and control -- for reference purposes. Data-entry accuracy was maintained by visual inspection of the data on the video display terminal and by program validation of the input data to ensure, insofar as possible, that only valid responses were entered.

Statistical Methods

The data collected for this study were analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS). First, the total marital readiness pretest and posttest scores for each student were tabulated. These consisted of the scores on both the RMC and the MPI. The difference in the scores was calculated by subtracting the pretest score from the posttest score. Therefore, a positive difference indicated an increase in marital readiness, while a negative difference indicated a decrease in marital readiness. Pretest and posttest subscores were also tabulated for the MPI, the RMC, and the four need areas of the RMC. The differences in these subscores were also calculated.

All data were then analyzed using SAS to produce frequency information concerning demographic categories. Frequency information produced included the number in each category, the percentage in each category, the cumulative frequency, and the cumulative percentage. Frequency information was also produced for each individual score.

Since the instruments used in this study produce score data, the primary statistical analysis utilized was analysis of variance. According to Linton and Gallo, "analysis of variance is one of the most powerful and flexible statistical tests of significance" (1975, p. 122). In conducting an analysis of variance, the following steps are necessary:

1. Make an estimate of the variance in the population by averaging the variance within each condition -- (MS) error.
 2. Using the means of each condition, estimate the variance of the distribution of sample means.
 3. From that, determine an estimate of the population variance -- (MS) treatment.
 4. The effects of the independent variable are evaluated by computing these two estimates.
 5. The ratio of the two estimates -- (MS) treatment/(MS) error -- yields F .
- (Linton & Gallo, 1975, p. 124)

Because there was only one independent variable (group) but different numbers of students in each group, the One-Way ANOVA was utilized to evaluate Hypothesis 1b. SAS was used to generate the One-Way ANOVA test in order to determine if there were any significant differences between groups for the differences in pretest and posttest scores. The differences were determined to be significant if the probability of the difference (p -value) was less than or equal to .05.

The One-Way ANOVA test was also conducted to evaluate pretest score differences, posttest score differences, and differences in the change between pretest and posttest scores by sex (Hypothesis 2) and by courtship stage (Hypothesis 3), and for these differences within the RMC and the MPI separately. Here again, the differences were determined to be significant if the p -value was less than or equal to .05.

The correlated groups t -test was utilized to evaluate the within group difference questioned by Hypothesis 1a. According to Jaccard (1983, p. 190), this test is appropriate to use to analyze the relationship between two variables when:

1. the dependent variable is quantitative in nature and is measured on approximately an interval level;
2. the independent variable is *within-subjects* in nature; and
3. the independent variable has two and only two values.

As with the previous tests, the differences were determined to be significant if the p -value was less than or equal to .05.

Next, SAS was used to generate the Spearman's rank order correlation (Spearman rho) to determine if there was any correlation between dating status and marital readiness pretest scores, posttest scores, and/or differences in pretest and posttest scores. The Spearman rho is a statistic that measures the degree to which rank scores on two variables are linearly related to each other (Jaccard, 1983). The correlation coefficient, or r , can range from -1.00 to 0 to +1.00. The closer r is to -1 or +1, the greater the linear

relationship. An r approximating +1 indicates a direct relationship, while an r approximating -1 indicates an inverse relationship.

The a x s ANOVA was then used to determine if there was a significant difference in the RMC pretest subscores or posttest subscores. A correlated groups t -test was done to note the difference in the change between pretest scores and posttest scores in each of the four need areas evaluated by the RMC. Again, the a x s ANOVA was utilized to evaluate the differences between the four need areas in regard to the changes made in those areas from pretest to posttest. Finally, post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey's (HSD) test to discriminate between the areas. For all statistical tests, both alpha and p were set at .05.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis Number One

- a) There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course and those students not enrolled in such a course.

Hypothesis Number Two

- a) There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in the posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

c) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Hypothesis Number Three

a) There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship (not dating, dating several, dating one not seriously, dating steady, engaged) enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

b) There is no significant difference in posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

c) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Hypothesis Number Four

a) There are no significant differences in pretest subscores, in the four need areas (love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication) covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

b) There are no significant differences in posttest subscores, in the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

c) There are no significant differences in the change between pretest and posttest subscores, between the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Summary

The procedures used in the current study were presented in this chapter. The sample was chosen from two sub-populations consisting of students enrolled in a general education course entitled "Christian Family", and students enrolled in another general education course entitled "Great Christian Doctrines". Details of sample selection were discussed. The survey instrument was presented and the reliability and validity of the RMC and the MPI were discussed. The data collected utilizing the survey instrument were analyzed using the One-Way ANOVA, the correlated groups *t*-test, the Spearman rho, the a x s ANOVA, and Tukey's (HSD) test, and results were obtained with which to draw conclusions about the hypotheses presented.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The results of the study are reported in this chapter along with a discussion and analysis of the findings. There are five major divisions in the chapter, the first four each relating to one of the hypotheses of the study, and the fifth discussing additional findings. Within each of the first four divisions, three major sections exist. The first section is devoted to reporting the findings. The second section provides a discussion of the findings. The third section in each division summarizes the results for the hypothesis.

The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used for all of the statistical tests that are reported. While the One-Way ANOVA was the primary test utilized, some calculations were also made with the correlated groups *t*-test, the Spearman rank order coefficient, the *a x s* ANOVA, and Tukey's (HSD) test.

In order that the reader might have a basis for interpreting the more complete calculations, the means of the groups are presented here in the introduction. The means for the experimental group are listed in Table III, while the means for the control group are listed in Table IV.

TABLE III
 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR STUDENTS IN "CHRISTIAN FAMILY"
 (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)
 (N=76)

| Variable | Mean | SD | Minimum Value | Maximum Value | Variance |
|--------------------|--------|-------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| <u>Total Score</u> | | | | | |
| Prescore | 241.45 | 27.11 | 173 | 314 | 734.84 |
| Postscore | 262.58 | 25.23 | 199 | 320 | 636.22 |
| Difference | 21.13 | 22.79 | -24 | 104 | 519.61 |
| <u>RMC</u> | | | | | |
| Prescore | 132.47 | 16.13 | 94 | 171 | 260.33 |
| Postscore | 144.79 | 14.85 | 95 | 180 | 220.38 |
| Difference | 12.31 | 15.19 | -20 | 68 | 230.83 |
| <u>MPI</u> | | | | | |
| Prescore | 108.97 | 13.01 | 79 | 143 | 169.17 |
| Postscore | 117.79 | 12.42 | 82 | 148 | 154.22 |
| Difference | 8.82 | 10.66 | -18 | 36 | 113.70 |

TABLE IV
 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR CONTROL GROUP
 (N=26)

| Variable | Mean | SD | Minimum Value | Maximum Value | Variance |
|--------------------|--------|-------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| <u>Total Score</u> | | | | | |
| Prescore | 253.58 | 26.73 | 205 | 310 | 714.33 |
| Postscore | 257.88 | 23.53 | 217 | 310 | 553.55 |
| Difference | 4.31 | 14.58 | -25 | 30 | 212.62 |
| <u>RMC</u> | | | | | |
| Prescore | 138.85 | 16.41 | 108 | 174 | 269.26 |
| Postscore | 141.88 | 15.98 | 112 | 180 | 255.23 |
| Difference | 3.04 | 10.49 | -20 | 27 | 110.04 |
| <u>MPI</u> | | | | | |
| Prescore | 114.73 | 12.62 | 94 | 138 | 159.32 |
| Postscore | 116.00 | 10.02 | 98 | 140 | 100.48 |
| Difference | 1.27 | 7.70 | -15 | 12 | 59.24 |

Hypothesis One

- a) There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

- b) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course and those students not enrolled in such a course.

Results for Hypothesis One

The correlated groups *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the students enrolled in "Christian Family". The *t*-test conducted with those scores produced a *t* value of 8.80, with a *p*-value of .0001. Therefore, null hypothesis 1a is rejected. Complete results of the *t*-test are listed in Table V.

TABLE V
CHANGES IN MARITAL READINESS SCORES
OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP:
t-TEST RESULTS
(N = 76)

| Variable | Mean | STD Error of Mean | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|------------------|--------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Score difference | 21.132 | 2.615 | 8.08 | .0001* |

**p* < .05

With a possible total score of 330, the minimum marital readiness score produced by the experimental group on the pretest was 173, while the minimum score on the posttest was 199. The maximum pretest score was 314, and the maximum posttest score was 320. On the pretest, 50% (38) scored 242 or below. On the posttest, only 19.7% (15) scored 242 or below, while 50% scored 263 or above. For a complete listing of pretest and posttest scores, see Appendixes E and F.

The One-Way ANOVA test conducted with the pretest and posttest data of both groups produced an F value of 12.38, with a *p*-value of .0007. This finding indicates that there was a significant difference in the change in scores between the experimental and the control groups. Therefore, null hypothesis 1b is rejected. Complete information produced by the One-Way ANOVA is presented in Tables VI, VII, and VIII. Eighty-six percent (65) of the experimental sample showed an increase in marital readiness over the trimester, while 58% (15) of the control sample showed some increase. Eleven individuals in each group showed no increase or a decrease in marital readiness over the period of the trimester.

TABLE VI
CHANGES IN TOTAL MARITAL READINESS SCORES OF THE
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|--------|-----|----------------|-----------|-------|----------|
| Scores | 1 | 5483.2675 | 5483.2675 | 12.38 | .0007* |
| Error | 100 | 44286.2227 | 442.8622 | | |
| Total | 101 | 49769.4902 | | | |

* *p* < .05

TABLE VII

CHANGES IN READINESS FOR MARITAL COMPETENCE SUBSCORES
OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------------|-----|----------------|-----------|------|----------|
| RMC Subscores | 1 | 1667.3723 | 1667.3723 | 8.31 | .0048* |
| Error | 100 | 20063.3825 | 200.6338 | | |
| Total | 101 | 21730.7549 | | | |

* $p < .05$

TABLE VIII

CHANGES IN MARITAL PREPAREDNESS INSTRUMENT SUBSCORES
OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------------|-----|----------------|-----------|-------|----------|
| MPI Subscores | 1 | 1103.2773 | 1103.2773 | 11.02 | .0013* |
| Error | 100 | 10008.5364 | 100.0854 | | |
| Total | 101 | 11111.8137 | | | |

* $p < .05$

Further analysis utilizing the One-Way ANOVA revealed a significant difference in the change in scores between the experimental and control groups on both the RMC and the MPI. The analysis of variance procedure conducted on the RMC subscore produced an F value of 8.31 with a *p*-value of .0048. The same procedure using the MPI subscores produced an F value of 11.02 with a *p*-value of .0013. Both subscores were significant at the .05 level.

Discussion of Results for Hypothesis One

The results of the statistical tests for this hypothesis have shown that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group, and a significant difference in the change in scores of the experimental group and control group. The results indicate that there was a significant increase in marital readiness of the students enrolled in "Christian Family". In addition, the findings show a significantly greater increase in marital readiness in those students enrolled in that course over students in the control group.

These findings are consistent with the results of past research (Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Duvall, 1965; Finck, 1956; Gillis & Lastrucci, 1954; Moses, 1956). While some of these studies reported increases in knowledge and others reported changes in attitude and personal adjustment, they all reported courses in family life to be effective in bringing about measurable changes. The current study indicated that the "Christian Family" course may be effective in bringing about measurable changes in marital readiness.

In addition, Bardis (1963), Dyer (1959), and Moses (1956), all utilizing a control group design, reported that the experimental group made significantly greater gains than did the control group. This was also found to be true in the present research study.

Summary of Results for Hypothesis One

As was expected, the statistical tests indicate a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness in students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Also as expected, a significant difference was noted in the change in scores between those students enrolled in "Christian Family" and students not enrolled. The null hypothesis can again be rejected. These results lead to the conclusion that there is a significant positive relationship between enrollment in the "Christian Family" course and marital readiness.

