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## A Comparative Look at Marital Happiness and Conflict in American Cross-National and Same-Nation Marriages

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A COMPARATIVE LOOK AT MARITAL HAPPINESS AND CONFLICT IN  
AMERICAN CROSS-NATIONAL AND SAME-NATION MARRIAGES

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Sandra Meinecke

December, 1998

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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Date

Also, as conjectured, after the 18 month adjustment period, the two marital types reported similar levels of marital conflict.

Two areas proved to be more contentious for cross-national respondents than same-nation respondents: agreement/disagreement over the best way to raise a child and gender ideology. Cross-national parents must make decisions over children's religion, names language, etc., and this can be emotionally charged and involve a threat to one or both parents' identities. Also, for cross-national respondents, traditional gender ideology was the only variable that had a significant association with marital happiness and global happiness. This, tied in with cross-national respondents fighting over housework, seems to suggest that sex role attitudes may be a special area that cross-national couples need to be aware of in order to make marriages run more smoothly.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the similarities and dissimilarities of perceived levels of marital conflict and happiness in cross-national and same-nation marriages and some related issues.

Globally, economic and social ties between nations have increased dramatically since World War II. As a result, more and more individuals are working, studying and traveling abroad. This marked increase in international mobility has also given rise to an increase in the number of international marriages (Cottrell 1990; Imamura 1986). For example, the number of foreign spouses entering the United States annually has increased from 27,761 in 1960 to 145,247 in 1994 (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 1960 and 1994). In Japan, the number of Japanese nationals married to foreign spouses more than doubled between 1965 and 1985 to over 12,000 (Cottrell 1990). In France, while the overall number of marriages decreased every year from 1975 to 1981, the number of cross-national marriages in this same time period remained steady at over 20,000 a year. As of 1981, France reported a total of 143,321 cross-national marriages (Barbara 1989).

As societies become more pluralistic, the study of cross-national marriages will provide valuable information at both the micro and macro levels of society. At the micro level, any insights into the life stages of cross-national couples and their methods of negotiating cultural or value differences would be of great use to people in the helping professions (Cottrell 1990). At the macro level, the number and type of cross-national marriages and the reaction of the social environment to such marriages would provide useful information about social distance, "marginality, acculturation, and culture change" (Cottrell 1990). According to Delcroix, Guyaux, and Rodriguez (1989), the cultural misunderstandings and differences encountered by cross-national couples are not

fundamentally different from some of the problems experienced by heads of states of countries who are culturally poles apart. Thus, any particular cultural conflict, cultural adjustment or cultural resolution brought on by the cross-national couple at the micro level could shed light on the misunderstandings that occur at the macro level in relations between nations and their representatives.

### **Cross-National Marriage as a Specific Research Topic**

Despite the dramatic increase in cross-national marriage over the last 50 years, a review of the English language literature dealing with cross-national marriage shows that there is little research on this topic. From a content analysis on English language literature concerning intergroup marriage, Cottrell (1990) discovered that of the 367 books and articles identified, only 13% dealt with cross-national marriage, and of these articles, very few considered cross-national marriage as a separate topic. Instead, cross-national marriages have been placed under such topics as interracial, interfaith or interethnic marriages. This, according to Cottrell (1990), can be problematic, since cross-national marriages are unique in that they can be interfaith and interethnic/interracial or they can be none of these things.

What sets cross-national marriages apart from other heterogamous marriages is that it is possible to have a marriage partner of the same religion, and same ethnic/racial group, yet have very different cultural values due to the couple's socialization in different countries. For example, a Syrian American married to a Syrian national may be surprised to encounter profound differences in gender role expectations, child rearing, etc. In much of the Middle East, the culture/religion dictates that a wife must ask her husband for permission to leave the house. Nermine, a Syrian national, was hurt that her Syrian American husband didn't "keep tabs" on her movements. She felt that if her husband really loved her, he would want to know when she left the house and where she went. Also, she

felt it was odd that he wanted to be so involved in the day-to-day care of their infant son (changing diapers, feeding and dressing the baby), and she became embarrassed when he did it in front of company.

Conversely, Cottrell points out that “equating cross-national with cross-cultural is overly simplistic” (p. 152). For example, in India there are many diverse cultural/religious groups—Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi. Within each of these groups there are cultural patterns that range from very traditional to modern, and sometimes Western. Consequently, an Indian who is an “urban, Westernized Christian will have fewer cultural differences married to an American Christian than married to an Indian who is an orthodox Hindu” (Cottrell 1990, p. 152).

Another way cross-national marriages differ from most intergroup marriages is that these couples usually maintain ties with their countries of origin and in many instances retain their citizenship (and possibly dual citizenship depending upon the laws of the countries involved). Children of cross-national married couples are also likely to have dual citizenship. Further, it is possible for cross-national couples to live in a third country where both partners are foreign (Cottrell 1990).

Finally, cross-national couples face some unique circumstances. Maintaining ties with one's country of origin may be done at a considerable financial cost to the cross-national couple due to travel and telephone expenses. Also, if the cross-national couple were to divorce, ties to two countries, particularly if they are continents apart, may result in complicated child custody battles, not to mention the deep psychological costs of a parent and child being physically thousands of miles apart, and the financial and legal barriers that may prevent visitation.

### **Recent Publications on Cross-National Marriage**

Since Cottrell's (1990) review of the English language literature on cross-national marriage was published, two articles, two books, and two doctoral dissertations have been written that specifically deal with this type of marriage. The two recent articles dealing with aspects of cross-national marriage are "The Quiet Immigration: Foreign Spouses of U.S. Citizens, 1945-1985," written by Thornton (1992), and "Identity Construction within a Bi-Cultural Context," written by Kourti and Androussou (1994). Thornton's article looks at how U.S. immigration legislation has influenced immigration patterns and thus contributed to the recent increase in international marriages, especially those involving non-Europeans. This article is mainly descriptive and provides evidence for the increasing trend of cross-national marriages in the United States. Kourti and Androussou's article looks at how 9-11 year old French-Greek children living in Greece construct identity. The authors suggest that everyday cultural identification and language are the primary determinants of identity. Although this article is not written specifically about cross-national married couples, research on bi-cultural children can be used to shed light on parental values by looking at the couples' choices for children's religion, names, schooling, language, etc.

Two recent book publications on cross-national marriage are Marriage Across Frontiers, an English translation of a French book written by Barbara (1989), and Inside the Mixed Marriage, edited by Johnson and Warren (1994). Marriage across Frontiers uses personal interviews with cross-national couples and their children in order to explore all the idiosyncrasies of the cross-national union. The book looks at the following: the first encounter of the couple; the parent's reaction to the mixed marriage and foreign partner; life as a married couple without children; married life with children and the difficult choices that need to be made with regard to names, religion, language, nationality and education; a focus on the children and their cultural identity; crisis and divorce; and the role of social class in determining the success of a "mixed marriage" (Barbara 1989). Inside the Mixed

Marriage (Johnson and Warren 1994) is a collection of personal experiences of people in "mixed marriages." A few of the personal stories covered in the book concern black-white intermarriage in the United States. However, a majority of the couples in this book are cross-national. The editors intentionally steered clear of any theoretical analysis. Marital partners provided a narration of what they saw as the advantages and constraints their marriages had placed on them and their children. The mixed couples discussed the impact society had on their marriages, and they speculated on the impact that their marriages have had on the attitudes of others.

Two recent doctoral dissertations on cross-national marriage are "Inside the House and Across the Seas: Transnational Arranged Marriage Among British-Pakistani Families" (Crane 1996), and "Selfing and Othering in the 'Foreign Bride' Phenomenon: A Study of Class, Gender and Ethnicity in the Transnational Marriages Between Taiwanese Men and Indonesian Women" (Hsia 1997). Crane's dissertation looks at how arranged marriages between British-Pakistanis and Pakistani nationals perpetuate transnational connections between families who are continents apart. Crane discusses the British-Pakistani preference for first-cousin marriage (though arranged marriages between distant relatives and non-relatives are also common) with Pakistani nationals as a means of "cultural renewal." The British government also plays a role in encouraging first-cousin marriages, by defining marriage between first cousins as the only "true" arranged marriage in order to limit the migration of Pakistani spouses to Britain (Crane 1996). Hsia's (1997) dissertation looks at marriage between Taiwanese men and Indonesian women as an example of the globalization of the trade in women, comparable to Asian and East European mail-order brides popular in the U.S. Hsia (1997) brings attention to ethnic/racial and class tensions between Taiwanese and Indonesian people. Taiwanese society portrays couples in transnational marriages as "tainting" the rest of the population. Hsia also discusses how a

person's identity construction of "self" and of the "other" as inferior is used to "perpetuate the structure of inequalities" in society (Hsia 1997).

Despite these more recent publications, there is little English language research on cross-national marriage as a specific topic, and within the available literature specifically dealing with cross-national marriage, even less research is available on the dynamics of the couple in this type of marriage. What research is available on the relationships themselves, largely focuses on the problems encountered by these marriages. There are other limitations. Looking at the social research on cross-national marriages since the 1950s, Cottrell (1990) points out that the subjects in most of the studies were selected by methods that limited their representativeness. In particular, the respondents were often clients of social workers, psychologists or were actively seeking help from clergy. This may have enhanced the "deviant," problematic character of cross-national marriage as portrayed in the literature and social research.

In the following chapter, the research literature is examined in more detail.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a more detailed look at the research literature on cross-national marriage. Five topics are covered: 1) the different types of cross-national marriage; 2) the impact of social class on cross-national unions; 3) the limitations of current research literature on cross-national marriage; 4) marital adjustment in cross-national marriage; and 5) the heterogamy hypothesis (which states that marital differences in a couple lead to marital instability and to low marital quality) and how it has influenced social research on mixed couples, i.e., cross-national couples, interethnic couples, interreligious couples, etc.

#### **Types of Cross-National Marriage**

Based on a review of the literature and the social research on cross-national marriage since the 1950s, Cottrell (1990) was able to identify three types of cross-national marriage: colonial/war bride marriage; Western-non-Western marriage; and Western-Western or "near culture" marriage.

Colonial or war bride marriages are the "result of one nation's military or colonial presence in another" (Cottrell 1990). A majority of the English language literature on this type of marriage concerns American servicemen and their Asian brides. Colonial/war bride marriages dominated the literature on cross-national marriage from 1950 well into the 1970s. The literature emphasized the alienation and isolation resulting from such marriages. The American husbands were characterized as "alienated, loners, insecure, dependent" (Cottrell 1990). A disproportionate number of these men were from single parent homes and most of them had lower middle class backgrounds with a high school education (Cottrell 1990). The Asian brides, on the other hand, were, on average, from a higher social class than their American husbands. As a result of war, occupation, and the



desperate circumstances they found themselves in, many Asian women looked at marriage to American servicemen as a means of attaining financial security. Also, the political and social upheavals in their respective countries permitted the break-down of cultural restraints that previously had discouraged and prevented the marriage of these women to foreigners.

Most of the studies on colonial/war bride couples show the couple to be socially isolated partly as a result of poor communication between the couple; the wife's lack of outside resources, i.e. employment, family; and a "dysfunctional" husband and his inability or unwillingness to help his bride adjust to her new surroundings (Cottrell 1990). Not all of the literature painted this type of marriage in such an unpleasant light. Studies by Strauss (1954) and Schnepf and Yui (1955) looked at how consensus on gender roles for Japanese and American couples facilitated a relatively conflict-free marriage. Jones (1972) showed that most Asian-American war bride couples reported their marriages to be happy, though they were more prone to conflict than a control group of same-nation married couples.

Western-non-Western marriage is a recent topic of research, reflecting the increasing number of people studying, traveling and working abroad (Cottrell, 1990). Most, but not all, of the husbands in this type of marriage are from non-Western nations; particularly within the United States. The predominant focus of research on such marriages is culture conflict and marginality. Most of the couples involved are college educated and come from middle to upper class families. Research shows that the individuals involved in this type of marriage are not deeply committed to a religion and are free from the strict constraints of their own cultures (Cottrell 1990; Romano 1988).

Most of the studies on Western-non-Western marriage look at the difficulties the Western wife encounters living in a foreign land. Often, the focus is on how Western wives (most are American) learn to adapt to traditional, male-dominated societies. Unlike Asian war brides, English-speaking Western wives living in foreign lands face much less

of a language barrier since most educated non-Westerners speak English. Also, most of these Western wives, unlike the Asian war brides, are highly educated and have some type of professional employment. The major difficulty Western women have in their husbands' native land is being able to adapt to the different role expectations that traditional societies have for wives and mothers. So, unlike Asian war brides, Western wives have more resources to help them cope, and instead of being isolated, they feel marginal due to the conflicts they encounter in meeting traditional role expectations (Imamura 1990).

The last type of cross-national marriage identified by Cottrell (1990) is the Western-Western or near culture marriage. Cottrell (1990) based this type of marriage on a single study by Varro of American women married to French nationals living in France. These cross-national couples were highly educated professionals and all ethnically "white." Varro's study emphasized the American wife's personal fulfillment through having bicultural, bilingual children. The major difficulties these American wives encountered in their foreign host country were professional. Differences in licensing or degree requirements often prevented the American wives from attaining satisfying professional employment. Some cultural differences in child rearing posed a problem for these couples. However, the American wives in Varro's (1988) study did not think of their marriages as "really mixed" due to the similarity of American and French cultures, and most of these women reported little or no feelings of marginality or isolation (P. 72). A majority of the American wives in Varro's study had already been exposed to French culture and were Francophiles at the time of their marriage. Many of these American wives stated that they preferred French culture to American culture (Varro 1988).

### **The Effect of Social Class on Cross-National Marriage**

One can see two generalizations being made about cross-national marriage in the literature. First, the more alike the cross-national couple are in terms of culture and

ethnicity/race, the less conflict encountered in such marriages. The emphasis on Western-Western or near culture marriages is on bi-cultural enrichment, not tension. Second, a cross-national couple's social background or educational attainment will determine whether one or both of the partners in Western-non-Western marriages will be isolated or merely marginal.

As stated earlier, a highly educated, English speaking woman, married to a "foreign" man, living in a foreign country, has the opportunity to find professional employment outside the marriage. This translates into an increase in social contacts, perhaps financial independence and an overall awareness and ability to fall back on other sources of support outside the family. Thus, these women are able to avoid being isolated. Likewise, a highly educated man married to a "foreign" woman, living in a foreign country, is more likely to be accepted by the majority group (despite tell-tale differences in physical features or religious practices that may set him apart) if he has a professional skill. In Barbara's study of foreign men married to French nationals, highly educated professional men often were able to immerse themselves fully in French culture in their professional practice and external relationships, but at home, in a protected and loving environment, could allow their private identity to be shown. Foreign blue collar workers in France, on the other hand, do not receive the automatic respect that their professional brethren do. If their partner is also working class and they are living in a working class neighborhood, the foreign man encounters much more intolerance for ethnic and religious differences, even from his own wife. Thus, uneducated, working class foreign men are more likely to find themselves feeling isolated from the dominant group than professional foreign men (Barbara 1989).

Whereas poor, uneducated, working class males manage to immigrate to France and other countries in search of employment, it is not as common for a poor, uneducated woman to immigrate. This is especially true if she is from a developing country with a

patriarchal society where women do not travel without a spouse or relative, and where women with no education are often strongly discouraged from working outside the home (particularly so for immigrants from Morocco, Algeria and Nigeria; countries which are dominated by Islam) (Barbara 1989). However, one can assume that a working class foreign woman would have limited job opportunities (beyond menial service or unskilled manufacturing employment) and would have fewer resources and a much harder time fitting in and being accepted by the majority group than an educated foreign woman. Indeed, a reoccurring theme of Barbara's (1989) book is how a cross-national married couple's social class will determine the ease to which the couple can have a happy "mixed lifestyle" marriage. For instance, working class cross-national couples often cannot afford to maintain ties with the foreign partner's country and family because of expensive travel costs. Children from such unions may grow up without having much exposure to the "other" culture and this can make a parent feel a profound loss of identity, particularly if the children are unable to speak or understand the "foreign" parents' language (Varro, 1988). Also, as mentioned earlier, Barbara states that working class people are less tolerant of ethnic and religious differences, and the low social status of the foreign partner makes it difficult to integrate into the dominant community.

Without trying to look for explanations, Weller and Rofe (1988) found that high levels of educational attainment for both spouses translated into greater marital satisfaction and lower divorce rates for both ethnically mixed (the subjects were Israeli nationals with different ethnic backgrounds--"Oriental" or Western) and homogeneous marriages in Israel.

With regard to social class differences within the cross-national marriage and its effect on marital quality, there is no available research. However, Romano (1988), a marriage counselor who specializes in cross-national marriage, states that there appears to be more class-crossing in cross-national marriages than in nationally homogamous unions. Romano points out that cross-national couples are often not aware of social class

differences because they do not know enough about the other partner's culture. If class-crossing is indeed more prevalent for cross-national couples than for same-nation couples, its possible influence on marital happiness and marital conflict should not be overlooked.

### **Limitations of Available Literature on Cross-National Marriage**

Besides paying little attention to the effects of social class on cross-national marriage, the literature available in English pays little attention to the impact outside environmental influences have on these marriages. What influence do family and friends have on the cross-national marital relation? Are they supportive or a strain on the marriage? What impact does the cross-national marriage have on family and friends? Does exposure to another culture and or ethnic group change the way family and friends think and act toward other nationalities?

Other biases include the emphasis on the experiences of wives in cross-national marriages, with limited attention to husbands. The majority of these studies focus on couples living in the husband's country (foreign wife couples). The foreign wife experiences a great deal of pressure to conform to her host country's cultural expectations for being a wife and mother and for transmitting these values to her children. For this reason, foreign wives have a much more difficult time at adjusting to their environment than do foreign husbands. A man's "status as a husband, even if he is a foreigner, is prevalent: he is not required to adapt as completely and unquestioningly" as is the wife (Varro 1988). The greater difficulties foreign wives have in adjusting has made their lives more interesting to sociologists, and this is the explanation for the focus on foreign wives in the literature. However, foreign husbands may out number foreign wives in cross-national marriages in some countries. Studying the experiences of these husbands should contribute to a better understanding of cross-national marriage.

Another limitation of the available English-language research literature on cross-national marriage (also true of this thesis) is the almost exclusive focus on Americans married to foreigners. Time and money constraints for translation prevented the use of what appears to be a wealth of foreign language literature on cross-national marriage. While doing a literature search for this thesis, I came across several Polish, Greek and, in particular, French journal articles and books dealing with cross-national marriage. Liberal immigration policies in France have encouraged an unprecedented settlement of “foreigners.” This has translated into a steady number of cross-national marriages and it has made cross-national marriage an important social issue in France. Immigration is a frequent occurrence around the world, affecting most countries, and there may be a great deal of non-English literature written on cross-national marriage. If there is to be any serious effort made to understand cross-national marriage as a specific topic, cross-cultural perspectives would be invaluable.

Finally, almost all the English-language literature on cross-national marriages emphasizes the problems associated with such marriages. Cultural differences between couples are an easily identifiable source of strain on marriages, and whether such strains are the most critical factor in a marriage or not is rarely investigated (Cottrell 1990; Romano 1988).

