

ATTITUDES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND
ATTITUDES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS
CONCERNING MARRIAGE DURING
THE LATER YEARS:
A COMPARISON

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

"... aging is a social problem for society as a whole, because the presence of old people and their problems has profound effects upon the structure and functioning of society" (Loether, 1967, p. 5). This quote suggests that the advantages and problems of aging are important not only to the older person but also to the younger person as he will someday find himself in the special situation of being in the later years stage of life. As attitudes influence how we perceive behavior and how we act, it is important to examine both the attitudes of older persons and younger persons toward the later years of life.

Tuckman and Lorge (1954) found that a substantial number of people subscribe to erroneous and stereotyped ideas about older people. Little is known about the attitudes toward marriage during the later years. It is important to understand not only the perceptions of older persons, but also the perceptions of younger persons toward marriage relationships during the later years since these perceptions will determine, in part, the attitudes of young persons toward themselves when they reach the later years (Stinnett and Montgomery, 1968).

Increase in Persons Sixty-Five Years and Over

A total of nearly twenty million men and women are sixty-five and over in the United States, comprising approximately ten percent of the population. The percentage of the total population in America has increased from 4.1 percent in 1900 to 9.5 percent in 1968. There are predictions that by 1985, the older population will number approximately twenty-five million (Aging, 1969).

Furthermore, life expectancy at birth has now risen to 73.8 years of age for the female and 66.7 years of age for the male. It can be expected that the total number of people age 65 and over will continue to increase as medical science progresses and the level of living rises.

Increase in Proportion of Older Married Persons

As life expectancy increases, the proportion of older persons who are married and still living with their mates increases. In 1969 the Bureau of Census reported that 72.5 percent of the older males and 36.0 percent of the older females were still married (Aging, 1969).

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare reported in 1963 that between 1949 and 1959 marriages among older persons increased by one-third. A 1963 report from the Department of Commerce indicated that the percentage of people still married and living with their mates rose from 36 percent in 1950 to 38.4 percent in 1962 for women and from 65.8 percent in 1950 to 73 percent in 1962 for men. According to the Department of Commerce (1967) there are 80 percent of the males and 66 percent of the females between the ages of 65 and 74 who are presently living with their mates. In a group of people over seventy-five, 58 percent of the males and 20 percent of the females are presently

married. According to Kerr (1968) there should be 21 percent more families over 65 years of age in 1980 than in 1965. This indicates that the 5.7 million families over 65 years of age in 1965 will increase to 6.9 million in 1980.

Increase in Matrimony During the Later Years

As the older population has increased, a rise in the number of marriages between persons in the older age category has been witnessed. Aging (1969) reported that: (a) an estimated 15,000 older women and 35,000 older men marry during the course of a year, (b) about 22,000 older grooms and 2,000 older brides marry mates who are under 65 years of age, (c) approximately four out of every ten older men and women are under 65 years of age, and (d) there are approximately 13,000 marriages in which both the bride and the groom are over age 65.

In a report by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1963) it was indicated that 93 percent of the older brides had been married at least once before. Approximately 73 percent of the older grooms and 13 percent of the older brides were divorced at the time of their marriage.

The Vital Statistics report of 1965 concerning marriage and divorce shows that of the 1,360,872 males who married, two percent were 65 years of age or over: of the 1,360,872 brides who were married, .9 percent were 65 years of age or over. For 7.1 percent of the older brides and 6.4 percent of the older grooms this was a first marriage. Of those 65 or over who remarried, 68.4 percent of the brides and 65.5 percent of the grooms had been widowed: while only 11 percent of the

brides and 15 percent of the grooms had been previously divorced (Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1968).

As it has been illustrated, several trends are evident. In most older marriages the bride and groom are both over 65 years of age and the majority of these marriages are remarriages.

Need for Research

Barron (1969, p. 8) notes several reasons for an increase in the need for research concerning the older American. The following are among his reasons:

1. There is a decline in the death rate in Western societies.
2. There is a "vast panorama of problems" that the aged are confronted with.
3. There is a need to prepare individuals and/or to educate individuals for old age.

Loether (1967) states that profound changes occur in interpersonal relationships as people age. Of paramount importance to the emotional and mental health of the older person is the marriage relationship of the older person.

Hickey and Kalish (1968) maintain that the feeling and attitudes of young people toward older age groups should be studied since the perceptions of the younger person influence the roles of both age groups. It is for this reason that this study is comparing the attitudes of college students with those of older husbands and wives concerning marriage relationships during the later years.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to compare the attitudes of college students with those of older husbands and wives concerning marriage relationships during the later years. The specific purposes of this study were to obtain evidence concerning the hypotheses that there are no differences between older husbands and wives and college students:

1. in Attitudes Toward Marital Relationships of Older Persons (AMROP) Scale Scores.
2. in Perception of Older Marriages Scale (POM) Scores.
3. in Age Conservatism Scores.
4. in their perceptions of whether older peoples' marriages improve or worsen over time.
5. in their perceptions of the happiest period of life.
6. in their perceptions of the happiest period of married life.
7. in their perceptions of the most troublesome aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.
8. in their perceptions of the major problems of older couples.
9. in their perceptions of the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.
10. in their perceptions of the most important characteristic of a successful marriage.
11. in their perceptions of the most important factor in achieving marital success.

12. in their perceptions of the primary reason why older people enter into marriage after age 65.
13. in their perceptions of the major problems of older persons entering into marriage after age 65.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There has been little research conducted concerning the attitudes of older persons toward marriage in the later years. The research on younger persons' attitudes toward older people and older marriages has also been very limited. The following is a review of the available literature concerning: (a) marriage relationships of the older person, (b) entering marriage during the later years, and (c) college students' attitudes toward the older person.

Marriage During the Later Years

The literature concerning the marital satisfaction of older husbands and wives is limited. Lipman (1961) interviewed 100 retired husbands and wives and found that the majority indicated that their marriages had become more satisfactory since retirement. Lipman also found that the most frequent response of both men and women to a question concerning the most important qualities for a good husband or wife past sixty years of age were expressive qualities such as love, understanding, and companionship. These expressive qualities were selected as important for a good husband by 47 percent of the females and 30.6 percent of the males. Women selected the quality of being a good economic provider less often than men which would indicate that men adhere to their pre-retirement role as an economic provider. In a study by

Fried and Stern (1948) it was found that 50 percent of the 37 couples interviewed viewed their marriage as more satisfactory as their mates aged. These results coincide with Goldfarb's (1968) suggestion that marriages which were satisfactory at the beginning usually improve through the years, whereas, marriages that were unsatisfactory from the beginning tended to worsen.

On the basis of their study, Fried and Stern found certain factors which may contribute to marital satisfaction among older persons. It was found that the marriage partners who had become better adjusted, "less egotistical," "less demanding," "less temperamental," and "less irritable," had more satisfactory marriages. Other factors which contribute to marriage satisfaction were similar habits and interest of the marriage partners. Some of the older people indicated that they felt that their partners had become more incompatible with age, expressing a tendency toward nagging, domineering, fault finding, worrying and selfishness. It was also found that these people had few common interests when they were first married and that they had grown apart over the years.

Love was found by Collins (1969) to be the area of greatest marital need satisfaction, whereas, communication for the older wife and respect for the older husband were found to be the needs which were least satisfied within the marriage relationship. Marital need satisfaction was also found to be significantly related to: (a) sex, with men receiving higher mean marital need satisfaction scores than women, (b) amount of contact with children through visits, those subjects who reported visiting or receiving visits from their children five to seven times a year receiving the most favorable mean Marital Need

Satisfaction score, while those subjects who reported a visiting frequency of only once a year received the least favorable score, (c) perception of happiest period of life, with those respondents who perceived the present as the happiest period of life (52 percent) receiving the most favorable mean score, (d) self-perceived happiness of marriage, with those respondents who perceived their marriages as very happy (45 percent) receiving the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction score, and (e) perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time, with older persons who perceived an improvement in their marriage over time (53 percent) receiving the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction score.

The family is the institution that has been assigned the task of supplying love, intimate affectionate contacts and companionship. Cavan (1956, p. 323) states that "the significance of marriage is said to lie in its close companionship." For the older marriage partners, close companionship may be due in part to the theory suggested by Nimkoff (1961, p. 97) when he stated that the relationship between the older "husband and wife has been strengthened by its prolongation and its more equalitarian nature . . ."

Another satisfaction found in marriage is that of having someone care for your physical needs (Fried and Stern, 1948; Cavan, 1956; McKain, 1969). The effect of health upon the older person and his marriage should not be overlooked; for example, McKain (1969) found a close association between health and personal adjustment and happiness; and health and marriage success. A study by Heyman and Jeffers (1968) and Rice (1969) also noted a definite relationship between good health and happy retirement marriages.

Tuckman and Lorge (1953) suggested from their interviews with industrial workers applying for retirement and industrial workers already retired that the majority (70 percent) of each group reported a happy relationship with their mates. Approximately 80 percent of the retired workers viewed their marital relationship as having remained the same as it was before retirement. Similarly 80 percent of the industrial workers who were applying for retirement felt that there would be no change in their marital relationship. However, Tuckman and Lorge also found that 43 percent of the retired women perceived that their marriage relationship had improved.

In a study of marital happiness in the life cycle, Bossard and Boll (1955) found that the happiest period of marital satisfaction for men over 60 years of age was in the 70 and over age category, while the second happiest period was in the 60-69 age category. The older women in the study indicated that the 20-29 age category was rated as the happiest and the next happiest was seventy and over for twenty older women.

Problems of the Older Person

Barron (1961) discussed some of the common problems for older persons in The Aging American. He states that all humans need shelter, food, clothing and good health, emotional security and affection, social status and recognition, and a sense of worth and self respect. His list of major problems for the older American include: inadequate income, poor physical health, mental and emotional disorders, and deficient social participation and recreation.

Barron indicates that three-fourths of the older persons live with their own families in their own households, but that one-fourth live alone, with non-relatives, in institutions and hotels. The housing arrangements for older people may lead to loneliness, bitterness or a loss of meaning in life.

Another problem for older people according to Barron is retirement. Since the working life span is shorter and life expectancy is longer, older persons have a longer retirement period. This factor creates additional problems for those persons who have been accustomed to living on the higher income that they received before retirement.

