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**COHABITATION:
AN ALTERNATIVE TO
MARRIAGE?**

A cross-national study

BIBLIOTHEEK L.V.

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S T E L L I N G E N

1.
Although Western societies today do embrace the idea of personal freedom, these same societies continue, nonetheless, to socialize their members towards the notion, often enforced by law, that every adult should conform to one lifestyle, preferably a monogamous heterosexual pair-bond as the permanent basis for living. However, when society places at the same time great emphasis on self-actualization and individuation, different kinds of selves will emerge. Cohabitation is indicative of this trend.

Dit proefschrift

2.
Cohabitants who question or reject parental responsibilities are most likely to indefinitely postpone marriage.

Dit proefschrift

3.
The dreams of the majority of the Dutch cohabiting couples center no longer around marriage as the fulfilment of a romantic dream, but around a vision of a permanent two-some.

Dit proefschrift

4.
As long as women see their only destiny in the cradling of a child, and as long as women find "...validation of (their) uniqueness and importance by being singled out among all other women by a man", then marriage will continue to be a liaison between unequals, and the woman the lesser of the two.

*Rachel M. Brownstein, *Becoming A Heroine: Reading About Women in Novels*, (New York, Viking Press, Inc., 1982).

5.
It is possible to marry with or without ecclesiastical benediction but not without governmental permission. It is preferable to root these covenants in moral religious teachings or in personal moral convictions rather than in governmental sanctions and licenses, since marriage and cohabitation involve moral action and moral growth and not political sanctification in order to survive.

6.

We often hear that couples, either cohabiting or married, have the best chance for lasting relationships when they achieve an on-going bond of interdependence. But, it could be said, also, that this much wished for interdependence will be extremely difficult to achieve, if not impossible to achieve, in a world that emphasizes the near unstopability of technology, with all of its dehumanizing diversions and demands, and its child-like games. Enduring and "healthy" pair-bonds require stronger stuff than can ever be proffered by science alone.

7.

The process referred to in psychology as "transference" is undergoing a metamorphosis brought about by what is popularly referred to as the women's movement (women's liberation). If healthy dyadic transference is only possible in relationships of mutual give and take, then the socialization of the so-called dominant male and of the submissive female will have to give way to a new kind of free man and free woman. Both will be obliged to interrelate out of a believed equality, irrespective of gender, and focus on the personhood of the individual. If one must, therefore, transfer, and we must, let it be to a noble cause, to a moral philosophy, or to a living God.

8.

Though the specific reasons may differ, one can nonetheless say that both Europe and the United States have experienced a decline in the institution of religion. However, if pair-bonded egos can only depend upon themselves or upon human secular institutions, however technologically advanced they may become, it is questionable whether the family unit, let alone the pair-bond, can ever remain strong without some culturally available form of relating to a transcendent frame of reference, i.e., religion.

9.

It is to be recommended that a longitudinal study be undertaken, not straying from the model of this thesis, that would research not only the human questions that arise from an examining of the difference between cohabitation and marriage but the ever more human questions that will and must arise when taking a very careful look at the quality of the socialization process as it relates to offspring and longevity of covenant. Because, whatever else research might find, in the end, lasting relationships with high degrees of satisfaction and long duration, in addition to stably socialized offspring growing in this very complicated world, are the best measures to authenticate the healthy household.

10.

Traditional sexual morality, which is for the most part still based upon a non-contraceptive morality, will be obliged to undergo drastic and moral transformation in order to respond to a new generation of active sexuals whose fear is no longer "birthing bastards" or "being caught". There is and ought to be a relationship between sexuality and love that society can teach to a world in sexual transformation.

11.

In a world with a high percentage of older citizens, it seems certain that society will have to make some provisions to alleviate the burdens of surviving spouses, to encourage marriage or bonding among seniors, to educate seniors in the vitality of sexual expression irrespective of age, and to facilitate older people to deal with the reality of death.

12.

In the matter of nuclear arms, we have created for the world a canopy of fear the likes of which has never before been experienced on the face of the good earth. For even as nuclear weapons continue to increase, based upon the dubious theory that equally strong adversaries will avoid conflict, women and men must now learn to exist either with the fear of extinction or, for all intents and purposes, with extinction itself.

13.

The social scientist, whether a man or a woman, who journeys on the path of cross-national research, despite its well-known obstacles, might well have heeded Park's warning: "... the marginal man ... lives in two worlds, in both of which he is more or less a stranger. ... Inevitably he becomes, relatively, to his cultural milieu, the individual with the wider horizon, the keener intelligence, the more detached and rational viewpoint".*But, nonetheless, quite possibly, a homeless stranger in strange lands.

*Robert E. Park, *Race and Culture*,
(New York, The Free Press, 1950),
p. 356, 376.

Geertje Else Wiersma

Cohabitation, An Alternative To Marriage?

A Cross-National Study

Wageningen, 22 juni 1983.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation $f(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$. It is shown that $f(x)$ is a constant function, and its value is determined by the initial condition $f(0)$.

2. In the second part, we consider the problem of finding the maximum value of the function $f(x)$ on the interval $[0, 1]$. It is shown that the maximum value is attained at $x = 0$ and is equal to $f(0)$.

3. The third part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation $f(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$. It is shown that $f(x)$ is a constant function, and its value is determined by the initial condition $f(0)$.

4. In the fourth part, we consider the problem of finding the maximum value of the function $f(x)$ on the interval $[0, 1]$. It is shown that the maximum value is attained at $x = 0$ and is equal to $f(0)$.

5. The fifth part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation $f(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$. It is shown that $f(x)$ is a constant function, and its value is determined by the initial condition $f(0)$.

**COHABITATION, AN ALTERNATIVE TO MARRIAGE?
A CROSS-NATIONAL STUDY**

CENTRALE LANDBOUWCATALOGUS



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Cohabitation, an alternative to marriage? A cross-national study

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van
doctor in de landbouwwetenschappen,
op gezag van de rector magnificus,
dr. C.C. Oosterlee,
hoogleraar in de veeteeltwetenschap,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
op woensdag 22 juni 1983
des namiddags te vier uur in de aula
van de Landbouwhogeschool
te Wageningen

door

GEERTJE ELSE WIERSMA

BIBLIOTHEEK
DER
LANDBOUWHOGESCHOOL
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Promotor: dr. G.A. Kooy, hoogleraar in de empirische sociologie en sociografie, in het bijzonder van gezin en huishouding.

Boaskjen en bargeslachtsjen it hat syn úfallen*

Voor mijn ouders

*** Frisian proverb**

CONTENTS

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	XI
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1. Background	1
2. Summary of the study design	6
2. MAJOR THEME OF THE STUDY: DEGREE OF INDIVIDUATION	11
3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK HYPOTHESES, AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	24
1. Statement of the problem	24
2. Theoretical framework, hypotheses and concepts	25
2.1. Introduction	25
2.2. The couple as a social system: its position	28
2.3. The couple as a social system: its structural-functional pattern	30
2.4. The couple as a social system: its psychological climate	43
2.5. Blue-print for an exploratory analysis of "Degree of Individuation"	44
3. Research design	46
4. Sampling and data-collection procedures	49
5. Questionnaire development and scale- construction	55

4. COHABITATION: A COMPARATIVE DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS WITH MARRIAGE IN THE NETHERLANDS AND IN THE UNITED STATES - A TEST OF HYPOTHESES	61
1. Introduction	61
2. The U.S. and Dutch sampling communities: a comparison	62
3. Some social-economic characteristics of cohabitants in comparison with marrieds	70
4. Some dyadic relationship characteristics of cohabitants in comparison with marrieds	75
5. Dyadic commitment of cohabitants in comparison with marrieds	80
6. The attitudes of cohabitants and marrieds towards marriage	85
7. Balance of power between cohabiting and married partners	96
8. Degree of individuation of cohabitants in comparison with marrieds	99
9. Summary	101
5. AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN DEGREE OF INDIVIDUATION BETWEEN COHABITING AND MATCHING MARRIED COUPLES	111
1. Explanation of the analytical method	111
2. Discussion of the variables that influence "Individuation Difference"	113
3. Ranking of the predictors of "Individuation Differences"	117
4. Conclusion	120
6. REFLECTIONS	122
REFERENCES	135
APPENDIX A	143
APPENDIX B	165

APPENDIX C	171
SAMENVATTING	205
CURRICULUM VITAE	213

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When first starting this dissertation about four years ago, I realized that such a study would reflect the accumulated insights gained from a journey that began more than four decades ago. The choosing of a topic so intimate and familiar as the couple relationship, woman and man, could only generate from a lifecourse of human encounters. Many from my past helped me raise the questions pondered in this study. Without the presence of these precious others, past and present, it would have been a lonely undertaking, if not an altogether impossible one.

I want to thank my parents and my brothers who taught me some valuable lessons about marriage and family in a world they believed we "belong to" and are not merely "from". After a MULO-detour, via the Christelijke HBS, my world expanded rather rapidly when entering academia in the early 'sixties. By the time I left the University of Wageningen in the late 'sixties, the rules that had regulated the heterosexual encounter and the general societal fabric for so long had changed drastically. During this period, thanks to lector Hendrik van Leeuwen, I began to develop that endless curiosity about the social encounter in a (wo)man created society. Indeed this curiosity proved basic to my decision to be a sociologist. Thanks to my promotor, professor dr. Gerrit A. Kooy, I discovered not only the sociology of the family, but, as well, a new consciousness about women's issues - an important eye-opener in the sexist surroundings of the Landbouwhogeschool in the early 'sixties. The 'seventies brought me to the United States and introduced me to Symbolic Interactionism that maintains the Self is encountered and defined through meaningful relationships.

I am indebted to my colleagues and to our secretary Ethel

Rowe, in the Department of Sociology and Political Science of Salem State College, for their support and encouragement. I especially want to thank Paul Green whose probing questions helped formulate some of the thoughts expressed in this study, and Earl Scharfenberger who shared his social research expertise with me. Others, outside the department deserve special mention: Robert Mooney for his statistical advice, Joseph Kasprzyk for his computer programming recommendations, and Dorothy Houle for key-punching the data cards. I am also grateful to many of my students who assisted throughout the stages of data collection, of whom Lori Gadala and Susan Rand completed the bulk of the interviews in the United States, and Laurie Nickerson and Gayle Visser helped in programming the computer. And I want to express my appreciation to Belle Ivers for the fine work she did in typing many of the tables. Besides the assistance of those in my work environment, I want to single out Jacquelyn Willey and Pamela White who not only offered me their friendship but also typed drafts and final copies of the questionnaires and statistical charts.

In Wageningen, professor Kooy again made me feel welcome when I returned to present my proposal for a cross-national study. I crossed the Atlantic many times; and my short and extended visits to Wageningen were well worth the effort. Discussions with professor Kooy were stimulating and always encouraging. His work on my behalf led to the awarding of two grants by the Nationaal Programma Demografisch Onderzoek, and to a stipend from the University which made it possible to complete this study. Many thanks go to the faculty in the Department of Sociology for making me feel at home and for sharing their insights and expertise: Wouter Douma, Henri Hilhorst, Jaap de Ru, and Iteke Weeda. Jan Willem te Kloeze I especially thank for his assistance with computer programming. And I deeply appreciate the care and diligence of Louis van Leeuwen who attended to some pressing administrative details in my absence. Also, my gratitude extends to Gerrit Stemerink of the Rekencentrum (Computer Center) and to Matthijs Keuls of the Mathematics Department for their time and advice. To Henda Martakis-Heij, who accepted the unenviable

challenge of typing the text of a dissertation not written in Dutch and without the presence of the author, I offer my profound admiration. I would be remiss if I failed to note here that the Dutch fieldwork phase would not have been carried out so smoothly had it not been for Martha Beuckens-Vries who supervised the data collection in the Netherlands. Thanks go to the Dutch interviewers Sonja van Herwijnen and Ellie Rouwendal, and especially to Wies van Woerden who did the major portion of the interviews. Special commendations go to Gemma van de Berg, Bert Geldman and Jan Hak of the town of Amersfoort Department of Population Records (Afdeling Bevolking), and to B.L. Groen of the Bureau of Sociology who contributed to the gathering of sample addresses well within the time limits I imposed upon my stay in the Netherlands.

Lastly, I very much want to give thanks to two constant human inputs that were a part of this study from the beginning. First, I extend my deepest thanks to Charles Navle, my companion and friend, a member of the faculty at Salem State College and a pastor to two inner city parishes, who taught me much about life and about the great quest for unity in a world abounding in diversity. He also took on the task of preliminary editing of the writings of a Hollander of Friesian stock who was somewhat forlorn at times when not expressing herself in her native tongues. And second, my lasting gratitude go to all the 164 couples who so willingly admitted strangers into their homes and completed a lengthy questionnaire which provided me with the living content for my work. Of those respondents I met personally, many shared with me additional thoughts on the subject of cohabitation and marriage. They gave me a rare close-up portrait of the intimate couple relationship.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

In the last ten years there has been much popular discussion and also a great scholarly interest in the so-called "alternative lifestyles" (1). Especially, since the late 1960's, a diversity of lifestyles other than the nuclear family began to emerge, according to demographic changes in household compositions during the past decade (US Bureau of Census, 1979; Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 1980). One lifestyle, non-marital cohabitation, has increased most dramatically during the past ten years and is the subject of this study. The term cohabitation will be used exclusively throughout the remainder of this study to refer to heterosexual couples who are living together without being married legally.

Despite its recent rapid increase, one should not overlook the fact that cohabitation, in comparison with legal marriage, remains an alternative practiced by a minority of the couples at any point in time. For the Netherlands, it is estimated that 7 percent of all couples are living together unmarried, and 93 percent are married (Straver, 1981). This cohabitation rate is about twice as low when compared to rates in countries like Sweden and Denmark where they are 16 percent (the highest rate in Europe) and 13 percent (Trost, 1979), but still about twice as high when compared to the 3 percent estimate for the United States (Macklin, 1980).

Various alternative forms of pair-bonding have been documented throughout human history. Throughout our history, this has also been a topic of debate and continual concern. Or, as Zimmerman (1947:2) concludes, disagreements over forms of mar-

riage and family are certainly not new It is one of the "oldest arguments of history". For example, at the time of the Roman empire, debates flourished about the dignitas type of marriage (a binding civil contract between the partners) and the concubinatus (a more flexible contractual arrangement subjected to fewer legal regulations and social consequences as far as children and inheritance was concerned - the child remained with the mother and inherited from her). Toward the last days of the empire, the Christian church became the most influential force of power in Europe, and with it the concupinatus family form disappeared and the dignitas marriage was reformed into a sacred and unbreakable union (Zimmerman and Cervantes, 1956). Nevertheless, concubinage remained a legalized form of couple relationship in various cultures, which differed from marriage in that it usually implied a considerably lower status of both the female partner and her offspring than that enjoyed by the legally married wife (Malinowski, 1963:10).

One example in the United States of tacitly sanctioned cohabitation is known as common law marriage. Ploscowe (1951) considers the basic thought underlying common law marriage to be that, if a man and a woman are living together and presumably portray themselves to the world as husband and wife, then the law treats them as having entered a common law marriage relationship. Common law marriage in the United States originated from the early frontier conditions, where the proper legal marriage often had to be postponed until a clergyperson could be found. It is still recognized in fifteen states today. Instead of being a choice against legal marriage, common law marriage was, throughout history, often an imperative and characteristic of the poor, somewhat comparable to conditions found in the Caribbean area as studied by Goode (1960), Blake (1976), Otterbein (1965), and Rodman (1966). Here, for economic reasons, "consensual" unions were often practiced as an acceptable means of obtaining children. Later on, when the male became better off economically, this union would be legalized by marriage. Thus, cohabitation became a means for

adjustment to social-economic circumstances often affecting lower social classes. Marriage was, when possible, the preferred arrangement and it symbolized the transformation toward economic independence.

The emergence of cohabitation in the 'seventies has developed under quite a different set of circumstances from those of cohabitation and concubinage in the past. Instead of constituting an imperative, it is characterized by free choice; and, instead of being predominantly a lower-class phenomenon, it is a life-style chosen by the middle and upper classes as well. For some couples cohabitation is a temporary trial-phase, intentionally to be followed by marriage when completed successfully. For others, a clear preference for marriage has been replaced by an attitude of indifference and superfluity. Marriage remains an acceptable expression mainly for practical reasons; but, it has lost its traditional intrinsic value. One could argue that marriage is in the process of becoming one of the "gesunkene Kulturgüter" (Naumann, 1922), or a cultural attribute that has come down the social stratification ladder and is now equally accessible to all social strata, which seemingly, and paradoxically, coincides with a continuous fall in marriage rates.

Regardless, whatever the reasons are for couples deciding to forego the legalization of their union, in the United States recent court decisions indicate a trend towards treating cohabiting couples who terminate their relationship as if they were legally married couples, especially with regard to the division of common property (Weitzman, 1975). However, these court rulings also indicate legal confusions and are, at times, contradictory (2). In twenty American states, according to the letter of the law, cohabitation is still considered a felony based on a two-centuries old legal code for "crimes against chastity". The law has not been enforced in recent years, but the political swing to the right in the 'eighties and the sentiments to strengthen again family life as voiced by the so-called American "Moral Majority" might bring about a reversal in recent legal trends. In Congress, it has been proposed (The Boston Globe, June 28, 1979) that tax laws should be altered to make

cohabitation a less advantageous economic option for couples in certain tax brackets. This argument corresponds to Cole's (1981:523) conclusion that considering "the recent actions of the Reagan administration to push the status quo far right of center cohabitation will likely be structurally repressed and legally restrained. If this occurs, cohabitation would not reach the sanctioned level of societal recognition necessary for becoming a social institution".

In Sweden, Trost (1978) found that, although most Swedes do not consider cohabiting couples to be different from married couples, only just over half felt that property should be divided equally between cohabiting partners in case of divorce or separation. In contrast, almost two thirds felt that married partners should feel this kind of responsibility for each other. Trost also concludes that, although cohabitation has become more and more institutionalized, Swedish laws have yet to be written to provide proper regulations. In the meantime, legal confusion continues.

In the Netherlands, where the political climate, despite a recent political movement toward the right, remains somewhat left of center in comparison with the United States, the government and representatives of the legal community have begun to work on some of these issues. The Dutch civil law (*Burgerlijk Wetboek*) under Article 1373 still considers cohabitation "in strijd met de openbare orde en de goede zeden" (against moral order) (3). Marriage is the only legalized form of living arrangement, and much of the legal marriage code dates back to 1838. Thus, also in the Netherlands, lifestyles other than marriage exist in a legal vacuum (Straver, 1979). This lack of legal and social provisions leads to inequalities and ambiguities. For example, the revised divorce law of 1971 (Art. 160 BW) provides that alimony duties cease when the recipient remarries or lives together with a partner as if they are married. If contested in court, it is the judge who has to determine the difference between married and unmarried relationships and it is questionable whether the legal profession, at this time, is equipped to make those judgements (Straver et al., 1980). In

addition, the question whether or not married and unmarried couples are comparable unions, has to be seen in the context of the ongoing public debate about what constitutes an "economic unit" (4). In a society that stresses individuality and the economic independence of the adult, the question arises whether dyadic partners, married or unmarried, should be held financially responsible for each other, or whether it is the individual who remains the basic (economic) unit regardless of marital status. Should the state carry the burden of the financial consequences resulting from dyadic break-downs, or should this remain as much as possible, the responsibility of the "divorced" partners? Considering this ongoing debate, current laws and regulations are predictably often contradictory, but are usually written in a way that benefits the treasury of the state. Inconsistencies do not only exist within government rules and regulations, but also among cohabitants themselves. When it becomes more advantageous to be considered an economic unit (for example, when applying for bank loans, housing, reduced family rates, tax exempt status when inheriting) the couple will most likely want to reap the benefits of their dyadic, although unmarried, status. In contrast, when applying for public welfare assistance, unemployment compensation, social security etc., they might want to reverse the conditions resulting from their "couple" status.

Legal regulations for lifestyles that are meant to be a substitute for marriage are rarely proposed, possibly because such legislation is often viewed by lawgivers as undermining the primacy of marriage as the preferable lifestyle. Straver *et al.* (1980:43-45) propose, in view of the diversity of relationships they found, which ranged from complete "unity" as a couple to complete "independence" as partners from each other, a so-called "functional approach". This suggests that, if dyadic partners want to legalize their relationship they should have a choice and opt for a legal package that protects and regulates their relationship according to the basic functions the partners fulfil for each other.

One might conclude that countries with relatively high cohabitation rates are at a cross-road, faced with the adjustment

of public policy to the plurality of emerging lifestyles, where- by the diversity of political and moral ideologies add on to the general public debate. If cohabitation becomes more and more an accepted social institution, then governments and experts on family will do well to consider at length the subsequent social-economic, legal, and demographic implications. Reviewers of recent cohabitation research (Cole, 1981, 1977; Trost, 1979; Macklin, 1978) have observed that only limited knowledge exists in this area. Studies completed so far are more often than not conceptually and methodologically weak and remain mainly of a descriptive nature. It is an unanswered question to what extent increased cohabitation is a social given, or whether it is a temporary change in styles of living, courtship, and dating patterns. Does it point toward a de-evaluation of the institutional character of marriage, or a de-dramatizing of marriage as a pursuit for personal happiness? Or, does the new cohabitation reflect a privatization of the intimate relationships between the sexes? It might be perilous to consider this as resulting from a profound transformation in lifestyles, but a review of recent cross-national demographic statistics concerning marriage and households (Cherlin, 1981; Roussel and Festy, 1978) does suggest more than just minor social adjustments. Therefore, because of the existence of the rapid increase in cohabitation in several western countries calling for ongoing political debates about the future of marriage and the family, and because of the limited knowledge about this phenomenon, research in the area of cohabitation is not only timely but necessary. This study will attempt to make a contribution to that debate.

Before describing in detail the study methodology (Chapter 3) and presenting its results (Chapters 4 and 5), it might be useful to insert in this opening chapter, a summary of the study, briefly describing its purpose, its theoretical base and methodological approach.

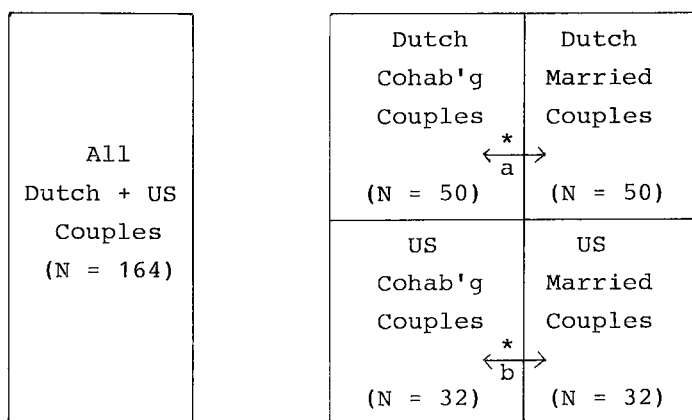
2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY DESIGN

The purpose of this study is to describe and to explain some psycho-social characteristics and relationship patterns that

are unique to cohabiting hetero-sexual couples, by comparing and contrasting matching samples of cohabiting and married couples, both in the Netherlands and in the United States.

A random sample of 50 cohabiting couples in the age group 20 through 40 years, and a sample of 50 matching married couples by age, length of the relationship, occupational prestige, and children, were gathered in the Dutch town of Amersfoort. Two similar samples consisting of 32 cohabiting and 32 matching married couples were obtained in the U.S. city of Salem and town of Marblehead. As shown in the following chart, the overall sample size for the Netherlands was 200 respondents or 100 couples, and for the United States 128 respondents or 64 couples, or a total of 328 respondents or 164 couples.

Chart 1. Samples and analytically comparable sub-groups.



*Out of the possible comparisons, the following three are chosen as part of the analysis:

- a. Dutch cohabiting couples vs. Dutch married couples (matched groups);
- b. US cohabiting couples vs. US married couples (matched groups);
- c. A comparison of the differences between cohabiting and married couples in the Netherlands and the United States (comparison of a and b).

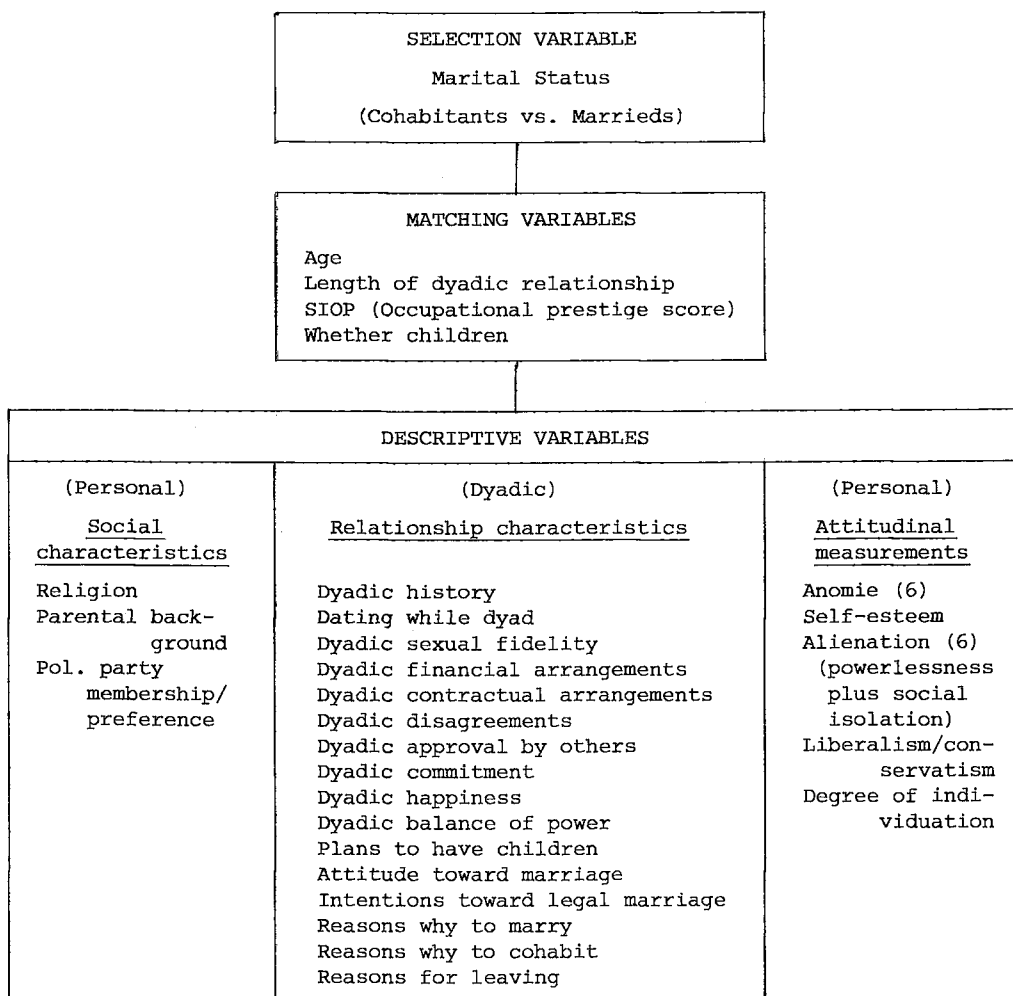
Four standardized highly comparable and integrated questionnaires (see Appendix) were designed for each of the sampled groups, of which two were written in English and two in Dutch.

Dyadic partners, independently from each other, filled out the questionnaires in the presence of an interviewer (5).

Chart 2 on the following page includes all the variables chosen for the study as well as their systematic classification. The main selection variable is marital status - cohabitants vs. marrieds. It also lists the matching variables chosen to make cohabiting and married couples equal on those selected criteria which are considered relevant for the outcomes of the study. All variables utilized to compare and contrast the cohabitants and the marrieds are categorized into two main headings: (1) Personal characteristics subdivided into Social characteristics and Attitudinal measurements; (2) Dyadic relationship characteristics. For a few variables proper categorization is somewhat ambiguous. Whereas, personal characteristics describe the respondents according to their individual psycho-social and economic qualities, their dyadic relationship characteristics result primarily from their participation in a dyadic partnership. The variables anomie, alienation, self-esteem, and degree of individuation can be placed under the heading "Personal" as well as under "Dyadic". A respondent might be either dispositioned as an individual with a certain degree of anomie etc. or these attitudinal ratings result from his or her dyadic experience, or the final rating is a combination of both. In the following scheme, the four questionable variables are placed under the heading "Personal" only, to avoid confusion, but could have been categorized as "Dyadic" also.

The complications that result from a cross-national study design, in combination with the abundance of data that could potentially be gathered from each of the samples, called for a methodological device that would enhance the systematic selection, ordering, and subsequent analytical presentation of all variables to be included in the study. The structural-functional conceptual model was chosen over other major theoretical paradigms in sociology, not as an theoretical explanatory base, but merely as a "methodological yardstick" (Turner and Maryanski, 1979:132-141), that facilitated the desired systematic selection and descriptive presentation of data (the rational for this choice is further explained in Section 2.1 of Chapter 3).

Chart 2. Scheme of variables included in the comparative descriptive analysis of cohabiting and married couples.



Adapting this model, the couple is considered a social system which occupies a certain systemic position, and is based upon some form of commitment, with a discernable structure and function, along with a psychological climate. This definition is an adaptation from Kooy's (1967) theories on the family. "Structure" and "function" are well known concepts as defined by Parsons (1951) and also by Merton (1957). Kooy (1967) defines the term "psycho-

logical climate" as the manner in which the members of a social system experience their position within that system. Taking this definition as a basis, the psychological climate of the couple relationship can be defined similarly.

Therefore, the study results include a comparative descriptive analysis of cohabiting and matching married couples for both countries, whereby the conceptual elements: position, structure, function and psychological climate of the couple relationship, are the basis for a systematic description of the surveyed couples against existing literature and hypotheses. In fact, the categorization of variables in Chart 2, reflects these underlying ordering principles: (a) the variables categorized as social characteristics describe the couples according to their systemic position; (b) those listed as dyadic characteristics describe the structural-functional aspects of the couple relationship; (c) the attitudinal variables measure the psychological climate. Also, the study includes an exploratory analysis of the differences between cohabitants and marrieds according to one selected major dependent variable: "Degree of Individuation". The latter is one of the major theoretical constructs developed for this study, and therefore it will be necessary to comment upon it further before describing in more detail the overall study (Chapter 3).

2. MAJOR THEME OF THE STUDY: DEGREE OF INDIVIDUATION

"Degree of Individuation" is defined as the act of achieving a balance between the paradoxical dualities implicit in the intimate dyad: the need for individuation or personal separateness on one end, against the need for identification as a couple or dyadic association at the other end of a continuum.

In other words, at the core of being human is the universal need for community, affiliation, belonging or identification. And, as paradoxically universal as the need to stand in relationship is, this need is often in conflict with our need for individuation, or the need to exist as an I. The I is boundless in its universal proclamation: I am I, I exist. "Existere", translated from the Latin, means to "emerge" or "to stand out" or "to be unique". Self-Becoming strongly suggests that one must ultimately rely upon one's own being despite, or in spite of, the fact that human existence also means social interdependence: "Sein ist Mitsein", as Hegel phrased it. Or, a "premordial Mitsein" of the "Self" and the "Other", as Simone de Beauvoir (1952, Introduction: XIX) calls it, has been part of the human experience since the origins of human culture. De Beauvoir's writings reflect the existentialist perspective that the relating I of the Self stands always paradoxically opposed to the Self of the Other. The Other always remains an object to be experienced. We are unable to relate without losing some of the centeredness of the I. It is the underlying subject-object duality coming to bear upon human relationships.

It can be suggested, then, that this duality becomes an unresolvable paradox rendering any couple relationship to some degree a compromise - that is, a diminishing of self-centeredness. In traditional heterosexual relationships, women in general

were forced to occupy the position of the "Other" or the "Object". Women, realizing their non-freedom, so often willingly accepted in the past, have begun a search for self-actualization, growth and freedom from the traditional stigma of the so-called "subordinate (or second) sex". Such a search for personhood and freedom has great and far-reaching influence on the traditional male and female bond. Yet, it should be noted that feminism, too, from time to time, in its own demand for liberation, tends to overlook the selfcenteredness of its own unqualified personal freedom as readily as does the "unliberated" male.

The existentialist perspective in its insistence on the dichotomous relationship between subject and object, harkens back to the Cartesian tradition that similarly splits life into two unrelated components: the knowing subject and the world of external objects. Western thought and the scientific pursuit of knowledge has been dominated by this dualistic doctrine, and only recently has philosophy decisively "triumphed" (Kwant, 1962) over this basic dualistic premise.

A review of the history of sociological thought reveals that sociology, heralded by Auguste Comte (Martineau, 1896) as the "new science", attempted from its very beginning to apply the rules of the scientific method to the study of society, thereby inheriting and accepting the basic Cartesian statement of the problem of knowledge. Emile Durkheim was the first sociologist to carry out the mandate to study the world of "man" scientifically as the world of nature had been studied before: "The first and most fundamental rule is: Consider social facts as things" (1964:14).

This attempt to make the world an objective entity "out there" fostered the belief that the problem of humanity could be resolved by uncovering the underlying laws that govern society. Likewise, today, unquestioned faith in advanced technical manipulation, i.e. computerized analysis of human responses, which are gathered as quantifiable "objective" facts, leads us to believe that we are progressing in unraveling the mystery of the universe. However, the last 200 years have also made it perfectly clear that science, including sociology, does not have

all the answers for a troubled universe. A growing disillusion with the "objectivity" doctrine, and a growing awareness of the "subjective" qualities inherent to the social sciences brought about a new methodological approach and a drastic new perspective of social reality. Human behavior is not completely determined but potentially creative and free (Berger, 1963:120-121). Or, "life as theater" (Goffman, 1959): reality subjectively "constructed" by individual performers, instead of something "out there" that can be described objectively. Human beings are not puppets held captive by their societal strings, but free actors participating in the societal drama --life.

This radical departure from the sociological deterministic model, was built upon earlier conceptions, that in similar fashion proceeded to refute the decisive dualistic underpinnings of the sociological enterprise. In the second half of the last century Max Weber (1949:29) proposed an "interpretive understanding" (Verstehen) of the "subjective" meaning of human action. Later on, Cooley (1930) and Mead (1934) provided additional insights by pointing out the inseparable link or reciprocity between subject and object in the process of knowing. Instead of focusing on society from a macroscopic impersonal point of view, the desire for deeper insight is beginning to focus on the microscopic interpersonal level through understanding the processes of the mind and the intimate relationship between two people. The knowing self does not come about in confrontation with or in objectification of the other, but by becoming the other. Approximately during the same decade that this so-called "symbolic interactionism" addressed the dualistic principles underlying the human encounter, two other important works on the same subject appeared (both in 1923) by Martin Buber and Sigmund Freud. Buber's virtuosity with the German language might have obscured some of his "Ich und Du" (I and Thou) message (Buber, 1970:19), but it did nevertheless make perfectly transparent the absurdity of the dichotomy that condemns humanity to existential aloneness. For Buber the world is twofold: a world of "I-It" relationships --others are treated as objects, and a world of the "I-Thou" --others are encountered

as Thou. Or, in Buber's own words (1970:62): "I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You. All actual life is encounter". Or, as Mead could have worded it had he used Buber's language: "..... there is never an I without a Thou.....". Similarly, Freud (Wollheim, 1974) pointed to the inescapable interconnectedness of the "Ich" (Ego) and "Über-Ich" (Super-ego). One is inconceivable without the other. Although, the sharp dichotomous wedge between subject and object was no longer conceptually valid, a basic dualism remained. However, more recently, phenomenological reasoning has tried to eradicate the dualistic barriers and has itself made a serious attempt to overcome the perils of dualistic thought by insisting upon a more "holistic" approach (Goodman, 1972). Kwant (1962) in his critical analysis of the phenomenological writings of Merleau-Ponty concludes that the latter has in fact provided the conclusive arguments that once and for all give the final death blow to Cartesian dualism that for so long dominated western thought.

