

RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH RELATIONSHIP
MAINTENANCE: AN APPLICATION OF THE COMMITMENT FRAMEWORK

by

Amy Lynn Busboom

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
WITH A MAJOR IN FAMILY STUDIES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2003

UMI Number: 3089917

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3089917

Copyright 2003 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

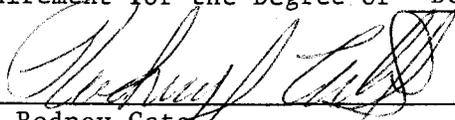
ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

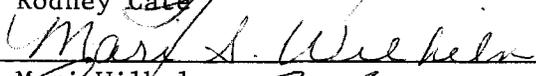
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA ©
GRADUATE COLLEGE

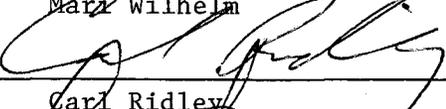
As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by AMY LYNN BUSBOOM

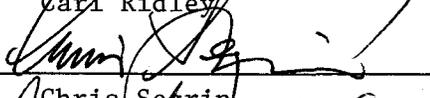
entitled RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH
RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE: AN APPLICATION OF THE
COMMITMENT FRAMEWORK

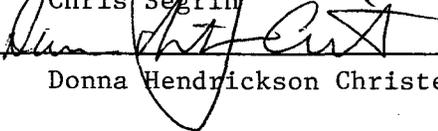
and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy


Rodney Cate
Date 3/24/03


Mari Wilhelm
Date 3/24/03


Carl Ridley
Date 3/24/03


Chris Seegrin
Date 3/24/03


Donna Hendrickson Christensen
Date 3/24/03

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.


Dissertation Director
Rodney Cate
Date 3/24/03

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at The University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the copyright holder.

SIGNED: Amy Lynn Bushon

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very appreciative for the years of mentoring, support, and encouragement that I received from all my committee members (Dr. Rodney M. Cate, Dr. Donna Hendrickson Christensen, Dr. Mari Wilhelm, Dr. Carl Ridley, and Dr. Chris Segrin). Through their efforts the process of graduate school was made easier for me. I would especially like to thank my advisor, Dr. Rodney M. Cate, for his support throughout graduate school. Through his guidance I was able to find an area of research that I am truly passionate about. A special acknowledgement goes to my husband, Gregory T. Reesing, for his eternal love and support and for always believing in me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| I. | LIST OF TABLES..... | 9 |
| II. | LIST OF FIGURES..... | 11 |
| III. | ABSTRACT..... | 12 |
| IV. | CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 13 |
| | Rationale for the Present Study..... | 13 |
| V. | CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW..... | 16 |
| | Conceptualization of Commitment..... | 16 |
| | Commitment Framework..... | 18 |
| | Components of Personal Commitment..... | 20 |
| | Components of Moral Commitment..... | 20 |
| | Components of Structural Commitment..... | 21 |
| | Arguments against Global Commitment..... | 22 |
| | Theoretical Links between Commitment and Maintenance..... | 23 |
| | Relationship Maintenance..... | 27 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Conceptualization..... | 27 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Typologies..... | 29 |
| | Intrapersonal Associations between Commitment & Maintenance | 35 |
| | Dedication and Constraint Commitment..... | 35 |
| | Global Commitment..... | 36 |
| | Love..... | 36 |
| | Satisfaction..... | 37 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS - Continued

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| | Interpersonal Associations between Maintenance & Commitment | 38 |
| | Global Commitment..... | 38 |
| | Love..... | 39 |
| | Satisfaction..... | 40 |
| | Direction of Influence between Commitment and Maintenance... | 41 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Schema..... | 41 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Schema and Maintenance Behavior.... | 44 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Schema as a Potential Moderator..... | 46 |
| | Hypotheses and Research Questions..... | 47 |
| VI. | CHAPTER 3. METHOD..... | 49 |
| | Participants..... | 49 |
| | Procedure..... | 52 |
| | Measures..... | 53 |
| | Relationship Commitment..... | 53 |
| | Personal commitment..... | 54 |
| | Moral commitment..... | 54 |
| | Structural commitment..... | 54 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Behaviors..... | 55 |
| | Positivity..... | 55 |
| | Openness..... | 56 |
| | Assurances..... | 56 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS - Continued

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| | Social networks..... | 56 |
| | Sharing tasks..... | 57 |
| | Relationship Maintenance Schema..... | 57 |
| IV. | CHAPTER 4. RESULTS..... | 59 |
| | Descriptive Analyses..... | 59 |
| | Hypothesis 1, Research Questions 1 and 2..... | 62 |
| | Research Question 3..... | 63 |
| | Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5..... | 67 |
| | Hypothesis 3..... | 69 |
| | Research Question 6..... | 70 |
| V. | CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION..... | 72 |
| | Hypothesis 1, Research Questions 1 and 2..... | 72 |
| | Research Question 3..... | 73 |
| | Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5..... | 77 |
| | Hypothesis 3..... | 81 |
| | Research Question 6..... | 82 |
| | Strengths of the Present Study..... | 83 |
| | Limitations of the Present Study..... | 84 |
| | Future Directions..... | 85 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS - Continued

| | |
|--|-----|
| APPENDIX A: COMMITMENT FRAMEWORK..... | 109 |
| APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE..... | 111 |
| APPENDIX C: HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL..... | 123 |
| REFERENCES..... | 125 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|----------|--|----|
| TABLE 1 | Descriptive Statistics for Study Scales..... | 89 |
| TABLE 2 | Bivariate Correlations between Individuals' Commitment and their own Maintenance Behaviors..... | 90 |
| TABLE 3 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Positivity..... | 91 |
| TABLE 4 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Openness..... | 92 |
| TABLE 5 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Assurances..... | 93 |
| TABLE 6 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Social Network..... | 94 |
| TABLE 7 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Sharing Tasks..... | 95 |
| TABLE 8 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Positivity..... | 96 |
| TABLE 9 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Openness..... | 97 |
| TABLE 10 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Assurances..... | 98 |
| TABLE 11 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Social Network..... | 99 |

LIST OF TABLES - Continued

| | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| TABLE 12 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Sharing Tasks..... | 100 |
| TABLE 13 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Maintenance Predicting Females' Personal Commitment..... | 102 |
| TABLE 14 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Maintenance Predicting Females' Moral Commitment..... | 103 |
| TABLE 15 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Maintenance Predicting Females' Structural Commitment..... | 104 |
| TABLE 16 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Maintenance Predicting Males' Personal Commitment..... | 105 |
| TABLE 17 | Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Maintenance Predicting Males' Moral Commitment..... | 106 |
| TABLE 18 | Bivariate Correlations between Individuals' Relationship Maintenance Schema and their own Maintenance Behaviors..... | 108 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|----------|--|-----|
| FIGURE 1 | Summary of Regression Results for Research Question 3..... | 101 |
| FIGURE 2 | Summary of Regression Results for Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5..... | 107 |

ABSTRACT

The present study examined both self and cross-partner associations between personal, moral, and structural commitment, maintenance behaviors, and relationship maintenance schema. Participants were both partners from 180 heterosexual couples in dating, engaged, and marital relationships who were between the ages of 18 and 35 years old with no children. Partners independently completed self-report questionnaires, which included measures of relationship commitment (Stanley & Markman, 1992), relationship maintenance behaviors (Canary & Stafford, 1992), and relationship maintenance schema (Sternberg, 1998). Results suggest that individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment are associated with their own maintenance behaviors and that some maintenance behaviors, especially assurances, are also associated with their partner's personal, moral, and structural commitment. In addition, having a relationship maintenance schema which states that relationships require effort to be successful is positively related to maintenance behaviors. These results provide some support for Johnson's contention that the different types of commitment have different implications for relationship maintenance.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Present Study

Close relationships research has traditionally focused on the initiation and dissolution dynamics of romantic relationships; however, in the last decade relationship maintenance has become a major focus for research (Wenzel & Harvey, 2001). A substantial amount of knowledge has been amassed over the past decade regarding the strategies that individuals use to maintain their close relationships. However, somewhat less is known about what relational characteristics motivate people to use certain relational maintenance strategies or enact routine maintenance behaviors. Canary and Stafford (2001) pointed to this gap in the maintenance literature by suggesting that future research examine the conditions that give rise to the alternate use of their original five maintenance strategies of positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, and sharing tasks (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Furthermore, research is lacking that links the different reasons why partners are committed to the behavior the partners enact within the relational context (Huston, 2000).

The present study attempted to help fill this void by exploring how the different reasons for being committed to a relationship are associated with the enactment of the various maintenance strategies that have been identified through previous research. In particular, this study attempted to answer the question: If commitment serves as a motivation to maintain one's relationship, then do different reasons for commitment promote the implementation of different relationship maintenance behaviors? Although some previous research has examined how an individual's commitment is related to their

own maintenance behaviors, this research has utilized global measures of commitment that arguably measure only personal commitment (Johnson, 1999). In response, the present study extended previous research by using Johnson's (1991) commitment framework as its organizing theoretical model and thus measured moral and structural commitment in addition to personal commitment.

Some of the early relationship maintenance research included only one member of couples, hence it has been suggested that research include both members of couples in order to investigate associations between partners (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Previous research has demonstrated the link between the individual's perception of a partner's maintenance behavior and their own global commitment; however, there is a lack of research that has examined whether one partner's self-reported maintenance behaviors is related to the other partner's self-reported experience of commitment. The present study included couples in order to extend previous research and investigate if one partner's enactment of maintenance behaviors are associated with the other partner's experience of personal, moral, and structural commitment to the relationship.

Canary and Stafford (2001) proposed that future research investigate how relational schemata affect maintenance activities. The present study included the construct of relationship maintenance schema which refers to the degree to which individuals believe that relationships require efforts to maintain them. Specifically, the present study investigated whether having a relationship maintenance schema that posits that relationships require maintenance efforts was related to the enactment of relationship maintenance behaviors. Additionally, the present study investigated whether relationship

maintenance schema moderates the associations between the three types of commitment and relationship maintenance behaviors.

To summarize, the present study had three main goals. First, the present study applied Johnson's (1991) commitment framework to examine the associations between individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment and their own relationship maintenance behaviors. Second, the present study examined the associations between individuals' report of maintenance behaviors and their partner's personal, moral, and structural commitment. Third, the present study examined whether individuals' relationship maintenance schema was associated with their own report of relationship maintenance behaviors and whether the associations between types of commitment and maintenance behaviors were moderated by relationship maintenance schema.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualizations of Relationship Commitment

Historically relationship satisfaction and relationship stability have received the majority of the empirical attention with regard to relationship outcomes research (Adams & Jones, 1999). However, in the late 1960's the conceptualization of relationship commitment gained significant interest among relationship scientists (Adams & Jones, 1999). Yet four decades later there are still debates among commitment researchers as to how relationship commitment should be conceptualized and measured (Adams & Jones, 1999).

Well over 200 years ago Immanuel Kant made the distinction between continuing a behavior or course of action because it was rewarding and continuing it because of a sense of personal responsibility (Adams & Jones, 1999). This distinction between attraction and constraint can be seen as the basis for many of our contemporary conceptualizations of commitment (Adams & Jones, 1999). Examples of this distinction can be seen in the work of George Levinger, Caryl Rusbult, and Michael Johnson who have been especially influential in the conceptualization and operationalization of relationship commitment.

Levinger (1976, 1999) proposed an attraction-barrier model of relational cohesiveness for understanding relationship commitment. Levinger's theoretical model was derived from Lewin's (1951) ideas of the psychological driving or restraining forces that influence people's actions in life (Levinger, 1999). Levinger (1999) defined four components of the attraction-barrier model. Attractions refer to a person's total attraction

to the primary relationship (Levinger, 1999). Barriers are the total strength of the restraining forces or costs of termination that keep the person from leaving the primary relationship (Levinger, 1999). Alternative attractions are the person's total attraction to his or her most salient alternative to the primary relationship (Levinger, 1999). Finally, alternative barriers are the strength of the restraints that keep the person from leaving an alternative relationship (e.g., ties to one's family, work responsibilities) (Levinger, 1999). Thus, "according to the attraction-barrier model, a strong commitment to a given relationship signifies that one's net attractions and barriers (or termination costs) durably exceed those available in the best alternative relationship" (Levinger, 1999, p. 46)

Another well-known theoretical model of relationship commitment is Rusbult's (1980, 1983) investment model. Rusbult's investment model of commitment is based upon interdependence theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Rusbult defined commitment as "the tendency to maintain a relationship and to feel psychologically attached to it" (Rusbult, 1983, p. 102). As such, Rusbult viewed the concept of commitment as including two distinct elements, one focused on behavioral intent and the other focused on psychological attachment (Rusbult, 1991). Rusbult utilized constructs and ideas from interdependence theory; however, she added the construct of investment to her model predicting commitment. According to the investment model, commitment is a function of satisfaction with the relationship, availability of alternatives to the relationship, and investment size (Rusbult, 1980, 1983). Specifically, commitment is strengthened by increased satisfaction with the relationship, decreased quality of the available alternatives to the relationship, and increased investments in the relationship (Rusbult, 1980, 1983).

Hence, Rusbult's investment model conceptualizes commitment as a unitary phenomenon that is influenced by satisfaction, alternatives, and investments.

Over the last thirty years Johnson has developed the Commitment Framework, which posits that the decision to continue a relationship is a function of three distinct experiences of commitment (Johnson, 1991; Johnson, Caughlin, & Huston, 1999). These three experiences or types of commitment are: personal commitment, moral commitment, and structural commitment (Johnson, 1991). Personal commitment is the feeling that one wants to continue the relationship. Moral commitment is the feeling that one ought to continue the relationship. And structural commitment is the feeling that one has to continue the relationship.

These three theoretical models of relational commitment share many similarities, not the least of which is their inclusion of attraction and constraint aspects of commitment. Nevertheless, Johnson's conceptualization of commitment is distinctive because in addition to the attraction component of commitment (personal commitment), it separates constraint commitment into two separate components (moral commitment and structural commitment). Thus, the explicit inclusion of a moral component to commitment makes it unique compared to Levinger's and Rusbult's models of commitment.

Commitment Framework

The present study used Johnson's (1991) Commitment Framework as its guiding theoretical model. The commitment framework was inspired by symbolic interaction theory as well as by Heider's (1958) theory of naïve psychology of everyday life

(Johnson, 1991). Due to the commitment framework's theoretical background in symbolic interaction and Heider's theory of naïve psychology, this theoretical model can be categorized as a combination of the interactional and psychological approaches to interpersonal communication. In particular, consistent with the interactional perspective, the commitment framework assumes that actors make choices within their definition of the situation and that meaning is created through social interaction (Johnson, 1991). Consistent with the psychological perspective, the commitment framework is largely cognitive in nature. It focuses on the cognitions and attitudes associated with commitment and how commitment influences behaviors related to maintaining or dissolving relationships. In a broader sense, the commitment framework is "voluntaristic in that it assumes that individuals do indeed make decisions about their behavior" (Johnson, 1991, p. 118). The commitment framework is also "subjective in that it assumes that the critical determinants of those decisions are the individuals' constructions of the likely outcomes of the various choices that they perceive to be available to them" (Johnson, 1991, p. 118).

As discussed above, Johnson's (1991) Commitment Framework proposes that the decision to continue a relationship is a function of three distinct types of commitment: personal commitment, moral commitment, and structural commitment. The three types of commitment can be understood in terms of two dimensions: 1) the extent to which the commitment is experienced as internal or external to the individual and 2) the extent to which the commitment is experienced as one of choice or constraint (Johnson, 1991). Based on these two dimensions, personal commitment is experienced as an internal

choice since it originates from the person's own attitudes and self-concept (Johnson, 1991). Moral commitment is experienced as an internal constraint since it originates from a person's own value system and sense of what is right and wrong (Johnson, 1991). Structural commitment is experienced as an external constraint since it originates from the person's subjective assessment of what costs the environment will impose on them if they terminate the relationship (Johnson, 1991).

Components of Personal Commitment

According to the Commitment Framework, the experiences of personal, moral, and structural commitment are the result of a combination of numerous components (Johnson, 1991). There are three components of personal commitment: attraction to the relationship, attraction to the partner, and relational identity (Johnson, 1991; Johnson et al., 1999). Attraction to the relationship can be operationalized as relationship satisfaction, while attraction to the partner can be operationalized as love (Johnson et al., 1999). The third component, relational identity, refers to the extent to which an individual's involvement in a particular relationship is incorporated into their self concept (Johnson, 1991).