Hypothesis Two

- a) There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in the posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- c) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Results for Hypothesis Two

The One-Way ANOVA test of score differences by sex revealed no significant differences. The test conducted utilizing the pretest scores produced an F value of 1.10 with a *p*-value of .2987. The same procedure with the posttest scores revealed an F value of 2.05, with a *p*-value of .156. Finally, the test of the differences in the changes between pretest and posttest scores indicated an F value of .11, with a *p*-value of .7431. None of

these values is significant at the .05 level, and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Results of these statistical tests are reported in Tables IX, X, and XI.

TABLE IX

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALES' AND FEMALES'
PRETEST SCORES: ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------|----|----------------|----------|------|----------|
| Pretest | 1 | 803.9911 | 803.9911 | 1.10 | .2987 |
| Error | 74 | 54308.7983 | 733.9027 | | |
| Total | 75 | 55112.7895 | | | |

TABLE X

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALES' AND FEMALES'
POSTTEST SCORES: ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|----------|----|----------------|-----------|------|----------|
| Posttest | 1 | 1288.6580 | 1288.6580 | 2.05 | .1560 |
| Error | 74 | 4627.8683 | 627.4036 | | |
| Total | 75 | 47716.5263 | | | |

TABLE XI
DIFFERENCES IN CHANGES BETWEEN PRETEST AND POSTTEST
SCORES FOR MALES AND FEMALES:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|--------------|----|----------------|----------|------|----------|
| Total Scores | 1 | 56.8990 | 56.8990 | 0.11 | .7431 |
| Error | 74 | 38913.7842 | 525.8620 | | |
| Total | 75 | 38970.6842 | | | |

Further analysis was conducted using the subscores of the RMC and the MPI. Here again, no significant differences were found. Utilizing the data from the RMC, an F value of .78 with a *p*-value of .3789 was revealed. The data from the MPI indicated an F value of .31, with a *p*-value of .5819. Complete results of the statistical tests are presented in Tables XII and XIII.

Discussion of Results for Hypothesis Two

The statistical tests conducted to evaluate hypothesis two indicate no significant differences between males and females. This was not the result expected for hypothesis 2a and 2b, but it was expected for 2c. In her 1956 study, Moses reported finding differences between males and females on both pretest and posttest scores of sex knowledge. Perhaps a part of the difference between the findings in Moses' study and the current study is due to what was actually being measured. Moses was measuring knowledge while the current

study was measuring attitude. It may be that males and females are more similar in their maturity in attitude than in their actual knowledge.

TABLE XII
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALES' AND FEMALES'
PRETEST AND POSTTEST RMC SUBSCORES:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------------|----|----------------|----------|------|----------|
| RMC Subscores | 1 | 181.3802 | 181.3802 | 0.78 | .3789 |
| Error | 74 | 17131.0409 | 231.5006 | | |
| Total | 75 | 17312.4211 | | | |

Stinnett, Hall, and Walters (1973) also reported finding a difference in scores between males and females. Although both the 1973 study and the current study utilized the RMC, the 1973 study was conducted with a sample of high school students. The difference in the findings of the two studies may be attributable to the different maturity levels of the sample groups. While females generally mature earlier than males, as age increases, the difference in maturity levels decreases (Stinnett, Hall, & Walters, 1973). This may explain why no difference was found in pretest or posttest scores of males and females on the RMC.

TABLE XIII
 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALES' AND FEMALES'
 PRETEST AND POSTTEST MPI SUBSCORES:
 ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------------|----|----------------|----------|-------|----------|
| MPI Subscores | 1 | 35.1009 | 35.1009 | 0.031 | .5819 |
| Error | 74 | 8492.3202 | 114.7611 | | |
| Corrected | 75 | 8527.4211 | | | |

On the other hand, the finding of no significant difference in pretest or posttest scores of males and females on the MPI is consistent with Sporakowski's 1968 study. In his study, utilizing a college undergraduate sample, he found no significant relationship between marital preparedness and sex of the respondent. Likewise, the current study found no significant relationship.

Finally, both Moses (1956) and Bardis (1963) reported that family life education was an "equalizer" across the sexes. Although Moses found differences in pretest and posttest scores of males and females, she found no significant difference between the gains of males and females over the semester. This is consistent with the current study which found no significant differences in gains.

Summary of Results for Hypothesis Two

As was expected, the statistical tests revealed no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of males and females enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course. Since no significant difference was found, the hypothesis of no difference can not be rejected. Unlike what was expected, however, no significant differences were found between pretest scores of males and females or posttest scores of males and females. Therefore, the hypothesis of no difference in those scores must not be rejected either. These results lead to the conclusion that, as Sporakowski found, there is no relationship between marital readiness and sex of the respondent.

Hypothesis Three

- a) There is no significant difference in the pretest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship (not dating, dating several, dating one not seriously, dating steady, engaged) enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There is no significant difference in posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- c) There is no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Results for Hypothesis Three

Analysis utilizing the One-Way ANOVA revealed no significant differences at the .05 level in pretest or posttest scores due to dating status. The test conducted with the

pretest scores indicated an F value of 2.44 with a *p*-value of .0547. The same calculation with the posttest scores revealed an F value of 1.78, with a *p*-value of .1434. Complete results of these calculations are listed in Tables XIV and XV.

TABLE XIV
DIFFERENCES IN PRETEST SCORES OF MARITAL READINESS
OF STUDENTS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COURTSHIP:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------|----|----------------|-----------|------|----------|
| Pretest | 4 | 6658.6646 | 1664.6661 | 2.44 | .0547 |
| Error | 71 | 48454.1249 | 682.4525 | | |
| Total | 75 | 55112.7895 | | | |

Analysis using the Spearman rho, however, did reveal a significant positive relationship between both pretest scores and posttest scores and dating status of the respondents. This positive linear relationship means that as dating status increases, scores also increase. Therefore, as an individual nears marriage, his/her marital readiness score increases. Complete results of the calculations utilizing the Spearman rank order coefficient are listed in Table XVI.

TABLE XV

DIFFERENCES IN POSTTEST SCORES OF MARITAL READINESS
OF STUDENTS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COURTSHIP:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|----------|----|----------------|-----------|------|----------|
| Posttest | 4 | 4337.8781 | 1084.4695 | 1.78 | 0.1434 |
| Error | 71 | 43378.6483 | 610.9669 | | |
| Total | 75 | 47716.5263 | | | |

TABLE XVI

DIFFERENCES IN PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES AND
CHANGES IN MARITAL READINESS OF STUDENTS
IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COURTSHIP:
SPEARMAN RHO RESULTS

| Variable | <i>r</i> | <i>p</i> |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Difference in Total Scores | +.00112 | .9924 |
| Difference in RMC Scores | -.00787 | .9462 |
| Difference MPI Scores | -.02737 | .8145 |
| Pretest Scores | +.23896 | .0376* |
| Posttest Scores | +.23474 | .0412* |

* $p < .05$

Further analysis utilizing the One-Way ANOVA revealed no significant differences in changes in marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship. The data revealed an F value of 1.59, with a *p*-value of .1866. The subscore of the RMC produced an F value of 1.29, with a *p*-value of .2871, while the subscore of the MPI produced an F value of 1.91, with a *p*-value of .1187. None of these values is significant at the .05 level set for the present study. More complete information gathered from these One-Way ANOVA calculations is presented in Tables XVII, XVIII, and XXIX. As can be noted in Table XVI, the Spearman rho calculations also indicate that there was no significant relationship between the change in scores and dating status.

TABLE XVII

DIFFERENCES IN CHANGES IN MARITAL READINESS
OF STUDENTS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COURTSHIP:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|--------------|----|----------------|----------|------|----------|
| Total Scores | 4 | 3202.3072 | 800.5768 | 1.59 | .1866 |
| Error | 71 | 35768.3771 | 503.7800 | | |
| Total | 75 | 38970.6842 | | | |

TABLE XVIII

DIFFERENCES IN CHANGES IN RMC SUBSCORES OF STUDENTS
IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COURTSHIP:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------------|----|----------------|----------|------|----------|
| RMC Subscores | 4 | 1162.1372 | 290.5345 | 1.28 | .2871 |
| Error | 71 | 16150.2829 | 227.4688 | | |
| Total | 75 | 17312.4211 | | | |

TABLE XIX

DIFFERENCES IN CHANGES IN MPI SUBSCORES OF STUDENTS
IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COURTSHIP:
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | MS | F | <i>p</i> |
|---------------|----|----------------|----------|------|----------|
| MPI Subscores | 4 | 827.2537 | 206.8134 | 1.91 | .0970 |
| Error | 71 | 7700.1673 | 108.4531 | | |
| Total | 75 | 8527.4211 | | | |

Discussion of Results for Hypothesis Three

The statistical tests revealed no significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship. This finding was consistent with Bardis' 1963 study in which he found a family life education course to be an equalizer of knowledge across all stages of courtship. Moses (1956), however, found courtship status to be related to the gains in learning derived from a family life course. In her study, she found that those students who were engaged made significantly greater gains than did those going steady, those going steady than those dating often, and those dating often than those dating less often. The current study was not consistent with the findings of Moses.

Further testing utilizing the Spearman rank order coefficient did indicate a significant relationship between dating status and marital readiness. This is consistent with the studies of Sporkowski (1968) and Stinnett (1969). Both of those studies, as well as the current study, found marital readiness scores to be significantly related to courtship stage, with those respondents who were closer to marriage reporting a higher degree of marital readiness. The current study did not, however, find that relationship to be a strong one. In fact, r^2 as the coefficient of determination indicates that only six percent of the difference in pretest scores and nine percent of the difference in posttest scores can be explained by differences in dating status. This suggests that there are other variables influencing those scores.

Summary of Results for Hypothesis Three

Contrary to what was expected, no significant differences were found in the change between pretest and posttest scores of marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship. Therefore, the hypothesis 3c can not be rejected. On the other hand, marital

readiness was found to be significantly related to dating status. From the review of literature, this finding was expected. These results lead to the conclusion that there is a significant but weak relationship between marital readiness and dating status, and hypotheses 3a and 3b can not be rejected.

Hypothesis Four

- a) There are no significant differences in pretest subscores, in the four need areas covered by the RMC (love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication), of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- b) There are no significant differences in posttest subscores, in the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.
- c) There are no significant differences in the change between pretest and posttest subscores, between the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course.

Results for Hypothesis Four

The a x s ANOVA indicated that there was a significant difference in the pretest subscores of the RMC. That test revealed an F value of 19.01, with a *p*- value of .0001. Since there were four areas, post hoc analysis using Tukey's (HSD) test was conducted to discriminate between the areas. The Tukey's test showed that the students scored significantly higher in the need area of "love" than in any other need area. The lowest scores were produced on the need area of "personality fulfillment," while "respect" and "communication" ranked second and third, respectively. For a more complete listing of the results of the a x s ANOVA and Tukey's test, see Tables XX and XXI.

TABLE XX

DIFFERENCES IN PRETEST RMC SUBSCORES :
A X S ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | F | <i>p</i> |
|----------------|----|----------------|-------|----------|
| Pretest--Areas | 3 | 588.2105 | 19.01 | .0001* |

* $p < .05$

TABLE XXI

DIFFERENCES IN RMC PRETEST SUBSCORES:
TUKEY'S (HSD) RESULTS

| Area | Mean | Tukey Grouping | Rank |
|-------------------------|---------|----------------|------|
| <u>Pretest</u> | | | |
| Love | 35.2763 | * | 1 |
| Respect | 33.3289 | ** | 2 |
| Communication | 32.2763 | ** *** | 3 |
| Personality Fulfillment | 31.5921 | *** | 4 |

NOTE: minimum significant difference = 1.3484

Calculations utilizing the a x s ANOVA also indicated a significant difference in the posttest subscores. Data from the posttest revealed an F value of 13.34, with a *p*-value of .0001. While the means for each area had increased over the pretest means, Tukey's (HSD) test indicated that the ranking of the subscores was identical to the pretest rankings, with "love" receiving a significantly higher score than any other need area. Once again, the lowest scores were indicated on the need area of "personality fulfillment," while "respect" and "communication" ranked second and third, respectively. One difference shown in the calculations using the postscores was in the Tukey grouping. In the pretest calculations, three groupings were indicated, while in the posttest calculations, only two groupings appeared. This indicates that the "Christian Family" course worked as an equalizer across the need areas of "respect," "communication," and "personality fulfillment." More complete results of these calculations can be found in Tables XXII and XXIII.