Barron also reports that according to the findings of the 1959 Senate sub-committee on the aged and aging, 60 percent of the men and women 65 years of age and over receive an annual income of less than one thousand dollars. For the older person who has been accustomed to a higher income, many problems are created.

A lack of social activities and recreation was also indicated to be a common problem for older persons by Barron.

Havighurst and Albrecht (1953) stated that the problems of older people include: fear of physical helplessness, fear of poverty, feeling of rejection, adjustment to loss of work, adjustment to loss of mate, loss of status, finding leisure-time activities, making satisfactory living arrangements, and treating grown children as adults.

In Five Hundred Over Sixty (Kutner, et al., 1956, p. 45), Havighurst is quoted as saying that the needs of older persons include: emotional security, social recognition, a sense of worth, and adequate food, clothing, shelter and health. He notes that many needs of the older person are often not met due to a loss of peers, status,

health, attractiveness, and social roles.

Rice (1969) indicates that some of the problems facing older couples include: a disinterest in sexual relations, infidelity, declining health, insecurity, financial problems or a loss of interest in the partner. Rice further indicates that many of the problems confronting retirement marriages stem from making children the nucleus of the family; after the children leave home there is a void.

Goldfarb (1968) indicates that marital complaints by older persons may indicate a need to recognize their own feelings of depression, nervousness, helplessness, fear or anger.

Entering Marriage During the Later Years

A positive family environment can contribute greatly to the emotional and mental health of an older person. One solution for the older person who wishes to live in a family environment is to remarry, or to marry for the first time.

Bernard (1956, p. 115) included the following figures on remarriage among individuals of all ages in her book, Remarriage: (a) 87 percent of all divorced men and women remarry, (b) 67 percent of all widowed men remarry, and (c) 33 percent of all widowed women remarry.

Locke (1951) states that bereaved persons who remarry are as good risks in marriage as those who marry only once and he further indicates that bereaved persons who do remarry are highly adaptable.

There are many advantages of marriage and remarriage late in life, Goldfarb (1968) notes the economic aspect and possible nursing care benefits as advantages to marriage. He further states that those who remarry tend to be better adjusted than those who remain widowed.

Loether (1967) indicates that remarriage for an older person is an answer to the problem of loneliness. Lawton (1946) points out that older marriages emphasize friendship, practical considerations, and companionship. Lawton indicates such advantages as: fewer in-law problems, fewer parental ties to be broken; fewer external tensions in life, fewer uncertainties about one's life work and other values, a greater understanding of sex, and more leisure time.

McKain (1969) interviewed 100 older couples in Connecticut who had remarried and he found that nearly 66 percent of the women and almost 75 percent of the men mentioned the desire for companionship as a major reason for remarriage, also included were: love, need for a place to live and the advantage of a combined income.

McKain also found that a happy previous marriage is one of the best indicators that the next marriage will be successful. He also stated that another indicator for a successful marriage is the reason for getting married. The happiest couples were those who had fallen in love or were seeking companionship; those who married to find a place to live or those who were seeking financial security had marital problems more frequently. He also indicated that most of the older couples found happiness, personal adjustment and companionship.

McKain suggested some of the reasons why it is difficult for older persons to remarry as the desire to be independent, personality problems, and lack of opportunity to meet eligible mates.

Problems associated with entering marriage during the later years were reported by Lawton (1956). These problems include: disapproval of children, rigid attitudes, more illness and physical helplessness, possible financial dependency, and difficulties in giving up one's home

and belongings in the event of moving.

Albrecht (1954) suggests that remarriage takes courage for older people since younger persons often indicate a negative, ridiculing attitude toward persons who enter marriage during the later years.

Gildea (1970), in a study of older person's attitudes toward older people entering marriage after age 65, found that Perception of Older Marriages (POM) scores were significantly related to the following:

(a) whether own marriage had improved or worsened over time, with those respondents who perceived their own marriage as having improved showing a more favorable attitude toward matrimony in the later years than those who perceived their own marriage as having worsened over time, remaining the same, or those who were undecided, and (b) remarriage status, with those subjects who had remarried due to the death of their previous mate receiving the highest POM scores.

College Students' Attitudes Toward Older People

Tuckman and Lorge (1954) noted that stereotyped and erroneous ideas concerning older people are subscribed to by a wide segment of the population, particularly college students and high school students. Their respondents indicate a view of old age as a period characterized by economic insecurity, failing physical and mental powers, poor health and resistance to change. The study further indicated that older people are living in a culture which is not conducive to feelings of usefulness, security, adequacy, or adjustment. These results were reaffirmed in subsequent studies.

Drake (1957) states that studies generally indicate that women college students subscribe to stereotyped statements more often than do

male college students. Another interesting finding was that "those college students who were living with old people but do not have intimate or frequent contact with them" subscribe more frequently to stereotyped statements (p. 270).

Lane (1964) investigated the attitudes of 400 high school and college subjects with a modified Tuckman and Lorge Old People Questionnaire and found that their attitudes were mostly neutral. According to the author, this finding indicated that "youth may be existing in a climate of tolerance rather than in one of acceptance and responsiveness" (p. 230). Lane also suggested that education should stress the following: (a) more contact with aged, (b) a study of the later stages of the family life cycle, (c) readings in gerontology and (d) analyses of attitudes of students toward older persons.

Hickey and Kalish (1968) utilizing a sample of 78 third graders, 83 junior high school students, 102 high school students and 72 college undergraduates, obtained data from a questionnaire which indicated that "the older the adult, the less pleasant image of him held by the child" (p. 218). In view of this finding, the investigators raise the point that such negative attitudes which are developing early in life, will probably affect the approach that younger generations take in caring for the problems of the elderly and will affect their own functioning when they become older.

Golde and Kogan (1959) designed a sentence completion test to assess attitudes toward older persons. The instrument was administered to college students and the data indicated that: (a) older persons are perceived to be no longer interested in achievement or success, (b) older persons' happiness is perceived to be tied with the past,

(c) older persons are perceived to be concerned with comfort and companionship, (d) older persons' major fears were perceived to be loneliness and dependence, and (e) the college students were found not to be interested in establishing a personal involvement with older people.

Kogan and Shelton (1962) suggested that younger persons attempt to avoid personal contact with older persons because younger people feel that older people resent them. The authors also indicate that inaccurate perceptions between generations are often held by both older and younger persons.

Stinnett and Montgomery (1968) found significant differences in southern college students' attitudes toward older persons who enter marriage during the later years, as measured by the Perception of Older Marriages (POM) Scale, according to sex, religion, amount of previous contact with older people, residence for major part of life, education and occupation of the head of the students' family of orientation. The most favorable attitudes were shown by: females; Protestants; respondents who lived in a rural area for the major part of their lives; subjects whose fathers' occupation was that of farmer, respondents who reported their family head as having an education at the graduate level; and those who reported considerable contact with older persons.

Smith (1970) reports that parents have the greatest influence on attitudes toward marriage. Females have a more favorable score on the Perception of Older Marriage Scale than males. Respondents who reported being youngest children received a significantly more favorable mean score on the Perception of Older Marriages Scale than did those reporting other sibling positions. Protestant students also received a significantly higher score than other religious groups.

In contrast to Stinnett and Montgomery (1968), Smith did not find a significant difference in Perception of Older Marriages Scale scores according to the place of resident for the major part of their lives or the amount of contact with older persons.

Campbell (1970) found that significantly more favorable attitudes toward marriage relationships during the later years, as measured with the AMROP Scale were reported by college students who: (a) had moderate and considerable contact with older persons, (b) felt that the middle and later years were the happiest, (c) perceived the later years to be the happiest period of an individual's married life, and (d) felt that the marriage relationship had become better over time.

Summary

1. Research indicates that many older people believe that their married life during the later years is as satisfactory or more satisfactory than in earlier years.
2. Marriages perceived as satisfactory in the later years have usually been satisfactory from the beginning.
3. Older husbands and wives perceive that the most important qualities of a good husband or wife are expressive qualities such as love, understanding, and companionship.
4. Love has been found to be the area of greatest marital need satisfaction among older husbands and wives. Communication, for the older wife, and respect for the older husband have been found to be the needs which are least satisfied in the marriage relationship.

5. Marriages entered into by older persons during the later years have their own unique advantages and problems.
6. Overall, the literature indicates that college students see older persons as living in a social climate which is not conducive to feelings of usefulness, adequacy and security.
7. Many people, youth as well as older people, hold stereotyped and erroneous ideas concerning older persons.
8. Women subscribe to stereotyped ideas concerning older persons more often than men.
9. Studies have found that certain background factors, such as sex, residence, education, amount of previous contact with older persons, and religious preference may influence an individual's attitudes toward aging and marriage relationships during the later years.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Selection of Subjects

The 408 older husbands and wives who served as subjects for this study were obtained from Senior Citizens Centers' mailing lists throughout Oklahoma. A packet containing a cover letter, which explained the research study and assured anonymity, two identical questionnaires and a stamped, addressed envelope, were sent to 418 married couples. The husbands and wives were requested to complete the questionnaires individually. The data were obtained during the months of February and March, 1969.

The 454 college students who comprised this sample were enrolled in the undergraduate marriage course, Family Relations and Child Development 3142 during the Spring semester, 1969. The undergraduate students enrolled in the marriage course represented the various colleges of the University.

Description of the Instrument

The questionnaires which were designed to investigate the attitudes of both college students and older husbands and wives concerning marriage relationships during the later years, included a general information section, three major scales and other specific items concerning

marriage success and older marriages. The three scales utilized were: (1) Perceptions of Older Marriage (POM) Scale, (2) Attitudes Toward Marital Relationships of Older Persons (AMROP) Scale, and (3) Age Conservatism Scale.

General Information Section

The general information section of the questionnaires consisted of questions designed to obtain certain background information from the respondents such as sex, age, race, religious preference, residence, education and occupation. Also included in the first section of the questionnaire were items concerned with the respondent's perception of various aspects of his marriage relationship.

Perception of Older Marriages Scale

The Perception of Older Marriages Scale (POM) which was developed by Stinnett and Montgomery (1968) was used to measure attitudes toward marriages entered into at age 65 or over. The POM Scale, a ~~Likert-type~~ scale, consists of six items which are characterized by five degrees of responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A maximum of thirteen points is given to the most favorable attitude. All six items in the POM Scale were found by Stinnett and Montgomery (1968), and Smith (1970), utilizing samples of college students, and Gildea (1970), utilizing a sample of older husbands and wives, to be significantly discriminating between the upper and lower quartile groups at the .001 level of significance.