It appears that both sociological and philosophical thinking in this century has been preoccupied with refuting dualism. Whether or not this refutation has been carried out successfully is a question that does not need to be answered here. In this study, however, deliberations on the couple relationship, especially with regard to their "Degree of Individuation" will be written keeping in mind the various perspectives discussed so far on the subject-object controversy. It will become clear that the spirit of symbolic interactionism underlies the investigation of the human encounter. The remainder of this chapter will review a number of arguments and positions. This is being done to highlight the premise that there exists an inherent tension in pair-bonding based on dichotomous needs --individuation vs. identification.

Numerous writings reflect upon a basic tension in pair-bonding. Fromm (1962) states that mature love is expressed in a union that preserves one's integrity and one's individuality but that it also fulfils the deepest human need to overcome one's separateness in order to leave the prison of one's aloneness. Conversely, when the pair becomes an "egoisme à deux", a union

that is looked at as refuge from aloneness or of two against the world, it is more often than not mistaken for love and intimacy. Becker (1973) somewhat similarly, used the term "cosmology of the two", a desperate try by men and women to secure something of lasting worth and meaning in a world that proclaims the death of permanence. Becker concludes that the human individual's need for identification, or belonging, is born out of a horror of standing alone - a dualism or tension between identification and individuation.

It can be argued here that the paradoxical duality seems especially problematic to women and men today. Humans cherish the value of individual freedom, but want to lose it at the same time. The line between necessary self-surrender in relationship and masochistic self-surrender is a very thin one indeed, as is the line between necessary self-centeredness and extreme narcissism. It may sound simplistic, but "healthy" human coupling may only be able to occur and endure when a proper balance between individuation and identification is achieved.

Some sociological literature and cohabitation research does, at times, mention this duality, although theoretically based empirical testing is rare. Askham (1976) explores the idea of a potential conflict in intimate couple relationships in that, as she hypothesizes, people seek to develop and maintain both a sense of stability and a sense of personal identity. The latter requires periods of privacy and independence which tend to conflict with the idea of stability and togetherness implied by the "home". Her conclusions, based upon a small sample of young cohabiting and married people, suggest that those who are especially concerned about individual independence might opt for cohabiting, while those emphasizing the need for "settling down" and stability maintenance might marry. Macklin (1972) found from a small sample of cohabiting students, a quite similar duality. Her study suggests that the problem of achieving security without giving up freedom to be oneself may well be central and determining of the outcome of the cohabiting relationship. Bernard (1972:89) arrives at a similar conclusion about marital union. "..... Marriage, in whatever form, always implies some

kind of commitment, and with it comes an inescapable conflict: 'Without a commitment, one has freedom but not security; with a commitment, one has security but little freedom'. Bernard is convinced that, in the future, the emphasis among both men and women will be on freedom rather than on security. Straver (1981), from his analysis of other-than-married various homo- and heterosexual couple relationships in the Netherlands, developed a typology which categorizes couples according to a continuum of degrees of togetherness or (in)dependence. Similarly, Weeda (1978), developed a typology of seven types of couple relationships based upon a continuum of degrees of individuation internally between the partners, and externally toward the family and the community. It varies from the least "individuated" form (in which self-interests are completely superseded by the interests of the group or family to which one belongs), toward the complete independence of the self (whereby the self is considered primary instead of the pair relationship or any commitment to others).

Besides sociological findings and western philosophical deliberations regarding the couple relationship, a careful observation of recent societal changes should also add to our understanding of the smallest common union: the pair. Human relationships are always in a state of change, in a kind of perpetual flux, reflecting societal changes with all its dominant forces.

Along with technology, individualization - the process by which each individual is allowed to express a basic sense of selfhood - has been one of the most profound forces of change that has dominated western culture over the past 200 years. Society, by means of technological development, emerged from the confining boundaries of rural and small 18th century communities into a modern, plural, socially differentiated society, and into a society based more upon an individualistic liberal ideology. The new moral climate of the 19th century which enhanced individualization cannot be understood apart from the crisis in which western society found itself at the end of the 18th century, --a crisis which brought about the disintegration

of Christianity and the breakdown of the relative social homogeneity of a pre-industrialized society, and according to Durkheim, a diminishing of "collective consciousness". Durkheim who perceived himself to live (1858 - 1917) in a period of dramatic social change, provides us with a theoretical framework that captures the emergence and transitions of a modern industrialized society, and some of his key elements for understanding the changes that have taken place or are taking place in human bonding are an illustration of the paradoxical notions being dealt with in this study. On the one hand, the "mechanical" type of solidarity provided people with a deep and unquestioned sense of belonging and security, but often at the cost of individual freedom. On the other hand, the "organic" type of solidarity lacks completeness and a natural sense of belonging, but provides choice and freedom based on contractual partial commitments and rational reasoning. Durkheim argued that in the modern world, characterized by "organic" solidarity, ties between people are far less secure or are lacking altogether; there is always the threat of "meaninglessness", "normlessness", or a state of "anomie". One might say that the progression toward individual freedom, which originated in the seminal ideas of the great thinkers of the Enlightenment period, who questioned the older order and paved the way for a liberal positivistic ideology in the 19th century, concomitantly led to the loneliness of the individual.

This reasoning concurs with Hofstee's (1980) observations about modern society wherein the price paid for progressive freedom and equality is extended loneliness. He maintains that "hyper-individualism" is a threat to the societal fabric and societal functioning. Whereas, the French Revolutionary dreams of freedom and equality might have materialized, the third component, "brotherhood" or social responsibility, has waned since then. Also, Hofstee expresses the paradoxical gains of the newly acquired freedoms, i.e. western (wo)man has become lonelier and suffers because of this, but does cherish this as an ideal at the same time.

In general, it can be concluded that our western world has

moved toward highly industrialized, highly urbanized, highly bureaucratized, highly secularized, and highly consuming systems. This has resulted in a proliferation of impersonal relationships, along with diminished social and emotional support systems such as the extended family network, the neighborhood and the church, all of which in the past provided profound and lasting social ties, at times, perhaps, compensated by participation in other relational networks, such as friendships.

This prepared the way for a society based more upon an individualistic liberal ideology instead of a fundamentally predestined one, where the fate of man and woman was essentially pre-set. People are now more able to take their lives into their own hands and presumably declare the autonomy of the human spirit. Today, the concept of individuality, often translated into the cult of personal happiness, is one of the most cherished cultural values in western society. Other popular terms such as personal growth, personal autonomy, self-actualization, all express the ongoing and unresolved narcissistic love affair with the self. Personal fulfilment and freedom, without the restraints and responsibilities of commitments, is often considered by modern woman and man to be synonymous with salvation, a salvation that does not await a world of a heaven to come to provide ultimate personal meaning, but, instead, attempts to provide it to itself.

At the end of the 'seventies both popular and more scholarly writings tried to capture this changing mood under the label "The culture of narcissism", a term also made popular in the Netherlands by a national bestseller under that title by the American author Christopher Lasch (1978). This modern Jeremiah, who summoned U.S. citizens to face their emotional shallowness (Newsweek, 1978), became a prophetic voice at gatherings of the literate Dutch. Similarly so, the term "Me" decade popularized by Marin (1975) and Wolfe (1976) in the United States, translated into Dutch as "Het Ik-tijdperk", became the title of a rapidly sold-out Christmas edition of a national magazine. And, Cyra McFadden's (1977) satirical novel describing "..... the love affair with self" of U.S. West-Coast middleclass couples,

became a Dutch bestseller, both in its translated and untranslated versions, and also in the United States found wide acclaim.

The "Me" decade portrays the individual as a person neither concerned about the past nor the future, but, rather with a kind of apotheosis of the self, the "Me". As Lasch (1978:27) comments, the narcissistic ethic prescribes "..... not to make too large an investment in love and friendship, and to avoid excessive dependency upon others". He concludes impermanent attachments are celebrated under such formulas as "open marriage", and "non-binding commitments" (phrases originally used by the O'Neills, 1972). Lasch considers the determination to live for the moment to have established the preconditions of a new intimacy between men and women. He also comments on the paradoxical desire of avoiding lasting commitments to others combined, at the same time, with a thirst for human bonding.

Zaretski (1976) made a similar effort. His neo-marxist, critical societal analysis of the emerging changes in personal life and the family within the context of the rise of industrial capitalism, led to results of which some are comparable with those of Lasch. Zaretski (1976:30) concludes that "..... an ethic of personal fulfilment has become the property of the masses of people". He further states that capitalism has generated a division between the private and the public, or between the individual and the harsh impersonal society, as a basic human condition. The individual determined to make the family a "private refuge", has therefore made it an institution that has lost its social meaning. Human relations have become an end in themselves.

Berger et al. in The Homeless Mind (1973) also speaks of the weakness of the public/private dichotomy as a "solution" to the discontents of modern society. The privatization process has led to an "underinstitutionalization" of society. Society lacks sufficient institutions to provide reliable structuring of human activity. Although the authors do not mention cohabitation specifically, cohabitation can be seen as a typical product of this so-called "de-institutionalization process" that leaves the individual with a "do-it-yourself" universe, while most of us need

structure instead of too many choices (Berger et al., 1973:186-7) They mention a built-in paradox which also applies to cohabitation. If cohabitation remains a private arrangement, then it cannot meet the demand for stability and reliability. If, on the other hand, these two dimensions are included, then cohabitation takes on the character of a societal institution. In other words, cohabitation might create a precarious predicament: it liberates us from tight societal controls, but possibly at the price of "homelessness" and "instability".

In conclusion, the emergence of cohabitation in the so-called narcissistic 'seventies might be symptomatic of the societal emphasis on self-actualization. Traditional marriage, with its legal and customary expectations, limits self-actualization and requires stereotypical sex role conformity. Some cohabiting couples might experience their relationship as an overt action against societal conformity, which both fulfils the need for intimacy and belonging as well as the need for personhood, independence and freedom - all limited only by personal choice.

New styles of unmarried pair-bonding are an immense challenge, fraught with possible failure, since they lack the traditional societal support systems to provide security and long-lasting dependence. Instead of a pair-bond, cohabitants might speak of a true peer-bond, based upon personal choice. The pair-bond (or peer-bond), whether married or not, is the private solution in a public world through which the individual tries to experience a sense of personal meaning - a precarious and fragile solution (Berger et al., 1973), or possibly an illusive one (Lasch, 1978) but still as popular now in our impersonal society as ever despite its everincreasing failure to endure on the level of individual relationships. It is certainly not fanciful speculation any longer to say that vastly increased numbers are perceiving cohabitation as the solution par excellence for those who are at the end of the search for a "private" destiny, liberated from tight societal controls, based on personal commitments only.

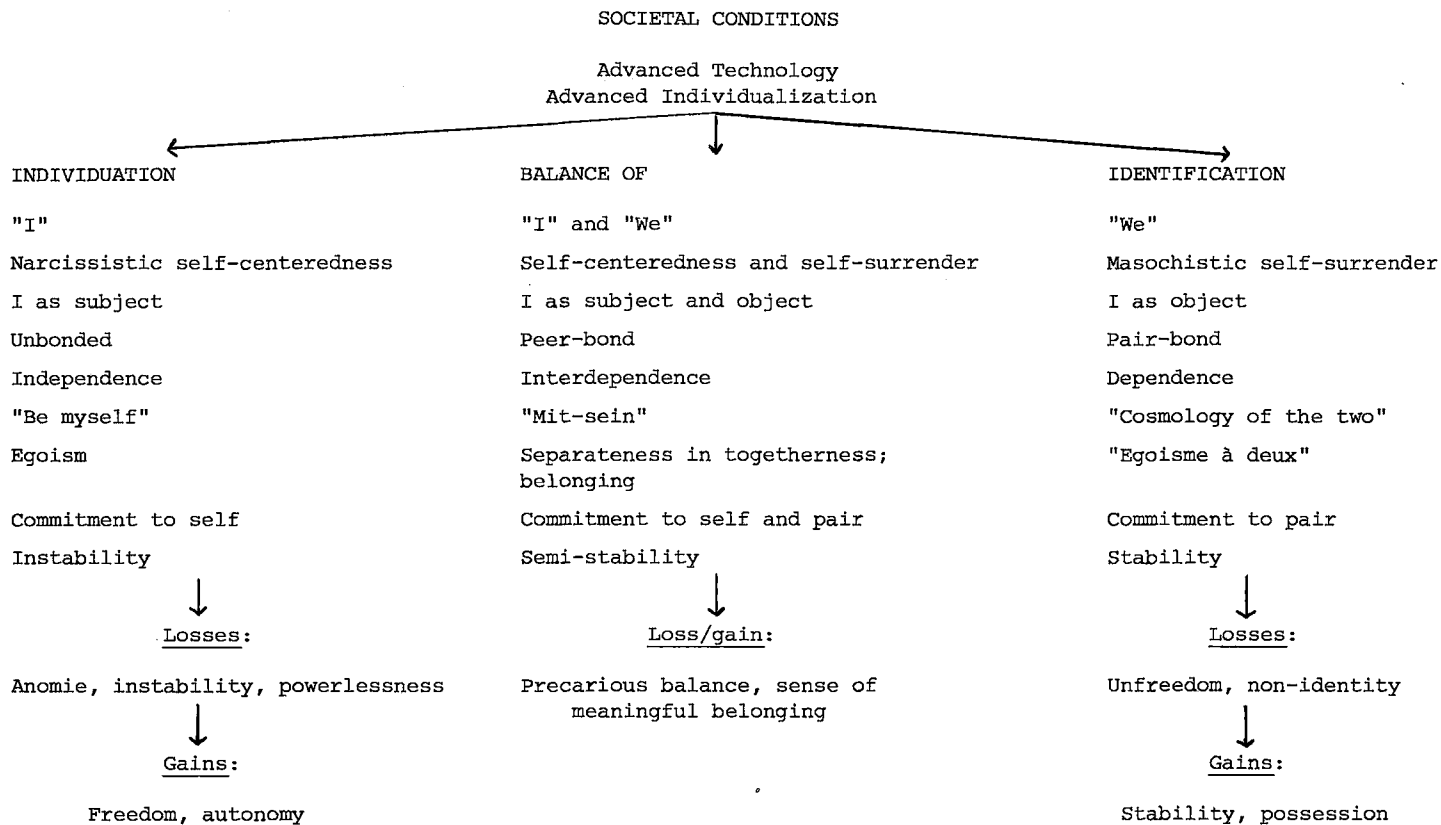
Based on these philosophical and sociological deliberations regarding the couple relationship, and on the observations made

so far by placing the pair-bond within the context of societal change, a set of hypothetical differences between cohabiting and married couples regarding their search for a balance between the dyadic dichotomous needs can now be selected for this study and they are summarized in Chart 3 on the next page. This chart portrays the basic theme of balance couples will try to achieve between the paradoxical dualities implicit in the intimate dyadic relationship. Couples like a pendulum can swing from left to right until they find their proper balance between the polar positions of individuation and personal freedom on one side, and identification and mutual dependency on the other. Possibly most will, over time, come to a halt, or near halt, somewhere in the middle where a precarious sense of stability can be achieved. It is hypothesized that most pair-bonds will not place themselves into the extreme polar positions: on the far left the price paid for gains in freedom is anomie, instability and a sense of powerlessness; on the right, gains in stability are counterbalanced by loss of freedom and a lack of individuality. The main hypothesis is, however, that cohabiting couples more often will tend to move toward the left of center in expressing various degrees of individuation, privatization and de-institutionalization, while married couples will more often position themselves toward the right, being drawn into that direction by a need for identification as a couple, institutionalization and the image of stability.

This chart might imply to the reader an idealization of the "balanced" middle position. Balance might not necessarily be preferable over disbalance. A balanced state might coincide with stagnation and resignation, while, for example, an unbalanced position towards the side of individuation might bring about individual freedom and choice that leads to energetic growth, albeit within the confines of feeling the tension of social responsibility.

In sum, Chapter 1 opened with a brief introduction of the emergence of cohabitation in the 'seventies, whereby its rapid increase during the past decade, its variance from "concubinage" in the past, and the noted social-legal and scientific vacuum

Chart 3. Individuation continuum.



wherein it exists, all point to the relevancy and significance of the study at hand. Also, to give the reader a taste of what this study will have to offer, a brief summary of the study design concluded the first chapter, and Chapter 2 contained a more lengthy essay of what is distinguished as one of its major themes, "Degree of Individuation".

Throughout this study the theme of balance between opposites is repeated in various forms when studying paradoxical dualities implicit in couple relationships. Perhaps, the following quote bears out the underlying sentiment from which this study generated, was conceived, and ultimately executed:

"I see human life drawing its energy from living out, as fully as possible, the tension to which it is subjected in the field of force between opposites." (Jantsch, 1975:7, 122).

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, HYPOTHESES, AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will provide a complete description of the study. It will define the research problem (Section 1), describe its theoretical base, hypotheses and concepts along with a review of cohabitation literature (Section 2), and the last three sections (3, 4, 5) explain the research design, the sampling and data-collection procedures, and the construction of the questionnaires.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The following basic study questions deal with similarities and differences between cohabitants and marrieds along with differences based on nationality: Dutch vs. U.S.

1. Do cohabitants differ from marrieds (both in the Netherlands and in the United States) by some selected
 - (a) personal characteristics: social characteristics other than those used to match both types of couples, and attitudinal measurements?
 - (b) dyadic relationship characteristics?
(see Chart 2, p. 9).
2. Do cohabitants differ from marrieds (both in the Netherlands and in the United States) by their "Degree of Individuation"?
And, if so, which variables do effect the differences in "Degree of Individuation" between the two types of couples?
3. What are the most distinguishing characteristics that maximally discriminate cohabitants from marrieds, both in the Netherlands and in the United States?

4. Are the differences found between the Dutch cohabitants and marrieds similar to the differences found between the U.S. cohabitants and marrieds?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, HYPOTHESES AND CONCEPTS

2.1. Introduction

The emergence of cohabitation in the 'seventies can be considered a response to changing values regarding marriage and the family. Couples who make a choice for cohabitation over legal marriage do so for a variety of reasons, and their decisions spring from differing value patterns, and might result in different types of cohabitation. This points to a need for examining more closely the different options for cohabitation available. Based on research done so far, the following main types of cohabitation can be distinguished:

1. cohabitation as a prelude to marriage --a transitional stage that either terminates or eventually is transformed into a legal marriage;
2. cohabitation as an alternative to marriage --a rejection of marriage as an institution, or cohabitation as a true alternative.

It appears that in most Western European countries and in the United States, cohabitation as a prelude to marriage is the most dominant form, and that in general few differences exist between cohabiting and married couples (Macklin, 1980). Considering the methodological weaknesses of the majority of these studies, the latter finding might be somewhat premature, and therefore this study will further explore the characteristics that are unique to cohabiting couples. Or, as Festy (1980:14) concludes for Western Europe in countries other than Denmark and Sweden, "cohabitation does not yet have the attributes of marriage and should not be confused with it".

This chapter contains the results of a review of cohabitation literature published approximately from 1970 through 1982 in the United States, the Netherlands, France and Sweden. Several key conceptual elements derived from the structural-

functional conceptual model provide the frame of reference wherein this review can be done systematically. To choose Functionalism as a "methodological yardstick" might elicit some questions among social scientists, that is, considering the criticism voiced of late against the functionalist model. However, several factors favored this choice, both academic and pragmatic. The major thrust of this study is to describe cohabitation in comparison with marriage. The functionalist model is merely used as a methodological device that facilitates a systematic descriptive presentation of the data. By limiting Functionalism to methodology it not only provides this study with order but frees it from valid criticisms that might follow from using the functionalist model as a theoretical framework. Furthermore, the intellectual presupposition of Functionalism --behind diversity there is discoverable order and harmony-- does correspond well with the study's methodology: data collection from standardized questionnaires. It was realized that this method has its drawbacks when analyzing dyadic interaction. Perhaps, the method of 'soft' data gathering: participant observation, in-depth interviews, case studies, might appear more appropriate. However, everything considered, the use of standardized questionnaires (filled out in the presence of a research assistant) proved not only a valid and efficient method, but also diminished the possibility of variation in outcomes resulting from interview data gathered by two teams of interviewers with two different supervisors for each country. Lastly, although, on the one hand, the functionalist model structured effectively the overall design, on the other hand, conceptual elements of the symbolic interactionist model influenced greatly some of the content of the study. The more interpretive and introspective approach of Interactionism, or, one could say, its attempt to 'get inside the individual', and from that microscopic vantage point, to understand social interaction, does lend itself well to clarifying the dynamics of intimate couple relationships (see Chapter 2).

The following chart includes elements of the functionalist model. Also, it represents some basic notions derived from a


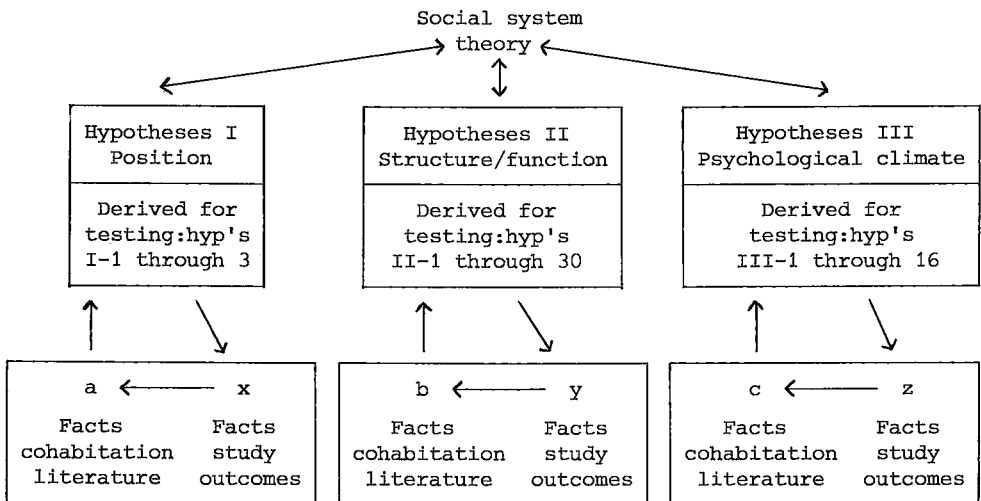
paradigm developed by Van Leent (1961:38, 39). Reflected in this chart is the second dimension of Van Leent's three-dimensional scientific approach, characterized by vertical stepwise up-and-downward movements: through inductive reasoning from specific facts at the bottom to hypothetical formulation at the middle level, towards a general overarching theoretical abstraction at the top, and downward again through deductive reasoning hypotheses are derived for specific empirical testing. The arrows in this pyramidal chart signify the neverending circular course of the inductive  deductive scientific process.

Chart 4. Theoretical pyramid.



In this chart, (a), (b), and (c) are facts known from existing cohabitation literature which generate three sets of hypotheses, I, II, and III, subsequently listed under the headings position, structure/function, and psychological climate (see Appendix B).

Under the assumption that these hypotheses are correct, predictions regarding the outcomes of this study (x, y, and z), are formulated. The rationale behind these various deduced hypotheses is given in the next sections, 2.2 through 2.4, of this chapter.

Thus, the three subsets of hypotheses (I, II, and III) explain as well as the known facts (a, b, and c) as the predicted

study outcomes (x, y, and z). If, however, the hypothetical predictions regarding x, y, and z are rejected by the outcomes of the study, then we will have to reconsider the hypothetical principles underlying I, II, and III. The descriptive Chapters 4 and 5 contain the results of the systematic testing of all included hypotheses.

And, finally, Section 2.5 of this chapter presents the blueprint for a further exploratory analysis of the construct "Degree of Individuation", of which the results are reported in Chapter 5.

2.2. The couple as a social system: its position

The couple, whether married or unmarried, does not live in a social vacuum (Yllö, 1978), and it does occupy a certain position within the social-cultural milieu, or a position in relation to other basic societal institutions such as the extended family, the educational system, the church, the occupational system, and the government (Kooy, 1967; Merton, 1957).

Much has been written about the mutual dependent relationships between the (nuclear) family and other societal institutions. And, whether or not the family has undergone a so-called process of de-institutionalization continues to be a much debated issue. Are, in fact, the institutional aspects of marriage, or patterns imposed by society upon the conduct of individuals called into question by cohabiting couples? To what degree do cohabitants by not (or not yet) partaking of a public legal ceremony, emphasize "the cleavage" between the public and private spheres (Berger and Berger, 1972:247), thereby express their own personal rules instead of the laws that govern society as a whole?

No society has, in the past or present, abdicated all control over the individual and his or her choices for styles of living and made of marriage a matter of entirely free choice. No "perennial" couple relationship escapes from some form of societal approval (Malinowski, 1963; Lévi-Strauss, 1956). Or, as Lasch (1977) contends, the family as a private refuge is an illusion and the privatization process (7) as far as the family is concerned has failed.

Trost (1979:7) observed for the Swedish society that cohabitation began as a protest against society and church, but "now at least in Sweden has become institutionalized". It is a "variant of marriage" and not an alternative. Bo Lewin (1982:763) concurs and proves that the increase in cohabitation in Sweden does not threaten marriage, since most cohabitants feel that the same norms apply to them. The change in form has not been accompanied by a corresponding change in the content of the relationship. The majority do intend to marry. "This seems the case even in a societal setting in which cohabitation is considered socially acceptable" (Lewin, 1982:772).

The Frenchman Roussel (1978) concludes that cohabitation in countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, although definitely not a deviant phenomenon any longer, is still at a different stage of social acceptance. Therefore, one might expect, there continues to be more of a difference between cohabitation and marriage in countries other than Sweden (which is a controversial conclusion considering Macklin's finding based on a contemporary review of cohabitation literature (1980) that few differences exist). In correspondence with Festy (1980:15) it appears that in these European countries cohabitation is less frequent, although rapidly increasing, and it functions more like a preliminary to marriage, which takes place when the couple desires to have children. Similarly so in the United States where various research suggests that cohabitation has become relatively more accepted (e.g., Arafat and Yorborg, 1973; Henze and Hudson, 1974; Bower and Christopherson, 1977; Macklin, 1976, 1980; Glick and Spanier, 1980). Nevertheless, a U.S. study conducted in the mid 'seventies (Yankelovich, 1981) found that almost half of the respondents still considered cohabitation to be morally wrong. In the United States, rather than replacing marriage, "cohabitation will have the effect of delaying marriage", predicts Macklin in 1980.

In this study, the marrieds are made distinctly different from their cohabiting counterparts in that they did not live together prior to their marriage. They rejected the increasing-

ly popular trend among young couples to do so. And, one might wonder with a certain irony, who are in fact the "deviant" ones?

Under the heading "position", the extent to which the two groups differ in the privatization of their personal relationships will be further explored. Considering the existing literature, cohabitants are expected to participate less in societal institutions such as: the extended family, the church, and the government, general level hypotheses and sub-hypotheses are derived and listed in Appendix B.

2.3. The couple as a social system: its structural-functional pattern

The concept structure, a term well defined within social system theory, refers to the network of recurring normative relationship patterns that exist between any two members of the system (adapted from Kooy, 1967; Merton, 1957). This study, which concerns itself with couples, will therefore study the interaction patterns between dyadic partners.

Similarly so, the concept function is a well defined term. Merton (1957) defined the function of a social system as a special type of consequence of the structure which helps to maintain it. Kooy (1967), adapting Merton's conceptualization for his discussion of the functions of the family, makes a distinction between the functional contributions the family makes toward society, and towards its own members. This study will be limited to the couple in its functioning to maintain itself.

The following issues, all labelled as "dyadic relationship characteristics" (Chart 2), are chosen to describe the couples according to their structural-functional patterns: (1) dyadic history, (2) dyadic financial maintenance, (3) dyadic relationship quality (happiness, commitment, balance of power), (4) attitude toward marriage, (5) sexual fidelity/exclusivity, and (6) attitude toward children. These issues together do refer to several important "family functions" (Kooy, 1967): the sexual, procreative, economic and affective functions. One important function "socialization" is not covered at all, since,

as to be expected, only a minority of the sampled cohabiting couples and also the marrieds (due to matching), have children living with them.

Dyadic history and financial maintenance Differences in dyadic history and dyadic financial maintenance are well documented in cohabitation research. A simple listing of the hypotheses chosen to be tested will suffice (Hypotheses II-1 through 6; Appendix B).

Dyadic relationship quality Whether or not cohabiting and married couples differ in the quality of their dyadic relationship is another topic quite often addressed in cohabitation research, but with more conflicting and at times confusing results. For example, four of the six articles in a recent special issue of the journal "Alternative Lifestyles" on cohabitation, all dealt with "various aspects of relationship quality" (Cole, 1981:397). Relationship quality is not a one-dimensional concept. It encompasses an interrelated set of "qualitative dimensions and evaluations" of dyadic interaction and dyadic functioning (see Spanier and Cole, 1976; Lewis and Spanier, 1979; Cole and Goettsch, 1981). The dimensions chosen to be included in this study are: dyadic happiness, dyadic commitment/permanence, and the dyadic balance of power; all topics relevant to cohabitation research.

Happiness Research suggests uniformly (Macklin, 1980), that there are no differences in the degree of dyadic happiness between the two groups. In contrast, the findings on commitment are inconclusive and are often contradictory.

Commitment The concept commitment does need conceptual specification. Johnson (1973) distinguishes "personal" commitment from "behavioral" commitment. The latter consists of two "constraining" components: social commitment, which involves constraints due to normative expectations and social control mechanisms, and cost commitment, which refers to costs perceived when discontinuing a relationship. Similarly so, Leik et al. (1978) breaks commitment down into two major types: personal commitments and situational commitments. This

study conceives of commitment as the personal commitment dyadic partners make to maintain the relationship, and if they will consider termination under certain circumstances. Most cohabitation research, so far, has dealt with the issue of commitment in relation to the question whether or not cohabitation functions as a substitute or prelude to marriage. Therefore, it makes sense to insert the discussion about "attitude toward marriage" within the context of commitment rather than postponing it to a later section.

Cohabitation research in the beginning of the 'seventies carried out in the United States (mainly comparisons between cohabiting students and non-cohabitants) concludes that cohabiting couples are less committed (Johnson, 1973). Also, Macklin (1972) observes that the students she interviewed do not seriously test or even contemplate a potential marriage. Peterman, Ridley and Anderson (1974) come to a similar conclusion, as do Arafat and Yorborg (1973) and Thorman (1973), who consider their most important finding to be: that for the great majority of cohabiting students, future marriage is not a goal at the time they first enter the relationship, nor do they have definite expectations of marrying their partners in the future. More recent research, not based on student samples only, and also comparing cohabiting couples with married couples, continues to produce somewhat similar findings. For example, Macklin (1980:908) in a comprehensive review of cohabitation studies concludes that few differences exist between cohabiting and married couples with the "exception of commitment". Also for Sweden, despite the great similarities between the two types of couples, Trost (1978) notes that the Swedes do perceive a higher commitment and responsibility among those having been married than those having cohabited over a similar period of time (five years). Yet, others have reasoned that cohabitants, although not publicly committed, do have a great personal commitment to each other (Lewis et al., 1975). In other words, it might be that their commitment differs. One could argue also that cohabitants, in view of their freedom to separate devoid of legal and marital constraints, do have an even stronger

commitment to stay together. Their commitment proves the authenticity of their "private" love-bond. One might say, theirs is a relationship caught in the bondage of love --freedom bound by love only. Nevertheless, the fact is that cohabiting relationships are less permanent, or are of a transitional nature (Yllö, 1978; Clayton and Voss, 1977). Glick and Norton (1977) calculated for the United States based on Census Population surveys that cohabiting couples live together a relatively short time before they either separate or marry. They found that 63 percent of unmarried couples had shared the same house or apartment for less than two years. In France, from 1975 to 1977, at least three quarters of cohabitations ended in marriage (Festy, 1980). Trost (1978) reports that in Sweden cohabiting couples break up at a rate that is seven times higher than that for married couples, but also, when they stay together, it is very seldom without eventually marrying. There is rarely an evident decision not to marry (Trost, 1979:79).

Attitude Two years later (1981:411) Trost writes: ".....
toward there was once a need for a decision not to marry,
marriage now there is a need for a decision to marry". From asking the cohabitants why they did not marry, it is now more appropriate to ask the marrieds why they did. The latter do not have a clear response to this question, and their answers explain more why they married at a certain time. It is not a matter of "why" but of "when". Trost concludes that, behind the reasons given, tradition remains one of the main ingredients. Marriage is still considered a more "secure" form of living together or "as it should be". From a "rite of passage" marriage has become a "rite of confirmation", and it is an expression of stability. These findings concur with Lewin's (1979, 1982) observations for Sweden. He also inferred from his data that, for those couples who do decide to marry, marriage becomes a "rite of confirmation" or a ceremonial, emotional reassurance, as it was in the past. Between marriage and cohabitation there remains a difference in symbolic meaning. Marriage is considered to be more secure, more of a family, more confirmed, and it reflects a tradition that shows the sincerity of the involvement.

Lewin concludes (adopting Berger and Kellner's (1964) argument) that pair-bonding must be understood as a nomos generating device, that is, it creates order or meaning for the individual in an anomic society, which is crucial in our search for security. In an increasingly anomic society, or during times of transition, individuals "..... like to fall back on rites, such as the wedding ceremony, and other traditional forms about which beliefs were internalized at an early age" (1982:772).

From Lewin's observations one might conclude, that the conventional elements of marriage are the prime protectives against a state of anomie, more so than, perhaps, those found in cohabiting pair-bonding. It might be suggested here that this hypothesis remains speculative. One might ask to what extent has cohabitation taken over that protective function of marriage. Or, it might be that it is not marital status per se but the quality of the couple relationship that has an effect on anomie. Ryan (1981) addressed this particular issue (although his data do not give comparisons with non-married cohabitants), and found that neither marital status nor marital happiness related significantly to anomie. He did find a weak negative relationship with overall life satisfaction. He concludes, when controlling for other relevant variables, that social economic status remains the primary determinant of anomie for most Americans.

This study will compare the cohabiting and the married couples by their degree of anomie, which is measured twice, namely by some selected Srole (1956) Anomie Scale items and by items selected from Dean's Alienation Scale (1961). (For a further description of the scales, see Section 5 of this chapter.)

When reviewing other studies done in Europe on attitudes toward marriage, the observations made by Roussel (1978), based upon the answers of a representative sample of French 18 to 30 year olds, seem to capture the widespread notion that marriage has undergone a de-institutionalization process, which he hypothesizes might be counterbalanced by the over-evaluation of the affective component of marriage. He argues that in our im-

personal world it is no longer physical survival but emotional survival that dominates. And therefore, the double wish of partners for a "fusion" or to become a "couple d'amants", and the wish to simultaneously maintain proper autonomy ("couple de compagnons") is one of the fundamental tensions to be resolved by couples today. Precisely this is the recurring theme of this study earlier defined as the tension caused by the paradoxical needs for freedom and commitment to co-exist at the same time. Roussel further comments that cohabitants adopt a "stratégie d'ajournement" or postpone marriage until the proper balance has been found. When eventually chosen, marriage is only an administrative formality without consequence for the exclusive love-bond of the couple. Legitimation of the union is an opportunistic act only. Why refuse this concession when it is social advantageous and has no effect on the private lifestyle of the couple. Subsequently, he found that only 14 percent were completely against marriage. Straver et al. (1979), in his study of various dyadic unmarried relationships in the Netherlands, found similar sentiments expressed among cohabitants. Although they don't necessarily exclude the idea of marriage, they don't consider it of importance, but more a formula that is customary and especially practical in case of children. Their attitudes toward marriage vary from indifference and superfluity to more negative feelings, while a very strong dislike is only expressed by a few. Similarly, Rank (1981:500) concludes that cohabitants who do decide to marry make consciously efforts "to minimize the importance traditionally attached to marriage".

In general, one might say that the function of all types of couple relationships is to achieve some form of intimacy based on differing levels of commitment and normative beliefs about what constitutes an intimate couple relationship. These range from the basically utilitarian relationships, based on needs such as convenience of a live-in companion, sexual gratification, and expediency, without commitment to permanency and exclusivity, to an intrinsic relationship where each partner is more important to the other than anything else in life and

where theirs is a commitment of marriage (Macklin, 1972; Arafat and Yorborg, 1973; Thorman, 1973; Clatworthy, 1975). It could be that both cohabiting and married couples are more concerned about instrumental goals than expressive goals in terms of maintaining the relationship. At least, Pietropinto and Simenauer in 1979 point in this direction. The 869 married couples they studied were more concerned about stability and the dyadic processes such as good communication, similarity of ideas and interests, concern for each other's needs - processes that lead to goals - than the goal itself: to experience love. The authors conclude that people do not marry in a state of infatuation and romantic idealism. To which one could add that this is an indication of a more pragmatic than an idealistic frame of mind.