TABLE XXII

DIFFERENCES IN POSTTEST RMC SUBSCORES :
A X S ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | F | <i>p</i> |
|----------------|----|----------------|-------|----------|
| Posttest--Area | 3 | 319.7632 | 13.34 | .0001* |

* *p* < .05

TABLE XXIII

DIFFERENCES IN RMC POSTTEST SUBSCORES:
TUKEY'S (HSD) RESULTS

| Area | Mean | Tukey Grouping | Rank |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------------|------|
| <u>Posttest</u> | | | |
| Love | 37.8947 | ** | 1 |
| Respect | 36.0658 | *** | 2 |
| Communication | 35.6184 | *** | 3 |
| Personality fulfillment | 35.2105 | *** | 4 |

NOTE: minimum significant difference = 1.187

The correlated groups t -test revealed a significant difference in the change between pretest and posttest scores in each of the four need areas evaluated by the RMC. Although different t values were indicated for each area, they were all significant at the .05 level. A complete list of the results of the t -test is presented in Table XXIV.

The a x s ANOVA, however, revealed no significant differences between the four areas in regard to the changes made in those areas from pretest to posttest. That procedure indicated an F value of 1.50, with a p -value of .2148. A complete listing of the results of this statistical test is presented in Table XXV.

TABLE XXIV

THE CHANGE IN RMC SUBSCORES:
t-TEST RESULTS
 (N=76)

| Variable | Mean Difference | SD of the Difference | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Love | 2.62 | 4.702 | 4.86 | .0001* |
| Personality Fulfillment | 3.62 | 4.676 | 6.75 | .0001* |
| Respect | 2.74 | 4.518 | 5.28 | .0001* |
| Communication | 3.34 | 5.310 | 5.49 | .0001* |

* $p < .05$

TABLE XXV

DIFFERENCE IN RMC SUBSCORE CHANGES:
 A X S ANOVA RESULTS

| Source | DF | Sum of Squares | F | <i>p</i> |
|-----------------------|----|----------------|------|----------|
| Area Score Difference | 3 | 42.3947 | 1.50 | .2148 |

Discussion of Results for Hypothesis Four

The statistical tests revealed a significant difference between the four areas of the RMC on both the pretest and posttest scores. Those four areas -- love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication -- are each represented by nine items on the RMC. In the present study, the rankings of the four areas were the same on both the pretest and posttest, and the significant differences came between the same areas at each administration. The only difference between the two administrations of the survey was in the Tukey grouping of the need areas. The students in "Christian Family" scored significantly higher on "love" than on any other need area. The ranking of the four need areas on both the pretest and posttest was as follows: 1) love, 2) respect, 3) communication, 4) personality fulfillment. This is consistent with the 1973 study by Stinnett, Hall, and Walters. They reported that the respondents felt most prepared to fulfill the need of "love" in a future marriage relationship, and least prepared to fulfill the need of "personality fulfillment." They did not report the ranking of the other two areas. Since a significant difference was found in both pretest and posttest subscores, the null hypotheses 4a and 4b can be rejected.

Further statistical analysis revealed a significant change in each area, but no significant difference between the four areas in the change from pretest to posttest scores. This is not consistent with past research (Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Gillies & Lastrucci, 1954) which indicated that a difference might be found. It may be that the past evaluations were so different from the present one that comparisons can not be made. For instance, the study by Bardis evaluated change in sex knowledge exclusively. Still, the other two studies did evaluate some change in attitudes as well as in knowledge. What ever the reason, in the present study no significant differences were found. Therefore, we can not reject the null hypothesis 4c.

Summary of Results for Hypothesis Four

As was expected, significant differences were found between the subscores in some of the need areas evaluated by the RMC. Differences were found in both the pretest scores and posttest scores. In addition, those differences came between the same areas and the areas were ranked the same by the students at both testing periods. The null hypotheses (4a and 4b) must be rejected.

Contrary to what was expected, however, no significant differences were found between the changes in subscores from pretest to posttest. Therefore, the final null hypothesis must not be rejected.

Additional Findings

Additional analysis was conducted on each individual item included in the RMC and MPI portions of the survey instrument for the experimental group, and a complete listing of the means and p -values is presented in Table XXVI. This analysis was completed utilizing the correlated means t -test. These calculations revealed that the mean scores for the majority of the items showed significant increases from the pretest to the posttest. A complete listing of the individual pretest and posttest scores is presented in Appendix E.

While, for the current study, p was set at .05, it is important to note the actual p -values for the items, and their significance. Out of 66 items, 16 had a positive significant change at the .0001 level. A quick perusal of those items should lead the reader to note that the majority of them are the statements in the inventory which are most nearly related to the greater maturity level needed for deepening relationships. This suggests that such mature attitudes most likely were greatly stressed by the instructor of the "Christian Family" course.

In addition, 25 items were significant at the .001 level, and 52 of the 66 items were significant at the .01 level. There were only 10 items which were not significant at the .05

level, and of those items, 5 were significant at the .1 level. Those 5 items -- RMC 6, 36; MPI 3, 6, 30 -- are so different from each other that it is difficult to link them together and speculate a reason for their nonsignificant change.

Considering the fact that the majority of the items did show a significant change at the .05 level, there are at least two possible explanations for the 10 items -- RMC 2, 6, 22, 36; MPI 3, 6, 15, 22, 30 -- that did not. First, some of these items may have had such a high mean score on the pretest, that there was little room for improvement. For instance, statement #2 under the RMC section -- Expressing my affection for him -- received the highest prescore mean (4.22) of all the items on the survey. Several of the others listed also received high prescore means. This is not the only explanation, however, as other items receiving high prescore means also showed significant changes. For example, statement #19 under the RMC section -- Being a good listener when he talks to me -- received the second highest prescore mean (4.20), but also received a significant *p*-value of .008. In some cases, then, the tasks evaluated by the items which did not show a significant change may not have been discussed as thoroughly as those that did. This is most likely true, for instance, for item #4 under the MPI section -- Food preparation -- since this is not a topic included in the course plan for "Christian Family".

These findings could be beneficial to the concerned instructor. By evaluating those items which did not show a significant change, the instructor may be able to revise his/her course plans to include other important topics or to expand on topics not covered thoroughly enough. By realizing the significant changes made, the instructor can be encouraged in the progress made by the students.

TABLE XXVI

PRETEST AND POSTTEST MEANS AND *p* -VALUES OF INDIVIDUAL ITEMS
FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
(N=76)

| Statement | Pre-Mean ^a | Post-Mean ^a | <i>p</i> |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|----------|
| <u>Readiness For Marital Competence Index</u> | | | |
| 1. Promoting a feeling of security in him. ^b | 3.61 | 4.05 | .0001* |
| 2. Expressing my affection for him. | 4.22 | 4.38 | .0637 |
| 3. Showing my admiration for him. | 4.01 | 4.28 | .0021* |
| 4. Satisfying his desire for affection. | 3.97 | 4.22 | .0109* |
| 5. Showing him that I evaluate him highly. | 3.89 | 4.26 | .0003* |
| 6. Helping him to feel that he is an attractive person. | 4.15 | 4.26 | .2701 |
| 7. Showing my confidence in him. | 3.76 | 4.04 | .0083* |
| 8. Letting him know I feel emotionally close to him. | 3.86 | 4.24 | .0008* |
| 9. Letting him know that I believe we have a common purpose in life. | 3.79 | 4.16 | .0001* |
| 10. Helping him to achieve his potential to become what he is capable of becoming. | 3.59 | 3.93 | .0017* |
| 11. Bringing out the "best" qualities in him. | 3.58 | 4.04 | .0001* |
| 12. Helping him become a more interesting person. | 3.41 | 3.74 | .0037* |
| 13. Helping him to see himself more positively. | 3.58 | 4.04 | .0001* |
| 14. Helping him to increase his circle of friends. | 3.41 | 3.88 | .0001* |
| 15. Helping him to improve the quality of his interpersonal relationships outside marriage. | 3.07 | 3.64 | .0001* |
| 16. Helping him to improve his personality. | 3.46 | 3.78 | .0018* |
| 17. Helping him to act according to his beliefs rather than simply "following the crowd." | 3.64 | 4.00 | .0004* |
| 18. Helping him to have confidence in himself. | 3.86 | 4.16 | .0001* |
| 19. Being a good listener when he talks to me. | 4.20 | 4.45 | .0082* |

TABLE XXVI (continued)

| Statement | Pre-Mean | Post-Mean | <i>p</i> |
|--|----------|-----------|----------|
| 20. Encouraging him when he is discouraged. | 4.13 | 4.37 | .0047* |
| 21. Seeing things from his point of view. | 3.41 | 3.78 | .0007* |
| 22. Being considerate of his feelings. | 3.93 | 4.09 | .0832 |
| 23. Showing him that I understand what he wants to achieve in life. | 3.71 | 3.97 | .0048* |
| 24. Respecting his wishes when making important decisions. | 3.70 | 4.14 | .0001* |
| 25. Accepting disagreement from him. | 3.43 | 3.78 | .0030* |
| 26. Accepting his differentness. | 3.38 | 3.78 | .0039* |
| 27. Avoiding habits which annoy him. | 3.38 | 3.71 | .0059* |
| 28. Expressing my disagreement with him honestly and openly. | 3.61 | 3.99 | .0056* |
| 29. Letting him know how I really feel about something. | 3.67 | 4.05 | .0003* |
| 30. Helping him to express his feelings to me. | 3.49 | 3.96 | .0001* |
| 31. Letting him know about my expectations in life. | 3.89 | 4.16 | .0101* |
| 32. Seeing beyond what he says and being aware of his true feelings when his feelings are different from his words. | 3.43 | 3.96 | .0001* |
| 33. Being aware that what he says may not always indicate how he really feels about something. | 3.51 | 3.92 | .0008* |
| 34. When he is angry at me trying to understand why he is angry. | 3.41 | 3.86 | .0001* |
| 35. Being observant as to whether he has understood correctly the meaning of the message I have communicated to him. | 3.70 | 4.01 | .0026* |
| 36. When I am troubled, letting him know what is bothering me. | 3.57 | 3.71 | .2181 |

TABLE XXVI (continued)

| Statement | Pre-Mean | Post-Mean | <i>p</i> |
|---|----------|-----------|----------|
| <u>Marital Preparedness Instrument</u> | | | |
| 1. Child care (feeding, clothing, discipline, etc.) | 3.00 | 3.32 | .0035* |
| 2. Reproduction or child bearing | --.--- | --.--- | |
| 3. Food preparation | 3.55 | 3.67 | .1814 |
| 4. Budgeting family income | 3.41 | 3.61 | .0707 |
| 5. Buying clothes, food, household goods | 3.76 | 4.04 | .0064* |
| 6. Home care; e.g. domestic chores such as minor carpentry or ironing | 3.97 | 4.09 | .1715 |
| 7. Recreation and leisure time pursuits | 4.03 | 4.25 | .0149* |
| 8. Sexual intercourse, physical aspects | 3.57 | 3.89 | .0018* |
| 9. Sexual intercourse, mental attitudes | 3.24 | 3.76 | .0001* |
| 10. Intellectual pursuits | 3.83 | 4.11 | .0033* |
| 11. Vocational readiness, job preparedness | 3.62 | 3.93 | .0012* |
| 12. A philosophy of life | 3.63 | 3.97 | .0017* |
| 13. Dealing with illness, diseases, handicaps | 2.95 | 3.22 | .0130* |
| 14. Being able to provide an adequate income | 3.39 | 3.68 | .0032* |
| 15. Adjustment to a higher income | 3.93 | 4.02 | .0637 |
| 16. Adjustment to a lower income | 2.88 | 3.33 | .0001* |
| 17. Affection giving and receiving | 4.00 | 4.34 | .0003* |
| 18. Courtship practices, dating, necking, etc. | 3.96 | 4.28 | .0010* |
| 19. Living with another person | 3.73 | 4.05 | .0026* |
| 20. Living with a person of the opposite sex | 2.95 | 3.58 | .0001* |
| 21. Making new friendships | 4.05 | 4.20 | .0475* |
| 22. Maintaining friendships | 4.14 | 4.26 | .0832 |
| 23. Resolving inter-personal conflicts | 3.66 | 3.93 | .0064* |
| 24. Adaptability to new people | 3.80 | 4.05 | .0082* |
| 25. Religious beliefs regarding marriage | 4.05 | 4.39 | .0008* |
| 26. Breaking or reducing parental ties | 3.75 | 4.08 | .0028* |
| 27. Planning long range goals | 3.74 | 4.01 | .0013* |
| 28. Maintaining a lasting marital relationship | 3.86 | 4.29 | .0001* |

TABLE XXVI (continued)

| Statement | Pre-Mean | Post-Mean | <i>p</i> |
|---|----------|-----------|----------|
| 29. Ability to accept another's conventionality (manners, personal habits, etc.) | 3.63 | 3.91 | .0055* |
| 30. Geographic mobility (moving to and living in an area or region with which you have had little experience) | 3.51 | 3.63 | .2952 |
| 31. Marriage as a whole | 3.55 | 3.80 | .0001* |

NOTE a: The range of possible scores is 1 to 5.