Age Conservatism Scale

Kutner's Age Conservatism Index, which was utilized in research reported in Five Hundred Over Sixty (1956), was used to measure an individual's expectations concerning appropriate behavior for older persons. The index consists of four conservative statements dealing with older persons' friendships, acceptance of new ways, mode of dress and interest in the opposite sex. Each of the items is characterized by responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. "Youth-oriented" individuals receive a liberal rating or a low age conservatism; and "age-oriented" individuals receive a conservative rating or a high age conservatism. The age conservatism Index's coefficient of reproducibility is reported by Kutner as 91.5 percent.

Attitudes Toward Marital Relationships of Older Persons Scale

The Attitudes Toward Marital Relationships of Older Persons (AMROP) Scale which was developed by Stinnett and Montgomery (1968) was used to measure the respondent's perception of the marriage relationships during the later years as to whether the relationships are more or less satisfying in comparison to the earlier years of marriage. The AMROP scale, a Likert-type scale, consists of twelve alternating negative and positive statements concerning various aspects of the older marital relationship such as companionship, communication, interest and understanding, and love and affection. The twelve items are characterized by five degrees of response ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The most favorable response received the highest

score and the least favorable response, the lowest score. The items in the AMROP scale were all found to be significantly discriminating at the .01 or the .001 level in research by Campbell (1970) utilizing a sample of college students, and by Quirk (1970), utilizing a sample of older husbands and wives. Also the research by both Campbell and Quirk indicate that the AMROP Scale has a split half reliability coefficient of .99.

Analysis of the Data

An analysis of variance test was used to determine if a significant difference existed between husbands and wives and college students concerning each of the following: (a) Perception of Older Marriages Scale scores, (b) Age Conservatism Scores and (c) Attitudes Toward Marriage Relationships of Older Persons (AMROP) Scale scores.

The chi-square test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between older peoples' and college students' perceptions concerning each of the following: (a) happiest period of married life, (b) major problems of older couples, (c) most troublesome aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years, (d) most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years, (e) most important characteristic of a successful marriage, (f) most important factor in achieving marital success, (g) primary reason why older people enter into marriage after age 65, (h) major problems of older persons who enter into marriage after age 65.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of Subjects

Table I presents a detailed description of the 408 older subjects who participated in this study. The sample was obtained from the mailing lists of Senior Citizen Centers throughout Oklahoma during the Spring of 1969.

The age of the subjects ranged from 60 to 89 years, with the greatest proportion falling in the age category 65-69 (36.27%). The sample included 50.50 percent males and 49.50 percent females. The respondents were predominantly white. The greatest proportion of respondents reported their residence for the major part of their life (50.25%) to be a small town under 25,000, while the smallest proportion of subjects (2.99%) reported living in a city of 50,000 to 100,000 for the major part of their life. The greatest proportion of the respondents (51.99%) reported their residence at the present time was in small towns under 25,000. The subjects represented the educational levels of less than high school (38.46%) and some high school (20.60%). Most of the subjects' occupations fell in the clerical-sales category (39.95%).

A detailed description of the 454 college students who participated in this study is presented in Table II. The sample of college students consisted of 202 males and 252 females who were enrolled in

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Sex	Male	204	50.50
	Female	200	49.50
Age	60-64	86	21.66
	65-69	144	36.27
	70-74	94	23.68
	75-79	46	11.59
	80-84	22	5.54
	85-89	5	1.26
Race	White	394	96.81
	Indian	9	2.21
Residence for Major Part of Life	On farm or in country	120	29.85
	Small town under 25,000	202	50.25
	City of 25,000 to 50,000	48	11.94
	City of 50,000 to 100,000	12	2.99
	City over 100,000	20	4.98
Present Residence	On farm or in country	67	16.67
	Small town under 25,000	209	51.99
	City of 25,000 to 50,000	105	26.12
	City of 50,000 to 100,000	5	1.24
	City over 100,000	16	3.98
Education Completed	Less than high school	155	38.46
	Some high school	83	20.60
	High school graduate	44	10.92
	Some college	64	15.88
	College graduate	27	6.70
	Post graduate study	30	7.44
Occupation for Major Part of Life	Professional -- Managerial	106	26.63
	Clerical -- Sales	159	39.95
	Skilled, Semiskilled, and Unskilled	82	20.60
	Farm	51	12.81

TABLE II
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Sex	Male	202	44.5
	Female	252	55.5
Age	17-18	32	7.0
	19-20	263	58.0
	21-22	144	32.0
	23-24	10	2.0
	25-over	5	1.0
Religious Preference	Catholic	31	7.0
	Protestant	389	85.8
	Jewish	1	.2
	Mormon	1	.2
	None	11	2.4
	Other	20	4.4
Residence for Major Part of Life	On farm or in country	81	17.9
	Small town under 25,000	106	23.4
	City of 25,000-50,000	99	21.8
	City of 50,000-100,000	33	7.3
	City of over 100,000	134	29.6
Presence of Brothers or Sisters	Yes	419	92.3
	No	35	7.7
Sibling Position	Oldest Child	182	43.2
	Intermediate Child	114	27.1
	Youngest Child	125	29.7
Parent's Marital Status	Living together	390	86.1
	Separated or divorced (no remarriage)	16	3.5
	One parent deceased (with no remarriage)	20	4.4
	Divorced (with remarriage)	16	3.5
	One of parents deceased (with remarriage)	11	2.4
Previous Family Relations Course	Yes	147	32.4
	No	307	67.6
Socio-Economic Status	Upper	20	4.4
	Upper-middle	183	40.3
	Lower-middle	171	37.7
	Upper-lower	78	17.2
	Lower-lower	2	.4
Source of Influence on Attitudes Toward Marriage	Parents	326	72.1
	Peers	80	17.7
	School	28	6.2
	Church	18	4.0
Amount of Contact With Older Couples	Considerable	55	12.1
	Moderate	268	59.0
	Very little	131	28.9

the undergraduate marriage course, Family Relations and Child Development 3142 during the Spring semester, 1969.

The age of the subjects ranged primarily from 18 to 24, with the greatest proportion falling in the age category 19-20 (58%) and the smallest proportion (1.0%) falling in the 25 and over group. Most of the respondents were white (98%). The subjects were predominantly Protestant (85.8%) while the smallest proportion were either Mormon (.2%) or Jewish (.2%). Residence for the major part of life was most often reported to be a city of over 100,000 (28.6%), while the smallest proportion (7.3%) reported a city of 50,000 to 100,000. Forty-three percent of the subjects reported that they were the oldest child in the family while only seven percent reported being an only child. Most of the respondents (86.1%) indicated that their parents were living together at the time of the study. Most of the subjects fell in the middle class category (78%) as determined by the McGuire-White Index of Social Status (1955). The greatest proportion of the subjects (72.1%) indicated that parents were the greatest source of influence on their attitudes toward marriage. Most of the respondents (59%) indicated having had moderate contact with older persons.

Examination of Hypotheses and

Discussion of Results

Hypothesis I(a). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students in Attitudes Toward Marital Relationships of Older Persons Scale (AMROP) scores.

This hypothesis was examined by the use of a one-way classification analysis of variance. As Table III indicates, an F score of 8.52 was

obtained, showing that a significant difference existed in the AMROP scores of older persons and college students at the .01 level. The college students received a higher mean score than the older husbands and wives which indicated that college students had a more positive attitude toward marriage relationships during the later years than did older husbands and wives.

TABLE III

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCE IN MEAN AMROP SCORES OF
OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Respondents</u>				
Older Husbands and Wives	181	39.25	8.52	.01
College Students	454	41.56		

This finding is somewhat surprising and in contrast to other research indicating that youth have a generally negative attitude toward the later years of life. Perhaps this finding reflects idealism of youth concerning marriage as well as their desire that their own marriage will improve as the years pass. The present results suggest that these college students do not subscribe to the erroneous stereotypes that the young adult years are necessarily the happiest period of

marriage and the later years are naturally characterized by a decrease in marital satisfaction.

Also, the college respondents may believe that most older marriages are successful or they would have ended in divorce or separation before the later years were reached.

Hypothesis I(b). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students in Perception of Older Marriages Scale (POM) scores.

As Table IV shows when an analysis of variance was applied to the data, an F score of 54.63 was obtained indicating a significant difference existed in the POM scores of older persons and college students at the .001 level. The college students received a significantly higher mean score than did the older husbands and wives, indicating that college students had a more favorable attitude toward older persons entering marriage during the later years.

TABLE IV

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCE IN MEAN POM SCORES OF
OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Respondents</u>				
Older Husbands and Wives	181	19.94	54.63	.001
College Students	454	22.80		

This finding appears to be related to the previous finding reported in Hypothesis I(a) that college students indicated a significantly more favorable attitude toward marital relationships during the later years; i.e., perceiving the marriage relationship during the later years as increasing in satisfaction and fulfillment to a significantly greater extent than did the older husbands and wives. As in the previous finding, this finding may be due to a greater idealism on the part of college students concerning marriage. Since the vast majority of marriages which are contracted during the later years involve remarriage, this finding perhaps reflects a more liberalized, tolerant attitude toward remarriage on the part of college students as compared with older persons.

Hypothesis I(c). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students in Age Conservatism Scale scores.

Again, using the one-way classification analysis of variance, it was found that there was a significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students in Age Conservatism scores. As indicated in Table V, an F score of 29.39 was obtained which is significant at the .001 level. The college students received the highest mean score which indicated that the college students' attitudes were not as rigid concerning behavior thought to be appropriate for older persons as were the attitudes of the older husbands and wives.

This finding appears to support the previous finding reported in Hypothesis I(b) that college students indicated a significantly more favorable attitude toward older persons entering marriage during the later years. Both findings suggest that college students are less

likely than older persons to adhere to rigid stereotypes concerning appropriate behavior for older persons. Perhaps these findings suggest that college students are subscribing less to erroneous and stereotyped ideas about older people than has been indicated in the past as reported by Tuckman and Lorge (1954) and Drake (1957).

TABLE V

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCE IN MEAN AGE CONSERVATISM SCALE SCORES
OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Respondents</u>				
Older Husbands and Wives	181	11.97	29.39	.001
College Students	454	13.82		

Hypothesis II(a). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of whether the marriage relationships of older persons improve or worsen over time.