### **Marital Adjustment in Cross-National Marriage**

Kinzie, a clinical psychiatrist, identifies three types of intercultural married couples. First are those couples in which differences in cultures do not appear to be issues in the relationship. Cultural issues may have been resolved without the couple particularly being aware of it. Second are those couples in which cultural factors appear to obscure or complicate the actual reasons for strained marriages. Third are those couples in which cultural differences contribute directly to the marital conflict or problems (Kinzie 1977).

Looking at particular case histories, Kinzie mentions that although his married clients come from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, often a client's central problem is related to his or her own past and relationships within the family, drug addiction, or organic psychiatric problems. When cultural differences directly contribute to marital problems, Kinzie states that the primary problem is usually cultural differences in communication styles. For example, he mentions that Hawaiians generally communicate affection with non-verbal communication, whereas Caucasians rely more on verbal communication of affection. This may cause misunderstandings and marital tensions for some intercultural married couples if they are not aware of the differences or are unwilling to accept them.

Romano (1988) cites a number of trouble spots repeatedly mentioned by intercultural couples. They include values, food and drink, sex, male-female roles, time, place of residence, politics, friends, finances, in-laws, social class, religion, raising children, language/communication, dealing with stress, illness and suffering, and ethnocentrism.

Delcroix, Guyaux, and Rodriguez (1989) are more specific and state that problems encountered in international marriages are centered around communication between partners and with their different social networks. These problems in communication occur at four stages in international marriages. In the first stage, when the couple are first married and without children, there is an emphasis on mutual adjustment and development of cross cultural expertise. In the second stage, child rearing becomes an issue and the couple must make choices of culture, language, rearing methods, and cope with differences in gender expectations in parenting. A third stage commences when children become adolescents and seek independent cultural identity. Finally, at retirement, issues of lifestyle and country of residence again become relevant.

Ibrahim and Schroeder (1990) have a different perspective on intercultural marriage. They state that difficulties and conflicts arise in cross-cultural marriages because of assumptions of similarity in values. Cultural differences in gender roles, religions and cultural rituals, modes of celebrating holidays, parenting, etc., may emerge at different points in the relationship, and bring to the forefront differences in values.

According to Barbara (1989), because of the very nature of a cross-national couple's "mixedness," couples are confronted with areas of conflict far sooner than same-nation married couples. For example, once the cross-national couple start living together, differences in the sort of music listened to, choice of food, and taste in decor immediately become obvious. Even before the marriage, cross-national couples cannot ignore their differences. Friends, and especially family, will want to know what religion the couple plan to practice, how the children will be raised, what country the couple plan to live in, etc. Barbara believes that this advanced warning of differences in cross-national couples can be an advantage.

In the mixed couple the distances are quickly recognized at the start of married life, or through a complex web of small crises. Through these conflicts a minimum consensus of opinion will form -- though this will never be rigid -- and this may well serve to avoid a fatal crisis later on. *This slight advance notice is one chance the mixed couple has.* Firstly, it makes it possible to quickly identify significant differences; and secondly, it enables them to create a stable way of living together which caters for the existence of each partner (P. 56).

Barbara states that intragroup married couples assume that they hold the same life values, and as such, crises come quite unexpectedly:

In the case of non-mixed couples one may have seen marriages which were 'going well' until the fateful crisis which suddenly destroyed the fragile construction of two people 'who seemed to get on so well together' (P.199).



According to Barbara, the couple that is overwhelmed by the first crisis is heading for an early divorce. Though not offering any empirical evidence, he believes this is why divorces in cross-national marriages occur earlier than in same-nation marriages.

### **The Heterogamy Hypothesis**

Whether explicitly stated or not, by focusing on the problematic nature of cross-national marriages, researchers are adopting the heterogamy hypothesis, which states that marital differences in a couple lead to marital instability and to low marital quality (Roger and Procidano 1989). The marriage of persons who are alike in terms of ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, education, socioeconomic status and age has been, and remains, the overwhelming norm in most societies (Ultee and Luijkx 1990). Not surprisingly, it is a popular notion in American culture (if not a universally held notion) that any deviation from this sociocultural homogamy is problematic (Cottrell 1990). Many family social scientists have attempted to research this popular preconception of marriage by trying to link spouse differences to low marital quality or happiness. For cross-national couples, it is assumed that differences in cultures or values are the primary source of marital conflict.

### **Cross-national marriages**

In the 1950s and 1970s a few researchers empirically tested the heterogamy hypothesis for cross-national couples. The subjects in these studies were American servicemen who had married Asian war brides. Contrary to the heterogamy hypothesis, most of the couples in these studies stated that their marriages were happy and reported little conflict (Albright et al. 1973; Connor 1976; Rafel 1954; Walters 1953). One study looked at American-Japanese marriages and reported little conflict as a result of a "high consensus on division of labor" (Strauss 1954; Schnepf and Yui 1955). Another study by Jones (1972) also identified many areas of satisfaction experienced by these couples.

However, she found that the cross-national couples that she interviewed were more likely to report higher levels of marital conflict than a control group of married couples.

Are differences in culture a primary source of marital conflict and low marital quality for cross-national couples? The studies mentioned above do not answer this question conclusively one way or the other. In fact, since most of these studies are twenty to forty years old and focus on war bride marriages, one cannot assume that these marriages reflect today's modern, cross-national marriage. A majority of cross-national married couples today are highly educated, unlike their American-Asian war bride counterparts. Higher education no doubt has translated into a higher social status and acceptance of today's cross-national couples in a society, and, according to Barbara (1989), this makes it much easier to have a successful, happy mixed marriage. Also, attitudes towards other nations and nationalities have changed since the 1950s and 1970s. For example, since World War II enmity toward Japanese nationals (and Japanese-Americans) has abated in the United States (Spickard 1989). One can assume that the outside environmental influences (i.e. family and friends and even the government) on a Japanese-American union today would not be as hostile as immediately after World War II. Today, most American institutions, and American culture in general, are less tolerant of overt discrimination against mixed couples. However, other nationals might now be targets of hostility due to current geopolitical tensions. For example, social and political tensions between the United States and Iraq could potentially add stress to a cross-national marriage involving nationals from the two countries—delays at airports, community harassment of the couple or their children.

Also, a cross-national marriage need not be between two people who are ethnically or racially different. The Western-Western cross-national married couples mentioned by Cottrell (1990) are both ethnically white and most have the same religion. These couples

report little or no conflict in their marriage, and they most likely do not experience the outright disapproval that "other" ethnically/racially mixed couples do (Barbara 1989).

#### Other heterogamous marriages

Besides culture, other variables which have received research attention with regard to the heterogamy hypothesis include: age, education, religion, social class, sex-role ideology and race/ethnicity. Since it is possible for a cross-national marriage to include all these spouse differences, it is important to note that research findings on these variables for "mixed couples" who are not cross-national are also inconsistent and inconclusive. For example, Blood and Wolfe (1960) determined that age-homogamous couples are the most satisfied and that satisfaction declines as the age difference between spouses increase. Other studies that support this position on age-heterogamous marriages include Bumpass and Sweet (1972) and Hicks and Platt (1970). More recently, a study by Vera, Berardo and Berardo (1985) reported contradictory results. Observing the effects of gender, age, and race, no significant differences in marital quality were found among couples from various age-dissimilar categories.

As for education, Bumpass and Sweet (1972) found correlations between educational heterogamy and marital instability in only the most extreme cases--husband a high school dropout married to a college-educated wife. Among Puerto Rican families, Roger and Procidano (1989) also concluded that heterogamous dissimilarities in education did not shape marital quality or instability. Presenting contradictory findings, Tynes (1990) reported that when the wife has more education than her husband, both partners report more satisfaction in their marriage. By contrast, when the husband has more education than his wife, both partners report "less than happy marriages with more disagreement and less positive feedback" (p. 153).

A majority of the studies that look at interreligious marriages in the United States have examined Protestant-Catholic marriages, though a few studied Christian-Jewish marriages. Several studies have examined interfaith marriages (Protestant versus Catholic versus Jewish versus other) and found higher than average divorce rates (Bumpass and Sweet 1972; Maneker and Rankin 1993). However a study by Chan and Heaton (1989) found that religious homogamy was not a significant variable in predicting divorce. Research by N. Glenn (1982) reported a negative relationship with marital happiness for men, but not for women in interfaith marriages. With regard to interdenominational marriages (Fundamentalist versus Episcopalian versus Lutheran versus Baptist versus other) Bumpass and Sweet (1972) and Morgan and Scanzoni (1987) failed to find any correlation with marital instability or low marital quality. However, a study by Heaton and Pratt (1990) found that denominational homogamy is correlated strongly with marital satisfaction.

Looking at interracial/interethnic marriages and marital happiness, a study by Weller and Rofe (1988) in Israel found no significant differences in marital happiness dimensions among mixed and homogeneous marriages of the two major Jewish ethnic groups--Asian/African and European. In the U.S., Monahan (1970) reported that black-white marriages were more stable than black-black marriages and that black husbands and white wives were less likely to divorce than white married couples. However, studies by Heer (1974) and Porterfield (1978) suggested that interethnic or interracial marriages are less stable and show less marital satisfaction than homogeneous marriages.

### The heterogamy hypothesis today

Though the heterogamy hypothesis has been neglected by researchers in the 1990s, it remains a popular conception in societies that mixed marriages (whether they be based on ethnic/racial, religious, social class, cultural or national differences) are problematic

(Barbara 1989). Smith (1996) stated that the "possibility of a mixed marriage tends to evoke many fears and strong feelings in relatives, friends, and even strangers" (p. 21). Such fears are also reflected in government policies toward mixed marriage around the world. For example, in the Gulf states of Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirate (UAE) all government employees and students studying abroad at state expense are prohibited from marrying foreigners. In the UAE a marriage fund was set up to encourage UAE national men to marry UAE national women. Between 1992 and 1997 the UAE government spent over \$200 million to finance 10,573 local weddings between UAE nationals ("UAE Spends Over \$200m to Finance Weddings" 1997; "Ban on Government Servants Marrying Foreigners to be Enforced Soon" 1996; and Zeitoun 1996). In Belgium, wards of the state must be given permission to marry foreigners:

*(Jocelyne) I was 18 years old, and I was still living at the home. I knew Nouredine, a Moroccan student of 28 years, for a whole year before we lived together. We went out together and went to small cafes. After 3 years together we got married, but it was very difficult. I was dependent on the state who was my tutor and who gave me a grant of 15,000 Belgian Francs per month for my studies. The state employees, who were to give me permission to marry Nouredine, put a lot of pressure on me to stop me from getting married. I was told women married to Moroccans were never happy and that it never worked out. (Delcroix et al. 1989, p. 56).*

During the Korean War, the United States Army actively discouraged cross-national marriage through the use of military counselors and bureaucratic red tape (Ratliff, Moon, and Bonacci 1978).

Given the increasing trend in cross-national marriage (and outmarriage in general), any research attempts to address the heterogamy hypothesis would be of some benefit (Thornton 1992). Research supporting the heterogamy hypothesis would be useful in identifying special areas in which cross-national couples should work to make marriages run more smoothly. Research not supporting the heterogamy hypothesis would be useful in diminishing the troubled stereotyping of intergroup marriages. This also could have

some effect on government policies on cross-national marriage. Instead of seeing outmarriage as a threat to social identity or group survival, governments might start looking at mixed unions as a useful asset in helping companies and nations build bridges of understanding, cultural exchange and improved trade relations, which would be particularly useful in today's global society.

### **Goals of the Study**

Due to the fact that these few studies on marital happiness and conflict in cross-national marriage deal mainly with war brides and are 20-50 years old, one cannot assume that these studies accurately reflect today's cross-national marriages. One of the goals of this thesis is to explore whether the heterogamy hypothesis applies to contemporary cross-national married couples in the United States. Do spouse differences lead to low marital happiness? In particular, do cultural differences in cross-national married couples lead to low marital quality or happiness?

If there existed a scale which we could use to label a marriage on a homogeneous/heterogeneous scale, a cross-national marriage is often located at the extreme end of the heterogeneous scale, since such a marriage could theoretically encompass all possible spouse differences; i.e. ethnicity/race, religion, education, socioeconomic status, age and of course nationality. Therefore, in researching the heterogamy hypothesis in cross-national marriage, this study examined the other end of the homogeneous/heterogeneous spouse scale, comparing individuals in cross-national marriages to those in same-nation marriages who have similar religious and ethnic/racial backgrounds or identities.

The relationship between marital conflict and happiness and patterns of marital homogamy/heterogamy are explored looking at the impact of cultural differences on the perceptions and satisfaction of spouses in cross-national marriages. Differences in such

specific areas as religion, social class, and gender ideology may be associated with cross-national marriage, and these are explored as to their existence and impact. I also look at the subjective perceptions of participants in cross-national marriage by asking respondents what they perceive to be the advantages and disadvantages of the bi-cultural experience on friends, family, and on the cross-national marriage itself.

In this thesis it is hypothesized that differences between cultures in a marriage may initially produce greater levels of cultural conflict and stress, but in the long run, as cross-cultural expertise is acquired by couples, reports of participants in cross-national marriages will characteristically come to resemble those of spouses in intragroup or same-nation marriages on measures of marital conflict and marital happiness. In other words, I expect to find that the heterogamy hypothesis is not determinative of marital conflict and happiness in cross-national marriage.

The next chapters develop the hypotheses and methodology of the study, connecting them to relevant literature.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **HYPOTHESES AND ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIONS**

The heterogamy hypothesis assumes that marital differences are associated with marital instability and low marital quality or happiness. Conversely, it is assumed that the marriage of couples with similar backgrounds leads to marital stability and happiness. In this thesis, it is not denied that differences in cultures between married couples may lead to some difficulties in adjustment or conflict between the couple. On the other hand, this research does not assume that intragroup marriages are relatively "trouble-free" compared to cross-national marriages. My study comparing spouses' perceptions in cross-national marriages to same-nation marriages explores the heterogamy hypothesis in reference to national and cultural differences, along with aspects of religious and social class homogamy/heterogamy patterns. In addition, respondents' gender ideology, sex and national origin are identified and their impact on marital happiness and marital conflict is analyzed. The effects of bi-culturalism on marriage, children, family and friends are also explored.

#### **Marital Conflict**

Do spouses in cross-national marriages report more or less conflict than spouses in same-nation marriages?

According to Barbara (1989), for the cross-national couple, differences in culture are obvious from the start of married life and because of the very nature of the differences, especially with regard to deep seated values, cross-national couples are confronted with areas of conflict far sooner than same-nation couples. Following this premise, it is hypothesized that spouses in cross-national marriages will experience more marital conflict early in their marriage than spouses in same-nation marriages.



Differences between cultures in a marriage may initially produce greater levels of cultural conflict and stress, but in the long run, as cross-cultural expertise is acquired by these spouses, cross-national marriages will characteristically come to resemble intragroup or same-nation marriages in both measures of marital conflict and marital happiness variables. Thus, after an initial adjustment to cultural differences for the spouses in cross-national marriages, marital conflict in cross-national marriage will come to resemble marital conflict patterns of spouses in same-nation marriages. It is also hypothesized that after the initial adjustment phase, spouses in cross-national and same-nation marriages will report similar levels of marital happiness. The initial adjustment phase is defined as a period from 6 to 18 months.

The initial adjustment phase of 6 to 18 months is based on two sources: The first source is a paper entitled "Sociocultural Heterogamy, Dissensus, and Conflict in Marriage" by Jorgensen and Klein (1979). They took the classical process theory of Park and Burgess (1924) and applied it to heterogamous married couples (heterogamy based on social class, religion, adult status, education, and age):

the classical process theory of Park and Burgess (1924) describes a cycle of contact-competition-conflict-accommodation-assimilation that occurs over time on a macroscopic (intergroup) level between cultural groups of various types. The attempt of ethnic minorities and other subcultural groups to adjust to each other and to the values and norms of the mainstream society is one type of heterogamous relationship that may, by means of this five-stage process, contribute to our understanding of marital conflicts that arise due to heterogamous spousal backgrounds (Jorgensen and Klein 1979, p. 52).

Jorgensen and Klein proposed that the heterogamy hypothesis of "marital incompatibility" would hold more for couples who have been married for no more than one or two years. In other words, recently married heterogamous couples would find themselves in Park and Burgess's (1924) competitive and conflict stages of the cycle "whereas couples married a comparatively greater number of years should have

accommodated their differences and adjusted to each other" (Jorgensen and Klein 1979). As predicted by this extension of the heterogamy hypothesis, their study yielded a positive correlation between their overall heterogamy index and dissensus over marital values and household roles for couples married 2 years or less.

The second source is a paper entitled "The determinants of spouses' normative preferences for family roles" by Cronkite (1977). His research showed that spouses act as socializing agents during marriage and that one spouse's beliefs and attitudes quickly adjust to the other's beliefs over an 18 month period. Based on this finding, cross-national married couples should be able to adjust to their cultural differences in an 18 month period, and presumably would experience less marital disagreement or conflict after this time.

***Hypothesis 1:*** *Spouses in cross-national marriages will report more conflict than same-nation marriages during the 18 month period after the wedding.*

***Hypothesis 2:*** *Spouses in cross-national and same-nation marriages will report similar levels of conflict after the first 18 months of marriage.*

No particular pattern of marital conflict is assumed for spouses in same-nation unions, and a varied number of responses are possible. For example, following the heterogamy hypothesis, spouses in intragroup marriages should have fewer adjustments to make due to similarity in cultures and therefore spouses would report little or no conflict. Then, based on the hypothesis presented in this paper, it is predicted that participants in cross-national marriages would report little or no conflict after an initial adjustment phase of 6-18 months. Other scenarios may include varying levels (both high and low) of reported marital conflict for same-nation married couples. As hypothesized in this paper, spouses in cross-national marriages are predicted to report levels of conflict similar to those in same-nation marriages after an initial adjustment phase.

## **Marital Happiness**

*Do spouses in cross-national marriages report greater or lesser levels of marital happiness in their marriage than their counterparts in same-nation marriages?*

If cross-national spouses indeed act as socializing agents, adjusting one spouse's cultural beliefs and attitudes to meet the other's, as researched by Cronkite (1977), then one would expect cross-nation married respondents to report levels of marital happiness similar to same-nation respondents after the initial adjustment phase. Therefore, parallel to the hypothesis for marital conflict, it is predicted that cross-national and same-nation subjects in this survey will report similar levels of marital happiness after the first 18 months of marriage.

**Hypothesis 3:** *Spouses in cross-national marriages will report lower levels of marital happiness than same-nation marriages during the 18 month period after the wedding.*

**Hypothesis 4:** *Spouses in cross-national marriages will report levels of marital happiness similar to those of same-nation spouses after the first 18 months of marriage.*

## **Additional Investigations**

In addition to cultural differences, this thesis also uses the heterogamy hypothesis to examine the influence social class and religious differences have on measures of marital conflict and marital happiness for (and between) married cross-national and same-nation spouses. Other aspects of cross-national marriage are explored by looking at perceived advantages and disadvantages of marital type, the effect gender ideology has on marital happiness and marital conflict, and the influence of bi-culturalism on family and friends.