Components of Moral Commitment

There are three components of moral commitment: belief in the general value of consistency, value concerning morality of dissolution of particular types of relationships (e.g., marriage), and personal moral obligation to the other people affected by a particular relationship (e.g., partner, children) (Johnson, 1991; Johnson et al., 1999). Belief in the value of consistency refers to a general value that individuals may hold regarding

maintaining consistency in how they feel, think and act (Johnson, 1999). Another component of moral commitment is the extent to which an individual believes that the dissolution of particular types of relationships is immoral. It is likely that on average people may have stronger moral objections to terminating a marriage as compared to a dating relationship; therefore, this component of moral commitment may not be as influential among premarital couples. The third component of moral commitment is the feeling that you ought to maintain the relationship because of a personal moral obligation to the other people affected by your relationship, such as your partner or children (Johnson, 1999).

Components of Structural Commitment

There are four components of structural commitment: availability of acceptable alternatives, social reaction, difficulty of termination procedures, and irretrievable investments (Johnson, 1991; Johnson et al., 1999). Availability of acceptable alternatives is derived from Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) comparison level of alternatives and refers to an individual's perception of the alternative relationships and non-relational circumstances available if the relationship were to terminate (Johnson, 1999). Social reaction refers to an individual's subjective perception of how people in their social network would react to the termination of the relationship (Johnson, 1999). Termination procedures function as structural constraints to the extent that individuals perceive the actions that are needed to dissolve the relationship as difficult or onerous (Johnson, 1999). Irretrievable investments refer to an individual's expenditures of time, energy,

and other resources that are put into a relationship but are not retrievable if the relationship terminates (Johnson, 1999).

Arguments against Global Commitment

Johnson hypothesized that these three types of commitment and their components will combine in complex ways to determine the development of action plans regarding the maintenance, dissolution or revision of the relationship (Johnson et al., 1999).

Johnson (1999) argued against the use of global measures of commitment because he does not believe that commitment is a unitary concept. Instead, Johnson believes that his three types of commitment represent three distinct experiences of commitment that have different implications for the development of plans of action to maintain or dissolve the relationship (Johnson, 1991). Additionally, Johnson assumed that the three types of commitment he describes have different interpersonal, structural and individual sources (Johnson, 1991). Therefore, although in some populations these three types of commitment may be highly correlated empirically, Johnson disputed the claim that these correlations invalidate the possibility that they are conceptually distinct, empirically distinguishable, and causally important in some populations (Johnson, 1991).

Johnson believes that these three distinct experiences or types of commitment should be measured and analyzed separately and not combined into an aggregate measure of commitment because he argued that this will compromise the experiential validity (Johnson et al., 1999). An additional reason why Johnson opposes "global" measures of commitment is because he believes that they tap only personal commitment (Johnson et al., 1999).

There is independent empirical evidence to support Johnson's tripartite model of commitment. Three independent factor analyses of items attempting to measure relationship commitment (Adams & Jones, 1997; Bagarozzi & Attilano, 1982; Stanley & Markman, 1992) all yielded three factor structures that correspond to Johnson's personal, moral, and structural commitment. Moreover, these three factors lend support to Johnson's argument that an aggregate measure of the three types of commitment would not be experientially valid or as useful as keeping the commitment types separate.

Johnson's argument against global measures of commitment is relevant to the present study because to my knowledge thus far all published relationship maintenance research that has examined commitment has used a global measure of commitment. In particular, Rusbult's line of research linking commitment to relationship maintenance has used a measure of commitment that is considered to be a global measure. In fact, there is some empirical evidence to support Johnson's claim that Rusbult's measure of commitment is primarily tapping personal commitment (Johnson, 1999). Communication scholars, such as Canary and Stafford and colleagues, also have used Rusbult's measure of commitment or another global measure of commitment in their maintenance research.

Theoretical Links between Commitment and Maintenance

Johnson's Commitment Framework contends that a person's experience of the three types of commitment will lead to motivation to maintain or dissolve the relationship, which will shape their development of plans of action regarding the maintenance of the relationship, which in turn will determine what action or behaviors

are enacted to maintain or dissolve the relationship (Johnson et al., 1999) (see Appendix A). What Johnson discusses as action to maintain the relationship can also be referred to as relationship maintenance processes, which include but are not limited to maintenance behaviors. Thus, an individual's experience of personal, moral, and structural commitment is what serves as motivation for them to enact maintenance behaviors to maintain the relationship. Likewise, if the experience of commitment is not strong enough then there will be no motivation to maintain the relationship.

Although not explicitly stated, it would seem that the commitment framework would hypothesize a positive association between the three types of commitment and maintenance behavior. Johnson (1999) did suggest that irrespective of the level of moral or structural commitment, if personal commitment is high then maintenance behaviors will be enacted. Stanley and Markman (1992) also supported this idea of the positive link between personal commitment and relationship maintenance behaviors by defining personal dedication, which is their version of personal commitment, as "the desire of an individual to maintain or improve the quality of his or her relationship" (p. 595).

However, Johnson (1999) speculated that high structural commitment combined with low personal and moral commitment would lead to contemplation about ways to terminate the relationship. Johnson (1999) posited that if the individual perceived that the termination would produce acceptable levels of losses then the individual would simply leave, but if the individual's perception of the structural constraints were too high then they might attempt to reduce their level of structural commitment. Yet, this scenario does not take into account the individual's level of moral commitment or other factors

that might encourage the individual to enact strategies in order to repair their relationship and increase their own and their partner's personal commitment. Amato and DeBoer (2001) lend support to the proposition that moral commitment may encourage relationship maintenance or repair behavior. Specifically, Amato and DeBoer (2001) described commitment as a sense of responsibility, obligation, and loyalty, which is consistent with moral commitment. It is then argued that in the face of marital problems, committed spouses are motivated to engage in behavior to repair the relationship; thus suggesting that when spouses are morally committed they will enact strategies to improve their marriage (Amato & DeBoer, 2001). Nevertheless, the way partners behave toward one another and attempt to maintain their relationships are undoubtedly affected by the specific reasons why they are committed (Johnson, 1991; Johnson et al., 1999). Yet, the commitment framework and previous research does not address which type of commitment would uniquely predict which maintenance behavior when all three types of commitment are taken into account together.

Another theoretical perspective that has linked commitment with relationship maintenance behaviors is Rusbult's (1980) investment model of commitment. According to the investment model, commitment is hypothesized to be positively associated with remaining in the relationship and the enactment of relationship maintenance behaviors. Rusbult reasoned that commitment promotes relationship maintenance behavior because committed individuals have a significant stake in their relationship and want to ensure that their relationship persists and exhibits good adjustment (Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, & Hannon, 2001). Thus, although Rusbult's operationalization of commitment arguably

pertains only to personal commitment, the investment model predicts positive associations between commitment and relationship maintenance.

So to summarize the theoretical arguments regarding intrapersonal associations between commitment and maintenance behavior, there is overall agreement that a positive association should exist between individuals' personal commitment and their own enactment of maintenance behaviors. However, there is no agreement as to what the association between individuals' moral or structural commitment and their own maintenance behaviors would be. Additionally, when individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment are examined simultaneously in the prediction of their own maintenance behaviors, it is not clear which of the three types of commitment will have unique predictive power for which maintenance behavior.

Rusbult and colleagues (1994) posited that by enacting personally costly, pro-relationship maintenance behaviors, a committed individual communicates to their partner their feelings of commitment. The mutual cyclical growth model further asserts that dependence promotes strong commitment, commitment promotes maintenance, maintenance is perceived by one's partner, the perception of maintenance enhances the partner's trust, and trust increases the partner's willingness to become more dependent (Wieselquist et al., 1999). This reasoning would therefore suggest that there should be interpersonal or cross-partner associations between an individual's maintenance behavior and their partner's commitment. If the enactment of maintenance behaviors communicates feelings of commitment to the partner then we might expect an individual's maintenance behaviors to be positively associated with their partner's

feelings of commitment to the relationship. For example, if my partner observes me behaving in ways to maintain our relationship then my partner may be more likely to: 1) feel that he wants to remain in our relationship (personal commitment) because he is receiving rewards from my maintenance efforts, 2) feel that he ought to remain in our relationship (moral commitment) because I am showing him how much our relationship means to me which may reinforce his feelings of obligation to stay, and 3) feel that he has to remain in our relationship (structural commitment) because he may not be able to find another partner who will treat him as well as I do.

Relationship Maintenance

Relationship Maintenance Conceptualization

Relationship maintenance is more than just the stage of relationship development that comes after relationship initiation and precedes relationship termination. Relational maintenance is also a dynamic process that encompasses all the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dynamics involved in maintaining a relationship (Dindia, 2000). Many definitions of relationship maintenance have been proposed including: 1) keeping a relationship in existence, 2) keeping a relationship in a specified state or condition, 3) keeping a relationship in satisfactory condition, and 4) keeping a relationship in repair (Dindia & Canary, 1993).

The present study ascribed to the definition of relationship maintenance that states that maintenance behaviors are actions and activities used to sustain desired relational definitions (Canary & Stafford, 1994). By ascribing to this definition of relationship maintenance, it is possible for any relationship beyond the initial stage of development to

require maintenance. My assumption is that relationships, premarital as well as marital, are constantly in need of some degree of maintenance work. Thus, I would disagree with objections to investigate maintenance activities in premarital relationships if the argument was based on the idea that premarital relationships are not fully developed and thus cannot be maintained. In fact, I believe that all relationships are in a constant state of development and change. However, I do acknowledge that the rate of development and change varies by relationship and that marital relationships on average may be at a higher level of development than premarital relationships.

Duck (1994) argued that relationship maintenance contains two elements, with the first being strategic planning for continuance of the relationship and the second being a “breezy allowance of the relationship to continue by means of the everyday interactions and conversations that make the relationship what it is” (p. 46). These two elements can be labeled strategic maintenance behaviors and routine maintenance behaviors (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). Strategic maintenance behaviors are enacted with the conscious intent of sustaining the relationship (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). Conversely, routine maintenance behaviors are generally enacted at a lower level of consciousness without the intentional goal of maintaining the relationship (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). However, the distinction between strategic and routine maintenance behaviors is probably not straightforward, with many maintenance behaviors probably being employed sometimes in a strategic manner and other times in a routine manner (Dindia, 2000). Furthermore, maintenance behaviors that once were enacted strategically often overtime become routinely enacted habitual behaviors. While early relationship

maintenance research often employed the terminology ‘maintenance strategies’, it has been suggested that future research utilize the term ‘maintenance behaviors’, which is considered a broader term referring to both strategic and routine activities (Stafford, 2002).

An additional distinction that can be made is between relationship maintenance and relationship repair. Relationship repair strategies refer to actions taken with the goal of restoring a damaged or distressed relationship to a better condition. The distinction between maintenance and repair is akin to the distinction between strategic and routine maintenance in that it is not always precise. There is a significant amount of overlap between the behaviors used to maintain relationships and the behaviors used to repair relationships. However, not all strategies used to maintain a relationship are used to repair it. Furthermore, individuals’ repertoires of maintenance strategies have been shown to be larger than their repair repertoires (Dindia & Baxter, 1987).

Relationship Maintenance Typologies

Over the past two decades attempts have been made to develop typologies of relationship maintenance behaviors. The following is a discussion of the progression of efforts to discover and categorize maintenance activities. Braiker and Kelley (1979) were possibly the first to develop a measure of relationship maintenance behaviors. This measure was based upon interdependence theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and tapped primarily communication behaviors such as self-disclosure of feelings and relational needs, communication regarding the relationship and problems in the relationship, as well

as attempts to change one's behavior in order to help solve relationship problems (Braiker & Kelley, 1979).

Ayres (1983) generated three types of strategies used to maintain relationship stability, defining stability as when the basic pattern of exchange in the relationship are established and accepted. The three types of strategies were labeled avoidance, balance and directness strategies. Avoidance strategies are concerned with ignoring or avoiding things that might change the relationship or alter the relationship's trajectory (Ayres, 1983). Balance strategies are concerned with keeping the number of favors the same and keeping the emotional support levels constant (Ayres, 1983). Directness strategies are concerned with directly telling the other person that you prefer to that the relationship remain unchanged (Ayres, 1983).

Bell, Daly, and Gonzalez (1987) examined affinity maintenance strategies in marital relationships. Bell et al. (1987) viewed maintenance strategies as behaviors designed to make you more likeable to your partner and maintain solidarity. A sample of wives was asked to describe the things that their husband said and did that they thought maintained liking and solidarity in their marriage (Bell et al., 1987). A typology of 28 strategies was derived through content analysis of wives' responses (Bell et al., 1987). Wives then reported the frequency with which the strategies were performed by themselves and their husbands. The most frequently reported strategies were faithfulness, honesty, physical attractiveness, self-concept confirmation, supportiveness, and verbal affection (Bell et al., 1987).

Dindia and Baxter (1987) identified a typology of maintenance behaviors that included 49 strategies, which clustered into 11 superordinate types of strategies. Dindia and Baxter's (1987) conceptualization of relational maintenance included both maintenance and repair. The eleven superordinate strategies were: changing the external environment, communication, metacommunication, avoiding metacommunication, antisocial strategies, prosocial strategies, ceremonies, antirituals/spontaneity, togetherness, seeking/allowing autonomy, and seeking outside help.

Probably the most widely utilized maintenance typology in empirical studies has been the Relational Maintenance Strategy Measure (RMSM) (Stafford & Canary, 1991; Canary & Stafford, 1992). Stafford and Canary (1991) derived a typology of maintenance strategies through a review of previous literature and the open-ended responses of married and dating couples of how they maintained a satisfactory relationship. Through factor analyses, five relational maintenance strategies were derived: positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, and sharing tasks (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Positivity includes acting positive and cheerful, being nice, courteous, and upbeat during conversations with one's partner and avoiding criticism (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). Openness refers to using self-disclosure and open discussion regarding the relationship. As such, openness is conceptually similar to Braiker and Kelley's (1979) measure of maintenance. Assurances refer to stressing commitment, showing love, and demonstrating faithfulness. Social network refers to spending time with common friends and family. Sharing tasks refers to sharing household chores as well as other tasks that are considered responsibilities of the couple.

Canary, Stafford, Hause, and Wallace (1993) conducted another inductive analysis of maintenance strategies comparing strategies used in a variety of relationships including romantic, familial relationships and friendships. Ten strategies were derived including the original five strategies (Stafford & Canary, 1991). The complete 10 strategies include: positivity, openness, assurances, social network, sharing tasks, joint activities, mediated communication, avoidance, antisocial behavior, and humor (Canary, Stafford, Hause, & Wallace, 1993).

In order to address the lack of attention to routine maintenance behaviors, Dainton and Stafford (1993) replicated Stafford and Canary's (1991) inductive strategy of developing a typology, but instead focused on routine rather than strategic maintenance behaviors. Dainton and Stafford (1993) instructed their dating and married couples to respond to an open-ended instruction to list examples of behaviors (positive and/or negative) that they had used to maintain their relationship. In order to achieve information on routine behaviors, a probe was added that instructed participants to focus on mundane, routine behaviors that also served to maintain their relationship (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). Using the Canary et al. (1993) typology as a basis, participants' responses were coded and 12 superordinate behaviors with 29 subcategories were identified. The 12 identified maintenance behaviors were as follows: positivity, openness, assurances, social network, sharing tasks, joint activities, talk, mediated communication, avoidance, antisocial behavior, affection, and focus on self (Dainton & Stafford, 1993).

Dindia (1994) proposed a multiphasic view of relationship maintenance, suggesting that relationship strategies used to initiate and escalate relationships are also used to maintain relationships. Furthermore, the opposite of these strategies are used to de-escalate and terminate relationships (Dindia, 1994). Hence, Dindia (1994) argued for a typology of relationship development strategies that are applicable to all of the stages of relationship development. Findings from two studies have lent support to this multiphasic perspective (Dindia, 1994). Dindia (1994) contended that this multiphasic view is more parsimonious than separate typologies for each phase of relationship development.