A significant difference was found to exist at the .001 level in perceptions of whether older persons' marriages improve or worsen over time. As Table VI shows, the obtained chi-square value was 104.22.

The greatest difference was that more than ten times as many college students (21.8%) as older persons (2.0%) were undecided as to

whether older persons' marriages improve or worsen over time. A greater proportion of older husbands and wives (41.0%) than college students (19.2%) perceived marriage relationships of older persons to remain the same. Almost twice as many college students as older husbands and wives perceived the marriage of older persons as becoming worse over time. However, it should be noted, that more than half of both older husbands and wives (53.3%) and college students (52.2%) perceived marriage relationships of older persons as improving over time.

TABLE VI

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OLDER HUSBANDS
AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHETHER THE
MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIPS OF OLDER PERSONS
IMPROVE OR WORSEN OVER TIME

Perceptions of Marital Improvement	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students		χ^2	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Better	212	53.3	237	52.2	104.22	.001
Worse	15	3.8	31	6.8		
Remained the Same	163	41.0	87	19.2		
Undecided	8	2.0	99	21.8		

The finding that more than ten times as many college students as older persons were undecided about whether the marriage relationship of older persons improves or worsens over time may reflect a feeling on

the part of college students of not being certain since they, themselves have not experienced the later years of life. Also, the contacts of the college students with older couples may have been very limited.

Hypothesis II(b). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time.

There was a significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time. As Table VII indicates, a chi-square value of 32.93 was obtained, which was significant at the .001 level.

TABLE VII

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHETHER MOST MARRIAGES IMPROVE OR WORSEN OVER TIME

Perceptions of Marital Improvement	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students		χ^2	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Better	183	46.9	271	60.2	32.93	.001
Worse	26	6.7	39	8.7		
Remained the Same	112	28.7	59	13.1		
Undecided	69	17.7	81	18.0		

The most striking difference was that more than twice as many older husbands and wives (28.7%) as compared to college students (13.1%) perceived that most marriages remained the same over time. This result is consistent with the previous finding reported in Hypothesis II(a) that more than twice as many older husbands and wives as college students perceived the marriage relationships of older persons as remaining the same over time. Another interesting difference which was observed was that a greater proportion of college students (60.2%) than older husbands and wives (46.9%) perceived that most marriages become better over time. This finding suggests a greater idealism and optimism on the part of college students as compared with older persons concerning the perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time. This finding may explain in part the finding reported in Hypothesis I(a).

It is interesting to note that the greatest proportion of both husbands and wives and college students perceived that most marriages become better over time.

Hypothesis II(c). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of the happiest period of life.

As Table VIII indicates, a chi-square value of 407.45 was obtained which is significant at the .001 level concerning differences in the older persons and college students' perceptions of the happiest period of life.

More than fifty times as many older husbands and wives (50.3%) as college students (.9%) perceived the later years to be the happiest

period of life. More than three times as many older persons (24.2%) as compared with college students (8.0%) perceived the middle years to be the happiest period of life. Also, 72.8 percent of the college students as compared to 15.0 percent of the older persons perceived the young adult years to be the happiest period.

TABLE VIII

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OLDER HUSBANDS
AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
OF THE HAPPIEST PERIOD OF LIFE

Perceptions of Happiest Period	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students		X ²	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Later Years	191	50.3	4	.9	407.45	.001
Middle Years	92	24.2	36	8.0		
Young Adult	57	15.0	329	72.8		
Teenage	22	5.8	43	9.5		
Childhood	18	4.7	40	8.8		

The present findings indicate that the majority of both college students and older persons believe that the present period of their lives is the happiest period of life. Perhaps this is an indication of positive mental health and morale when an individual feels that his present period of life is the happiest period of life. The findings

also indicate a pattern among both groups of perceiving a progressive increase in happiness with each succeeding age period up to the particular age period in which the respondent currently finds himself. It is perhaps logical that there was not a large proportion of college students who selected the middle and later years as the happiest periods of life as they have not yet experienced these periods of life. The college students may also perceive the present period of life as the happiest because of the young adult years as being the most exciting and fulfilling years of life.

Hypothesis II(d). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of the happiest period of married life.

There was a significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of the happiest period of married life. As Table IX indicates, a chi-square value of 296.18 was obtained, which was significant at the .001 level.

The most prominent difference was that more than eighteen times as many older husbands and wives (54.9%) as compared to college students (3.1%) perceived the later years to be the happiest period of married life. A much greater proportion of college students (58.3%) than older husbands and wives (18.0%) perceived the young adult years to be the happiest period of married life.

Older husbands and wives may feel that the later years is the happiest period of married life because the problems and responsibilities that confronted their marriage in the early and middle years have been successfully met. This finding appears related to the reports of Fried

and Stern (1948) and Goldfarb (1968) that marriages which were satisfactory from the beginning tend to remain satisfactory or improve during the later years. This finding is also related to Lipman's (1961) study which indicated that marital satisfaction increases after retirement.

TABLE IX

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OLDER HUSBANDS
AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
OF THE HAPPIEST PERIOD OF MARRIED LIFE

Perceptions of Happiest Period	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students		χ^2	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Later Years	207	54.9	14	3.1		
Middle Years	102	27.1	173	38.6	296.18	.001
Young Adult	68	18.0	261	58.3		

The present results coincide with the previous finding reported in Hypothesis II(c) that both groups perceived the present period of their lives as being the happiest period of life. Perhaps the college students perceive the young adult years as the happiest period of marriage because it is the most highly romanticized interval in the marriage cycle.

Hypothesis II(e). There are no differences between the responses of older husbands and wives and college students concerning the perceptions of major problems of older couples.

As Table X indicates, marked differences were observed between older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of major problems of older couples.

TABLE X
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES
AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING PERCEPTIONS OF
MAJOR PROBLEMS OF OLDER COUPLES

Major Problems	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students	
	No.	%	No.	%
Housing	122	27.4	18	1.5
Money	89	20.0	170	14.3
Use of Leisure Time	49	11.0	234	19.7
Poor Health	95	21.3	310	26.0
Not Feeling Useful	44	9.9	309	26.0
Dependent on Children	4	.9	112	9.4
In-Laws	5	1.1	3	.3
Finding a Job	13	2.9	16	1.3
Marriage Relationship	25	5.6	17	1.4

The greatest difference was that more than eighteen times as many older persons (27.4%) as college students (1.5%) perceived housing to be a major problem for older couples. This finding could reflect the fact that many older couples find it difficult to maintain the household in which they have lived for the last several years. Many older couples may find it necessary to move to a smaller residence because it requires less physical exertion, or many may find it necessary to move in with relatives due to financial reasons. In any event the required change can pose a problem and the adjustments can be difficult. The mass media have not emphasized this problem of older persons as much as other problems which may be largely responsible for such a small proportion of college students perceiving housing as a major problem. The home is very important to older persons, perhaps much more than college students realize. As McKain (1969, p. 96) has stated:

The home is so important in the lives of older people that it can affect the success of their marriage. It is related to their sense of security, it serves as a constant reminder of past associations connected with the earlier marriage, and it tends to determine who is head of the household. At the same time it provides a bond between the marriage partners and gives them status in the community.

A greater proportion of college students (9.4%) as compared to older persons (.9%) viewed being dependent on children as a major problem. Perhaps this finding is due to college students hearing much about the problem of older couples becoming dependent upon their children as mass media have emphasized this problem a great deal.

More than three times as many college students (26.0%) than older husbands and wives (9.9%) perceived not feeling useful as a major problem for older couples. This finding seems to reflect a tendency of the college students to subscribe to the stereotyped idea of the older

person as neither feeling useful nor being useful. As Hickey and Kalish (1968) state, older persons are viewed as living in a culture which does not stimulate feelings of usefulness, adequacy and security on the part of the older person. This raises the questions of what changes are needed in culture to alter the image of the older person as not being useful, and what changes are needed to allow the older person to feel more useful and to be more useful.

Another interesting difference which was observed was that a greater proportion of older persons' responses (5.6%) than college students' responses (1.4%) perceived marriage to be a major problem. Perhaps this difference again reflects a greater degree of idealism on the part of college students concerning marriage.

Hypothesis II(f). There are no differences between the responses of older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of the most troublesome aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.

As Table XI shows, marked differences were found to exist in the responses of older persons and college students concerning the perceptions of the most troublesome aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.

A much greater proportion of older husbands and wives (30.4%) than college students (4.5%) perceived nothing to be troublesome in the marriage relationship of the later years. It is logical that a much higher percentage of the older husbands and wives than college students perceived nothing to be troublesome in the marriage relationship during

TABLE XI

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES
AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING PERCEPTIONS OF THE
MOST TROUBLESOME ASPECT OF THE MARRIAGE
RELATIONSHIP IN THE LATER YEARS

Troublesome Aspect	<u>Older Husbands & Wives</u>		<u>College Students</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%
Economic Insecurity	37	14.4	61	24.7
Physical Needs Not Being Met	17	6.6	26	10.5
Lack of Companionship	31	12.1	31	12.6
Lack of Mutual Interest	33	12.8	31	12.6
Unsatisfactory Affectional Relationships	14	5.4	27	10.9
Disagreements	19	7.4	23	9.3
Not Expressing Feelings to Each Other	25	9.7	28	11.3
Nothing Is Troublesome	78	30.4	11	4.5
Other	9	1.2	9	3.6

the later years as a previous finding indicated that a much higher proportion of older husbands and wives perceived the later years to be the happiest period of marriage.

Over 10.9 percent of the college students as compared to 5.4 percent of the older husbands and wives viewed unsatisfactory affectional relationships to be the most troublesome aspect of the marriage relationship. Perhaps this difference reflects a greater tendency among college students to accept the stereotyped view of the later years of marriage as a period when sexual relations and expressions of affection become almost non-existent.

Hypothesis II(g). There are no differences between the responses of older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.

Table XII indicates marked differences existed in the responses of older persons and college students concerning perceptions of the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.

A greater proportion of older husbands and wives' responses (7.6%) than college students' responses (2.5%) perceived having physical needs cared for to be the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years. Older persons are faced with more physical limitations due to health problems and they, therefore, place more importance upon caring for each other's physical needs.