## **Social Class**

*Does social class heterogamy influence reported levels of marital conflict or marital happiness for participants in cross-national and same-nation marriages?*

An area that has been overlooked in studies on cross-cultural marriages is social class (Cottrell, 1990). It has been suggested that class-crossing in intercultural marriages occurs more often than in monocultural marriages, though no study is available to support this (Romano, 1988).

A comparative look at marital conflict and happiness as a function of social class differences in cross-cultural and monocultural marriages is undertaken, in addition to the basic comparison of the two types of marriage.

It is hypothesized that social class differences are more frequent for spouses in cross-national marriages and that they increase marital conflict and decrease marital happiness.

***Hypothesis 5:*** *Social class differences will be more frequent in cross-national marriages compared to same-nation marriages.*

***Hypothesis 6:*** *Social class heterogamy will be associated with greater marital conflict.*

***Hypothesis 7:*** *Social class homogamy will be associated with greater marital happiness.*

In terms of social stratification, Kalmijn (1991) asserts that in today's society education is a more important boundary in marriage selection than social-class origins (defined in terms of father's occupation) and that educational homogamy has increased over time. Attempts will be made to find out whether the transition from ascriptive patterns of marriage selection (defined in terms of father's occupation) to achievement patterns in marriage selection (defined as the educational attainment of both partners) in the general population of the United States also holds for cross-national marriages.

## **Religion**

*Does religious heterogamy influence reported levels of marital happiness or marital conflict for spouses in cross-national or same-nation marriages?*

Differences in religious beliefs or practices are more likely to be found in cross-national marriages than same-nation ones (Romano, 1988). Various studies have been conducted over the years with inconsistent findings as to correlations between religious heterogamy and marital happiness and conflict (Bumpass and Sweet, 1972; Maneker and Rankin 1993; Chan and Heaton 1989; Morgan and Scanzoni 1987; Heaton and Pratt 1990).

In this thesis, cross-national and same-nation respondents' marriages are identified as either religiously homogamous or heterogamous and the relationship with reported levels of marital happiness and marital conflict is explored.

***Hypothesis 8:** Spouses in religiously heterogamous marriages will evidence more conflict than those in religiously homogamous marriages.*

***Hypothesis 9:** Spouses in religiously homogamous marriages will report more marital happiness than those in religiously heterogamous marriages.*

### **Gender Ideology**

*What influence does gender ideology have on reports of marital happiness or marital conflict for participants in cross-nation and same-nation marriages?*

Research on gender ideology in American marriages shows that the direction of the difference in sex role attitude between the spouses is the most important determinant for marital happiness, not the difference itself (Li and Caldwell 1987). A traditional husband and a non-traditional wife produce the lowest evaluation of marital happiness, and, irrespective of husband's sex role beliefs, traditional women report the highest levels of marital and global happiness (Lueptow, Guss and Hyden 1989).

Since differences in role expectations often are more readily apparent in some types of cross-national marriage (for example, Western-non-Western marriage) than same-nation marriage, it is possible that gender role ideology may play an important role in marital happiness for cross-national marriage. However, the unit of analysis for this thesis is the

individual respondent; therefore, the direction of the difference in sex role attitudes between the spouses cannot be determined. Without predicting any direction of association, this thesis identifies subjects' own gender ideology, sex and national origin and analyzes the relationships to reported levels of marital happiness and conflict.

### **Bi-Culturalism and Family and Friends**

*What effects, if any, would a person's bi-cultural, cross-national marriage have on children, family and friends?*

Much research has been done on the effects of bi-culturalism on children from mixed marriages, but little or no research has been conducted on the effects that a mixed marriage might have on family and friends (Cottrell 1991). I ask respondents to identify any influences, negative or positive, that their cross-national marriage may have had on their friends, family and children.

### **Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages**

*What would be some of the advantages and/or drawbacks a person would experience by marrying someone from another country and/or culture?*

Respondents are asked to identify perceived advantages, along with any disadvantages, that their particular marriage type might entail. Much of the literature on cross-national marriage emphasizes the problems encountered in such marriages. This thesis provides respondents with questions which are designed to also look at the possible advantages a person would experience by marrying someone from another country.

The next chapter describes the methodology of the study including measurement of concepts presented in this chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the survey used, characteristics of the sample, method of data collection, and operational definitions of the independent and dependent variables under investigation.

#### Survey

A mailed survey was used to gather data on spouses in cross-national and same-nation marriages. In order to provide some established measures, over half of the questions in the survey were taken directly from a questionnaire used for a three-wave panel study entitled "Marital Instability over the Life Course" (Booth, Johnson, and Edwards 1991).

Only two of the questions taken from the three-wave panel study dealt directly with marital instability, and these questions were used to screen-out couples who were being counseled at the time of the study. The remaining questions taken from the Booth et al. instrument are grouped into eight categories: demographics, employment, gender ideology, social class, religion, marital interaction, marital happiness, and marital disagreement.

I developed questions to address: global satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the marital situation; the influence a cross-national marriage is perceived to have on friends' and relatives' perception of different cultures; and questions which require the respondents to identify their ethnic/cultural/national identity. Additional questions were taken from *The Transplanted Woman* by Varro (1988). These questions deal with the effects of biculturalism and/or bilingualism on the children of cross-national married couples. The questionnaire is included as Appendix A of this thesis.

There are 103 questions in the men's and women's cross-national survey, and 99 questions in the men's and women's same-nation survey. Excluded from the men's and

women's same-nation surveys were questions asking about the influence (if any) that a bi-cultural marriage has on friends and family (see Appendix A, questions 76a - 76d).

Men's and women's surveys for the two marital types were nearly identical with the exception of two questions, not included in the men's surveys, which were based on gender and work (see Appendix A, questions 67a-67b).

### **Sample**

One of the main goals of this research is to test the heterogamy hypothesis for cross-national marriages. In order to do this, two extremes of the heterogamy/homogamy spouse scale were selected to define appropriate research subjects. First, is the cross-national marriage. A cross-national marriage is defined in this research as a union between partners who are from two different countries. Either the partners were born in two different countries, or as a child or an adolescent, one of the spouses lived 15 years or more in a country different from their married partner, and consequently, identifies with that country's culture. The couple may presently live in the country of the husband, or that of the wife, or in a third country in which both partners are foreign. A cross-national marriage could theoretically encompass all possible spouse differences; i.e. ethnicity/race, religion, education, socioeconomic status, age and of course nationality. Such possible spouse differences for cross-national married couples would put them at the extreme end of the heterogeneous spouse scale. This entire set of differences was not required for entry into the cross-national sample category, however.

Looking at the opposite spectrum of the scale, one would find the homogeneous, same-nation married couple who have similar religious and ethnic/racial backgrounds or identities. This paper defines same-nation marriage as a union in which the partners are from the same country, and as the control group for this study, the same-nation subjects are required to have the same ethnic/racial identities and to have been born with the same



religion. Same-nation marriages should be intrafaith in the sense that there is no pairing of couples with different affiliations in terms of Christian, Muslim, or Jewish sects. For example, a marriage between a Roman Catholic and a Protestant Southern Baptist would be considered an intrafaith marriage since it is a Christian-Christian marriage. According to Delcroix et al. (1989), what determines whether or not a union is heterogamous is the social environment's often hostile reaction to it. Therefore, to be defined an intergroup marriage, a strong reaction should be elicited from the groups involved. In Northern Ireland, you may get killed if you are involved in a Protestant-Catholic marriage, but in the United States, interdenominational marriages are frequent and do not violate any standard norm (Donnan 1990).

The unit of analysis for this study is the individual married respondent who is either in a cross-national or same-nation marriage.

Respondents, either cross-national or same-nation, who reported that they were receiving marital counseling at the time of the study, were excluded.

In the U.S. population as a whole, there are relatively few cross-national married couples. In order to identify all accessible and willing cross-national married subjects in the local area (Lincoln, Omaha, and surrounding areas), phone directories were scanned for individuals who appeared to have first or last names that were ethnically different from their spouses. Some individuals were identified from the city of Omaha phone book, but the majority of the cross-national mailing lists were obtained from employee phone directories from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. All mailed questionnaires were sent with a cover letter explaining the goals of the thesis research study, a note of confidentiality, and a \$5.00 incentive fee for all completed and returned questionnaires.

In addition to the mailed surveys, advertisements were posted next to the student centers at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and at two religious centers, the Islamic Center of Omaha at 3511 N 73 Street and the Omaha Jewish Community Center at 333 S. 132 Street. The advertisements requested cross-national married subjects to volunteer for an anonymous thesis research study, and as an incentive, individuals who completed the questionnaire were promised \$5.00 in compensation for their time. Advertisements requesting same-culture married subjects to volunteer for the thesis research study were posted at the same location. Three individuals, in same-nation unions, responded to the advertisements. Questionnaires were mailed out to the volunteer respondents; however, only one same-nation respondent returned the questionnaire.

In the end, all but two of the cross-national subject volunteers were University of Nebraska employees (UNO, UNL, UNMC, U Kearney). Based on these response patterns, and for ecological matching reasons, respondents from same-nation marriages were randomly selected from a sampling of page numbers in the University of Nebraska employee phone directory, and a random sampling of names on selected pages.

### **Data Collection**

Two questionnaire booklets were mailed to the cross-national and same-nation married couples' homes. One questionnaire booklet was for men only, and another was for women only. In the cover letter, respondents were asked to refrain from sharing or comparing their responses to the questionnaire with one another. The cross-national marriage partners were to respond to questions about their marriage to a person from another country and or cultural/ethnic background than their own. The same-nation marital partners responded to questions about their marriage to a person from the same country with the same cultural/ethnic and religious background.

Due to the personal nature of some of the questions in the survey, it was felt that the respondents should be given some measure of anonymity; therefore, the mailed survey was determined to be the best option for this thesis project. In order to aid respondents' privacy, it was requested that the completed questionnaire be mailed with no identification, and that it be mailed separately from a check-off card (which did have the respondent's name). The returned check-off card indicated that the questionnaire was completed, and, at the same time, the respondents' responses remained anonymous.

One hundred and thirty-two questionnaires were mailed out to 66 same-nation married couples. Fifteen same-nation couples and 10 individuals in same-nation marriages completed and returned the questionnaire for a total of 40 individual questionnaires. This was a 30% response rate, which was accomplished in two waves of randomly selected, same-nation couple mailings. Two same-nation couple respondents were not included in the study because they were in an interfaith marriage, and thus did not meet the defined criteria for a same-nation couple in this research study. Seventy questionnaires were mailed out to 35 prospective cross-national married couples. Eleven cross-national married couples and 6 individuals in cross-national marriages completed and returned the questionnaires; providing a total of 28 individual questionnaires. This was a 40% response rate which was accomplished in three waves of selected mailings and repeated requests for participation from cross-national married couples.

All cross-national respondents met the defined criteria for being in a cross-national marriage as defined by this study, i. e., either the respondent was born in a different country than that of his or her spouse, or as a child or an adolescent, the respondent or the respondent's spouse had lived 15 years or more in a country different from their marital partner. In all completed cross-national questionnaires, the respondent identified him or herself with a country's culture different from that of his or her spouse.

Table 1 presents selected characteristics of the sample.

**Table 1.** Selected Characteristics of the Sample

<b>Respondent Characteristic</b>	<b>Respondents in Cross-Nation Marriage (N=28)</b>		<b>Respondents in Same-Nation Marriage (N=38)</b>	
	<u>N</u>		<u>N</u>	
<b><u>Sex</u></b>				
Male	14 (50%)		19 (50%)	
Female	14 (50%)		19 (50%)	
<b><u>Number of Times Married*</u></b>				
once	23 (82%)		34 (90%)	
twice	5 (18%)		2 ( 5%)	
three or more	0		2 ( 5%)	
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>
<b><u>Age</u></b>				
Male	14	46.93	19	53.89
Female	13	46.77	19	52.32
<b><u>Years Married</u></b>				
	28	16.96	38	26.6
<b><u>Children in the home</u></b>				
	11 (39%)	2.82	11 (29%)	1.7
<b><u>Education Level</u></b>				
High school	0	5yrs	4 (11.5%)	4+yrs
Associates degree	0	college	1 ( 3%)	college
Bachelors degree	4 (15%)		12 (34%)	
Graduate degree	22 (85%)		18 (51.5%)	
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
	27	\$54,800	38	\$45,700

As shown in Table 1, equal numbers of men and women completed the questionnaire for both marital types. On average, same-nation men and women were at least six to seven years older and had been married 10 years longer than cross-national men and women respondents. Not surprisingly, the younger cross-national respondents are more likely to have children under 18 years living with them than same-nation respondents.

Cross-national respondents (sexes combined) ranged in age from 28 to 69 years old. The cross-national group had a mean age of 47, a mode of 46 and a median age of 47 years. For the same-nation group, ages ranged from 34 to 75 years old. The same-nation group had a mean age of 53, a mode of 60 and a median age of 53 years.

For number of years married, the range was 2 to 40 years of marriage for the cross-national group, and 6 to 46 years of marriage for the same-nation group. The mean number of years married for the cross-national group was 17 years, a mode of 30 and a median of 16 years married. The mean number of years married for the same-nation group was 27 years, a mode of 36 and a median of 32 years married.

Looking at the number of times respondents have married, the cross-national group was more likely to have been married more than once (18%), compared to the same-nation group (10%). In the cross-national group, five persons had been married twice. In the same-nation group, two persons had been married twice, and two were on their third marriage.

Both cross-national and same-nation respondents have a high level of education. Eighty-six percent of same-nation and all cross-national subjects have a college degree. More telling is the fact that over half of the same-nation and eighty-five percent of cross-national respondents have graduate degrees.

Commensurate with cross-national and same-nation subjects' high level of education is their income. The average income for cross-national and same-nation subjects is \$54,800 (\$60,000 median) and \$45,700 (\$50,000 median) respectively, which is well over the \$35,000 median annual income for U.S. families (Ahlburg and De Vita 1992). Though cross-national respondents, on average, earned at least \$10,000 a year more than same-nation respondents, the mode for the two marital types was identical at \$60,000.

Unlike many of the studies on cross-national marriage that focus on the foreign-born wife, a majority of the foreign-born subjects in this thesis project are men (Cottrell

1990). Fifty-seven percent of cross-national men and thirty-six percent of cross-national women respondents are from a country other than the United States. Ninety-five percent of same-nation respondents were born in the United States, and the remaining five percent were born in Iran (See Table 2).

**Table 2.** Ethnic and National Identities of Subjects

<b>Subject Characteristic</b>	<b>In Cross-Nation- Marriage (N=28)</b>		<b>In Same-Nation Marriage (N=38)</b>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>Nation</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Nation</u>
<b><u>Female</u></b>				
Arab	0			
Asian	2 (14.3%)	Japan, Thailand.	1 ( 5%)	Iran
Black	0			
East Indian	0			
Hispanic	2 (14.3%)	Paraguay, Venezuela		
White	8 (57.1%)	United States	18 (95%)	United States
	1 ( 7.1%)	Latvia		
	1 ( 7.1%)	Greece		
<b><u>Male</u></b>				
Arab	3 (21.4%)	Iraq, Palestine, Syria		
Asian	0		1 ( 5%)	Iran
Black	1 ( 7.1%)	Nigeria		
East Indian	3 (21.4%)	India		
Hispanic	0			
White	6 (43%)	United States	18 (95%)	United States
999	1 ( 7.1%)	Not from the United States.		

### **Independent Variable Definitions**

One of the main goals of this thesis is to examine whether or not spouse differences, in terms of cultural/national heterogamy, affect levels of marital happiness and conflict. As such, marital type, i.e. cross-nation or same-nation, is the major independent variable in this thesis.

A *Cross-National Marriage* is a marriage in which the partners are from two different countries. Either the partners will be born in two different countries, or, as a child or adolescent, the individual has lived 15 years or more in a country different from his/her spouse, and as such, identifies with that country's culture. A cross-national marriage can be interfaith, interracial or interethnic or a combination of all of these. The couple may live in the country of the husband, or that of the wife, or in a third country in which both partners are foreign.

For this thesis, I am specifying that a *Same-Nation Marriage* is a marriage in which the partners are from the same country, have the same ethnic/racial identities and were born with the same religious identity. A same-nation marriage should be intrafaith in the sense that there is no crossing of Christian, Muslim, or Jewish categories. For example, a marriage between a Roman Catholic and a Protestant Southern Baptist would be considered an intrafaith marriage since it is a Christian-Christian marriage.

In addition to marital type, three indicators of heterogamy were obtained: 1) *Ascribed Heterogamy* is based on the social class position of the families of orientation of each spouse; 2) *Achieved Heterogamy* is based on the spouses' comparative level of education; and 3) *Religious Heterogamy* is based on each spouse's religious affiliation.

*Ascribed Heterogamy* was measured by creating a hierarchy of occupational prestige. The occupational prestige of the father and father-in-law of the respondents was determined, and the level of difference between them was coded accordingly:

**Occupational Prestige**

Professional/Managerial	1
Sales	2
Clerical	3
Technical Trade/Skilled Craft	4
Farming/Ranching	5
Service	6
Driver/Material Handling Laborer	7

Examples of Ascribed Homogamy or Heterogamy:

<u>Respondent's Father</u>	<u>Respondent's Father-in-law</u>	
Engineer	Lawyer	= 0 level difference = Ascribed Homogamy
Salesman	Laborer	= 1 level difference = Ascribed Heterogamy
Chemist	Laborer	= 2 level difference = Ascribed Heterogamy

*Achieved Heterogamy* was measured by ranking the level of education and then comparing the respondent's level of education with that of his or her spouse.

Education Level Rank

Less than High School	1
High School/Associate Degree	2
Undergraduate/Graduate Degree	3

<u>Respondent's Education:</u>	<u>Respondent's Spouse's Education</u>	
------------------------------------	--	--

Less than High School	Less than High School	= 0 level difference = Achieved Homogamy
Associate Degree	Undergraduate Degree	= 1 level difference = Achieved Heterogamy
Less than High School	Graduate Degree	= 2 level difference = Achieved Heterogamy

*Religious Heterogamy* was coded "1" for a couple if any difference existed between the major religious groups, while a religiously homogamous marriage was coded "0." For example, a marriage between a Muslim and a Christian would be an interfaith, religiously heterogamous marriage. A marriage between a Shiite and Sunni Muslim would be a religiously homogamous marriage since it is a Muslim-Muslim marriage. Similarly, a marriage between a Roman Catholic and a Protestant Southern Baptist would also be considered an intrafaith marriage because it is a Christian-Christian marriage.

*Gender Ideology* was determined by coding questions that dealt with men's and women's roles as either non-traditional responses or traditional responses. The responses



of the individual subjects were then tallied to assess their gender ideology leanings. Non-traditional gender ideology was coded as 1, and traditional gender ideology, 2.

Respondents were asked questions that assessed gender role behavior for housework and child care (if children were present in the home). Additional questions asked respondents to provide their opinions about what they believed to be appropriate gender role behaviors for husbands and wives. For example, respondents are asked whether they agree or disagree with the opinion that a husband should be the main breadwinner, or if jobs are scarce, whether a woman whose husband can support her should have a job?