Rusbult's line of research has identified six relationship maintenance mechanisms (Rusbult et al., 2001). While previous relationship maintenance typologies have primarily focused on behaviors, Rusbult has identified three cognitive maintenance mechanisms as well as three behavioral maintenance mechanisms (Rusbult et al., 2001). Rusbult and colleagues (2001) defined behavioral maintenance mechanisms generally as the positive, pro-relationship actions that partners exhibit during problematic interdependence dilemmas. Therefore, Rusbult's maintenance mechanisms focus on cognitions and behaviors enacted in times of interdependence conflicts, while Canary and Stafford's (1992) relationship maintenance behaviors are communication behaviors not necessarily linked to times of conflict. Specifically, the three behavioral maintenance mechanisms identified are accommodation, willingness to sacrifice, and forgiveness (Rusbult et al., 2001). Accommodation refers to an individual's willingness to inhibit the impulse to react destructively and instead react constructively when one's partner

behaves in a potentially destructive way (Rusbult et al., 1991). Willingness to sacrifice refers to an individual's willingness to sacrifice their immediate self-interest for the benefit of the relationship when there is partners' preferences do not correspondence with one another (Rusbult et al., 1999). Forgiveness refers to an individual's willingness to react in a constructive manner rather than retaliate or demand atonement when a partner violates an implicit or explicit relationship rule (Rusbult et al., 2001).

Cognitive maintenance mechanisms are defined as the mental restructuring that enhances couple well-being (Rusbult et al., 2001). While these cognitive maintenance acts occasionally may be engaged in strategically, typically they are automatic consequences of being highly committed to a relationship (Rusbult et al., 2001). The three cognitive maintenance mechanisms are cognitive interdependence, positive illusion, and derogation of alternatives (Rusbult et al., 2001). Cognitive interdependence refers to a cognitive representation of one's self that is collective and incorporates one's partner into one's self-concept or identity (Rusbult et al., 1999). Thus, cognitive interdependence is virtually identical to Johnson's relational identity, which is hypothesized by Johnson as an antecedent or component of structural commitment rather than a maintenance mechanism which results from commitment as Rusbult posits (Johnson, 1991; Rusbult et al., 1999). Positive illusion refers to social comparison processes that serve to be adaptive for the well-being of the relationship via perceived superiority, excessive optimism, and unrealistic perceptions of control (Rusbult et al., 1999). Derogation of alternatives refers to the cognitive disparaging of available alternatives, which is at least in part a motivated act on the part of committed individuals (Rusbult et al., 1999).

Stafford and Canary's (1991) typology of maintenance behaviors have been widely used, especially by communication scholars. While these maintenance behaviors have been empirically linked with global measures of commitment, no study thus far has attempted to link them with the tripartite model of commitment. Hence, the present study will contribute to the existing literature by examining Stafford and Canary's (1991) five maintenance behaviors (positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, and sharing tasks) and three types of relational commitment (personal, moral, and structural commitment).

Intrapersonal Associations between Components of Commitment and Maintenance Dedication and Constraint Commitment

Results of one study have shown a positive correlation between dedication commitment and self disclosure behavior, which is similar to the maintenance behavior of openness (Stanley & Markman, 1992). In contrast, no correlation was found between constraint commitment and self disclosure behavior (Stanley & Markman, 1992). However, when the specific subscales that would be components of moral commitment are examined, a positive correlation was found between meta-commitment and self disclosure, but no association was found between morality of divorce and self disclosure (Stanley & Markman, 1992). These results suggest that there should be a positive association between personal commitment and openness, and that there may be a positive association between moral commitment and openness, but that there may not be any association between structural commitment and openness.

Global Commitment

Research has indicated that individual's self-reported (global) commitment was positively correlated with their own self-reported use of the five maintenance strategies of positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and shared tasks (Canary & Stafford, 1992; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). Yet, when self-reported and partner reported commitment, satisfaction, and love were included in an SEM predicting self-reported maintenance behavior, the only significant association with commitment was a negative association between wives' self-reported commitment and their own positivity (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999).

While not many studies have examined intrapersonal associations between (global) measures of commitment and Stafford and Canary's (1991) five relationship maintenance behaviors, there is some evidence of positive correlations between global commitment and maintenance behaviors. However, as discussed above, there is evidence that global measures of commitment tap only personal commitment (Johnson, 1999; Johnson et al., 1999). In addition, there is some previous research that has examined intrapersonal associations between specific dimensions of personal commitment (i.e., love and satisfaction) and Stafford and Canary's (1991) maintenance behaviors.

Love

Only one study has examined within-person associations between love and maintenance behaviors. Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999) reported positive correlations between self-reported love and the maintenance behaviors of positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and sharing tasks for husbands and wives. For wives, when

self-reported and partner reported commitment, satisfaction, and love were included in an SEM predicting self-reported maintenance behavior, self-reported love still showed positive associations with all five maintenance behaviors (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). In contrast, for husbands, when self-reported and partner reported commitment, satisfaction, and love were included in an SEM predicting self-reported maintenance behavior, the only association with love was a positive association between self-reported love and assurances (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999).

Satisfaction

Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999) reported positive correlations between self-reported satisfaction and the maintenance behaviors of positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and sharing tasks for husbands and wives. For wives, when self-reported and partner reported commitment, satisfaction, and love were included in an SEM predicting self-reported maintenance behavior, the only association with satisfaction was a positive association between self-reported satisfaction and sharing tasks (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). For husbands, when self-reported and partner reported commitment, satisfaction, and love were included in an SEM predicting self-reported maintenance behavior, self-reported satisfaction was positively associated with positivity, openness, and social network (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999).

Therefore, taken together, the majority of the research on intrapersonal associations between global commitment, love, satisfaction and the enactment of maintenance behaviors lend support to the hypothesis that an individual's personal

commitment should be positively associated with their own enactment of maintenance behaviors.

Interpersonal Associations between Maintenance and Components of Commitment

Communication scholars have conducted research linking an individual's use of maintenance behaviors with their partner's global commitment, love, and satisfaction. Most of the research has investigated how the perception of a partner's maintenance behavior is related to the other partner's self-reported commitment, love, and satisfaction. However, one study included self-reports and partner's reports of satisfaction, commitment, love and maintenance behaviors, thus allowing for observation of interpersonal or cross-partner associations between maintenance behaviors and commitment (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999).

Global Commitment

Results of Stafford and Canary's (1991) research indicated that perceptions of a partner's use of positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and shared tasks were all positively correlated with one's own self-reported (global) commitment. Canary and Stafford (1992) replicated these interpersonal or cross-partner correlations between perceptions of partner's use of the five maintenance behaviors and self-reported commitment. Findings from a longitudinal study were consistent with the previously found concurrent associations between perceptions of partner's maintenance use and self-reported commitment; however, perceptions of partner's maintenance behaviors were not significantly linked to commitment over time (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). Furthermore, Stafford and Canary (1991) found that, when all five maintenance

behaviors were entered into a step-wise regression, individuals' perception of their partners' use of assurances, social network, and sharing of tasks were significant positive predictors of their own global relationship commitment.

Canary and Stafford (1992) extended previous findings by including individual's self-reported use of maintenance behaviors and their perceptions of spouse's use of maintenance as well as equity in predicting self-reported (global) commitment. Step-wise regression results suggest that for husbands, after controlling for wives' commitment, perceptions of spouse's assurances and sharing tasks, self-reported inequity, assurances, and openness were unique predictors of commitment (Canary & Stafford, 1992). For wives, after controlling for husbands' commitment, self-reported assurances, perceptions of spouse's sharing tasks and openness, and self-reported positivity were unique predictors of commitment (Canary & Stafford, 1992). Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999) found that an individual's self-reported maintenance behaviors of positivity, openness, assurances, social network and sharing tasks were all positively correlated with the partner's commitment for both wives and husbands.

Love

Dainton, Stafford, and Canary (1994) found that individuals' perceptions of their partners' use of maintenance strategies were associated with individuals' self-reports of love for their partner. Specifically, for husbands, perception of wife's use of assurances, positivity, and sharing of tasks were significant positive predictors of husbands' feelings of love. For wives, perception of husband's use of positivity and assurances were significant positive predictors of wives' feelings of love. Weigel and Ballard-Reisch

(1999) reported positive correlations between self-reported maintenance behaviors of positivity, openness, assurances, social network and sharing tasks and partner's self-reported love for husbands and wives.

Satisfaction

Stafford and Canary (1991) found that individuals' perception of their partners' use of assurances, positivity, sharing tasks, and social network were significant positive predictors of their own relationship satisfaction in a step-wise regression. Individuals' perception of their partners' use of openness was a significant negative predictor of satisfaction in the same step-wise regression. Dainton, Stafford, and Canary (1994) found the same pattern of results in predicting satisfaction by perceptions of partners' maintenance behaviors for wives. However, for husbands, perception of wife's use of assurances, husbands' own physical affection satisfaction, and perception of wife's use of positivity were significant positive predictors of husbands' relationship satisfaction. Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999) reported positive correlations between self-reported maintenance behaviors of positivity, openness, assurances, social network and sharing tasks and partner's self-reported satisfaction for husbands and wives.

Thus, overall the results of Canary and Stafford's research lend support to the notion that one's own (global/personal) commitment motivates the enactment of maintenance behaviors, as would be hypothesized from Johnson's (1991) commitment framework. Additionally, Canary and Stafford and colleagues' line of research indicated that the perception of one's partner's maintenance behaviors influences one's own (global/personal) commitment to the relationship, suggesting that when someone

perceives that their partner is behaving in ways to maintain their relationship they may feel more committed as a result. Weigel and Ballard-Reisch's (1999) findings also showed that an individual's maintenance behaviors were positively related to aspects of their partner's (personal) commitment.

Direction of Influence between Commitment and Maintenance Behaviors

It is interesting to note that there is not agreement on the hypothesized direction of influence, with Rusbult and Johnson hypothesizing commitment as an antecedent of maintenance while Canary and Stafford and Weigel and Ballard-Reisch describe commitment as an outcome that is sustained by maintenance behaviors (Perlman, 2001). This discrepancy has been discussed in both of the most recent edited volumes on relationship maintenance behavior research (Perlman, 2001; Stafford, 2002). However, it seems that the apparent discrepancy could be resolved if the ideas are combined. In actuality, Johnson and Rusbult hypothesize that individuals' commitment predicts their own maintenance, while Canary and Stafford's line of research hypothesizes that an individual's perception of his/her partner's maintenance behavior will predict that individual's commitment. These two hypotheses can be thought of as two pieces of a reciprocal association, with an individual's commitment motivating their own maintenance behavior and that individual's enactment of maintenance behaviors leading to an increase in their partner's commitment.

Relationship Maintenance Schema

Many relationship researchers and theoretical models of relationship maintenance assume that the forces holding couples together are weaker than the forces pulling them

apart; therefore, partners must do things in order to keep their relationship together. In fact, Canary and Stafford (1994) assume that all relationships require the use of maintenance behaviors or else the relationship will deteriorate. This is consistent with a centrifugal perspective of relationships, which assumes that the centrifugal forces pulling couples apart must be actively counteracted in order to keep the relationship intact (Duck, 1994). In contrast, a centripetal perspective of relationships would assume that relationships are naturally held together by the centripetal forces unless something is done to pull the relationship apart (Duck, 1994). It has been suggested that the notion of centrifugal and centripetal forces are central to most theoretical perspectives of relationship maintenance (Dindia, 2000; Duck, 1994).

While this centrifugal perspective is generally agreed upon by most relationship researchers, little empirical research has been conducted that can address the question of to what degree this perspective is accepted and adopted by couples in the general public. Stafford (2002) also noted that although the necessity for relational maintenance seems intuitively obvious, perhaps it is not so obvious to everyone in the general public. The present study investigated this possibility. Specifically, the present study proposed that there exists a type of relationship maintenance schema in which some people believe relationships only survive or thrive when effort is put in to maintain them while others believe that relationships are self-maintaining.

Although not framed within a centrifugal versus centripetal perspective, there is some initial empirical data that can inform this line of research. Knee (1998) proposed that individuals have implicit theories of relationships, which simply refer to beliefs that

individuals hold about the nature of relationships. Knee's (1998) implicit theories of relationships distinguished between the belief in destiny and the belief in growth. A belief in destiny refers to the belief that potential relational partners are either meant for each other or they are not, thus the success of relationships are determined by fate or unchangeable personal characteristics (Knee, 1998). The belief in destiny thus is consistent in some ways with the centripetal perspective of relationship maintenance. Contrastingly, a belief in growth refers to the belief that successful relationships are cultivated and developed through effort and communication (Knee, 1998). So the belief in growth is consistent with the centrifugal perspective of relationship maintenance. Knee (1998) found evidence that the belief in destiny and the belief in growth are two independent, uncorrelated dimensions. Additionally, the college undergraduate participants agreed significantly more with the belief in growth as compared to the belief in destiny (Knee, 1998).

A recent study tested two additional implicit theories of relationships, a soulmate theory and a work-it-out theory, that are related to the centripetal and centrifugal perspectives of relationship maintenance (Franiuk, Cohen, & Pomerantz, 2002). A soulmate theory refers to the belief that finding the right person is the most important thing to obtaining a satisfying relationship. Like the belief in destiny, the soulmate theory is consistent in many ways with the centripetal perspective. In contrast, the work-it-out theory refers to the belief that effort is the most important thing to obtaining a satisfying relationship. Thus, like the belief in growth, the work-it-out theory is consistent with the centrifugal perspective. Evidence suggested that the soulmate and

work-it-out implicit theories were two negatively correlated dimensions rather than one bipolar dimension (Franiuk, Cohen, & Pomerantz, 2002).

Sternberg (1996) theorizes that people's romantic relationships are influenced by the story or stories that they develop about how love and love relationships should be. Specifically, Sternberg and colleagues (2001) asserted that the stories regarding love that individuals bring into relationships will influence the way they behave in that relationship. Sternberg's (1996) gardening story of love, which focuses on the idea that relationships need to be continually tended to and nurtured is consistent with the centrifugal perspective that relationships need continual maintenance activities in order to continue. Interestingly, the gardening love story was the highest rated love story indicating that the undergraduates in the study agreed most strongly with this story of what love and love relationships are like (Sternberg, 1996). Additionally, no gender differences were observed in the rating of the gardening story (Sternberg, 1996; Sternberg, Hojjat, & Barnes, 2001). The gardening story of love is believed by Sternberg to be an adaptive view of love, which has a high potential to lead to successful relationships (Sternberg, 1996; Sternberg, Hojjat, & Barnes, 2001).

Relationship Maintenance Schema and Relationship Maintenance Behavior

Huston (2000) asserted that individuals' beliefs or knowledge structures about how relationships work can influence their behavior within relationships. Hence, the present study proposes that an individual's relationship maintenance schema, the degree to which one believes that relationships require maintenance efforts to be successful, should be associated with their report of relationship maintenance behaviors.

Specifically, if an individual has a relationship maintenance schema that says that relationships require continuous maintenance efforts to be successful, then it is likely that the individual will enact strategic maintenance behaviors regularly. Conversely, if an individual has a relationship schema that says that relationships are self-maintaining and will remain together unless something is done to pull them apart, then it is likely that the individual will not enact strategic maintenance behaviors at a very high frequency. It is also possible that these individuals think that if you have to work too hard, then the relationship is not worth it, or is not “meant to be.” Thus, the present study views this relationship maintenance schema as another factor influencing the enactment of maintenance behaviors.

Little research has been conducted to examine whether an individual’s schema regarding the necessity of relationship maintenance behaviors influences their enactment of maintenance behaviors. However, Knee (1998) found that in response to a negative relationship event, belief in growth was associated with the endorsement of relationship maintenance strategies which included active coping, planning, and suppression of competing activities in addition to more positive reinterpretation of the event. Knee (1998) also reported that belief in destiny was associated with disengaging from the relationship and not engaging in relationship maintenance behaviors when faced with a negative relationship event. These findings lend support to the proposition that having a relationship maintenance schema which holds that relationships require work and maintenance efforts will lead to the enactment of maintenance behaviors.

Relationship Maintenance Schema as a Potential Moderator

Relationship maintenance schema may also function as a moderator of the associations between relational commitment and relationship maintenance behaviors. A moderator variable can be defined as a variable that affects the direction and/or strength of an association between two other variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). If commitment, or the intention to continue a relationship, serves as the motivation to enact maintenance behaviors, then an individual's relationship maintenance schema may moderate the association between commitment and the enactment of maintenance behaviors. Specifically, if an individual has a strong commitment to their relationship (a strong intention to continue the relationship), but believes that relationships do not require maintenance efforts, then the individual's level of commitment should not necessarily be related to their enactment of maintenance behaviors. Hence, the individual's commitment may motivate them to plan to remain in the relationship, but no strategic maintenance behaviors will be enacted because they do not believe any are necessary. In contrast, if an individual's schema is that relationships need maintenance efforts to survive then their level of commitment should be positively related to the enactment of strategic maintenance efforts. In particular, if the individual was strongly committed to continue the relationship, they should enact maintenance behaviors in order to maintain the relationship; however, if they were not committed to the relationship then they would not enact maintenance behaviors in order to effectively dissolve the relationship.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

The following hypotheses were derived from a combination of the theoretical rationale and previous research findings reviewed. When theory and previous research failed to provide adequate guidance or provided information arguing contrasting views, research questions were proposed. Research questions seemed appropriate given that this is the first study attempting to implement the tripartite model of commitment in the relationship maintenance arena.