In the Netherlands, not only the marrieds but young people in general, aged 17 to 21, have become relatively less romantic and idealistic in their attitudes toward marriage as Cornelissen (1970) and Kooy (1976) found. It appears that young people do consider honesty, open communication, security and a sense of belonging to be the most valued aspects of marriage (Fourastié, 1964; Cornelissen, 1970; Brandsma, 1977; Weeda 1978; Beuckens-Vries, 1980). The notion that young people are less romantic and idealistic is discussed from a somewhat different perspective by Roussel (1978), and Roussel and Festy (1978). Roussel argues that cohabitants being free to separate, just idealize the spontaneity of their "lieu amoureux" (love-bond). They maintain their relationship as long as affective needs are fulfilled. The increasing depreciation of marriage as an institution concomitantly developed with an increasing appreciation of marriage based on "l'amour". These arguments mainly reflect the well known theory that marriage and the family are not weakened by loss of functions, but have undergone a change: the affective function has become more and more important in a society that emphasizes the individual and personal meaning more than ever, but threatens this individuality at the same time. Also, in the study done by Beuckens-Vries (1980), the prediction whether future couples will be more or less romantic stands out as one of the more controversial issues among the

respondents, although the majority thinks they will.

In sum, it appears that, in the long run, cohabitation functions for most as a transitional stage toward marriage:

- in the United States, it is a temporary arrangement preceeding or following marriage (Glick and Spanier, 1980), or delaying marriage (Macklin, 1980);
- in Sweden, it is a variant of marriage and rite of confirmation; even in this society that has fully accepted cohabitation as another form of marriage, the majority of cohabiting couples will wed eventually (Lewin, 1979, 1982; Trost, 1978, 1979);
- in France, it is a "stratégie d'ajournement" (postponement strategy) (Roussel, 1978), and when children are wanted marriage occurs (Festy, 1980); similarly so
- in the Netherlands, it is a temporary renouncement of marriage as an institution, however, for most acceptable for practical reasons when contemplating offspring (Straver et al., 1979).

As far as reasons to marry are concerned the general hypothesis is that cohabitants in comparison with the marrieds have scaled down the importance of marriage. They will consider the majority of reasons mentioned to them of little importance, including the ideal of marriage as an expression of love, although the latter reason will be considered of relative more importance than other expressive goals mentioned. Also the reasons that mention security and stability will relatively rank higher in importance but less so compared to the rankings of the married. In contrast, instrumental reasons such as the legitimization of children, legal securities, practical conveniences will receive higher rankings among the cohabitants, expressing the sentiment that marriage is not so much an expression of feelings and sentiments but an opportunistic act that simplifies some legal matters. Very few cohabitants will have taken the option to enter their own legal contract (specifying responsibilities and expectations of the partners and regulating financial settlements at the time of termination of the relationship in the case of death or separation), which would make it possible to avoid marriage all together, and at the same time would take

care of practical and legal matters.

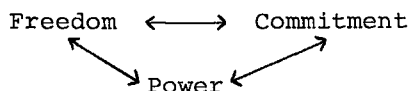
Cohabitation research deals with commitment in the context of commitment to marriage, and the results are inconclusive. The question whether or not cohabitants are less, more, equally, or differently committed to each other remains unanswered. Considering again the built-in differences between the samples chosen for this study, the general hypothesis is that cohabitants are less committed to the relationship than the marrieds, and more often doubt whether or not the relationship will be permanent, which is based on the literature that uniformly links marriage with a greater sense of stability and security, at least symbolically. As mentioned earlier, the pair-bond, whether married or not, is the private solution in a public world, through which the individual tries to experience a sense of personal meaning - a precarious and fragile solution perhaps, or an illusive one, but as popular now in our impersonal society as ever despite its ever-increasing failure on the level of individual relationships. Hypothesis II-7 deals with happiness, Hypotheses II-8 through 12 with commitment, Hypotheses II-23a through m and II-24a through g, with attitudes toward marriage (see Appendix B).

Balance of power The third dimension of relationship quality was distinguished as "balance of power". Power can be defined as the ability to control the actions of others. According to Straver et al. (1979), it is especially in the first stage of a relationship that partners are concerned about the reciprocity of the relationship.

The wish to maintain a relationship, couple commitment, is related to the ongoing bargaining process between partners (Hennon, 1981; Straver et al., 1979; Blau, 1964). One invests in a relationship and expects to receive something in return. It is an "arrangement based upon exchanging rewards for benefits" (Hennon, 1981:470). The relational balance of power is a topic studied frequently from different theoretical angles. The "resource theory" later revised by Heer (1963) to an "exchange value theory" maintains that the balance of power mainly stems from the comparative resources, skills and competences

partners bring into the relationship. Heer (1963) also added the "least-interest" principle, whereby the partner least committed to the relationship has the greatest power. Several other attempts have been made to improve the original resource theory (Safilios-Rothchild, 1967; Scanzoni, 1972, 1980), and recent studies have demonstrated considerable "conceptual ambiguity" about the concept of power (Nichols et al., 1979). The little research done so far on the balance of power between cohabiting partners has produced similar contradictory and ambiguous outcomes. Several studies conclude that, despite increasing egalitarianism between the sexes, the balance of power expressed in decision-making and task division, remains one of traditional sex role inequalities. In fact, cohabitants do not significantly differ in this respect from married couples, and are not as egalitarian as one might expect (Stafford et al., 1977; Cole, 1977; Macklin, 1972, 1980). Stafford et al. (1977:43) conclude that the traditional division of labor is the outcome of the "non-conscious ideology developed from parental modeling that preserves traditions", and this is equally true for both types of couples. Women continue to be socialized for a role as homemaker. Some studies even suggest that females in cohabiting relationships are at a double disadvantage, the male continues to lay out the rules and on top of that they are unable "to get a man to marry them. Power in these relationships, runs rampant in favor of the male" (Whitehurst, 1969). So does Johnson (1968), who suggests that cohabiting males are less committed to their partners, and based upon "the least interest principle" may be more powerful than husbands in comparable situations.

At this point the dualistic notion of freedom against commitment should be re-introduced (see for a more extended discussion Chapter 2). And, a triangular set of interdependent and conflicting relationships between the concepts (freedom vs. commitment vs. power vs. freedom) can be captured in the following paradigm:



This triangle more or less illustrates Simons' (1978) argument, based on in-depth interviews with cohabiting couples, that they might not feel trapped by the legal bond, but while maintaining external freedom they may feel trapped inside themselves, unable to express their true feelings for fear that their partner might leave. (To which one might add a feeling of powerlessness.) Macklin's (1972) initial observations about cohabiting students link the same concepts. She maintains that the problem of achieving security without giving up freedom to be oneself, and growing together yet leaving enough space for the individuals to grow, appears to constitute a central problem. Feelings of being trapped or used, or the lack of a feeling of belonging, all surfaced in her study. Or as Bernard (1972) concludes based on her analysis of the marital union and the future of couple relationships, the tension between freedom and commitment is an inescapable conflict. Especially women will have to adjust to the fact that for their newly acquired independence they might pay a price - the loss of security. Weeda (1978) distinguishes seven types of couple relationships based on a continuum from the least to the most extremely individuated couples. The couples in the middle position (the fourth one) are characterized by their paradoxical commitment to the pair-bond as well as to the self. She argues that this kind of dual commitment generates an emotionally tense relationship. For this study it might be, that the cohabiting couples best fit into this category number 4, more so than the married couples. The latter might stress, by the very fact that they decided to marry without cohabiting first, togetherness as a couple more one-sidedly and are therefore less caught in trying to achieve both: individual freedom and togetherness, and gain thereby a sense of security and couple commitment.

If it is true that cohabiting couples struggle more to achieve a balance between opposites (see Chart 3, p. 22), and if it is true that they are more concerned about the reciprocity in the relationship or the power quotient (Straver et al., 1979), then they will consider it more likely in comparison with the marrieds to leave their partners if he or she becomes

too dependent or too dominant, and they will feel more often a sense of powerlessness due to their paradoxical search for togetherness and freedom at the same time. Therefore, in view of their anxieties, reciprocity in the relationship, equality in sharing tasks, a sense of personal freedom, competitiveness and arguments with the partner are more often matters of concern and a predicament for the cohabitants (see Hypotheses II-13 through 20), combined with slightly higher levels of anomie and alienation, and less self-esteem (Hypotheses II-28 through 30; Appendix B). Significant differences are not expected, whereas also the marrieds will have to deal with those issues, but are, as argued above, less caught within the paradoxical middle position.

Attitude toward children/Sexual fidelity Other topics listed under structural-functional patterns are "attitude toward children" and "sexual fidelity/exclusivity". It is often argued that cohabiting couples are more liberal than the married couples, and that cohabitants are "the avant garde in experimenting with new courtship and family patterns" (Stafford et al., 1977:46). Again, cohabitation research comes up with mixed and contradictory findings, partly due to sampling methods (non-random) and types of respondents (students mainly). In general, cohabitants do not reject societal standards concludes Clatworthy (1975), although they are more willing to engage in non-traditional lifestyles (Bower and Christopherson, 1977), or have in the past engaged in behavior which is considered unconventional (Clayton and Voss, 1977).

The fact is that both in the Netherlands and the United States the majority of cohabiting couples, when considering parenthood, do decide to follow the conventions of a legal marriage for the sake of legitimizing their children. It might be, however, in correspondence with Roussel and Festy's (1978) observations about Europe, that cohabitation in countries other than Sweden only now is moving in the direction of the Swedish model (to have children and not necessarily marrying). For example, in the Netherlands extramarital fertility has

dropped substantially among the young since 1970, as did the enforced marriage rate. However, the extramarital fertility rates for women over 24 have increased. This might reflect an increasing number of cohabiting couples who have children and continue to cohabit, and a greater acceptance of illegitimate birth. According to Roussel and Festy (1978) the increase in illegitimate birth is the greatest where cohabiting is more or less considered another form of marriage with a relative indifference being shown toward the marital status of parents.

Comparable figures and interpretations for the United States are hard to find. The illegitimacy and enforced marriage rates are substantially higher and have to be analyzed in the context of race and ethnicity. Besides, these rates have increased since 1970, mainly due to the high rates of teenage pregnancies. And, also in the United States, there has been an increase in illegitimacy rates among "older" women (25 or older), likely related to the increased cohabitation rates (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1979).

In this study, other than attitudes toward children and legitimation, the couples' attitudes toward sexual fidelity, exclusiveness, and dating others are measured. Buunk (1981), who studied jealousy of 125 Dutch "sexually open" married and unmarried couples, found no differences between the two. This finding contrasts with one of his earlier findings (1980), that sexual jealousy is stronger among cohabiting women than among married women, while the difference was absent among the men. He interprets this as being caused by differing socialization patterns of women and men. Women are brought up with the emphasis on marriage, and therefore marriage is more important for the self-esteem of women. This corresponds with the findings of Lyness et al. (1972) that cohabiting women are significantly more committed to marriage than their male partners. Similarly did Arafat and Yorborg (1973) report that for women marriage is the most important motive to cohabit, while men mention sexual gratification. Henze and Hudson (1974) found that cohabiting women are more sexually faithful than their male partners are. In contrast, in Sweden, based on Lewin's (1982:766) data, it

appears, that cohabiting men (also when controlled for education and number of children) are consistently more committed to the relationship: overall, 65 percent of the men compared to 53 percent of the women indicate that they are inclined to marry their present partner.

Based on the existing literature, although often offering more confusion than clarity in outcomes, and based on the characteristics of the samples drawn for this study (random, non-students, aged 20 - 40 years, and only marrieds who did not cohabit first), cohabitants are expected to be more liberal in their sexual norms: sexual fidelity, abortion, illegitimacy of children. In view of this general hypothesis, specific hypotheses are derived and formulated (II-12c, e and f, II-21, 22, 24f and g, 25a through d, 26, 27; Appendix B).

2.4. The couple as a social system: its psychological climate

Kooy (1967) defines the term psychological climate as the manner in which the members of a social system experience their position within that system. Taking this definition as a basis, the psychological climate of the couple relationship can be defined similarly. It involves an analysis of the emotional, personal feelings partners experience for each other.

Under the heading "psychological climate", the theoretical construct "Degree of Individuation" will be described and analyzed, and the major hypothesis to be tested in this section is: "Cohabitants in comparison with marrieds have a higher degree of individuation".

The underlying rationale for this hypothesis has already been discussed in Chapter 2, and a set of hypothetical differences between the two groups associated with differing degrees of individuation are introduced at the end of that chapter. Also Chart 3 (p. 22) summarizes and illustrates the expected differences. It depicts the notion of balance couples will try to achieve between their dichotomous needs for individuation or personal separateness at one end of the continuum against the need for identification as a couple or dyadic association at the other. The questions measuring "Degree of Individuation"

(see the listing of Hypotheses III-1 through 16; Appendix B) constitute the various dualities listed in Chart 3. Together they encompass three conceptual dimensions:

- (A) dyadic emotional dependency (partner-identification);
- (B) dyadic idealization (couple-identification);
- (C) autonomy (self-identification).

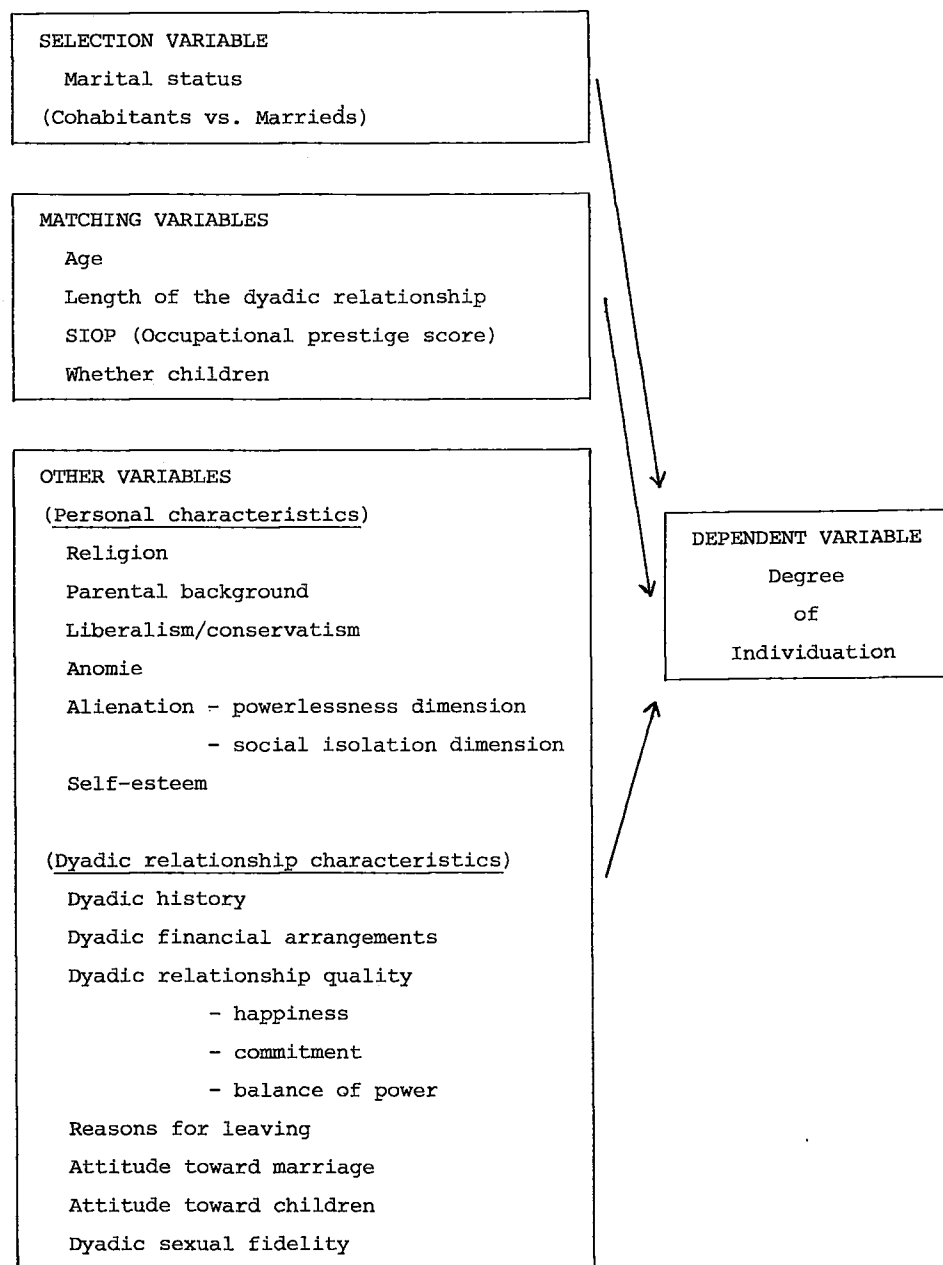
In order to construct a scale of valid items measuring "Degree of Individuation", all questions or items were tested for reliability, and were entered into factor analyses to evaluate its assumed multi-dimensionality. The results are discussed in Section 5 of this chapter. The scale consists of seven questions and the individual sum-score of the seven responses becomes each respondent's degree of individuation. This latter measure has been further examined in Chapter 5 based on some assumptions discussed in the next section.

2.5. Blue-print for an exploratory analysis of "Degree of Individuation"

Besides describing "how" cohabitants might differ from marrieds, the task to explain "why" those differences exist is the more difficult one. "Degree of Individuation" is one of the various variables upon which cohabitants and marrieds are expected to differ, and is selected for a further exploratory analysis. The rationale for selecting this variable is given in Chapter 2, where this construct is introduced as one of the major themes of the study.

The following chart presents besides marital status all other selected variables that might cause a difference in degree of individuation, and functions more or less as a blue-print for the exploratory analysis. The final selection of variables will be based on the outcomes of the descriptive comparative analysis of the two types of couples, i.e., only variables that correlate with the degree of individuation are to be included. Therefore, the exploratory scheme as presented at this point, is mainly based on facts known from cohabitation literature, and will thus later on be adjusted by the outcomes of the study.

Chart 5. Blue-print for an exploratory analysis of degree of individuation; a regression model.



Degree of individuation is an attitudinal measurement which deals with interpersonal dynamics with which individuals are confronted when establishing an intimate dyadic relationship that attempts to secure a certain degree of permanence. Adopting Reiss' (1960) "wheel theory of love", the progression toward functioning as a dyad is a stepwise process. From initial rapport in each other, which leads to self-revelation and mutual dependency, couples finally find basic personality need fulfillment such as the need for someone to love, or the need for someone to confide in. According to Reiss, the final stage corresponds with a deep level of emotional involvement and interpersonal commitment. Lewis (1973) conceptualized this process in a somewhat similar fashion, and speaks of "the achievement of dyadic crystallization" as the final phase. He suggests, that in the end, the couple functions as a dyad, then establishes boundaries, they become committed to each other, and they identify as a couple.

The question the individual must in time face is: whether or not he/she is willing to give up personal identity or freedom when becoming increasingly absorbed in this so-called crystallization process, a process that, according to Berger and Kellner (1964), conjoins two separate identities who together redefine their world, and develop a new "maritally" defined identity. Or, what will be their degree of individuation?

All independent variables include, besides marital status and the matching personal characteristics of the respondents, other personal and relationship characteristics. The assumption is that personal and dyadic qualities may effect the degree of individuation which is, as argued above, an attitudinal measurement evolving from participation in an intimate dyadic relationship.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Ideally, a study like this whose main objective is to describe whether being married or not married (the selection or experimental variable) is associated with differences in dyadic

experiences, their form and content, should be based on a pure experimental design. However, the necessary requirement of a random assignment of cases to the experimental group (the cohabiting couples), and the control group (the married couples), could of course not be satisfied. The choice whether to marry or not was already made by the respondents, and fortunately was not to be considered a prerogative of this researcher. Therefore, a quasi-experimental design was chosen as the second best alternative in which the experimental group of cohabiting couples and the control group of married couples are made equal by matching the two groups on selected criteria. In other words, through matching the effects of variables (other than the experimental variable) which are known to correlate substantially with the dependent variable(s), are eliminated. Matching as a form of variance control is well documented (Kerlinger, 1973:310, 311; Gadourek, 1972:75, 76; Blalock, 1960:180), and therefore, the discussion here will limit itself to describing the application of this strategy. For this study, the couple is the basic unit of matching, or, for each randomly selected cohabiting couple, a "twin" married couple had to be found. Ideally, all variables that might intervene with the correlation between marital status and dyadic experiences (measured by various dependent variables, see Chart 2, p. 9) would be included in the matching procedure. Realistically, this is impossible, since not all intervening variables are known, and even if known, it would be technically impossible to include a large number simultaneously. For example, to match two couples (four individuals) by age is not an easy task, and by adding a second characteristic, like occupation, one has to draw from a large pool of couples to find the perfect match.

The following variables were selected for matching, and within certain defined margins of variance, the matching was carried out successfully, i.e., save one (8), there were no significant differences in means for the "matching" variables (see Table 2, and Table 3 in Appendix C):

Age: the difference between the combined ages of the dyadic partners could not exceed 10 years;

Length of the relationship: the difference between the "twin" couples could not exceed 5 years;

SIOP*-score (Standard International Occupational Prestige scale): the difference between the couples' combined scores could not exceed a total of 30 points.

Also, the presence of children under 18 years of age was a consideration, and in all but five cases the couples were made similar in this respect. And, finally, sex became automatically one of the matching variables since only heterosexual couples are included in the study.

These variables were chosen, since marriage and family studies based on the developmental theoretical approach (Duvall, 1971), have extensively documented that age, length of a relationship, social economic status, and the presence of children, are important determinants of the form and content of dyadic pair-bonds. Thus, by eliminating their effect through matching, the number of intervening variables have been reduced, and subsequently the goal to describe differences in dyadic experiences due to differences in marital status (cohabitation vs. married), can be pursued more effectively.

In addition, a randomly selected sample of married couples in the age category of 20 through 40 years, would have produced in comparison with a random sample of cohabiting couples, first, a smaller number of relatively young couples (cohabitation is more prevalent among the young than the old (Yllö, 1978:43; Trost, 1979:31)), second, fewer couples who have been married a relatively short period of time (cohabitation is less permanent (Trost, 1979:162; Yllö, 1978; Clayton and Voss, 1977)), and, third, fewer couples without children (cohabitants have fewer children (Clayton and Voss, 1977)). As far as social-economic status is concerned the outcomes are less conclusive. For instance, Yllö (1978) found that cohabitants have lower incomes, while Peterman et al. (1974) found this to be true for

*SIOP-score is based on the Standard International Occupational Prestige scale developed by Treiman (1977). The score for each occupation can range from a minimum of -2 points to a maximum of 92 points, and the mean scale score = 43.3 points.

the male cohabitants only.

In this study, each individual couple in one group (cohabitants) has its "match" as much as possible in the other group (marrieds). Subsequently, the two samples are not independent, i.e., it is unjustified to use a difference of sample means test (Nie, Norman H. *et al.*, 1975:270). The following discussion is based on Blalock's (1980:179, 180) explanation of "matched pairs". Instead of having a total N of 100 Dutch couples and 62 U.S. couples (see Chart 1, p. 7), we have only half as many independent cases. Each "case" is a matched set of two couples, one from the group of cohabiting couples and one from the married couples, or a "quartet" (four matching individuals). Therefore, we consider each "quartet" a single case or our unit of analysis. And, instead of applying a difference-of-means test (T-test for independent samples), we can make a direct quartet-by-quartet comparison by obtaining the difference score for each quartet. If we use the null hypothesis that there is no difference in dyadic experiences between cohabitants and marrieds, thereby assuming that marital status has no effect, we can simply hypothesize that the mean of the quarter-by-quartet differences is zero. The next chapter contains the results of these kinds of tests for the various hypotheses listed in Section 2 of this chapter, all of which deal with the question whether the two types of couples differ from each other on a variety of dyadic experiences and other characteristics. But, before describing the results of a computerized analysis of the data, this chapter will conclude with describing the method by which the data were collected.

4. SAMPLING AND DATA-COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The overall sample size is 328 respondents or 164 couples, of which half were married and half were unmarried. Sampling took place in the Netherlands and in the United States making it possible to compare not only by marital status but also, although within limits, cross-nationally. All sampled groups for this study are presented in Chart 1, page 7.

The Dutch samples were drawn in the town of Amersfoort.

Amersfoort was chosen over others for three reasons: (1) its population is quite representative of the Dutch population at large, based upon 1970 Census figures; (2) the willingness of town officials to cooperate with the study; (3) the availability of a computerized listing of 86,854 registered town citizens and some of their demographic characteristics to draw the samples from. The listing, based on 1978 town records, included for each address the names of all residing persons, their date of birth, nationality, date of moving both into the town and into that particular residence, their previous municipality, marital status, religion, sex, and their relationship to others living at the same address, such as: husband and wife, child, single head of household, boarder. The latter two categories might include cohabitants, since information determining whether one lives together in an unmarried couple relationship is not known by the town registrar. A careful review of this list produced 428 addresses at which heterosexual couples in the age-bracket of 20 through 40 might possibly live together for at least one year. Since the sample, drawn in June, 1980, required a yield of no more than 50 cohabiting couples, only a random half of those addresses were checked for changes that might have occurred since the 1978 listing. According to the updated information from the town register, of the 214 addresses 31 percent had remained completely unchanged, 18 percent (although with different people) still qualified as potential cohabiting couples' addresses, and 15 percent were now occupied by married partners. At 28 percent of the addresses no two unrelated single adults of different sex aged 20 through 40 years were living there any more, and at 8 percent the occupants had moved to a different town. These figures show that, within an 18 months period, less than one-third, 31 percent, of the addresses had remained completely unchanged, which does reflect the rather transient nature of people aged 40 or younger. Of the remaining potential 105 addresses, five out of six, 88, were selected for the sample, and each remaining potential cohabitant was mailed an introductory letter which explained the purpose of the study and announced the visit of a researcher

who would ask them to fill out a questionnaire in his or her presence independently from their partner. This took on the average 45 minutes. This data gathering method is a variation upon the personal interviewing technique combining it with a self-administered questionnaire. As the following chart shows, those 88 chosen addresses yielded 108 questionnaires completed by 54 cohabiting couples. At 16 of the remaining addresses, people were not living together as couples, at 6 no one was home during the interviewing period, and at 12 one or both respondents refused to fill out the questionnaire.

Chart 6. Sampling results cohabitants.

	<u>Netherlands</u>	<u>United States</u>
Total selected sampling addresses	214	236
Non-sample (Registrar's update):		
moved	77	
married	32	
	<u>109</u>	
	105	
Randomly excluded one-sixth:	17	
Total contacted sampling addresses	88	236
Non-sample (Interviewer's update):		
moved	-	71
not cohab's	16	50
married	-	33
never home	6	21
unable to locate	-	3
	<u>22</u>	<u>178</u>
	66	58
Non-response:		
refusal	12	23
incomplete	-	3
	<u>12</u>	<u>26</u>
No. of couples who completed questionnaires	54	32
Refusal rate in percentages	18.2	39.7
Non-sample rate in percentages	66.5	75.1

As soon as a cohabiting couple completed their questionnaires, a married couple, which matched as closely as possible by age, length of the relationship, occupational prestige, and whether they had children or not, was selected. Simultaneously matching, according to four variables, though difficult, was nonetheless successfully completed for all but four of the 54 cohabiting couples by perusing demographic information on all married couples, aged 20 - 40 years, made available by the town register. The final yield reached exactly the goal of 50 couples. The non-sample rate (see Chart 7) among the married was close to 50 percent (47.7), since many of the selected matching couples had lived together prior to their marriage and therefore had to be disqualified once contacted. Of the 104 surveyed Dutch couples 71 completed their questionnaires in the months July and August of 1980. The remaining 33 couples did so in the fall of that same year.

Chart 7. Sampling results marrieds.

	Netherlands	United States
Total selected sampling addresses	130	81
Non-sample:		
lived together prior marriage	48	20
have a child	-	11
moved	5	3
separated	-	2
did not match	9	1
never home	-	1
	<hr/> 62	<hr/> 38
	68	43
Non-response:		
refusal	16	11
incomplete	2	-
	<hr/> 18	<hr/> 11
No. of couples who completed questionnaires	50	32
Refusal rate in percentages	23.5	25.6
Non-sample rate in percentages	47.7	46.9

In the United States, the sampling and data-collection procedures were carried out in similar fashion, but with considerable more difficulty. The U.S. samples were gathered in the State of Massachusetts from two adjacent communities: the city of Salem and the town of Marblehead. These communities are approximately 20 miles north of Boston. According to the 1980 U.S. Census, Salem had a population of 38,220 citizens, and Marblehead 20,126, or a total of 58,346 for both. These two communities were chosen since their combined populations do reflect the diversity of a U.S. suburban metropolitan area and are quite comparable with the Dutch town of Amersfoort with respect to social-economic characteristics, such as: occupation, age, marital status (see Table 1, Appendix C). Furthermore, they were easily accessible to the researcher and a team of interviewers.

The street-directories of Salem and Marblehead were the bases for the drawing of the samples. These directories are published annually. For each address, the name of all occupants 17 years of age or older, their dates of birth, occupations, and whether they are registered voters or not, are listed. A list of 236 addresses was prepared at which two people aged 20 through 40, of opposite sex, under different surnames were living. Updating of the list in terms of the most recent population changes could not be done since this kind of information was not made available by the registrars. Therefore, all adults living at the 236 selected addresses were mailed introductory letters explaining the survey and announcing the visit of an interviewer who would then determine whether or not the respondent qualified. It was found that only 58 addresses (25 percent) qualified. The large non-sample rate was due to occupant relocation (71 addresses); occupants not living together as a cohabiting couple (50 addresses); occupants living as a married couple but under different surnames (33 addresses); no one home during the period of the interview (21 addresses). Three addresses could not be located.

Of the 58 qualifying cohabiting couples, 32 completed the questionnaires, 23 refused (one or both partners) to participate,

and 3 filled out the questionnaires incompletely and were therefore not included in the analysis. Once the cohabiting couples were interviewed, matching married couples were found for all, using again the city/town directories. Eighty-one married couples were contacted for matching, of which 11 refused to participate, 3 had moved away, 2 had separated, 20 did not qualify since they had lived together before they married, 11 had given birth to a child and therefore did not match, and 1 did not match for an unrelated reason. The interviewing of the U.S. couples was done in two phases. About half of all couples were interviewed in March and April of 1980, and the rest of the couples were found and interviewed in July through October of 1981.

As the statistics show, sampling and data gathering were more cumbersome and less successful in the United States than in the Netherlands. Non-sampling rates were high in both countries, but in the Netherlands access to up-to-date information from the registrar predetermined non-sampling addresses before personal contacts were made. In the United States updated information was not available, and existing records were incomplete and often incorrect when checked by the interviewers. Only once a year do Massachusetts cities and towns update their population records by sending out self-addressed, stamped census cards to all heads of households. If not returned, the clerk tries to obtain the information by phone and sometimes census takers are sent out. Accuracy and full cooperation, however, is not often achieved. And, although Massachusetts citizens are required by law to submit the information, they often do not cooperate, and the law is not enforced.

The U.S. interviewing also was less successful. The refusal rate among cohabitants was 40 percent compared to 18 percent in the Netherlands, and therefore, the goal of 50 cohabiting couples fell short by 18.

This high refusal rate is a matter of concern when analyzing the U.S. data. The 23 cohabiting couples who refused to be interviewed appear not to differ significantly from the sampled couples by age, occupation, number of children, or location.

Therefore, the remainder of 32 successfully interviewed couples is not considered a special sub-set among cohabitants. It also might illustrate the fact that Americans living in metropolitan areas are rather reluctant to admit strangers into their homes to answer their questions.

5. QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT AND SCALE-CONSTRUCTION

To cover the wide variety of issues raised in this study, four questionnaires were developed for each of the sampled groups. Each questionnaire included 115 similar questions or items which generated 129 comparable variables. Some additional questions were asked of the cohabitants dealing with issues such as: reasons for living together, housing, financial and other contractual arrangements, and whether others knew and approved of cohabiting lifestyles. The final selection of topics and the formulation of the questions were based on a thorough review of relevant cohabitation literature, the theoretical assumptions of the study, and the outcomes of a pre-test of a rather lengthy preliminary questionnaire given to 22 cohabitants and 22 marrieds in the United States. The Dutch questionnaires (translations from the final U.S. versions) were not pretested. Pretesting led to the omission of some variables that showed poor frequency distributions and to a rewording of some of the questions. The questionnaire for the cohabitants can be found in Appendix A, and comprises the following major topic areas:

1. Personal social-economic background information;
2. Dyadic relationship characteristics, such as: dyadic history, dyadic happiness, commitment, reasons to marry, etc.;
3. Attitudinal measurements consist of a set of items taken from existing scales: Srole's (1956) Anomia Scale, Dean's (1961) Alienation Scale, Rosenberg's (1965) Self-esteem Scale, Houseknecht and Rogers' (1979) Autonomy Scale. Also, included was a newly developed scale, measuring "Degree of Individuation".

Anomie was measured twice. First, by adopting two (see Appendix A, Question 32, items 9 and 22) of the five Anomia Scale items designed by Srole (1956). The three rejected items had shown very poor frequency distributions based on the outcomes of the pre-test questionnaires. The Srole Scale measures anomie based on the respondent's perception of "self-to-others", defined as: "The individual's generalized pervasive sense of self-to-others belongingness at one extreme compared with self-to-others distance and self-to-others alienation at the other pole of the continuum". While widely used, Srole's Scale has been subjected to much criticism, including Lee's (1974) and Teevan's (1975). The latter argues, that although the scale has been found uni-dimensional (Robinson and Shaver, 1973), it might nevertheless be multi-dimensional. This confirms Neil and Retti's earlier finding (1963), that the scale consists of two dimensions: powerlessness and normlessness. Considering these findings, a second approach utilized certain items from Dean's Alienation Scale (1961). Dean distinguished three major components of alienation: powerlessness (measured by 9 items), normlessness (6 items), and social isolation (9 items). Thus, these three original subscales, when combined, make up a 24 item alienation scale. Based on pre-test results, two of the three components were adopted: powerlessness (defined as the sense of low control vs. mastery over events --items 10 and 19), and social isolation (defined as the sense of exclusion or rejection vs. social acceptance --items 11 and 15). In addition, a slightly modified question developed by Cole (1977) was added to measure social isolation (item 34).

Self-esteem is defined as: "Acceptance of the self as an individual" (Rosenberg, 1965). Based on pre-test results two of the ten original scale items were included (items 2 and 8).

Individuation; for a definition, see Chapter 2. Sixteen items were chosen to cover three conceptual dimensions distinguished as the hypothetical factors underlying the theoretical construct "Degree of Individuation". They are:

1. dyadic emotional dependency (or partner-identification), measured by items 7, 28, and 43;

2. dyadic idealization (or couple-identification), measured by items 14, 23, 29, 30, 39, and 42;
3. autonomy (or self-identification), measured by items 12, 16, 20, 21, 24, 33, and 40.

Items 14, 21, 28, 29, 30, 39, and 42 were developed for this study. Items 12, 16, 20, 24, and 33 are slightly altered questions taken from the autonomy scale developed by Houseknecht and Rogers (1979). Items 7, 40, and 43 were adopted from Cole (1977), and item 23 was adopted from Glazer-Malbin (1975).

The answers of the Dutch and U.S. respondents to each of the sixteen items were entered into a series of factor analyses, namely one for all samples combined, and also for each of the four sub-samples separately. This was done in order to reduce the number of items entering a final individuation scale applicable to each of the sub-samples, and, second, to test whether or not the three hypothetical dimensions of individuation could be confirmed.

Chart 8 displays the factor analytic results for all samples combined. Only two of the five emerging factors are given in this table, since the three additional ones with their respective eigenvalues of .80, .45, and .43 do not sufficiently contribute to the explanation of the total variance of the construct individuation.