NOTE b: The statements are listed as they appear on the Female form of the survey.

* $p < .05$

Summary

The result of the statistical tests for the four hypotheses were reported. These tests revealed that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest marital readiness scores of students enrolled in a one-trimester "Christian Family" course, and there is a significant difference in the change in marital readiness of those students as compared to a control group. The tests did not indicate, however, a significant relationship between marital readiness and sex, and no significant difference was found in the change between pretest and posttest scores of males and females. While calculations revealed that marital readiness is significantly related to dating status, no significant difference was found in the change in marital readiness of students in various stages of courtship (i.e. not dating, dating several, dating one not seriously, dating steady, engaged). Finally, all four need

areas identified by the RMC (love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication) revealed significant differences between pretest and posttest scores and some differences were found between the subscores. There were, however, no significant differences in the changes between the subscores. Additional analysis indicated that the majority of the items on the survey instrument experienced significant increases in their means from pretest to posttest.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the procedures and findings of the study are presented in the first section of this chapter. This summary will include a brief overview of the purpose and design of the study and the methods used to carry out the study. A synopsis of the major findings will also be included. Later sections of the chapter will present conclusions that are drawn from these major findings and recommendations of the researcher for those concerned with marital readiness and the effectiveness of family life education courses.

Summary

Marital readiness has been determined to be significantly related to marital success (Sporakowski, 1968; Stinnett, 1969). It is the concept of marital readiness, and how it is impacted by a one-trimester "Christian Family" course, that is the major concern of this paper.

Marital readiness is defined as "the degree to which an individual is prepared to identify and meet the basic emotional needs of a marriage partner" (Stinnett, 1969, p. 684). Although this is a subjective assessment, it has been found to be a valid one, and one that is important to predicting marital success in terms of both quality and stability.

Although most of the research is relatively old, a great deal has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of family life education courses (Avery & Lee, 1964; Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Duvall, 1965; Dyer, 1959; Finck, 1956; Gillies & Lastrucci, 1954; Moses, 1956). In spite of the indicated relationship between marital readiness and marital success, however, no studies have been conducted to evaluate the impact of a family life

education course on marital readiness as defined by Stinnett. Because that relationship was understood to be a significant one, and because most of the existing research was at least 15 years old, the need for this study became apparent.

All of the past studies reviewed revealed a significant positive change in knowledge and attitude of students who participated in a family life education course. In spite of those findings, however, the colleges and universities of our nation are being scrutinized more closely than ever as the divorce rate continues to climb. Some critics say that the institutions of higher education are not fulfilling their responsibilities to prepare students for marriage and family living (Byron, 1985). If this criticism is being made of all institutions of higher education, how much more the church-related institution. Yet, the only study of effectiveness at a church-related college was conducted more than 20 years ago (Bardis, 1963). It seems appropriate, even necessary, that a study such as the current one be conducted in order to assess the family life courses offered at such institutions so that an evaluation of their effectiveness might take place.

The specific purpose of this study was to assess the impact of a "Christian Family" course on the marital readiness of the participants in the course. It was hoped that such a study would provide information for effective curriculum evaluation and planning, and development of teaching strategies designed to provide the students with better preparation for marriage.

Procedures of the Study

A quasi-experimental study was conducted utilizing two sample groups. An experimental sample of students was chosen from those enrolled in "Christian Family" during the Spring 1986 Trimester at Oklahoma Christian College. A second sample was chosen from those enrolled in one section of "Great Christian Doctrines." The second sample served as a control group. A survey instrument was administered to both groups of students at the beginning and again at the end of the trimester. The instrument contained

demographic data as well as the Readiness for Marital Competence (RMC) Index and the Marital Preparedness Instrument (MPI). The RMC was developed by Stinnett (1969), and the MPI was developed by Sporakowski (1968), for the purpose of measuring marital readiness as reported by unmarried college students. The resulting scores are considered an indication of the readiness for marriage of the respondent.

The pretest and posttest scores of the students were then tabulated, as well as the differences between those scores. Statistical tests, including the One-Way ANOVA, the correlated groups *t*-test, the Spearman rank order coefficient, Tukey's (HSD) test, and the $a \times s$ ANOVA were then used to determine if any difference existed:

- 1a. between pretest and posttest scores of students in "Christian Family."
- 1b. between differences in pretest and posttest scores of students in "Christian Family" and those not in "Christian Family."
- 2a. between pretest scores of males and females in "Christian Family."
- 2b. between posttest scores of males and females in "Christian Family."
- 2c. between changes in pretest and posttest scores of males and females in "Christian Family."
- 3a. between pretest scores of students in "Christian Family" in various stages of courtship (i.e. not dating, dating several, dating one not seriously, dating steady, engaged).
- 3b. between posttest scores of students in "Christian Family" in various stages of courtship.
- 3c. between changes in pretest and posttest scores of students in "Christian Family" in various stages of courtship.
- 4a. in pretest subscores, in the four need areas covered by the RMC (love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication), of students enrolled in "Christian Family".

- 4b. in posttest subscores, in the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled in "Christian Family".
- 4c. in the change between pretest and posttest subscores, between the four need areas covered by the RMC, of students enrolled "Christian Family".

Research Design

The current study was a quasi-experimental study rather than a true experimental study. Isaac & Michael stated that the purpose of a quasi-experimental study is "to approximate the conditions of the true experiment in a setting which does not allow the control and/or manipulation of all relevant variables" (1981, p. 54). Control is of extreme importance in research, primarily for the protection of both internal and external validity, insuring that the findings of a study are due to experimental variables and not to something else. The ideal amount of control, however, is seldom possible. This is not a reason for the researcher to ignore the need for control, but a recognition of the limitations of any specific research design allows for more research to actually be conducted.

Quasi-experimental research generally involves applied settings where it is not possible to control all the relevant variables, but only some of them (Isaac & Michael, 1981). This was the case in the current study. Relevant variables which could not be controlled in this study included: (1) population size -- determined by enrollment; (2) presentation of the instrument -- presented by the instructors in an attempt to reduce research bias; (3) validity and reliability of instruments -- determined to be sufficient in previous studies; and (4) ability of the students to complete the instrument. These are all identified within the presentation of limitations, delimitations, and assumptions of this study.

Perhaps the most important variable not controlled in this particular study was random selection of the samples. While random sampling does not guarantee that a sample

will be representative of a population, it does ensure that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample (Jaccard, 1983). Without random sampling, then, this surety does not exist. Therefore, generalizations from the findings cannot be as extensive as when random sampling is present. The findings may, in fact, only be applied to the sample studied.

Lack of control in sampling as occurred in this study, where randomization came only as a result of the enrollment process, is common to quasi-experimental research design. The first example given by Isaac and Michael (1981) in their discussion of quasi-experimental research is of like design. While randomization is the ideal sampling technique, it is not always possible. When it is not possible, as in this study, the researcher and the reader must recognize the limits this places on the study and generalization from the study.

Even though randomized sampling is generally the ideal, Isaac and Michael recognize the nonrandomized control-group pretest-posttest design as a valid one (1981, p.69). This design has the practical advantages of not disrupting a school's program and of conducting an authorized experiment without the subjects being aware of it. In addition, internal validity is said to be satisfactory if the groups have similar means and standard deviations in the pretest or if the experimental group has a lower pretest mean and a higher posttest mean than the control group. (In the present study, the experimental group had a pretest mean of 241.45 and a pretest standard deviation of 27.11. The control group had a pretest mean of 253.58 and pretest standard deviation of 26.73. Analyzing these figures with a *t*-test reveals $p = .0509$ -- a significant difference. The reader should note, however, that the experimental group had a lower pretest score (241.45) and a higher posttest score (262.58) than did the control group (253.58 and 257.88)). Internal validity is further strengthened by the control group which checks for effects other than the main effect, and by the pretest/posttest record checking which controls mortality effects. With the lack of randomization, however, the possibility exists that some critical difference not

reflected in the pretest is operating to contaminate the posttest data (Isaac & Michael, p. 70).

Quasi-experimental research is conducted in the same manner as true experimental research. In quasi-experimental research, careful consideration must be given to each limitation of the study, and the findings and conclusions must be noted with these limitations in mind. Therefore, the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions of this study are restated here for the reader's consideration.

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions

The following factors delimit the study:

- (1) Only one church-related school was included in the study. This school was in the state of Oklahoma. These findings are applicable to other institutions only in so far as this institution is representative of the other institutions of its type.
- (2) Only one type of family life education course, the "Christian Family", was included in this study. The findings of this study are only applicable to this type of course.
- (3) The majority of students involved in the study were college juniors and seniors. The findings of this study, therefore, should only be applied to students in similar developmental stages.

This study will be limited by the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the samples of students drawn from the "Christian Family" classes are representative of the entire population of junior and senior students.
- (2) The extent to which the samples of students drawn from the second general education course are representative of the entire population of junior and senior students.

- (3) The extent to which the Marital Preparedness Instrument (MPI) and the Readiness for Marital Competence Index (RMC) adequately measure marital readiness.
- (4) The ability of the respondents to identify their marital readiness by completing the MPI and the RMC.
- (5) The extent to which the respondents report their true feelings on the MPI and the RMC. Since there is no penalty involved, students could report what they think their feelings should be rather than what their feelings actually are.

The following assumptions were necessary in order to conduct the study:

- (1) That the MPI and the RMC truly measure marital readiness.
- (2) That respondents will be able to understand and report their true feelings at the time of questioning.
- (3) That the study of marital readiness is a significant study because it has been shown to be related to marital success.
- (4) That the students enrolled in "Christian Family" at Oklahoma Christian College in the Spring Trimester, 1986, are representative of all classes of "Christian Family" at Oklahoma Christian College.

Findings of the Study

The primary research question was: What is the impact of an undergraduate level "Christian Family" course on the marital readiness of those students participating in the course for one trimester? The major finding of the study was that students in the "Christian Family" course made significant increases ($p > .05$) in marital readiness over the course of one trimester as reflected by scores on the MPI and the RMC. In addition, those students made significantly greater increases ($p > .05$) in marital readiness scores on the MPI and the RMC than did students in the control group who were not enrolled in

"Christian Family." Both of these findings were expected from the review of past research.

Further analysis revealed no significant differences in males and females on either pretest or posttest scores, or in changes in scores. Likewise, no significant differences were found in changes in scores of students in various stages of courtship. There was, however, a significant relationship ($p > .05$) indicated between pretest and posttest scores and dating status, suggesting a relationship between marital readiness and dating status.

Finally, while the changes between pretest and posttest scores in each need area as measured by the RMC (love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication) were significant, there were no differences in the rankings of the four areas from pretest to posttest. This finding was not consistent with what was expected.