Hypothesis 1: Individuals' personal commitment will be positively associated with their own enactment of maintenance behaviors.

Research Question 1: Are individuals' moral commitment associated with their own enactment of maintenance behaviors?

Research Question 2: Are individuals' structural commitment associated with their own enactment of maintenance behaviors?

Research Question 3: How do individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment combine to predict their own enactment of maintenance behaviors?

Hypothesis 2: Individuals' enactment of maintenance behaviors will be positively associated with their partner's personal commitment.

Research Question 4: Are individuals' enactment of maintenance behaviors associated with their partner's moral commitment?

Research Question 5: Are individuals' enactment of maintenance behaviors associated with their partner's structural commitment?

Hypothesis 3: Individuals' relationship maintenance schema will be positively associated with their own enactment of relationship maintenance behaviors.

Research Question 6: Do individuals' relationship maintenance schema moderate the associations between their personal, moral and structural relationship commitment and their relationship maintenance behaviors?

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Participants

Participating couples were recruited using a social network recruitment procedure that has been successfully used in previous studies (e.g., Canary & Stafford, 2001). Students enrolled in undergraduate family studies and human development courses at a large university in the southwestern United States were offered extra credit to recruit a heterosexual dating or married couple to complete a questionnaire regarding their relationship. Students who themselves were involved in a heterosexual dating or marital relationship that fit the inclusion criteria were permitted to participate in the present study themselves as long as their partner also agreed to participate. The use of this procedure in previous research has yielded samples that included over 40% non-student participants, thus resulting in a potentially more diverse and representative sample (Canary & Stafford, 2001). To be eligible for participation in the present study all couples met the following inclusion criteria: 1) currently involved in a heterosexual dating relationship in which they had been dating for at least a month, or currently involved in a marital relationship and married for five years or less, 2) both partners in the couple were between 18 and 35 years old, 3) neither partner in the couple had children, and 4) both partners in the couple must have been willing to participate in the study.

The sample for the present study consisted of 180 heterosexual couples. The mean age for women was 21.61 years old and the mean age for men was 22.81 years. Seventy-nine percent of the women and 76% percent of men identified themselves as White/Caucasian, 12% of women and men identified themselves as Hispanic/Mexican

American, 3% of women and 2% of men identified themselves as American Indian, 1% of women and 2% of men identified themselves as Asian American, and 1% of women and men identified themselves as Black/African American. An additional 3% of women and 5% of men identified themselves as an ethnicity other than the five categories listed above and 1% of women and men did not report their ethnicity. The mean educational level of participants was two and a half years in college. While 82% of the women in the present study were currently enrolled in college, only 48% of the men were currently enrolled in college. Additionally, the study design was successful at recruiting students from a wide range of majors. Specifically, participants who were currently university students listed over forty different majors. Approximately 75% of male students reported non-social science majors while approximately 45% of female students reported non-social science majors.

In regard to relationship status, 12% of the participants were married, 9% of women and 11% of men reported that they were engaged, 68% of women and 69% of men reported that they were seriously dating their partner, and 11% of women and 8% of men reported that they were casually dating their partner. Approximately 20% of the non-married participants reported cohabiting with their partner. The average length of time that the dating couples in this study had been dating was 18 months. The average length of time that the married couples in this study had been married was 20 months. Additionally, married couples had dated for an average of 40 months before getting married, leading to an average length of relationship for married couples of 5 years.

Questionnaire packets for 265 couples were given out. Questionnaires from 198 couples were returned. Therefore, the total completion rate was 75%. However, questionnaire data from both members of 18 couples was excluded from analyses due to incomplete data or potential fabrication of partner answers. Thus, the final sample size was 180 couples and the completion rate of usable questionnaires was 68%. These completion rates are comparable to previous studies that have used the same recruitment procedure.

The original goal for the present study was to recruit at least 84 couples. One of the key determinants in setting the goal of recruiting a minimum of 84 couples was the desire to achieve adequate statistical power. When determining an appropriate sample size to obtain adequate power (.80 or greater), one must consider both their desired alpha level ($\alpha = .05$ was used for the present study) and the probable magnitude of the effect sizes (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). It was probable that in the present study the hypothesized associations would be consistent with medium effect sizes ($r = .30$) (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Therefore, according to Cohen and Cohen's (1983) a sample size of at least 84 would yield adequate power for medium effect sized associations. The present study analyzed female and male partners' data separately due to the nonindependent nature of their data. Thus, the power analysis was based upon the number of female and male partners rather than the total number of individuals. With a final usable sample size of 180, the present study achieved the goal of having adequate statistical power to detect medium effect sized associations.

Procedure

Every participant received a questionnaire packet that included the following: a letter introducing them to the study, two consent forms, a questionnaire (see Appendix B), and an envelope to return the questionnaire in. Partners from each couple completed questionnaires independently from one another in a location that was self-determined. Two human subject's consent forms were included in each questionnaire packet, one was kept by the participant and the other signed consent form was sent back with the completed questionnaire. After completion of the consent form and questionnaire, each partner sealed their questionnaire and one copy of the signed consent form in the provided envelope and signed or marked over the seal. This envelope was then returned to the principal investigator.

Each participant's data was identified in the database only by their identification number. Each set of questionnaire packets was pre-labeled with identification numbers, with both members of each couple receiving packets with identical identification numbers. Students interested in participating or recruiting a couple for the present study completed a sign-up sheet with their name, contact information, what class they would receive extra credit in, whether they would participate themselves or whether they were recruiting a couple, and the identification number of the questionnaire packets they received. This sign-up sheet enabled me to match up returned questionnaire packets with the student to receive extra credit. The present study's procedures were reviewed and subsequently approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Arizona; please see Appendix C for documentation.

Measures

Relationship Commitment

Commitment was conceptualized in a manner consistent with Johnson's tripartite model of commitment. Johnson (1991) proposed three types of commitment: personal, moral, and structural. A disadvantage of choosing to operationalize commitment in a manner consistent with Johnson, rather than Rusbult for example, was that there are no published multi-item scales developed especially for Johnson's research that have previously been shown to be reliable and valid. Therefore, for the present study the decision was made to use existing measures to assess the three types of commitment. The advantage of using existing measures of these constructs from the literature was that they had been previously shown to be reliable and valid.

Personal, moral, and structural commitment were assessed with Stanley and Markman's (1992) Commitment Inventory. While Stanley and Markman's (1992) research initially revealed three distinct dimensions of commitment, they later decided to combine the "moral" and "structural" dimensions to form one constraint dimension. The present study utilized the twelve subscales from Stanley and Markman's (1992) Commitment Inventory, but combined the subscales in a manner consistent with Johnson's (1991) commitment framework to form three composite scales representing personal, moral, and structural commitment. Items for all commitment subscales were rated on a 7-point Likert scale, with anchors at 1 (strongly disagree), 4 (neither agree nor disagree), and 7 (strongly agree). Participants were instructed to think about the last month when responding to the commitment items. Appropriate items in all commitment

subscales were reverse coded so that a higher score reflected a higher degree of commitment.

Personal commitment. The personal commitment composite scale was comprised of the following five subscales: Relationship Agenda, Couple Identity, Primacy of Relationship, Satisfaction with Sacrifice, and Alternative Monitoring. A mean of the thirty items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of personal commitment. In the present study, the personal commitment composite scale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$ for men.

Moral commitment. The moral commitment composite scale was comprised of the following two subscales: Meta-Commitment and Morality of Divorce. A mean of the twelve items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of moral commitment. In the present study, the moral commitment composite scale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$ for men.

Structural commitment. The structural commitment composite scale was comprised of the following three subscales: Availability of Partners, Social Pressure, and Structural Investments. A mean of the eighteen items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of structural commitment. In the present study, the structural commitment composite scale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .79$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$ for men.

A disadvantage of using existing measures was that the components or subscales that combine to form the composite scales of personal, moral, and structural commitment did not map on exactly with Johnson's (1991) commitment framework

conceptualizations. Specifically, in regard to personal commitment, Johnson's components of attraction to relationship and attraction to partner were not explicitly assessed by the measures used in the present study. In regard to moral commitment, Johnson's component of personal moral obligation to the partner was not assessed in the present study. In regard to structural commitment, the present study did not assess termination procedures. Although there was a termination procedures measure available in Stanley and Markman (1992), it was not used in the present study because the items were not applicable to the dating couples in the study.

Relationship Maintenance Behaviors

Relationship maintenance was assessed with Canary and Stafford's (1992) typology of five maintenance behaviors. Canary and Stafford's (1992) Relational Maintenance Strategy Measure (RMSM) includes the five maintenance behavior subscales of positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, and sharing tasks. Instructions preceding the five scales read as follows: "The following items concern things people might do to maintain their relationships. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive that each of the following describes your current methods of maintaining your relationship in the last month." Items for all five subscales were rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Positivity. Positivity was assessed using Canary and Stafford's (1992) 10-item measure. A sample item is "Act cheerful and positive when with him/her." A mean of the items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of positivity. Previously published studies have shown this subscale to have an average reliability

coefficient of Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$ (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). In the present study, the positivity subscale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$ for men.

Openness. Openness was assessed using Canary and Stafford's (1992) 6-item measure. A sample item is "Simply tell him/her how I feel about our relationship." A mean of the items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of openness. Previously published studies have shown this subscale to have an average reliability coefficient of Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$ (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). In the present study, the openness subscale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .79$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$ for men.

Assurances. Assurances were assessed using Canary and Stafford's (1992) 4-item measure. A sample item is "Imply that our relationship has a future." A mean of the items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of assurances. Previously published studies have shown this subscale to have an average reliability coefficient of Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$ (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). In the present study, the assurances subscale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$ for men.

Social networks. Social networks were assessed using Canary and Stafford's (1992) 4-item measure. A sample item is "Include our friends or family in our activities." A mean of the items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of use of one's social network. Previously published studies have shown this subscale to have an average reliability coefficient of Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$ (Canary,

Stafford, & Semic, 2002). In the present study, the social networks subscale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$ for men.

Sharing tasks. Sharing tasks was assessed using Canary and Stafford's (1992) 5-item measure. A sample item is "Share in the joint responsibilities that face us." A mean of the items was obtained such that higher scores indicate a higher level of sharing tasks. Previously published studies have shown this subscale to have an average reliability coefficient of Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$ (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). In the present study, the sharing tasks subscale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$ for men.

Relationship Maintenance Schema

Sternberg's (1996, 1998) Garden Story was used in order to tap the proposed construct of relationship maintenance schema. Sternberg's (1996, 1998) gardening story of love relationships was assessed with the 8-item garden story subscale of the Love Stories Scale measure (e.g., "I believe a good relationship is attainable only if you are willing to spend the time and energy to care for it, just as you need to care for a garden"). Items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale, with anchors at 1 (strongly disagree), 4 (neither agree nor disagree), and 7 (strongly agree). A mean of the items was obtained such that a higher score indicates a higher degree of agreement with the view of love relationships as similar to gardening in the sense that they require maintenance efforts to be successful. Previous research has shown this subscale to have acceptable internal consistency, with a ten-item version of this subscale achieving a Cronbach $\alpha = .92$ (Sternberg, 1996; Sternberg, Hojjat, & Barnes, 2001). In the present study, the

relationship maintenance schema scale's reliability coefficient was Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$ for women and Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$ for men.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Descriptive Analyses

As discussed earlier, due to the nonindependent nature of couple data, the present study analyzed female and male partners' data separately. Table 1 contains descriptive information for all the scales in the present study. In general, the sample could be described as scoring moderately high on personal and moral commitment, yet scoring only moderately on structural commitment. The sample as a whole reported enacting maintenance behaviors quite frequently, with their means being consistent with previous samples (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). The sample also scored highly on the relationship maintenance schema measure, thus in general the sample agreed with the idea that relationships require maintenance efforts to be successful, which is consistent with previous research (Sternberg, 1996).

The results of paired t-tests indicated that there were several significant ($p < .05$) mean-level differences between the female and male participants. Females reported more frequent use of openness, assurances, social networks and sharing tasks than males did. These results are generally consistent with previous research that has also reported females' greater use of openness, social networks and sharing tasks as compared to males (Canary & Stafford, 1992). Hence, with the exception of positivity, females are reporting engaging in maintenance behaviors more frequently than are their male partner. Interestingly, in the present study, males reported being more structurally committed than females.

A multivariate analyses of variance was run to see if females' reports of commitment, maintenance behaviors, or relationship maintenance schema varied by relationship status in the present study. The main effect was significant, $F(27, 507) = 4.43, p < .001$. Follow up analyses of variance indicated that differences in females' reported personal commitment ($F(3, 176) = 19.54, p < .001$), moral commitment ($F(3, 176) = 3.79, p < .01$), structural commitment ($F(3, 176) = 16.69, p < .001$), and assurances ($F(3, 176) = 12.02, p < .001$) were responsible for the main effect. No significant differences in means by relationship status were found for females' reported positivity, openness, social network, shared tasks or relationship maintenance schema.

Tukey's honestly significant difference post-hoc analyses were performed to determine which of the relationship statuses differed from one another. Females who were casually dating reported that they were significantly less personally committed than females who were seriously dating, engaged, or married. Additionally, females who were seriously dating reported that they were significantly less personally committed than females who were engaged or married. Females who were casually dating reported that they were significantly less morally committed than married females. Consistent with the results for personal commitment, females who were casually dating reported that they were significantly less structurally committed than females who were seriously dating, engaged, or married. And females who were seriously dating reported that they were significantly less structurally committed than females who were engaged or married. Thus, as would be expected, females who report being in more serious relationship statuses also report being more personally, morally, and structurally committed.

Additionally, females who were casually dating reported that they used assurances significantly less often than females who were seriously dating, engaged, or married. This is generally consistent with previous research which has found that engaged or married individuals perceive their partners to offer more assurances than those in dating relationships (Canary & Stafford, 1991).

Another multivariate analyses of variance was run to see if males' reports of commitment, maintenance behaviors, or relationship maintenance schema varied by relationship status in the present study. The main effect was significant, $F(27, 507) = 2.73, p < .001$. Follow up analyses of variance indicated that differences in males' reported personal commitment ($F(3, 176) = 13.31, p < .001$), structural commitment ($F(3, 176) = 7.58, p < .001$), openness ($F(3, 176) = 3.68, p < .01$), and assurances ($F(3, 176) = 3.31, p < .05$) were responsible for the main effect. No significant differences in means by relationship status were found for males' reported moral commitment, positivity, social network, shared tasks or relationship maintenance schema.

Tukey's honestly significant different post-hoc analyses were performed to determine which of the relationship statuses differed from one another. Males who were casually dating reported that they were significantly less personally committed than males who were seriously dating, engaged, or married. Additionally, males who were seriously dating reported that they were significantly less personally committed than males who were engaged or married. Males who were casually dating reported that they were significantly less structurally committed than males who were seriously dating, engaged, or married. And males who were seriously dating reported that they were

significantly less structurally committed than males who were married. Hence, as would be expected, males who report being in more serious relationship statuses also report being more personally and structurally committed.

Males who were engaged reported that they used openness significantly more frequently than males who were casually dating. And males who were casually dating reported that they used assurances significantly less often than males who were engaged or married. These results are consistent with previous research which has found that seriously dating or engaged individuals perceive their partners to be more open than did casually dating individuals or marital partners and that individuals who were engaged or married perceive their partners to offer more assurances than those in dating relationships (Canary & Stafford, 1991).

Hypothesis 1, Research Questions 1 and 2

In order to test the associations between individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment and their own enactment of the five maintenance behaviors (Hypothesis 1, Research Question 1 and 2), bivariate correlations were performed. Bivariate correlations showed support for Hypothesis 1; personal commitment was positively related to all five maintenance behaviors for both women and men (see Table 2). In response to Research Questions 1 and 2, positive bivariate correlations were also found between moral and structural commitment and all five maintenance behaviors for both women and men (see Table 2). Thus, high levels of personal, moral, and structural commitment were associated with high levels of positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and sharing tasks. Individuals who reported being highly committed to their

relationships for personal, moral, and structural reasons also reported using all five maintenance behaviors frequently.