Clearly, the first factor is the dominant one with an eigenvalue of 3.14 and explaining 55.0 percent of the variance in individuation. The natural cut-off point for inclusion of variables loading high on Factor I falls at .43, since the next highest loading (item 28) drops to .25. The first four variables (items 23, 39, 29, and 14) load significantly on Factor I only. The factorial complexity of these variables is therefore 1, or they measure one theoretical dimension earlier defined as: dyadic idealization. The next item (43), on the contrary, loads at .43 moderately high on both Factor I and Factor II, which indicates a factorial complexity of 2, or a theoretical ambiguity. Upon inspection of the wording of this item, this ambiguity seems justified: it includes both a "dependency on the partner" component, and also, but to a lesser extent, the

Chart 8. Factor analysis (varimax rotated) of sixteen individuation items for all samples combined - Dutch and U.S. cohabitants and marrieds (N = 164 couples).

Question 32 items:	Factor I "Dyadic idealization" loadings	Factor II "Dyadic emotional dependency" loadings
23. I could not possibly ever have as satisfying a relationship as I have now with my present cohabitant/spouse	.63	.01
39. I find my completion in my cohabitant/spouse	.59	.15
29. Living with my cohabitant/spouse is one of the most important things in my life	.48	.16
14. In a good couple relationship the two partners mean everything to one another	.43	.03
43. I feel panicky and empty when I think of the possibility of living without my cohabitant/spouse	.43	.43
7. When my cohabitant/spouse is not around, I often feel so incomplete I don't know what to do with myself	.12	.64
28. I find it hard to be by myself without my cohabitant/spouse	.25	.56
Eigenvalue	3.14	.92
Percentage of variance explained	54.6	16.1
Total percentage of variance explained	70.7	

"idealization" of a lasting relationship with the current partner, and can therefore reflect both dimensions. By comparison, the second factor contributes much less to the understanding of the phenomenon individuation, since its eigenvalue of .92 does not quite reach the acceptable minimum level of 1, and therefore does not warrant very serious consideration. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that Factor II does explain

16.0 percent of the variance and the three significantly loading items (43, 7, and 28) tend to confirm the existence of the earlier distinguished hypothetical dimension: "Dyadic emotional dependency". The third hypothetical dimension "Autonomy" did not emerge at all. Therefore, the items chosen as various measurements of this third dimension do not belong together or do not represent one common denominator like the construct "Autonomy". In summary, only Factor I stands out as a clearly defined entity, it is uni-dimensional with the exception of item 43. Its five significantly loading variables determine and confirm the existence of a common underlying denominator, named "Dyadic idealization".

A review of the factor analytic results, carried out on all sixteen items for each of the four sub-samples separately does support these findings. The same five items emerge consistently. In addition, items 30 and 42 categorized as dyadic idealization measurements, load significantly high on the appearing factors. Again, never do any of the "Autonomy" items appear as a separate factor, nor do any of these items load highly on any of the emerging factors (9).

In conclusion, these factor analytic outcomes resulted in the deletion of all "Autonomy" items and the inclusion of all dyadic idealization items, plus item 43. Subsequently, the individuation scale consists of seven items all of which measure dyadic idealization. The scale was tested for reliability; alpha scores for each of the sub-samples were: .78, .74., .79, and .75. Therefore, the scale is considered a reliable instrument that is applicable to each of the sub-samples. The sum-score of the responses to these 7-point Likert-scale type of statements becomes each respondent's degree of individuation or, more correctly, each respondent's degree of dyadic idealization. The scale measures the extent to which the respondents idealize the dyadic relationship: (item 23) I could not possibly ever have as satisfying a relationship, (item 39) I find my completion in my cohabitant/spouse, (item 29) Living with is one of the most important things in my life, (item 14) two partners mean everything, (item 43)

..... panicky and empty when I think of living without my co-habitant/spouse, (item 30) self-sacrifice is necessary (item 42) do things together as much as possible.

Section 8 of the next chapter includes a discussion of the responses to each of the original sixteen individuation items, and also presents the outcomes to the seven-item individuation scale. In addition, Chapter 5 elaborates on the individuation findings.

4. COHABITATION: A COMPARATIVE DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS WITH MARRIAGE IN THE NETHERLANDS AND IN THE UNITED STATES - A TEST OF HYPOTHESES

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study, as described earlier in Section 2, Chapter 1, is to explain certain characteristics and relationship patterns that are unique to cohabiting couples. To this purpose, random samples of cohabiting and matching married couples were gathered, both in the Netherlands and in the United States.

A description has been given of the methods by which the respondents in both countries were selected (see Section 4, Chapter 3). A look now at the cross-national settings will provide an interesting and important introduction to the dyadic puzzle we are trying to piece together in this chapter. This chapter will offer a geographical scenario (a transatlantic perspective) against which one can interpret the endless diversity of couple relationships. Therefore, a brief history of the communities will precede a descriptive comparative analysis of the sub-samples. Later on in this chapter the couples are described by some of their social characteristics (Section 3), the history and current status of their dyadic relationship (Section 4), then more specifically by their dyadic commitment along with attitudes toward marriage (Sections 5 and 6), intra-dyadic balance of power and the extent to which each dyadic partner balances his or her need for separateness and belonging --degree of individuation (Sections 7 and 8). The summary section (9) includes final conclusions and interpretations balanced against existing literature and the hypotheses formulated for this study.

In each of the sections the following comparisons will be made in order to answer the basic research questions:

1. In both countries, do cohabitants differ from marrieds?
2. Do the differences/similarities between the Dutch samples correspond with comparable outcomes in the United States?
3. How do Dutch cohabitants differ from U.S. cohabitants?

The assumption is that the comparisons between the two countries might contribute to interpreting the differences/similarities in outcomes between cohabitants and marrieds, and also some interesting contrasts between the two countries regarding couple relationships might be brought out as well.

These various comparisons might at times tax the concentration power of the reader. However, at the end of each section, after having digested a rather heavy main course of "couple" ingredients due to the richness in details extracted from the various comparative elements, the reader will be given a summary, highlighting the peculiarities of the cohabitants.

2. THE U.S. AND DUTCH SAMPLING COMMUNITIES: A COMPARISON (10)

Salem and Marblehead are adjacent U.S. coastal communities located on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean approximately 16 miles or 25 kilometers north of Boston. Both date back to the very early days of the first European white settlements in the American North-East or in the so-called New England region.

Salem, a name derived from the Hebrew word "Shalom" meaning "peace" was founded as early as 1626 by a group of English immigrants. Their arrival did not come much later than the year (1620) when the "Pilgrims" departed from England, via the town of Delft in the Netherlands, and made their historic voyage to the "New World". The Pilgrims set foot in a place they later called Plymouth, today a town about 65 miles or 100 kilometers down the coast from Salem and Marblehead.

Marblehead, which probably owes its name to the marblelike appearance of its rocky shores (as seen by early fishermen approaching from the sea" (Widger, 1957) was established as a town in 1649. Up until then it belonged to Salem, from where its first fishermen and farmers had come looking for more freedom from the strict Calvinistic and Puritanical way of life in

the town of Salem. They crossed the Salem harbour to the shores of the Marblehead peninsula and began building their fishing shacks and simple clapboard houses. So-called "Old Town" Marblehead today does still project the charm of an old New-England fishing village with houses built closely together, along a labyrinth of streets and narrow pathways down to the waterfront.

Both Salem and Marblehead are built around naturally secluded harbors which from early on, encouraged trade, fishing and ship-building industries. Salem in the 17th and 18th centuries developed into a prosperous major commercial port trading not only with many European ports but also its schooners ventured to such far-away places as Russia, the West Indies and China, bringing back a diversity of goods and economic profits. Marblehead followed very much a similar pattern. And today, in both communities, magnificent homes built by wealthy shipowners and merchants, and museums containing some of the treasures gathered during the golden age of trade with the East, are the visible testaments of the rich cultural inheritances from their past.

In the beginning of the last centuries economic decline of the ports set in and the towns turned to other industries such as shoe- and leather manufacturing, Salem never reached again its glorious days of the past and especially over the past 20 years Salem is a city struggling to recover from its steady economic decline. It has begun to recognize its historic significance and to attempt to reclaim its heritage. The carefully preserved "House of Seven Gables", made famous by Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel under that same name, is still surrounded by delapidated "three-deckers" (three story apartment buildings) and other housing in dire need of repair. Nearby, a major downtown urban renewal project together with new waterfront developments is changing the face of the town. Planners and citizens alike feel that Salem is "..... once more on its way to an even more exciting and economically prosperous future" (Community Development Master Plan, 1979). Although urban experts feel the city has turned the corner, it remains a somewhat depressed industrial community in an urban metropolitan environment and a city whose overall appearance is in need of considerable

improvements in the years to come.

In contrast, Marblehead, although in the past less significant as a major trading port, has seen a tremendously rapid growth since World War II. Its population since then has more than doubled and it has become an affluent middle and upper-middle-class town. Marblehead is predominantly a residential suburban bed-room town (mainly for the city of Boston) and resort-town with only a small number of manufacturing firms. Instead of schooners and fishing boats its harbor is now filled to capacity with a fleet of more than 2000 yachts and other leisure boats. Marbleheaders like to refer proudly to their town as the "Yachting Capital of the World", or fully agree with the New York Times' description that their town is one of the "Five Great Small Towns in America". In other words, many Marbleheaders are fiercely proud of their town and its heritage. In contrast with the U.S. myth that big-business and newness equates progress, Marblehead's middle-class likes to make their home in the homesteads of the past often hanging out a hand-made "shingle" with the name of the first owner (most likely a sea-captain) and the building date. Even today, major decisions that have to be faced in the complex 20th century world are still made at the annual town meeting, one of the last vestiges of U.S. democratic ideals, or a legislative body where every citizen can state his/her view and cast directly their vote on all town matters, such as: the budget, expenditures for schools, police, fire and other public service departments. Also, almost all town officials are directly chosen or elected by the town residents, including a Board of seven Selectmen/women that oversee all ongoing town matters. Selectpersons are chosen every two years on a staggered basis. In contrast, the city of Salem, which has almost twice the population (see Table 1, Appendix C), is governed by a mayor and a city council. The mayor is elected every two years, while the eleven councillors are voted in on a staggered basis.

It is in the rediscovery and costly restoration and maintenance of the past that the two U.S. communities and the Dutch town of Amersfoort have something in common. Although "old" is a very relative concept considering the fact that the 250 year

old houses of Salem and Marblehead are "new" compared to some of Amerfoort's medieval architectural remnants of 15th century "Muurhuizen", or Wall Houses, built onto the old fortifications and town gates. This obviously reflects the differing histories of the "old" and the "new" world. Amersfoort's history goes back about 900 years, and is from its very beginning determined by its function as an important trade and traffic junction. Medieval travelers and traders crossed at this location the Amer river, now named the Eems, and around 1050 a small settlement was established there, soon to be protected by a ring of walls and canals. In 1259, town-rights were granted by Bishop Hendrik van Vianden. Continued prosperity and growth led to the construction of a second ring of walls and canals and various town-gates, which were all completed circa 1450. Since then, Amersfoort did not expand or grow much beyond its, and still existing walls until the beginning of this century when the town, through its central location became once more an important junction for the newly built railroads. Likewise, more recently, Amersfoort finds itself surrounded by modern highways, interconnecting the town with the northern and eastern provinces, the city of Amsterdam in the North-west, and the city of Utrecht as the gateway to the South. The combination of begin easily accessible by highway and rail, and of being centrally situated in the Netherlands, has made the town attractive to industrial developments and various organizations. Also, three army bases have made it into an important military town. These various circumstances led to an increase in population since the beginning of this century, and especially since World War II.

Today, Amersfoort also serves as a regional center providing surrounding populations of more rural municipalities with employment opportunities, social service organizations, health facilities, secondary schools, retail businesses, and recreational/entertainment facilities. In many ways it is a typical Dutch town reflecting in its architecture and town plan the historic growth and development from a medieval settlement toward a modern regional town center. The old town center, still

to be entered through the remaining town-gates, is a maze of cobbled alleys and old market squares, very much following the medieval patterns. Ventures outside the double ring of canals and fortifications force one to return in one giant leap to the suburban sprawl of a rapidly growing Dutch society. High-rise apartment buildings dominate the architecture of the wedge-shaped neighborhoods surrounding the old center. They are densely populated, and have made Amersfoort into a town of almost 80.000 inhabitants, not including an additional 9.000 inhabitants of the two adjacent communities just outside the town itself but still belonging to the municipality of Amersfoort. While the new neighborhoods are more homogeneous (social-economic) bed-room communities, the old town center offers a more plural population. Carefully restored town-houses along the canals or narrow streets and "wall-houses" have become the homes of the more affluent professionals, while in the same neighborhoods young singles might rent a room or share an "étage" of one of the older three to four story buildings, usually in somewhat crowded and "bohemian" conditions. Also, almost one-fourth of the 3.000 so-called guestworkers (predominantly Turks and Maroccans) have found a home here, they often occupy the older inexpensive housing units. The town is governed by an appointed mayor (selected by the Dutch Government Secretary of Internal Affairs) and elected Wethouders (upholders of the law, comparable to U.S. selectpersons). Each of those officials oversees town departments, such as: public works, housing, social services etc. All other top-level administrative personnel, heads of agencies etc., are appointed and are not directly elected by the population.

The profiles of the three communities emerging from these brief reviews, bring out the distinctive characteristics of each. They depict, also, their common traits. First, as was mentioned earlier, one can find a common denominator in their efforts to restore and maintain rich cultural and architectural pasts. And second, they are communities situated in metropolitan regions. Table 1 (Appendix C) highlights the unique characteristics and reflects the similarities and differences among them.

Table 1 summarizes information about housing, social-economic status (income, education, occupation), age, marital status, religion, and political party affiliation or voting behavior. Not always, exact categorical, horizontal comparisons between the communities can be made, since the figures are based on data gathered in different years, and also, the categories do not always correspond. Nevertheless, these figures do give a valid impression based on some basic population and housing characteristics.

In general, one can conclude, corresponding with what has been mentioned before, that the two U.S. municipalities sharply differ (Marblehead is the more affluent and smaller bed-room/resort community compared to Salem as a more industrial center and a lower and middle-class community), and that the characteristics of the two U.S. communities combined often correspond with comparable features of the Dutch town of Amersfoort. This second observation is important, since samples of cohabitants and marrieds were drawn in the United States from the populations of Salem and Marblehead and then compared with the samples gathered in Amersfoort. Therefore, in the following paragraphs, the emphasis is on comparing the combined populations of Salem and Marblehead with the population of Amersfoort. In addition, some contrasts between the two U.S. municipalities will be commented on.

Housing Amersfoort is the most densely populated town with almost 7,500 persons living per square mile compared to more than a one-third lesser density rate for Salem and Marblehead (just over 4,700). Also, the number of persons per housing unit is somewhat larger in Amersfoort. Another significant contrast is reflected in the percentages of the housing units that are owner-occupied: this rate is twice as high in Salem and Marblehead (59 percent) than it is in Amersfoort (29 percent). These figures also reflect the differences nationwide in this respect: in the United States of all housing 63 percent is owner-occupied (U.S. Census, 1971) compared to 35 percent in the Netherlands (C.B.S. Census, 1971) (11).

Social-economic status Comparisons by education, occupation and income must be made with some caution, since directly comparable figures are not available. For example, U.S. undergraduate colleges entered after graduation from highschool do not only serve students interested in pursuing academic graduate degrees after they complete four years of college, but they do also offer programs to students looking for more applied fields, often comparable with the Dutch middle-level and higher-level professional degrees. Therefore, the total percentage (20.0) employed males in Amersfoort who have either a middle-level or higher-level educational background is roughly comparable to the percentage (19.1) of all adults living in Salem and Marblehead who do have a college degree or more. Other comparable levels of education, although not included in Table 1, do reinforce the conclusion that the education of the population of Amersfoort is more or less comparable to the educational backgrounds found in Salem and Marblehead.

Similar trends appear when comparing different occupational levels: the employment levels of Amersfoort correspond approximately with the ones for Salem/Marblehead. Again, very precise comparisons cannot be made since the categories do partly overlap. When one compares the types of industries, Amersfoort appears to function as an important service center in combination with offering employment in manufacturing and wholesale/retail businesses. Compared with Salem and Marblehead, three times as many firms are located in Amersfoort offering twice as many employment places. Therefore, Salem and Marblehead can be characterized more as suburban residential bed-room communities, especially Marblehead where employment has to be found elsewhere in the greater Boston metropolitan area. Considering the difference in population size Salem has almost twice the number of inhabitants as Marblehead, and is much more of an industrial center with manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and the service industry as the leading sources of employment. In 1974, these three industries accounted for 88.0 percent of the reported employment offered in Salem. In contrast,

Marblehead is a combination suburban, residential and resort town with a small amount of manufacturing, consisting mainly of sail-making industries. And, also about half of those who do find work in Marblehead are employed in either service industries or in the retail stores. Marblehead is the most affluent one of the three municipalities. The latest available comparable income figures were for 1976. Table 1 shows that the estimated median income (based on the 1970 U.S. Census) for Salem and Marblehead combined about equals the income reported for Amersfoort in that year. In conclusion, when comparing the Dutch and U.S. sampling areas by social-economic indicators, the two regions are quite comparable. The fact that Marblehead stands out as being relatively more affluent is counterbalanced by the conditions in Salem. In other words, together, these populations provide a comparable sampling base with Amersfoort.

<i>Political party affiliation/vote</i>	The political preferences of the populations of Salem and Marblehead mirror their social-economic differences. For example, 41.0 percent of the Marbleheaders are registered as Republicans, which more than doubles the percentage for Salem (16.0). The figures for the two municipalities combined do reflect the national U.S. political preferences: in 1980, 29.0 percent of U.S. voters aged 21 or older identified themselves as Republican which is comparable to the average of 28.0 percent for Salem and Marblehead combined.
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A comparison between the voting patterns in Amersfoort and the outcomes nationwide in the Netherlands, based on 1981 national elections, show that Amersfoort also did not vary a great deal from the national outcomes. There was one exception: the percentage of the vote going to the Christian Democrats was higher in Amersfoort. Thus, political preferences in both the U.S. and the Dutch sampling areas do, more or less, reflect national voting patterns.

<i>Marital status</i>	Amersfoort has the youngest population: 31.0 percent falls within the 20 - 39 age-bracket compared to 25.0 percent of the populations of Salem and
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Marblehead. Correspondingly, a smaller percentage of the population of Amersfoort is married (47.5) compared to an average of 62.7 percent for the two U.S. municipalities.

In conclusion, these brief portrayals of the three communities, along with their numerical facts, do provide some background information to be kept in mind when reading the outcomes based on the samples. Amersfoort differs from Salem/Marblehead in that it has more inhabitants, greater population density, a younger citizenry, and a metropolitan area that offers double the number of employment opportunities. However, by social-economic parameters, the Dutch and U.S. sampling areas are very comparable --an important observation, since in the next sections discussions based on cross-national comparisons are included.

3. SOME SOCIAL-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF COHABITANTS IN COMPARISON WITH MARRIEDS

Four samples, two of which were drawn in the Netherlands and two in the United States, and the subsequent responses to four rather lengthy questionnaires together produced a rich data source full of comparative information. As a start, it might be helpful to describe these respondents by some of their basic social-economic characteristics, and thereby outline a preliminary composite respondent profile. Table 2 presents a statistical profile (12).

It appears that the intentional matching of cohabitants and marrieds by age and occupational prestige was successfully carried out in both countries. No significant differences exist between the matched samples.

Age The composite average age of the Dutch couples is 27 years, and of the U.S. couples is 29. The ages in both countries were restricted to the 20 through 40 age-bracket.

Occupation Similarities in occupational prestige of cohabitants and marrieds do not necessarily lead to cor-
Education

Income

responding similarities in income and educational backgrounds. In comparison with the marrieds, the cohabitants are better educated but earn significantly less. This finding can be explained partly by the fact that cohabitants belonging to the same general occupational stratum as the marrieds are employed in the lesser paying positions. This explanation, however, cannot be derived from the data in Table 2; it is based on comparisons of the various occupations specified by the respondents.

It should also be pointed out, that in both countries a disproportionately large percentage of the respondents are employed in the two top occupational strata. About 71.0 percent of the Dutch samples are employed in the two top strata while, by comparison 38.0 percent of all male heads of households and singles in Amersfoort are employed in middle-level or higher occupations (exact comparison figures are not available). Similarly in the United States, where also about 71.0 percent of the sampled respondents occupy the higher positions compared to 33.0 percent of the adult population in Salem and Marblehead (see Table 1 for the population figures). Of course, it would have been preferable to compare the samples with population groups similar in age instead of the total population. However, the municipalities did not have such information available. It seems likely that a younger segment of the population (through age 40) would tend to be somewhat better educated but would not yet have reached the top salaries in their occupational strata. This trend might have effected the study outcomes to some extent but, considering the disproportionately large percentages, the tentative conclusion is, that random samples of young cohabitants are in fact better educated and are in higher-level occupations than the population in general. Also, it should be noted that the large majority of these young and predominantly childless couples, whether they are married or not, are two-earner couples. Unemployment rates are low --never more than 5.0 percent-- for any of the sampled groups.

Religion

Religion or active church participation are variables on which cohabitants and marrieds are known

to differ. Cohabitants are less involved religiously. In the Netherlands, 72.0 percent of the cohabitants consider themselves non-religious, or as it was worded in Dutch "buitenkerkelijk" (13) compared with less than one-third (31.3 percent) of the marrieds. Similarly, in the United States, the cohabitants are less religious. But here both the unmarried and the married are much less (at least half the percentages of the Dutch) inclined to consider themselves non-religious --30.2 and 14.3 percent respectively. This should not be construed to mean that the Americans are more active church participants. The differences with the Dutch in this respect are negligible. Of the U.S. cohabitants and marrieds, 76.0 and 46.0 percent answer that they attend religious services "less often" than "by special occasions", or "high holidays only", or "never", compared to almost similar percentages (78.0 and 45.0) for the Dutch samples. Thus, church participation is nil for three-fourths of the cohabitants in both countries, and for almost half of the marrieds.

Politics

Besides religious involvements, political involvements of the Dutch cohabitants and marrieds also differ. Of the Dutch unmarried and married respondents, 86.0 and 94.0 percent respectively are not a member of a political party, and more than half (55.5 percent) of the cohabitants would vote for the more leftist parties, namely the P.v.d.A. (Socialists) or three other smaller ones (sometimes referred to as "small left"), compared to only 19.0 percent of the marrieds. Remarkable is the relatively large percentage (23.0) of the cohabitants that would vote for "small left", while during the 1981 national elections these parties received only 6.3 percent of the vote in Amersfoort (see Table 1). Compared to the cohabitants, a relatively large percentage of the marrieds would vote for the C.D.A. (Christian Democrats, a party politically in the center or somewhat to the right of center), namely 23.0 percent compared to 3.0 percent of the cohabitants. Since the majority of the respondents are religiously non-involved, and in the Netherlands religion remains one of the determinants of political preferences, the more leftist orientation of the sampled respondents corresponds with similar trends among the

young "un-churched" voters in the Netherlands as a whole. And finally, 15.0 percent of the cohabitants and 18.0 percent of the marrieds did not want to vote or did not know whether they would vote or not. Instead of answering more direct questions about voting behavior, the U.S. respondents were asked where they would place themselves on a liberalism-conservatism scale. Their answers indicate the cohabitants to be more liberal.

Thus, in comparison with the marrieds the Dutch cohabitants have politically a more leftist orientation, while the U.S. cohabitants consider themselves more liberal. To be a "leftist" or to be a "liberal" are terms which for the purposes of this study are interchangeable. In other words, cohabitants are more "leftist" or "liberal" and marrieds are more "rightist" and "conservative".

Household- Very few of the surveyed couples have others
composition living with them. Only two of the Dutch cohabiting couples and (because of matching) also two of the Dutch married couples have one child. One of these children is a 12 years old boy from a previous marriage by his cohabiting mother. The other three are all less than one year old. One cohabiting couple has an "illegitimate" child under one year, and has plans to marry in the near future. Two other Dutch cohabiting women volunteered to mention that they were pregnant --no questions were asked about current pregnancy-- and they had no immediate plans to marry. In the United States, six cohabiting couples have one or more children, but all are from previous marriages. Of those six couples two have one child under 5 years of age, and the other four have two children each of which the oldest are teenagers. Four U.S. married couples have one or more children --three have each one child, and one couple has two children. All the children of the marrieds are teenagers. Thus, in this respect the U.S. cohabitants and marrieds do not completely match.

As far as other live-in adults are concerned, all but one Dutch cohabiting couple have no other member living in the household, the one exception being a sister of the female partner. In conclusion, cohabitants (with the exception of three Dutch

couples of which one has plans to marry) do not have children unless from a previous marriage. And also, when asked what they would do in the case of pregnancy only a minority (12.1 percent of the Dutch and 4.7 percent of the U.S. cohabitants) would choose to have the baby and continue to cohabit (see Table 9 for some of their other answers).

Parental background To complete this first profile of the surveyed couples, Table 2 includes some information about parental backgrounds. It is a well known fact that adult behavior, despite varying situational circumstances, remains one of the by-products of earlier socialization patterns. For example, adult sex-roles are the outcomes of the "nonconscious ideology developed from parental modeling", conclude Stafford et al. (1977:43).

In both countries, the parents of cohabitants in comparison with the parents of the marrieds, are significantly more often divorced (highest rates are in the U.S.). Also, cohabitants visit their parents less often. The latter finding might be effected by the fact that more parents of the married couples are living in the same town or in general they are in closer proximity. In both countries, cohabitants and marrieds come from about similar economic backgrounds based on the mean occupational prestige scores of their parents. Also, respondents and their parents do belong to about the same social-economic strata which are, for both, on the average 6 to 7 points above the mean Standard International Prestige score of 43.3 points (see footnote beneath Table 2 for the scoring). In other words, in comparison with parents, these young couples have definitely not (yet) reached significantly higher ranking positions on the social stratification ladder, but both generations in comparison with the general population, do rank above average.

Fathers are more often mentioned than mothers as the more dominant parent while growing up. As to be expected, more U.S. mothers worked outside the home: respectively 43.0 and 55.0 percent of the U.S. cohabitants and marrieds, compared to only 17.0 and 14.0 percent of the Dutch. The Dutch figures also show that there are no significant differences between cohabitants

and marrieds in this respect.

The figures presented so far, have portrayed the majority of the cohabitants in both countries as well educated, employed in the higher-level positions, and probably, considering their age (average of about 28 years), at entry-level incomes. They are religiously non-involved, politically progressive, and without children. Because of matching, the marrieds do not differ significantly from the cohabitants by most social-economic status characteristics. Parents of marrieds are less often divorced or more happily married, and more visited than the parents of cohabitants. Marrieds also differ from cohabitants by religious involvement (greater), by political preferences (less "leftist" or "liberal").

In the next section, the respondent profile will be expanded to examine the characteristics that tend to reflect more the dyad than the individual. First, the dyadic histories of the coupled respondents will be described. And second, the extent to which the current dyad expresses togetherness and commitment through joint financial and other kinds of arrangements will also be measured. Furthermore, the question whether cohabiting couples think others know and approve of their relationship is also addressed.

4. SOME DYADIC RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF COHABITANTS IN COMPARISON WITH MARRIEDS

It was the intention of this study, rather than gathering a typical student sample of couples who have been together a relatively short period of time, to find a cross-section of cohabiting couples, aged 20 through 40, who lived together at least one year. Couples with some duration behind them had the chance to develop their relationship, to think about commitments to each other and about the extent to which they would like to function as a two-some that maintains a degree of individual independence at the same time.

Length of the relationship Table 3 indicates that the study succeeded in reaching these goals: in both countries, not one of the cohabiting couples and, because of matching, not one of the married couples have lived together for less than one year. In the Netherlands, the cohabitants have lived together an average of 3.72 years. However, the intended matching on this variable was not completely successful since the marriages have lasted an average of 7 months longer (a difference significant at the .05 level). In contrast, in the United States, the matching resulted in no significant differences between the two groups, although the marriages did tend to be of longer duration. In the United States, both types of couples, in comparison with the Dutch, have lived together or have been married approximately one year less, which are significant differences ($p = .01$) between the two countries.

In both countries, the marrieds had known each other significantly longer ($p = <.001$), about 2 years, before they decided to marry than the cohabitants had before they moved in together. Thus, adding in both countries the period a couple has known one another to the period of cohabitation or marriage, the total period of "togetherness" is longer for marrieds than for cohabitants. In the Netherlands, these figures average out to approximately $5\frac{1}{2}$ years for the cohabitants and 8 years for the marrieds, compared to $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 7 years in the United States. Therefore, when including the time couples "knew" one another, the U.S. couples have been "together" one year less than comparable Dutch couples.

Previous relationships When comparing other aspects of the dyadic histories, additional important differences between cohabitants and marrieds (and also between Dutch and U.S. samples) emerge. In both countries, the cohabitants have had more previous couple relationships than the marrieds, and the U.S. cohabitants more so than the Dutch.

Previous cohabitation Through screening, none of the Dutch and U.S. marrieds had first cohabited with their current spouse, and, as it turned out, neither had the Dutch marrieds ever experienced a cohabiting relationship

with somebody other than their current spouse. In contrast, 15.6 percent of the U.S. marrieds cohabited once. Also, of the cohabitants, few did cohabit before: 16.0 percent of the Dutch and 24.2 of the U.S. cohabitants. Only one cohabitant had two previous cohabitation experiences.

Previous marriage When asked about previous marriages, with the exception of the U.S. cohabitants (27.0 percent previously married) very few (10.0 percent) of all respondents spoke of an earlier marriage.

Housing The housing situation reflects some distinct differences between the cohabitants and the marrieds, as well as some typical differences between the two countries. In Amersfoort, where 29.0 percent of all housing is owner occupied (which is just about half the rate of the two sampled municipalities in the United States), the cohabitants hardly vary from the town average with 30.0 percent homeowners among them. In contrast, their married counterparts have an overrepresentation of homeowners: they more than double the average rate (64.0 percent). In the United States the situation is quite different. Here the differences between the cohabitants and the marrieds are even more distinct in that homeowners are very much underrepresented among the cohabitants (19.0 percent are --about two-thirds less than the average rate of 59.0 percent for Salem and Marblehead), and the U.S. marrieds are exactly at the average level (59.0 percent). However, as far as ownership is concerned, in both countries, the majority --60.0 and 67.0 percent of the Dutch and U.S. cohabitants-- are co-owners. In contrast, a minority of the cohabitants who rent do so jointly in both co-signing a lease: respectively 38.0 and 40.0 percent. It appears, when examining the combined figures for owners and tenants that, in both countries, about 55.0 percent of the cohabitants have not made joint tenure arrangements, which leaves those who are neither co-owners nor co-leasers either at the mercy of their partner if faced with separation, or places a high premium on mutual trust and moral judgement. Few cohabitants do maintain a separate living facility (respectively 2.0 and 9.4 percent in the Netherlands and in the United States),

but all couples spend at least five nights together, with the exception of one U.S. male cohabitant who, because of his work, spends three nights a week away from home.

Summarizing these results regarding housing and/or tenure, it appears in both countries that cohabitants predominantly rent their homes and, in the United States, cohabitants show a disproportionately small percentage of homeowners among them. This may suggest a lesser degree of involvement or commitment among U.S. cohabitants.

Finances In comparing the samples of cohabitants by the manner in which they keep their finances --separate or joint--, again the U.S. couples distinguish themselves as the least "together" in this respect: almost half (47.0 percent) answer that they have completely separate finances compared to only 6.0 percent of the Dutch. And, by comparison, in both countries, very few of the married couples (3.0 percent of the Dutch and 1.6 percent of the U.S.) handle their finances this way. Also notice that the Dutch marrieds, in comparison with all others, are the most "together" in this respect: 86.0 percent say they keep their finances completely jointly.

These reports on financial arrangements do correspond with attitudinal statements concerning couple finances. As well, U.S. and Dutch cohabitants are significantly more in agreement (78.1 and 60.0 percent) with the idea that "it is all right for a couple to keep their finances separate" (although they don't necessarily do so themselves as was shown above). The U.S. cohabitants, as to be expected from their own approach to financial "togetherness", are, in comparison with the Dutch, the most in agreement with: "I do not feel comfortable spending the money earned by my cohabitant" (58.1 percent and 19.0 percent). Nearly similar patterns emerge when asked about joint savings, checking and insurance policies: the U.S. cohabitants, again, are the least "together" on these issues. Only the cohabitants were asked whether they purchased cars or other household items together. The U.S. cohabitants do so less often. For example, relatively few (20.3 percent compared to 45.0 percent of the Dutch cohabitants) have purchased a car together. This might be

related to a higher incidence of U.S. cohabitants owning cars independently. This information however was not gathered.

Legal arrangements Another question asks to what extent cohabitants make their own informal or legally binding arrangements in case they have to confront the ending of their relationship. It appears that with the exception of "ownership of home", very few cohabitants have made any kind of legal arrangements whatsoever. Regarding homeownership, 70.0 percent of the Dutch compared to 50.0 percent of the U.S. cohabiting homeowners do have some kind of legal arrangement on how to divide owned property in case of separation or death. A legally made "will" or "couple-contract" is, at best, an infrequent phenomenon among these couples. A few say they have discussed these matters but, in the main, few informal understandings exist either. Only the division of household items is proportionately more often discussed or achieved on an informal level (57.0 percent of the Dutch and 46.0 percent of the U.S. cohabitants). Overall, the tendency for U.S. cohabitants to be less involved or to show fewer signs of outward "togetherness" seems to be reinforced by these figures. Consistently, the U.S. couples have discussed these matters less than the Dutch, with one exception: child support and child custody. This is not surprising, since more U.S. couples have children living with them from previous marriages. Based on these figures, it seems reasonable to conclude that cohabitants in both countries largely exist in a legal and contractual vacuum, which, on the one hand, may suggest a higher level of mutual trust, or, on the other, a marked tendency to avoid binding responsibility. No questions were asked about respondent knowledge of legal provisions available to them. However, whether they know or do not know of the laws that do regulate their relationships, very few have taken steps in that direction.

Knowledge, approval others Finally, Table 3 reveals whether cohabitants think others know or approve of their relationship. They definitely do not consider their relationship to be clandestine. Only 1.6 percent of the U.S. cohabitants think that no one, or hardly anyone, knows of their

lifestyle. Of the Dutch cohabitants, not one felt this way. Parents are still seen as the least approving of dyadic cohabitation. Not surprisingly, respondents report parents as having the lowest approval rates (see Table 3). Also, more U.S. respondents report that relatives do not give complete approval compared to the Dutch (53.0 and 72.0 percent). Similarly, U.S. neighbors are less approving (57.0 percent compared to 71.0 percent). Therefore, it appears that U.S. parents, relatives and neighbors of cohabitants have more reservations about cohabitation than their Dutch counterparts. Nevertheless, in both countries complete disapproval has become a minority point of view.

Conclusion

There seems to emerge from these various figures a coherent pattern of differences between the Dutch and the U.S. cohabitants. U.S. cohabitants resemble least a portrait of outward "couple-togetherness". U.S. cohabitants have been coupled less long. They have had more couple relationship experiences, both married and unmarried. They keep their finances more often separate. And, they have made fewer provisions for separation and are subjected more often to disapproval.

When one compares cohabitants with the marrieds, other consistencies surface which correspond with the patterns just outlined above. In both countries, the cohabitants portray outwardly less togetherness, greater previous couple relationships, fewer incidences of joint financing. These initial observations might correspond with other criteria measuring the extent to which respondents portray the couple "image". The next two sections will deal more directly with inward togetherness, or the subjective issue of couple "image". Sections 5 and 6 of this chapter will study the question of commitment, marriage and parenting.

5. DYADIC COMMITMENT OF COHABITANTS IN COMPARISON WITH MARRIEDS

Some differences in commitment, already tentatively brought up and associated with outward signs of couple "togetherness", will be further examined in this section. Dyadic commitment has

been one of the topics frequently studied in cohabitation research with inconclusive results. As was outlined in Section 2.3, Chapter 3, this study conceives of commitment as the personal commitment dyadic partners have to each other. It will also study the question of commitment along with the question of marriage (why marry--why not?), and under what kind of circumstances dyadic partners consider ending their relationship. To avoid an oversaturation with factual details, or to end up not seeing the forest for the trees, Table 4 includes only the more important parameters of dyadic commitment, or functions as a guide through the thick of the human relational forest.