All questions dealing with gender ideology were taken from a survey entitled "Marital Instability over the Life Course" (Booth, et al. 1991). For cross-nation and same-nation women respondents, there were fourteen questions that were used to assess gender ideology (see Appendix A, questions 68a-68i, 78, 80, 62c-62f). Twelve of these questions asked respondents about their attitudes or beliefs about gender roles, and two questions asked respondents to identify their actual gender role behavior. For cross-nation and same-nation men respondents, there were ten questions that were used to assess gender ideology (see Appendix A, questions 68a-68i, 78, 80). Excluded from the men's survey were four questions which dealt with some of the reasons women choose to work (see Appendix A, questions 62c-62f). Eight of the men's gender ideology questions dealt with attitudes and beliefs. Two questions dealt with male respondents' gender role behavior.

In addition to gender ideology, respondent's *sex* was coded "1" for men and "2" for women for both marital types. For cross-national respondents only, *national origin* was identified as American-born, coded as "0," or foreign-born, coded as "1." Both *sex* and *national origin* were used to help identify relationships between happiness and conflict variables.

*Time* is defined and measured in terms of number of months/years of marriage. In the hypothesis, it is proposed that the "initial adjustment" period that cross-national couples go through due to cultural differences is between 6 and 18 months. In order to assess changes in adjustment over time, a question was created that asked respondents to recall the perceived amount of conflict they experienced over the months and years of their marriage. The time frame for the question ranged from 0 to 3 months of married life to 7 years marriage to the present (see Appendix A, question 89).

An independent variable entitled *marriage group* was created by plotting the number of years married for cross-nation and same-nation respondents and creating groups that were coded accordingly:

Group 1 = <6 years married	Group 4 = 20-27 years married
Group 2 = 7-13 years married	Group 5 = 28-36 years married
Group 3 = 14-19 years married	Group 6 = 37-46 years married

Using the actual number of years married and the variable *marriage group*, cross-sectional data were also used to help examine the relationship between marital conflict and marital happiness over the course of a marriage.

### **Dependent Variable Definitions**

*Marital Conflict* was measured in terms of its perceived frequency and perceived intensity. Several sets of questions used to measure marital conflict were taken from the survey "Marital Instability over the Life Course" (Booth et al.:1991) One question asked respondents to indicate how often, on a five-point scale from "never" to "very often," they had disagreements with their partner (see Appendix A, question 86). Another question asked respondents to indicate if the number of quarrels they had with their spouses were decreasing, about the same, or increasing (see Appendix A, question 90). Additional questions were more specific regarding behavior, and asked respondents to answer "yes" (coded as 1) or "no" (coded as 0) to whether or not they had had disagreements with their

spouse over who did his/her share of the child care and housework and whether or not they had ever hit, punched or kicked their spouse during an argument (see Appendix A, questions 81, 79, 91).

I added a question asking respondents to recall how often, on a five-point scale ranging from "rarely" to "almost always," they had experienced conflict and disagreements with their spouses over the months and years of their marriage (see Appendix A, question 89).

Special areas of disagreement identified by Romano (1988) were also included to measure marital conflict (see Appendix A, questions 93a-93m). Responses in thirteen life areas--for example, politics, best way to raise children, use of alcohol, choice of friends--were either coded as "agree" (1) or as "disagree" (2).

*Marital Happiness* was measured by asking respondents their perceptions about how happy their marriage was at the point of time this survey was completed. The global question on marital happiness asked respondents "Is your marriage very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?" Responses were coded as either happy (1) or not too happy (2) (see Appendix A, question 76). Similarly, eleven questions (taken from "Marital Instability over the Life Course") asked respondents to indicate how "happy" (1) or "not too happy" (2) they were with specific life areas related to their marriage (see Appendix A, questions 92a-92k), for example, "How happy are you with the amount of love and understanding you receive from your spouse?"

*General Happiness* was measured by asking respondents their perception about how happy they were with their lives (Booth et al. 1991). Responses were coded as either "happy" (1) or "not too happy" (2) with the "way you are these days?" (see Appendix A, question 4).

## **Data Analysis**

In order to examine the hypotheses of this thesis, Spearman and Pearsonian correlation, between-subjects t-tests, and Mann-Whitney non-parametric tests were employed. Spearman correlation is used for analyzing the relationships among ordinal variables, while Pearsonian correlation is used for relationships between linear variables. Since t-tests assume a normal distribution, Mann-Whitney test is used when this assumption is not clear. The statistical package, SPSS, is used to analyze the data obtained from the surveys using the above mentioned statistical procedures.

For questions that are not hypothesis-driven, descriptive data tables will be used to present summaries of responses.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RESULTS

Recall, one of the main goals of this thesis is to test whether or not spouse differences, in either cross-national or same-nation marriages, affect levels of marital happiness and marital conflict. This chapter provides survey results for the heterogamy hypothesis for cultural/national differences in married partners, along with data on social class, and religious marital differences. Also, gender ideology is assessed for both marital types, and gender ideology, along with sex and national origin, are correlated with marital happiness and conflict variables to see if there is an association. Lastly, survey results are provided for the perceived effects of bi-culturalism on marriage, children, family and friends. Keep in mind that the unit of analysis is the *individual* who is in a cross-national or same-nation marriage.

#### **Marital Conflict**

*Do spouses in cross-national marriages report more or less conflict than spouses in same-nation marriages?*

In order to answer the above question, marital conflict was measured using sets of questions that asked respondents to indicate the perceived frequency and the perceived intensity of marital conflict in the marriage. In addition to determining reported differences in levels of marital conflict for the two marital types, a purpose of this research was also to determine whether or not marital conflict was a function of length of marriage, particularly for spouses in cross-national marriages:

**Hypothesis 1:** *Spouses in cross-national marriages will evidence more conflict than spouses in same-nation marriages during the 18 month period after the wedding.*

**Hypothesis 2:** *Spouses in cross-national and same-nation marriages will evidence similar levels of conflict after the first 18 months of marriage.*

Table 3 presents data for the test of Hypotheses 1 and 2 of this thesis.

**Table 3.** Reported Levels of Marital Conflict Over Time for Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Respondents

<b>Marital Conflict Over Time</b>	<b>Marital Type</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean<sub>a</sub></b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig. (1-tailed)</b>
Conflict During the First 0-3 Months of Marriage	Cross-Nation	28	1.89	1.07	1.689	62	.049*
	Same-Nation	36	1.50	.70			
Conflict During the period 3-6 Months of Marriage	Cross-Nation	28	1.93	1.18	.968	53	.169
	Same-Nation	35	1.66	1.00			
Conflict During the Period 6 Months - 1 Year	Cross-Nation	28	1.93	1.12	1.661	43	.052
	Same-Nation	36	1.53	.70			
							<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
Conflict During the Period 1-2 Years	Cross-Nation	28	2.07	1.12	2.212	41.4	.033*
	Same-Nation	35	1.54	.66			
Conflict During the Period 2-3 Years	Cross-Nation	26	2.04	1.11	1.268	43	.212
	Same-Nation	35	1.71	.79			
Conflict During the Period 3-4 Years	Cross-Nation	25	1.88	.78	.962	51	.341
	Same-Nation	35	1.69	.76			
Conflict During the Period 4-7 Years	Cross-Nation	25	1.68	.69	-.030	55	.976
	Same-Nation	35	1.69	.76			
Conflict During the Period 7 Years to Present	Cross-Nation	25	1.60	.82	-1.650	57	.104
	Same-Nation	34	2.00	1.04			

Between Subjects T-tests (one and two-tailed tests).

Note: Mann-Whitney 2-tailed test for the 1 to 2 year marriage period is  $P < .073$ .

<sup>a</sup> The range for marital conflict is a 5 point scale from rarely (low conflict) to almost always (high conflict). A higher value of the mean implies a higher degree of conflict.

\* $p < .05$  (equal variance not assumed)

- Refer to *Figure 1* for a graph representation of cross-nation and same-nation respondents average reported levels of conflict over the months and/or years of their marriages.

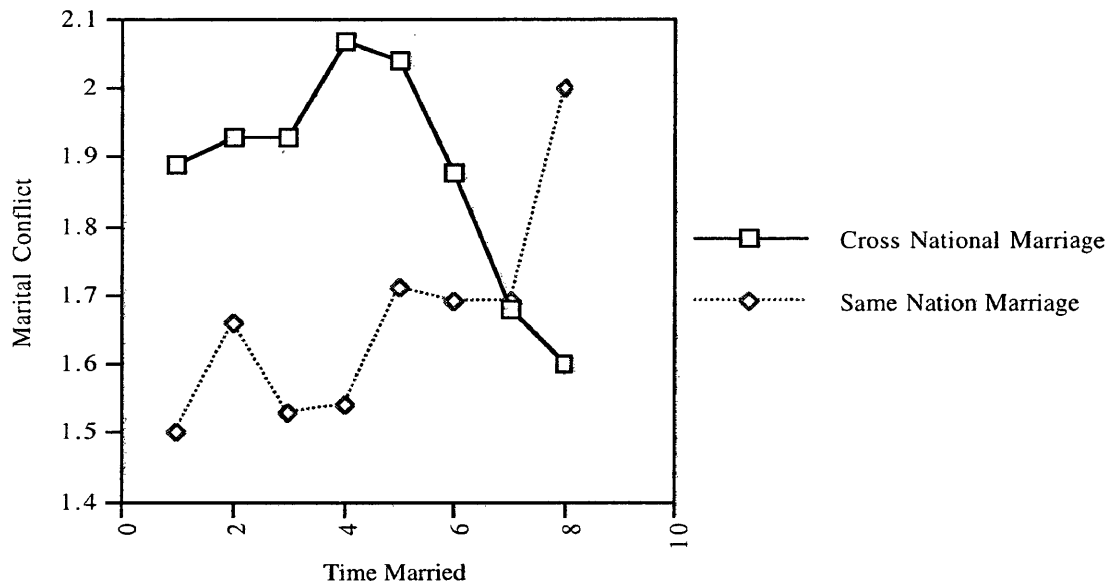
The between-subjects t-tests in Table 3 compare the means of spouses' reports of conflict in the two marital types (cross-nation and same-nation married couples) to determine if those means differ significantly over the months and/or years of their marriages. Equal variance is not assumed for the obtained values.

Since we are predicting that spouses in cross-national unions will experience more conflict early on in marriage (first 18 months) than spouses in same-nation unions, a one-tailed t-test is used for the first three time frames: Conflict during the first 0-3 months; 3-6 months; and 6 months to one year. For the 1-2 year period, Cronkite's 18 month adjustment phase falls between the time frame. As a result, a two-tailed t-test is used.

Of the eight t-tests appearing in Table 3, two of the t-tests are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) for conflict at the 0-3 month marriage period and at the 1-2 year marriage period. For the 6 month to 1 year marriage period, differences between the means of the two marital types is near significance at .052. This result partially supports Hypothesis 1 of this thesis, since cross-national married respondents do report significantly more conflict at 0-3 months and at the 1-2 year marriage period than same-nation respondents--which is within Cronkite's (1977) initial adjustment phase of 18 months. Looking at Hypothesis 2, reports of marital conflict for spouses in cross-national and same-nation marriages after 2 years are not significantly different. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is also partially supported, the only exception being the 1-2 year borderline period:

Looking at Figure 1, it can be noted that, although not statistically significant, the two means for marital conflict are moving in opposite directions and the difference peaks at the 7 year to present marriage period.

**Figure 1.** Perceived Amount of Marital Conflict over the Months/Years of a Marriage for Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Respondents



Key for Time Married:

- 1 : 0 – 3 months
- 2 : 3 – 6 months
- 3 : 6 months – 1 year
- 4 : 1 – 2 years
- 5 : 2 – 3 years
- 6 : 3 – 4 years
- 7 : 4 – 7 years
- 8 : 7 years - Present

**Note:** Refer to Table 3 for between subjects t-test results.



**Table 4.** Additional Measures of Marital Conflict for Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Respondents

Marital Conflict	Marital Type	N	Mean <sub>a</sub>	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
How often do you disagree with your spouse?	Cross-Nation	28	3.04	.88	1.520	47	.135
	Same-Nation	38	2.74	.64			
Serious quarrels decreasing, same, or increasing?	Cross-Nation	28	1.57	1.00	-1.863	61	.067
	Same-Nation	38	2.05	1.09			
Have arguments led to hitting?	Cross-Nation	27	.26	.45	1.507	44	.139
	Same-Nation	37	.11	.31			
Argue whether you or your spouse are doing his/her share of the housework?	Cross-Nation	28	.36	.49	2.048	47	.046*
	Same-Nation	37	.14	.35			

Between Subjects T-tests (two-tailed tests).

<sup>a</sup> Higher values of the mean indicate a higher degree of marital conflict. (See Appendix A for response categories.)

\* $p < .05$  (equal variance not assumed)

Table 4 provides additional measures of marital conflict for the two marital types. As noted in the table, arguments over who does his or her share of the housework is the only variable significantly different for the two groups ( $p < .05$ ). Cross-national married couples are younger, have been married a shorter time, and are more likely to have children under 18 living in the home than same-nation couples. This may partially explain the difference between the marital types with regard to housework (Glenn 1991). However, it should be noted that the "serious quarrels" item in Table 4 approaches significance (.067), with spouses in same-nation marriages showing a greater tendency toward contentiousness.

While counseling cross-national married couples, Dugan Romano (1988) cited a number of "trouble spots" that are repeatedly mentioned by intercultural married couples in

counseling. Are these life aspects or trouble spots more contentious for cross-national married couples than for same-nation couples? Other than a question dealing with agreement or disagreement over the *language or languages used in the home*, it was predicted that the trouble spots identified by Romano are life areas experienced similarly by all married couples, regardless of national culture differences. Therefore, a two-tailed between subjects t-test was used. Table 5 is a compilation and a test of Romano's cross-cultural trouble spots for cross-national and same-nation respondents.

**Table 5.** Frequently Mentioned Cross-Cultural "Trouble Spots"

Spouse Agreement for Specific Topics	Marital Type	N	Mean <sub>a</sub>	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)																																																																																
Drinking Alcohol	Cross-Nation	27	1.11	.32	1.265	36	.214																																																																																
	Same-Nation	38	1.03	.16				The Preparation of and Type of Food to be Eaten	Cross-Nation	26	1.08	.27	-.420	58	.676	Same-Nation	37	1.11	.31	Being Punctual	Cross-Nation	27	1.22	.42	.539	52	.592	Same-Nation	36	1.17	.38	Place of Residence	Cross-Nation	25	1.00	.00	-1.000	37	.324	Same-Nation	38	1.03	.16	Religious Beliefs and Practices	Cross-Nation	24	1.17	.38	.089	48	.929	Same-Nation	38	1.16	.37	Best Way to Raise Children	Cross-Nation	26	1.19	.40	1.969	31	.058 <sup>c</sup>	Same-Nation	36	1.03	.17	Language or Languages Used in the Home	Cross-Nation	26	1.12	.33	.852	41	.399	Same-Nation	38	1.05	.23	Use of Birth Control	Cross-Nation	27	1.00	.00	0 <sup>b</sup>		
The Preparation of and Type of Food to be Eaten	Cross-Nation	26	1.08	.27	-.420	58	.676																																																																																
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Use of Birth Control	Cross-Nation	27	1.00	.00	0 <sup>b</sup>																																																																																		
	Same-Nation	37	1.00	.00																																																																																			

**Table 5.** (continued)

<b>Spouse Agreement for Specific Topics</b>	<b>Marital Type</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean<sub>a</sub> Deviation</b>	<b>Std.</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
Ways of Dealing with Stress	Cross-Nation	27	1.26	.45	.212	53	.833
	Same-Nation	34	1.24	.43			
Ways of Dealing with Illness	Cross-Nation	28	1.14	.36	-.494	61	.623
	Same-Nation	37	1.19	.40			
Choice of Friends	Cross-Nation	27	1.04	.19	-.726	63	.471
	Same-Nation	38	1.08	.27			
Politics	Cross-Nation	27	1.15	.36	.423	52	.674
	Same-Nation	36	1.11	.32			
Sexual Relations with Spouse	Cross-Nation	27	1.07	.27	-1.139	61	.259
	Same-Nation	36	1.17	.38			

Between Subjects T-tests (two-tailed tests)

<sup>a</sup> Higher values of the mean indicate higher levels of disagreement. (See Appendix A for response categories.)

<sup>b</sup> The t value cannot be computed because the standard deviation of both groups is 0.

<sup>c</sup> Assuming equal variances, *agree with the best way to raise children* would be significant,  $P < .031$  ( $t = 2.212$ ,  $df = 60$ ).

Cross-nation and same-nation respondents have nearly identical responses to Romano's (1988) "trouble spots" with the exception of a question which concerns the amount of agreement/disagreement about the *best way to raise children*. Only if equal variances are assumed for this variable, would there be a statistically significant difference for the two marital types ( $p < .05$ ). Surprisingly, cross-nation and same-nation respondents reported similar levels of agreement/disagreement over the use of *language or languages in the home*. Based on a few written comments from same-nation respondents, it appears the question was interpreted to mean agreement/disagreement over the use of "vulgar" language in the home—not foreign language.

For this sample, Dugan Romano's (1988) "trouble spots" appear to be life areas which are similarly experienced by all married couples, regardless of cultural or national differences.

### **Marital Happiness**

*Do respondents in cross-national marriages report greater or lesser levels of marital happiness than respondents in same-nation marriages?*

A series of questions were used to test whether or not marital happiness was dependent upon marital type. Although unable to test the effect of Cronkite's (1977) "initial adjustment phase" on marital happiness for cross-nation respondents because retrospective data on happiness was not collected, and none of the sample respondents were married less than 18 months, I was able to use cross-sectional data to assess the relationship between length of marriage and marital happiness for each marital type beginning at the two-year point.

**Table 6.** Marital Happiness by Marital Group (Years Married) and Number of Years Married

Marital Happiness <sub>a</sub>	N	Years Married	Marriage Group <sub>b</sub>
Marital Happiness for Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Married Respondents	66	.053	.083
Marital Happiness for Cross-Nation Married Respondents	28	-.157	-.285
Marital Happiness for Same-Nation Married Respondents	38	.157	.164

*Note:* Spearman correlation was used for the ordinal data in the *marriage group* variable, and Pearsonian correlation was used for the linear data for *years married*.

<sup>a</sup> Marital happiness was coded as 1 for *happy* and 2 for *not too happy*.

<sup>b</sup> The variable *marriage group* is based upon intervals of 6 to 9 years of marriage (for both marital types), creating 6 groups based on years married ranging from 1 for the smallest number of years, and 6 being the longest number of years married (refer to p. 40, under *Independent Variable Definitions*, of this thesis for groupings).

Based on obtained results from the survey, a significant correlation could not be detected between the number of years married and perceived reports of marital happiness for cross-nation and same-nation respondents, separately or combined, whether linear or ordinal measures of length of marriage were used.

Regardless of the number of years married, do cross-nation married respondents report greater or lesser levels of marital happiness in their marriage than same-nation couples? The results in Table 7 show no significant difference between the means for cross-nation and same-nation married respondents for general happiness or marital happiness, indicating support for hypothesis 4.