Over twice as many older husbands and wives (7.0%) as compared to college students (3.2%) perceived ones' standing in the community to

TABLE XII

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF
 OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING
 PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOST REWARDING ASPECT OF THE
 MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP IN THE LATER YEARS

Rewarding Aspect	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students		χ^2	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Economic Security	174	16.2	133	10.0		
Having Physical Needs Cared for	82	7.6	33	2.5		
Standing in the Community	75	7.0	42	3.2		
Being Able to Effectively Express True Feelings to Each Other	119	11.1	102	7.7		
Companionship	230	21.4	376	28.3	126.67	.001
Being Needed by Your Mate	160	14.9	332	25.0		
Affectionate Relationships	94	8.8	87	6.5		
Sharing of Mutual Interest	139	12.6	215	16.2		
Other	5	.5	10	.8		

be the most rewarding aspect of the older marriage relationships. Another interesting difference which was observed was that almost twice as many college students (25.0%) as compared to older husbands and wives (14.9%) perceived being needed by one's mate as the most rewarding aspects of the marriage relationship of older persons.

It is interesting to note that the greatest proportion of both older husbands and wives (21.4%) and college students (28.3%) perceived companionship to be the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years.

Hypothesis II(h). There are no differences between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of the most important characteristics of a successful marriage.

As Table XIII indicates, marked differences were found to exist in college students and older persons' perceptions of the most important characteristic of a successful marriage. The greatest difference was that more than five times as many college students (40.8%) than older persons (7.8%) perceived sexual satisfaction as the most important characteristic of a successful marriage. It is suggested that this finding is largely due to a stronger sexual drive among college students as well as to the great emphasis placed upon sex in the youth culture.

A greater proportion of older husbands and wives (13.3%) as compared to college students (3.8%) viewed effectively expressing true feelings to each other as the most important characteristic of a successful marriage. That more older persons than college students perceived effectively expressing true feelings to each other to be the

most important characteristic of a successful marriage is somewhat surprising since the importance of communication in marriage has been stressed more among the younger generation than among any previous generation.

TABLE XIII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES
AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOST
IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

Important Characteristics	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students	
	No.	%	No.	%
Respect	127	38.3	133	14.9
Personality Growth	14	4.2	33	3.7
Emotional Closeness	18	5.4	40	4.5
Sexual Satisfaction	26	7.8	365	40.8
Sharing the Same Interest	88	26.5	252	28.2
Effectively Expressing True Feelings to Each Other	44	13.3	34	3.8
Having Physical Needs Met	15	4.5	38	4.2

More than twice as many older husbands and wives (38.3%) than college students (14.9%) perceived respect as the most important characteristic of a successful marriage. This finding raises the question of whether respect is being stressed less now as an important characteristic of marriage than it was in previous generations. This finding is also interesting in that respect is mentioned very little in the literature as being an important characteristic of a successful marriage.

Hypothesis II(i). There is no significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of the most important factor in achieving marital success.

There was a significant difference between older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of the most important factor in achieving marital success. As Table XIV indicates, a chi-square value of 75.19 was obtained, which is significant at the .001 level.

The most striking difference was that more than five times as many ~~older husbands and wives~~ (17.5%) as compared to college students (3.4%) perceived having common interests to be the most important factor in achieving marital success. Perhaps this finding is related to McKain's report (1969) that a high degree of common interests is positively related to happiness in retirement marriages. Perhaps the older husbands and wives are more aware of the importance of having common interests due to their greater experience.

Another interesting difference which was observed was that more than twice as many college students (55.2%) as compared to older

husbands and wives (22.0%) perceived compatibility of personalities to be the most important factor in achieving marital success. This difference may be largely due to the younger generation receiving more emphasis upon the importance of personality compatibility in achievement of marital success from the mass media than was the case with the older generation.

TABLE XIV

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF
OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING
PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR
IN ACHIEVING MARITAL SUCCESS

Important Factors	Older Husbands & Wives		College Students		χ^2	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Being in Love	89	48.6	95	26.9		
Determination	21	11.9	51	14.4		
Having Common Interest	31	17.5	12	3.4	75.19	.001
Compatibility of Personalities	39	22.0	195	55.2		

A greater proportion of older husbands and wives (48.6%) than college students (26.9%) perceived being in love as the most important factor in achieving marital success. This difference is surprising as it would normally be expected that college students would be more

likely to select being in love as the most important factor in achieving marital success due to their supposedly greater degree of idealism and romanticism concerning marriage.

Hypothesis II(j). There are no differences between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of the primary reason why older persons enter into marriage after age 65.

As Table XV indicates, marked differences were observed between older persons and college students concerning perceptions of the primary reason why older persons enter into marriage after age 65.

A large proportion of older persons (1.7%) rather than college students (.1%) perceived sexual satisfaction to be the primary reason why older persons enter into marriage after age 65. This difference may be due to a tendency for the college students to subscribe to the stereotype of the older person as being almost completely sexually inactive and disinterested.

A greater proportion of college students (28.9%) than older husbands and wives (17.7%) perceived feeling needed by someone as a primary reason why older persons enter into marriage after age 65. This finding coincides with the finding reported in Hypothesis II(e) that a much greater proportion of college students than older persons perceived not feeling useful as a major problem of older couples.

It is interesting to note that the greatest proportion of both older husbands and wives (47.4%) and college students (46.8%) viewed companionship to be the primary reason why older persons enter marriage after age 65. This finding coincides with the previous finding

reported in Hypothesis II(g) that the greatest proportion of both older persons and college students perceived companionship to be the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship during the later years.

TABLE XV
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND
WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING PERCEPTIONS
OF THE PRIMARY REASON WHY OLDER PERSONS
ENTER INTO MARRIAGE AFTER AGE 65

Reasons for Entering Marriage After 65	<u>Older Husbands & Wives</u>		<u>College Students</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%
To Have Someone to Look After Physical Health Needs	29	9.9	56	6.4
Economic Security	25	8.5	49	5.6
Sexual Satisfaction	5	1.7	1	.1
To Feel Needed by Someone	52	17.7	252	28.9
Companionship	139	47.4	408	46.8
To Give and Receive Affection	43	14.7	106	12.2

This finding is also related to McKain's observation (1969) that couples who entered a second marriage after age 65 were happiest if they had married because they were in love or were seeking

companionship. This may also be related to Loether's (1967) theory that remarriage is a solution to loneliness in the later years.

Hypothesis II(k). There are no differences between older husbands and wives and college students' perceptions of the major problems of older persons entering into marriage after age 65.

There was a marked difference between older husbands and wives and college students concerning perceptions of the major problems of older persons entering into marriage after age 65, as Table XVI indicates.

The most striking difference was that more than twice as many college students (7.4%) as compared to older husbands and wives (2.8%) perceived housing to be the major problem of older persons entering into marriage after age 65. This finding is in contrast to the previous finding reported in Hypothesis II(e) that more than eighteen times as many older persons as college students viewed housing to be a major problem for older couples. Perhaps the college students who viewed housing to be the major problem facing older persons entering marriage during the later years felt that many such older persons would, prior to marriage, be living with relatives or children and that their marriage would create a physical and financial strain of obtaining and maintaining a separate household.

It is interesting to note that the greatest proportion of both older husbands and wives and college students perceive emotional adjustment to each other and children by a previous marriage to be the major problems for couples entering marriage after age 65. It is not surprising that emotional adjustment would be viewed as a major problem for those entering marriage after age 65 since adjusting emotionally to

one another is necessary to any successful marriage regardless of when it is entered.

TABLE XVI
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND
WIVES AND COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING PERCEPTIONS
OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF OLDER PERSONS
ENTERING INTO MARRIAGE AFTER AGE 65

Major Problems	<u>Older Husbands & Wives</u>		<u>College Students</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%
In-Laws	37	12.9	104	11.9
Money	38	13.2	80	9.1
Sexual Adjustment	10	3.5	51	5.8
Children by Previous Marriage	92	32.1	284	32.4
Housing	8	2.8	65	7.4
Emotional Adjustment to Each Other	102	35.5	292	33.3

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The overall purpose of this study was to compare the attitudes of college students with those of older husbands and wives concerning marriage relationships during the later years.

The sample was composed of 408 older husbands and wives who were on the mailing lists of the Senior Citizen Centers throughout Oklahoma. The data were obtained during the months of February and March, 1969. The subjects were over 65 years of age, retired and predominantly white. Most of the older husbands and wives were from small towns under 25,000. The largest proportion indicated clerical-sales as the occupation for the major part of their lives.

The 454 Oklahoma State University students selected for this study were enrolled in the undergraduate marriage course, Family Relations and Child Development 3142 during the Spring semester, 1969. The subjects were single, white, primarily Protestant and between the ages of 18 and 24.

The instrument used included the following: (a) a general information section, (b) Perception of Older Marriages Scale (POM) designed to measure attitudes toward marriages entered into at age 65 or over, (c) Kutner's Age Conservatism Scale was utilized to measure an individual's expectations concerning appropriate behavior for older persons, (d) Attitudes Toward Marital Relationships of Older Persons

Scale (AMROP) which was developed to measure attitudes toward marital relationships during the later years concerning whether the relationship is perceived as more or less satisfying in comparison to the earlier years of marriage, (e) a section regarding the subjects perceptions concerning why older people marry and the major problems involved in such marriages.

An analysis of variance test was used to determine if a significant difference existed between older husbands and wives and college students concerning each of the following: (a) POM scores, (b) Age Conservatism Scale scores, and (c) AMROP scores.

The chi-square test was used to determine if there was a significant difference in the perceptions of older persons and college students concerning the following: (a) whether the marriage relationships of older persons improve or worsen over time, (b) whether most marriage relationships improve or worsen over time, (c) happiest period of life, (d) happiest period of married life, and (e) most important factor in achieving marital success.

The results of the study were as follows:

1. The college students received significantly more favorable AMROP scores than did the older husbands and wives,
2. A significantly more favorable POM score was received by the college students than by the older husbands and wives,
3. The college students received a significantly more liberal (less rigid and stereotyped attitude concerning what constitutes appropriate behavior for older persons) Age

Conservatism scale score than did the older husbands and wives.