Wish for permanent relationship The first entry in Table 4 presents the recollections of the cohabitants of the time they first moved in together. At that time, many of both the Dutch and the U.S. cohabitants wanted their relationship to become a permanent one (respectively 61.0 and 50.0 percent), and only one Dutch cohabitant (none of the U.S.) moved in with the idea of a temporary arrangement. Somewhat larger differences exist between the proportions who were unsure about it (respectively 16.0 and 31.2 percent). Thus, the U.S. cohabitants tended to be more unsure about their relationships at that time. Now, on the average of three years later, they are still, in comparison with the Dutch cohabitants and their U.S. married counterparts, less sure about how permanent their relationship might turn out to be --about 25.0 percent is unsure where only 10.0 percent of the U.S. marrieds have any doubts. Of the Dutch cohabitants and the marrieds, very few (14.0 percent) express uncertainty about the future of their relationship. This finding reinforces the earlier conclusion, that the U.S. cohabitants show the least the signs of couple "togetherness".

Dyadic commitment Commitment is high among coupled partners in all four samples: of the Dutch and the U.S. cohabitants and marrieds, respectively 65.1, 90.6, 85.1 and 96.5 percent give a "very strongly" or "completely" committed answer. It also should be noticed, that in both countries, the cohabitants are relatively less committed than the marrieds

(both are significant differences at levels $<.01$). When the two types of couples are asked to indicate on a scale from 1 through 10, how much chance they think there is to succeed in staying together, the mean scale scores for the four samples are again high (respectively 8.75, 9.23, 8.95 and 9.21). These high scores could be expected, since these statistics are based on the answers of those who expressed a wish for permanence only. Thus, the majority of the respondents give their goal of dyadic permanence a likely chance to succeed; although the cohabitants (which corresponds with their lesser personal commitment) are, in comparison with the marrieds, relatively less certain.

Dyadic happiness All respondents are above average in happiness with their relationship. Of the Dutch and U.S. cohabitants and marrieds respectively 50.5, 70.0, 47.6 and 68.7 percent say that they are "decidedly" or "extraordinarily" happy. And, the cohabitants are, in correspondence with their relatively lower levels of commitment and hopes for a permanent relationship, slightly less happy (differences at levels of $<.01$ and $.01$).

Dyadic termination Likewise, the majority of all respondents seldom, or never, thinks seriously about leaving their partners (respectively 62.0, 87.0, 57.8, and 81.2 percent). But, again in both countries, the cohabitants think relatively more often about separation than the marrieds (both significant at levels of $<.001$ and $<.01$).

When asked about specific circumstances under which they might decide to leave their partners, both countries highlighted a lack of trust, sexual incompatibility, and differences in dominance between dyadic partners. The cohabitants in comparison with the marrieds are less committed to stay (all significant differences). In contrast, when it comes to tolerating sexuality with others outside the couple relationship, the cohabitants are significantly (all but one insignificant difference) more tolerant or are more likely to stay. When considering dating others no significant differences exist between the two types of couples. A minority of the two types of Dutch respondents would then leave. In contrast, a majority of the two types

of U.S. respondents would.

Besides reviewing the differences between cohabitants and marrieds something should be said about each of the circumstances separately, and which ones of those circumstances will most likely lead to termination.

Trust Lack of trust or loss of trust is the one item that stands out. In both countries, lack of trust (especially among the cohabitants) is the number one reason to leave (respectively 71.0 and 89.0 percent of the Dutch and U.S. cohabitants, compared to respectively 46.0 and 72.0 percent of the marrieds --both significant differences at levels of $<.001$). Thus, Dutch marrieds are the least likely to terminate (less than 50.0 percent).

Sexuality The next circumstance that is linked with a relatively high likelihood of separation is intolerance for sexual relations with others (50.0 percent or more of all but one sample, namely the Dutch cohabitants of which 41.0 percent think they would terminate the relationship if this were to occur to them). Also, it appears that both cohabiting and married respondents are more intolerant of their partners in this respect than of themselves; more say they would leave because of their partner's sexual liaisons than because of their own. However, sexual incompatibility between partners is much less a reason to leave. In this respect, the U.S. cohabitants distinguish themselves: just over half (52.0 percent) think they will leave, while of all others approximately one-fourth feel that sexual incompatibility warrants separation.

Dating Extra-relational dating is another problematic, at least for the majority of the U.S. respondents, with no significant difference between the two groups. Of the Dutch respondents, fewer (about 40.0 percent) feel this way, but neither are there in this country any significant differences between cohabitants and marrieds.

Dominance Dominance of the partner is of greater concern to the U.S. cohabitants (64.0 percent say they might leave). This is a significantly higher percentage than it is for

Dutch cohabitants (43.0 percent). The Dutch marrieds are the least concerned about partner dominance. The two countries are similar in that dominance within marriage is less likely to end the relationship ($p \leq .001$).

Dependency Dyadic dependency compared to all the other circumstances mentioned, is the least likely reason given to leave. Just under one-fourth of the cohabitants think they would do so, with the marrieds it was even less (9.0 to 14.0 percent) which is significantly less ($p \leq .001$).

Conclusion The above provides great amounts of detail: therefore, it might be helpful to summarize some of these results while trying to keep in mind the overall purpose of this study: to highlight characteristics of cohabitants in comparison with marrieds. Only facts have been reported thus far; the final section (9) of this chapter will interpret further these findings against existing literature. In both countries, the cohabitants definitely want their relationship to be a permanent one, they are very much committed to this goal and feel they are likely to succeed, they are above average in happiness with their relationship and the majority seldom or never thinks seriously about leaving. However, in all these respects, the cohabitants do remain (significantly, for most) behind the marrieds. This latter finding corresponds with the conclusion of the previous section that the cohabitants, in comparison with the marrieds, show less the signs of couple "togetherness". When asked, under what particular circumstances they might leave their partners, in both countries, the cohabitants in comparison with the marrieds are more insisting (thus more likely to leave) upon trust, sexual compatibility, and an egalitarian relationship. In contrast, they are more tolerant of sexual relations with others and thus less likely to leave would this occur. And, as far as dating is concerned, there are no differences between the two types of couples. And lastly, there are some consistent differences between the two countries: the U.S. cohabitants and marrieds are more inclined to leave under each of the circumstances mentioned than their Dutch counterparts with one exception: the Dutch marrieds are slightly

more inclined (very few though) to leave than the U.S. marrieds when there is a problem with "dependency". Also notice: both the married and unmarried Dutch respondents tend to be more tolerant of sexual liaisons with others or of dating others than the U.S. respondents.

6. THE ATTITUDES OF COHABITANTS AND MARRIEDS TOWARDS MARRIAGE

With the past sections of this chapter as background, it is now time to look at the question of marriage. Marriage is, or perhaps more correctly, was often projected as the fulfilment of a romantic dream: two separate individuals finding each other, falling in love, and, after a period of "going steady" or courting, becoming engaged to marry with hopes soon to live happily ever after. It is obvious that the cohabitants of today vary from this traditional approach to dyadic living. Yet, whether cohabitants are more or less romantic than the couples who follow the more traditional pattern, whether they represent a new form of engagement or a trial-phase preceeding marriage, whether cohabitation will constitute a lifelong alternative to marriage, or whether cohabitation is in reality a marriage-like couple relationship, remain unanswered questions repeatedly raised in cohabitation literature.

This study considers the reasons behind and the attitudes towards marriage. The responses to the question why people move in together mainly function as opinions reinforcing an interpretation of the reasons why couples might or might not consider marriage.

Trost (1979) concludes, based on a review of cohabitation literature and on his own research findings for Sweden, that there are mainly two types of moving in together. It is either a gradual process without any real decision or, it occurs at a certain time after the couple has made a more or less evident decision. In this study no questions were asked directly about decisive circumstances but only about the reasons for moving in together, recalled as important at that time. It appears that before actually moving in cohabitants had known each other for an average of $1\frac{1}{2}$ years. This might suggest a gradual process of

increasing closeness. One of the circumstances that might have effected the decision is the matter of housing. Especially in Amersfoort, where affordable housing (mainly rental apartment units) for young singles is at a premium. Procuring a decent dwelling unit could be a major influencing factor behind the decision to live together. No questions were asked however about this particular circumstance.

Reasons for cohabiting Table 5 includes a list of circumstances or reasons for cohabiting. In both countries, couples first choose to cohabit for reasons of companionship and love. Furthermore, cohabitation was seen as a test of the relationship --"to find out if the relationship would work". The latter is significantly more important to the U.S. cohabitants ($p < .01$), which supports the earlier finding that the U.S. cohabitants project less of a couple image. Although the U.S. cohabitants try, or are very much committed to becoming a solid couple (a couple in statu nascendi one could say), they are more uncertain of the outcome. Also, if this trial stage has been completed successfully, then they want to express publicly in marriage the stability of their couple relationship. In comparison, "to find out if the relationship would work" and "to find security and stability through cohabiting", were significantly more important to the U.S. than to the Dutch cohabitants ($p < .05$ or higher). The three reasons that are relatively least important to the cohabitants in both countries (less than 45.0 percent mention these), all have to do with being alone: "to avoid loneliness", "to find belonging", and "to have somebody to grow old with". Therefore, this group of respondents appear not to be overly burdened by such thoughts. Lastly, "finding self-fulfilment" belongs to the least important category; this might in part be caused by the ambiguous nature of the term.

Hence, in both countries, a majority of the cohabitants do recall most of the reasons listed as important to their decision to cohabit. They strongly associate finding companionship and love with cohabitation. Thus cohabitation becomes an expression of and a search for romance and life-companionship. Also, for

almost three-fourths of the U.S. cohabitants, it was definitely considered a trial-phase in the development of the relationship. Reasons such as: "to find emotional security", "stability", "a better homelife", "practical convenience", and "to have sex regularly", were rated as important by 50.0 percent or more of all cohabitants. And, lastly, reasons that are related to aloneness were of lesser concern; only a minority listed those as important.

Reasons for marrying This first impression of what cohabitation symbolizes will be expanded by looking once more at those same reasons in association with attitudes towards marriage. Furthermore, existing intentions toward legal marriage will contribute to solving the puzzle whether or not to marry, whether or not to cohabit.

According to Table 6, the same reasons given for cohabitation when focused on a possible decision to marry have all become less important. None but two are ranked highly anymore: "to express love" remains an important reason to marry for just over 77.0 percent of the U.S. cohabitants. This is not so for a majority of the Dutch (42.0 percent). Likewise, for almost 70.0 percent of the U.S. cohabitants, marriage remains the unquestioned next step when their relationship has proven to be a "good" one, while for the Dutch significantly fewer (not even 25.0 percent) think this is the logical consequence of a good relationship. When other comparisons are made between the Dutch and the U.S. cohabitants, two significant differences between the two samples emerge. First, of the Dutch cohabitants, none of the sixteen reasons listed are ranked important by a large majority. Their responses point to a de-evaluation of marriage as an institution. Only two: "pregnancy or desire to have children" and "more legal securities", are considered by just over 50.0 percent of the Dutch as important. Of all the other reasons listed, only one, "to express love" (42.0 percent), stands out as relatively more important. None other is ranked important by more than one-third. Second, to the U.S. cohabitants marriage remains of more importance, at least more so than to the Dutch. They appear to have more reasons to do so. All but two of the

16 reasons listed are considered more important to the U.S. cohabitants (all significant differences, $p \leq .05$). The two exceptions are "pregnancy....." (similar rankings in both countries), and "more legal securities", which is more important to the Dutch cohabitants, but not significantly more important. For the U.S. cohabitants, the four top ranking items are in descending order of importance: first "to express love" (77.0 percent against 42.0 of the Dutch cohabitants); second, "if the relationship is a good one the next step is marriage" (69.0 percent compared with significantly less so among the Dutch --24.0 percent); third, "pregnancy....." (55.0 percent compared with just about the same for the Dutch --53.0 percent); and fourth, "pressure of my cohabitant" (54.0 percent compared with 36.0 percent for the Dutch).

Based on these figures it appears that for Dutch cohabitants marriage has lost much of its importance. When entered into (a majority will, as will be shown later) they envision marriage predominantly as an act to legitimize their children and to benefit from certain governmental advantages. Cohabitation is already accepted for companionship, love, a home life, security and stability. Dutch cohabitants have demonstrated a great sense of outward togetherness and involvement. Against these kinds of existing certainties marriage (see Table 8: only 12.0 percent say they are against marriage in principle) is regarded as "just a legal formality". Seventy-seven percent agree with this statement which definitely does not symbolize marriage as the "peaceful and secure haven....." (only 6.0 percent would agree with this). Neither do the Dutch think it will offer a "more stable and secure life....." (only 17.0 percent). Marriage is in the interest of children, but is of no real consequence for the existing love-bond. Love is not a primary reason to marry legally, children are.

One should realize that all these answers are attitudes, or verbal responses to a symbolic situation (see Fishbein, 1967). There is no guarantee that the Dutch cohabitants will in fact act this way when confronted more directly with marriage and pregnancy. Their other answers (see Table 8) to questions about

their current intentions toward marriage might shed some light upon this issue. As reported before, a very small proportion (12.0 percent) is against marriage in principle. An additional 40.0 percent indicate that marriage is not that likely, but the idea is not necessarily excluded either. In contrast, for almost 25.0 percent the likelihood of marriage is seen as rather great, and for another one-fourth marriage will occur when having children. Thus, about 50.0 percent consider it likely that they will marry pending, of course, on a lasting relationship.

For a majority of the U.S. cohabitants, marriage is very much the crown upon a successfully completed cohabitation period; it solidifies their love and is linked with a desire for children. Compared to the Dutch, U.S. cohabitants feel more pressured to get married. But notice, that also among the U.S. cohabitants with the exception of "pressure from the partner" (mentioned by 54.0 percent as an important reason to marry), less than one-third mention parental or societal pressures as important reasons.

The openness and sense of freedom that come with a cohabiting relationship might be more of a threat to the U.S. cohabitants than the Dutch, since the former are more uncertain about the relationship with the partner and are less "together" by some outward criteria. Therefore, their sentiments about marriage might be a projection of these more or less ambiguous feelings. For instance, the reasons to cohabit and to marry that deal with finding security and stability are significantly more important to the U.S. cohabitants. Likewise (see Table 7), the idea that marriage will provide a more stable and secure life is much more accepted among the U.S. cohabitants. Although, also among the U.S. cohabitants it remains a minority point of view, 46.0 percent, compared with 17.0 percent of the Dutch cohabitants.

The findings so far confirm some of the trends distinguished in cohabitation literature and discussed before at some length in section 2.3 of Chapter 3. It seems likely that most cohabitants of both samples, if they stay together, will eventually marry. They will do so for different reasons. And corresponding-

ly, marriage as an institution has taken on a different symbolic meaning. The Dutch cohabitants fit the descriptions made by Trost (1979), Roussel (1978), and Straver *et al.* (1979), in that, they do not exclude the idea of marriage, but..... they do not consider it of much importance..... it is practical in case of children (Straver *et al.*, 1979); it is an opportunistic act..... or only an administrative formality..... (Roussel, 1978); and they seem already very much "marriage-like" in their couple togetherness, and cohabitation almost always eventually leads to marriage (Trost, 1979). The U.S. cohabitants fit these kinds of portrayals less and correspond more with Macklin's (1980) findings for the United States: cohabitation functions as a trial-phase in dyadic relationships.

After describing the differences between the two samples of cohabitants, it might be a good idea to return to the purpose of the study which is to bring out the distinctive characteristics of cohabitants in comparison with the marrieds. Table 6 includes these comparisons, and in general the responses to the sixteen reasons listed for marrying when recalled by the marrieds --that is when they look back at the time when they decided to marry. Here cohabitants and marrieds exhibit an obvious difference. Regarding the decision to marry, cohabitants project forward in time while marrieds must recall an earlier state of mind. But, nevertheless, the answers do provide some indication of the differences existing between the two types of couples in both countries when asked about marriage. In both countries, pregnancy and the pressure of the partner are more important considerations for the cohabitants than they were for the marrieds. This corresponds with the earlier finding that for a majority of the cohabitants marriage is very much seen as in the interest of children. One does not want to take risks when it comes to children living in societies where up to 95.0 percent of the population is married at least once by age 40. Marriage is not exactly a disappearing social phenomenon. Partner pressure is especially a consideration for U.S. cohabitants, significantly more so than by any of the other sampled groups, and might be related to a greater sense of insecurity

and to a lesser sense of togetherness. This apparent lack of security is supported by answers to five other questions that all have to do with finding less a sense of pressure when married. The following reasons to marry are all considered relatively more important ($p \leq .05$) to the U.S. cohabitants than they are to their married counterparts. They are: "to find more stability", "more emotional security", "more self-fulfilment", "pressure from the partner", and "to express commitment with a public ceremony". In general, where for the U.S. cohabitants love is the important reason to marry (77.0 percent), only half of the now married recall this to be the case. For cohabitants marriage is "a logical next step when the relationship has proven to be a good one" (69.0 percent compared with only 42.0 percent of the married). More U.S. cohabitants hope to find "more stability" and "more emotional security" in marriage (about 45.0 percent for both compared with respectively 24.0 and 36.0 percent of the U.S. marrieds). It might be that the married are more realistic about these hopes and dreams which appear much more important to the cohabiting couples who can only see marriage ahead of them. For the married it is not so much love anymore that they remember as being important at that time, but "practical conveniences" (92.0 percent), "a home life" (61.0 percent), or "somebody to grow old with" (58.0 percent).

A similar comparative analysis of the two types of Dutch couples reveals quite a different portrait. As was shown before, the Dutch cohabitants in comparison with the U.S. cohabitants stand out as very much diminishing the importance of marriage, while the Dutch marrieds react just the opposite. Therefore, the differences between the two types of Dutch couples are more startling than those found between the couples in the United States. The Dutch cohabitants in comparison with their married counterparts consistently consider, with the exception of "pregnancy....." and "more legal securities", all reasons listed as less important. Therefore, in comparison with all other respondent groups, the Dutch cohabitants do have the least outspoken reasons to marry. Only two of the sixteen reasons listed

are ranked important by a majority.

In both countries, the most extreme differences between the two types of couples are found in their perceptions of whether or not marriage provides more stability and security, or is a secure haven where husband and wife can find peace together. Significantly more marrieds believe this to be true in comparison with the expectations of the cohabitants. The Dutch cohabitants are most at odds with anybody else on those issues. The U.S. cohabitants, as to be expected from the discussions so far, have higher hopes in this respect, but never express the same level of belief as the marrieds do. Only a small percentage of each respondent group, after having been married on an average of 3 to 4 years, find it important to marry with a religious ceremony, and marrieds significantly more so than the cohabitants (almost 40.0 percent compared with 21.0 percent). This obviously reflects a rather low religious involvement in most of the respondents. The idea that marriage is just a legal formality finds more support among the cohabitants than the marrieds. In the Netherlands significantly more so: 77.0 percent of the Dutch cohabitants versus 53.0 percent of the marrieds. In the United States these approval rates are less for both types of couples (45.0 to 50.0 percent). The majority (69.0 percent or more) of each of the respondent groups do not consider cohabitation morally wrong: "it is all right to live together indefinitely without getting married" (see Table 7), but, "to have children without getting married" is met with considerably less approval, especially among the currently married (see Table 9).

This section has presented a great deal of detail and statistical facts about marital attitudes of cohabitants in comparison with married couples. Therefore, to provide the reader with some final thoughts on this matter, the results will be summarized according to certain trends distinguished in cohabitation research.

<i>Marriage</i>	According to Trost (1979), why cohabitants marry or
<i>projecting</i>	do not marry is a difficult question to answer,
<i>security and</i>	since many cohabitants do not seem to have clear

stability and considered an institution to raise children responses in their own minds to the question in the first place. He more or less opines: "..... de facto, most of what we do as social beings is dependent upon lack of decision --at least lack of superior and long range decisions". Despite the ambiguity of the answers of the Swedish respondents, Trost comes to the conclusion that their answers indicate tradition and security still play a role, perhaps an unconscious one. The findings of this study seem to support these observations for Sweden in that marital security and stability are issues on which cohabitants and marrieds are most at odds with one another. The marrieds after an average of three to four years of marriage are much more convinced that marriage provides stability and is a secure "haven"; the differences are most distinct between the Dutch cohabitants and marrieds, since the U.S. cohabitants are more similar to their married counterparts in this respect.

The results of discriminant analyses carried out to discriminate maximally between the Dutch cohabiting and married couples, and between the two types of U.S. couples, support the differences discussed so far. Results of a discriminant analysis applied to the Dutch samples show that out of 63 questions on which the couples (cohabiting and married) differ significantly, two questions emerge as the top ranking discriminators. Both questions are opinions about marriage: "marriage provides stability and security....." and "marriage is a secure haven". In other words, answers to those two questions are the best predictors (with 75.0 percent certainty) of whether a respondent is cohabiting or is married. The same analysis applied to the U.S. respondents, singles out three questions, which are all reasons why one might get married: "for practical convenience", "pregnancy.....", and "to find a sense of belonging". Depending upon their responses to these reasons, marriage or cohabitation can be predicted to the 89 percentile.

Cohabitation as a trial-phase preced- This definitely is correct for the U.S. cohabitants but less so for the Dutch. However, considering the facts that few Dutch cohabitants exclude

ing marriage the idea of marriage completely, that few give birth to children without a legal certificate, that non-marital relationships have demonstrated marked "togetherness", and that the majority will sometime marry, makes Dutch cohabitation in retrospect appear like a trial-phase also.

Marriage-like cohabitation Marriage-like cohabitation is more definitive of the Dutch due to their demonstrated sense of togetherness, both outwardly and inwardly. U.S. cohabitants have not yet achieved that togetherness and stability they routinely project onto marriage. They are more in a state of becoming a couple. Once they feel they have satisfactorily proven to themselves that their relationship is a good and stable one, then only is marriage considered the viable next stage.

Cohabitation as an alternative to marriage This has not proven true for cohabitants in either country. Very few reject marriage completely, or do not ever want to be married. They are more liberal and more tolerant than the marrieds are (see Table 9) in their attitudes about what couples ought and ought not to do. It might be an expression of a greater acceptance of the conduct of others, but is not necessarily a predictor of the way they behave themselves. Some opinion statements that might indicate the extent to which the cohabitants are living alternatively from the marrieds deal with "attitudes toward children" and "attitudes toward sexuality". Besides their attitudinal responses, which measure more their tolerance toward other couples, reports about their own behavior are available for comparisons. Table 9 includes the various responses to these kinds of questions. A majority of all cohabitants, though to a greater extent the Dutch, are very accepting of couples who want to have children without marrying or of couples who want to live in sexually open couple relationships. This does not mean that they opt for such a lifestyle themselves. What is all right for others is definitely not right for them. Only 12.0 percent of the Dutch and 5.0 percent of the U.S. cohabitants would consider having a child while continuing to cohabit. It is interesting to note also that a minority (respectively 24.0 and 16.0 percent)

have dated since cohabiting. This is a significantly higher percentage than the 3.0 percent among the marrieds. One should take care to notice the discrepancies between the answers of the respondents themselves about dating others and the reports of their partners about them. Respondents date more often than their partners believe they do, which means, of course, that dating others remains a controversial issue. Lastly, only 24.0 percent of the Dutch cohabitants see themselves as becoming "romantically" involved with more than one, while 42.0 percent of the U.S. cohabitants see this as a possibility. The difference in response between the two countries might be associated with the lesser degree of "togetherness" among U.S. cohabitants. Similar differences come out when interpreting other positions taken by the Dutch and U.S. cohabitants. For instance, parental responsibilities are very much avoided by the U.S. cohabitants. If they would become pregnant "now", less than 20.0 percent would have the baby. Of the remainder more than half would abort; the other half is unsure about what they would do. Likewise, less than 20.0 percent are planning for children in the future, and half remain unsure. The Dutch cohabitants are quite different in this respect, almost the opposite: twice as many would have the child if pregnant, and more than twice the percentage of the U.S. cohabitants are planning on having children in the future. Since, in the Netherlands, the decision to transform cohabitation into marriage is very much linked with the decision to have children, one might expect the cohabiting couples who do not desire to have future children also to be less inclined to contemplate future marriage. This hypothesis appears to be confirmed by the following comparison statistics: only one cohabitant who answers not wanting to have children responds to Question 23 (see Appendix A) with: "made definite plans to marry". All others who do not want children, do not see marriage as that likely: "may marry someday, but marriage is not necessary for future happiness" (30.0 percent), or, "do not want to consider marriage at this point", or, "are against marriage in principle" (66.0 percent). In contrast, of those who say yes to wanting children, the reverse is true: only one-third see mar-

riage as unlikely, while 68.0 percent have either definite plans to marry or think it likely. Although in the U.S. the desire for children is considered less of a top ranking reason to marry, one might expect similar trends, but perhaps less significantly evident. Considering the sample size, only the absolute figures are given: of the U.S. cohabitants who answer yes to wanting children (N = 12), only one thinks marriage to be rather unlikely, while of those who answer no (N = 20) fourteen think so.

In conclusion, these findings show the cohabitants as not really challenging the taboos of illegitimacy and sexual non-exclusiveness. Though, in comparison with the marrieds, they tend to be more liberal in their attitudes about these issues and are also significantly more often willing to break those taboos. However, it remains a minority point of view. In most of their actions and in the images they portray to the outside world, cohabitants are very much marriage-like and couple oriented. But, as was described earlier, they differ distinctly in what marriage symbolizes and in the meaning attributed to it. And "children" remain for many the crucial consideration when contemplating marriage.

7. BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN COHABITING AND MARRIED PARTNERS

When individuals establish a dyadic relationship a so-called bargaining process is set into motion. One invests in a relationship and expects to receive something in return (see Section 2.3 of Chapter 3). Each individual will search for a sense of reciprocity or a balance between mutual giving and taking. Or, more paradoxically, to enter a dyad with hopes for mutual self-fulfilment ends at the same time the autonomy of the self. Which is to say that self-fulfilment is gained at the price of self-surrender. Dyadic partners place themselves along a power continuum which can vary between the extreme positions of either controlling the actions of an other, or being controlled by an other. Instead of choosing between the extremes of self-autonomy on one side and self-surrender on the other, most dyads search for a sense of balance more associated with a cen-

ter position. In other words, the loss of the autonomous self is counterbalanced by the gain of self-fulfilment through interdependence. The implicit paradox underlying the couple relationship and one of the basic themes of this study --self-autonomy vs. self-surrender-- will be addressed both in this section and in the next. First, attitudinal measures that reflect feelings of power or powerlessness resulting from dyadic experiences are analyzed: "I have to do more than my fair share", "Am I getting as much out of this relationship as I am putting into it?", "I feel restricted, trapped, too involved in my relationship", "I usually give in when arguments arise". In addition, feelings of high or low self-esteem, alienation, and anomie will also be examined.

The first three statements listed in Table 10 all deal with feelings of being restricted, trapped, or too involved. Clearly, the pair-bonded relationship is not experienced as this kind of imprisonment. There is a high degree of consensus among all respondents. Within each respondent group, at most one-third, usually less, agree with any of the three statements. However, there are significant differences between the cohabitants and the marrieds: consistently and significantly the cohabitants feel relatively more restricted than their counterparts. The majority of all cohabitants and marrieds do feel a sense of reciprocity in their relationships: they do not feel exploited, for instance, by having to do more than their "fair share", nor do they feel that they have to "compete" with their partners all the time. Arguments are usually resolved by "mutual give and take". And, a clear majority are not bothered by thoughts like: "Am I getting as much out of this relationship as I am putting into it?".

From the answers to specific questions asked to measure alienation, the conclusion can be drawn that neither a sense of powerlessness nor a sense of social isolation (both are dimensions of the construct alienation) prevail among a majority of the cohabitants or the marrieds. In other words, both types of couples score below average in alienation: although cohabitants tend to score slightly higher than marrieds. Correspondingly,

when answering a series of questions measuring anomie and self-esteem, all appear to be just about average in positive feelings towards self.

In conclusion, it appears that a majority of both cohabitants and marrieds have, with some success, managed to achieve an intra-dyadic balance of power: they feel sufficiently free, have a sense of mutual give and take, and feel generally good about themselves and the world. However, the cohabitants present a slightly less degree of contentment.

These findings will be further interpreted in the light of prior findings of significant differences in commitment between the two types of couples. The conclusions of Macklin (1972), Askham (1976), Bernard (1972), and Weeda (1978) all point to the fact that the implicit tension that results from simultaneous striving for personal freedom and mutual partnership brings out the crucial issue that has to be resolved in the couple relationship. Based on the findings of this study, it might be that the price cohabitants pay for "outward" freedom (and they insist on this), in combination with relatively lower levels of commitment, is a lack of freedom from within. Uncertainties about the relationship with the partner might run parallel to uncertainties about the autonomous self: they do feel more restricted by their partner, while they also feel more frequently a sense of social isolation ("sometimes I feel all alone in the world"). This supposition seems supported by the fact that the U.S. cohabitants, who are the more uncertain about their partner relationship, tend to express themselves consistently more negatively: U.S. cohabitants feel more restricted by and too involved with their partners. They score relatively higher in alienation and anomie and lower in self-esteem, at times significantly more so.

In the next section, this same theme will be examined more extensively by focusing on the dual need for individuation and identification (degree of individuation), or considering the contradictions that might generate from a simultaneous search for both autonomy and belonging by "coupled" partners.

8. DEGREE OF INDIVIDUATION OF COHABITANTS IN COMPARISON WITH MARRIEDS

The idea of balance between opposites was utilized in the previous section to address the question of power in dyadic relationships. The same theme will be brought up again to analyze the major theoretical notion constructed for this study: "Degree of Individuation". Much has been said already about this concept. It was introduced at length in the second chapter, and described as the act of balancing the need for individuation or personal separateness with the need for identification or dyadic association. Also, various individuation dualities were summarized in Chart 3 (p. 22), and Appendix B contains the list of hypotheses associated with these dualities. And, finally, the three conceptual dimensions that together constitute the theoretical construct individuation, and the method by which a 7-item individuation scale was developed, were discussed in Sections 2.4 and 5 of Chapter 3 respectively.

Table 11 includes all the questions or statements used to measure the degree of individuation. The answers to each of the items listed will be examined; the three conceptual dimensions will give a clear direction to the analysis. Also, the mean individuation scale scores will be compared based on the answers to the seven items that were selected as the final set of questions measuring individuation. A sum-score of the answers becomes each respondent's degree of individuation. If one considers degree of individuation as a continuum ranging between not at all individuated to highly individuated, then, it is obvious from the results in Table 11 that few of the respondents participated in pair-bonds characterized by either polar extreme: dyads consisting of completely independent partners or dyads consisting of partners completely identifying with one another. One might say that the majority of the respondents gravitate slightly towards the left of the center of the individuation continuum which is characterized by dual commitment, perhaps experienced less paradoxically as described so far and more as an expression of compromise. They cherish the value of personal autonomy but want to lose it at the same time by

being pulled towards ideals of permanency and complete pair-bonded togetherness: "..... it is one of the most important things in my life do things together as much as possible". Where temporary separateness from the partner is experienced without conflict and is an expression of personal freedom, the thought of non-permanent togetherness is met with considerable panic. This indicates dyadic emotional dependency. In other words, couple togetherness emotionally frees and bonds the individual. One cannot exist without the other. They want both: self-fulfilment through independence and self-surrender through togetherness.

The conclusions so far are equally true for all "coupled" respondents. A more detailed examination of the outcomes does show some significant differences in orientation between the two types of respondents. The differences neither lie in their insistence upon personal autonomy nor in their acceptance of temporary separateness from the partner along with the need for permanent togetherness, but in their ideas about what the couple relationship with the partner ideally should encompass.

Consistently, the marrieds idealize and emphasize couple togetherness more than cohabitants; eight out of the twelve possible comparisons listed under dimension II (dyadic idealization) show significant differences. This does not mean that the cohabitants are that dramatically more individuated or uninvolved with dyadic idealism at all. For example, they are almost equally extreme in agreeing with the idea that living with the partner is one of the most important things in life. But they tend to moderate their views on all other opinions listed concerning couple closeness more than do the marrieds.

The differences are most distinct (and all significant), in that cohabitants idealize the partner less as the one and only, the one who means everything, who brings completion and satisfaction as can never be experienced with anybody else. Besides, the thought of living without the partner causes significantly less "panic" among the cohabitants. Thus, although both types of couples are very much partner oriented, the cohabitants tend to be less dependent on their current partners. For them, their

present couple relationship weighs less heavy as the determinant of future happiness and self-fulfilment; it leaves them more freedom to contemplate life without the current partner, or more freedom to exist as an independent self. They are less convinced that the current partner fulfils that exclusive a role that makes him or her irreplaceable. In other words, in this respect they are more independent from their partners and more individuated. This conclusion is supported by the finding that in both countries the cohabiting couples score significantly higher on the individuation scale (which measures dyadic idealization) than do the marrieds.

In conclusion, the dual wish for separateness and belonging is equally strong for both types of couples; they very much need a sense of togetherness to be able to express their sense of individuality. The WE is necessary to function as an I, and vice versa. Their world takes on meaning because of the existence of their dyadic bond. And only in this latter respect do the cohabitants demonstrate a lesser dependency on their current partners. Nevertheless, also for them, the couple takes on a central position in their relational universe.

In the next chapter, the differences in degree of individuation between cohabitants and marrieds are further explored by utilizing regression-analytical techniques. Finding the best predictors of the differences in degree of individuation (or degree of dyadic idealization) between cohabitants and marrieds, and the magnitudes of the correlations of various independent variables, ought to cast some light upon the endless variety of couple relationships and dyadic functioning.

The next section will summarize and interpret the descriptive outcomes presented so far against the existing cohabitation literature and the hypotheses formulated for this study. A final descriptive review of cohabitants and marrieds will conclude this chapter.

9. SUMMARY

As indicated earlier, a descriptive analysis of cohabitants in comparison with marrieds against existing literature and

hypotheses, can be carried out systematically by utilizing several conceptual elements (position, structure, function, and psychological climate) derived from the structural-functional systemic model. With this model as a guide, the great many descriptive facts about cohabitants presented in the previous sections can be summarized accordingly, and an attempt to contribute to greater understanding of the phenomenon "cohabitation" can also be made. To make this summary more readable, each specific hypothesis is not always mentioned, including confirmations and rejections. At times, general conclusions suffice to avoid a repeat of specifics mentioned in the previous sections. Appendix B includes the total list of hypotheses.

Position It appears, that cohabitants in comparison with marrieds, have become more independent from the historically confining boundaries of the extended family and the church: they visit their parents significantly less and they are significantly less involved religiously. This might indicate that the so-called process of individuation has progressed further among the cohabitants, and that they are able to express more of a sense of selfhood and greater individual freedom from the patterns imposed by society upon the conduct of individuals. Based on a review of their other attitudinal responses and their own actions, cohabitants emerge as significantly more liberal in their attitudes toward sexuality. Also, politically, they appear to be more progressive. Nevertheless, it remains a small minority who dares to break the rules, or to challenge the taboos of sexual non-exclusiveness, or to bring illegitimate children into the world. They might have the potential to develop relationships that are more an alternative to the married kind rather than just a variation of the same. But, for now, they definitely cannot be seen as the harbingers of non-traditional and innovative intimate lifestyles to come.

So far, this chapter has shown that cohabitants differ from marrieds on many specific measurements, but to portray them as

societal non-conformists in general would be to misrepresent them. Most cohabitants will eventually reach out for the confinements and legal boundaries set by the legal marriage contract. While cohabitation might remain a private arrangement as long as the partners test the strength of their intimate dyad or remain a two-some, it is transformed most likely into a publicly sanctioned unit, when expanded with children, or when the test results are promising enough to move toward greater stability and security associated with marriage. The first reason is crucial for the Dutch cohabitants in deciding to marry, while the second is more true for the American. (Hypotheses I-1 through 3, II-12, 25 through 27, are confirmed.)