Research Question 3

The results of bivariate correlations showed significant positive correlations between the three types of commitment for both females and males. Specifically, personal commitment and moral commitment were correlated at $r = .40$ ($p < .001$) for females and $r = .55$ ($p < .001$) for males. Personal commitment and structural commitment were correlated at $r = .60$ ($p < .001$) for females and $r = .58$ ($p < .001$) for males. Finally, moral commitment and structural commitment were correlated at $r = .26$ ($p < .001$) for females and $r = .32$ ($p < .001$) for males.

In order to test how individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment combine to predict their own enactment of maintenance behaviors (Research Question 3), five multiple regressions were performed for each gender. Specifically, the five maintenance behaviors were individually regressed on all three types of commitment, which were entered simultaneously. These regression analyses made it possible to examine personal, moral, and structural commitment's unique contribution in the prediction of the five maintenance behaviors. The amount of unique variance accounted for in each of the maintenance behaviors by each of the three types of commitment are reported in Tables 3 through 12 with squared semi-partial correlations. Figure 1 summarizes the results of the regression analyses testing Research Question 3.

The model predicting females' positivity was statistically significant, accounting for 15% of the total variance in female positivity. Females' personal commitment

($\beta = .31, p < .001$) and moral commitment ($\beta = .19, p < .01$) were significant unique predictors of females' positivity (see Table 3). Hence, controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, females were more likely to report frequently acting positively toward their partner when they were highly personally and morally committed.

The model predicting females' openness was statistically significant, accounting for 13% of the total variance in female openness. Females' personal commitment ($\beta = .22, p < .05$) was the only significant unique predictor of females' openness (see Table 4). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, females were more likely to report frequently being open to discussions and self-disclosing to their partner when they were highly personally committed.

The model predicting females' assurances was statistically significant, accounting for 42% of the total variance in female assurances. Females' personal commitment ($\beta = .59, p < .001$) was a significant unique predictor and females' structural commitment ($\beta = .12, p < .10$) was a unique predictor at the trend level of females' assurances (see Table 5). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, females were more likely to report frequently assuring their partner of their love, commitment, and faithfulness when they were highly personally and structurally committed.

The model predicting females' social network was statistically significant, accounting for 7% of the total variance in female social network. Females' moral commitment ($\beta = .20, p < .05$) was a significant unique predictor and females' structural commitment ($\beta = .17, p < .10$) was a unique predictor at the trend level of females' social network (see Table 6). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment,

females were more likely to report frequently interacting with their joint social network when they were highly morally and structurally committed.

The model predicting females' sharing tasks was statistically significant, accounting for 9% of the total variance in female sharing tasks. Females' personal commitment ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$) was the only significant unique predictor of females' sharing tasks (see Table 7). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, females were more likely to report frequently sharing tasks when they were highly personally committed.

The model predicting males' positivity was statistically significant, accounting for 32% of the total variance in male positivity. Males' personal commitment ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$), moral commitment ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$), and lack structural commitment ($\beta = -.17$, $p < .05$), were all significant unique predictors of males' positivity (see Table 8). Therefore, controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, males were more likely to report frequently acting positively toward their partner when they were highly personally and morally committed, but not structurally committed.

The model predicting males' openness was statistically significant, accounting for 34% of the total variance in male openness. Males' personal commitment ($\beta = .60$, $p < .001$), moral commitment ($\beta = .14$, $p < .001$), and lack structural commitment ($\beta = -.19$, $p < .01$), were all significant unique predictors of males' openness (see Table 9). Similar to the results for positivity, when the effects for the other types of commitment were controlled for, males were more likely to report frequently being open to

discussions and self-disclosing to their partner when they were highly personally and morally committed, but not structurally committed.

The negative regression coefficients for males' structural commitment in the prediction of their own positivity and openness were surprising and inconsistent with the positive bivariate associations between structural commitment and both positivity ($r = .20, p < .01$) and openness ($r = .16, p < .05$). Upon further investigation, a hand calculation comparing bivariate correlations and regression coefficients indicated that negative or net suppression occurred between males' personal and structural commitment in the prediction of both males' positivity and males' openness (Cohen & Cohen, 1983, p. 94). Suppression occurs when an association between two variables is suppressed, or hidden, by an unmeasured third variable (Pedhazur, 1982). It is only when the effects of the third variable, in this case personal commitment, are controlled for that the true association between the first two variables is visible (Pedhazur, 1982). When the sign of the regression coefficient of an independent variable is the opposite of what would be expected on the basis of the bivariate correlation with the dependent variable, as it is in these two cases, it is called negative or net suppression (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In all cases of suppression, prediction is enhanced because the magnitude of the effect of the independent variable is greater when the suppressor is controlled for (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

The model predicting males' assurances was statistically significant, accounting for 44% of the total variance in male assurances. Males' personal commitment ($\beta = .56, p < .001$) and moral commitment ($\beta = .14, p < .05$) were significant unique predictors of

males' assurances (see Table 10). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, males were more likely to report frequently assuring their partner of their love, commitment, and faithfulness when they were highly personally and morally committed.

The model predicting males' social network was statistically significant, accounting for 9% of the total variance in male social network. Males' personal commitment ($\beta = .21, p < .001$) was the only significant unique predictors of males' social network (see Table 11). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, males were more likely to report frequently interacting with their joint social network when they were highly personally committed.

The model predicting males' sharing tasks was statistically significant, accounting for 24% of the total variance in male sharing tasks. Males' personal commitment ($\beta = .42, p < .001$) and moral commitment ($\beta = .18, p < .05$) were significant unique predictors of males' sharing tasks (see Table 12). Controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, males were more likely to report frequently sharing tasks when they were highly personally and morally committed.

Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5

In order to test the cross-partner associations between individuals' maintenance behaviors and their partner's commitment (Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5), multiple regressions were performed. Three multiple regressions, one for each type of commitment, were performed for each gender. Specifically, the three types of commitment (personal, moral, and structural) were individually regressed on the partner's

report of the five maintenance behaviors. Figure 2 summarizes the results of the regression analyses testing Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5.

Females' personal commitment was significantly predicted by their male partner's lack of positivity ($\beta = -.26, p < .01$), assurances ($\beta = .41, p < .001$), and sharing tasks ($\beta = .15, p < .10$), with the model accounting for 20% of the variance in female personal commitment (see Table 13). Therefore, controlling for the effects of the other maintenance behaviors, females are more likely to report high personal commitment when their male partners assure them of their love, commitment, and faithfulness frequently and share tasks frequently, but act positively toward them infrequently. The negative regression coefficient for males' positivity in the prediction of females' personal commitment was again surprising and inconsistent with the positive trend-level bivariate association between males' positivity and females' personal commitment ($r = .13, p < .10$). Upon further investigation, a hand calculation comparing bivariate correlations and regression coefficients indicated that negative or net suppression occurred between males' positivity and three other maintenance behaviors: openness, assurances, and sharing tasks (Cohen & Cohen, 1983, p. 94).

Females' moral commitment was significantly predicted only by their male partner's assurances ($\beta = .24, p < .05$), with the model accounting for 9% of the variance in female moral commitment (see Table 14). Females' structural commitment was also significantly predicted only by their male partner's assurances ($\beta = .32, p < .01$), with the model accounting for 10% of the variance in female structural commitment (see Table 15). Hence, controlling for the effects of the other maintenance behaviors, females are

more likely to report high moral and structural commitment when their male partners assure them of their love, commitment, and faithfulness frequently.

Males' personal commitment was significantly predicted only by their female partner's assurances ($\beta = .30, p < .001$), with the model accounting for 9% of the variance in male personal commitment (see Table 16). Thus, controlling for the effects of the other maintenance behaviors, males are more likely to report high personal commitment when their female partners assure them of their love, commitment, and faithfulness frequently. Males' moral commitment was significantly predicted by their female partner's positivity ($\beta = .23, p < .01$) and assurances ($\beta = .16, p < .10$), with the model accounting for 12% of the variance in male moral commitment (see Table 17). So, controlling for the effects of the other maintenance behaviors, males are more likely to report high moral commitment when their female partners act positively toward them frequently and assure them of their love, commitment, and faithfulness frequently. The model predicting males' structural commitment was not statistically significant. In other words, females' maintenance behaviors did not predict a significant amount of variance in their male partner's structural commitment.

Hypothesis 3

In order to test the associations between individuals' relationship maintenance schema and their own enactment of maintenance behaviors (Hypothesis 3), bivariate correlations were performed. Bivariate correlations showed support for Hypothesis 3 in that relationship maintenance schema was positively related to all five maintenance behaviors for both women and men (see Table 18). Thus, the more participants agreed

with statements about relationships requiring maintenance efforts, the more likely they were to also report performing the maintenance behaviors of positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and sharing tasks.

Research Question 6

In order to investigate whether individuals' relationship maintenance schema moderated the associations between their report of the three types of commitment and their own enactment of five maintenance behaviors (Research Question 6), Holmbeck's (1997) method for testing moderation with regression was followed. The first step in testing for moderation with regression was to create deviation or centered scores from the independent and moderator variables, which in this case were the three types of commitment and relationship maintenance schema (Holmbeck, 1997). Centered scores were created by subtracting the sample mean for that variable from all individual scores. Centered scores are used to reduce nonessential multicollinearity among predictors which is inherent between the interaction term and the two variables that make up the interaction term (Aiken & West, 1992).

Next, interaction terms were created by multiplying the centered independent variable (commitment) with the centered moderator variable (relationship maintenance schema) (Holmbeck, 1997). Then, hierarchical regressions were performed with the first step including the centered independent (e.g., personal, moral, or structural commitment) and the centered moderator variable (e.g., relationship maintenance schema). The interaction term of the centered independent and centered moderator variable was added

in at the second step (Holmbeck, 1997). Moderation has occurred if the interaction term is significantly related to the dependent variable then (Holmbeck, 1997).

Following the method described above, fifteen hierarchical regressions for each gender were performed, one regression for each combination of the three types of commitments predicting to the five types of maintenance behaviors, with relationship maintenance schema as the moderator. In general, no support was found for Research Question 6 which investigated whether individuals' relationship maintenance schema moderated the associations between their personal, moral and structural relationship commitment and their relationship maintenance behaviors. None of the interaction terms in the hierarchical regressions reached statistical significance ($p < .05$), thus moderation did not occur. Therefore, no evidence was found that individuals' relationship maintenance schema moderates the associations between their commitment and their maintenance behavior. So, the general pattern of positive associations between individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment and their report of maintenance behaviors that were found in previous analyses were not altered by the extent to which they believed that relationships require maintenance efforts to be successful.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The possibility that relationship characteristics such as commitment serve as both antecedents to maintenance behaviors as well as consequences of maintenance behaviors has been relatively neglected by previous research (Stafford, 2002). The present study found support for this possibility by providing evidence that individuals' personal, moral, and structural commitment predict their own maintenance behaviors and that some maintenance behaviors then predict their partner's commitment. In addition, the present study found support for the hypothesis that having a relationship maintenance schema which states that relationships require effort to be successful is positively related to maintenance behaviors.

Hypothesis 1, Research Questions 1 and 2

Results of the correlational analyses provided strong support for Hypothesis 1. Additionally, the same pattern of results was found in response to Research Questions 1 and 2 as well. Bivariate correlations provided evidence that females' and males' personal, moral, and structural commitments are positively associated with self-reports of their enactment of all five maintenance behaviors. Thus, the more an individual is personally, morally, or structurally committed to a relationship, the more likely that individual is to enact behaviors that serve to maintain the relationship. While previous research has shown that global commitment measures are positively associated with maintenance behaviors (Stafford, 2002; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999), the present study has furthered our knowledge by providing evidence that, at the bivariate level, all three types of commitment (personal, moral, and structural) promote the use of all five

maintenance behaviors (positivity, openness, assurances, social network, and sharing tasks) for both women and men. These results support the contention that all three types of commitment serve as motivators to maintain relationships. Consequently, these findings support theoretical propositions that high personal commitment increases the likelihood of maintenance behaviors (Johnson, 1999; Rusbult et al., 2001) as well as empirically driven speculations that moral commitment should encourage behaviors that are beneficial to the relationship (Amato & DeBoer, 2001). Furthermore, the results are consistent with the argument that structural commitment has stabilizing benefits and is not necessarily detrimental to relationships' well-being (Stanley & Markman, 1992).

Research Question 3

Results of the hierarchical regression analyses utilized to investigate Research Question 3 demonstrated the importance of examining the unique predictive power of the three different types of commitment. The average percentage of variance in females' maintenance behaviors accounted for by these models was 17%, ranging from 7% to 42%. While, the average percentage of variance in males' maintenance behaviors accounted for by these models was 24%, ranging from 9% to 44%. The models predicting assurances for both females and males accounted for the most variance (42% and 44%, respectively). In contrast with the results of the bivariate correlations, these results demonstrated that when the effects of the other types of commitment were controlled for; each of the three types of commitment did not always make significant unique contributions to the prediction of the five maintenance behaviors. Nevertheless, even after controlling for the effects of the other types of commitment, personal

commitment was a significant unique predictor in all but one regression model.

Specifically, males' personal commitment was a significant unique predictor of all of their own maintenance behaviors. And females' personal commitment was a unique significant predictor of all of their own maintenance behaviors with the exception of social network.

One potential explanation for why females' personal commitment does not uniquely predict their social network is that women may feel pressure from their social networks to include the male partner in activities so that family and friends can get to know the partner and see how the two partners are as a couple. Social networks may be more likely to have a sense of protectiveness for women that they do not have for men. So regardless of how personally committed they are to the relationship, women may feel that they should or have to include their partner in joint social network activities often. In fact, in the present study, women do have significantly higher levels of inclusion of partner in their social network than their male partners. Furthermore, previous research has shown that while social network support is important to both men and women, approval from social networks is especially important for women and in fact influences the stability of women's relationships (Sprecher & Feinlee, 1992). This may explain why females' personal commitment is not a unique predictor of social network, but their levels of moral and structural commitment are unique predictors. In contrast, men may not feel pressure from their social networks and therefore only include their partner in their joint social network when they want to because they are personally committed, thus explaining their association between personal commitment and social network.

Results indicate that moral commitment may be more influential to males' motivation to enact maintenance behaviors, as compared to females. Males' moral commitment uniquely predicted all their own maintenance behaviors except social network. However, females' moral commitment was a significant unique predictor for only two of their own maintenance behaviors, positivity and social network. This may be explained by recent research which implies that men's, but not women's, sense of loyalty and responsibility toward relationships has become stronger over the past few decades (Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2003). In addition, young men (but not young women) today express a stronger preference for and expectation of marriage than they did in the mid-1970's (Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2003). These two factors together may indicate that men's sense of moral commitment to their relationship may be especially salient to them and therefore is encouraging them to act in ways that society tells them they should in order to help create a strong relationship and stable marriage, for example being open and sharing tasks with their partner.

Finally, levels of structural commitment predicted two out of the five maintenance behaviors for both females and males. However, the pattern of results for females' and males' structural commitment has quite different implications for their behavior. Females' structural commitment was a significant and positive unique predictor of their own use of assurances and social network. One explanation for these results is that females' structural commitment, if it is not paired with personal commitment, may make them feel vulnerable in the relationship. Thus, in an attempt to alleviate those feelings of vulnerability they enact maintenance behaviors that may increase their male partner's

commitment to the relationship. In particular, females may frequently assure their partner of their own love, commitment and faithfulness in hopes of increasing their partner's feelings of personal and moral commitment. In addition, they may frequently include their joint social networks in activities with their partner in order to increase their partner's experience of social pressure to be a good partner and remain in the relationship, thus increasing the partner's structural commitment.

In contrast to females' structural commitment being a positive predictor of two maintenance behaviors, males' structural commitment was found to be a unique negative predictor of their own use of positivity and openness. Despite the positive bivariate associations, when personal commitment was controlled for, negative associations between males' structural commitment and both males' positivity and openness were discovered. Thus, the portion of variance in structural commitment that was unrelated to personal and moral commitment was negatively related to positivity and openness. In other words, males who were more structurally committed than their levels of personal and moral commitment would predict reported being less positive and less open toward their partners than males who were less structurally committed than their levels of personal and moral commitment would predict. These results can be interpreted to mean that when men have higher levels of structural commitment than expected they may feel trapped by these structural constraints and are then less willing to show positivity and openness to their partner. If men are feeling trapped by their level of structural commitment it makes sense that they may feel less positive about their relationship and therefore may express less positivity. Furthermore, since men tend to be less likely to

self disclose and want to have talks about their relationship, it is also likely that openness is a behavior that may provoke somewhat uncomfortable feelings. Consequently, men who feel vulnerable because of their level of structural commitment may not be willing to be as positive or open with their partner.