**Table 7.** Marital Happiness and General Happiness for Spouses in Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Marriages

Happiness	Marital Type	N	Mean <sub>a</sub>	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Are you very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?	Cross-Nation	28	1.71	.53	1.329	57	.189
	Same-Nation	37	1.54	.51			
Is your marriage very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?	Cross-Nation	28	1.43	.69	-.416	58	.679
	Same-Nation	38	1.50	.69			

Between Subjects T-tests (two-tailed tests)

<sup>a</sup> Higher values of the mean indicate a higher degree of unhappiness.

In order to provide additional support for *Hypothesis 3*, which states that cross-nation and same-nation married respondents will report similar levels of marital happiness, respondents were asked to indicate how happy they were with specific aspects of their married life. These results are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Marital Happiness for Specific Aspects of Married Life

Are you happy or not too happy? <sup>b</sup>	Marital Type	N	Mean <sub>a</sub>	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Happy with the amount of agreement?	Cross-Nation	28	.1100	.31	.380	53	.706
	Same-Nation	38	.0789	.27			
Happy with spouse-child rapport?	Cross-Nation	28	.0357	.19	-.330	63	.742
	Same-Nation	38	.0526	.23			
Happy with help around the house?	Cross-Nation	28	.1400	.36	.793	49	.432
	Same-Nation	38	.0789	.27			

**Table 8.** (continued)

Are you happy or not too happy? <sup>b</sup>	Marital Type	N	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)																																																																																
Happy with spouse as someone to do things with?	Cross-Nation	28	.0714	.26	-.113	60	.910																																																																																
	Same-Nation	38	.0789	.27				Happy with fidelity?	Cross-Nation	28	.0357	.19	-.330	63	.742	Same-Nation	38	.0526	.23	Happy with home?	Cross-Nation	28	.0357	.19	-.759	64	.450	Same-Nation	38	.0789	.27	Happy with your spouse as someone who provides a stable income?	Cross-Nation	28	.0357	.19	.212	53	.833	Same-Nation	38	.0263	.16	Happy with amount of love and affection?	Cross-Nation	28	.1100	.31	-.601	63	.550	Same-Nation	38	.1600	.37	Happy with financial situation?	Cross-Nation	28	.0357	.19	-1.451	60	.152	Same-Nation	38	.1300	.34	Happy with your sexual relationship?	Cross-Nation	28	.0714	.26	-2.185	61	.033*	Same-Nation	38	.2600	.45	Happy with the amount of understanding?	Cross-Nation	28	.1100	.19	.380	53	.706
Happy with fidelity?	Cross-Nation	28	.0357	.19	-.330	63	.742																																																																																
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Between Subjects T-tests (two-tailed tests)

<sup>a</sup> Higher values of the mean indicate higher levels of marital unhappiness.

<sup>b</sup> *Not too happy* was coded as 1, *happy* was coded as 0.

\* $p < .05$  (equal variances are not assumed)

Of the twelve t-tests presented in Table 8, only one question, “Are you happy with your sexual relationship?”, shows a statistically significant difference, ( $p < .05$ ). As shown in Table 9, more than one-fourth of same-nation respondents reported that they were not too happy with their sexual relationship.

**Table 9.** Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Respondents Reports of Marital Happiness and Sex

Are you happy with your sexual relationship with your spouse?	Marital Happiness	
	<u>Happy</u>	<u>Not Too Happy</u>
Cross-Nation Respondent	26 (93%)	2 ( 7%)
Same-Nation Respondent	28 (74%)	10 (26%)

*Note:* No significant relationship was found for national origin (foreign-born versus American-born), gender (male/female) and marital happiness with sex. For cross-nation respondents, two American-born subjects, a man and woman, reported being not too happy with their sexual relationship with their spouse. For same-nation respondents, six women and 4 men, all American-born, reported being not too happy with sex in the marriage.

### ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIONS

#### Social Class

*Does social class heterogamy influence reported levels of marital happiness and marital conflict for spouses in cross-nation and same-nation marriages?*

Romano (1988) states that she believes more class-crossing occurs in cross-national marriages because partners are often ignorant of social class distinctions in other countries. Contrary to Romano's assumptions, and contrary to *Hypothesis 4* of this thesis, the results of this survey (Table 10) show no significant differences in social class, either ascribed or achieved, for cross-nation or same-nation respondents. (*Ascribed heterogamy* is based on the social class position of the families of orientation of each spouse and *achieved heterogamy* is based on the spouse's level of education; refer to p. 37 of this thesis, under *Independent Variable Definitions*).



**Table 10.** Reported Difference in Achieved and Ascribed Class Status for Respondents in Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Marriage

Social Class Type	Marital Type	N	Mean <sub>a</sub> Difference	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (1-tailed)
Achieved	Cross-Nation	28	.18	.55	-.259	48	.399
	Same-Nation	38	.21	.41			
Ascribed	Cross-Nation	23	.48	1.86	.832	24	.207
	Same-Nation	31	.45	.51			

<sup>a</sup> Higher levels of the mean indicate a larger degree of difference in social class.

**Table 11.** Achieved and Ascribed Social Class Patterns for Spouses in Cross-National and Same-Nation Marriages

Achieved Social Class	Achieved Homogamy	Achieved Heterogamy 1 Level Diff	Achieved Heterogamy 2 Level Diff	Missing Values
<b>Cross-National</b>	25 (89.3%)	1 (3.6%)	2 (7.1%)	0
<b>Same-Nation</b>	30 (79%)	8 (21%)	0	0

Ascribed Social Class	Ascribed Homogamy	Ascribed Heterogamy 1 Level Diff	Ascribed Heterogamy 2 Level Diff	Missing Values
<b>Cross-National</b>	13 (57%)	9 (39%)	1 (4%)	5
<b>Same-Nation</b>	17 (55%)	14 (45%)	0	9

Looking at the percentages in Table 11, overall, cross-national couples are more likely to marry partners with similar class backgrounds than same-nation couples. However, cross-national couples in this sample are also more likely to marry partners with large class differences, although actual numbers are very small and there are a number of missing values for ascribed social class.

Again, looking at the percentages for ascribed and achieved heterogamy, both cross-nation and same-nation married respondents are more likely to be in marriages that are homogamous in current class status ("achieved" status, as measured by own education) than they are in ascribed class status (parents' occupation). This supports Kalmijn's (1991) hypothesis concerning education as the primary boundary in marriage selection in today's society.

Is there a relationship between marital conflict and marital happiness and the homogeneity or heterogeneity of a couple's social class background? Looking at Table 12, we can see that for both marital types, achieved heterogamy is positively correlated with two measures of marital conflict: the amount of *quarrels* in the marriage and agreement/disagreement concerning the *best way to raise children*. Positive correlations imply that heterogamous differences in achieved social class are correlated with the likelihood that the number of *quarrels* in a marriage are increasing ( $p < .05$ ) and with disagreement over the *best way to raise children* ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 12 also shows a statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between heterogamy in achieved social class and arguments over housework. A negative correlation implies that couples with heterogamous differences in achieved social class are less likely to argue over housework. These results only partially support *Hypothesis 5* which states that social class heterogamy is associated with greater marital conflict. It may be that differences in achieved social class are associated with role consensus over housework.

Table 12 suggests no significant correlation between social class heterogamy and marital happiness, contrary to *Hypothesis 6* of this thesis.

**Table 12.** Happiness and Conflict Reported by Respondents in Cross-National and Same-Nation Marriages by Class, Religious Heterogamy, Gender Ideology and Sex.

The Two Samples N = 66	Achieved Class Heter.	Ascribed Class Heter.	Religious Heter.	Gender Ideo. of Resp. <sup>a</sup>	Sex <sup>b</sup> (M/F)
General Happiness	-.010	.206	.068	.180	-.153
Marital Happiness	-.015	.106	-.064	.154	-.021
Have you ever hit your spouse?	-.024	.199	.226	.024	.304*
Do you disagree with your spouse never, sometimes, always?	-.239	-.019	.099	.101	.078
Quarrels are decreasing, about the same, increasing?	.284*	-.111	.012	-.176	.079
Argue over who does his/her share of the housework?	-.247*	-.064	-.086	-.160	-.028
Argue over who does his/her share of the child care?	-.007	.304	.153	.260	-.074
Agree/Disagree with the best way to raise a child?	.312*	-.189	.399**	.271*	-.011

*Note:* Spearman rank-order correlation was used for this table.

<sup>a</sup> Gender ideology is identified for individual respondents only: Non-traditional respondents were coded as 1, and traditional respondents 2.

<sup>b</sup> Sex (male/female) was coded "1" for men and "2" for women respondents for both marital types.

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

Using the same independent and dependent variables, separate Spearman correlations for cross-nation and same-nation respondents (Table 14) show that the correlation between perceived amount of *quarrels* in the marriage and *difference in achieved social class* are statistically significant (p<.01) for same-nation respondents only. The correlation between *differences in achieved social class* and disagreement over the *best way to raise a child* is statistically significant (p<.01) for cross-national respondents only (Table

13). Other relationships between ascribed class heterogamy and conflict and happiness variables were not significant.

Looking at Tables 12-14, we can see that there is no relationship between ascribed heterogamy and marital happiness or marital conflict variables.

**Table 13.** Happiness and Conflict Reported by Respondents in Cross-National Marriage by Class, Religious Heterogamy, Gender Ideology, Sex and National Origin.

Cross-National Respondents N = 28	Achieved Heter.	Ascribed Heter.	Religious Heter.	Gender Ideo. of Resp.	Sex <sup>b</sup> (M/F)	National Origin <sup>a</sup>
General Happiness	.117	.212	.220	.457*	-.264	.264
Marital Happiness	.040	.083	.098	.496**	.043	-.226
Have you ever hit your spouse?	.318	.178	.153	.294	.276	-.106
Do you disagree with your spouse never, sometimes, always?	-.162	-.154	.330	.212	.000	-.203
Quarrels are decreasing, about the same, increasing?	.007	-.116	.301	-.056	.075	.161
Argue over who does his/her share of the housework?	-.258	-.091	-.153	-.086	.000	.000
Argue over who does his/her share of the child care?	-.030	-.494	.178	.386	-.386	.386
Agree/Disagree with the best way to raise a child?	.739**	-.303	.603**	.364	-.136	.136

*Note:* Spearman rank-order correlation was used for this table.

<sup>a</sup>Sex (male/female) was coded "1" for men and "2" for women respondents.

<sup>b</sup> National origin was coded "0" for American-born and "1" for foreign-born cross-national respondents only.

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

**Table 14.** Happiness and Conflict Reported by Respondents in Same-Nation Marriages by Class, Religious Heterogamy, Gender Ideology and Sex.

Same-Nation Respondent N = 38	Achieved Heter.	Ascribed Heter.	Religious Heter.	Gender Ideo. of Resp.	Sex <sup>b</sup> (M/F)
General Happiness	-.043	.202	-.124	.006	-.079
Marital Happiness	-.061	.128	-.227	-.088	-.006
Have you ever hit your spouse?	-.183	.231	.273	-.212	.358*
Do you disagree with your spouse never, sometimes, always?	-.258	.088	-.207	-.034	.146
Quarrels are decreasing, about the same, increasing?	.442**	-.101	-.202	-.270	.084
Argue over who does his/her share of the housework?	-.208	-.045	-.107	-.241	-.068
Argue over who does his/her share of the child care?	-.108	-.293	-.059	-.130	.271
Agree/Disagree with the best way to raise a child?	-.090	. <sup>a</sup>	-.053	.255	.169

*Note:* Spearman rank-order correlation was used for this table.

<sup>a</sup> The correlation between *ascribed heterogamy* and the *best way to raise a child* cannot be computed because *all* same-nation respondents reported agreeing with their spouses over the best way to raise a child.

<sup>b</sup> Sex (male/female) was coded "1" for men and "2" for women respondents.

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

### **Religious Heterogamy**

*Does religious heterogamy influence reported levels of marital happiness or marital conflict reported by respondents in cross-nation and same-nation marriages?*

Looking at Tables 12-14, we find a strong correlational relationship ( $p < .01$ ) between religious heterogamy and disagreement over child-rearing for the overall group and for the cross-national sample, though not for the same nation sample. This suggests

the importance of this area of tension in cross-national marriage. Otherwise, there are no significant correlations for religious heterogamy. This result partially supports *Hypothesis 7* which states that those in *religiously heterogamous marriages will evidence more conflict than those in religiously homogamous marriages*. However, there is no support for *Hypothesis 8* which states that spouses in marriages that are *religiously homogamous will report more marital happiness than those in religiously heterogamous marriages*.

### **Gender Ideology**

*What influence does gender ideology have on reports of marital happiness and marital conflict for spouses in cross-nation and same-nation marriages?*

Looking at Table 13, we can see that for respondents in cross-national marriage, there is a relationship between traditional gender ideology and the likelihood of being *not too happy* with their marriage ( $p < .01$ ) or with their life in general ( $p < .05$ ). There is no correlation between same-nation respondents' gender ideology and marital happiness or general happiness. For the combined subject pool (Table 12), there is a significant correlation ( $p < .05$ ) between disagreement over the *best way to raise a child* and traditional gender ideology. Additional correlations between gender ideology and other variables were not significant.

### **Sex and national origin**

Looking at Table 13, there are no statistically significant correlations for sex, national origin and the various happiness and conflict variables presented in the table. Although not significant, it is interesting to note that for *national origin*, it is the foreign-born cross-national respondents who report being not too happy with life in general, and the American-born cross-national subjects who are more likely to report not being too happy with the marriage. Also, American-born cross-national respondents are more likely

to report physical violence in the marriage and frequent disagreements in general. Foreign-born cross-national respondents, on the other hand, were more likely to report that the number of quarrels in their marriages were increasing, and more disagreements over childcare and the best way to raise children.

Table 15 classifies cross-national and same-nation respondents according to gender ideology and selected conflict items by sex and national origin. As shown in the table, if the national origin of cross-national subjects is overlooked, gender ideology patterns are nearly identical for both marital types, and do not differ significantly by sex. However, when you look at the percentages for national origin for cross-national respondents, a pattern emerges. First, half of foreign-born *male* respondents in cross-national-marriages have traditional gender ideology leanings. This contrasts sharply when compared to the American-born men in cross-national marriage who all report non-traditional gender ideology leanings. Also, foreign-born cross-national male respondents are more likely to have traditional gender ideology leanings than same-nation male respondents. Second, with regard to *women* subjects, foreign-born cross-national female respondents had the lowest percentage of traditional gender ideology leanings, and same-nation women reported slightly more traditional gender ideology leanings than American-born cross-national women. Simply looking at percentages, the assumption that traditional gender role identity is stronger in cross-national marriages than same-nation marriages holds true only for foreign men in cross-national marriage (in this study).

Since all cross-national married respondents in this study involve one American-born partner and one foreign-born partner, a few generalizations can be made about these respondents looking at the percentages provided in Table 15. First, American-born men and foreign-born women who married cross-nationally did not report arguments over housework and childcare; this is in contrast to American-born women and foreign-born men in cross-national marriage, and male and female subjects in same-nation marriage,

who did report arguments over housework and childcare. Second, American-born women and foreign-born men, who marry cross-nationally, were more likely to report arguments over housework and childcare than American-born men and foreign-born women in cross-national marriage, and same-nation respondents of both sexes. Third, foreign-born cross-national women respondents reported more physical violence in the marriage than foreign-born cross-national men and cross-national American women and same-nation men and women respondents. Fourth, all women, regardless of national origin or marriage type, reported more hitting in the marriage than all male respondents in this study. Indeed, looking at Tables 12 and 14, there are statistically significant relationships ( $p < .05$ ) between the *overall group* of women, and *same-nation* women, and the reporting of physical violence in the marriage.

With regard to gender role identity, the direction of sex role differences cannot be ascertained because the unit of analysis in this study is the individual respondent. However, since 50 per cent of the foreign-born male respondents married to American women in this study had traditional gender ideology leanings, and 75 per cent of American-born female respondents married to foreign-born males in this study had non-traditional gender ideology leanings, it is likely that the relatively high reports of arguments over housework and childcare for these respondents may be due to differences in married spouse's gender ideology.



**Table 15.** Gender Ideology and Selected Conflict Items by Marital Type, Sex and National Origin.

<b>Cross-National Married Respondents</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Non-Traditional Gender Ideo.<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Traditional Gender Ideo.</b>	<b>Arguments Over House-Work</b>	<b>Hit</b>	<b>Arguments Over Child-Care</b>
American-Born Men	6	6 (100.0%)	0 ( 0.0%)	0 ( 0.0%)	1 (16.7%)	0 ( 0.0%)
American-Born Women	8	6 ( 75.0%)	2 (25.0%)	5 (62.5%)	3 (37.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Foreign-Born Men	8	4 ( 50.0%)	4 (50.0%)	5 (62.5%)	1 (12.5%)	3 (37.5%)
Foreign-Born Women	6	5 ( 83.3%)	1 (16.7%)	0 ( 0.0%)	2 (53.3%)	0 ( 0.0%)
All Men	14	10 ( 71.4%)	4 (28.6%)	5 (35.7%)	2 (14.3%)	3 (21.4%)
All Women	14	11 ( 78.6%)	3 (21.4%)	5 (35.7%)	5 (35.7%)	1 ( 7.1%)
Both Sexes	28	21 ( 75.0%)	7 (25.0%)	10 (35.7%)	7 (25.0%)	4 (14.3%)
<b>Same-National Married Respondents</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Non-Traditional Gender Ideo.<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Traditional Gender Ideo.</b>	<b>Arguments Over House-Work</b>	<b>Hit</b>	<b>Arguments Over Child-Care</b>
Men	19	13 (68.4%)	6 (31.6%)	4 (21.1%)	1 ( 5.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Woman	19	14 (73.7%)	5 (26.3%)	1 ( 5.3%)	4 (21.1%)	1 (5.3%)
Both Sexes	38	27 (71.0%)	11 (29.0%)	5 (13.2%)	5 (13.2%)	1 (2.6%)

<sup>a</sup> The categories for traditional and non-traditional gender ideology were constructed from questions 68a-68i., 78., 80., for women subjects, and questions 68a-68i., 78. and 80., for men-subjects (see Appendix A). Scores of 8 or above for women, and 6 or above for men, were the dividing point.

### **Bi-Culturalism and Family and Friends**

What effects, if any, would a person's cross-national marriage have on one's children, family and friends? Using a question written specifically for this study by me, both cross-national and same-nation married respondents were asked about increases in cultural understanding. Table 15 indicates no difference between the two groups of respondents in their reports of cultural enrichment and increased understanding of cultural diversity. There are no significant differences in the means for Table 16. Cross-national and same-nation respondents had nearly identical responses that fell toward the lower (culturally open) end of the scale.

**Table 16.** Bi-Cultural Experiences and Knowledge Gained after Marriage for Respondents in Cross-Nation and Same-Nation Marriages.