4. A significant difference concerning the perceptions of whether the marriage relationships of older persons improved or worsened over time. The greatest difference was that more than ten times as many college students (21.8%) as older persons (2.0%) were undecided as to whether older persons' marriages improve or worsen over time. However, it should be noted that the majority of both older husbands and wives and college students perceived older marriages as improving over time.
5. A significant difference existed at the .001 level concerning the perceptions of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time. More than twice as many older husbands and wives (28.7%) as compared to college students (13.1%) perceived that most marriages remain the same over time. Although the majority of both older husbands and wives and college students perceive that marriages become better over time.
6. A significant difference existed at the .001 level concerning the perceptions of the happiest period of life. The most striking difference was that more than fifty times as many older husbands and wives (50.3%) than college students (.9%) perceived the later years to be the happiest period of life. However, 72.8 percent of the college students as compared to 15.0 percent of the older persons perceived the young adult years to be the happiest.

7. A significant difference existed at the .001 level concerning the perceptions of the happiest period of married life. The most prominent difference was that more than eighteen times as many older husbands and wives (54.9%) as compared to college students (3.1%) perceived the later years to be the happiest period of married life.
8. A marked difference existed in the responses of older persons and college students concerning the perceptions of major problems of older couples. Housing was perceived to be a major problem by a much greater proportion of older husbands and wives (27.4%) than college students (1.5%). Also, more than three times as many college students (26.0%) than older husbands and wives (9.9%) perceived feeling useful as a major problem for older couples.
9. A marked difference existed in the responses of older persons and college students concerning the perceptions of the most troublesome aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years. The greatest proportion of the older husbands and wives (30.4%) as compared to only 4.5 percent of the college students perceived nothing to be troublesome in the marriage relationship of the later years.
10. A marked difference existed in the responses of older persons and college students concerning the perceptions of the most rewarding aspect of the marriage relationship in the later years. A greater proportion of older

husbands and wives (7.6%) than college students (2.5%) perceived having physical needs cared for, while the majority of both older husbands and wives (21.4%) and college students (28.3%) perceived companionship to be the most rewarding aspect of matrimony during the later years.

11. A marked difference existed in the responses of older persons and college students concerning the perceptions of the most important characteristics of a successful marriage. The greatest difference was that more than five times as many college students (40.8%) than older persons (7.8%) perceived sexual satisfaction as the most important characteristic of a successful marriage, while more than twice as many older husbands and wives (38.3%) than college students (14.9%) perceived respect as the most important factor in achieving marital success.
12. A significant difference existed at the .001 level concerning the perceptions of the most important factor in achieving marital success. The greatest proportion of both husbands and wives (47.4%) and college students (46.8%) viewed companionship to be the primary reason why older persons enter marriage after age 65. The greatest difference was that a greater proportion of older persons (1.7%) than college students (.1%) perceived sexual satisfaction to be the primary reason why older persons enter into marriage after age 65.

13. A marked difference existed concerning the perceptions of the primary reason why older persons enter into marriage after age 65. An interesting difference was observed when more than twice as many college students (7.4%) as compared to older husbands and wives (2.8%) perceived housing to be a major problem for marriages entered into after age 65. It is interesting to note that the greatest proportion of both older husbands and wives and college students perceive emotional adjustment to each other and children by a previous marriage to be the major problems for couples entering marriage after age 65.

Conclusions

Among the major conclusions which seemed to emerge from this research are the following:

1. Concerning attitudes toward marriage during the later years and appropriate behavior for older persons, the college students in this sample did not subscribe to negative stereotyped ideas about older persons as might be expected from past research. The college students even indicated less rigid stereotyped attitudes toward marriage and appropriate behavior in the later years than did the older husbands and wives. However, the college students did indicate a tendency to subscribe to the stereotyped idea of older persons as not feeling useful.
2. The college students indicated a more idealistic and optimistic attitude toward marriage in general and also toward marriage in the later years.

3. Both older husbands and wives and college students tend to perceive the present time of their lives as the happiest period of life and also as the happiest period of marriage.

4. Both older husbands and wives and college students indicated a generally favorable attitude toward marriage relationships during the later years.

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APPENDIXES



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER

Department of Family Relations & Child Development
Frontier 2-6211, Ext. 4084

74074

March 6, 1969

Dear Senior Citizen:

You and your mate have been selected as persons who would be well qualified and willing to cooperate in a research project which is being directed by the Department of Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University. This research project is concerned with the family relationships of the Senior Citizens in Oklahoma. It is hoped that the information gained from this research can help such organizations as church groups and Senior Citizen Centers in better serving the Senior Citizen in Oklahoma. Your cooperation is requested in this study because you and other Senior Citizens have a greater knowledge of the rewards and problems of family life in the later years than does anyone else.

If you would be kind enough to assist us in this research, you (both husband and wife) are each asked to fill out the enclosed questionnaires. The two questionnaires are identical; one is for the husband to fill out and one is for the wife to fill out. A stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience and you are asked to return the questionnaires to us at the earliest possible date. Please return them by no later than March 31.

As you answer the questions please do not consult with each other or compare answers. If, for some reason one of you cannot assist with the research, we would greatly appreciate it if the other would send his or her questionnaire to us separately.

You are asked not to put your name on the questionnaire, and since you will not put your name on the questionnaire, you are encouraged to answer all the questions as honestly as possible.

If you would like a brief summary of the findings of this research study when it is completed, we will be happy to send it to you if you will send us a postal card or a request in a separate envelope giving your name and address. This summary should be available in the latter part of the summer.

Your assistance with this research is greatly appreciated. It is through the participation of individuals such as you that we gain greater knowledge and understanding of family life as it is today.

Sincerely yours,

Nick Stinnett

Nick Stinnett, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Family Relations and Child Development

NS/fd

Enclosures: 2

Your cooperation in this research project is greatly appreciated. Your contribution in a research project of this type helps us to gain greater knowledge and insight into family relationships.

Please check or fill in as appropriate to each question. Since your name is not required, please be as honest in your answers as possible.

The blanks at the extreme left of the page are for purposes of coding (do not fill in).

___ 1-3

___ 4. Sex: ___ 1. male ___ 2. female

___ 5. Age: ___ 1. 60-64 ___ 4. 75-79
 ___ 2. 65-69 ___ 5. 80-84
 ___ 3. 70-74 ___ 6. 85-89
 ___ 7. 90 and over

___ 6. Race: ___ 1. White
 ___ 2. Negro
 ___ 3. Indian
 ___ 4. Other _____

___ 7. Religious preference:
 ___ 1. Catholic ___ 4. Mormon
 ___ 2. Protestant ___ 5. None
 ___ 3. Jewish ___ 6. Other _____

___ 8. For the major part of your life have you lived:
 ___ 1. on farm or in country ___ 4. city of 50,000 to 100,000
 ___ 2. small town under 25,000
 ___ 3. city of 25,000 to 50,000 ___ 5. city over 100,000
 population

___ 9. Do you presently live:
 ___ 1. on farm or in country ___ 4. city of 50,000 to 100,000
 ___ 2. small town under 25,000 ___ 5. city of over 100,000
 ___ 3. city of 25,000 to 50,000
 population

___ 10. Years of education completed:
 ___ 1. less than high school
 ___ 2. some high school
 ___ 3. high school graduate
 ___ 4. some college
 ___ 5. college graduate
 ___ 6. post graduate study

___ 11. What was your occupation for the major part of your life?

- ___22. What is your present living arrangement?
 ___ 1. live in own home
 ___ 2. live in an apartment
 ___ 3. live with children
 ___ 4. live with other relatives
 ___ 5. live with non-relatives
 ___ 6. live in trailer
 ___ 7. other _____
- ___23. Do you own your home?
 ___ 1. yes ___ 2. no
- ___24. Generally, how often do you visit or receive a visit from one of your children?
 ___ 1. once a year ___ 4. 8-10 times a year
 ___ 2. 2-4 times a year ___ 5. over 10 times a year
 ___ 3. 5-7 times a year ___ 6. do not have children
- ___25. How many miles is it from your home to your child who lives closest to you?
 ___ 1. less than 1 mile ___ 6. 100-300 miles
 ___ 2. 1-5 miles ___ 7. over 300 miles
 ___ 3. 5-25 miles ___ 8. do not have children
 ___ 4. 25-50 miles
 ___ 5. 50-100 miles
- ___26. Generally, how often do your children write or telephone you?
 ___ 1. once a month
 ___ 2. 2-3 times a month
 ___ 3. 4-5 times a month
 ___ 4. over 5 times a month
 ___ 5. never
 ___ 6. do not have children
- ___27. At present, are you:
 ___ 1. employed by others full time
 ___ 2. employed by others part time
 ___ 3. self-employed
 ___ 4. retired

Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- ___28. As I grow older, things seem better than I thought they would be.
 ___ 1. agree ___ 2. undecided ___ 3. disagree
- ___29. I have gotten more of the breaks in life than most of the people I know.
 ___ 1. agree ___ 2. undecided ___ 3. disagree
- ___30. This is the dreariest time of my life.
 ___ 1. agree ___ 2. undecided ___ 3. disagree

- __31. I am just as happy as when I was young.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __32. These are the best years of my life.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __33. Most of the things I do are boring and monotonous.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __34. The things I do are as interesting to me as they ever were.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __35. As I look back on my life, I am fairly well satisfied.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __36. I have made plans for things I'll be doing a month or a year from now.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __37. When I think back over my life, I didn't get most of the important things I wanted.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __38. Compared to other people, I get down in the dumps too often.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __39. I've gotten pretty much what I expected out of life.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __40. In spite of what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.
 __ 1. agree __ 2. undecided __ 3. disagree
- __41-42. Would you say you feel older or younger than most people your age?
 __43. your age?
 __ 1. older __ 2. feel same age __ 3. younger
- __44. Do you think your health is better or worse than that of most people your age?
 __ 1. better __ 2. same __ 3. worse
- __45. Would you say your standard of living is better or worse than the standard of living of most of your friends and acquaintances?
 __ 1. better __ 2. same __ 3. worse
- __46. Which of the following do you consider to be the three most rewarding aspects of your present marriage relationship?
- __47. 1. economic security
2. having your physical needs cared for
- __48. 3. your standing in the community
4. being able to effectively express true feelings to each other
5. companionship

- ☐ 6. being needed by your mate
- ☐ 7. affectionate relationship with your mate
- ☐ 8. sharing of mutual interests
- ☐ 9. other _____
- ☐ 10. none are rewarding

☐ 50. Which of the following aspects of your relationship with your mate do you consider to be the two most troublesome at the present time?