Structure/ Some social-economic characteristics and dyadic
function histories indicate that the samples consist of relatively young respondents (their average age is 28 years); they are well educated and well employed and have established a more or less permanent relationship. On the average, cohabitants have known each other for about $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ years, of which the last 3 to 4 years are spent living together. The endurance of the relationship so far has given partners the opportunity to think about commitments and also to contemplate future plans. They are beyond the initial trial-and-error period which, for the large majority of the cohabitants, is their first and only experience with living together as a couple. About three-fourths have neither been married nor have they been living together with someone prior to their current encounter. Nevertheless, they are more "experienced" than the marrieds who, by comparison, show only a small fraction that ever cohabited or married before (see Hypothesis II-2).

The decision to cohabit was not an instantaneous one. On the average, they waited a little more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ years. And when they moved in together, it was for reasons of romance (love) and life companionship. For a majority, it was also seen as a test of whether or not these goals could be reached with their chosen partner. Likewise, the marrieds did not make the decision to marry in haste either. They waited an average of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, thus about 2 years longer. This significant difference in time

confirms Hypothesis II-1: marrieds know each other longer before they decide to marry than cohabitants before they decide to cohabit. In reference to Reiss' (1960) theory about dyadic progression, one could ask: What is it that might put a spoke in the "wheel of love", or, what will be a hindrance in reaching the final stage of achieving maximum couple togetherness or "dyadic crystallization" (Lewin, 1979). This kind of reasoning, once more, addresses the basic study theme: degree of individuation, or to what extent dyadic partners überhaupt want "to conjoin their two separate identities" as Berger and Kellner (1964) worded it, or to what extent they prefer individual separateness in their couple togetherness. The latter might express a certain ambiguity or uncertainty toward the couple image and a preference for less confining and distinct dyadic boundaries.

Based on some outward signs of couple togetherness or involvement (questions were asked about financial engagements, housing and other joint purchases, and various matters discussed or contracted for as a two-some), the cohabitants in comparison with their married counterparts go consistently and significantly more their separate ways. They appear to keep a greater sense of individuality in the management of financial affairs; and, in their attitudes toward couple finances, they express corresponding sentiments. In comparison with the marrieds, they are significantly more comfortable with the idea that couples can keep their finances separate, and significantly less comfortable with spending the money earned by their partner. (These findings confirm Hypotheses II-3 through 6.) After measuring outward (mainly economic) togetherness, another approach that might cast some light upon the same problem could be called their subjectively perceived (inward) togetherness, i.e., their subjective evaluation of the quality of their relationship. Three dimensions were chosen as measurements: "dyadic commitment/permanence", "dyadic happiness", and "dyadic balance of power". The answers to a series of questions show that on all three dimensions the cohabitants remain relatively (but significantly) behind the marrieds: they are less committed, they are more unsure whether the rela-

tionship will last or not, they think more often about leaving, they are less happy.

These outcomes correspond with most cohabitation literature findings: marriage, in general, is associated with greater commitment and responsibility (Macklin, 1980; Trost, 1979), and confirm Hypotheses II-9 through 11, 17 through 19. Hypothesis II-7 is rejected: cohabitants are relatively less happy.

It should be emphasized that these are relative differences --although, their scores are lower, the cohabitants still rank above average by all those qualitative measures. One can say, they are less extreme in their positive evaluations. This might point to a more critical attitude of cohabitants toward what the relationship really means to them, or a greater willingness to evaluate critically the outcomes of the dual wish for personal autonomy and couple togetherness. For marrieds, to question or to weigh their equally strong need for personal autonomy against their greater idealism of what the relationship with the partner ought to mean, i.e., complete reciprocal fulfilment and satisfaction, might be more of a threat and therefore may not surface in their responses. As might be expected, there is more admitted tension within the cohabiting partnerships which confirms the findings of Macklin (1972), Askham (1976), Bernard (1972), Simons (1978), Weeda (1978, 1982) that striving simultaneously for a sense of personal freedom and commitment might run parallel with more insecurity or conflict between unmarried partners. The price paid by cohabitants for outward freedom (at least from legal constraints, financial dependence, insistence upon personal space and autonomy, and the onset of sexually open relationships) is, for some, a lack of freedom from within. Again, these are minority points of view; one should not conclude that cohabitants are caught in a crisis situation in which they feel they end up with the greater shortcomings. There merely exists more of a struggle between cohabiting dyadic partners. On the one hand, they are very positive about the relationship, they feel a sense of mutual give and take and definitely do not feel exploited as some early cohabitation literature suggested

(Johnson, 1968; Whitehurst, 1969), they feel in general good about themselves (just above average levels of self-esteem) and good about the world (about average levels of alienation and anomie). On the other hand, consistently, they remain behind the marrieds in most of those respects, i.e., they are relatively less positive as a group. In other words, cohabitants can definitely not be characterized as mal-functioning in their relationships, only less so in comparison with their married counterparts. And even then it is debateable whether their "autonomy" is a disadvantage. It is likely to constitute both a plus and a minus in human relational terms. A similar though opposite price is paid by marrieds. Their gain in togetherness is matched by a more discernible loss in personal freedom. (Hypotheses II-29 and 30 are confirmed and Hypotheses II-13 through 16, 20, 28 are rejected.)

Against this scenario of greater freedom and lesser security for cohabitants, it is not surprising that mutual trust is their top-ranking condition. It is for them the most indispensable ingredient to continue the relationship. They very much agree with the notion that, if there is no trust in a relationship, then this is the most definite sign to leave. Lacking a legal (marital) document that contracts commitment, mutual trust is the binding principle. Lack of security does undermine mutual trust. Uncertainty about the partner's intentions and commitment does jeopardize perceptions of reciprocity in the relationship. It creates a sense of powerlessness, greater dependence on the partner, and a fear of partner dominance. Although, these latter observations are not conclusively proven by the data, there are findings that definitely point in this direction. For instance, the U.S. cohabitants who appear to be least secure about the permanency of their relationship and the least "together" according to some objective criteria, do value trust more so than all others as a positive indicator to continue the relationship. Likewise, they do also consider partner dominance significantly more of a reason to end the relationship.

For the marrieds the number one ranking reason for leaving

their partners is sexual infidelity. This being ranked second by the cohabitants. This signifies a greater tolerance among them for extra-dyadic sexuality (especially among the Dutch respondents). (Hypothesis II-12 is confirmed.)

Despite the fact that these cohabitants have been together an average of about 5 years, very few of them have made any kind of arrangements, either legal or more informal, to protect their individual interests in case their relationship ends through death or "divorce". They do exist in a legal or contractual vacuum. And based on what is known from other studies, they most likely have a limited knowledge of existing laws that would regulate their affairs when put to the test. It appears that the majority of the Dutch cohabitants will eventually choose for marriage (only 12.0 percent are against marriage in principle) as the option offering "more legal securities". And when deciding to have children, they prefer to avoid having to make their own arrangements to put their affairs in order. They de-evaluate the institution of marriage as an expression of their mutual love or their sense of belonging, security and stability. With marriage, they do not associate romance and ideals about "geborgenheid" (inadequately translated by the English word "belonging"). One could say "finding 'geborgenheid'" means "finding an emotional home". It is, the majority agrees, "just a legal formality". They are, to paraphrase Hoefnagels (1976), "seduced" to find their way into the town-hall. In the Netherlands, the legal marriage certificate is obtained via an official procedure taking place in the town-hall. Therefore, such government incentives as: lower taxes, rights to pension of the partner, access to subsidized housing, and exemption from the military service, etc., are more likely to be secured in this manner. One should be careful in concluding that romance is dead among these Dutch cohabitants. Perhaps one could state it like this: the word "bè-loved" will not be uttered in the judicial language of their marital contract, but it might be reserved for the affectionate exchange between partners privately. After all, they did 'confess' to have searched for love when deciding to move in together. Perhaps, that is what they

believe they have found in their non-marital private togetherness. Marriage is not anymore, for cohabitants, the institution par excellence symbolizing that so basic and relentlessly pursued human sentiment: love. Rather than being committed to the institution of marriage, they are committed to the dyad itself. Rather than putting their trust in marriage, they demand trust of the relationship itself which, as was suggested earlier, might also make them more critical in their judgements about the partner and the relationship per se. This might also explain some of the increase in tension experienced by cohabitants. With feelings "out on the table", so to speak, one can expect not only greater openness to develop and grow but also greater stress in the process. The idea that marriage provides more stability and security is the issue over which the two types of Dutch couples are most at odds with one another. Three questions measuring attitudes in this respect are extremely reliable (based on a discriminant analysis) in predicting whether a person is cohabiting or is married. These findings support the conclusions of Trost (1979) and Lewin (1979), that marriage symbolizes a more secure form of living together, greater commitment and responsibility, and from a "rite of passage" has become a "rite of confirmation" for the previously cohabiting and now married couples.

The situation of the U.S. cohabitants is quite different. In comparison with the Dutch cohabitants, they show less the signs of outward togetherness: they do fewer things together, have fewer joint purchases, and they have fewer contractual arrangements. This observation corresponds with their own evaluation of their living together; it is predominantly a trial-phase in the development toward a strong and good relationship. They are relatively more uncertain about the durability of their relationship. Another indication of a lesser sense of togetherness might be found in their greater avoidance of parental responsibilities, now and also in the future. They feel marriage becomes the logical next step after completing the trial cohabitation phase successfully. Besides offering greater legal securities and a place to raise children, marriage remains primarily for them an

institution that is associated with love, stability and security and not one that necessarily calls out for parenting. These findings support the conclusions of Macklin (1980), and Glick and Spanier (1980) for the United States, that although cohabitation has become an increasingly accepted way of living, it is not replacing marriage, but delaying it.

In conclusion, cohabitation for Americans is more an intended transitional phase leading to marital love and security, for the Dutch cohabitants, most likely it will turn out that way in retrospect, i.e., eventually leading to marriage for opportunistic reasons and not intrinsic ones.

(In the previous section (6 of this chapter) additional references to existing cohabitation literature are made and need not to be repeated here. The hypotheses with regard to attitudes toward marriage are included in Appendix B.)

Psychological climate Now to summarize the initial outcomes of the "Degree of Individuation": the cohabitants and the marrieds are similar in their dual wish for personal separateness and couple togetherness. The majority of both types of couples place themselves toward the left of the center position of the individuation continuum where the satisfactory compromise of individual needs is perhaps within reach. As mentioned earlier, all respondents want both: "self-fulfilment through independence and self-surrender through togetherness". One does not exist without the other. They want a sense of WE to make the I possible, and vice versa. Or, to state it more dramatically, from the imprisonment of the WE they reach out for the freedom of the I. Or (adopting some of Fromm's (1962) terminology), they want a union that preserves their "integrity and individuality but one that also fulfils the deepest human need to overcome one's own separateness in order to leave the prison of one's aloneness". As well, from the aloneness of the I they grasp for belonging in the WE. Or, using Becker's (1973) terminology, the human individual's need for identification is born out of the horror of standing alone. While both types of couples are similar in their simultaneous orientation toward self and the couple rela-

tionship, they differ by the extent to which they idealize togetherness within the intimate dyadic relationship. Cohabitants in comparison with marrieds idealize the partner less as the one and only the one who means everything the one who brings completion and satisfaction as can never be experienced with anybody else. The current partner fulfills less an irreplaceable and exclusive role in the scenario of carefully plotted strategies to achieve lasting freedom and belonging. In other words, the cohabitants have obtained greater emotional freedom in this respect and are more individuated. (See Appendix B, Hypotheses III-1 through 16.)

In conclusion. Cohabitants in comparison with marrieds:

Position They occupy a more autonomous position in relation to other societal institutions. Although their attitudes show greater liberalism and progressiveness, their actions certainly do not characterize them as societal non-conformists.

Structure They have structured their relationships with their partners in such a way that they are more independent from each other, both outwardly (in financial arrangements) and inwardly (relatively less committed and more critical about dyadic reciprocity).

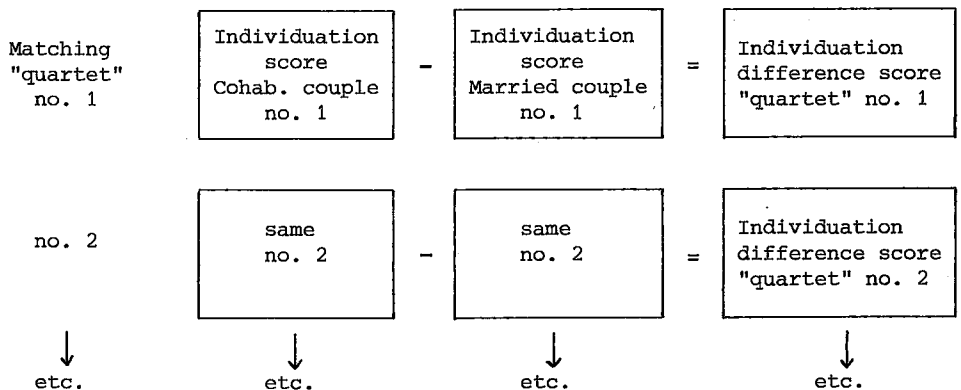
Function They express themselves relatively more critically when asked to evaluate the quality of the relationship. Where the U.S. cohabitants see their dyadic functioning primarily as a trial-phase prior to marriage, for the Dutch cohabitants it is the desire for children that provides the primary reason for transforming the cohabitational phase to marriage. Since very few of the cohabitants are against marriage in principle, it is predicted that cohabitation becomes, for those whose relationship endures, a transitional phase in retrospect.

*Psychological
climate* They idealize their current partners less or they are relatively less dependent on their partners. In other words, they are more individuated.

5. AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN DEGREE OF INDIVIDUATION BETWEEN COHABITING AND MATCHING MARRIED COUPLES

1. EXPLANATION OF THE ANALYTICAL METHOD

The outcomes presented so far have shown that cohabiting couples differ significantly from matching married couples by "Degree of Individuation". As it was argued before, it is quite possible that, rather than marital status per se, other differences between the two types of couples may contribute to the existing variance in individuation. Therefore, in order to measure the true effect of marital status, other factors influencing individuation have to be eliminated or statistically controlled. The effects of a limited number of variables have already been eliminated through matching. To include more variables in the matching process was practically impossible. Consequently, the remainder of the possible individuation correlates have to be controlled by some other technique. Multiple regression is the statistical technique chosen to respond to this need for variance control. The use of this particular statistical control method makes it possible to give a more refined explanation of "Degree of Individuation" by focusing on the proposed predictors of individuation (see Chart 5, p. 45), and thereby assessing the relative contribution of each to a change in individuation. The focus of analysis is no longer to search out differences but to explain the already established difference in individuation for each matching cohabiting and married couple. To this end, a new dependent variable, called "Individuation Difference", is created and calculated by subtracting the individuation score of each married couple from its matching cohabiting counterpart. Each set of matched couples or "quartets" of individuals is the unit of analysis. The following chart depicts this process:



As far as the independent variables are concerned, only those variables that correlate significantly with the newly constructed criterion variable are to be included in the regression analysis. Tables 12 - 14 present all significant Pearson product-moment correlations at the .05 level or higher. Based on these outcomes, a series of regressions are performed. Table 15 shows the best prediction models for each country, one for the Dutch and one for the U.S. couples.

Sum scores that correlate significantly indicate that the variable has an important influence on the relationship that is proven to exist between marital status (cohabiting vs. married) and individuation. Thus, differences in individuation might not only result from difference in marital status but from the variable in question as well. Likewise, difference scores that correlate significantly indicate that the difference between cohabiting and matching married couples on this variable also influences differences in individuation between both types of couples. For example (see Table 12), in the Netherlands, the sum total of time during which a cohabiting and a matching married couple (quartet) have been together correlates significantly with "Individuation Differences". Or, an increase in time together decreases the effect of marital status on individuation ($\underline{r} = -.34$). The difference score has also a significant and similar effect: the greater the difference in time together the lesser the difference in individuation for each quartet ($\underline{r} = -.26$). Thus, also difference in

time together per quartet influences the effect of marital status on individuation. In sum, it appears that "time together" affects "Individuation Difference" for each match, or quartet, in two ways. First, cohabiting and matching married couples, who on the average (sum score) have been together the longest, differ less by individuation. And, second, differences in time together varies inversely with differences in individuation for each match. This finding, that differences in time together is one of the correlates, does confirm the earlier observation that the two types of Dutch couples are not perfectly matched in this respect. Also, since the matching by this variable was carried out more successfully in the United States, the variable does not emerge as one of the correlates for the U.S. couples.

2. DISCUSSION OF THE VARIABLES THAT INFLUENCE "INDIVIDUATION DIFFERENCE"

A comparison of the original model (Chart 5, p. 45) with the outcomes in Table 12 shows that most of the proposed explanatory categories do in fact account for variations in individuation. A review of all individuation correlates, which are subdivided into various categories, indicates that those variables that measure political-, parental background-, and self-esteem-differences for each match, are missing. In other words, none of the "missing" variables, categorized as personal characteristics, influence the relationship between marital status and individuation. Other categories that do emerge ("dyadic quality", "personal freedom/autonomy", "dyadic reciprocity", "attitudes toward sexuality", "reasons and attitudes toward marriage", and "social-economic background") are discussed below based on figures given in Table 12, and on the zero-order correlation-matrices (i.e., including the r 's of all possible pairs of variables) presented in Tables 13 and 14. The correlations given in Table 12 reveal that they range from low to moderately high: thirty-four reach .25 through .39 levels (explaining 6 - 15 percent of the variance), and the remaining 12 are at levels of .40 through .66 (explaining 16 - 44 percent). The correlations

are higher for the U.S. couples than they are for the Dutch. In both countries, differences according to variables categorized as "dyadic quality", "personal freedom/autonomy", and "dyadic reciprocity" account substantially for "Individuation Differences". Personal freedom/autonomy and dyadic reciprocity can be considered dimensions of dyadic quality as well.

Before discussing these outcomes further, it should be pointed out that a comparison of the independent variables, on one hand, and the operational definition of the construct "Individuation Difference", on the other, might suggest the possibility of a tautological relationship. Indeed, independent and dependent variables have one thing in common: both are evaluations of dyadic partnerships and, therefore, finding statistical intercorrelations is not surprising. Consequently, awareness of this phenomenon warrants cautiousness when proceeding with interpreting these and other correlations. A brief review of the original theoretical construct "Degree of Individuation" might shed some light on determining whether or not a certain repetitiveness in fact exists. As mentioned, the dependent variable "Individuation Difference" measures differences in "Degree of Individuation" for each quartet. "Degree of Individuation" is based on the answers to a seven-item individuation-scale, all of which measure one theoretical dimension defined as "Dyadic Idealization", (see Section 5 of Chapter 3). The scale consists of specific opinions about what the relationship with the current partner or couple relationships in general ideally ought to encompass. But, also, the independent variable "Degree of Happiness", which is one of the major predictors of "Degree of Individuation" (categorized under the heading "Dyadic Quality"), is, in general, a more ambiguous qualitative measure of the dyad. Thus, although both the dependent variable and the independent variables have in common a comparable evaluative measure of the dyad, they are not synonymous. Furthermore, to summarize that which was discussed at length in Chapter 2, "Degree of Individuation"/"Dyadic Idealization" is considered a continuous variable ranking couples between polar positions. One extreme characterizes couples as being onesidedly committed to

a highly romantic ideal of complete couple togetherness. The security that comes when two consider themselves as one justifies giving up personal freedom; love for the partner rationalizes self-sacrifice. They become a bulwark of two against the world. For others, drawn towards the other extreme of the continuum, freedom and independence of self are more pressing considerations than diminishing the self in coupledness. Among these there is a greater willingness to terminate the relationship when personal independence is threatened, and greater deliberate concern about relational reciprocity and equality. To repeat it once more, what we are dealing with is the paradoxical search for individuation and identification. Also, it is hypothesized that the more individuated person (a lesser dyadic idealist) may be less likely to terminate with a partner who expresses his/her independence, for example, by dating or by sexually relating to others. The more individuated person de-emphasizes dyadic exclusivity. Also, a somewhat paradoxical quest for self-actualization and dyadic commitment may generate, as was argued before, a more "emotionally tense relationship" (see Section 2.3 of Chapter 3).

Returning to the study outcomes, it appears that the above theoretical linkages are confirmed. The following observations cannot be derived directly from the statistics given in Table 12, but from correlations calculated for each of the four subsamples separately, between "Degree of Individuation" and the listed independent variables. The tendency is that the more diminished the degree of relationship quality (unhappiness, frequent thoughts about leaving, etc.) the greater the "Degree of Individuation". A more critical evaluation of the relationship with the partner tends to lessen idealism and to encourage greater open critical exchange. Furthermore, the figures confirm that the more individuated person is inclined to end a relationship when there exist inequalities of dominance and dependency and is, by contrast, inclined to stay when his/her partner dates others. In general, they are more tolerant of sexual non-exclusivity, that is to say, of more "open" relationships. They are also more assertive in expressing a need

for personal freedom, by wanting to make their own decisions even though the partner might not agree.

It is important to be cautious when interpreting these results. The strong association found between "Degree of Dyadic Quality" and "Degree of Individuation" does not necessarily make the relationship causal, in one direction or in the other. It is possible that those who are discontented with their current partnerships will subsequently alter their opinions about dyadic togetherness. Or, the reverse is equally plausible: those who are dyadic "non-idealists" (those disinclined to consider couple relationships and dyadic partners as the one and only path to personal "blessedness") will, at some later date, be more inclined to evaluate their dyadic partnership critically. And, as reported on the previous page, a twin desire for both "togetherness" and "individual freedom" might lead to increased levels of frustration and stress. In order to make conclusive statements about causal inferences, further experimentation is necessary. Such, however, is beyond the scope and purpose of this particular analysis.

Another major category one might expect to be at variance with individuation is differences "in reasons or attitudes towards marriage". It appears that the strongest predictors of "Individuation Differences" listed under this category are precisely the same variables by which cohabitants and marrieds differ most significantly. In the Netherlands, the prime motivation to marry for cohabitants is their "desire to have children"; and, in the United States, it is for "practical convenience".

It seems that those who link marriage to greater security, stability, and self-fulfilment are the least individuated, i.e., they are the greater dyadic idealists. One might say, they regard pair-bonded relationships more as a "refuge of two against the world", and emphasize individual freedom less. Lastly, differences in social-economic background hardly contribute to explaining individuation differences. Of course, the differences between cohabiting and married couples by these kinds of variables are partly eliminated through matching.

Their non-appearance renders the matching process a successful one.

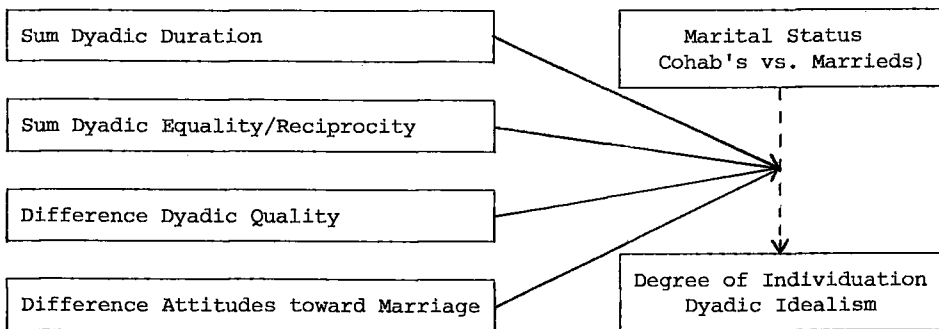
To gain more insight into the interrelationships of these various independent variables, which share one common denominator (they all correlate significantly with "Individuation Differences"), warrants a closer examination of the zero-order correlation-matrices (Tables 13 and 14). The variables in these matrices are ordered according to statistical strength and frequency of intercorrelations. Each mathematically arranged subset of interrelated variables corresponds with the theoretical categories already given in Table 12. For example, the first eight, highly interrelated, variables listed in the U.S. matrix are redundant measures of the same thing, they evaluate dyadic relationships. Together they operationalize the construct "Dyadic Quality" and are, therefore, important predictors of "Individuation Differences". A second dimension that emerges for the U.S. couples, similarly based on substantial intercorrelations among a subset of variables (9 - 14), can be labeled as "Personal Freedom/Autonomy". And, finally, the next four variables (15 - 18) have in common the fact that they all are "reasons for marrying" and, once combined, become the third predictor of "Individuation Differences" for U.S. couples. By comparison, patterns are less distinct for Dutch couples, largely due to lower correlations between all possible pairs of variables. The first two dimensions are similar to those found for the U.S. but in reverse order. Six of the first subset (variables 1 - 7) measure "Personal Freedom/Autonomy". The next set (variables 8 - 12) suggests the common denominator "Dyadic Quality". The remaining variables show weak intercorrelations and no distinct patterns or factors can be found among them.

3. RANKING OF THE PREDICTORS OF "INDIVIDUATION DIFFERENCES"

To determine the relative power of each of these emerging clusters of variables predicting the "Differences in Individuation", a series of multiple regression analyses are carried out. The question still remains whether or not "Differences in Individuation"/"Dyadic Idealism" result primarily from dif-

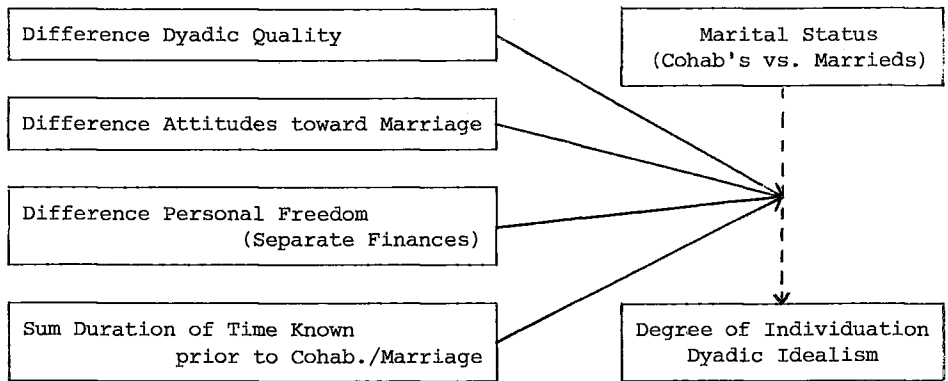
ferences in marital status (cohabiting vs. married), or whether they issue from other factors as well. As far as the regression method is concerned, substantial interrelationships among predictors (independent variables that enter the regression), known as "multicollinearity", can lead to a serious distortion of the meaning of regression outcomes. For example, partial regression correlations are effected. In this study, high intercorrelations, when caused by redundancy among variables is eliminated by selecting carefully a minimum number of variables to represent the common underlying dimension (Nie *et al.*, 1975). Theoretical considerations weighted heavy in the selection process. Also, in a few instances, the size of the N for a particular variable was the determining factor. For example, the non-response to the question about "dating others" reduced the N from 32 to 27 for the U.S. matching quartets; it is therefore eliminated. If proper selection prior to the regression analysis is unwarranted, a series of regressions are performed to determine the hierarchical order of the variables. Table 15 presents the final results; they are the best prediction models for each country. For Dutch and U.S. matching couples, the amount of variance in "Individuation Differences" explained is respectively 62 and 84 percent. Generally, for the Dutch couples, the subset of three sum variables explains 23 percent. An additional subset of four difference variables contributes another 39 percent. On the average, the longer a quartet has been together, and the more both types of couples insist upon an egalitarian relationship the "Differences in Individuation" between them are less. This means, when we compare a cohabiting and a married couple who have been living together equally long, and who think similarly about wanting a "fair" relationship, and who are equally inclined to leave their partners when they become "too dominant" then, the "Difference in Individuation" between the two types of couples is reduced by almost one-fourth. Thus, duration and equality of a relationship are important predictors of "Individuation Differences"/"Dyadic Idealism". The four difference variables represent two major categories: "Dyadic Quality" and "Attitudes

toward Marriage". A greater difference for each match (quartet) in dyadic quality, and the greater the difference in whether or not marriage brings more self-fulfilment - this, then, brings about a greater "Difference in Individuation". In contrast, greater differences in whether or not "to have children is the main purpose of marriage", decreases "Difference in Individuation". Thus, when an unmarried and married couple are equal in these respects, an additional 39 percent of the "Difference in Individuation" disappears. Again, the following observation cannot be derived directly from the figures. But, from correlations calculated for each of the four subsamples not given in Table 15, greater dyadic discontent and a greater de-evaluation of marriage is associated with higher "Degrees of Individuation". The following diagram highlights the Dutch regression results:



Elimination of each of the four factors listed on the left side (they are approximately equal in importance according to the Beta-weights), reduces by 62 percent the effect of marital status on individuation. It is not marital status, per se, but variation by dyadic duration, - equality, - quality, and attitudes toward marriage that produce "Differences in Individuation"/"Dyadic Idealism" between Dutch cohabiting and married couples.

The U.S. regression results can likewise be highlighted by a diagram:



The diagram shows that each of the dimensions distinguished earlier, based on the intercorrelations of all the independent variables (see Table 14), are represented in the final prediction model. It is apparent that it is not marital status as such but other dyadic characteristics that explain the couple variance by "Degree of Individuation". Increases in differences between a cohabiting and a married couple in "Dyadic Quality", in "Marital Attitudes", and in opinions whether or not to keep "Finances Separate" produce the greater "Differences in Individuation" between them. In addition, cohabiting and matching married couples, together called quartets, who were also together the longest prior to living together or marriage, differ less by individuation. "Dyadic Quality" alone explains 42 percent of the variance. The general tendency is: a lesser degree of "Dyadic Quality", and a greater insistence upon "Personal Autonomy" (expressed in: "It is all right for a couple to keep finances separate"), and the less one perceives marriage as a safeguard against "loneliness" will bring about a higher "Degree of Individuation".

4. CONCLUSION

To become more or less individuated depends on certain dyadic traits that can be found among all couples, regardless whether they are married or unmarried. To be more individuated (or less a dyadic idealist) is certainly not an inherent trait of cohabiting couples. It can be found equally among married couples

as long as certain dyadic conditions or characteristics pertain. It appears, as long as partners voice more severe criticisms about their partnership, and as long as the partners are sufficiently self-assertive, and as long as they do not perceive marriage as a "haven" of happiness a higher "Degree of Individuation" will occur. It is not personal traits but traits ' resulting from participation in a dyad that predict differences in individuation. All persons who couple, despite whether they do so with or without legal marital sanction, can potentially position themselves anywhere along the individuation-identification continuum. Each person will create his or her own response to the tension of freedom and commitment that is inherent in couple intimacy, which is precisely the underlying theme of this study.

6. REFLECTIONS

This last chapter will provide final observations about cohabiting couples by reflecting on this lifestyle in the context of societal changes that have produced it. The study will conclude with some recommendations for further research.

When considering various demographic indicators the decade of the 'seventies stands out as a period during which young adults have made some significant changes with regard to marriage, family, and sexuality. Although exact ratios and figures might be different for the Netherlands and the United States, the trends are the same. These trends reflect the accumulated effects of major societal changes and processes that have taken place in the western world over the last one and a half centuries, not the lesser of which were the devastations of World War II and the rise of technology. The earlier rise of industrialization and the later technologization, along with differentiation, individuation, and secularization have had a profound impact on the way women and men relate. And, however one chooses to understand the decline of institutional Christianity - whether as losing its battle with the gods of science, or whether as having finally lost its aura of purity in the worldly maelstrom of political intrigues and national religions which, if not having directly aided the conditions of World War II, did not or could not effectively oppose it, or whether a combination of both - this decline also contributed to a societal shift in favor of secularism and "this world" concerns. The Netherlands, with most of Europe, witnessed first-hand an almost total collapse of a "way of life". It was the order of secularism and technology that picked up the pieces of the old order and put together a new one. In the United States, except

for casualties and the memories of countless thousands of returning servicemen, the devastation of World War II was more second hand. However, the results were not significantly different. Post-war technology, and ecclesiastical setbacks in relation to the gods of science coupled with world war memories, civil inequalities, the Youth Movement, the Vietnam War (and the Korean War), and the rise of feminism all contributed to bringing the "New World" old order to its knees. While the process may have been different, the results were more than not the same as they were in Europe. Therefore, in the United States too, secularism became the heir apparent of the new order. Whether good or bad, the price for this change was high, and the 'sixties were to become a decade of turmoil affecting in, among many ways, the expression of intimate relationships. The Dutch society which had "..... distinguished itself by constant reflection upon the restrictive teachings or orthodox theology, became a very permissive society within a few years (the late 'sixties)" writes Kooy in 1974. This process in the United States, as was implied, was more gradual. It was in the 'fifties that a majority of the study's respondents were born to parents, many of whom still held onto the values of the old order. Yet, if one is allowed to generalize, one could say that it was left to the offspring to make sense of two "Weltanschauungen".

It is generally recognized that the notions of marriage as a haven and a place for belonging were transmitted to the baby-boom generation. The myths and realities of traditional family experiences inhabited the dreams of the adults participating in this study. However, their adolescent years were experienced in quite a different world. In the Netherlands, they were thrown into the midst of a rapidly progressing secularization process that penetrated the very protective shield of orthodoxy and its anti-secularistic posture. The societal fabric was drastically altered and these adolescents saw the old social and political structures collapse around them; a new kind of society emerged. Likewise, in the United States, an analogous development took place: the more or less limited affluence and stability of the

'fifties was followed by the turbulent 'sixties, with its inequitable economic prosperity and its subsequent social revolutions.

Sex role complementarity and female dependency, which maintained and supported patriarchal marriage conditions for so long, were being replaced by an equality of sex roles and by a new kind of personal independence. The late 'sixties brought forth a time of role confusion and lifestyle experimentation with its new kinds of living arrangements and differing sexual mores. Cohabitation was one emerging option. Based on empirical findings, young people became less romantic and idealistic in their attitudes toward marriage. Marriage was not considered the exclusive deliverer of personal happiness any longer. Hence, one might conclude that their pragmatism won out over the prevailing idealism.

"Die Entzauberung der Welt", as Max Weber called it, implies an increase of rationality in the modern world and a diminishing of the mythical, the romantic, and the poetic. One no longer sees the couple encounter through a romantic veil but sees it for what it is. Instead of the "forever together" formula, relationships are perceived as possibly impermanent. And legal marriage, once considered a meaningful symbolic act, has been de-evaluated by many to a recording procedure without intrinsic merit. The myth of multi-generational family happiness has been de-mythologized by the ever increasing numbers of single parent households. Many couples opt to leave the domestic nest empty by choosing to remain childless. The myth of the Victorian family of permanence and refuge has given way to successive experimentations in living. In other words, the myths and realities surrounding marriage and family were and still are rapidly changing.

These speculative observations are backed up by demographic studies and the findings of this study, both of which bear witness to the fact that behavioral and attitudinal shifts have taken place. Households have become smaller because of decreasing birth and marriage rates, higher divorce and separation rates, and the fact that more people are living alone. The trend among

young adults is to postpone marriage, although it is unclear for how long. Cohabitation has proven to be one of the popular couple-responses to this decline in traditional marital expectations.

The hopes and dreams that emerged in the optimistic and economically prosperous 'sixties found an expression in the programs of the Dutch Welfare State and the American Great Society. They were carried over into the 'seventies but unfortunately diminished by the onset of economic decline. High inflation rates combined with high unemployment severely began to undermine the social welfare programs that had earlier enhanced the independence of the individual and the great expectations of both societies. A tear in the societal fabric became evident as "new freedoms" became bound by ever increasing economic realities and political priorities.

Against this historical account, the "Weltanschauung" of cohabiting couples can be interpreted. We are dealing with relatively young unmarried couples who are well-educated and situated in the middle-class, and politically rather liberal. They straddle a dual world that stresses traditional values while at the same time departs from them. Although their families might have emphasized mutual affection and love, its often stripped down and isolated modern version also taught them the pursuit of self-interest. It can be argued that the nuclear family as it functions today is destructive in that its offspring enter the world of secondary institutions with an excessive need for self-fulfilment which, then, is no longer controlled by the intimacy of the traditional family setting. Unleashed are unending and unbridled competition, and individuation. The possible antithetical claim that an individuated society leads to greater contentment for all remains a much debated issue. After all is said and done, that pre-sociological idea still seems decisive: the indefinable energy of love is the only antidote for the suffering brought about by the narcissism of the I and the de-personalization of that same I in the secular world. Perhaps, Martin Buber was very close to the equation for significant happiness: I - Thou

equals love.