<b>Bi-Cultural Experiences since my marriage<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Marital Type</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
I am less likely to believe stereotypes.	Cross-Nation	26	1.31	.47	.407	52	.686
	Same-Nation	31	1.26	.44			
I have become more active in learning about other cultures	Cross-Nation	25	1.32	.48	.136	51	.893
	Same-Nation	33	1.30	.47			
I am more knowledgeable about different cultures.	Cross-Nation	28	1.25	.44	-.064	58	.949
	Same-Nation	35	1.26	.44			
I have made friends with ethnically diverse people.	Cross-Nation	27	1.30	.47	.400	54	.691
	Same-Nation	36	1.25	.47			

<sup>a</sup> Respondents either *agreed* (coded as 1) or *disagreed* (coded as 2) with the statements presented in this table. Answers were summed. High scores indicate less openness.

**Table 17.** The Influence a Cross-Nation Marriage has on Family and Friends' Bi-Cultural Experiences and Knowledge.

<b>Cross-National family and friends' bi-cultural experiences<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Missing Values</b>
My family and friends are more likely to challenge stereotypes.	14 (50%)	8 (29%)	6 (21%)
My family and friends are more interested in learning about other cultures.	19 (67.9%)	8 (28.6%)	1 ( 3.6%)
My family and friends are more knowledgeable about different cultures.	20 (71.4%)	6 (21.4%)	2 ( 7.1%)
My family and friends are more likely to have friends who are culturally different from themselves.	21 (75%)	7 (25%)	0 ( 0%)

<sup>a</sup>Note, no comparable question provided for same-nation respondents.

Table 17 provides percentages for answers to questions concerning the impact a cross-national marriage has on family and friends' attitudes and behaviors toward different cultures and ethnically diverse peoples. A majority of cross-nation respondents stated that they believed that their cross-national marriage influenced their family and friends' knowledge about (71%), and their interest in learning about (68%), different cultures. Also, most cross-national respondents stated that their friends and family were more likely to have friends who are culturally different from themselves (75%). Concerning family and friends being more likely to challenge cultural stereotypes, only half of the cross-national respondents agreed that their marriage has had any influence. Perhaps more telling is the fact that 21% or over one-fifth of the cross-national respondents chose not to answer this question.

### **Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages**

Cross-national respondents were provided a number of open-ended questions asking them to talk about some of the advantages and disadvantages that they have experienced by marrying someone from another country and/or culture. They were also asked to talk about the influences their bi-national marriage has had on their children's lives. With regard to children, cross-national respondents were asked to identify any good effects or any problems that their children may have experienced as a result of having parents from different national, cultural or ethnic backgrounds. In addition, for bilingual households, questions taken from Varro (1988) were used to ask respondents what influence, if any, there was on the children from having more than one language in the home.

### **Children of Cross-National Respondents**

Overwhelmingly, cross-national respondents stated that their children experienced more advantages than disadvantages from having a bi-national, bi-cultural or bilingual home. Cross-national respondents described their children as more open-minded and accepting of other ethnic and cultural groups than children from same-nation unions. It was felt that a dual-heritage enriched their children's lives through more travel opportunities and a hands-on knowledge about another culture. Cross-national respondents saw bilingualism in their children as an important means of broadening their children's understanding of another culture. One cross-national respondent felt that her child's bilingualism allowed for a greater sense of belonging and comfort with both parents' cultures. Additional benefits children received from having a dual heritage included international friendships and a large "foreign" family. One cross-national respondent mentioned that his child's bi-cultural experiences helped influence the son's decision to major in international relations.

In terms of difficulties or problems, two cross-national respondents stated that their children had problems "fitting in" because of their ethnic appearance. For example, a Japanese woman married to a white American said that her youngest child looks Japanese. As a result, she feels "very different" from the majority of her ethnically white class-mates.

Also, a couple of cross-national respondents mentioned that their children had difficulties fitting in to "another" culture because they had lived in the United States all their lives. One cross-national parent said, "I'm not sure my kids are comfortable with Indian culture even though I have made an effort to regularly expose them to it." Another problem mentioned by an American Muslim woman married to a Muslim Palestinian was that their children don't feel they fit in with American culture when they "hear and see the big fuss made about Christmas in this country and they don't celebrate."

**Table 18.** Advantages a Child has Growing up in a Bi-Cultural Home

	<b>Great Adv.</b>	<b>Adv.</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disadv.</b>	<b>Great Disadv.</b>	<b>Missing Value</b>
Bilingualism	14 (61%)	1 (4%)	7 (31%)	0	0	1 (4%)
Dual Citizenship	2 (9%)	2 (9%)	18 (78%)	0	0	1 (4%)
Bi-cultural Expertise	17 (74%)	4 (17%)	2 (9%)	0	0	0
International linkages in terms of future job prospects	6 (26%)	5 (22%)	11 (48%)	1 (4%)	0	0

Looking at Table 18, we can see that a majority of the respondents felt that *bilingualism* (61%) and *bi-cultural expertise* (74%) were some of the great advantages that cross-national respondents could give to their children. For international linkages, cross-

national respondents were split between seeing it as an advantage (48%) or as having no influence (48%) on their children's lives. Overwhelmingly, cross-national respondents saw dual citizenship as having no positive or a negative influence (78%) on their children's lives.

### **Cross-National Respondents**

Many of the cross-national respondents viewed their marriage to a person from a different culture/country as a culturally enriching experience. Many respondents found their marriage differences exciting and enjoyed exchanging new ideas and learning different perspectives and view points. One cross-national respondent commented that the "diversity of backgrounds and culture brings a new and often happy dimension to married life." Not all the mentioned advantages for a cross-nation marriage were of the interpersonal, growth type. For one cross-national respondent from Thailand, a practical advantage she saw to being married to an American was that it allowed her to live in a prosperous and stable country.

A frequently mentioned disadvantage to being married to someone from another nation was the expense of travel costs to the foreign spouse's country. One cross-national respondent said that because of the distances involved and the travel costs, her husband lost touch with his family and culture. She believes that her husband may regret marrying her for this reason, though he doesn't discuss it with her. Other frequently mentioned disadvantages include the stress of not being able to communicate with the foreign spouse's family and friends because of language barriers. One respondent stated that she was tired of being asked the same questions over and over again about her spouse's country and culture and that she was tired of people treating her differently. Several respondents mentioned different values and ideas concerning the best way to raise children as a big disadvantage to marrying cross-nationally. One respondent elaborated and said that the

different parenting styles resulted in his "kids being constantly confused about what constitutes acceptable behavior." A couple of respondents mentioned that their parents' disapproval of aspects of their spouse's culture added stress to the marriage.

In summing up what they believed to be important life aspects for cross-national marriage, many respondents said that they had problems determining whether or not any disagreements were due to cultural differences or due to male and female gender roles (gender ideology). One respondent stated that she believed that the problems she experienced in her marriage were more likely to be "typical" ones experienced by same-nation marriages, not necessarily problems related to culture.

Stability, maturity, good communication skills, commitment, and similar values and interests were factors mentioned by cross-national respondents as important elements of a successful marriage, whether it be a "mixed marriage" or a "non-mixed marriage." One respondent stated that "familiarity with cultural differences, not agreement, is what must be achieved" for a successful cross-national marriage. A couple of respondents mentioned that a cross-national marriage requires a greater effort toward adjustment in the beginning than same-nation marriage: "I believe a mixed marriage requires more commitment and adjustment, especially at first, but it has been absolutely wonderful in our maturity."

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

It was not until after World War II, and the influx of “war brides” in the United States that cross-national marriages became a social issue, and thus a topic of research. Since World War II, a web of global economic and social ties between nations has propelled and encouraged many people to study, work and travel abroad. This increase in international mobility has also translated into a five-fold increase in the number of cross-national marriages found in the United States since 1960.

Despite the dramatic increase in the number of cross-national marriages in the United States, there has been little research done on this type of marriage since the preoccupation with Asian war brides after World War II and the Korean War. A majority of the research on war bride marriages emphasized the problems encountered in such marriages or labeled the participants as “deviants.” Social scientists refer to the theoretical linking of spouse differences to low marital quality and high conflict as the “heterogamy hypothesis” (Roger and Procidiano 1989). Family sociology has drawn many of its research concerns and foci from the persistent cultural interest in the consequences of intergroup marriage and, undoubtedly, the heterogamy hypothesis originated with this cultural preoccupation.

The present study identified three reasons why new research was needed on cross-national marriage. First, the literature on war bride marriage is 20 to 40 years old, and American institutions and American culture, in general, are now less tolerant of overt discrimination against “mixed couples” whether it is based on ethnicity/race or religion. Therefore, assuming outside societal influences are less openly hostile to a mixed union today, one could assume that cross-national married couples would experience less stress. Second, most modern cross-national marriages are not a result of one nation’s military or



colonial presence in another nation. Today's cross-national marriages are a consequence of the increasing number of people able to study, travel and work abroad. Also, unlike couples involved in war bride marriages, modern cross-national couples have higher levels of education. This is important because researchers have found an association between high levels of educational attainment for both spouses, whether mixed or homogamous, and greater marital satisfaction and lower divorce rates (Weller and Rofe 1988). Third, despite widely held assumptions, research on the heterogamy hypothesis is inconsistent and inconclusive—regardless of whether the spouse differences are with reference to religion, ethnicity/race, age, social class or national origin. Given the growing trend in cross-national marriage, and out-marriage in general (exogamy), any research attempts to address the heterogamy hypothesis would be beneficial. Research that supports the heterogamy hypothesis would nevertheless be useful in identifying the special areas which cross-national couples need to be aware of, and work at, to make marriages run more smoothly. Research not supporting the heterogamy hypothesis would be useful in diminishing the troubled stereotyping of intergroup marriages.

This thesis explored the heterogamy hypothesis by comparing cross-national marriages to same-nationality marriages. In addition to national difference, aspects of religious and social class homogamy or heterogamy were explored. Respondents' gender ideology was identified, along with sex and national origin, and their impact on marital happiness and marital conflict assessed. The effects of biculturalism on marriage, children, family and friends were also explored.

Data for this study was gathered by mailing questionnaires (to be self-administered) to a non-random, convenience sample of cross-national married subjects found in the Nebraska State university phone directories or the City of Omaha phone directory. Same-nation subjects were also selected from the Nebraska State university phone directories, but selected randomly. Advertisements requesting volunteers for both marital types resulted in

only one same-nation subject completing a questionnaire. In all, twenty-eight cross-national married subjects and 38 same-nationality subjects responded to the questionnaire.

The results of this study should be treated cautiously as a result of the limited sample size, the low response rate (<50 per cent), the non-representativeness of the sample, and the fact that the individual, not the couple, was the unit of analysis.

Nearly all respondents were employees or/and students of the University of Nebraska. As a result, the respondents had a higher than average education and income level, for both marital types, relative to the U.S. population. Along with the selectivity by education, a common academic culture or milieu may have predisposed the respondents to be less ethnocentric, thus, inclined to be more accepting of cultural/national differences, particularly within the cross-national marriage. Gender ideology is another way the academic culture may have influenced respondents; a majority of the respondents reported having non-traditional gender ideology leanings.

In terms of individual questions, a small number of questions, some open-ended, others not, were written by me, and they do not have reliability and validity checks. Also, due to the length of the questionnaire, at least 30 minutes were required to complete it, and this precluded respondents with low educational levels from participating.

Additional limitations include the higher than average age and number of years married, for both marital types, relative to the U.S. population, the exclusive focus on Americans married to foreigners, and that, due to financial costs and time constraints, the foreign language literature on cross-national marriage is overlooked. Also, it is important to note that there may be research literature on cross-national marriage from other English speaking countries such as Australia, Canada or New Zealand which I did not come across in my literature review.

The following conclusions were drawn from the data in response to the questions posed in this thesis study.

1. Do cross-national married couples report more or less conflict in their marriage than same-nation couples? In addressing this question, it was acknowledged that from the start of married life, cross-national couples are likely to be confronted with differences in deep-seated values far sooner than same-national couples. Based on this premise and research conducted by Jorgensen and Klein (1979) and Cronkite (1977), it was hypothesized that cross-national married couples would report higher levels of conflict in the first 18 months of marriage compared to same-nation married respondents. After the initial adjustment phase of 18 months, it was conjectured that both marital types would report similar patterns of marital conflict.

The result of the study partially supported the hypothesis; cross-national subjects reported significantly higher levels of marital conflict than same-nation respondents for the first three months of marriage, and for the first one to two years of marriage, with near significance for the six-month to one year married time frame (.052). As conjectured, other than the one to two year period, differences between respondents for the two marital types are not statistically different. Looking at simple percentages, levels of marital conflict for same-nation subjects were actually higher than cross-national respondents after the seven year period.

Together with the research findings of Jorgensen and Klein (1979) and Cronkite (1977) and comments made by Barbara (1988), the results from the sample in this thesis study do seem to suggest that cross-national married couples may indeed experience some type of competition-conflict-accommodation-assimilation cycle in their marriage that may correspond to the length of time the couple is married.

Additional measures of marital conflict, not based on time married, were also explored. A statistically significant association was found between marital type and one form of conflict; cross-national correspondents are more likely to argue over housework with their spouses. No such association was found for same-nation subjects. In this

study, the cross-national respondents who reported couple arguments over housework were either men from predominantly patriarchal nations, or women respondents (all of whom were U.S. citizens) married to men from patriarchal nations. Based on comments made by Barbara (1989), it would probably not be unfair to say that in the patriarchal countries represented in this study, women, whether they work or not, do most, if not all, of the child care and housework. Therefore, one might assume that the arguments over housework would stem from culturally determined gender roles. Also, the cross-national subjects in this study have more children in the home than same-nation respondents, and this, too, could explain the quarrels over housework reported by cross-national respondents.

A comparison of cross-national and same-nation subjects' responses to questions over agreement/disagreement over a number of marital "trouble spots" yielded no significant differences between the two marital types (Romano 1988). However, one question approached significance ( $p < .058$ ); cross-national respondents were more likely to argue over the best way to raise children.

2. Do cross-national married couples report greater or lesser levels of marital happiness in their marriage than same-nation couples?

Parallel to the question posed for marital conflict, it was hypothesized that cross-national subjects would be affected by the stresses of Cronkite's (1977) initial adjustment phase, and would report lower levels of marital happiness than same-nation subjects for the first 18 months after the wedding. After the initial adjustment phase of 18 months, it was predicted that cross-nation and same-nation respondents would report similar levels of marital happiness. Unfortunately, retrospective data on happiness was not collected and none of the sample respondents were married less than 18 months. However, cross-sectional data was used to assess the relationship between length of marriage and marital happiness for each marital type beginning at the two-year point. No significant relationship

was found between time married and marital happiness. Similarly, comparisons for the two marital types on measures of general happiness and marital happiness, irrespective of time married, showed no statistically significant difference. A look at specific aspects of married life, covering marital happiness over love and affection, fidelity, income, agreement, etc. yielded only one statistically significant result: same-nation subjects (over one-fourth) were much more likely to report being not too happy with their sexual relationship than cross-national subjects.

The same-nation subjects were older and had been married at least 10 years longer on average than the cross-national respondents in this thesis sample. Therefore, duration of marriage may be one explanation for the difference between the marital types. Also, only American-born respondents, for both marital types, reported that they were not too happy with sex in the marriage. Thus, it is possible that the American-born same-nation and cross-national married respondents may have been more open about their dissatisfaction with the sexual relationship with their spouses than the foreign born cross-national married respondents.

In sum, cross-national respondents reported levels of marital happiness similar to same-nation subjects (as conjectured), and in at least one marital aspect (sex), reported higher levels of marital happiness.

3. Does social class heterogamy influence reported levels of marital conflict or marital happiness for spouses in cross-nation and same-nation marriages?

It was conjectured that spouses in marriages with similar educational backgrounds would report being more happy than spouses in educationally heterogamous marriages. Contrary to the predictions made in this thesis, no relationship was found between social class heterogamy and reports of general or marital happiness for both marital types. It was also conjectured that social class heterogamy would be associated with greater marital conflict. This prediction was only partially supported. For both marital types, differences

in achieved social class yielded an association with educationally heterogamous respondents reporting quarrels increasing in their marriages and disagreements over the best way to raise kids ( $p < .05$ ). Separate tests of association for cross-nation and same-nation respondents yielded statistically stronger relationships. For same-nation respondents, there was a relationship between frequent quarreling and achieved social class heterogamy ( $p < .01$ ). For cross-national respondents, there was a relationship between quarreling over the best way to raise children and differences in achieved social class ( $p < .01$ ).

Contrary to what was predicted, differences in achieved social class, for both marital types, were associated with the respondents' perception of being less likely to argue over housework. One way to explain the association is to look at it as a symbolic exchange in which women who marry-up are more willing to do all or most of the housework without issue or complaint (all women respondents in this study had less or equal education to that of their male spouses). Also, elements of dominance and dependence for the married women may be involved. For example, in this thesis sample, a college educated American man had married an Asian woman with no high school diploma. The Asian woman indicated that one of the reasons she had married her husband was to stay in the United States. She reported that once they had had an argument because she felt he should help pack for a move across state. The fight was so unpleasant for her that she decided to keep a low profile with regard to matters in the home.

It was suggested by Romano (1988), a mixed marriage counselor, that cross-national married couples are more likely to be heterogamous in terms of social class than same-nation couples. Contrary to this assumption, data for cross-national couples indicated that they were largely homogamous in terms of both achieved and ascribed social class, similar to same-nation respondents. Since Romano counsels cross-national couples

who are already in troubled marriages, she may see more extremes in her clientele than would be found in any non-counseled population of cross-national marriages.

Ascribed heterogamy, based on differences in spouse's father's education and occupational attainment, demonstrated no relation to marital happiness or marital conflict for either marital type.

4. Does religious heterogamy influence reported levels of marital happiness or marital conflict for spouses in cross-national or same-nation marriages?

It was conjectured that respondents in religiously homogamous marriages would report less conflict and more marital happiness than respondents in religiously heterogamous marriages. The only variable that proved to have a statistically significant association with religious heterogamy was the best way to raise children. A Spearman correlation matrix, with both marital types and for cross-national respondents only, yielded a statistically significant association for religious heterogamy and disagreement over the best way to raise kids ( $p < .01$ ). Tests of association for same-nation respondents yielded no statistically significant results for religious heterogamy.

5. What influence does gender ideology have on reports of marital happiness or marital conflict for spouses in cross-national and same-nation marriages?

Questions on gender ideology were not provided for respondent's spouses. Therefore, gender ideology was assessed for cross-national and same-nation individual subjects only.

When the two marital types were combined, a Spearman correlation showed a relationship between traditional gender ideology and the likelihood of disagreement over the best way to raise children ( $p < .05$ ). Perhaps traditional and/or rigid gender role ideology leads to conflict over appropriate behavior for children, particularly teenage children. For example, traditional cross-national respondents may have rigid expectations for gender

behavior for their children, particularly female children, which may come in conflict with American customs of dating and dress.

For cross-national respondents only, a Spearman correlation showed a relationship between traditional gender ideology and not being too happy with life in general ( $p < .05$ ), and not being too happy with one's marriage ( $p < .01$ ).