- ☐ 1. lack of mutual interests
- ☐ 2. not being able to effectively express true feelings to each other
- ☐ 3. unsatisfactory affectional relationship
- ☐ 4. different values and philosophies of life
- ☐ 5. lack of companionship
- ☐ 6. frequent disagreements
- ☐ 7. other _____
- ☐ 8. nothing is troublesome

Since you were first married to your present mate, do you feel your marriage relationship has improved or worsened in each of the following areas:

- ☐ 52. Love and affection for each other
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 53. Expressing true feelings and thoughts to each other
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 54. Companionship
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 55. Respect for each other
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 56. Understanding each other
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 57. Helping each other to find meaning in life
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 58. Personality growth of each partner
 - ☐ 1. improved ☐ 2. worsened ☐ 3. neither improved nor worsened
- ☐ 59-60.

Now we would like to find out how satisfied you are with your mate's present performance of certain marriage roles at the present time of your life. Please answer each question by circling the most appropriate letter at the left of each item.

Circle VS if you feel very satisfied; circle S if you feel satisfied; circle U if you feel undecided; circle US if you feel unsatisfied; and VUS if you feel very unsatisfied.

How satisfied are you with your mate in each of the following areas?

- ___ 61. VS S U US VUS Providing a feeling of security in me
- ___ 62. VS S U US VUS Expressing affection toward me
- ___ 63. VS S U US VUS Giving me an optimistic feeling toward life
- ___ 64. VS S U US VUS Expressing a feeling of being emotionally close to me.
- ___ 65-
- ___ 66.
- ___ 67. VS S U US VUS Bringing out the best qualities in me
- ___ 68. VS S U US VUS Helping me to become a more interesting person
- ___ 69. VS S U US VUS Helping me to continue to develop my personality
- ___ 70. VS S U US VUS Helping me to achieve my individual potential (become what I am capable of becoming)
- ___ 71-
- ___ 72.
- ___ 73. VS S U US VUS Being a good listener
- ___ 74. VS S U US VUS Giving me encouragement when I am discouraged
- ___ 75. VS S U US VUS Accepting my differentness
- ___ 76. VS S U US VUS Avoiding habits which annoy me
- ___ 77-
- ___ 78.
- ___ 79. VS S U US VUS Letting me know how he or she really feels about something

- 80. VS S U US VUS Trying to find satisfactory solutions to our disagreements
- 81. VS S U US VUS Expressing disagreement with me honestly and openly
- 82. VS S U US VUS Letting me know when he or she is displeased with me
- 83-
— 84.
- 85. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel that life has meaning
- 86. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel needed
- 87. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel that my life is serving a purpose
- 88. VS S U US VUS Helping me to obtain satisfaction and pleasure in daily activities
- 89-
— 90.
- 91. VS S U US VUS Giving me recognition for my past accomplishments
- 92. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel that my life has been important
- 93. VS S U US VUS Helping me to accept my past life experiences as good and rewarding
- 94. VS S U US VUS Helping me to accept myself despite my shortcomings
- 95-
— 96.
- 97-
— 99.
- 100-
— 101.
- 102-
— 103.
- 104-
— 105.

__106. Which of the following do you believe to be the two most important characteristics of a successful marriage?

- __ 1. respect
- __ 2. personality growth
- __ 3. emotional closeness
- __ 4. sexual satisfaction
- __ 5. sharing the same interests
- __ 6. effectively expressing true feelings to each other
- __ 7. having physical needs met

__108. Which one of the following do you believe to be most important in achieving marital success?

- __ 1. being in love
- __ 2. determination
- __ 3. having common interests
- __ 4. compatibility of personalities

__109-110.

Indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement to the following statements.

__111. Older people should dress more conservatively than younger people.

- __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
__5. strongly disagree

__112. Older people should go around with friends their own age rather than with younger people.

- __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
__5. strongly disagree

__113. You can't expect older people to accept new ways of doing things.

- __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
__5. strongly disagree

__114. It is undignified for older people to be interested in the opposite sex.

- __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
__5. strongly disagree

__115-116.

The purpose of the following questions is to determine your general attitude toward marriage relationships in the later years of life (past age 65). Please answer according to your own true feelings and not according to how you think you "ought" to answer. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be frank as possible in your answers.

For each item below indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree by checking the response which best describes your feelings.

- __117. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually talk to each other less than they did when younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __118. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have more common interests than they did when younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __119. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less interest in each other as persons than they did when younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __120. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have a greater degree of companionship than they did when younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __121. Husband and wives past the age of 65 are usually no longer physically attracted to each other.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __122. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have a greater understanding of each other than they did when younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __123. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually enjoy each other's company less than they did when younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __124. The love between husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually continues to grow and become even more meaningful.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __125. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less happiness in their marital relationships than when they were younger.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree

- ☐ 126. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less difficulty in expressing their feelings to each other than when they were younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 127. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less affection for each other than when they were younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 128. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have a more meaningful marriage relationship than when they were younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 129-130.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements concerning people who enter marriage after the age of 65.

- ☐ 131. Persons aged 65 and over should not enter into marriage.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 132. Two older persons (65 or over) who enter into marriage have a good possibility of achieving a successful marriage.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 133. "There is no fool like an old fool" applies very much to those who marry after age 65.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 134. Most of the marriages entered into after the age of 65 are happy marriages.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 135. It would be embarrassing to have a relative marry after age 65.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 136. It is too difficult for persons over age 65 to adjust to a new marriage.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 137-138.

- ___139. Which of the following do you believe to be the two primary
 ___140. reasons why older persons enter marriage after age 65?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. have someone to look after | ___ 5. to feel needed by someone |
| ___ 2. economic security | ___ 6. to give and to receive affection |
| ___ 3. sexual satisfaction | |
| ___ 4. companionship | |
- ___141. Which of the following do you believe to be the two major prob-
 ___142. lems of older persons entering into marriage after age 65?
- | |
|--|
| ___ 1. inlaws |
| ___ 2. money |
| ___ 3. sexual adjustment |
| ___ 4. children (by a previous marriage) |
| ___ 5. housing arrangements |
| ___ 6. adjusting emotionally to each other |

For each of the statements below please indicate which one of the three alternatives (possible answers), A, B, or C is most true, or most preferred, or most important to you by writing A, B, or C in the Most column.

Then choose the least preferred or least important of the three possible answers (A, B, or C) and write its letter in the Least column.

For every statement, be sure you mark one of the possible answers in each column. If A is entered under the Most column, then either B or C should be marked under the Least column, and so on.

Do not debate too long over any one statement; your first reaction is desired.

MOST LEAST

- | | | |
|-----|-----|--|
| () | () | 1. One of the greatest satisfactions in life is: |
| | | A. Recognition for your efforts |
| | | B. The feeling of a job well done |
| | | C. The fun of being with friends |
| () | () | 2. I like my friends to: |
| | | A. Want to help others when possible |
| | | B. Be loyal at all times |
| | | C. Be intelligent and interested in a number of things |
| () | () | 3. My best friends: |
| | | A. Are easy to get along with |
| | | B. Know more than I do |
| | | C. Are loyal to me |

MOST LEAST

- () () 4. I would like to be known as:
 A. A successful person
 B. An efficient person
 C. A friendly person
- () () 5. I enjoy:
 A. Just being with friends
 B. The feeling of accomplishment I have after doing something well
 C. Being praised for some achievement
- () () 6. If I had more time, I would like to
 A. Make more friends
 B. Work at my hobby or learning something new and interesting
 C. Just take it easy, without any pressure
- () () 7. I think I do my best when:
 A. I work with a group of people who are friendly
 B. I have a job that is in my line
 C. My efforts are rewarded
- () () 8. I like:
 A. Being appreciated by others
 B. Being satisfied personally with my performance
 C. Being with friends with whom I can have a good time
- () () 9. Nothing is worse than:
 A. Having your self-esteem damaged
 B. Failure at an important task
 C. Losing your friends
- () () 10. I like a leader who:
 A. Gets the job done
 B. Makes himself respected by his followers
 C. Makes himself easy to talk to
- () () 11. Which leisure time activity is important to you:
 A. Watching T.V.
 B. Chatting with acquaintances
 C. Keeping busy with interesting hobbies
- () () 12. I like:
 A. Sincere praise for my efforts and accomplishments
 B. Cooperative effort
 C. Wisdom

MOST LEAST

- () () 13. Which is important to you?
- A. To know what you want to do
 - B. To know how to do what you want to do
 - C. To know how to help others to do what they want to do
- () () 14. I am considerably disturbed by:
- A. Hostile arguments
 - B. Rigidity and refusal to see the value of new ways
 - C. Persons who degrade themselves
- () () 15. I would like to:
- A. Be accepted as a friend by others
 - B. Help others complete a mutual task
 - C. Be admired by others

Oklahoma State University
Division of Home Economics

Department of Family Relations and Child
Development FRCD 3142 NS/fd 1/69

Your cooperation in this research project is greatly appreciated. Your contribution in a research project of this type helps us to gain greater knowledge and insight into family relationships.

Please check or fill in answers as appropriate to each question. Since your name is not required, please be as honest in your answers as possible.

The blanks at the extreme left of the page are for purposes of coding. (Do not fill in.)