Conclusions

Recognizing the limits of the study, and based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. The fact that the control group experienced significantly less increase in marital readiness than did the experimental group indicates that the increase noted in the experimental group was probably due to more than maturity. Therefore, it is concluded that the "Christian Family" course at Oklahoma Christian College is effective in increasing marital readiness in students participating in the course. This conclusion is consistent with that of similar research studies of the past (Avery & Lee, 1964; Bardis, 1963; Crosby, 1971; Duvall, 1965; Dyer, 1959; Finck, 1956; Gillies & Lastrucci, 1954; Moses, 1956).

2. The fact that no significant differences were noted between the scores of males and females indicates that the marital readiness scores in this study were not related to sex. Therefore, it is concluded that marital readiness of college juniors and seniors is not related to sex. This is consistent with Sporakowski (1968), but not with Moses (1956) or Stinnett, Hall, and Walters (1973).

3. The fact that a significant relationship was indicated between pretest and posttest scores and dating status in this study indicates that marital readiness was related to dating status. Therefore, it is concluded that marital readiness of college juniors and seniors is related to dating status. This is consistent with Moses (1956), Sporakowski (1968), and Stinnett (1969).

4. The fact that the changes in scores in each need area as measured by the RMC were significant in this study leads to the conclusion that students feel more prepared to fulfill certain types of needs in a future mate than other types of needs. They feel most prepared to fulfill the need of love, and least prepared to fulfill the need of personality fulfillment. This is consistent with the Stinnett, Hall, and Walters study of 1973.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Family Life Instructors

With the indicated significance of the relationship between marital readiness and marital success, family life instructors must take a renewed interest in their courses and in their students. All research studies have indicated that family life courses can have a significant effect on the students who participate. Therefore, family life educators should do everything within their power to make sure the courses are as effective as possible. Specifically, family life educators should:

1. Evaluate their course materials and make sure they cover the major areas related to the quality and stability of marriage as indicated by the literature. It is likely that every family life instructor could improve the effectiveness of his/her course by conducting a thorough evaluation and then acting upon his/her own findings.
2. Conduct periodic studies, perhaps similar to the current study, which would give them an update on the effectiveness of the course and the areas which need more coverage.

3. Take a special interest in the students and recognize the validity of their subjective responses to the course. Carl Rogers (1951) has indicated that student self-evaluation is the most effective of all evaluations in a student centered course.

4. Recognize the noted effectiveness of this type of course and realize the effect it may have on the student for the rest of his/her life. Prepare each class period with the significance of that time in mind.

Recommendations for Students

Likewise, students who are interested in their own future marriage should take note of the indications of research of the effectiveness of family life education. The college student who wishes to prepare for marriage in the most thorough way possible should:

1. Recognize the effectiveness of family life courses and enroll in such courses throughout his/her college career.

2. Put forth his/her best effort while participating in such courses. No matter how much preparation the instructor has made, the effectiveness of the course still depends on the student and what personal effort is exerted in the course. While the overall sample in the present study increased significantly in marital readiness, there were those students in the sample who experienced no change or a decrease in marital readiness (n=11).

At best, it is difficult to dissect out of the complexity of an individual's life and educational experience the effect that a particular course may have. What a student is when he completes a given course is highly colored by what he was when he entered. (Bowman, 1952, p. 262)

3. Encourage others to participate fully in family life courses, especially prospective mates. Remember that marriage takes two people, and marital stability is greatly dependent upon the commitment of both (Blood, 1962). As more students participate in this type of course, there will be more chance for those who marry to be "ready" for marriage.

4. Give productive feedback to the instructor. He/she can improve the course only if he/she is made aware of the most effective strategies and the problems.

Recommendations for Future Researchers

Further research is recommended in the area of effectiveness of family life education courses, and particularly their effect on marital readiness. Specifically, research is recommended to:

1. Further support or refute the findings of this study regarding the increase in marital readiness as effected by the "Christian Family" course. In particular, studies are needed that consider the effects of "Christian Family" or similar courses at other church-related schools.
2. Study the effectiveness of other types of family life courses at church-related schools. Many schools also offer family life courses in Home Economics, Psychology, and/or Sociology. These courses should be evaluated to note their effectiveness in increasing marital readiness.
3. Compare the effectiveness of "Christian Family" courses and other family life courses at church-related schools in increasing marital readiness.
4. Study the effectiveness of family life courses at other institutions of higher education. Since the majority of past research is 15 years old and older, it is appropriate to once again consider this problem.
5. Compare family life courses at church-related colleges or universities and state colleges or universities. Such a study might yield information as to what teaching approaches are most effective, and with which to plan more effective teaching strategies.
6. Determine if the change in marital readiness of students in a family life course is a lasting phenomenon.

7. Conduct a more thorough analysis of the types of individual items on the RMC and MPI surveys, giving special attention to the differences between those found to have significant changes and those showing nonsignificant changes.
8. Develop and test methods for improving the educational process that teaches the tasks necessary to build a marriage of high quality and stability.
9. Develop more complete research instruments for the evaluation of marital readiness.

Because of its recognized relationship to marital success, the study of marital readiness is one of the most important studies in family life education today. Our nation continues to be concerned with the increasing divorce rate, and continues to search for answers to the problem of unstable and low quality marriages. As institutions of higher education strive to prepare young people for their future, including their future in marriage, a search for effective programs is important to that goal. Educators, employers, and community leaders have all recognized the importance of better family life, and are interested in finding ways to evaluate and improve family life and family life programs. The study of one family life course in one institution is simply a beginning in the search for stronger marriages, stronger families, and eventually stronger communities.

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Macmillan Company.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
COURSE SYLLABUS AND SELECTED MATERIALS
FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY COURSE
AT OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

Spring 1986
 BL 3413-01 11:00 MWF
 -02 2:00 MWF

Dr. Lynn A. McMillon
 MC 104; ext. 248

- (CL) Clinebell, Howard and Charlotte. The Intimate Marriage. New York: Harper, 1970.
- (WH) Wheat, Ed and Gaye. Intended for Pleasure. Old Tappan: Revell, 1977.
- (WR) Wright, H. Norman. Communication: Key To Your Marriage. Glendale: G/L Regal, 1974.

| DATE | LECTURE TOPICS | READINGS |
|--------|--|---------------------------|
| Jan. 6 | Scriptural Principles on Dating and Marriage | |
| 8 | Types of Dating Relationships | |
| 10 | FILM "What I Need To Know About Dating" | |
| 13 | Breaking Up Is Hard To Do | |
| 15 | Major Factors Influencing Mate Selection | WR 1-16 |
| 17 | FILM "How To Know When I Am In Love" | |
| 20 | Major Theories of Mate Selection | |
| 22 | Sequential Theories of Mate Selection | |
| 24 | 14 Keys to Distinguish Infatuation from Love | |
| 27 | The Psychological Dynamics of Relationships | |
| 29 | What Is Engagement and What Should It Accomplish | |
| 31 | TEST #1 | |
| Feb. 3 | Scriptural Principles of Marriage | CL 179-202 |
| 5 | The Importance of Marrying Within One's Faith | |
| 7 | FILM "How To Know When I Am Ready for Marriage" | |
| 10 | The Husband's Role as Head of the Family | WR 159-190 |
| 12 | The Wife's Role of Submission | WR 17-30 |
| 14 | Portrait of the Ideal Woman - Proverbs 31 | WR 31-50 |
| 17 | Marks of Immaturity | WR 51-64 |
| 19 | Major Issues that Commonly Threaten Marriage | WR 65-80 |
| 21 | Developing Effective Communication | CL 87-102; WR 81-98 |
| 24 | Developing Effective Communication (Part 2) | WR 99-136 |
| 26 | TEST #2 | |
| 28 | How To Express Love to a Mate | |
| Mar. 3 | Coping With Conflict in Marriage | WR 137-158 |
| 5 | Characteristics of Happily and Unhappily Married People | CL 1-22 |
| 7 | Realistic Expectations In Marriage | CL 23-40 |
| 19 | Eight Skills Necessary to A Successful Marriage | CL 41-64 |
| 21 | The Wedding Ceremony and the Honeymoon | CL 65-86 |
| 24 | The Challenges of the First Year of Marriage | |
| 26 | Dealing With In-Laws TOP TEN FAMILY STRESSES | |
| 28 | TEST #3 | |
| Apr. 7 | Sexual Differences Between Men and Women | CL 134-159; WH 4, 1, 2 |
| 9 | The Divine Nature of Human Sexuality | WH 9; CL 134-159 |
| 11 | The Role of Sexual Intercourse In Marriage | WH 3, 5 |
| 14 | The Role of Sexual Intercourse In Marriage | WH 14, 15, 16 |
| 16 | "Developing Financial Responsibility" | |
| 18 | The Place of Children in the Home | CL 160-178 |
| | Final Exam | |

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

DAILY QUIZZES. Each Monday a quiz will be given over the tape played the previous week, the lecture notes for that day and the previous class meeting and any reading for that day. Quizzes on Wednesdays and Fridays will be over the lecture notes for that day and the previous class period, and any assigned reading for that day. The two lowest grades will be dropped. 20%

EXAMS. Each of the four major exams is comprehensive and counts 20%.

NOTEBOOK. A comprehensive notebook is required for the course. It is to contain three clearly marked sections.

I. Class lecture notes.

II. Supplemental material compiled by the student on dating, marriage and family, e.g., tapes, articles, etc.

The notebook will count as 5 daily grades. A notebook will receive an A (100) only if it is typed, well-organized and thorough. B (90), C (80), D (70), F (0) .

MEMORY VERSES. The following verses will be called for by memory at announced times such as daily quizzes or exams:
Gen. 2:24; Prov. 31:10-12; Song of Solomon 8:6-7;
Malachi 2:14; Matt. 5:31-32; Matt. 19:3-9; I Cor. 7:3-5;
Eph. 5:21-25; I Thess. 4:3-5; Heb. 13:4; I Pet. 3:1-4;
I Pet. 3:7.

GRADING SCALE. A = 92-100
B = 83-91
C = 72-82
D = 60-71
F = 59 and Below

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY -- COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. The student will be able to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships and tell why.
2. The student will be able to relate scriptural principles to marriage.
3. The student will be able to explain all aspects of marital sexuality.
4. The student will be able to make a responsible financial budget for a newly married couple.
5. The student will be able to explain the various theories of attraction.
6. The student will be able to explain the purposes of dating and engagement for marital preparation.

Prepared by Lynn A. McMillon



HOW DO I KNOW?

Student Sheet

WHAT I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DATING

5 Stages of dating:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

1. A TIME TO ENJOY SOCIAL COMPANIONSHIP

2. GIVES A MORE MATURE UNDERSTANDING OF SELF

Life goals—

Values—

Self-reliance—

3. OPPORTUNITY TO ADAPT SELF TO ANOTHER PERSONALITY

4. DISCOVERS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE

Petting

5. BEGINNING OF THE FINAL SEPARATION FROM PARENTS

6. TO SELECT A LIFE PARTNER

Danger signals in dating



HOW DO I KNOW?

Student Sheet

DATING CASE STUDY

Mark and Kathy

Mark, 17, and Kathy, 17, have been dating steadily for nearly a year now. Mark dated one other girl before he started dating Kathy, but he is the first serious boyfriend she has had. They attend the same high school and take as many classes together as possible. They also attend the same church. This past year they have spent almost all of their time with each other. As a result neither of them has very many close friends anymore. Furthermore, they attend very few school or church activities either. They say they don't like the activities at school or church.

Both of them admit that they have allowed petting to become an increasingly larger part of their relationship. They describe their typical date as going to a movie, sometimes an "R", then getting something to eat and then parking til time to go in. They have made several attempts to stop the petting, but their resolves do not last very long. They do not feel especially good about petting but they have rationalized that they do seem to love each other. They say they do not know any other ways to change their dating patterns so as to prevent the petting. They do not have any other places to go or any other people to do things with.

1. Would you describe their relationship as a "healthy" or "unhealthy" one?

2. List three reasons for your answer.

(1)

(2)

(3)

3. List some positive suggestions to help Mark and Kathy.

(1)

(2)

(3)



HOW DO I KNOW?

Student Sheet

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I AM IN LOVE?