While the results of the present study support the general importance of personal commitment as a motivation to enact relationship maintenance behaviors, moral and structural commitment were also found to be important unique factors that predicted the enactment of some maintenance behaviors. These results support Johnson's (1991) claim that the three types of commitment can be associated with one another but still empirically relate to other relationship phenomenon differently. Thus, these results support the argument that the three types of commitment should not be aggregated into one global measure of commitment (Johnson et. al., 1999). Specifically, the different patterns of results for moral commitment and structural commitment, especially for men, support Johnson's argument that it can be useful to separate the constraint dimension of commitment into two pieces, one that is internalized constraint (moral commitment) and one that is constraint originating from external sources (structural commitment).

Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5

Results of regression analyses provided evidence that, in five out of the six models, at least one maintenance behavior reported by individuals predicted their partner's personal, moral, and structural commitment. The exception was males' structural commitment which was not predicted by any of their female partner's maintenance behaviors, thus indicating that men's feelings of structural commitment are

not associated with their partner's maintenance behaviors, but instead may be due to factors external to the relationship. The percentage of variance in females' and males' three types of commitment accounted for by these models was modest, ranging from 9% to 20%. Yet, in three out of the five cases where the models were significant the variance was due to only one maintenance behavior, partner's report of assurances.

In general, of the maintenance behaviors tested in the present study, partners' assurances appeared to be the most consistent predictor of individuals' commitment. After controlling for the use of other maintenance behaviors, partners' assurances was a significant positive predictor in all of the regression models with the exception of males' structural commitment. In fact, when controlling for the use of other maintenance behaviors, partners' assurances was the only significant unique predictor of females' moral and structural commitment and males' personal commitment.

The pattern of findings demonstrate that after controlling for all other maintenance behaviors, partners' assurances is still a consistently strong positive predictor of females' personal, moral, and structural commitment and of males' personal and moral commitment. This strong association between assurances and commitment makes sense because the items in the assurances scale refer to showing one's love and faithfulness, stressing one's commitment, and implying that the relationship has a future. Consequently, assurances may be a more explicit signal of commitment to relationship partners than the other maintenance behaviors.

Similarly, previous research has consistently found that individual's perceptions of their partner's assurances is positively associated with the individual's global

commitment even after controlling for the other maintenance behaviors (Canary & Stafford, 1992; Canary & Stafford, 1994; Dainton & Stafford, 2000; Stafford, 2002; Stafford & Canary, 1991). Generally, as was the case in the present study, partner's assurances has been found to have stronger associations with individual's commitment than the other maintenance behaviors (e.g., Canary & Stafford, 1991). It has even been stated that assurances holds the most importance of all maintenance behaviors for sustaining a relationship (Dainton & Stafford, 2000). Hence, the present study's findings are consistent with previous research. Additionally, the present study extends previous findings by establishing that partners' assurances are unique positive predictors of not only females' and males' personal commitment, but also females' and males' moral commitment and females' structural commitment.

Partners' positivity was also one of the significant predictors after controlling for the use of other maintenance behaviors in two models, females' personal commitment and males' moral commitment. However, the pattern of results for partners' positivity has different implications for males' and females' commitment. Females' positivity increased their male partner's moral commitment. In contrast, males' positivity was found to be negatively related to their female partner's personal commitment. Therefore, despite the positive bivariate association, when the other relationship maintenance behaviors were controlled for in this regression, a negative association between males' positivity and females' personal commitment was discovered. Thus, the portion of variance in males' positivity that was unrelated to the other maintenance behaviors is negatively related to females' personal commitment. In other words, males who reported

using positivity more frequently than their levels of the other maintenance behaviors would predict had female partners who reported being less personally committed compared to males who reported using positivity less frequently than their levels of the other maintenance behavior would predict.

It may be that once the variance common to the other maintenance behaviors is controlled for what is left is an exaggerated positiveness that is interpreted by the female partner as insincere or false behavior. When the positivity items are examined many of them, if strongly endorsed, represent an unrealistic ideal of always acting cheerful, positive, and cooperative even in the face of disagreements. While 'putting one's best foot forward' in the beginning of relationships is common and functional, it may be that continuing a façade of unrealistic positivity may be interpreted negatively by one's partner. Female partners may feel that this façade is keeping them from really getting to know their partner and finding out about their partner's real emotional life, thus making it difficult for the females to have a strong couple identity or relationship agenda, two parts of personal commitment. Future research should attempt to replicate this finding and directly investigate the explanation for it.

Additionally, after controlling for the use of other maintenance behaviors, males' sharing tasks was one of the unique positive predictors of females' personal commitment. This is consistent with a recent study that found that increases in the last twenty years of the proportion of household work done by husbands improved wives' marital quality, which was measured by marital happiness and decreases in behaviors that would lead to divorce (Amato, Johnson, Booth & Rogers, 2003). Additionally, previous research has

found that perceptions of partner's sharing tasks were positively associated with individual's global commitment for both men and women who had been married an average of fourteen years (Stafford & Canary, 1991). In contrast to the long-time married couples sampled by Stafford and Canary (1991), the present study's sample was composed of couples in dating and newly married relationships and these results were only found for women, not men. It is possible that partner's sharing tasks is something that is important to women's personal commitment throughout the life course of a relationship, yet sharing tasks may only become important to men's personal commitment later in a marriage when there is a greater amount of interdependence.

Hypothesis 3

Results of bivariate correlations provided strong support for Hypothesis 3 in that individuals' relationship maintenance schema is positively associated with reports of their own enactment of maintenance behaviors for both women and men. So not surprisingly, women and men who believe that relationships require maintenance efforts in order to survive and thrive are also likely to report that they behave in ways that serve to maintain their relationships. These results are consistent with previous research that found that believing that successful relationships are cultivated and developed through effort was related to behaviors that are beneficial to relationship maintenance (Knee, 1998). Additionally, these results help to strengthen the argument made here that Sternberg's (1996, 1998) love is a garden story can be conceptualized as a measure of individuals' schema regarding the necessity of relationship maintenance efforts.

These findings may also have practical implications for couples. Previous research as well as the present study has shown that these five maintenance behaviors are related to indicators of relationship well-being, such as commitment and satisfaction (Stafford, 2002). And the present study has shown that if you hold the belief that relationships require effort and work to be successful then you are more likely to enact these maintenance behaviors. While these five maintenance behaviors may not be necessary or sufficient to the success of all relationships, it seems logical to assume that maintenance behaviors do contribute to the overall well-being of relationships. So it may be possible through intervention efforts to encourage individuals to perform maintenance behaviors more often, which in turn might benefit their relationship, if they are convinced that relationships do indeed require work in order to be successful. Intervention efforts with couples may want to consider teaching couples that relationships are not self-sustaining, but instead require that both partners behave in ways that maintain and enhance positive aspects of their relationship. Possibly more important would be prevention efforts such as discussions in premarital education classes and undergraduate family studies courses that emphasize the idea that most relationships require maintenance efforts to be successful in the long term.

Research Question 6

Results of the regression analyses for Research Question 6 provided no evidence that individuals' relationship maintenance schema moderated the associations between their personal, moral and structural commitment and their relationship maintenance behaviors. In other words, the positive associations between individuals' commitment

and their own maintenance behaviors did not depend upon the extent to which they believed that relationships require efforts to maintain them. Despite the lack of support for relationship maintenance schema as a moderator, there may be other factors that do indeed influence whether an individuals' motivation to maintain the relationship that comes from their commitment is actually put into action in the form of maintenance behaviors. Future research may want to investigate whether situational factors, such as individuals' emotional states, act as moderators.

Strengths of the Present Study

One of the strengths of the present study is that it was theoretically driven. It was conducted with Johnson's tripartite model of commitment as its inspiration. While, it is not a perfect test of Johnson's commitment framework because the measures used do not assess all of Johnson's hypothesized components of personal, moral, and structural commitment, it was one of few studies to measure personal, moral, and structural commitment. Furthermore, the present study was the first study to empirically link the tripartite model of relationship commitment with Stafford and Canary's (1991) relationship maintenance behaviors. And results of the present study support Johnson's tripartite model of commitment and its contention that personal, moral, and structural commitment have differential influences on relationships.

A second strength of the present study is that it utilized data from both partners in dating, engaged, and marital relationships. There have been few previous studies in the relational maintenance area that have sampled both partners, instead many previous studies sampled only one partner and asked them to report on their own maintenance and

relational characteristics as well as their perceptions of their partner's maintenance and relational characteristics. Moreover, some of the previous studies that included both members of couples still did not take advantage of the couple data. Instead they investigated only within person associations between participants' perception of their partner's maintenance behaviors and their own relational characteristics, thus not gaining anything over a sample that included female and male individuals from different couples. Consequently, it is rare for studies to examine cross-partner associations between maintenance behaviors and relational characteristics such as commitment. Because the present study was able to examine both intrapersonal and interpersonal or cross-partner associations, it was able to provide evidence that individuals' relationship maintenance schema and their three types of commitment predict their own maintenance behaviors which in turn predict their partner's commitment to the relationship.

Limitations of the Present Study

As with all research, the present study has certain limitations. First, the sample was less diverse than would have been ideal. There was little ethnic variation in the sample, with the majority of participants identifying themselves as Caucasian. The present study was successful at recruiting students from a wide variety of majors; however, despite the fact that the majority of men in the study were not currently college students, the majority of the women in the study were currently college students. A final limitation of the sample was that the majority of the couples who agreed to participate in the study were relatively highly personally and morally committed. These factors limit the generalizability of the present study's findings.

Another limitation of the present study is related to the study's methodology. The present study relied solely on self-report methodology. Because relationship commitment and relationship maintenance schema are cognitive, they may be best measured by self-report. In contrast, one-time self-report may not be the best or the only way to measure relationship maintenance behaviors. Unlike cognitive structures, many relationship maintenance behaviors can be outwardly observed and are potentially variable over short periods of time. When participants are asked to respond to questions about relationship maintenance that occurred in the last month, it is unclear whether all participants mentally consider the whole month or if some participants only think about the last few days.

Future Directions

Several directions for future research address limitations found regarding the present study's sample and methodology. Future research would benefit from more diversity in participants' ages, ethnic backgrounds, and educational attainment. Fortunately, several recent studies of relational maintenance have begun to address this limitation by sampling individuals with a variety of ethnic backgrounds and individuals in homosexual relationships (Canary & Dainton, 2002). Due to the sampling methods used, most of the participants in the present study and previous studies appear to be involved in relatively stable well-adjusted relationships. Because of the voluntary nature of research studies it is often difficult to recruit many couples in distressed relationships unless they are specifically targeted for recruitment. Accordingly, it has been recently

suggested that future studies compare low and high quality marriages (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002).

Furthermore, future research should explore ways to assess relationship maintenance behaviors using observational methods or daily diary methods. Virtually every study on maintenance behaviors has measured maintenance behaviors using traditional self-report questionnaires, with the notable exception of one study that used a diary-based methodology to measure maintenance behaviors (Dainton, 1998).

Employing different methodologies to assess maintenance behaviors can help validate previous findings as well as further empirical knowledge of the associations between maintenance behaviors and relationship phenomena. For instance, daily diary methods would allow for the examination of whether the frequencies of some or all maintenance behaviors fluctuate on a daily basis. Daily diaries as well as observational methods also could prove useful in determining why individuals chose certain maintenance behaviors over others and whether their enactment meets the needs of the partner and situation.

A crucial direction for future relationship maintenance research is longitudinal studies. Longitudinal studies can provide important information that will help to determine the casual order of maintenance behaviors and relational phenomenon such as commitment. While there is some evidence from cross-section research that suggests that maintenance behaviors do play a facilitating role in sustaining or developing relationships and that the lack of certain maintenance behaviors may contribute to the demise of relationships (Guerrero, Eloy & Wabnik, 1993), longitudinal studies are needed to

successfully answer the question of whether maintenance behaviors influence relationship stability.

A recent longitudinal study found that an individual's perceptions of their spouse's maintenance behaviors was not predictive of the individual's commitment, liking, or control mutuality measured one, two or three months later (Canary, Stafford, & Semic, 2002). However, concurrent associations between perceptions of maintenance behaviors and commitment, liking, and control mutuality were significant. The explanation was that the effects of perceived maintenance behaviors on relationship properties are short-lived. Therefore, the maintenance behaviors perceived to be performed a month ago by one's partner do not influence how committed individuals are to their relationships today. These results are an excellent example why measuring maintenance behaviors longitudinally with daily or weekly diary methods would be useful.

A promising direction for future research would be to directly test Johnson's (1999) idea that individuals who are low on personal and moral commitment, but high on structural commitment might attempt to lower their structural commitment in order to get out of the relationship. To adequately test this it would be critical to get a sample that included a sufficient number of participants who were low on personal and moral commitment, but high on structural commitment. Additionally, along with positive maintenance behaviors, it would be important to include negative behavioral strategies, or behaviors that serve to lower structural commitment and interfere with the maintenance of the relationship. It would also be interesting to include both members of

the couples in order to examine how the partners of these individuals react to the attempts to lower structural commitment. For example, if the partner noticed these attempts would the most effective strategy be to try to increase the other partner's personal and/or moral commitment?

Future research should also continue to examine the relational consequences of the relationship maintenance schema construct. Longitudinal studies investigating relationship maintenance schema could attempt to answer the following questions: Does holding a relationship maintenance schema that says that relationships require maintenance efforts predict relationship stability? and What are the short-term and long-term relational consequences if only one partner believes that relationships require maintenance efforts to be successful?

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Study Scales

| Scale Name | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Actual Range |
|---|-----|------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Female Personal Commitment | 180 | 5.58 | .95 | 2.07 - 7.00 |
| Male Personal Commitment | 180 | 5.54 | .95 | 3.17 - 7.00 |
| Female Moral Commitment | 180 | 5.32 | .89 | 2.75 - 7.00 |
| Male Moral Commitment | 180 | 5.23 | .90 | 2.42 - 7.00 |
| Female Structural Commitment | 180 | 3.98 | .82 | 1.17 - 5.72 |
| Male Structural Commitment | 180 | 4.20 | .88 | 1.28 - 7.00 |
| Female Positivity | 180 | 5.87 | .75 | 3.80 - 7.00 |
| Male Positivity | 180 | 5.76 | .91 | 2.20 - 7.00 |
| Female Openness | 180 | 5.65 | .99 | 1.17 - 7.00 |
| Male Openness | 180 | 5.21 | 1.21 | 1.50 - 7.00 |
| Female Assurances | 180 | 6.17 | .91 | 2.50 - 7.00 |
| Male Assurances | 180 | 5.95 | 1.06 | 2.50 - 7.00 |
| Female Social Network | 180 | 5.63 | 1.15 | 1.25 - 7.00 |
| Male Social Network | 180 | 5.29 | 1.27 | 1.00 - 7.00 |
| Female Sharing Tasks | 179 | 6.09 | .93 | 2.40 - 7.00 |
| Male Sharing Tasks | 179 | 5.77 | 1.09 | 2.80 - 7.00 |
| Female Relationship Maintenance Schema | 180 | 6.14 | .85 | 1.50 - 7.00 |
| Male Relationship Maintenance Schema | 180 | 6.02 | .85 | 3.63 - 7.00 |

Table 2

Bivariate Correlations between Individuals' Commitment and their own MaintenanceBehaviors

| | Positivity | Openness | Assurances | Social Network | Sharing Tasks |
|-----------------------------------|------------|----------|------------|------------------|---------------|
| Females' Personal Commitment | .34** | .34** | .64** | .13 ⁺ | .30** |
| Females' Moral Commitment | .16* | .29** | .46** | .19* | .20** |
| Females' Structural Commitment | .30** | .23** | .22** | .22** | .17* |
| Males' Personal Commitment | .47** | .56** | .65** | .28** | .46** |
| Males' Moral Commitment | .16* | .20** | .39** | .20** | .21** |
| Males' Structural Commitment | .50** | .40** | .46** | .22** | .38** |

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
two-tailed significance

Table 3

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Positivity

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | .24 | .07 | .31** | .05 |
| Moral Commitment | .16 | .06 | .19** | .03 |
| Structural Commitment | -.07 | .08 | -.07 | .00 |