Cohabitation today is a phenomenon that has to be understood against the double message of love for the self and love for the other. While the cohabiting lifestyle might reflect this kind of incongruity, it might also articulate the search for a possible compromise between the illusive personal privacy of the home against an alienating impersonal public world. It should not be forgotten that relationships are choices made equally for personal reasons as well as for reasons to satisfy societal demands. We should therefore consider that male - female pair-bonding, besides being an interpersonal relationship, remains a social institution that reflects societal values and norms. Although western societies today do embrace the idea of personal freedom, these same societies continue, nonetheless, to socialize their members towards the notion, often enforced by law, that every adult should conform to one lifestyle, preferably a monogamous heterosexual pair-bond as the permanent basis for living. However, when society places at the same time great emphasis on self-actualization and individuation, different kinds of selves will emerge. Cohabitation is indicative of this trend.

The cohabitants in this study have witnessed and experienced the breakdown of fundamental values that guided family and parenthood for so long. In addition, they experienced a burgeoning and prosperous society that was followed by the stark reality of a collapsing world economy that threatened the ideology of freedom. They were caught in a polarized world that celebrated the freedom of the self and lamented its accompanying narcissisms, the prospects of economic scarcity and unemployment (especially among the young), and the thought that children might no longer be better off than their parents. Theirs was a struggle to combine the family values taught in early childhood with the values of self-fulfilment (the "Me" generation). Now, in the early 'eighties, in the circumstances of diminishing economic returns, they are confronted with some central questions regarding their own family life: whether to marry or not, and whether to take on the responsibilities of

parenthood. Their answers reveal a certain ambiguity which might reflect the societal contradictions to which they are and were exposed. Although they do not appear to be disenchanted with the idea of marriage, they so far have postponed it. The institution of marriage has been de-mythologized, especially among the Dutch cohabitants who do not attach any special power or significance to it. Their dreams center around a vision of a permanent two-some. Marriage as a fulfilment of a romantic dream might be dead, however the couple relationship definitely is not. Perhaps, as long as existential fears remain, myths of togetherness and permanence are kept alive as a protective shield, not unlike a child's fairytale. Ultimately, we all want to go home again. Dreams are the stuff that makes tomorrows possible. The answers of the respondents indicate that a more traditional outlook on marriage, family, sexuality, and parenthood is still rather widespread among them. Also, their responses demonstrate a more liberal and tolerant attitude towards others different from themselves. They are neither the harbingers nor the vanguard of a new world to come. Either they are questioning the institution of marriage or postponing marriage, or both. Cohabitants question parental responsibilities for themselves. And, especially those cohabitants who decide not to have children might indefinitely postpone marriage. They express dichotomous needs for freedom and couple togetherness at the same time. Against these existing polarities, it is no longer surprising to find that, in comparison with their married counterparts, the cohabitants are more critical of their partners. This does not necessarily demonstrate more problems or greater unhappiness among the cohabitants, rather more of a questioning of the status quo. Mutual trust is the ingredient that solidifies their coupledness, which should not be surprising in a modern world dominated by impersonal relationships, and their attending suspicions.

Cohabitation has emerged in the middle of a variety of societal debates that surround marriage and family. Controversy continues over whether the family is in crisis or not. The disagreements range from the beliefs that the family is falling

apart to the family undergoing a remarkable rejuvenation. Neither of these extremes fit the cohabiting lifestyle. A majority of the cohabitants neither reject marriage nor do they live in a style that is significantly different from married couples. They basically postpone the acquisition of the legal certificate. The main difference between cohabiting and married couples lies not in the fact that one is legally married and the other is not, rather in what they believe marriage has to offer in terms of security and stability, and in practical and legal conveniences. Therefore, most couples in today's society will eventually legally marry, depending of course on a lasting relationship. But those who cohabit first do so for different reasons.

And, finally, it seems appropriate and in the research reporting tradition to end with some suggestions for further research. This carefully prepared study provides much detail, many conclusions, and some speculative opinions about cohabitation in comparison with marriage. The information gathered from four different samples of couples in two countries give ample opportunity to go beyond the scope and purpose of this present analysis. An important topic that has not been addressed is the validity of the statement that every couple contains two couples: the couple perceived by the female and the couple perceived by the male. For example, are the experiences of the women participating in this study different from those of the men? Sexual freedom through better birth control methods and economic independence have affected women's dependency on men, and therefore have had an impact on their perception of male - female relationships. By much the same kind of measure, the onset of less male domination with a work-world including women in increasing numbers, clearly must have left its impact on a particularly male perception. To this social transformation with all the subsequent changings and experimentations in lifestyles, one might add that all modern couples must now encounter life in perhaps even more terrifying dimensions than those of their ancestors. If in the past women and men found relational solace and hope in a world they could not control, so, too, in this

modern era made starkly clear in works like *Future Shock*, are today's women and men driven towards each other, only more so and differently. Couples now strive to cope in a world of near unstoppable technology and nuclear fears. In other words, changing "styles", the sexual revolution, and world-wide economic inflation have not alone altered perception, also modern circumstances, profoundly threatening personhood and social survival, have even more exacerbated age old concerns. Today, however, women depend on men less for their survival. The mutuality and interdependence of equals becomes more the current relational reality in a world where personal and human survival is seen in the light of all these "new" precarious dimensions and implications. Perhaps cohabitation could only develop as a consequence of these other developments that dramatically affected the "Sitz im Leben" of women and men and the choices they have made regarding their lifestyles.

Also, the data lend itself to a study of intra-dyadic differences, i.e., whether cohabiting couples, in comparison with their married counterparts, are internally more conflicted or more harmonious. This kind of analysis might shed further light upon the differences already found between the two types of couples.

And lastly, a follow-up study might provide some answers to the question, how permanent cohabiting relationships are in comparison with their married counterparts.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1

1. The term lifestyles refers to the various ways in which people relate to each other, which can be in legal marriage or in any of the variety of alternatives to the traditional and legally sanctioned union.
2. In the United States, recent court decisions indicate that the law in some cases treats unmarried couples equal to married couples, extending to them the same rights. While in other cases, they are discriminated against and judged to be a violation of the laws of the land. For example, in 1979, a California judge ruled the actor Lee Marvin to pay to Michelle Triola "alimony" based on their living together as an unmarried couple. In March, 1980, the Warren County Circuit Court of Virginia, declared a divorcee morally unfit to take the state bar examination because she lived with a man to whom she was not married, thereby violating Virginia's antifornication statutes. Also, in 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an Illinois court decision that denied a woman custody of her three daughters because she was living with an unmarried man, thereby violating that state's fornication law.
3. In 1982, the Dutch prime minister Van Agt made it known that only spouses of guests invited to official receptions for Queen Beatrix would be welcome. Van Agt stipulated that as long as lifestyles other than the married kind remained an issue of ongoing public debate, and that no decisions were made about recognizing alternatives to

marriage, the existing rules of government protocol were to be enforced (Trouw, March 11, 1982).

4. The amount of public welfare assistance depends, among other things, upon marital status or "couple" status. Couples, both married and unmarried, are considered an economic unit, and receive equal benefit, which is however almost one-third less than the total amount that two singles are allowed to receive. Therefore, many municipalities are forced to check whether applicants who file as living alone in fact are living alone. Municipal employees will have to develop their own set of guidelines on how to determine whether a person is single or is cohabiting with a partner.
5. There are a few exceptions. In the United States, five respondents completed their questionnaires without an interviewer present. Each respondent was asked not to discuss the questions with his/her partner prior to placing the questionnaire in a sealed envelope. Similarly, in the Netherlands, six respondents were trusted to fill out the questionnaires in this manner.
6. The term anomie was introduced by Emile Durkheim into the sociological terminology. It is often retained in the French spelling by American and English writers. The term "alienation" has been conceptualized by various classical and contemporary scholars. Alienation refers to the separation of the Self from the world, leading to a state of estrangement. Seeman (1972) distinguishes six varieties of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, cultural estrangement, self-estrangement, and social isolation. In this study only two components are measured: powerlessness and social isolation (see Section 5 of Chapter 3).

CHAPTER 2

7. The privatization process refers to an increased emphasis on private life. "Private sphere..... this is an area of social life that is quite strictly segregated from the

great public institutions, notably the economy and the state." (Berger and Berger, 1972:82-83). Lasch (1977) concludes, thereby deviating from the prevailing sociological point of view, that this so-called privatization process has not succeeded as far as the family is concerned. He states (1977:168): "As for the family, its isolation from the marketplace, from the ravages of which it provided a refuge, was precarious from the beginning. The so-called privatization of experience went hand in hand with an unprecedented assault on privacy".

CHAPTER 3

8. Tables 2 and 3, Appendix C, show that there are no significant differences by mean age and by mean SIOP-(occupational prestige)scores. However, the intended matching by length of time couples have been living together or have been married was not successful for the Dutch couples (the married couples have been together significantly longer). In contrast, in the United States there were no significant differences between the two types of couples.
9. The seven-item Autonomy scale was tested for reliability; alpha scores for each of the sub-samples were: .57, .40, .53, and .45. These outcomes support the decision to delete the autonomy dimension.

CHAPTER 4

10. Historical and statistical information included in Section 2 of Chapter 4 came from various sources and was partly made available by the city and town registries. In Amersfoort, the Bureau of Sociography made information available upon request.

The following sources were used:

- U.S. Census, 1971 and 1981;
- Dutch Census, 1971 (C.B.S. Volkstelling, 1971);
- Salem Community Development Master Plan, City of Salem, Department of Planning, 1979;
- Haalbaarheidsonderzoek Amersfoort Groeistad (Feasibility Study of Amersfoort as a town designated for expansion

and growth), Gemeente Amersfoort, 1981;

- Maatschappelijke verkenning van Amersfoort (Social Study of Amersfoort), Sociografisch Bureau gemeente Amersfoort, Rapporteur: Ir. Letty Lettinga, augustus, 1980;
- Statistisch Jaarboek Amersfoort 1978 (Statistical Yearbook Amersfoort 1978), Gemeente Amersfoort, 1979.

11. The two countries are quite different in regards to public housing policies and subsidized housing programs. In the Netherlands, there has been a long standing tradition to make rental subsidies available to a large segment of the population. In other words, private homeownership is less encouraged in the Netherlands than it is in the United States.
12. Before proceeding to examine the tables in Appendic C, the following explanation should be given. All calculated means and T-tests are based on the couple as the unit of analysis. However, the percentage distributions are based on the answers of individual respondents. There are several reasons why this approach was taken. First, some of the variables measure individual respondent properties rather than properties acquired through participating in a dyadic relationship, such as: age, education, occupation, parental background. Second, other variables measure dyadic or "collective" properties (White and Brinkerhoff, 1977, 1978) on which dyadic partners ought to agree: number of years married/cohabited, housing/tenure, joint purchases, financial and other kinds of arrangements made together. Regarding "collective" properties the answer of one partner ought to be sufficient to report for the other. However, discrepancies in answers between dyadic partners did occur and were considered errors in reporting. Instead of working with the answers of one informant or with composite dyadic responses the percentages are based on individual answers. Third, many of the remaining variables are opinion statements or individual level attitudes about the dyad. On these kinds of attitudinal measures, dyadic part-
same dyad, can legitimately

disagree reflecting non-consensus rather than error in perception (White and Brinkerhoff, 1978). Composite couple scores blur the individual differences. And lastly, mathematical sum scores and averages are hard to categorize. For example, a sum score of 4 points based on two partners who both rate their marriage as "decidedly happy" (2 points each) equals the ranking of a couple in which one partner is "extraordinarily happy" (1 point) and the other is "happy" (3 points). In other words how do we categorize a couple that scores 4 points in happiness? Analyzing individual responses cancels out this problem.

13. The Dutch term "buitenkerkelijk" is not equivalent to the English term "non-religious" which may account for some of the differences in the responses to religion. Perhaps the term "un-churched" (which implies that one is a non-participant in the institutional church but not necessarily a non-religious person) would have come closer in meaning, but this term might be meaningful to a survey researcher but is metaphorically obscure to a large majority of the U.S. respondents.

One of the findings in a recent dissertation by C. de Hoog, based on a random sample of young married couples: "Partnersselectie bij huwelijkssluiting in Nederland" (Mate selection in the Netherlands), states that 39.0 percent of the men and 36.0 percent of the women declared themselves "buitenkerkelijk" (un-churched). Our samples produce figures which are about 6 percent lower for the married couples, but substantially higher for the cohabiting couples (circa 35.0 percent higher). Thus, the Dutch cohabitants do distinguish themselves as predominantly formally uninvolved religiously.

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APPENDIX A
COHABITING COUPLES SURVEY

COHABITING COUPLES SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please read each question carefully before answering.
2. For most questions we want you to give your answer by checking off one appropriate number. If you wish to clarify your answer feel free to write any comments you have in the open spaces in the questionnaire.
3. Do not leave a blank to mean a "no" answer.
4. Do not discuss any of the questions with your cohabitant or anybody else before or during the completion of the questionnaire. (The word "cohabitant" will be used in this questionnaire to refer to the person you are living with as an unmarried couple.)
5. Many of the questions are to be answered on a continuum ranging from very important on the left, to neither important nor unimportant in the middle, to very unimportant on the right. For example, if you considered finding emotional security a fairly important reason for living together, then you would check off one number that indicates that judgment, as follows:

	<u>VERY</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>FAIRLY</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>NEITHER</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u> <u>NOR</u> <u>UNIMP.</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY</u> <u>UNIMPORTANT</u>	<u>FAIRLY</u> <u>UNIMP.</u>	<u>VERY</u> <u>UNIM-</u> <u>PORTANT</u>
a. To find security.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

To begin with, we want to ask you some general questions.

1. For how long have you been living together in the same dwelling with your cohabitant?

_____ (YEARS) _____ (MONTHS)

2. And how long did you know one another before you began living together?

_____ (YEARS) _____ (MONTHS)

3. Did you ever before live together with somebody else of the opposite sex as a cohabiting couple?

(1) YES (How many times? _____ NUMBER)

(2) NO

4. Were you ever married?

(1) YES (How many times? _____ NUMBER)

(2) NO

5. And which of the categories listed below describes best your living situation today? (CHECK OFF ONE.)

(1) I AM SINGLE, AND LIVE WITH MY COHABITANT UNMARRIED

(2) I AM DIVORCED, AND LIVE WITH MY COHABITANT UNMARRIED

(3) I AM SEPARATED, AND LIVE WITH MY COHABITANT UNMARRIED

(4) I AM WIDOWED, AND LIVE WITH MY COHABITANT UNMARRIED

6. The house/apartment you are living in together: do you own or rent?

(1) OWN (GO TO QUESTION 7)

(2) RENT (SKIP TO QUESTION 8)

(3) OTHER (PLEASE EXPLAIN: _____
_____.) (SKIP TO QUESTION 9.)

7. If you own your home, who is the owner? (1) I AM (SKIP
TO QUESTION 9.)
(2) MY COHABITANT IS
(3) WE OWN IT JOINTLY IN BOTH OUR NAMES
8. If you rent your home and you signed a lease, whose name is on it?
(1) MY NAME ONLY
(2) MY COHABITANT'S NAME ONLY
(3) BOTH OUR NAMES
(4) NEITHER OF US SIGNED A LEASE
9. At the moment, do you or does your cohabitant maintain a separate living facility (e.g. a room, apartment, or house) somewhere else?
(1) YES, I DO
(2) YES, MY COHABITANT DOES
(3) NO, NEITHER OF US DOES
(4) OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY: _____.)
10. During an average week, do you usually stay every night together?
(1) YES
(2) NO (On the average, how many nights do you stay together? _____ NUMBER)
11. Which of the following items have you and your cohabitant obtained jointly? (CHECK OFF AS MANY AS APPLY.)
- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| (1) JOINT SAVINGS ACCOUNT | (1) JOINT CHECKING ACCOUNT |
| (1) JOINT INSURANCE POLICY | (1) JOINTLY FILED INCOME TAXES |
| (1) JOINT HEALTH INSURANCE | (1) PURCHASED A CAR TOGETHER |
| (1) PURCHASED MAJOR HOUSEHOLD ITEMS AND/OR FURNITURE TOGETHER | |

12. Do you keep your finances separate, or do you have joint finances?

(1) SEPARATE

(2) JOINT

(3) SOME THINGS SEPARATE, SOME THINGS JOINT

13. Which of the following people know that you are cohabiting?

And, also answer for those who do know, whether they approve or disapprove of the relationship as it exists today.

	CHECK OFF WHO KNOWS:	<u>APPROVE</u>	<u>DISAPPROVE</u>	<u>BOTH APPROVE AND DISAPPROVE</u>
a. PARENT(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)
b. FRIEND(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)
c. LANDLORD(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)
d. EMPLOYER(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)
e. FELLOW EMPLOYEE(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)
f. OTHER RELATIVE(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)
g. NEIGHBOR(S)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)

h. NOBODY OR HARDLY ANYBODY KNOWS ABOUT OUR COHABITATION (1)

14. As you probably know, legal marriage regulates marital obligations of the spouses during their marriage and at the time of termination through death or divorce. Since you are not legally married at the moment, have you either discussed and do you have an informal understanding, or have you made formal legal provisions with regard to the issues listed below in the case of separation or death?

	NOT APPLICABLE	NEVER DISCUSSED THIS ISSUE	DISCUSSED IT AND HAVE AN INFORMAL <u>UNDERSTANDING</u>	DISCUSSED IT AND MADE <u>FORMAL LEGAL PROVISIONS</u>
a. Division of major household items: furniture, etc.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
b. Ownership of home	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
c. Rental of house/ apartment	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
d. Pension benefits	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
e. Tax benefits	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
f. Life insurance	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
g. Child support	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
h. Child custody	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
i. Personal couple contract	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
j. Made a will	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

15. Since you began living together with your cohabitant have you dated anyone else?

(1) YES

(2) NO

16. Has your cohabitant dated anyone else since you began living together?

(1) YES

(2) NO

17. Do you plan to have any (or any more) children together in the future?

(1) YES

(2) NO

(3) NOT SURE

18. If pregnancy would occur now, what would you want to do?

(1) WOULD HAVE AN ABORTION

(2) WOULD HAVE THE BABY AND GET MARRIED

(3) WOULD HAVE THE BABY AND CONTINUE TO COHABIT

(4) DON'T KNOW, NOT SURE

(5) OTHER (Please specify: _____.)

19. Below are listed some of the reasons why some people decide to live together. Thinking back about the time you made the decision to live together, how important was each item to you in making that decision? The answers to each one form a continuum ranging from very important on the left to very unimportant on the right. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. But please make sure to answer all items by checking off one number for each.

	<u>VERY</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>FAIRLY</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>NEITHER</u> <u>IMPORTANT</u> <u>NOR</u> <u>UNIMP.</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY</u> <u>UNIMPORTANT</u>	<u>FAIRLY</u> <u>UNIMP.</u>	<u>VERY</u> <u>UNIM-</u> <u>PORTANT</u>
a. To find out if the relationship would work	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
b. Practical convenience of living together	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

19. (continued)

c. To find stability	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
d. To have a home life	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
e. To find emotional security	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
f. To express our love for one another	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
g. To avoid loneliness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
h. To find self-fulfillment	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
i. To have somebody to grow old with	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
j. To find sense of belonging	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
k. To have sex regularly	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
l. To have companionship	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

20.* When you are thinking about your relationship with your cohabitant, how often do you wonder: "Am I getting as much out of this relationship as I am putting into it?" (CHECK OFF ONE NUMBER THAT EXPRESSES BEST YOUR ANSWER.)

NEVER	SELDOM	OCCASIONALLY	SOMETIMES	FAIRLY OFTEN	VERY OFTEN	ALL THE TIME
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

21. Since you began to live together with your cohabitant, have you ever thought seriously about leaving him/her? (CHECK OFF ONE NUMBER THAT EXPRESSES BEST YOUR ANSWER.)

NEVER	SELDOM	OCCASIONALLY	SOMETIMES	FAIRLY OFTEN	VERY OFTEN	ALL THE TIME
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

22. Below are listed some of the reasons why some people decide to get married. How important is each one to you as a reason that might make you decide to get married? The answers form a continuum ranging from very important on the left to very unimportant on the right. Please make sure to answer all items by checking off one number for each one.

	<u>VERY IMPORTANT</u>	<u>FAIRLY IMPORTANT</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT</u>	<u>NEITHER IMPORTANT NOR UNIMP.</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY UNIMPORTANT</u>	<u>FAIRLY UNIMP.</u>	<u>VERY UNIM- PORTANT</u>
a. Pressure from parents	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
b. Pregnancy or desire to have children	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
c. Pressure from my cohabitant	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
d. To find more a sense of belonging	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
e. To have a better home life	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
f. If the relationship is a good one, the next step is marriage	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
g. To find more emotional security	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
h. To avoid loneliness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
i. To find more self-fulfillment	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
j. Societal pressure; to get married is "more proper"	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
k. To have somebody to grow old with	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
l. To find more stability	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
m. For practical convenience	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
n. To express our love for one another	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

22. (continued)

- | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| o. | To express our commitment
with a public ceremony | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| p. | For more legal securities | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |

23* Since you are living together at the moment, what are your intentions toward legal marriage? Read each one of the following possibilities carefully and choose one that describes best how you feel about marriage.

- (1) WE HAVE ALREADY MADE DEFINITE PLANS TO GET MARRIED.
- (2) WE WILL VERY LIKELY MARRY IN THE FUTURE WHEN IT IS MORE CONVENIENT FOR BOTH OF US.
- (3) WE WILL LIKELY MARRY IN THE FUTURE WHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS PROVEN TO BE A STABLE AND A GOOD ONE.
- (4) THE MAIN REASON WHY WE MIGHT GET MARRIED IS TO HAVE CHILDREN TOGETHER.
- (5) WE MAY MARRY SOME DAY, BUT I DO NOT FEEL MARRIAGE IS NECESSARY FOR MY FUTURE HAPPINESS.
- (6) I DO NOT PERSONALLY WANT TO CONSIDER MARRIAGE AT THIS TIME.
- (7) I AM AGAINST MARRIAGE IN PRINCIPLE, AND DO NOT EVER WANT TO BE MARRIED.

24. When disagreements or arguments arise between you and your cohabitant, do they usually result in...
(CHECK OFF ONE):

- (1) AGREEMENT BY MUTUAL GIVE AND TAKE
- (2) YOUR GIVING IN
- (3) YOUR COHABITANT GIVING IN
- (4) NEITHER GIVING IN
- (5) WE NEVER OR HARDLY EVER DISAGREE

25. Below are listed circumstances under which people might decide to break off a relationship. For each one, indicate how much chance there is, after having tried to do something about it, that you would leave your cohabitant under those circumstances. The answers form a continuum ranging from you would most definitely leave on the left to you would most definitely not leave on the right. Check off one number for each item.

	DEFINITELY LEAVE	PROBABLY LEAVE	MIGHT LEAVE	NOT SURE	MIGHT NOT LEAVE	PROBABLY NOT LEAVE	DEFINITELY NOT LEAVE
a. Your cohabitant dated others	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
b. <u>You</u> dated others	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
c. Your cohabitant had sexual relations with other(s)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
d. <u>You</u> had sexual relations with other(s)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
e. Your cohabitant would become too dependent on you	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
f. <u>You</u> would become too dependent on your cohabitant	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
g. You felt your cohabitant was too dominant and had too much control	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
h. <u>You</u> dominated your cohabitant too much	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
i. Sexual incompatibility	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
j. Lack of trust, or loss of trust	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

26. Thinking back about the time you began to live together, did you want your relationship to develop into...
(CHOOSE ONE):

- (1) A PERMANENT ONE
- (2) A TEMPORARY ONE
- (3) WAS UNSURE ABOUT IT, IT WOULD DEPEND
- (4) DID NOT THINK ABOUT IT AT THE TIME

27. And how do you feel now, considering both the good and not-so-good things about your relationship, would you say... (CHOOSE ONE):

- (1) I WANT OUR RELATIONSHIP TO BE A PERMANENT ONE
(GO TO QUESTION 28)
- (2) I HAVE NOT MADE UP MY MIND OR I DON'T KNOW WHETHER WE
WILL STAY TOGETHER OR NOT (SKIP TO QUESTION 30)
- (3) I AM ENDING OR I AM THINKING OF ENDING THE RELATION-
SHIP (SKIP TO QUESTION 31)

28. Since you want your relationship to be a permanent one, on a scale from 1 to 10, how much chance do you think there is that the two of you will stay together? (CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

Chances out of 10: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

29. And how committed are you yourself to staying together?

- (1) SOMEWHAT COMMITTED
- (2) FAIRLY STRONGLY COMMITTED
- (3) RATHER STRONGLY COMMITTED
- (4) VERY STRONGLY COMMITTED
- (5) COMPLETELY COMMITTED

SKIP
TO
QUESTION
#31

30.* Since you have not made up your mind, or you don't know whether you will stay together, would you say... (CHOOSE ONE) :

- (1) I WANT TO DEVELOP A LASTING RELATIONSHIP BUT I AM NOT SURE IF WE WILL BE ABLE TO STAY TOGETHER.
- (2) I HAVE A "LET'S SEE" ATTITUDE TO TEST THE RELATIONSHIP AND STAY TOGETHER AS LONG AS IT IS SATISFYING FOR BOTH OF US.
- (3) I HAVE A "LET'S SEE" ATTITUDE TO TEST THE RELATIONSHIP AND STAY TOGETHER AS LONG AS IT IS SATISFYING FOR ME.
- (4) I DO NOT THINK THAT I WANT TO LIVE TOGETHER INDEFINITELY, AND I SEE OUR RELATIONSHIP MAINLY AS A TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENT.

31. Everything considered, how happy has your cohabiting relationship been for you? (CHECK OFF ONE NUMBER THAT EXPRESSES BEST YOUR ANSWER) :

EXTRA- ORDINARILY HAPPY (1)	DECIDEDLY HAPPY (2)	HAPPY (3)	SOMEWHAT HAPPY AND UNHAPPY (4)	SOMEWHAT UNHAPPY (5)	DECIDEDLY UNHAPPY (6)	EXTREMELY UNHAPPY (7)
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32. The next pages of this questionnaire contain statements regarding a variety of issues with which some people agree and others disagree. The answers form a continuum ranging from strongly agree on the left to neither agree nor disagree in the middle to strongly disagree on the right. For each item mentioned CHECK OFF ONE NUMBER that best expresses your degree of agreement or disagreement. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers but please make sure not to skip any items.

	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>SOME- WHAT AGREE</u>	<u>NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE</u>	<u>SOME- WHAT DISAGREE</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u>	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1) I have to do more than my fair share of family tasks and duties.							

32. (continued)

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 2) I feel useless at times. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 3) It is all right to live together indefinitely without getting married. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 4) There is a lot of competition between my cohabitant and myself, and we often try to outdo each other. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 5) One ought to overlook sexual infidelities in isolated instances. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 6) It is all right for a couple to keep their finances separate. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 7) When my cohabitant is not around, I often feel so incomplete I don't know what to do with myself. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 8) At times I think I am no good at all. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 9) In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average person is getting worse. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 10) It is frightening to be responsible for the development of a little child. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 11) I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd like. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 12) I can feel right without
always having to please others. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 13) Marriage is like a secure
haven, where husband and wife
can find peace together. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 14) In a good couple relationship
the two partners mean every-
thing to one another. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 15) Sometimes I feel all alone
in the world. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 16) It is difficult for me to
say "no" to my cohabitant
even if I do not agree. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 17) I could possibly be roman-
tically involved with more
than one person at the
same time. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 18) It is all right for a cohabi-
ting couple to have children
without getting married. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 19) There are so many decisions
that have to be made today
that sometimes I could just
"blow up". | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 20) I feel that in issues that
mostly concern myself, I
should make my own decisions
even though my cohabitant
might not agree with me. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 21) I feel that personal freedom is a necessary ingredient for a successful couple relationship. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 22) There's little use writing to public officials because they really aren't interested in the problems of the average person. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 23) I could not possibly ever have as satisfying a relationship as I have now with my present cohabitant. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 24) I try to do what others want me to do, even if they don't play a very important role in my life. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 25) Sometimes I feel trapped in my relationship with my cohabitant. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 26) For those who are married there is no justification for having sexual relationships with anyone other than one's spouse. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 27) To have children is the main purpose of marriage. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 28) I find it hard to be by myself without my cohabitant. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 29) Living with my cohabitant is one of the most important things in my life. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 30) I feel that self-sacrifice is a necessary ingredient to make a couple relationship work. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 31) I routinely set apart private time for myself. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 32) The marriage ceremony is just a legal formality. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 33) In life an individual should for the most part make his or her own decisions attempting to resist being influenced by others. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 34) *I feel that my cohabitant quite often does not understand my feelings. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 35) *Sometimes I feel I am too involved in my relationship with my cohabitant and it leaves me with a lack of opportunity to be with others. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 36) *I do not feel comfortable spending the money earned by my cohabitant. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 37) It is important to me to marry within a religious ceremony. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 38) For those who live together as an unmarried couple, there is no justification for having sexual relations with anyone other than one's partner. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |

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|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 39) I find my completion in my cohabitant. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 40) *I feel my cohabitant is entitled to certain evenings out with his/her friends of either sex. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 41) Marriage helps to provide a more stable and secure life for its participants. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 42) It is important for people who function as a couple to do things together as much as possible. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 43) I feel panicky and empty when I think of the possibility of living without my cohabitant. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 44) *My cohabitant's caring for me exerts a kind of restrictive power over me. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |

And finally we would like some background information for statistical purposes only. We would like to compare the attitudes of different groups. For example, we are interested whether younger people differ in their opinions about living together unmarried from those who are older. Please remember that your answers are completely confidential. We appreciate your honest and accurate answers to these questions.

33. What is your age? _____ YEARS

34. What is your sex? (1) FEMALE (2) MALE

35. What was the highest level you completed in school?

- (1) SOME HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS
- (2) HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
- (3) TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
- (4) 1 TO 3 YEARS OF COLLEGE
- (5) COLLEGE GRADUATION
- (6) HIGHER DEGREE

36. Do you consider yourself to be:

- (1) PROTESTANT
- (2) ROMAN CATHOLIC
- (3) JEWISH
- (4) NON-RELIGIOUS
- (5) OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY: _____)

37. On the average, how often do you attend religious services?

- (1) MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK
- (2) ABOUT ONCE A WEEK
- (3) A FEW TIMES A MONTH
- (4) EVERY FEW MONTHS
- (5) ONLY ON HIGH HOLY DAYS OR SPECIAL OCCASIONS
- (6) LESS OFTEN
- (7) NEVER

38. Are your parents:

- (1) STILL LIVING TOGETHER
- (2) SEPARATED
- (3) DIVORCED
- (4) ONE OR BOTH PARENTS DECEASED--NO REMARRIAGE
- (5) ONE PARENT DECEASED--ONE PARENT REMARRIED

39. How often do you visit with your (closest-dwelling) parent(s)?

- (1) ABOUT ONCE A WEEK
- (2) A FEW TIMES A MONTH
- (3) ABOUT ONCE A MONTH
- (4) A FEW TIMES A YEAR
- (5) LESS OFTEN
- (6) BOTH PARENTS DECEASED

40. And what is the approximate distance to your (closest-dwelling) parent(s)?

- (1) WE LIVE IN SAME HOUSE
- (2) WE LIVE IN SAME TOWN
- (3) WITHIN 20 MILES
- (4) WITHIN 50 MILES
- (5) WITHIN 100 MILES
- (6) WITHIN 500 MILES
- (7) MORE THAN 500 MILES AWAY

41. Thinking about the marriage of your parents, who would you say was more dominant—your father or your mother—while you were living with them? (CHECK OFF ONE NUMBER):

FATHER DOMINANT			NEITHER FATHER NOR MOTHER	MOTHER DOMINANT		
VERY (1)	FAIRLY (2)	SLIGHTLY (3)		SLIGHTLY (5)	FAIRLY (6)	VERY (7)

42. And how happy (was/is) their marriage?

EXTRAORDINARILY HAPPY	DECIDEDLY HAPPY	HAPPY	SOMEWHAT HAPPY AND UNHAPPY	SOMEWHAT UNHAPPY	DECIDEDLY UNHAPPY	EXTREMELY UNHAPPY
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

43. What kind of work did your father do when you last lived at home, or before he retired? (BE SPECIFIC:)

44. What kind of business or organization was that in? (BE SPECIFIC:) _____

45. Did your mother work outside the home while you were growing up?

(1) YES. (What kind of work did she do? BE SPECIFIC:) _____

(What kind of business or organization was that in? BE SPECIFIC:) _____

(2) NO.

46. What kind of work do you do? (BE SPECIFIC:) _____

47. What kind of business or organization is that in? (BE SPECIFIC:) _____

48. What kind of work does your cohabitant do? (BE SPECIFIC:) _____

49. What kind of business or organization is that in? (BE SPECIFIC:) _____

50. Considering all sources of income and all salaries, what was—not just your income—but your total household income in 1979—before deductions for taxes or anything?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) UNDER \$8,000 | (2) \$8,000 to \$11,999 | (3) \$12,000 to \$15,999 | (4) \$16,000 to \$19,999 |
| (5) \$20,000 to \$24,999 | (6) \$25,000 to \$29,999 | (7) \$30,000 to \$34,999 | (8) \$35,000 to \$39,999 |
| (9) \$40,000 to \$44,999 | (10) \$45,000 to \$49,999 | (11) \$50,000 OR MORE | |

51. And how much of your household income was your contribution, based on your salary and your other sources of income?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| (0) I DID NOT HAVE ANY INCOME IN 1979 | | | |
| (1) UNDER \$4,000 | (2) \$4,000 TO \$7,999 | (3) \$8,000 to \$11,999 | (4) \$12,000 to \$15,999 |
| (5) \$16,000 to \$19,999 | (6) \$20,000 to \$24,999 | (7) \$25,000 to \$29,999 | (8) \$30,000 to \$34,999 |
| (9) \$35,000 to \$39,999 | (10) \$40,000 to \$44,999 | (11) \$45,000 to \$49,999 | (12) \$50,000 OR MORE |

52. Are any others living with you and your cohabitant including children, friends, etc.? We do not want to know their names, only their relationship to you, their sex and age.

<u>Relationship to You</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>
(1) _____		
(2) _____		
(3) _____		
(4) _____		
(5) _____		
(6) _____		

53. And, lastly, where would you place yourself on a liberal-conservative scale? Would you consider yourself to be... (CHOOSE ONE):

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) VERY CONSERVATIVE | (2) FAIRLY CONSERVATIVE | (3) SLIGHTLY CONSERVATIVE | (4) MODERATE, MIDDLE OF THE ROAD |
| (5) SLIGHTLY LIBERAL | (6) FAIRLY LIBERAL | (7) VERY LIBERAL | |

*Question adapted from questionnaire developed by C.L. Cole (1977).

APPENDIX B

List of Hypotheses

COHABITANTS IN COMPARISON WITH MARRIEDS

I POSITION

In general, the cohabitants are more autonomous. More specifically:

1. They visit their parents less frequently.
2. They participate less politically, and they are more liberal in their choice of political parties.
3. They are less involved religiously.

II STRUCTURE-FUNCTION

(Dyadic history)

1. The cohabitants did not know their partners as long as the marrieds before they began to live together.
2. They are more often divorced.

(Dyadic financial maintenance)

3. They have a lesser number of joint financial arrangements.
4. They more often keep their finances separate.
5. They more often feel that it is all right for a couple to keep their finances separate.
6. They are less comfortable spending their partner's earnings.

(Dyadic relationship quality)

Dyadic happiness

7. They are similar to married couples in degree of happiness.

Dyadic commitment

8. They more often feel that the relationship might not be permanent.
9. They think that there is less chance that they will stay together.
10. They are less committed to staying together.
11. They more often think about leaving their partners.
12. They are more likely to leave their partners when:
 - a. they or their partners become too dependent
 - b. they or their partners become too dominant
 - c. there is sexual incompatibility
 - d. there is a lack of trust or a loss of trust.
 They are less likely to leave their partners when:
 - e. they or their partners date others
 - f. they or their partners have sexual relationships with others.