Definitions of love:

1 Cor. 13:4-7

1. HAVE I DATED ENOUGH TO BE OVER THE INFATUATION?
2. HOW MUCH ALIKE ARE THE TWO OF YOU?
3. DO YOU SATISFY EACH OTHER'S DEEPEST EMOTIONAL NEEDS?
4. HOW EFFECTIVE IS YOUR COMMUNICATION?
5. WHAT PRODUCES CONFLICT IN YOUR RELATION?
6. DO YOU FEEL GENUINE COMMITMENT TO HIM/HER?
7. WHAT DO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS SAY?
8. HOW HAS THE RELATION AFFECTED YOUR PERSONALITY?



HOW DO I KNOW?

Student Sheet

LOVE CASE STUDY

JOHN AND CINDY

About three months ago John, 19, and Cindy, 18, met one afternoon at the tennis courts and subsequently began dating steadily. They have now been dating three months and this past week decided to marry in one more month. They both sincerely believe they love each other.

John has been popular in his crowd, and Cindy describes him as the "best-looking guy she knows." During their courtship Cindy has noticed that John seems to be enjoying talking with other girls. In fact, twice since they began dating John has taken two other girls out, but Cindy sees these as harmless: part of John's social, friendly nature. John makes friends easily and is an outgoing person. He spends much more time with his friends than he does at home. He and his mother don't seem to get along very well. John has attended church with Cindy several times; he doesn't put up a fuss; he just doesn't seem very interested.

Cindy is a quiet person; she finds it a bit difficult to reach out to others and make friends; however, those who know her seem to like her. Although she has dated some before, she has had only one serious boyfriend before John. While she recognizes that John doesn't seem very interested in religion right now, Cindy believes that in time he will want to become a Christian. She is also aware that he drinks on the weekends. She feels that will stop in time with her influence on him. She says John pays more attention to her than any boy ever has, and so she believes that she can use her influence to get him to change some of his habits. Two of her girlfriends have told her they don't think she and John are "right" for each other, but she thinks they are only saying that because they are jealous they didn't "land" him.

John admires Cindy's character. She and her family are faithful Christians. He feels she is the nicest girl he has ever dated. Cindy, on the other hand, is flattered by all the attention John gives her above the other girls, and "he makes me feel so special." John really doesn't see anything wrong with his "harmless" weekend drinking, but he respects Cindy's stand against drinking.

Recently hired by a drilling company, John hopes to be bringing in a fairly good salary, and Cindy will graduate from high school in two weeks. They plan to be married soon after that.

1. Does John love Cindy? Explain your answer.
2. Does Cindy love John? Explain your answer.
3. What observations do you have on their relationship?
4. What do you recommend?



HOW DO I KNOW?

Student Sheet

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I AM READY FOR MARRIAGE?

Introduction:

1. Marriage is not for everyone
2. Marriage is a covenant

1. WHY DO I WANT TO MARRY?

2. AM I READY TO BE INDEPENDENT FROM MY PARENTS?

3. AM I EMOTIONALLY MATURE ENOUGH?

4. DO I UNDERSTAND MYSELF AND MY BACKGROUND?

5. AM I READY TO SHARE EVERYTHING WITH A SPOUSE?

6. DO I ACCEPT GOD'S ROLE FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE?



HOW DO I KNOW?

Student Sheet

MARRIAGE CASE STUDY

Lyle and Debbie

Lyle, 20, is finishing his junior year in college. Five months ago he met Debbie, 18, while he was home from college for the weekend. They have now dated for that five months. Two months ago they decided to get married and set the wedding date for one month from now. Though both agree that Lyle is more serious about his religion than is Debbie.

Lyle grew up in a family in which his parents got along with each other fairly well. He remembers his father as an independent sort of person who often seemed to get involved in his own projects. His mother seemed to accept his ways and go on. Lyle has now been away from home for 3 years going to college and working in the summers. He feels very close to his mother, even protective at times. He likes his freedom as a single man and enjoys having fun with his friends. He thinks that marriage will be okay too. He feels that he is ready to marry Debbie because he loves her and is strongly attracted to her physically. He describes their communication as getting better all of the time. The main problem that he sees is that Debbie is jealous of his close relation with his mother. Debbie is also jealous of other young women at times.

Debbie has been working during this last year of her high school. She plans to keep on working rather than attend college. She is a beautiful girl with a nice personality. She is very excited about getting married and has spent a lot of time planning the wedding and deciding how to decorate their apartment after they are married. Debbie's mother and father divorced when she was 13. She is also very close to her mother but now is ready to leave home and get married. She thinks that Lyle is the best looking and nicest boy she has ever dated. At times she is jealous because other girls pay so much attention to him. She, however, feels lucky that she is the one who is marrying him. The only arguments they have had have been about Debbie's jealousy and Lyle's closeness to his mother. There have only been a few arguments and they have been in the last two months.

1. What would be the best direction for Lyle and Debbie to follow?

- Marry as scheduled
- Do not get married at all
- Marry only after pre-marital counseling
- Postpone the marriage

2. Explain your answer.

3. What do you suggest to help Lyle and Debbie?

Advice on Dating from College Juniors to their Brothers and Sisters in Junior and Senior High School.

1. Keep your priorities straight.
2. God should always be first and foremost in your life/relationship.
3. Don't grow up any faster than you have to! When you do go on dates go with some other friends. Keep your morals, people will respect you for it.
4. Don't be afraid of it. I know it's very scary but it's a lot of fun, so don't stay at home because you're afraid, get to know people.
5. Have strong moral standards, and don't ever get into a situation where you'll be tempted to go past where you've drawn the line.
6. Don't date till high school, and then date for fun, lightly, not seriously.
7. Be careful of becoming too physical. It can happen to you. If it does admit it and face up to your mistake. Don't try to hide it.
8. Set your standards and don't, for any reason, lower them or change them.
9. Be assured that dating is not marriage but a way to get to know the other sex; therefore, date many different people and find out what you like before marriage.
10. If you really love and respect him/her you can wait until after you're married for sex.
11. Don't let the person you're dating become the total center of your life. Don't let all of your activities, thoughts, friends, etc revolve around that other person. Still be your own person with your own set of values and standards.
12. Hold back sexually. This will make sex more enjoyable later and will develop a greater trust and sharing experience with your mate.
13. Turn every relationship over to the Lord whether it be a simple friendship or a romantic relationship.
14. Don't settle for someone who lacks the most important qualities you want in a mate.
15. Do not give in to mental or physical force on a date, or don't give yourself up for anyone. You will be much, much happier if you don't, I promise!
16. Try to avoid spending time alone in order to avoid getting into heavy petting and beyond. Go to football games, restaurants, etc. Don't open a door to guilt by getting involved sexually.
17. Date as many as you can and don't be afraid to break up. Wait to pick a mate! You change so much from the time you're in high school--college age. Take your time in choosing a steady.

18. Take things slow and easy.
19. Don't try to grow up too fast. It's a great temptation to want to be an "Adult" and it is very easy to get caught up in behavior that looks adult, but it's not the behavior that makes you an adult.
20. Date around a lot before getting serious with someone, so you'll know for sure, exactly the kind of person you're looking for.
21. In dating try not to get so involved physically that you'll start petting or start committing sexual intercourse. Try to focus on more of the intellectual part of the relationship.
22. Don't get into any serious relationships; just have fun dates and save your serious ones for later years.
23. Do not get so involved with a girlfriend/boyfriend to the extent of ignoring other friends.
24. Don't think that you will have to marry the first person that comes along. There WILL be others after them.
25. Date as many people as possible, that is, different types of people.
26. Make each time out a learning experience.
27. Learn to develop self-control and discipline.
28. Don't date just one person. Date around so that you can see the differences in people.
29. Don't become serious with the first one to come around--Date others!
30. Get to know the person before you start to get serious--communicate with them.
31. Don't get too deeply involved. Keep developing relationships with friends of both sexes. Keep it light and fun.

NOTE: The above words of advice were given November 1, 1982 by Dr. Lynn McMillon's Christian Family class at Oklahoma Christian College, to the Houston area Christian teens.

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
 MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH
 HUMAN SEXUALITY

THE 35 MOST PREVALENT MYTHS

(Based on incorrect scores in SKAL & questions submitted in writing at residence hall discussion programs.)

1. It is possible for a man to tell if a woman is a virgin by having intercourse with her.
2. An abortion would always be detectable by a man at intercourse.
3. The larger the breasts the more sexually aroused a woman is capable of becoming.
4. Women are not innately as sexually responsive as men.
5. Women are not usually able to have more than one orgasm in a sexual episode.
6. It is impossible to become pregnant without having had intercourse.
7. A woman is considered a virgin if the man has withdrawn before ejaculation or if intercourse takes place during menstruation.
8. It is not possible to become pregnant at the first intercourse.
9. Vaginal foams are one of the most effective forms of contraception.
10. There is a pill for men now available without prescription.
11. Douching and withdrawal are reliable forms of contraception.
12. A woman cannot become pregnant three days before, after, or during her menstrual period--the so-called "safe" period.
13. Quinine and castor oil will induce abortion.
14. Abortion cannot be safely performed beyond the 12th week.
15. Illegal abortions are cheaper and easier to get than legal therapeutic ones.
16. The size of the penis is an important factor in the pleasure a woman receives in intercourse.
17. It is possible to tell how large an erection a man will have by knowing the size of his penis in a flaccid (non-erect) state.
18. Blacks have larger genitals and are more virile than whites.
19. You can tell the size of a man's genitals by his height and body build.
20. Almost all men are non-virgins at marriage.
21. Masturbation for men and women is physically harmful.
22. A couple must experience simultaneous orgasm to have a satisfactory sexual relationship.
23. Intercourse prior to marriage is necessary to determine if a couple will be sexually compatible.
24. The greatest incidence of intercourse among college-level adults takes place with the man above the woman ("male superior position").
25. Oral-genital sexual activity is considered a perversion for humans.
26. It is normal for sexual activity in both men and women to decline in their 30's, and be expected to end in their late 50's or 60's.
27. Women lose their interest in sexual activity following menopause.
28. It is not uncommon for a couple in intercourse to get stuck together and be unable to separate until there is loss of erection.
29. "Crabs" is a venereal disease.
30. V. D. can be contracted from toilet seats in public rest rooms.
31. It is impossible to get syphilis by French kissing with an infected person.
32. V. D. is primarily a disease of the inner-urban, lower economic population.
33. Spanish Fly will cause a person to become uncontrollably aroused.
34. There are certain commonly available foods (aphrodisiacs) that will increase sexual potency.
35. The University puts salt peter in the residence hall food to lessen sexual desire.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF HAPPILY AND UNHAPPILY MARRIED PEOPLE
 Christian Family
 File 3413

The following information is based on the study of Lewis Turner in Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness.

Qualities of Happily Married Women

1. Kind attitudes toward others.
2. Expect kind attitudes from others.
3. Aren't defensive.
4. Not unduly concerned about impressing others - they feel good about themselves.
5. Don't look at social relationships as rivals.
6. Are cooperative.
7. Accept the meaning of submission.
8. Accept advice.
9. Have an attitude of service.
10. Enjoy experiences that bring pleasure to others.
11. Careful about their work - not perfectionists, just careful.
12. Healthy attitude towards money.
13. Are conventional on morals, religion, and politics - don't go to extremes.
14. Are optimistic about life.

Qualities of Happily Married Men

1. Cooperative and helpful.
2. They are emotionally stable and do not go to extremes or excesses.
3. They show positive egalitarian attitudes toward women.
4. They demonstrate positive attitudes toward underprivileged people.
5. They are self-confident.
6. They tend to take initiative and leadership.
7. They show attention to details.
8. They are generally wise in handling money, cautious, but not tight.
9. Positive, favorable attitude towards religion.
10. Hold strong morals.

Qualities of Unhappily Married Women

1. Tend to be moody - unpredictable and seem to change without cause.
2. Tend to be more tense and uptight.
3. Often have strong feelings of inferiority and compensate by being aggressive.
4. Irritable and dictatorial.
5. Self-centered.
6. Irrascient.
7. Take radical positions in matters of religion, politics, and society.