Note. $R^2 = .15$ ($p < .001$)

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Openness

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | .22 | .10 | .22* | .03 |
| Moral Commitment | .12 | .08 | .11 | .01 |
| Structural Commitment | .15 | .11 | .13 | .01 |

Note. $R^2 = .13$ ($p < .001$)

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Assurances

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr^2 |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|------------------|--------|
| Personal Commitment | .57 | .07 | .59*** | .20 |
| Moral Commitment | -.05 | .06 | -.05 | .00 |
| Structural Commitment | .13 | .08 | .12 ⁺ | .01 |

Note. $R^2 = .42$ ($p < .001$)

⁺ $p < .10$, *** $p < .001$

Table 6

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' Social Network

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | -.06 | .12 | -.05 | .00 |
| Moral Commitment | .25 | .10 | .20* | .03 |
| Structural Commitment | .24 | .13 | .17 ⁺ | .02 |

Note. $R^2 = .07$ ($p < .01$)

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 7

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Commitment Predicting Females' SharingTasks

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr^2 |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|--------|
| Personal Commitment | .25 | .09 | .25** | .04 |
| Moral Commitment | .07 | .08 | .07 | .00 |
| Structural Commitment | .04 | .10 | .03 | .00 |

Note. $R^2 = .09$ ($p < .001$)

*** $p < .001$

Table 8

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Positivity

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr^2 |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|--------|
| Personal Commitment | .37 | .08 | .39*** | .08 |
| Moral Commitment | .34 | .08 | .34*** | .08 |
| Structural Commitment | -.18 | .08 | -.17* | .02 |

Note. $R^2 = .32$ ($p < .001$)

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Table 9

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Openness

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | .76 | .11 | .60*** | .18 |
| Moral Commitment | .18 | .10 | .14 ⁺ | .01 |
| Structural Commitment | -.27 | .10 | -.19** | .02 |

Note. $R^2 = .34$ ($p < .001$)

⁺ $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 10

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Assurances

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | .63 | .09 | .56*** | .16 |
| Moral Commitment | .17 | .08 | .14* | .01 |
| Structural Commitment | .02 | .08 | .02 | .00 |

Note. $R^2 = .44$ ($p < .001$)

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Table 11

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Social Network

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | .28 | .13 | .21* | .02 |
| Moral Commitment | .13 | .12 | .09 | .01 |
| Structural Commitment | .05 | .13 | .04 | .00 |

Note. $R^2 = .09$ ($p < .001$)

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Table 12

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Commitment Predicting Males' Sharing Tasks

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β | sr ² |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Personal Commitment | .48 | .11 | .42*** | .09 |
| Moral Commitment | .21 | .10 | .18* | .02 |
| Structural Commitment | -.12 | .10 | -.10 | .01 |

Note. $R^2 = .24$ ($p < .001$)

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1

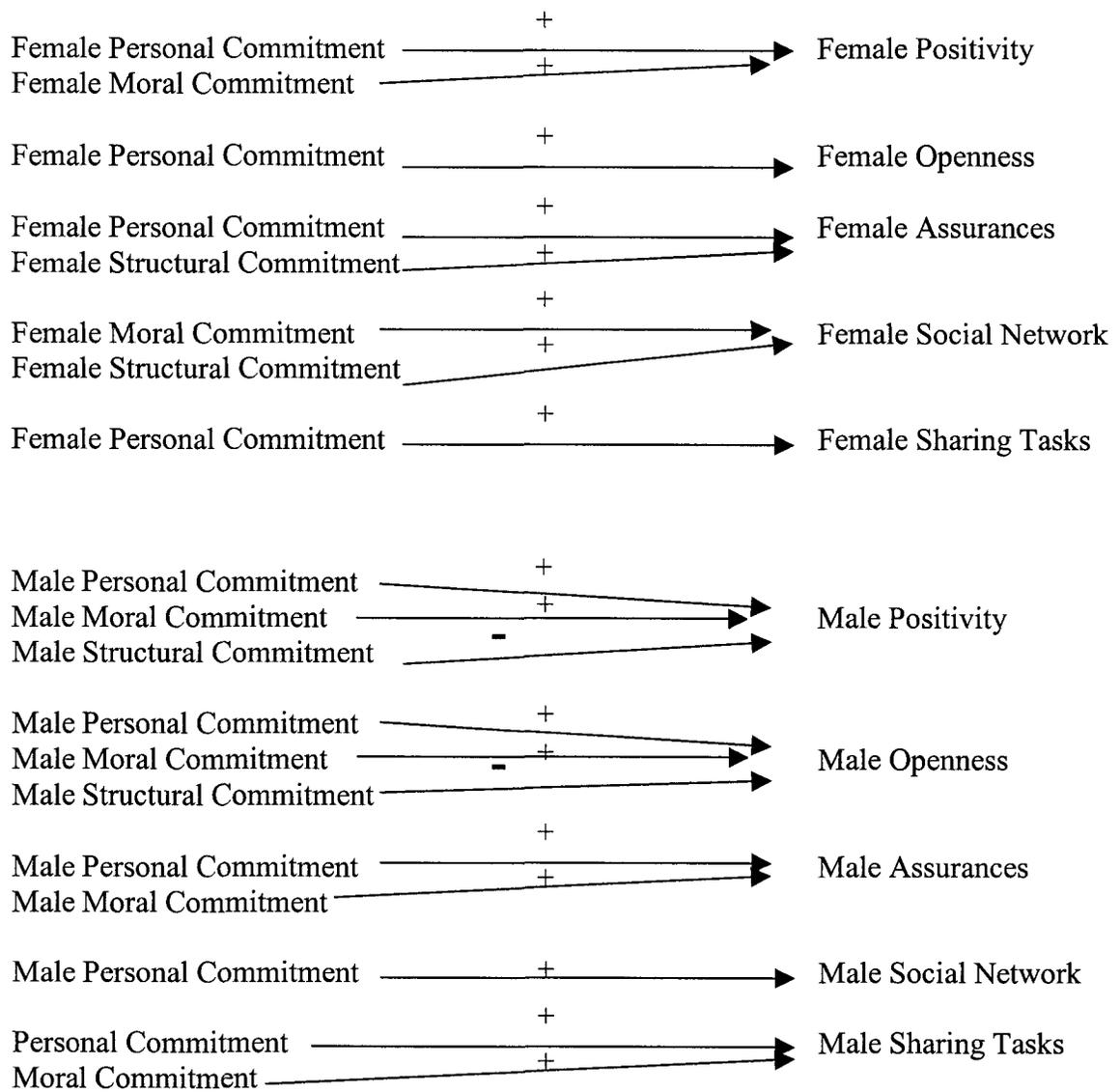
Summary of Regression Results for Research Question 3

Table 13

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Maintenance Behaviors Predicting Females'Personal Commitment

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β |
|----------------|----------|-------------|------------------|
| Positivity | -.27 | .10 | -.26** |
| Openness | .08 | .07 | .11 |
| Assurances | .37 | .08 | .41*** |
| Social Network | .01 | .06 | .01 |
| Sharing Tasks | .13 | .08 | .15 ⁺ |

Note. $R^2 = .20$ ($p < .001$).

⁺ $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 14

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Maintenance Behaviors Predicting Females'Moral Commitment

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β |
|----------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Positivity | -.12 | .10 | -.12 |
| Openness | .10 | .07 | .14 |
| Assurances | .19 | .09 | .24* |
| Social Network | .06 | .06 | .09 |
| Sharing Tasks | -.03 | .08 | -.03 |

Note. $R^2 = .09$ ($p < .01$).

* $p < .05$

Table 15

Multiple Regression Analysis for Males' Maintenance Behaviors Predicting Females'Structural Commitment

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β |
|----------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Positivity | -.09 | .10 | -.10 |
| Openness | -.00 | .07 | -.00 |
| Assurances | .25 | .08 | .32** |
| Social Network | .07 | .05 | .12 |
| Sharing Tasks | -.04 | .07 | -.06 |

Note. $R^2 = .10$ ($p < .01$).

** $p < .01$

Table 16

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Maintenance Behaviors Predicting Males'Personal Commitment

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β |
|----------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Positivity | -.02 | .11 | -.01 |
| Openness | .02 | .09 | .03 |
| Assurances | .31 | .09 | .30*** |
| Social Network | .01 | .07 | .01 |
| Sharing Tasks | -.05 | .09 | -.05 |

Note. $R^2 = .09$ ($p < .01$).

*** $p < .001$

Table 17

Multiple Regression Analysis for Females' Maintenance Behaviors Predicting Males'Moral Commitment

| Predictors | <u>B</u> | <u>SE B</u> | β |
|----------------|----------|-------------|------------------|
| Positivity | .28 | .10 | .23** |
| Openness | .05 | .08 | .06 |
| Assurances | .16 | .09 | .16 ⁺ |
| Social Network | .01 | .06 | .01 |
| Sharing Tasks | -.05 | .08 | -.05 |

Note. $R^2 = .12$ ($p < .001$).

⁺ $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$

Figure 2

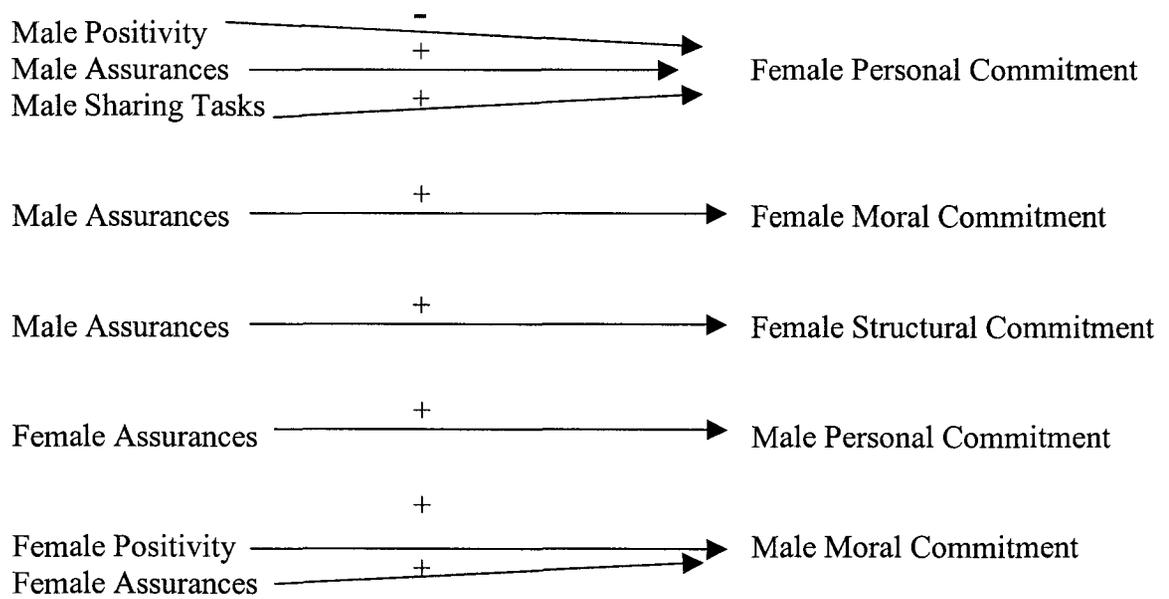
Summary of Regression Results for Hypothesis 2, Research Questions 4 and 5

Table 18

Bivariate Correlations between Females' and Males' Relationship Maintenance Schema and their own Maintenance Behaviors

| | Positivity | Openness | Assurances | Social Network | Sharing Tasks |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Females' Maintenance Schema | .26** | .34** | .17** | .24** | .26** |
| Males' Maintenance Schema | .46** | .47** | .47** | .25** | .54** |

** $p < .01$
two-tailed significance

APPENDIX A

Commitment Framework: The General Psychological Model (Johnson, 1991, p. 126)

MICHAEL P. JOHNSON

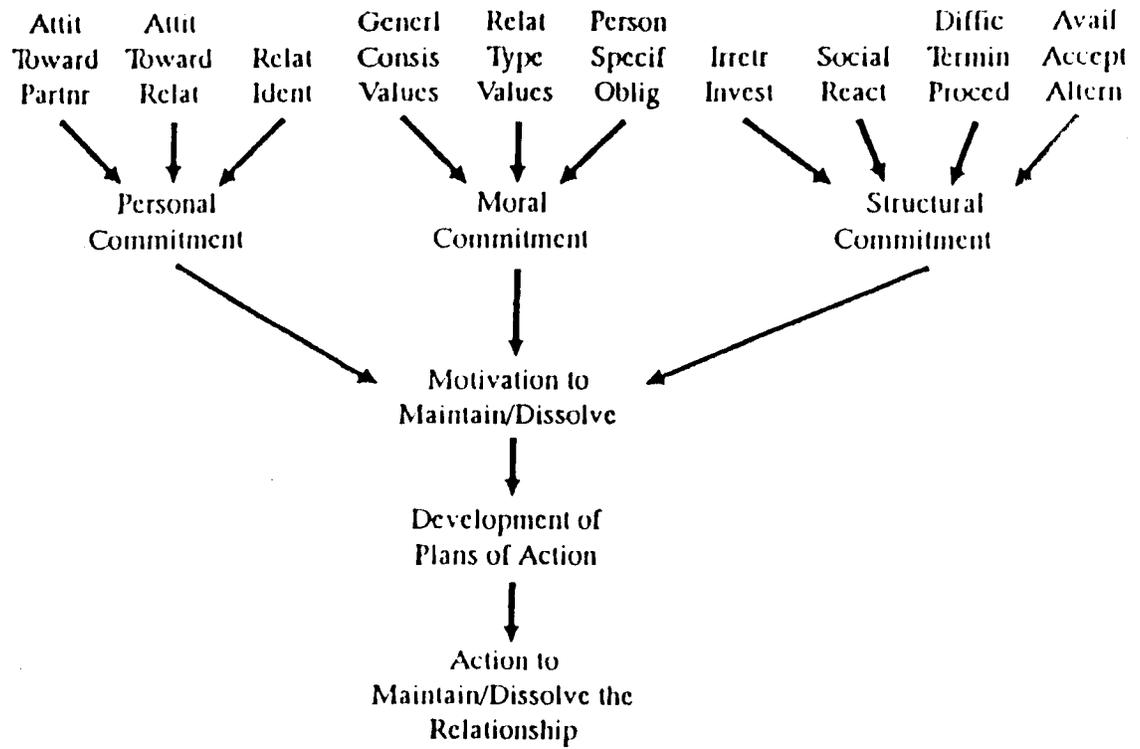


Figure 1. The General Psychological Model

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

Close Relationships Project

This questionnaire contains questions that will ask you to think about how you think and feel about your relationship with your partner, relationships in general and the ways you behave in order to maintain your relationship with your partner. "Partner" refers to the person you are dating or your spouse. These questions will take approximately 30 minutes to answer.

All of your information will be confidential and will not be shared with anyone including your partner/spouse. Your data will not be linked with your name; it will only be linked to an identification number. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose to terminate your involvement in this project at any time with no negative consequences. By completing this questionnaire, consent for use of this information is given.

Please remember to fill this questionnaire out separately from your partner.

Demographic Questions

Age: _____ years

Gender: _____ Female _____ Male

Ethnicity: _____ Black/African American _____ American Indian
 _____ Hispanic/Mexican American _____ White/Caucasian
 _____ Asian American
 _____ Other (please specify) _____

What is the highest level of education you have attained (last year of school you have completed)?

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ Less than high school | _____ Junior in College |
| _____ GED | _____ Senior in College |
| _____ High School Diploma | _____ Bachelor's Degree |
| _____ Freshman in College | _____ Master's Degree |
| _____ Sophomore in College | |
| _____ Other (please specify) _____ | |

Are you currently enrolled at the University of Arizona?

Yes No

If you are getting extra credit in a class for participating in this project, please list the course: _____

If currently a U of A student, what is your major? _____

If currently a U of A student, what is your GPA? _____

Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

- Casually dating
- Seriously dating
- Engaged
- Married

Are you currently living with your partner/spouse?

Yes No

If married, what was the date of your wedding? _____

If married, how long did you date your spouse before you married him/her? (please be as specific as possible, using weeks, months or years as appropriate) _____

If dating, how long have you been dating your partner?