__ 1-4.

__ 5. Sex: __ 1. Male
 __ 2. Female

__ 6. Age: __ 1. 17-18 __ 4. 23-24
 __ 2. 19-20 __ 5. 25 and over
 __ 3. 21-22

__ 7. Race:
 __ 1. White
 __ 2. Negro
 __ 3. Indian
 __ 4. Other

__ 8. Religious preference:
 __ 1. Catholic __ 4. Mormon
 __ 2. Protestant __ 5. None
 __ 3. Jewish __ 6. Other

__ 9. For the major part of your life have you lived:
 __ 1. On farm or in country
 __ 2. Small town under 25,000
 __ 3. City of 25,000 to 50,000 population
 __ 4. City of 50,000 to 100,000
 __ 5. City of over 100,000

__ 10. Do you have brothers or sisters?
 __ 1. Yes
 __ 2. No

__ 11. If you have brothers or sisters, are you the:
 __ 1. Oldest child
 __ 2. Intermediate child
 __ 3. Youngest child

- ___12. What is your parents' marital status?
- ___ 1. Living together
 - ___ 2. Separated or divorced (with no remarriage)
 - ___ 3. One of parents deceased (with no remarriage)
 - ___ 4. Divorced (with remarriage)
 - ___ 5. One of parents deceased with remarriage
- ___13. Have you had a previous family relations course in high school or college?
- ___ 1. Yes
 - ___ 2. No
- ___14. Which one of the following do you feel has influenced you most in the formation of your attitudes toward marriage?
- ___ 1. Parents
 - ___ 2. Peers
 - ___ 3. School
 - ___ 4. Church
- ___15. Has your contact with older couples (age 65 or over) been:
- ___ 1. considerable
 - ___ 2. moderate
 - ___ 3. very little
- ___16. What is the occupation of the head of your family of orientation household (teacher, policeman, etc.): _____
- ___17. What is the primary source of the above income?
- ___ 1. inherited savings and investments
 - ___ 2. earned wealth, transferable investment
 - ___ 3. profits, royalties, fees
 - ___ 4. salary, commissions (regular, monthly, or yearly)
 - ___ 5. hourly wages, weekly checks
 - ___ 6. odd jobs, seasonal work, private charity
 - ___ 7. public relief or charity
- ___18. What is the highest educational attainment of the principal earner of the above income?
- ___ 1. completed graduate work for a profession
 - ___ 2. graduated from a 4-year college
 - ___ 3. attended college or university for two or more years
 - ___ 4. graduated from high school
 - ___ 5. attended high school, completed grade 9, but did not graduate
 - ___ 6. completed grade 8, but did not attend beyond grade 9
 - ___ 7. less than grade 8
- ___19.
- ___20. Which of the following, if any, do you believe to be major
- ___21. problems of older couples (past the age of 65)? Please check no more than three problems.
- ___22.
- ___ 1. housing
 - ___ 2. money
 - ___ 3. use of leisure time
 - ___ 4. poor health

- ☐ 5. not feeling useful ☐ 8. finding a job
☐ 6. being dependent on ☐ 9. their marriage re-
 their children lationship
☐ 7. in-laws ☐ 10. no problems
- ___23. Which of the following do you believe to be the happiest period of an individual's life?
 ☐ 1. later years (past age ☐ 3. young adult years
 of 65) ☐ 4. teenage years
 ☐ 2. middle age years ☐ 5. childhood
- ___24. Which of the following do you consider to be the happiest period of an individual's married life?
 ☐ 1. later years (past
 age 65)
 ☐ 2. middle age years
 ☐ 3. young adult years
- ___25. Do you feel that the marriage relationship of most older couples (past the age of 65) has become better or worse since the time they were first married?
 ☐ 1. better ☐ 3. remained about the
 ☐ 2. worse same
 ☐ 4. undecided
- ___26. In general, do you feel most marriages become better or worse over time?
 ☐ 1. better ☐ 3. remain about the
 ☐ 2. worse same
 ☐ 4. uncertain
- ___27. Which of the following do you consider to be the three most rewarding aspects of the marriage relationship in the later
 ___28. years (past age 65)?
- ___29. ☐ 1. economic security ☐ 6. affectionate re-
 ☐ 2. having physical needs lationship
 ☐ 3. their standing in com- ☐ 7. sharing mutual
 munity interests
 ☐ 4. companionship ☐ 8. effectively ex-
 ☐ 5. being needed by each pressing true feel-
 other ings to each other
 ☐ 9. other _____
 ☐ 10. none are rewarding
- ___30. Which of the following, if any, do you consider to be the two most troublesome aspects of marriage relationships in the later
 ___31. years?
- ☐ 1. economic insecurity
 ☐ 2. not having one's physical needs cared for
 ☐ 3. lack of companionship
 ☐ 4. lack of mutual interests
 ☐ 5. unsatisfactory affectional relationship
 ☐ 6. frequent disagreements

- ☐ 7. not being able to effectively express true feelings to each other
☐ 8. nothing is troublesome
☐ 9. other _____
- ☐ 32. Which of the following do you believe to be the two most im-
☐ 33. portant characteristics of a successful marriage?
- ☐ 1. respect
☐ 2. personality growth
☐ 3. emotional closeness
☐ 4. sexual satisfaction
☐ 5. sharing the same interests
☐ 6. effectively expressing true feelings to each other
☐ 7. having physical needs cared for
- ☐ 34. Which one of the following do you believe to be the most impor-
tant in achieving marital success?
- ☐ 1. being in love
☐ 2. determination
☐ 3. having common interests
☐ 4. compatability

The purpose of the following questions is to determine your general attitude toward marriage relationships in the later years of life (past age 65). Please answer according to your own true feelings and not according to how you think you "ought" to answer. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be as frank as possible in your answers.

For each item below, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree by checking the response which best describes your feelings.

- ☐ 35. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually talk to each other less than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 36. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have more common interests than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 37.
- ☐ 38. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less interest in each other as persons than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree

- ☐ 39. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have a greater degree of companionship than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 40. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 are usually no longer physically attracted to each other.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 41. Husbands and wives past age of 65 usually have a greater understanding of each other than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 42. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually enjoy each other's company less than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 43. The love between husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually continues to grow and to become even more meaningful.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 44. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less happiness in their marital relationship than they did when younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 45. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less difficulty in expressing their feelings to each other than when they were younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 46. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have less affection for each other than when they were younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 47. Husbands and wives past the age of 65 usually have a more meaningful marriage relationship than when they were younger.
☐ 1. strongly agree ☐ 2. agree ☐ 3. undecided ☐ 4. disagree
☐ 5. strongly disagree
- ☐ 48-49.

Indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement to each of the following statements:

- __50. Older people should dress more conservatively than young people.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __51. Older people ought to go around with friends their own age rather than with young people.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __52. You can't expect older people to accept new ways of doing things.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __53. It is undignified for an older person to be interested in the opposite sex.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __54-55.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements concerning people who enter into marriage after the age of 65:

- __56. Persons aged 65 and over should not enter into marriage.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __57. Two persons who enter into marriage after age 65 have a good possibility of achieving a successful marriage.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __58. "There is no fool like an old fool" applies very much to those who marry after age 65.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __59. Most of the marriages entered into after age 65 are happy marriages.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree
- __60. It would be embarrassing to have a relative marry after age 65.
 __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
 __5. strongly disagree

__61. It is too difficult for persons over age 65 to adjust to a new marriage.

- __1. strongly agree __2. agree __3. undecided __4. disagree
__5. strongly disagree

__62-63.

__64. Which of the following do you believe to be the two primary reasons why older people enter marriage after age 65?

- __ 1. to have someone to look after physical and health needs
__ 2. economic security
__ 3. sexual satisfaction
__ 4. to feel needed by someone
__ 5. companionship
__ 6. to give and receive affection

__66. Which of the following do you believe to be the two major problems of older persons entering into marriage after age 65?

- __ 1. in-laws
__ 2. money
__ 3. sexual adjustment
__ 4. children (by previous marriage)
__ 5. housing arrangements
__ 6. adjusting emotionally to each other

__68-69.

__70-71.

__72-73.

For each of the statements below please indicate which one of the three alternatives (possible answers), A, B, or C is most true, or most preferred, or most important to you by writing A, B, or C in the Most column.

Then choose the least preferred or least important of the three possible answers (A, B, or C) and write its letter in the Least column.

For every statement, be sure you mark one of the possible answers in each column. If A is entered under the Most column, then either B or C should be marked under the Least column, and so on.

Do not debate too long over any one statement; your first reaction is desired.

MOST LEAST

- () () 1. One of the greatest satisfactions in life is:
A. Recognition for your efforts
B. The feeling of a job well done
C. The fun of being with friends

MOST LEAST

- () () 2. I like my friends to:
 A. Want to help others when possible
 B. Be loyal at all times
 C. Be intelligent and interested in a number of things
- () () 3. My best friends:
 A. Are easy to get along with
 B. Know more than I do
 C. Are loyal to me
- () () 4. I would like to be known as:
 A. A successful person
 B. An efficient person
 C. A friendly person
- () () 5. I enjoy:
 A. Just being with friends
 B. The feeling of accomplishment I have after doing something well
 C. Being praised for some achievement
- () () 6. If I had more time, I would like to:
 A. Make more friends
 B. Work at my hobby or learning something new and interesting
 C. Just take it easy without any pressure
- () () 7. I think I do my best when:
 A. I work with a group of people who are friendly
 B. I have a job that is in my line
 C. My efforts are rewarded
- () () 8. I like:
 A. Being appreciated by others
 B. Being satisfied personally with my performance
 C. Being with friends with whom I can have a good time
- () () 9. Nothing is worse than:
 A. Having your self-esteem damaged
 B. Failure at an important task
 C. Losing your friends
- () () 10. I like a leader who:
 A. Gets the job done
 B. Makes himself respected by his followers
 C. Makes himself easy to talk to

MOST LEAST

- () () 11. Which leisure time activity is important to you?
A. Watching T.V.
B. Chatting with acquaintances
C. Keeping busy with interesting hobbies
- () () 12. I like:
A. Sincere praise for my efforts and accomplishments
B. Cooperative effort
C. Wisdom
- () () 13. Which is important to you?
A. To know what you want to do
B. To know how to do what you want to do
C. To know how to help others to do what they want to do
- () () 14. I am considerably disturbed by:
A. Hostile arguments
B. Rigidity and refusal to see the value of new ways
C. Persons who degrade themselves
- () () 15. I would like to:
A. Be accepted as a friend by others
B. Help others complete a mutual task
C. Be admired by others

VITA

2

Greta Dean Goolsby

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: ATTITUDES OF OLDER HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND ATTITUDES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS CONCERNING MARRIAGE DURING THE LATER YEARS: A COMPARISON

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Elk City, Oklahoma, April 13, 1947, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ted L. Dean. Married August 18, 1970, to Mr. James Ryan Goolsby.

Education: Graduated from Hammon High School, Hammon, Oklahoma, in May, 1965; received the Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in August, 1969, with a major in Family Relations and Child Development; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1971.

Professional Experience: Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Family Relations and Child Development, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, September, 1969 to May, 1971.

Professional Organizations: American Home Economics Association, Oklahoma Home Economics Association, National Council on Family Relations and Oklahoma Council on Family Relations.