Qualities of Unhappily Married Men

1. Tend to be moody.
2. Feel socially inferior.
3. Feel very self-conscious in public.
4. Solve family and job problems by domineering (asserting authority).
5. Dislike saving money, they like to spend it (unwisely, selfishly).
6. Less interested in religion.
7. Compensate for their weaknesses by being emotionally distant and authoritarian.

BA 3413

SYMPTOMS OF JEALOUSY

Are you letting jealousy cause problems in your relationship? Answer true or false to each question in this quiz, devised with the help of psychology professor Ralph Hupka of California State University, Long Beach:

1. If my lover upsets me by flirting with someone, I always try to even the score.
2. I often feel I couldn't exist without my mate.
3. I sometimes think my mate is cheating behind my back.
4. I don't imagine I'll ever have a relationship as good as some I've seen.
5. My partner is the motivating force in my life.
6. When I'm away from my mate for any length of time, I worry a great deal about what he/she is up to.
7. I like to flirt now and then in front of my partner to keep him/her interested.
8. I feel depressed when my partner speaks favorably about a member of the opposite sex.
9. Most of my friends have less trouble in their relationships than I do.
10. When my partner pays attention to other people, I feel lonely and left out.

If you answered "true" to more than four questions, you need to work on your feelings of jealousy. Here are some problem areas to think about:
 --Questions 1 and 7: You're too competitive with your mate. Try to analyze your reasons for this.
 --2 and 5: Your dependence on your mate is making you feel overly vulnerable. Do you think there's something wrong with being dependent?
 --3 and 6: For some reason, you don't trust your mate. Has he/she actually given you reason for doubt?
 --4 and 9: You're not being realistic about your relationship. Do you expect to hear bells ringing 24 hours a day?
 --8 and 10: You're insecure and easily threatened. Perhaps self-esteem is your problem. Why do you have such a poor self-image?

SCORING

FINANCE CASE STUDY

Jim and Jan have dated for the past year and a half and will get married in another month. The Fall trimester will begin three weeks after their wedding so they are busily making their financial plans. They have already opened a joint checking account at a local bank. In addition to going to college, Jim, a Junior, will have a part time job as a teller and Jan, also a Junior, will work a few hours each week as a receptionist very near to the campus. Together they will have a take home pay of \$950 per month. Their tuition and books will be paid for by scholarships and their parents but they must provide all other expenses.

They have a student apartment reserved and are trying to decide if they can afford it or if they should make some other living arrangements. Her parents think they should look for a lesser expensive apartment even if it is farther from the campus, but his parents have advised them to live in the student apartments. At the present, Jim and Jan prefer to live near the campus for convenience and to be near their friends.

Jim has worked and saved about \$1000 and Jan has about \$450 in the bank. Jim also has a total of \$55 per month payments on a VISA account that will take him another ten months from now to pay off. Jan also has \$50 per month in payments on her VISA account that she brings into the marriage. Jan has an older car that is paid for and has been well maintained and still runs well. They plan to sell Jan's car, which is paid for, and which will bring about \$750. On the advice of Jim's father they plan to keep Jim's car which is a two year old Trans Am. The monthly payments are \$210 and 24 of them remain. It is a beautiful car and both of them consider it their main investment.

Jim and Jan are also trying to make some decisions concerning their finances. The following are some of the decisions they are dealing with. One, should they go to the expense of health insurance? Two, do they need to purchase life insurance at this point? Three, once they get the VISA accounts paid should they close both of them to avoid the temptation of further spending? Four, What would be the best use of the money they have saved? Five, both sets of parents have offered advice on their finances and they are not sure what they should do.

Name _____ ID # _____ Section _____

PROPOSED BUDGET
(All are monthly amounts)

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Contribution to God | _____ |
| Furnished Apartment (includes utilities) | _____ |
| Groceries | _____ |
| Car Payment | _____ |
| Car Operational Expenses | _____ |
| Car Insurance (full coverage) | _____ |
| Payments on their VISA Accounts | _____ |
| Health Insurance | _____ |
| Life Insurance (on husband age 20) | _____ |
| Entertainment | _____ |
| Personal Spending Money (X Two =) | _____ |
| Miscellaneous (hair cuts, emergencies, etc.) | _____ |
| <i>Write in "OMIT" if you omit an item.</i> | TOTAL _____ |

- _____ 1. What should they do about a place to live?
- a. Follow the advice of Jan's parents.
 - b. Follow the advice of Jim's parents.
 - c. Stay with their original plan.
 - d. Look for a lesser expensive apartment
- _____ 2. What should be done with the \$1450 the two of them have saved ?
- a. Pay off debts.
 - b. Savings
 - c. Pay on the Trans Am
 - d. Buy some furniture
 - e. Jan should use her money how she prefers and Jim should use his money how he prefers.
- _____ 3. Should Jim and Jan purchase health insurance at the beginning?
- a. Yes b. No
 - c. Later when they can best afford it.
- _____ 4. Should they purchase life insurance at this time?
- a. Yes b. No
- _____ 5. Should they keep the VISA account?
- a. Yes b. No
 - c. Yes, but do not use it
- _____ 6. What should they do about a car ?
- a. Keep the Trans Am and sell Jan's car.
 - b. Sell the Trans Am and keep Jan's car.
 - c. Sell both cars and buy another car midway between the two.
- _____ 7. Should they open a passbook savings account?
- a. Yes b. No

CHRISTIAN FAMILY

Case Study # 2

Sherry, Jim and Joan

Two years ago, Jim and Sherry began dating. Jim recalls being attracted to Sherry because she really needed him in a way that no other girl ever had. He felt that he was important to her. He also enjoyed taking care of her car and helping her with her personal finances. However, after about eight months of dating, they broke up. Jim says that the break up was by mutual consent and because neither of them was very happy in the relationship the last five months. He does admit that he took the initiative in breaking up with Sherry, but that she did not protest his action. In retrospect, Jim feels that Sherry was not very mature and leaned on him too much. He says, however, that the two of them are still friends and that he occasionally still gets a call from her asking for help with something.

Jim did not date anybody for nearly two months after he broke up with Sherry. Even during this time he and Sherry saw each other several times though they never went out. Most of their relation during this time centered on "counseling" her about her parents, future school plans, and how she was going to become fully independent.

Then Jim started dating Joan. It was "strictly friends at first," Jim recalls. I liked Joan but I just was not ready for anything serious. Our relationship developed more slowly than the previous one, but it was also much more fun. They are comfortable with each other most of the time because they share in common the most important things.

But even though it has been over a year since Jim and Sherry broke up, she still is in the picture for him because she calls him about once every six weeks as she always has. Joan has become increasingly unhappy with this practice to the point that after more than a year of it she and Jim have had a couple of arguments over Sherry. Jim insists that he has no feelings for Sherry, that he only feels some responsibility to help her. He is not sure whether Sherry has romantic feelings for him. Joan now finds it difficult to believe that Jim has no feelings for Sherry. Joan has said to Jim many times, "If you don't feel anything for her anymore, then why don't you leave her alone to take care of her own problems?"

Jim admits that he cannot turn loose of Sherry but he really wants to and actually feels nothing more than responsibility to help her. He insists that he feels nothing romantic for her.

1. Does Sherry still love Jim? (yes or no)
2. Does Jim still love Sherry? (yes or no)

3. Analyze and explain the "connection" or relation between Jim and Sherry at the present

4. Does Joan have a solid basis for her concerns? Why?

5. Analyze Jim and Joan's relation. Is their relation a healthy or unhealthy one? Give several reasons for your answer.

APPENDIX B
RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION BACKGROUND DATA:
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

| Experience | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| <u>Experimental Group</u> | | |
| High School Family Course | 11 | 14.5 |
| Christian Family Course in College | 5 | 6.6 |
| Sociology Family Course in College | 12 | 15.8 |
| Home Economics Family Course in College | 5 | 6.6 |
| Marriage and Family Course at Church | 25 | 32.9 |
| Marriage and Family Seminar | 9 | 11.8 |
| Extensive Reading | 7 | 9.2 |
| <u>Control Group</u> | | |
| High School Family Course | 6 | 23.1 |
| Christian Family Course in College | 12 | 46.2 |
| Sociology Family Course in College | 6 | 23.1 |
| Home Economics Family Course in College | 4 | 15.4 |
| Marriage and Family Course at Church | 13 | 50.0 |
| Marriage and Family Seminar | 5 | 19.2 |
| Extensive Reading | 6 | 23.1 |

APPENDIX C
SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR MALES

MALE

Age _____ **ID# _____

Classification _____

Marriage Status:

Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____

Dating Status:

Not dating _____ Dating several girls _____

Dating one girl, but not seriously _____ Dating steady _____

Engaged _____

**Although your ID Number appears at the top of this form, this is for bookkeeping purposes only and your identity will remain anonymous.

Check every response that applies to you:

I have had marriage/family instruction in the following way(s): (Indicate courses now enrolled in as well.)

_____ Family course in high school

_____ Christian Family course in college --semester/year _____

_____ Sociology family course in college --semester/year _____

_____ Home Economics family course in college --semester/year _____

_____ Marriage/Family course at church --semester/year _____

_____ Marriage/Family seminar --year _____

_____ Extensive reading on marriage/family topics

_____ Other (specify)

Following is a list of 67 statements, with five possible responses each. These statements are designed to measure your own feelings as of today. There are no right or wrong answers, so be as honest with yourself as possible as you respond to each statement. Do not discuss the statements or responses with anyone else. If you do not totally understand a statement, just interpret it the best you can and respond to it from your own interpretation. PLEASE WORK ALONE.

Read each statement carefully and then respond by **circling** the response that most nearly approximates how well prepared you feel today regarding that statement. The five possible responses are:

- VU -- very unprepared
- U -- unprepared
- N -- neither prepared nor unprepared
- P -- prepared
- VP -- very prepared

Remember, please **circle** only one response for each statement.

Concerning the relationship with my future wife, I feel I am (VU) very unprepared, (U) unprepared, (N) neither prepared or unprepared, (P) prepared, (VP) very prepared in the following:

Readiness For Marital Competence Index

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Promoting a feeling of security in her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 2. Expressing my affection for her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 3. Showing my admiration for her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 4. Satisfying her desire for affection. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 5. Showing her that I evaluate her highly. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 6. Helping her to feel that she is an attractive person. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 7. Showing my confidence in her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 8. Letting her know I feel emotionally close to her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 9. Letting her know that I believe we have a common purpose in life. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 10. Helping her to achieve her potential to become what she is capable of becoming. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 11. Bringing out the "best" qualities in her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 12. Helping her become a more interesting person. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 13. Helping her to see himself more positively. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 14. Helping her to increase her circle of friends. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 15. Helping her to improve the quality of her interpersonal relationships outside marriage. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 16. Helping her to improve her personality. | VU | U | N | P | VP |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 17. | Helping her to act according to her beliefs rather than simply "following the crowd." | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 18. | Helping her to have confidence in himself. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 19. | Being a good listener when she talks to me. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 20. | Encouraging her when she is discouraged. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 21. | Seeing things from her point of view. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 22. | Being considerate of her feelings. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 23. | Showing her that I understand what she wants to achieve in life. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 24. | Respecting her wishes when making important decisions. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 25. | Accepting disagreement from her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 26. | Accepting her differentness. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 27. | Avoiding habits which annoy her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 28. | Expressing my disagreement with her honestly and openly. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 29. | Letting her know how I really feel about something. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 30. | Helping her to express her feelings to me. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 31. | Letting her know about my expectations in life. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 32. | Seeing beyond what she says and being aware of her true feelings when her feelings are different from her words. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 33. | Being aware that what she says may not always indicate how she really feels about something. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 34. | When she is angry at me trying to understand why she is angry. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 35. | Being observant as to whether she has understood correctly the meaning of the message I have communicated to her. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 36. | When I am troubled, letting her know what is bothering me. | VU | U | N | P | VP |

Marital Preparedness Instrument

| | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Child care (feeding, clothing, discipline, etc.) | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 2. Reproduction or child bearing | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 3. Food preparation | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 4. Budgeting family income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 5. Buying clothes, food, household goods | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 6. Home care; e.g. domestic chores such as minor carpentry or ironing | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 7. Recreation and leisure time pursuits | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 8. Sexual intercourse, physical aspects | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 9. Sexual intercourse, mental attitudes | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 10. Intellectual pursuits | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 11. Vocational readiness, job preparedness | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 12. A philosophy of life | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 13. Dealing with illness, diseases, handicaps | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 14. Being able to provide an adequate income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 15. Adjustment to a higher income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 16. Adjustment to a lower income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 17. Affection giving and receiving | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 18. Courtship practices, dating, necking, etc. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 19. Living with another person | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 20. Living with a person of the opposite sex | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 21. Making new friendships | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 22. Maintaining friendships | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 23. Resolving inter-personal conflicts | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 24. Adaptability to new people | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 25. Religious beliefs regarding marriage | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 26. Breaking or reducing parental ties | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 27. Planning long range goals | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 28. Maintaining a lasting marital relationship | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 29. Ability to accept another's conventionality (manners, personal habits, etc.) | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 30. Geographic mobility (moving to and living in an area or region with which you have had little experience | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 31. Marriage as a whole | VU | U | N | P | VP |

APPENDIX D
SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR FEMALES

FEMALE

Age _____ **ID# _____

Classification _____

Marriage Status:

Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____

Dating Status:

Not dating _____ Dating several guys _____

Dating one guy, but not seriously _____ Dating steady _____

Engaged _____

**Although your ID Number appears at the top of this form, this is for bookkeeping purposes only and your identity will remain anonymous.