(please be as specific as possible, using weeks, months or years as appropriate) _____

My Relationship with My Partner/Spouse

The following items concern your thoughts and feelings toward your partner and your relationship. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree that the following statements are true of your thoughts and feelings IN THE LAST MONTH. Please rate each of the items using the scale below and write the number corresponding to your answer on the line.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |

I may decide that I want to end this relationship at some point in the future. _____

I want this relationship to stay strong no matter what rough times we may encounter. _____

I want to grow old with my partner. _____

My relationship with my partner is clearly part of my future life plans. _____

I may not want to be with my partner a few years from now. _____

I do not have life-long plans for this relationship. _____

I don't make commitments unless I believe I will keep them. _____

I do not feel compelled to keep all of the commitments that I make. _____

I have trouble making commitments because I do not want to close off alternatives. _____

I try hard to follow through on all of my commitments. _____

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |
| Fairly often I make commitments to people or things that I do not follow through on. | | | | | | _____ |
| Following through on commitments is an essential part of who I am. | | | | | | _____ |
| I want to keep the plans for my life somewhat separate from my partner's plans for life. | | | | | | _____ |
| I am willing to have or develop a stronger sense of an identity as a couple with my partner. | | | | | | _____ |
| I tend to think about how things affect "us" as a couple more than how things affect "me" as an individual. | | | | | | _____ |
| I like to think of my partner and me more in terms of "us" and "we" than "me" and "him/her". | | | | | | _____ |
| I am more comfortable thinking in terms of "my" things than "our" things. | | | | | | _____ |
| I do not want to have a strong identity as a couple with my partner. | | | | | | _____ |
| My relationship with my partner comes before my relationship with my friends. | | | | | | _____ |
| My career/job/studies is more important to me than my relationship with my partner. | | | | | | _____ |
| When push comes to shove, my relationship with my partner often must take a backseat to other interests of mine. | | | | | | _____ |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |

When the pressure is really on and I must choose, my partner's happiness is not as important to me as are other things in my life. _____

My relationship with my partner is more important to me than almost anything else in my life. _____

When push comes to shove, my relationship with my partner comes first. _____

It can be personally fulfilling to give up something for my partner. _____

I do not get much fulfillment out of sacrificing for my partner. _____

I get satisfaction out of doing things for my partner, even if it means I miss out on something I want for myself. _____

I am not the kind of person that finds satisfaction in putting aside my interests for the sake of my relationship with my partner. _____

It makes me feel good to sacrifice for my partner. _____

Giving something up for my partner is frequently not worth the trouble. _____

I know people of the opposite sex whom I desire more than my partner. _____

I am not seriously attracted to people of the opposite sex other than my partner. _____

I am not seriously attracted to anyone other than my partner. _____

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |

Though I would not want to end the relationship with my partner, I would like to have a romantic/sexual relationship with someone other than my partner. _____

I do not often find myself thinking about what it would be like to be in a relationship with someone else. _____

I think a lot about what it would be like to be dating or married to someone other than my partner. _____

Except when a spouse dies, marriage should be a once-in-a-lifetime commitment. _____

People should feel free to end a marriage as long as the children are not going to be hurt. _____

Divorce is wrong. _____

If a couple works hard at making their marriage work but find themselves incompatible, divorce is the best thing they can do. _____

It is all right for a couple to get a divorce if their marriage is not working out. _____

A marriage is a sacred bond between two people which should not be broken. _____

It would be very difficult to find a new partner. _____

I would have trouble finding a suitable partner if this relationship ended. _____

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |

If for any reason my relationship ended, I could find another partner. _____

I believe there are many people who would be happy with me as their spouse or partner. _____

Though it might take awhile, I could find another desirable partner if I wanted or needed to. _____

I am not very attractive to the opposite sex. _____

My friends would not mind it if my partner and I broke up. _____

My family would not care either way if this relationship ended. _____

It would be difficult for my friends to accept it if I ended the relationship with my partner. _____

My friends want to see my relationship with my partner continue. _____

My family really wants this relationship to work. _____

My family would not care if I ended this relationship. _____

This relationship has cost me very little in terms of physical, tangible resources. _____

I have not spent much money on my partner. _____

I would lose money, or feel like money had been wasted, if my partner and I broke up. _____

I would lose valuable possessions if I left my partner. _____

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |

I have put a number of tangible, valuable resources into this relationship.

I have put very little money into this relationship.

My Maintenance Behavior

The following items concern things people might do to maintain their relationships. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive that each of the following describes your current methods of maintaining your relationship IN THE LAST MONTH. Please rate each of the items using the scale below and write the number corresponding to your answer on the line.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | | | | | | Strongly Agree |
| I attempt to make our interactions very enjoyable | | | | | | _____ |
| I am cooperative in the ways I handle disagreements between us | | | | | | _____ |
| I try to build up his/her self-esteem, including giving him/her compliments, etc. | | | | | | _____ |
| I ask how his/her day has gone | | | | | | _____ |
| I am very nice, courteous, and polite when we talk | | | | | | _____ |
| I act cheerful and positive when with him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I do not criticize him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I try to be romantic, fun, and interesting with him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I am patient and forgiving of him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I present myself as cheerful and optimistic | | | | | | _____ |
| I encourage him/her to disclose thoughts and feelings to me | | | | | | _____ |
| I simply tell him/her how I feel about our relationship | | | | | | _____ |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | | | | | | Strongly Agree |
| I seek to discuss the quality of our relationship | | | | | | _____ |
| I disclose what I need or want from our relationship | | | | | | _____ |
| I remind him/her about relationship decisions we made in the past | | | | | | _____ |
| I like to have periodic talks about our relationship | | | | | | _____ |
| I stress my commitment to him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I imply that our relationship has a future | | | | | | _____ |
| I show my love for him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I show myself to be faithful to him/her | | | | | | _____ |
| I like to spend time with our same friends | | | | | | _____ |
| I focus on common friends and affiliations | | | | | | _____ |
| I show that I am willing to do things with his/her friends or family | | | | | | _____ |
| I include our friends or family in our activities | | | | | | _____ |
| I help equally with tasks that need to be done | | | | | | _____ |
| I share in the joint responsibilities that face us | | | | | | _____ |
| I do my fair share of the work we have to do | | | | | | _____ |
| I do not shirk my duties | | | | | | _____ |
| I perform my household responsibilities | | | | | | _____ |

My Thoughts About Relationships

The following questions ask you about your thoughts and beliefs about how close relationships between dating or marital partners. Please rate each of the items using the scale below and write the number corresponding to your answer on the line.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | | | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | | Strongly Agree |

I believe a good relationship is attainable only if you are willing to spend the time and energy to care for it, just as you care for a garden. _____

I believe any relationship that is left unattended will not survive. _____

I believe relationships need to be nourished constantly in order to survive the ups and downs of life. _____

I believe the secret to a successful relationship is the care that partners take of each other and of their love. _____

I believe no love will survive without constant care and nourishment. _____

I think a love relationship between two people is similar to a delicate flower; it will die if it is left unattended. _____

It is important that I properly nurture and tend to relationships. _____

I devote a great deal of effort and care to relationships. _____

APPENDIX C: HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

Human Subjects Protection Program
http://vpr2.admin.arizona.edu/human_subjects

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ARIZONA[®]
TUCSON ARIZONA

1350 E. Vine Avenue
P.O. Box 245137
Tucson, AZ 85724-5137
(520) 626-6721

30 July 2002

Amy Busboom, M.S.
Advisor: Rodney Cate, Ph.D.
Department of Family and Consumer Sciences
PO Box 210033

RE: **BSC B02.153 CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS PROJECT**

Dear Ms. Busboom:

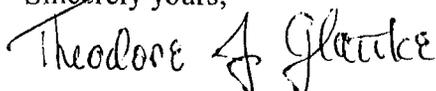
We received your research proposal as cited above. The procedures to be followed in this study pose no more than minimal risk to participating subjects. Regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [45 CFR Part 46.110(b)] authorize approval of this type project through the expedited review procedures, with the condition(s) that subjects' anonymity be maintained. Although full Committee review is not required, a brief summary of the project procedures is submitted to the Committee for their endorsement and/or comment, if any, after administrative approval is granted. This project is approved effective **30 July 2002** for a period of one year..

The Human Subjects Committee (Institutional Review Board) of the University of Arizona has a current assurance of compliance, number M-1233, which is on file with the Department of Health and Human Services and covers this activity.

Approval is granted with the understanding that no further changes or additions will be made either to the procedures followed or to the consent form(s) used (copies of which we have on file) without the knowledge and approval of the Human Subjects Committee and your College or Departmental Review Committee. Any research related physical or psychological harm to any subject must also be reported to each committee.

A university policy requires that all signed subject consent forms be kept in a permanent file in an area designated for that purpose by the Department Head or comparable authority. This will assure their accessibility in the event that university officials require the information and the principal investigator is unavailable for some reason.

Sincerely yours,



Theodore J. Glatke, Ph.D.

Chair

Social and Behavioral Sciences Human Subjects Committee

TJG:tl

cc: Departmental/College Review Committee

REFERENCES

- Adams, J. M., & Jones, W. H. (1997). The conceptualization of marital commitment: An integrative analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *72*, 1177-1196.
- Adams, J. M., & Jones, W. H. (1999). Interpersonal commitment in historical perspective. In J. M. Adams & W. H. Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability* (pp.3-33). New York: Plenum.
- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Amato, P. R., & DeBoer, D. D. (2001). The transmission of marital instability across generations: Relationship skills or commitment to marriage? *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *63*, 1038-1051.
- Amato, P. R., Johnson, D. R., Booth, A., & Rogers, S. J. (2003). Continuity and change in marital quality between 1980 and 2000. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *65*, 1-22.
- Ayres, J. (1983). Strategies to maintain relationships: Their identification and perceived usage. *Communication Quarterly*, *31*, 62-67.
- Bagarozzi, D. A., & Attilano, R. B. (1982). SIDCARB: A clinical tool for assessment of social exchange inequities and relationship barriers. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, *8*, 325-334.

- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1173-1182.
- Bell, R. A., Daly, J. A., & Gonzalez, C. (1987). Affinity-maintenance in marriage and its relationship to women's marital satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49*, 445-454.
- Braiker, H., & Kelley, H. (1979). Conflict in the development of close relationships. In R. Burgess & T. Huston (Eds.), *Social exchange in developing relationships* (pp. 135-168). New York: Academic Press.
- Canary, D. J., & Dainton, M. (2002). *Maintaining relationships through communication: Relational, contextual, and cultural variations*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (1992). Relational maintenance strategies and equity in marriage. *Communication Monographs, 59*, 239-267.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (1993). Preservation of relational characteristics: Maintenance strategies, equity, and locus of control. In P. Kalbfleisch (Ed.), *Interpersonal communication: Evolving interpersonal relationships* (pp. 237-259). Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (2001). Equity in the preservation of personal relationships. In J. Harvey & A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close romantic relationships: Maintenance and enhancement* (pp. 133-151). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Canary, D. J., Stafford, L., Hause, K. S., & Wallace, L. A. (1993). An inductive analysis of relational maintenance strategies: Comparisons among lovers, relatives, friends, and others. *Communication Research Reports, 10*, 5-14.
- Canary, D. J., Stafford, L., & Semic, B. A. (2002). A panel study of the associations between maintenance strategies and relational characteristics. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*, 395-406.
- Cohen, J., & Cohen, P. (1983). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences*. (2nd Edition). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dainton, M., & Stafford, L. (1993). Routine maintenance behaviors: A comparison of relationship type, partner similarity and sex differences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*, 255-271.
- Dainton, M., Stafford, L., & Canary, D. J. (1994). Maintenance strategies and physical affection as predictors of love, liking, and satisfaction in marriage. *Communication Reports, 7*, 88-98.
- Dindia, K. (1994). A multiphasic view of relationship maintenance strategies. In D. J. Canary & L. Stafford (Eds.), *Communication and relational maintenance* (pp. 91-112). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Dindia, K. (2000). Relational maintenance. In C. Hendrick & S. S. Hendrick (Eds.), *Close relationships: A sourcebook* (pp. 287-299). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Dindia, K., & Baxter, L. (1987). Strategies for maintaining and repairing marital relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 4*, 143-158.

- Dindia, K., & Canary, D. J. (1993). Definitions and theoretical perspectives on maintaining relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*, 163-173.
- Duck, S. (1994). Steady as (s)he goes: Relationship maintenance as a shared meaning system. In D. J. Canary & L. Stafford (Eds.), *Communication and relational maintenance* (pp. 45-60). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Holmbeck, G. N. (1997). Toward terminological, conceptual, and statistical clarity in the study of mediators and moderators: Examples from the child-clinical and pediatric psychology literatures. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 65*, 599-610.
- Huston, T. L. (2000). The social ecology of marriage and other intimate unions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 62*, 298-320.
- Johnson, M. P. (1991). Commitment to personal relationships. In W. H. Jones & D. Perlman (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships* (Vol. 3, pp. 117-143). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Johnson, M. P. (1999). Personal, moral, and structural commitment to relationships. In J. M. Adams & W. H. Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability* (pp.427-449). New York: Plenum.
- Johnson, M. P., Caughlin, J. P., & Huston, T. L. (1999). The tripartite nature of marital commitment: Personal, moral, and structural reasons to stay married. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 160-177.

- Knee, C. R. (1998). Implicit theories of relationships: Assessment and prediction of romantic relationship initiation, coping, and longevity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 360-370.
- Levinger, G. (1976). A social psychological perspective on marital dissolution. *Journal of Social Issues, 32*, 21-47.
- Levinger, G. (1999). Duty toward whom? Rconsidering attractions and barriers as determinants of commitment in a relationship. In J. M. Adams & W. H. Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability* (pp.37-52). New York: Plenum.
- Lewin, K. (1951). *Field theory in social science*. New York: Harper.
- Pedhazur, E. J., & Kerlinger, F. N. (1982). *Multiple regression in behavioral research: Explanation and prediction*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Perlman, D. (2001). Maintaining and enhancing relationships: Concluding commentary. In J. Harvey & A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close romantic relationships: Maintenance and enhancement* (pp. 357-377). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Rusbult, C. E. (1980). Commitment and satisfaction in romantic associations: A test of the investment model. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 16*, 172-186.
- Rusbult, C. E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 45*, 101-117.

- Rusbult, C. E. (1991). Commentary on Johnson's 'Commitment to personal relationships': What's interesting, and what's new? In W. H. Jones & D. Perlman (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships* (Vol. 3, pp. 151-169). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Rusbult, C. E., Olsen, N., Davis, J. L., & Hannon, P. A. (2001). Commitment and relationship maintenance mechanisms. In J. Harvey & A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close romantic relationships: Maintenance and enhancement* (pp. 87-113). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Rusbult, C. E., Wieselquist, J., Foster, C. A., & Witcher, B. S. (1999). Commitment and trust in close relationships. In J. M. Adams & W. H. Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability* (pp.427-449). New York: Plenum.
- Stafford, L. (2002). Maintaining romantic relationships: A summary and analysis of one research program. In D. J. Canary & M. Dainton (Eds.), *Maintaining relationships through communication: Relational, contextual, and cultural variations* (pp. 51-77). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Stafford, L., & Canary, D. J. (1991). Maintenance strategies and romantic relationship type, gender and relational characteristics. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 8, 217-242.
- Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (1992). Assessing commitment in personal relationships. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 54, 595-608.
- Sternberg, R. J. (1996). Love stories. *Personal Relationships*, 3, 59-79.

- Sternberg, R. J. (1998). *Love is a story: A new theory of relationships*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Sternberg, R. J., Hojjat, M., & Barnes, M. L. (2001). Empirical tests of aspects of a theory of love as a story. *European Journal of Personality, 15*, 199-218.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2001). *Using multivariate statistics*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Thibaut, J. W., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. New York: Wiley.
- Thornton, A., & Young-DeMarco, L. (2001). Four decades of trends in attitudes toward family issues in the United States: The 1960s through the 1990s. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63*, 1009-1037
- Udry, J. R. (1981). Marital alternatives and marital disruption. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 43*, 889-897.
- Weigel, D. J., & Ballard-Reisch, D. S. (1999). How couples maintain marriages: A closer look at self and spouse influences upon the use of maintenance behaviors in marriages. *Family Relations, 48*, 263-269.
- Wenzel, A., & Harvey, J. (2001). Introduction: The movement toward studying the maintenance and enhancement of close romantic relationships. In J. Harvey & A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close romantic relationships: Maintenance and enhancement* (pp. 1-10). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Wieselquist, J., Rusbult, C. E., Foster, C. A., & Agnew, C. R. (1999). Commitment, pro-relationship behavior, and trust in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*, 942-966.