Traditional gender ideology proved to be the only variable in this study that had a significant association with marital happiness and general happiness. Previous studies have shown that non-traditional women married to traditional men report the lowest levels of marital happiness, and, irrespective of the husband's gender ideology, traditional women report the highest levels of marital and global happiness (Li and Caldwell 1987; Lueptow, Guss and Hyden 1989). Because no data on gender ideology is available for respondents' spouses in this thesis study, it is impossible to determine the direction of the difference in sex role attitude between the spouses. However, one might surmise that because many of the cross-national married men have national origins in patriarchal societies where there are rigid sex roles, marriage to American women, particularly if they have non-traditional gender ideologies, may be contentious and adversely affect levels of general and marital happiness. Indeed, a closer look at the relationship between national origin and gender ideology showed that 50 percent of the foreign-born cross-national male respondents reported traditional gender ideology leanings, and 75 percent of the American-born cross-national women respondents reported non-traditional gender ideology leanings.

Looking at sex (male/female), a statistically significant correlation ( $p < .05$ ) was found for *same-nation* women and the likelihood of reporting physical violence in the marriage. Similarly, for the *overall group*, an association was found for women and the reporting of physical violence in the marriage ( $p < .05$ ). No other relationships between sex, and happiness and conflict variables were found.



6. What effects, if any, would a person's bicultural, cross-national marriage have on children, family and friends?

Both cross-national and same-nation respondents were asked about increases in cultural understanding. For example, respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement "since my marriage I am less likely to believe stereotypes." Cross-national and same-nation respondents had nearly identical responses that leaned toward cultural openness.

For cross-national respondents only, similar questions were asked with regard to the impact a cross-national marriage has on family and friends attitudes toward different cultures and ethnically diverse peoples. For example, respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the following statement: Since my marriage to a person with a different national culture, my family and friends are more knowledgeable about different cultures. A majority of cross-national respondents indicated that their marriage influenced their family and friends' knowledge about different cultures, their interest in learning about different cultures, and that their friends and family were more likely to have friends who were culturally different from themselves. However, only half of the cross-national respondents believed their friends and family were more likely to challenge cultural stereotypes and, perhaps more telling, over one-fifth of the cross-national respondents chose not to answer the question.

With regards to the children of cross-national marriage, a majority of the cross-national respondents felt that bilingualism and bicultural expertise were some of the great advantages they could give their children. Cross-national respondents are equally split between seeing international linkages as an advantage or as having no influence on their children's lives. Overwhelmingly, cross-national respondents view dual citizenship as having no positive or negative influence on their children's lives.

In terms of disadvantages, a few cross-national respondents stated that some of the difficulties their children experienced were a result of different religious beliefs/practices and differences in ethnic appearance that effected how their children felt about "fitting in" with their predominantly Christian, white class-mates in the Omaha area. Also, one cross-national respondent indicated that despite attempts to familiarize her children with the foreign parent's culture, the children were not comfortable with it.

7. What would be some of the advantages and/or drawbacks a person would experience by marrying someone from another country and/or culture?

Cross-national respondents were provided with an open-ended question asking them to discuss some of the advantages and disadvantages that they experienced as a result of marrying someone with a different national culture. Some frequently mentioned disadvantages included travel costs to the foreign partner's country, language barriers with the foreign partner's family and friends, and conflicts over different values and ideas concerning the best way to raise children. One cross-national respondent mentioned her parent's disapproval of her spouse's culture as a stress, and another respondent was unhappy about being "made to feel different" all the time because of her marriage to a foreigner. Some frequently mentioned advantages to being married to a foreign partner include the excitement of traveling to foreign lands, and learning about different perspectives and viewpoints. Many cross-national respondents viewed their marriage as a culturally enriching experience.

Now, providing an overall summary of the data, it appears that the one area that proved to be most contentious for cross-national respondents was parental agreement/disagreement over the best way to raise children. Cross-national parents must decide whether they want their children to identify primarily with the dominant national culture they are living in, or in the case for those with committed religious beliefs, the national culture of the minority (foreign) parent. The prestige of one parent's national

culture may also influence the choices parents make for their children. Also, the parents (or sometimes *the* parent) may wish to give their children a bicultural, binational identity. A few examples of the many decisions, and potential areas of conflict, that cross-national parents are confronted with include: what language or languages should be taught to their child, what religion the child should have, should the child's name be typical of one country or one religion, should a baby be breast or bottle-fed and for how long, should the care of the child be exclusive domain of the mother, or be shared by both parents? Although this appears to involve only details, cross-national parents are really battling over different cultural values and beliefs, and according to Varro (1988), these decisions affect the survival of a parent's identity, particularly if the parent is in the minority culture. Unless differences in philosophy are resolved at some level, child rearing can be an area of contentiousness throughout the life of the marriage. In addition, when cross-national couples have differences in achieved social class and religious background, differences in values are probably more pronounced, and this may explain the associations found with conflict over the best way to raise children.

Another area that appears to be an important issue for cross-national married couples is gender ideology. For cross-national respondents, traditional gender ideology was the only variable that had a significant association with marital happiness and global happiness. This, tied in with cross-national respondents fighting over housework, seems to suggest that sex role attitudes, may be a special area that cross-national couples need to be aware of in order to make marriages run more smoothly.

In sum, it can be said that cross-national married respondents in this thesis study did report more conflict early on in their marriage compared to same-nation subjects, presumably because they were confronted with immediate and obvious differences in values from the very start of the marriage. Also, it appears that disagreements over the best way to raise children and traditional gender ideology were more likely to affect cross-

national respondent's marriages than same-nation subject marriages. For same-nation and cross-national respondents alike, religious and achieved social class heterogamy appear related to disagreement over the best way to raise children. Same-nation respondents reported more unhappiness with their sexual relationship with their spouses than cross-national respondents. Other than in these instances, a comparison of the means for reported levels of marital and general happiness for the two marital types yielded no significant difference.

Since the data for this thesis study are limited by the small sample size and non-representativeness of the survey sample, the legitimacy of the heterogamy hypothesis cannot be meaningfully assessed. The data do suggest that certain differences in national culture, educational achievement, and religion affect reported levels of marital conflict. However, it should be emphasized that for the vast majority of the tested parameters in this study, both marital types reported similar responses.

In order to acquire more generalizable findings, a study of cross-national married couples at the national level would need to be done. However, given the amount of time and money this would require, a practical step would be to enlarge the sampling frame to include an entire county or possibly a state.

In terms of methodology, conducting interviews over the phone or in person with cross-national couples, though removing the anonymity of respondents, could potentially elicit more in-depth discussion of survey questions. Also, looking at the suggestive data on gender ideology it would be beneficial to include both spouses as the unit of analysis, although this would involve more money and time.

If a good sample size could be obtained, an analysis of the marital differences found in Western-Western marriage versus Western-non-Western marriage could shed light on the role that ethnicity and religion play in social distance, assimilation, discrimination and prejudice within and outside a marriage. Within the analysis of the two types of marriage

mentioned above, it would also be important to consider the amount of time the foreign partner has lived in his or her host country. Lengthy stays in the host country would undoubtedly lead to some amount of "cultural leakage" which would better prepare the person for a cross-national marriage.

Also, interviewing cross-national respondents overseas would take the focus off of Americans married to foreigners and could add dimensionality to our understanding of cross-national marriage. Similarly, including in one's study what appears to be a wealth of foreign language literature (and possibly literature from other English speaking countries) on cross-national marriage would provide breadth of perspective and be of great use in helping to understand the phenomenon of cross-national marriage.

In addition, survey questions dealing with bicultural experiences and openness, that I wrote, would be re-written to avoid socially desirable responses by subjects. For example, instead of asking whether or not the respondent has made more friends who are ethnically/nationally different from themselves, I would ask how often they have had someone who was ethnically/nationally different from themselves over for dinner.

Furthermore, an in-depth look at what types of disagreements cross-national married couples have over child rearing would help to identify emotionally charged values that are most important to parents. Also, a focus on child rearing would provide an indirect assessment of the amount of parental compromise (egalitarianism in the marriage) or dominance by one parent. For example, decisions over a child's religion, language, name, etc. can be made in a give or take fashion of compromise or as an act of authority and dominance by one parent. Further, the study of children from cross-national marriages should include the testing of their bilingualism in order to get an accurate indicator as to the degree of biculturalism and/or binationalism present in the child.

Lastly, current trends in a "global society" may make binationalism/biculturalism a perceived advantage. In a global society, the development of a new type of individual who

is binational, bicultural, bilingual and naturally equipped to deal with diverse peoples and situations would be in a privileged position, which could benefit society at large.

**APPENDIX A**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTER**  
**AND SURVEY**

September, 1994

As a person in a cross-national marriage, I have observed that people are not knowledgeable and stereotype such marriages, either romantically, or as troubled. I want to discover the real character of cross-national marriage. Due to the large number of people working and studying abroad in every society, more and more people are marrying partners who have different cultural or national backgrounds than their own. This trend has resulted in a need for an unbiased assessment of cross-national marriage.

I am interested in your perceptions of your married life experiences as a cross-national married couple. Enclosed is the **Descriptive Questionnaire of Cross-national Married Couples**. Your candid responses will help assess any similarities or dissimilarities with married couples who have the same cultural or national backgrounds. Ultimately, it is hoped that the publication of a study based on your responses will help bring awareness and help lessen stereotypes of cross-national marriage. Your names will not be used.

The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please respond as candidly as possible. Once you have completed the questionnaire, please mail it **as soon as possible** in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

To guarantee anonymity, I have enclosed a return post-card. After you have completed the questionnaire, please mail the questionnaire and the post-card separately. When I receive your post-card, I will know that you have returned the questionnaire, and, at the same time, **your responses will remain anonymous**. Do not put your name on the questionnaire. Upon receipt of your post-card, \$5.00 will be mailed to you in appreciation for your time and valuable input.

My thesis advisor is Dr. Mary Ann Lamanna, Department of Sociology, University of Nebraska at Omaha. You may verify my status as a graduate student and the validity of my research by contacting Dr. Lamanna (402) 554-3374. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the study results, note it on the return post-card. I will send you a copy of the study when it has been completed.

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact me at (402) 491-0344.

Sincerely,

Sandra Meinecke-Ali  
Graduate Student  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

**Descriptive Questionnaire of Cross-National  
and Same-Nationality Married Couples**

**<Descriptive>**

1. Where do you live?
  - a. Town or city
  - b. Farm
  - c. Open country but not a farm
  - d. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. For the majority of your childhood years, where *did* you live?
  - a. Town or city
  - b. Farm
  - c. Open country but not a farm
  - d. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Where did your spouse live during the majority of his or her childhood years?
  - a. Town or city
  - b. Farm
  - c. Open country but not a farm
  - d. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**<General Happiness>**

4. Taking all things together, how would you say you are these days? Would you say you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?
  - a. Very happy
  - b. Pretty happy
  - c. Not too happy

**<Descriptive>**

5. How many months and/or years have you been married to your current spouse?  
Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. How many times have you been married?
  - a. Once
  - b. Twice
  - c. Three or more times
  
7. How many times has your spouse been married?
  - a. Once
  - b. Twice
  - c. Three or more times



8. Did you know your spouse before you were twelve years old?

---a. Yes

l b. No

l

l\_\_\_\_\_> 8a. If you knew your spouse before you were twelve years old, was this due to your meeting in school, parents being friends, or due to other circumstances? Please explain.

---



---

9. Did you date (visit places together before you were engaged and/or married) your spouse before you got married? If so, for how many months?

Months\_\_\_\_\_

10. How many months were you engaged to your spouse before you got married?

Months\_\_\_\_\_

11. Did you live with your spouse before you got married?

a. Yes

b. No

**<Outside Environmental Influences>**

12. When you first got married, what was the reaction of your parents to your marriage?

a. Very happy

b. Pretty happy

c. Neutral

d. Pretty unhappy

e. Very unhappy

f. Parents are dead or not in touch

g. I could not determine my parents' reaction

13. How about now? How well do your parents and your spouse get along?

a. Very well

b. Pretty well

c. Not too well

d. Parents dead, not in touch

14. When you first got married, what was the reaction of your spouse's parents to your marriage?

a. Very happy

b. Pretty happy

c. Neutral

d. Pretty unhappy

e. Very unhappy

f. Spouse's parents' dead or not in touch

g. I could not determine spouse's parents' reaction

15. How about now? How well do you and your spouse's parents get along?
- Very well
  - Pretty well
  - Not too well
  - Spouse's parents dead, not in touch
16. Are there any relatives living with you and your spouse other than your children?
- a. Yes  
 1 b. No  
 1 \_\_\_\_\_>
- 16a. If yes, what relatives do you have living with you?
- A parent
  - Both parents
  - An in-law
  - Both in-laws
  - Grandparents (your or your spouse's)
  - Other relative

### <Descriptive/Children>

17. Altogether, counting children who live with you and children who don't, how many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

17a. If you were married more than once, how many children by birth or adoption do you have from this marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you intend to have any (more) children in the next three years?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

19. What was or is the ideal number of children that you would like to have (had)? \_\_\_\_\_

### <Religious Identification>

20. What is your religious preference?
- Buddhist
  - Catholic
  - Hindu
  - Jewish
  - Mormon
  - Muslim
  - Orthodox
  - Protestant
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

20a. If Protestant is your preferred religious preference, what specific denomination, if any? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Does your spouse have the same religious preference?

- a. yes
- b. no

1 \_\_\_\_\_ > 21a. If no, what is your spouse's religious preference?

- a. Buddhist
- b. Catholic
- c. Jewish
- d. Hindu
- e. Mormon
- f. Muslim
- g. Orthodox
- h. Protestant/Specify Denomination \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

22. How often do you attend religious services (for example, at church, synagogue, mosque)?

- a. Weekly or more
- b. Once a month or more, but less than weekly
- c. Once a year or more, but less than monthly
- d. Less than once a year or never

22a. How often does your spouse attend religious services (for example, at church, synagogue, mosque)?

- a. Weekly or more
- b. Once a month or more, but less than weekly
- c. Once a year or more, but less than monthly
- d. Less than once a year or never

22b. How often do you and your spouse attend religious services together?

- a. Weekly or more
- b. Once a month or more, but less than weekly
- c. Once a year or more, but less than monthly
- d. Less than once a year or never

23. In general, how much would you say your religious beliefs influence your daily life?

- a. Very much
- b. Quite a bit
- c. Some
- d. A little
- e. None

24. How do the religious beliefs of your spouse influence his or her daily life?

- a. very much
- b. quite a bit
- c. some
- d. a little
- e. not at all

25. When you started seeing each other, was your religious preference the same as that of your spouse?

- a. Yes
- b. No

I

I \_\_\_\_\_> 25a. If no, what were your and your spouse's original religious preferences?

Your original religious preference \_\_\_\_\_

Your spouse's original religious preference \_\_\_\_\_

### <National Identity>

(Questions 26, 27, 28, 28a, 29, 30 and 31 were written by me.)

26. In what nation or country were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

27. In what nation or country did you spend most of your childhood years?

Nation or country \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years \_\_\_\_\_

28. In what nation or country do you most identify with? \_\_\_\_\_

28a. In your nation of identity, is there any particular ethnic group that you identify yourself with? \_\_\_\_\_

29. In what nation or country was your spouse born? \_\_\_\_\_

30. In what nation or country did your spouse spend most of his or her childhood years?

Nation or country \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years \_\_\_\_\_

31. What nation or country does your spouse most identify with? \_\_\_\_\_

### <Ethnic Identity>

31a. For your spouse's nation of identity, is there any particular ethnic group that he/she identifies with? \_\_\_\_\_

32. What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself?

- a. White, non-Hispanic
- b. White, Hispanic
- c. Black, Hispanic
- d. Asian
- e. Native American
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

33. What race/ethnicity does your spouse consider him or herself?
- White, non-Hispanic
  - White, Hispanic
  - Black, Hispanic
  - Asian
  - Native American
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**<Cultural Experiences>**

**(Questions 34a-34d were written by me.)**

34. Do you agree with the following statements?

A. Since my marriage, I am less likely to believe cultural, ethnic or racial stereotypes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

B. Since my marriage, I have become more active in learning about different cultures (other than, or in addition to, the culture of my spouse).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

C. Since my marriage, I have made friends with many people who are culturally, ethnically or racially different from myself.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

D. Since my marriage, I am more knowledgeable about different cultures (other than, or in addition to, the culture of my spouse).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

## &lt;Ascribed Social Class&gt;

35. What was your father's occupation when you were sixteen years old?

---



---

36. What is highest education obtained by your father?

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school
- c. Associate's degree
- d. Bachelor's degree
- e. Graduate or professional degree
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

37. What about your father-in-law? What was his occupation when your spouse was sixteen? \_\_\_\_\_

---

38. What is the highest education obtained by your father-in-law?

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school
- c. Associate's degree
- d. Bachelor's degree
- e. Graduate or professional degree
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Don't know

39. When you were growing up, how much of the time did your mother work outside the home?

- a. All of the time
- b. Most of the time
- c. About half the time
- d. Less than half the time
- e. Never

40. Did your mother ever earn wages from work done inside the home?

---a. Yes

l b. No

l \_\_\_\_\_ > 40a. If yes, what type of wage work did your mother do at home?  
Please specify.

---



---

41. What was your mother's main occupation (homemaker, physician, teacher, etc.)?

---



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42. What was the highest education obtained by your mother?

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school
- c. Associates degree
- d. Bachelors degree
- e. Graduate or professional degree
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

43. What about your mother-in-law? Did she work outside the home when your spouse was growing up?

- a. All of the time
- b. Most of the time
- c. About half the time
- d. Less than half the time
- e. Never
- f. Don't know

44. Did your mother-in-law ever earn wages from work done inside the home?

---a. Yes

l b. No

l c. Don't know

l \_\_\_\_\_>44a. If yes, what type of wage work did your mother-in-law do at home? Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

45. What was your mother-in-law's main occupation (homemaker, physician, teacher, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

46. What was the highest education obtained by your mother-in-law?

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school
- c. Associates degree
- d. Bachelors degree
- e. Graduate or professional degree
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Don't know

## &lt;Employment/Job Satisfaction&gt;

47. Last week, were you working full-time, part-time, going to school, keeping house or engaging in another major activity? You may choose more than one answer.

- a. Working full-time
- b. Working part-time
- c. With a job but not at work because of temporary illness, vacation, or strike
- d. Unemployed
- e. Retired
- f. In school
- g. Keeping house
- h. Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

48. What kind of work do you normally do?

---



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49. Was there ever a time in your marriage when you did not have a job and could not bring money into the family for one month or longer?

- a. Yes
- 1 b. No

1\_\_\_\_\_>49a. If yes, did this occur in the last three years?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY NOT WORKING, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 53.**

50. Does your job involve any of the following? (YOU MAY CIRCLE MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE.)

- a. Irregular hours
- b. Shift work
- c. Evening meetings
- d. Overnight trips
- e. None of the above

51. How much does your job interfere with your family life?

- a. A lot
- b. Somewhat
- c. Not too much
- d. Not at all

52. On the whole, how satisfied are you with this job?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Moderately satisfied
- c. A little dissatisfied
- d. Very dissatisfied



## &lt;Spouse's Employment&gt;

XXXXXXXXXX

53. Last week was your spouse working full-time, part-time, going to school, keeping house or what?

- a. Working full-time
- b. Working part-time
- c. Employed but not at work because of temporary illness, vacation, or strike
- d. Unemployed
- e. Retired
- f. In school
- g. Keeping house
- h. Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

54. What kind of work does your spouse normally do?

---



---

55. Was there ever a time in your marriage when your spouse did not have a job and could not bring money into the family for one month or longer?