Check every response that applies to you:

I have had marriage/family instruction in the following way(s): (Indicate courses now enrolled in as well.)

_____ Family course in high school

_____ Christian Family course in college ---semester/year _____

_____ Sociology family course in college ---semester/year _____

_____ Home Economics family course in college ---semester/year _____

_____ Marriage/Family course at church ---semester/year _____

_____ Marriage/Family seminar ---year _____

_____ Extensive reading on marriage/family topics

_____ Other (specify)

Following is a list of 67 statements, with five possible responses each. These statements are designed to measure your own feelings as of today. There are no right or wrong answers, so be as honest with yourself as possible as you respond to each statement. Do not discuss the statements or responses with anyone else. If you do not totally understand a statement, just interpret it the best you can and respond to it from your own interpretation. PLEASE WORK ALONE.

Read each statement carefully and then respond by **circling** the response that most nearly approximates how well prepared you feel today regarding that statement. The five possible responses are:

- VU -- very unprepared
 U -- unprepared
 N -- neither prepared nor unprepared
 P -- prepared
 VP -- very prepared

Remember, please **circle** only one response for each statement.

Concerning the relationship with my future husband, I feel I am (VU) very unprepared, (U) unprepared, (N) neither prepared or unprepared, (P) prepared, (VP) very prepared in the following:

Readiness For Marital Competence Index

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Promoting a feeling of security in him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 2. Expressing my affection for him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 3. Showing my admiration for him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 4. Satisfying his desire for affection. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 5. Showing him that I evaluate him highly. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 6. Helping him to feel that he is an attractive person. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 7. Showing my confidence in him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 8. Letting him know I feel emotionally close to him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 9. Letting him know that I believe we have a common purpose in life. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 10. Helping him to achieve his potential to become what he is capable of becoming. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 11. Bringing out the "best" qualities in him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 12. Helping him become a more interesting person. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 13. Helping him to see himself more positively. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 14. Helping him to increase his circle of friends. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 15. Helping him to improve the quality of his interpersonal relationships outside marriage. | VU | U | N | P | VP |

| | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 16. Helping him to improve his personality. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 17. Helping him to act according to his beliefs rather than simply "following the crowd." | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 18. Helping him to have confidence in himself. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 19. Being a good listener when he talks to me. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 20. Encouraging him when he is discouraged. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 21. Seeing things from his point of view. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 22. Being considerate of his feelings. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 23. Showing him that I understand what he wants to achieve in life. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 24. Respecting his wishes when making important decisions. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 25. Accepting disagreement from him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 26. Accepting his differentness. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 27. Avoiding habits which annoy him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 28. Expressing my disagreement with him honestly and openly. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 29. Letting him know how I really feel about something. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 30. Helping him to express his feelings to me. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 31. Letting him know about my expectations in life. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 32. Seeing beyond what he says and being aware of his true feelings when his feelings are different from his words. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 33. Being aware that what he says may not always indicate how he really feels about something. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 34. When he is angry at me trying to understand why he is angry. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 35. Being observant as to whether he has understood correctly the meaning of the message I have communicated to him. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 36. When I am troubled, letting him know what is bothering me. | VU | U | N | P | VP |

Marital Preparedness Instrument

| | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Child care (feeding, clothing, discipline, etc.) | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 2. Reproduction or child bearing | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 3. Food preparation | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 4. Budgeting family income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 5. Buying clothes, food, household goods | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 6. Home care; e.g. domestic chores such as minor carpentry or ironing | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 7. Recreation and leisure time pursuits | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 8. Sexual intercourse, physical aspects | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 9. Sexual intercourse, mental attitudes | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 10. Intellectual pursuits | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 11. Vocational readiness, job preparedness | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 12. A philosophy of life | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 13. Dealing with illness, diseases, handicaps | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 14. Being able to provide an adequate income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 15. Adjustment to a higher income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 16. Adjustment to a lower income | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 17. Affection giving and receiving | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 18. Courtship practices, dating, necking, etc. | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 19. Living with another person | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 20. Living with a person of the opposite sex | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 21. Making new friendships | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 22. Maintaining friendships | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 23. Resolving inter-personal conflicts | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 24. Adaptability to new people | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 25. Religious beliefs regarding marriage | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 26. Breaking or reducing parental ties | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 27. Planning long range goals | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 28. Maintaining a lasting marital relationship | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 29. Ability to accept another's conventionality (manners, personal habits, etc.) | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 30. Geographic mobility (moving to and living in an area or region with which you have had little experience) | VU | U | N | P | VP |
| 31. Marriage as a whole | VU | U | N | P | VP |

APPENDIX E
INDIVIDUAL PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES:
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

INDIVIDUAL PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES:
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
(N = 76)

| Student Number | Prescore | Postscore | Difference |
|----------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | 258 | 269 | 11 |
| 2 | 218 | 270 | 52 |
| 3 | 284 | 317 | 33 |
| 4 | 231 | 257 | 26 |
| 5 | 232 | 263 | 31 |
| 6 | 191 | 252 | 61 |
| 7 | 216 | 237 | 21 |
| 8 | 267 | 265 | -2 |
| 9 | 245 | 255 | 10 |
| 10 | 231 | 230 | -1 |
| 11 | 272 | 277 | 5 |
| 12 | 252 | 275 | 23 |
| 13 | 195 | 234 | 39 |
| 14 | 258 | 285 | 27 |
| 15 | 239 | 271 | 32 |
| 16 | 237 | 280 | 43 |
| 17 | 212 | 250 | 38 |
| 18 | 228 | 246 | 18 |
| 19 | 287 | 272 | -15 |
| 20 | 244 | 263 | 19 |
| 21 | 199 | 201 | 2 |
| 22 | 222 | 242 | 20 |
| 23 | 242 | 264 | 22 |
| 24 | 252 | 278 | 26 |
| 25 | 243 | 267 | 24 |
| 26 | 188 | 217 | 29 |
| 27 | 245 | 249 | 4 |
| 28 | 215 | 201 | -14 |
| 29 | 259 | 273 | 14 |

| Student Number | Prescore | Postscore | Difference |
|----------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| 30 | 300 | 315 | 15 |
| 31 | 255 | 282 | 27 |
| 32 | 267 | 244 | -23 |
| 33 | 230 | 244 | 14 |
| 34 | 274 | 288 | 14 |
| 35 | 275 | 301 | 26 |
| 36 | 247 | 257 | 10 |
| 37 | 245 | 260 | 15 |
| 38 | 173 | 256 | 83 |
| 39 | 238 | 264 | 26 |
| 40 | 214 | 290 | 76 |
| 41 | 248 | 253 | 5 |
| 42 | 189 | 235 | 46 |
| 43 | 259 | 278 | 19 |
| 44 | 213 | 236 | 23 |
| 45 | 223 | 236 | 13 |
| 46 | 259 | 235 | -24 |
| 47 | 225 | 263 | 38 |
| 48 | 223 | 242 | 19 |
| 49 | 314 | 320 | 6 |
| 50 | 213 | 249 | 36 |
| 51 | 202 | 306 | 104 |
| 52 | 269 | 273 | 4 |
| 53 | 286 | 292 | 6 |
| 54 | 230 | 255 | 25 |
| 55 | 275 | 304 | 29 |
| 56 | 332 | 355 | 22 |
| 57 | 256 | 294 | 38 |
| 58 | 259 | 273 | 14 |
| 59 | 266 | 248 | -18 |
| 60 | 242 | 274 | 32 |
| 61 | 260 | 274 | 14 |
| 62 | 257 | 267 | 10 |

| Student Number | Prescore | Postscore | Difference |
|----------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| 63 | 257 | 253 | -4 |
| 64 | 232 | 259 | 27 |
| 65 | 214 | 199 | -15 |
| 66 | 233 | 256 | 23 |
| 67 | 213 | 229 | 16 |
| 68 | 240 | 265 | 25 |
| 69 | 267 | 293 | 26 |
| 70 | 213 | 265 | 52 |
| 71 | 254 | 238 | -16 |
| 72 | 268 | 290 | 22 |
| 73 | 245 | 253 | 8 |
| 74 | 234 | 301 | 67 |
| 75 | 236 | 273 | 37 |
| 76 | 263 | 259 | -4 |

NOTE: Minimum possible score -- 66

Maximum possible score -- 330

APPENDIX F
INDIVIDUAL PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES:
CONTROL GROUP

INDIVIDUAL PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES:
CONTROL GROUP
(N = 26)

| Student Number | Prescore | Postscore | Difference |
|----------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| 77 | 250 | 247 | -3 |
| 78 | 300 | 282 | -18 |
| 79 | 276 | 251 | -25 |
| 80 | 257 | 257 | 0 |
| 81 | 275 | 288 | 13 |
| 82 | 310 | 310 | 0 |
| 83 | 205 | 217 | 12 |
| 84 | 230 | 236 | 6 |
| 85 | 236 | 262 | 26 |
| 86 | 227 | 236 | 9 |
| 87 | 234 | 232 | -2 |
| 88 | 219 | 249 | 30 |
| 89 | 234 | 244 | 10 |
| 90 | 258 | 284 | 26 |
| 91 | 251 | 235 | -16 |
| 92 | 305 | 287 | -18 |
| 93 | 259 | 247 | -12 |
| 94 | 238 | 251 | 13 |
| 95 | 270 | 299 | 29 |
| 96 | 221 | 232 | 11 |
| 97 | 245 | 253 | 8 |
| 98 | 260 | 264 | 4 |
| 99 | 282 | 279 | -3 |
| 100 | 261 | 271 | 10 |
| 101 | 256 | 259 | 3 |
| 102 | 234 | 233 | -1 |

NOTE: Minimum possible score -- 66

Maximum possible score -- 330

2
VITA

Rita Lavelle Eicke Goad

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: THE EFFECT OF A CHRISTIAN FAMILY COURSE
ON MARITAL READINESS

Major Field: Home Economics

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Snyder, Texas, September 16, 1959, the daughter of Seabourn and Lavelle Eicke. Married to William Perry Goad, Jr. on December 16, 1979. Has one son, Spencer Perry Goad, born September 14, 1986.

Education: Graduated from Snyder High School, Snyder, Texas, in May, 1978; received Bachelor of Science Degree in Religious Education from Oklahoma Christian College, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in December, 1980; received Master of Science degree in Family Studies from Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas, in April, 1984; completed requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy at Oklahoma State University in May, 1987.

Professional Experience: News Editor, The Christian Chronicle, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, August 1982 to May 1983; Instructor, Department of Sociology, Lubbock Christian College, August 1984 to December 1984; Production Coordinator, COPE, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, January 1985 to January 1987.