- a. Yes
- 1 b. No

1\_\_\_\_\_>55a. If yes, did this occur in the last three years?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**IF YOUR SPOUSE IS CURRENTLY NOT WORKING, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 59.**

56. Does your spouse's job involve any of the following?

- a. Irregular hours
- b. Shift work
- c. Evening meetings
- d. Overnight trips
- e. Not applicable

57. How much does your spouse's job interfere with your family life?

- a. A lot
- b. Somewhat
- c. Not too much
- d. Not at all

58. On the whole, how satisfied would you say your spouse is with this job?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Moderately satisfied
- c. A little dissatisfied
- d. Very dissatisfied

59. Do any of the following aspects of your **spouse's** employment give you concern?

	<u>Concern?</u>		<u>Serious Concern?</u>	
	yes	no	yes	no
A. Coming home in a bad mood or irritable				
B. Having time to do all the things he should	yes	no	yes	no
C. Having time to take care of things in the house	yes	no	yes	no
D. Meeting too many people of the opposite sex	yes	no	yes	no
E. Having time to do things together	yes	no	yes	no
F. Taking proper care of the children	yes	no	yes	no
G. Job stability	yes	no	yes	no
H. Future job prospects (promotions)	yes	no	yes	no
I. Ability to support the family	yes	no	yes	no

60. How much of the time since you got married have you held a job for pay?

- All the time
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Hardly any time at all

61. Was there any time in the last three years when your family had to rely primarily on your income because your spouse was not bringing in enough money?

- Yes
- No

### <Employment and Gender Roles>

62. The following items list some reasons why people work. Please tell me how important each is as a reason why you have worked during the time of your marriage.

A. My earnings are necessary to make ends meet.

- Very important
- Pretty Important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

B. To have enough money to get some of the better things

- Very important
- Pretty Important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

- C. I wanted a career
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty Important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all
  
- D. For a feeling of accomplishment
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty Important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all
  
- E. To "get away from the family or children"
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty Important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all
  
- F. I don't like staying at home
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty Important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all
  
- G. I like the contact with people
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty Important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all

63. Taking all things together, how would you say that your working has affected the quality of your marriage? Has it greatly increased it, decreased it, or greatly decreased it? Please explain.

---

---

64. How does your spouse generally feel about your working?
- a. Strongly approve
  - b. Approve
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disapprove
  - e. Strongly disapprove

65. Do any of the following aspects of your job cause your *spouse* concern?

	<u>Concern?</u>	<u>Serious Concern?</u>
	yes no	yes no
A. Coming home in a bad mood or irritable		
B. Having time to do all the things you should	yes no	yes no
C. Having time to take care of things in the house	yes no	yes no
D. Meeting too many people of the opposite sex	yes no	yes no
E. Having time to do things together	yes no	yes no
F. Taking proper care of the children	yes no	yes no
G. Job stability	yes no	yes no
H. Future job prospects (promotions)	yes no	yes no
I. Ability to support the family	yes no	yes no

**IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 68.**

66. Have you wanted to go (back) to work?

---a. Yes

1 b. No

1

1 \_\_\_\_\_> 66a. Why would you like to go back to work? (**You may circle more than one response.**)

a. To make ends meet; necessity

b. To get some better or special things

c. Want a career

d. Feeling of accomplishment

e. To get away from house or kids

f. Bored staying home

g. Have contact with more people

h. Financial independence

i. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

67. The following list contains items that mention reasons why some **women** or **men** don't work. Please tell me how important each is as a reason why you aren't working?

- A. To take care of my husband.
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all

**(Questions 67b. and 67c. are excluded from the cross-nation and same-nation men's survey)**

- B. My husband disapproves.**
  - a. Very important**
  - b. Pretty important**
  - c. Not very important**
  - d. Not important at all**

- C. I disapprove.**
  - a. Very important**
  - b. Pretty important**
  - c. Not very important**
  - d. Not important at all**

- D. My health prohibits working.
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not very important at all
  - e. Not applicable--no children.

- E. No jobs available to me.
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all

- F. To have or take care of children.
  - a. Very important
  - b. Pretty important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not important at all

**<Gender Ideology>**

68. Here are some statements about men's and women's roles. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement?

- A. A woman's most important task in life should be taking care of her children.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- B. A husband should earn a larger salary than his wife.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- C. It should not bother the husband if a wife's job sometimes requires her to be away from home overnight.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- D. It should not bother the wife if a husband's job sometimes requires him to be away from home overnight.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- E. If his wife works full-time, a husband should share equally in household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and washing.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- F. If a husband works full-time, a wife should take care of all household chores.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- G. If jobs are scarce, a woman whose husband can support her ought *not* to have a job.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree

H. A mother who works outside the home can establish just as good a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

I. Even though a wife works outside the home, the husband should be the main breadwinner and the wife should have the responsibility for the home and children.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

**<Achieved Social Class>**

69. What is the highest educational degree you have obtained?

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school
- c. Associate's degree
- d. Bachelor's degree
- e. Graduate degree
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

70. What is the highest educational degree obtained by your spouse?

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school
- c. Associates degree
- d. Bachelors degree
- e. Graduate degree
- f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**<Cultural Influence on Family>**

**(Questions 71a.-71d. are in the cross-national men's and women's survey only. These questions were written by me.)**

**71. The following is a list of questions concerning the influence your cross-national marriage has had on your friends' and relatives' thoughts and/or actions. Please indicate whether you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, or are Undecided concerning each of these statements.**

**A. Since my marriage, my friends and relatives are more knowledgeable about different cultures.**

- 1. Strongly Agree**
- 2. Agree**
- 3. Disagree**
- 4. Strongly Disagree**
- 5. Undecided**

**B. My friends and relatives are more likely to challenge other people's stereotypes about different cultures.**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Undecided

**C. Since my marriage, my friends and relatives have made more friends with people who are culturally, ethnically or racially different from themselves.**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Undecided.

**D. My friends and relatives have shown a greater interest in learning about different cultures.**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Undecided

**<Marital Interaction>**

72. Here is a list of some of the things couples sometimes do together. For each one, please indicate how often you and your spouse do this together.

A. Eat your main meal together.

- a. Always
- b. Almost always
- c. Usually
- d. Occasionally
- e. Never

B. Go shopping together

- a. Always
- b. Almost always
- c. Usually
- d. Occasionally
- e. Never

C. Visit friends together.

- a. Always
- b. Almost always
- c. Usually
- d. Occasionally
- e. Never



D. Work together on projects around the house?

- a. Always
- b. Almost always
- c. Usually
- d. Occasionally
- e. Never

E. When you go out for entertainment, for example to play cards, bowl, or go to a movie, how often do you do this together?

- a. Always
- b. Almost always
- c. Usually
- d. Occasionally
- e. Never

73. Are there any people you consider to be very close friends of yours who are not relatives? If so, how many persons would that be? \_\_\_\_\_

74. How well do your friends get along with your spouse?

- a. Very well
- b. Pretty well
- c. Not too well
- d. Mixed Reaction
- e. No friends

75. How well do you get along with your spouse's friends?

- a. Very well
- b. Pretty well
- c. Not too well
- d. Mixed Reaction
- e. No friends

### <Marital Happiness>

76. Taking all things together, how would you describe your marriage? Would you say that your marriage is very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?

- a. Very happy
- b. Pretty happy
- c. Not too happy

77. Compared to other marriages you know about, do you think your marriage is better than most, about the same as most, or not as good as most?

- a. Better
- b. Same
- c. Not as good

## &lt;Marital Disagreement/Gender Roles&gt;

78. In every family there are a lot of routine tasks that have to be done -- cleaning the house, doing the laundry, cleaning up after meals, cooking dinners, etc. How much of this kind of work usually is done by you.

- a. All of it
- b. Most of it
- c. About half of it
- d. Less than half
- e. None of it

78a. Do you think this amount is fair or do you think you do more than your share?

- a. Fair
- b. Do more than own share
- c. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

78b. Does your spouse think the current arrangement is fair or that he or she is doing more than his or her share?

- a. Fair
- b. Do more than own share
- c. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

79. Do you and your spouse have arguments or disagreements about whether one of you is doing their share of the housework?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**IF YOU HAVE NO CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF OLD LIVING WITH YOU, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION NUMBER 82.**

80. How much child-care is usually done by you?

- a. All of it
- b. Most of it
- c. About half of it
- d. Less than half
- e. None of it

80a. Do you think your arrangement for looking after the children is fair or do you think you do more than your share?

- a. Fair
- b. Do more than own share
- c. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

80b. What about your spouse? Does he or she think the current arrangement for looking after the children is fair or that he or she is doing more than his/her share?

- a. Fair
  - b. Does more than his/her share
  - c. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

81. Do you and your spouse have arguments or disagreements about whether one of you is doing their share of looking after the children?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**XXXXXXXXXXXX**

Now, I would like you to think a moment about the way decisions are made at your house.

82. Are there any kinds of decisions made around your house where your decision is the final word?

----a. Yes

l b. No

l \_\_\_\_\_ > 82a. If yes, what type of decisions are made solely by you?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

83. What about your spouse? Are there any kinds of decisions where his or her decision is the final word?

----a. Yes

l b. No

l \_\_\_\_\_ > 83a. If yes, what type of decisions are made solely by your spouse?

\_\_\_\_\_

84. Overall, considering all the kinds of decisions you two make, does your spouse more often have the final word or do you?

- a. I do
- b. Spouse does
- c. Equal/Compromise

85. Overall, are you satisfied with the amount of influence you have in family decision making?

- a. Yes
- b. More or less
- c. No

**<Marital Disagreement>**

86. How often do you disagree with your spouse?

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes
- d. often
- e. Very often

87. How many serious quarrels have you had with your spouse in the past two months?

\_\_\_\_\_

**(Questions 88, 88a, 88b, and 89 were written by me.)**

88. Thinking back, can you identify any specific life events about which you and your spouse had a serious quarrel(s) or difference of opinion?

---a. Yes

l b. No

l

l\_\_> 88a. If yes, please indicate whether it was based on any of the following?

a. Attempts to adjust to differences in culture between you and your spouse

b. Deciding when to start a family.

c. The best way to rear young children

d. Dealing with one's teenage children--for example, type of dress, dating, etc.

e. New job

f. Choosing a place of residence

g. Retirement

h. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

88b. In the space below, please make any additional comments or classifications of your answers which you would like to provide.

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89. Looking back at your marriage, please rank the level of conflict you feel you and your spouse experienced during the periods of time listed below.

- 1 = Rarely or never any serious conflict or disagreements  
 2 = Seldom any serious conflict or disagreements  
 3 = Occasionally a serious conflict or disagreement  
 4 = Often serious conflicts and disagreements  
 5 = Almost always serious conflicts and disagreements.

PLEASE CIRCLE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

	<u>Low Conflict</u>			<u>High Conflict</u>		<u>Not Married At This Time</u>
a. 0 to 3 months of marriage	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. 3 to 6 months	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. 6 months to 1 year	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. 1 year to 2 years	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. 2 to 3 years	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f. 3 to 4 years	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g. 4 to 7 years	1	2	3	4	5	NA
h. 7 years to present	1	2	3	4	5	NA

90. Would you say that the number of serious quarrels that you and your spouse have are decreasing, remaining about the same, or are increasing?

- a. Decreasing  
 b. About the same  
 c. Increasing  
 d. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

91. In many households bad feelings and arguments occur from time to time. In many cases people get so angry that they slap, hit, push, kick, or throw things at one another. Has this ever happened between you and your spouse?

- a. Yes  
 1 b. No

1

1 \_\_\_\_\_ > 91a. If yes, how many times has it happened over the last three years?

\_\_\_\_\_

**<Marital Happiness>**

92. The following is a list of some different aspects of married life. For each one, I would like you to tell me whether you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy with this aspect of your marriage.

How happy are you:

- A. With the amount of understanding you receive from your spouse
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- B. With the amount of love and affection you receive
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- C. With the extent to which you and your spouse agree about things
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- D. With your sexual relationship
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- E. With your spouse's performance in providing a stable income
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- F. With your spouse as someone who takes care of things around the house
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- G. With your spouse as someone to do things with
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy
  
- H. With your spouse's faithfulness to you
  - 1. Very happy
  - 2. Pretty Happy
  - 3. Not too happy

I. With your financial situation

1. Very happy
2. Pretty Happy
3. Not too happy

J. With your home

1. Very happy
2. Pretty Happy
3. Not too happy

K. If children are in the household, how happy are you with the way your spouse gets along with your children

1. Very happy
2. Pretty Happy
3. Not too happy
4. Not applicable--no children

**<Marital Disagreement/Romano's Specific Life Areas>**

**(Questions written by me as suggested by Romano 1988)**

93. The following is a list of areas in life in which married couples may experience differences of opinion. Please indicate whether you and your spouse strongly agree (SA), agree (A), Disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), or are undecided (U) concerning each of these life situations.

A. Drinking alcoholic beverages.

1. Strongly Agree with spouse
2. Agree with spouse
3. Disagree with spouse
4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
5. Undecided

B. The preparation and type of food to be eaten.

1. Strongly Agree with spouse
2. Agree with spouse
3. Disagree with spouse
4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
5. Undecided

C. Being punctual--concerned about getting places on time.

1. Strongly Agree with spouse
2. Agree with spouse
3. Disagree with spouse
4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
5. Undecided

- D. Place of residence--for example, the country you and your spouse chose to live in.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided
- E. Religious beliefs and practices.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided
- F. The best way to raise children.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided
- G. The particular language or languages you and your spouse choose to use at home.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided
- H. The use of contraception or birth control.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided
- I. Ways of dealing with stress.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided
- J. Ways of dealing with illness.
1. Strongly Agree with spouse
  2. Agree with spouse
  3. Disagree with spouse
  4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
  5. Undecided



## K. Choice of friends.

1. Strongly Agree with spouse
2. Agree with spouse
3. Disagree with spouse
4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
5. Undecided

## L. Politics.

1. Strongly Agree with spouse
2. Agree with spouse
3. Disagree with spouse
4. Strongly Disagree with spouse
5. Undecided

## M. Sexual relations with your spouse.

1. Strongly Agree with spouse
2. Agree with spouse
3. Disagree with spouse
4. Strongly Disagree with Spouse
5. Undecided

94. In the space below, please make any comments or clarifications of your answers which you would like to provide.

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## &lt;Screening Instrument&gt;

95. Have you and your spouse ever sought professional counseling for your marital problems?

- a. Yes
- b. No

96. Are you and your spouse currently receiving professional counseling for your marital problems?

- a. Yes
- b. No

## &lt;Perceived Advantages/Disadvantages for Same-Nationality Marriage&gt;

(Questions 96., 96a., 97. and 98, listed below, were answered by same-nation men and women respondents only. These questions were written by me.)

96. What do you feel are the advantages of being married? Please explain.

96a. What do you feel are the disadvantages of being married? Please explain.

97. What do you feel are some of the advantages (strong values, loving home, good education, etc.....), if any, that you and your spouse have been able to give to your child(ren)?

98. What do you feel are some of the things, if any, that you and your spouse have not been able to give to your child(ren)?

**<Perceived Advantages/Disadvantages for Cross-National Marriage>**

**(Questions 97., 97a., 98.-102, listed below, were answered by cross-national men and women respondents only. These questions were written by me.)**

97. What advantages, if any, do you see in being married to a partner from a different cultural or national background than your own? Please explain.

97a. What disadvantages, if any, do you see in being married to a partner from a different cultural or national background than your own? Please explain:

**IN YOU HAVE NO CHILDREN, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION #1 BELOW.**

**(Questions 98a-98d were written by me as suggested by Varro 1988.)**

98. What do you feel are the advantages a child has growing up with parents who have different national, cultural or ethnic/racial backgrounds? Rank your feelings from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating if you consider it a great advantage, 2 an advantage, 3 neutral (neither positive or negative), 4 a disadvantage, and 5 a great disadvantage to a child:

	<u>Great Advantage</u>	Neutral			<u>Great Disadvantage</u>
a. Bilingualism	1	2	3	4	5
b. Dual citizenship	1	2	3	4	5
c. Bi-cultural expertise	1	2	3	4	5
d. International linkages in terms of future job or business prospects	1	2	3	4	5

**(Questions 99 and 100 deal with bilingualism in Children, taken directly from Varro 1988)**

99. Have you noted any problems in you child(ren) which you would attribute to the presence of more than one language in the home?

-----a. Yes

1-----b. Perhaps

1 c. No

1 d. Not applicable, No children or only one language

1

1\_\_\_\_\_ > If yes or perhaps, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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100. Are there any good effects on your child(ren) that you would attribute to having more than one language in the home?

-----a. Yes

1-----b. Perhaps

1 c. No

1 d. Not applicable, No children or only one language

1

1\_\_\_\_\_ > If yes or perhaps, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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**(Questions 101, 102, 103 and 99 were written by me.)**

101. Have you noted any problems with your child(ren) feeling like they do not really fit in or belong to your culture or that of your spouse?

-----a. Yes

1-----b. Perhaps

1 c. No

1 d. Not applicable, No children

1

1\_\_\_\_\_ > If yes or perhaps, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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102. Are there any good effects on your child(ren) that you would attribute to having parents from different national, cultural or ethnic/racial backgrounds?

-----a. Yes

1-----b. Perhaps

1 c. No

1 d. Not applicable, No children

1

1\_\_\_\_\_ > If yes or perhaps, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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**<Open-ended, Qualitative Question Covering Married Life>**

**(Question 103., listed below, was answered by cross-national respondents.)**

103. We've talked about many different aspects of family life. Is there anything else you can tell me that would help us to understand the life situations experienced by cross-national married couples like yourselves?

**(Question 99., listed below, was answered by same-nation respondents.)**

99. We've talked about many different aspects of family life. Is there anything else you can tell me that would help us to understand the life situations experienced by married couples like yourselves?

**<General Demographic>**

Please respond to the following items.

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female
3. Total family income:
  - a. Under \$5,000
  - b. \$5,000 - \$9,999
  - c. \$10,000 - \$14,999
  - d. \$15,000 - \$19,999
  - e. \$20,000 - \$24,999
  - f. \$25,000 - \$29,999
  - g. \$30,000 - \$39,999
  - h. \$40,000 - \$49,999
  - i. \$50,000 - \$59,999
  - j. \$60,000 or more

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY.  
PLEASE RETURN IT IN THE ENCLOSED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.  
DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS SURVEY. PLEASE MAIL THE  
CARD WITH YOUR NAME SEPARATELY.**

**Please note, unless otherwise stated, all questions in this survey were directly taken from:**

Booth, A., Johnson, D. R. and Edwards, J. N. 1991. *Marital Instability Over the Life Course Methodology: Report and Code Book for Three Wave Panel Study*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska. Bureau of Sociological Research.

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