(Dyadic balance of power)

13. They more often think: "Am I getting as much out of this as I am putting into it?"
14. They more often feel that they have to do more than their fair share in family tasks and duties.
15. They more often feel competitive with their partners.
16. They more often feel that they give in when arguments arise.
17. They more often feel that partners' caring exerts a kind of restrictive power over them.
18. They more often feel that they are too involved in the relationship with their partners and it leaves them with a lack of opportunity to be with others.
19. They more often feel trapped in their relationship with their partners.
20. They are more concerned about setting apart private time for themselves.

(Attitude toward children)

21. Plan less often to have (more) children.
22. If pregnant, they are likely to have an abortion.

(Attitude toward marriage)

23. In general, the cohabitants consider most reasons to marry as less important. More specifically, the following reasons are less important to them:
 - a. to find more a sense of belonging
 - b. to have a better home life
 - c. to find more emotional security
 - d. to find more self-fulfillment
 - e. to find more stability
 - f. to avoid loneliness
 - g. societal, parental and/or partner pressure
 - h. to have somebody to grow old with
 - i. to express our love for one another
 - j. to express our commitment in a public ceremony.
 The following reasons are more important to them:
 - k. pregnancy or desire to have children
 - l. more legal securities
 - m. practical convenience.

24. In general, the cohabitants de-evaluate marriage as an institution. More specifically, they do agree less with:
 - a. marriage helps to provide a more stable and secure life for its participants.
 - b. marriage is like a secure haven, where husband and wife can find peace together.
 - c. it is important to marry within a religious ceremony.
 More specifically, they do agree more with:
 - d. the marriage ceremony is just a legal formality.
 - e. to have children is the main purpose of marriage.
 - f. it is alright for a cohabiting couple to have children without getting married.
 - g. it is alright to live together indefinitely without getting married.

(Sexual fidelity/exclusiveness)

25. In general, the cohabitants have more liberal sexual attitudes. More specifically, they do agree less with:
 - a. for those who live together as an unmarried couple, there is no justification for having sexual relations with anyone other than one's partner.
 - b. for those who are married, there is no justification for having sexual relationships with anyone other than one's spouse.
 More specifically, they do agree more with:
 - c. one ought to overlook sexual infidelities in isolated instances.
 - d. I could possibly be romantically involved with more than one person at the same time.
26. They have dated others more often since they began to live together.

(Liberalism/conservatism)

27. They are more liberal.

(Anomie)

28. In general, the cohabitants are higher in anomie, but not significantly. More specifically, they do agree more with:
 - a. In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average person is getting worse.

- b. There's little use writing to public officials because they aren't really interested in the problems of the average person.

(Self-esteem)

- 29. In general, the cohabitants have less self-esteem, but not significantly. More specifically, they do agree more with:
 - a. I feel useless at times.
 - b. At times I think I am no good at all.

(Alienation)

- 30. In general, the cohabitants are more alienated, but not significantly. More specifically, they do agree more with:
 - Powerlessness-dimension
 - a. It is frightening to be responsible for the development of a little child.
 - b. There are so many decisions that have to be made today that sometimes I could just "blow up".
 - Social isolation-dimension
 - c. I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd like.
 - d. Sometimes I feel all alone in the world.
 - e. I feel that my cohabitant/spouse quite often does not understand my feelings.

III PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE

(Degree of Individuation)

In general, the cohabitants are more individuated. More specifically, they do agree less with:

Dimension I: Dyadic emotional dependency (partner-identification)

- 1. When my cohabitant/spouse is not around I often feel so incomplete I don't know what to do with myself.
- 2. I find it hard to be by myself without my cohabitant/spouse.
- 3. I feel panicky and empty when I think of the possibility of living without my cohabitant/spouse.

Dimension II: Dyadic idealization (couple-identification)

- 4. Living with my cohabitant/spouse is one of the most important things in my life.
- 5. It is important for people who function as a couple to do things together as much as possible.
- 6. In a good couple relationship, the two partners mean everything to one another.
- 7. I find my completion in my cohabitant/spouse.
- 8. I could not possibly ever have as satisfying a relationship as I have now with my present cohabitant/spouse.
- 9. I feel that self-sacrifice is a necessary ingredient to make a couple relationship work.

Dimension III: Autonomy (self-identification)

- 10. It is difficult for me to say "no" to my cohabitant/spouse even if I do not agree.

- 11. I try to do what others want me to do, even if they don't play a very important part in my life.

More specifically, they do agree more with:

- 12. I feel that personal freedom is a necessary ingredient for a successful couple relationship.
- 13. I feel my cohabitant/spouse is entitled to certain evenings out with his/her friends of either sex.
- 14. I can feel right without always having to please others.
- 15. In life an individual should for the most part make his or her own decisions attempting to resist being influenced by others.

16. I feel that in issues that mostly concern myself, I should make my own decisions even though my cohabitant/spouse might not agree with me.

APPENDIX C

Tables 1-15

Table 1: Statistical comparisons of some characteristics of the Dutch town of Amersfoort, the U.S. town of Marblehead, and the city of Salem

	Amersfoort	Salem & M'head	Salem	M'head
Land-area (square miles)	10.45 ¹	12.39	7.99	4.40
Population	78,302 ¹ (1978) ²	58,346 (1980)	38,220 (1980)	20,126 (1980)
No. of housing units in 1978 (U.S. 1980)	26,936 ¹	24,184	15,879	8,305
Persons/square mile	7,493	4,709	4,783	4,574
Persons/housing unit	2.91	2.41	2.41	2.42
Housing-% owner occupied	29.4 (1980)	59.1 (1970)	46.0 (1970)	72.2 (1970)
Established year	1259		1630	1649
Type of government	Mayor & Wethouders		Mayor & Council	Select(wo)- men & Town- meeting
Median income		\$11,023 (1970)	\$9,861 (1970)	\$12,184 (1970)
	\$15,000	\$14,000	\$12,000	\$16,000
	f38,000	f35,000	f30,000	f40,000
	(1976)	(1976)	(1976)	(1976)
	(estimate)	(estimate)	(estimate)	(estimate)
<u>(Education of male employees in Amersfoort)*</u>				
Middle-level education	10.0			
Higher-level education	10.0			
	(1971) (approx.)			
Completed 4 yrs. college or more (persons 25 yrs or older) (In 1970)		19.1	6.9	31.2

(Occupation, persons 16 years or older, in Salem and Marblehead)*

Professional, techn. and kindred	20.3	13.9	26.8
Managers, administrators	12.4	6.6	18.1
Salesworkers	10.6	7.6	13.6
Clerical workers	19.1	19.2	19.1
Craftsmen, foremen	10.4	13.2	7.6
Operatives	14.2	22.7	5.8
Laborers	2.5	3.4	1.5
Service workers	8.8	13.1	6.5
Private household workers	.7	.3	1.0
(Total = 100%)	(1970)	(1970)	(1970)

(Occupation of male heads of households and singles in Amersfoort)*

Self-employed	10.0
Higher level employees	8.0
Middle level employees	20.0
Lower level employees	10.0
Laborers (craftsmen, foremen, and operatives)	32.0
Other	1.0
Unemployed	18.0
(Total = 100 %)	(1971) (approx.)

(Employment by type of industry)*

Agriculture, fishing	2.0	.4	.2	.5
Manufacturing	18.0	30.3	34.2	26.3
Wholesale and retail ³	22.0	31.5	29.2	33.5
Finance, insur. (real estate)	10.0	5.0	4.9	5.1
Transportation (utilities)	6.0	3.6	3.2	2.9
Construction	10.0	6.0	3.7	8.2
Other service industries	32.0	24.1	24.6	23.6
(Total = 100%)	(1976)	(1974)	(1974)	(1974)
	(approx.)			

(Employment)

No. of firms (vestigingen)	3,660	1,230	886	334
No. of employees	35,523	28,601	15,910	2,691
	(1976)	(1974)	(1974)	(1974)
Median age in years		32.3	30.9	33.6
		(1970)	(1970)	(1970)
Population aged 20-39 years*	31.0	25.0	25.9	24.0
	(1978)	(1980)	(1980)	(1980)
Married adult population*	47.5	62.7	59.3	66.1
	(1980)	(1980)	(1980)	(1980)
Non-religious*	23.8			
	(1978)			

(Political party affiliation)*

Registered Democrats		36.7	53.9	19.5
Registered Republicans		28.3	15.7	40.8
Unregistered voters		35.0	30.4	39.7
(Total = 100%)		(1972)	(1972)	(1972)

(Political party vote)*

C.D.A. (Christian Democrats)	29.4
P. v.d. A. (Socialists)	25.6
V.V.D. (Conservatives)	19.2
C.P.N./P.S.P./P.P.R. (Small radical left)	6.3
S.G.P./G.P.V. (Small religious right)	4.3
D'66 (Progressive liberal)	11.6
Other	3.6
(Total = 100%)	(1981)

*All figures in this category are in percentages.

¹Two communities, Hoogland and Hooglanderveen, at some distance from the town of Amersfoort but belonging to this latter municipality, are not included in these figures. Their much lower population density rates would obscure the relatively high density of the town of Amersfoort itself. The total population of Amersfoort in 1978 including these two communities was 87221 with an average of 4.001 persons per square mile, which is lower than the rate for Salem and Marblehead combined.

²Numbers in parentheses refer to the years in which the statistics were gathered.

³The figures for Amersfoort include those who are employed in entertainment industries and restaurants (horeca) as well.

Table 2: A comparison of some social-economic characteristics of cohabitants and matching marrieds in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>						
<u>Means:</u>						
Age (in years)	27.28	27.47	n.s.	29.25	29.77	n.s.
Occupational Prestige (S.I.O.P.score*)	51.61	49.73	n.s.	51.00	51.87	n.s.
Income (in Dollars)	\$9,600	\$11,380	.01	\$13,873	\$16,500	.01
<hr/>						
<u>Percentages:</u>						
<u>(Education)</u>						
Some high school or less	7.0	7.0		1.6	0.0	
Technical/vocational training	4.0	14.0		0.0	6.3	
High school graduation or middle-level professional training and/or 1 to 3 years of college	41.0	45.0		37.5	32.9	
Higher-level professional training college or more	48.0	34.0		60.0	59.4	
(Total = 100%)			n.s.			n.s.
<u>(Occupation)</u>						
University or higher professionals	49.0	41.0		47.5	44.4	
Administrators, managers	22.9	30.5		24.6	25.4	
Commerce, sales workers	4.2	6.3		6.6	7.9	
Service workers	5.2	7.4		4.9	6.3	
Craftsmen, foremen, operatives, laborers	7.3	13.7		8.2	15.9	
Other: agrarian, fisherman, student, military serviceman	11.4	1.1		8.2	0.0	
(Total = 100%)						
Unemployed	4.0	5.0	n.s.	4.7	1.6	n.s.

<u>(Religion)</u>					
Protestant	11.3	35.3	19.0	23.8	
Roman Catholic	5.2	26.3	22.2	44.4	
Other	11.3	7.1	28.6	17.5	
Non-religious/non-church member	72.2	31.3	30.2	14.3	
(Total = 100%)			.001		.001
<u>(Attendance religious services)</u>					
Once a month or more	3.0	27.2	0.0	22.2	
Every few months	2.0	6.1	9.7	3.2	
High holidays, special occasions	17.2	22.2	14.5	28.6	
Less often	10.1	8.1	41.9	33.3	
Never	67.7	36.4	33.9	12.7	
(Total = 100%)			<.001		<.001
<u>(Politics)</u>					
Not a member of a political party	86.0	94.0			
If elections, would vote for:					
V.V.D. (Conservatives)	6.1	5.0			
D' 66 (Liberal/progressive)	19.2	33.0			
C.D.A. (Christian Democrats)	3.0	23.0			
P.v.d.A. (Socialists)	32.3	12.0			
P.S.P./P.P.R./C.P.N. (small left)	23.2	7.0			
Would not want to vote, or does					
not know whether would vote or not	15.1	18.0			
Other	1.0	2.0			
(Total = 100%)					
<u>(Liberalism/conservatism)</u>					
Very to slightly conservative			10.3	23.3	
Moderate, middle of the road			20.5	26.7	
Very to slightly liberal			69.3	50.0	
(Total = 100%)					.05

<u>(Household composition)</u>						
Couples with children	4.0	4.0	n.s.	18.8	12.5	n.s.
Couples with other relatives	2.0	0.0	n.s.	0.0	0.0	n.s.
<u>(Parental background)</u>						
Parents divorced	15.0	2.0	.001	22.8	11.5	.001
Visit parents once a week	30.0	53.0	<.01	31.3	50.0	<.05
Parents live in the same town	48.0	62.0	n.s.	28.1	39.7	<.01
Parents' marriage:						
- happy to extra-ordinarily happy	47.4	82.7		39.6	57.9	
- happy to unhappy	35.1	11.2		34.9	26.6	
- somewhat to extremely unhappy	17.5	6.2		25.4	15.7	
(Total = 100%)			<.001			.05
Parental dominance:						
- father more dominant	45.4	41.5		44.4	44.5	
- mother more dominant	29.9	33.4		38.0	30.1	
- neither dominant	24.7	25.3		17.5	25.4	
(Total = 100%)			n.s.			n.s.
Mean occupational prestige score						
- father	51.50	48.02	<.05	49.95	46.60	n.s.
Mean occupational prestige score						
- mother	41.88	35.00	n.s.	45.37	43.41	n.s.
Respondents with mothers who worked outside the home	17.2	14.0	n.s.	42.9	54.7	n.s.

*S.I.O.P. score is based on the Standard International Occupational Prestige scale developed by Treiman (1977). The score for each occupation can range from a minimum of -2 points to a maximum of 92 points, and the mean scale score = 43.3 points.

Table 3: A comparison of dyadic relationship characteristics of cohabitants and matching marrieds in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<u>(Dyadic history)</u>						
Mean number of years cohabitated/married	3.72	4.33	.05	2.92	3.42	n.s.
Mean number of years known each other before cohabiting/marrying	1.80	3.74	<.001	1.55	3.57	<.001
<u>Percentages:</u>						
Ever cohabited with other than current cohabitant/spouse	16.0	0.0	<.001	24.2	15.6	n.s.
Ever married before	10.0	2.0	<.01	27.0	10.9	.01
Cohabitants' current marital status:						
Single	90.0			73.0		
Divorced	10.0			25.4		
Widowed	0.0			1.6		
(Total = 100%)						
<u>(Housing)</u>						
Owners	30.0	64.0		19.0	59.0	
Tenants	70.0	36.0		81.0	41.0	
(Total = 100%)						
Of the cohabs whose home is owned: co-owners	60.0		.001	66.7		.001
one owner	40.0			33.3		
(Total = 100%)						
Of the cohabs whose home is rented:						
both signed lease	38.2			40.4		
one signed lease	51.5			15.4		
neither signed lease	10.3			44.2		
(Total = 100%)						

Maintain separate living facility	2.0			9.4		
Spent at least 5 nights together	100.0			98.4		
<u>(Finances)</u>						
Separate	6.0	3.0		46.8	1.6	
Joint	42.0	86.0		19.4	59.4	
Some things separate, some joined	52.0	11.0		33.9	39.1	
(Total = 100%			<.001			<.001
<u>(It is all right for a couple to keep their finances separate): score range 1-7;</u>						
the <u>higher</u> the score the <u>more</u> agreement						
(mean score)	(4.6)	(4.0)	<.05	(5.4)	((4.5)	.01
Percent: somewhat to strongly agree	60.0	47.0		78.1	56.2	
<u>(Do not feel comfortable spending money earned by partner): score range 1-7;</u>						
the <u>higher</u> the score the <u>less</u> agreement						
(mean score)	(4.7)	(5.9)	<.001	(3.9)	(5.8)	<.001
Percent: somewhat to strongly agree	19.0	2.0)		58.1	6.5	
<u>(Jointly obtained items):</u>						
Savings account	23.0	66.0	<.001	12.5	85.9	<.001
Checking account	31.0	85.0	<.001	25.0	93.8	<.001
Insurance policy	54.0	72.0	<.05	15.6	54.7	<.001
Car	45.0			20.3		
Major household items, furniture	83.0			59.4		

<u>(Cohabs who have (in) formal provisions re.)</u>				
Division hsehold items	- informal understanding	56.6		46.0
	- legal provision	3.1		0.0
Ownership home	- informal understanding	23.0		25.0
	- legal provision	70.0		50.0
Rental of home	- informal understanding	30.0		28.8
	- legal provision	2.9		0.0
Pension benefit	- informal understanding	6.7		6.3
	- legal provision	0.0		0.0
Tax benefit	- informal understanding	17.4		16.1
	- legal provision	7.6		0.0
Life insurance	- informal understanding	22.0		11.9
	- legal provision	8.8		17.2
Couple contract	- informal understanding	13.2		8.2
	- legal provision	7.7		0.0
Made a will	- informal understanding	29.8		15.9
	- legal provision	12.8		9.5
Child support	- informal understanding	2.2		3.3
	- legal provision	0.0		0.0
Child custody	- informal understanding	3.4		6.6
	- legal provision	1.1		0.0
<u>(Cohabitation, who knows, who approves)</u>	(knows)	(fully approve)	(knows)	(fully approve)
Parents	100.0	68.4	93.8	41.7
Friends	100.0	96.7	97.0	91.9
Landlord	79.7	94.7	73.1	83.3
Employer	83.5	82.8	75.0	87.0
Fellow-employees	93.0	82.4	89.1	94.4
Relatives	97.0	72.3	85.9	52.7
Neighbors	82.6	71.2	75.0	56.8
Nobody, hardly anybody knows about our cohabitation	0.0		1.6	

Table 4: A comparison of some commitment measures of cohabitants and matching marrieds in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>						
<u>(When first cohabiting wanted the relation- ship to be)</u>						
A permanent one	61.0			50.0		
A temporary one	1.0			0.0		
Was unsure, would depend	16.0			31.2		
Did not think about it	22.0			18.8		
(Total = 100%)						
 <u>(Feelings now...want relationship/ marriage to be)</u>						
A permanent one	86.0	86.0		73.4	90.5	
Not made up mind, don't know whether will stay together	14.0	13.0		21.9	6.3	
Ending, think of ending it	0.0	1.0		4.7	3.2	
(Total = 100%)						
(mean score) range 1-3; the <u>higher</u> the the score the <u>less</u> the commitment	(1.14)	(1.15)	n.s.	(1.32)	(1.13)	n.s.
 <u>(Those who wanted a permanent relationship, Degree of commitment)</u>						
Somewhat committed	4.7	2.4		0.0	0.0	
Fairly strongly committed	11.6	2.4		2.0	1.8	
Rather strongly committed	18.6	4.7		12.8	1.8	
Very strongly committed	24.4	23.5		46.8	21.1	
Completely committed	40.7	67.1		38.3	75.4	
(Total = 100%)						
(mean score) range 1-5; the higher the score the more committed	(3.86)	(4.61)	<.01	(4.30)	(4.74)	<.01

(Those who wanted a permanent relationship

Chances out of 10 to succeed)

6 out of 10 or less	5.9	2.4	2.1	3.4
7 out of 10	10.6	2.4	12.8	5.2
8 out of 10	23.5	16.7	23.4	13.8
9 out of 10	23.5	23.8	34.0	32.8
10 out of 10	36.5	54.8	27.7	44.8

(Total = 100%)

(mean score) range 1-10; the higher

the score the more chance

(8.75)	(9.23)	<.05	(8.95)	(9.21)	n.s.
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(Happiness with cohabitation/marriage)

Extraordinarily happy	12.1	25.0	14.3	40.6
Decidedly happy	38.4	45.0	33.3	28.1
Happy	26.3	24.0	34.9	21.9
Somewhat happy and unhappy	23.2	6.0	15.9	6.3
More unhappy	0.0	0.0	1.6	3.2

(Total = 100%)

(mean score) range 1-7; the lower the

score the happier

(2.59)	(2.11)	<.01	(2.61)	(1.97)	.01
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(Thinking about leaving)

Never	37.0	72.0	21.9	53.1
Seldom	25.0	15.0	35.9	28.1
Occasionally	14.0	8.0	17.2	12.5
Sometimes	18.0	4.0	14.1	3.1
Fairly often	5.0	1.0	4.7	1.6
Very often or all the time	1.0	0.0	6.3	1.6

(Total = 100%)

(mean score) range 1-7; the lower the

score the less likely to leave

(2.33)	(1.47)	<.001	(2.64)	(1.79)	<.01
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(Will definitely, probably or might leave partner when)

(mean score) range 1-7; the lower the score the more likely to leave

Lack or loss of trust (mean score)	70.8 (2.70)	46.0 (3.80)	<.001	89.1 (1.97)	71.8 (2.91)	<.001
Partner sex with others (mean score)	50.5 (3.71)	60.0 (3.08)	<.05	62.6 (3.21)	81.3 (2.30)	<.01
Respondent sex with others (mean score)	40.5 (3.99)	56.6 (3.79)	<.05	54.6 (3.55)	57.8 (3.11)	n.s.
Sexual incompatibility (mean score)	27.2 (4.43)	24.0 (5.03)	<.05	51.6 (3.47)	28.1 (4.42)	<.01
Partner dated others (mean score)	39.4 (4.09)	38.0 (3.98)	n.s.	59.4 (3.47)	68.7 (2.97)	n.s.
Respondent dated others (mean score)	43.4 (3.95)	38.0 (4.10)	n.s.	50.0 (3.70)	53.2 (3.41)	n.s.
Partner too dominant (mean score)	42.8 (3.85)	20.3 (4.87)	<.001	63.5 (3.28)	35.9 (4.36)	<.001
Respondent too dominant (mean score)	27.8 (4.33)	8.2 (5.23)	.001	50.8 (3.75)	14.3 (5.15)	<.001
Partner too dependent (mean score)	24.0 (4.86)	9.0 (5.64)	.001	25.0 (4.64)	4.7 (5.64)	.001
Respondent too dependent (mean score)	21.4 (4.63)	14.0 (5.48)	<.001	23.8 (4.58)	9.4 (5.47)	<.01

Table 5: A comparison of reasons to cohabit in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>	<u>United States</u>	
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>			
<u>(Reasons to cohabit)</u>			
Percent: slightly to very important (mean scores) range 1-7; the <u>lower</u> the score the <u>more</u> important			
Have companionship (mean score)	91.8 (1.60)	86.0 (2.20)	.05
Express our love for one another (mean score)	78.6 (2.30)	84.0 (1.90)	n.s.
Find out if relationship would work (mean score)	58.8 (3.30)	73.4 (2.40)	<.01
Find emotional security (mean score)	56.2 (3.40)	65.6 (3.00)	<.05
Find stability (mean score)	52.1 (3.80)	62.5 (3.20)	<.05
Have a home life (mean score)	57.2 (3.50)	59.4 (3.10)	n.s.
Practical convenience (mean score)	52.0 (3.70)	67.2 (3.00)	<.05
Have sex regularly (mean score)	50.5 (3.60)	50.0 (3.90)	n.s.
Avoid loneliness (mean score)	43.9 (4.20)	40.6 (4.30)	n.s.
Find sense of belonging (mean score)	34.7 (4.60)	40.6 (4.60)	<.05
Have somebody to grow old with (mean score)	31.6 (4.50)	23.4 (5.00)	<.05
Find self-fulfillment (mean score)	31.9 (4.60)	29.7 (4.30)	n.s.

Table 6: A comparison of reasons for cohabitants and matching marrieds to marry in the Netherlands and in United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>						
<u>(Reason to marry)</u>						
Percent: slightly to very important (mean scores) range 1-7; the <u>lower</u> the score the <u>more</u> important						
Express our love for one another (mean score)	42.4 (4.51)	89.0 (1.73)	<.001	76.6 (2.74)	50.1 (3.46)	<.05
Pregnancy or desire to have children (mean score)	53.0 (3.59)	26.0 (4.99)	<.001	54.6 (3.63)	15.7 (5.64)	<.001
If the relationship is a good one, the next step is marriage (mean score)	24.0 (5.33)	69.7 (2.78)	<.001	68.8 (3.22)	42.2 (2.00)	.001
Pressure from partner (mean score)	35.6 (4.53)	15.3 (5.38)	.01	53.9 (3.85)	15.6 (5.60)	<.001
More legal securities (mean score)	51.0 (3.88)	35.0 (4.15)	n.s.	40.7 (4.22)	48.5 (3.83)	n.s.
Have somebody to grow old with (mean score)	24.3 (5.42)	51.0 (3.89)	<.001	39.1 (4.48)	57.8 (3.73)	.01
Find stability (mean score)	23.4 (5.40)	57.0 (3.56)	<.001	45.4 (4.14)	23.5 (4.86)	<.05
Find emotional security (mean score)	20.3 (5.52)	51.6 (3.67)	<.001	43.7 (4.17)	35.9 (4.56)	n.s.
Have a home life (mean score)	15.2 (5.68)	63.6 (3.19)	<.001	36.0 (4.28)	60.9 (3.49)	.01
Avoid loneliness (mean score)	13.2 (5.87)	36.7 (4.50)	<.001	25.1 (5.00)	40.6 (3.92)	<.01
Find self-fulfillment (mean score)	13.5 (5.87)	34.7 (4.35)	<.001	32.8 (4.47)	15.7 (5.44)	.01

Practical convenience (mean score)	30.9 (5.02)	25.0 (4.78)	n.s.	39.1 (4.27)	92.2 (1.64)	<.001
Express our commitment with a public ceremony (mean score)	24.3 (5.39)	58.0 (3.52)	<.001	39.1 (4.22)	17.2 (5.19)	<.05
Pressure from parents (mean score)	8.0 (6.31)	23.0 (5.32)	<.01	25.1 (5.58)	6.3 (6.13)	n.s.
Societal pressure: to get married is "more proper" (mean score)	4.0 (6.52)	15.1 (5.87)	<.01	29.7 (5.22)	37.5 (4.17)	<.01
Find sense of belonging (mean score)	19.3 (6.28)	27.6 (4.99)	<.001	25.9 (4.42)	42.2 (4.25)	n.s.

Table 7: A comparison of cohabitants and matching marrieds attitudes toward marriage in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>						
<u>(Attitudes toward marriage)</u>						
Percent: somewhat to strongly agree (mean scores) range 1-7; the <u>lower</u> the score the <u>less</u> in agreement						
Marriage helps to provide a more stable and secure life for its participants (mean score)	17.0 (2.68)	73.0 (5.01)	<.001	46.1 (4.10)	75.8 (5.50)	<.001
Marriage is like a secure haven, where husband and wife can find peace together (mean score)	6.0 (2.15)	50.0 (4.26)	<.001	18.8 (2.83)	57.8 (4.70)	<.001
The marriage ceremony is just a legal formality (mean score)	77.0 (2.39)	53.0 (3.63)	<.001	50.0 (3.91)	44.6 (4.31)	n.s.
It is important to me to marry within a religious ceremony (mean score)	7.0 (1.81)	38.0 (3.41)	<.001	20.7 (2.71)	39.7 (3.71)	<.05
To have children is the main purpose of marriage (mean score)	11.0 (2.09)	12.0 (2.22)	n.s.	11.0 (2.38)	3.1 (2.05)	n.s.
It is all right to live together indefinitely without getting married (mean score)	89.0 (6.16)	68.7 (5.15)	<.01	75.1 (5.34)	75.0 (5.42)	n.s.

Table 8: A comparison of intentions toward legal marriage of cohabitants in the Netherlands and in the United States; percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>	<u>United States</u>
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Cohab Couples (N = 32)
<hr/>		
(Intentions toward legal marriage)		
We have already made definite plans to get married	14.0	19.4
We will very likely marry in the future when it is more convenient for both of us	9.0	12.9
We will likely marry in the future when our relationship has proven to be a stable and good one	1.0	17.7
The main reason why we might get married is to have children together	24.0	4.8
We may marry someday, but I do not feel marriage is necessary for my future happiness	27.0	29.0
I do not personally want to consider marriage at this time	13.0	14.5
I am against marriage in principle, and do not ever want to be married	12.0	1.6
(Total = 100%)		

Table 9: A comparison of cohabitants and matching marrieds attitudes toward sexuality, dating, and having children in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>						
<u>(Attitudes toward sexuality)</u>						
Percent: somewhat to strongly agree/disagree (mean score) range 1-7; the <u>higher</u> the score the <u>more</u> liberal in sexual attitudes						
One ought to overlook sexual infidelities in isolated instances (percent agree) (mean score)	50.0 (4.20)	30.3 (3.29)	.01	53.1 (4.14)	34.4 (3.39)	n.s.
For those who live together as an unmarried couple, there is no justification for having sexual relations with anyone other than one's partner (percent disagree) (mean score)	66.0 (4.93)	35.0 (3.86)	.001	39.6 (3.82)	54.1 (4.53)	.01
For those who are married there is no justification for having sexual relations with anyone other than one's spouse (percent disagree) (mean score)	68.0 (5.09)	40.0 (3.92)	<.001	50.8 (4.21)	42.9 (3.73)	n.s.
I could possibly be romantically involved with more than one person at the same time (percent agree) (mean score)	24.5 (2.93)	11.1 (2.17)	.01	42.1 (3.70)	31.2 (2.91)	<.05 <.05
<u>(Dating since cohabitation/marriage)</u>						
Respondents who dated since cohabitation/marriage	24.2	3.0	<.001	15.6	3.1	<.05
Respondents believe partner/spouse dated	19.6	3.0	<.01	6.6	4.7	n.s.

(Attitudes toward having children)

Percent: somewhat to strongly agree

(mean score) range 1-7; the higher the score the more in agreement

It is alright for a cohabiting couple

to have children without getting married
(mean score)

71.0	53.5		42.2	25.0	
(5.16)	(4.36)	<.05	(3.89)	(3.34)	n.s.

(Planning -more- children)

Yes

41.4	73.0		18.8	57.8	
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No

28.3	10.0		31.3	18.8	
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Not sure

30.3	17.0		50.0	23.4	
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(Total = 100%)

<.001 .001

(Pregnant now)

Would abort

19.2	4.1		43.8	10.9	
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Cohabs who would have a baby and continue to
cohabit

12.1			4.7		
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Cohabs who would have a baby and marry

33.3			14.1		
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Married who would have a baby

	91.8			78.1	
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Don't know, not sure

23.2	4.1		37.5	10.9	
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Other

12.1	0.0		0.0	0.0	
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(Total = 100%)

Table 10: A comparison of power-measures of cohabitants and matching marrieds in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	Netherlands			United States		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<u>(Personal Freedom)</u>						
Percent: somewhat to strongly agree (mean score) range 1-7; the <u>higher</u> the score the <u>less</u> agreement, the <u>less</u> restricted						
My cohabitant's/spouse's caring for me exerts a kind of restrictive power over me (mean score)	9.1 (5.54)	5.0 (5.92)	<.05	30.1 (4.63)	15.9 (5.28)	.05
Sometimes if feel trapped in my relationship with my cohabitant/spouse (mean score)	29.3 (4.93)	15.0 (5.50)	<.05	20.3 (4.24)	12.0 (5.63)	.001
Sometimes I feel I am too involved in my relationship with my cohabitant/spouse and it leaves me with a lack of opportunity to be with others (mean score)	23.3 (4.96)	12.0 (5.44)	.05	36.0 (4.52)	6.3 (5.75)	<.001
I routinely set apart private time for myself (mean score)	78.8 (2.65)	85.0 (2.54)	n.s.	65.6 (3.02)	74.6 (2.83)	n.s.
<u>(Reciprocity)</u>						
I have to do more than my fair share of family tasks and duties (mean score)	29.3 (4.48)	35.0 (4.40)	n.s.	28.1 (4.49)	29.8 (4.42)	n.s.
There is a lot of competition between my cohabitant/spouse and myself, we often try to outdo each other (mean score)	9.1 (5.99)	7.1 (6.11)	n.s.	11.0 (5.60)	11.0 (5.77)	n.s.

Think: "Am I getting as much out of this
relationship as I am putting into it?"

Never or seldom	48.0	44.9	42.2	59.4
Occasionally or sometimes	20.0	13.3	31.3	32.8
Fairly often	16.0	19.4	9.4	4.7
Very often all the time	16.0	22.5	17.2	3.1

(Total = 100%)

(mean score) range 1-7; the higher the
score the more often

(3.02)	(3.39)	n.s.	(3.36)	(2.44)	<.05
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When arguments arise they usually result in:

Agreement by mutual give and take	77.6	78.0	74.6	77.8
Respondent giving in	9.2	5.0	9.5	6.3
Partner giving in	4.1	6.0	9.5	4.8
Neither giving in	6.1	3.0	3.2	4.8
Never or hardly ever disagree	3.1	8.0	3.2	6.3

(Total = 100%)

n.s.	n.s.
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(Alienation scale items)

Percent: somewhat to strongly agree
(mean score) range 1-7; the higher the score,
the more in agreement, the more alienated
Powerlessness Dimension

It is frightening to be responsible for the
development of a little child
(mean score)

43.0	42.5	65.7	51.5	n.s.
(3.85)	(3.47)	(4.58)	(4.03)	

There are so many decisions that have to be
made today that sometimes I could just
"blow up"

34.4	30.3	29.8	35.9	n.s.
(3.57)	(3.26)	(3.34)	(3.58)	

(mean score)

Social Isolation Dimension

I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd like	43.4	43.5		45.4	39.1	
(mean score)	(3.55)	(3.66)	n.s.	(3.83)	(3.44)	n.s.
Sometimes I feel all alone in the world	31.3	20.2		38.6	11.0	
(mean score)	(3.15)	(2.61)	.05	(3.68)	(2.45)	<.01
I feel that my cohabitant/spouse quite often does not understand my feelings	28.3	23.8		32.8	30.2	
(mean score)	(3.03)	(2.81)	n.s.	(3.34)	(3.25)	n.s.

(Alienation scale)

Range 5-35; arithmetic mean: 20.0 points, the higher the score the higher the alienation

(17.18)	(15.88)	n.s.	(18.73)	(16.78)	<.05
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(Anomie scale items)

Percent: somewhat to strongly agree (mean score) range 1-7; the higher the score, the more in agreement, the higher the anomie

In spite of what some people say the lot of the average person is getting worse	20.4	26.5		39.1	28.6	
(mean score)	(3.41)	(3.31)	n.s.	(3.84)	(3.39)	n.s.
There's little use writing to public officials because they aren't really interested in the problems of the average person	24.5	34.4		52.4	32.8	
(mean score)	(3.82)	(3.84)	n.s.	(4.17)	(3.84)	n.s.

(Anomie scale)

Range 2-14; arithmetic mean: 8 points, the higher the score the higher anomie (mean score)

(7.20)	(7.20)	n.s.	(8.03)	(7.32)	n.s.
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(Self-esteem scale items)

Percent: somewhat to strongly agree
(mean score) range 1-7; the higher the
score, the less in agreement, the higher
self-esteem

At times I think I am no good at all (mean score)	21.1 (5.42)	28.1 (5.67)	n.s.	22.0 (5.30)	29.6 (5.58)	n.s.
I feel useless at times (mean score)	15.3 (5.44)	17.2 (5.65)	n.s.	17.2 (5.17)	23.5 (5.31)	n.s.

(Self-esteem scale)

Range 2-14; arithmetic mean: 8 points,
the higher the score the more
self-esteem
(mean score)

(10.87)	(11.31)	n.s.	(10.47)	(10.84)	n.s.
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Table 11: A comparison of the Degree of Individuation of cohabitants and matching marrieds in the Netherlands and in the United States; means and percentages

	<u>Netherlands</u>			<u>United States</u>		
	Cohab Couples (N = 50)	Married Couples (N = 50)	p Value	Cohab Couples (N = 32)	Married Couples (N = 32)	p Value
<hr/>						
Percent: somewhat to strongly agree (mean score) range 1-7; the <u>higher</u> the score the <u>more</u> individuated or the <u>less</u> <u>in agreement</u>						
Dimension I: <u>Dyadic emotional dependency</u> <u>(partner-identification)</u>						
1. When my cohabitant/spouse is not around I often feel so incomplete I don't know what to do with myself (mean score)	19.1 (5.53)	24.3 (5.36)	n.s.	15.7 (5.53)	15.6 (5.49)	n.s.
2. I find it hard to be by myself without my cohabitant/spouse (mean score)	26.6 (5.02)	30.3 (4.76)	n.s.	9.5 (5.90)	3.1 (6.02)	n.s.
3. I feel panicky and empty when I think of the possibility of living without my cohabitant/ spouse (mean score)	56.6 (3.64)	73.0 (3.07)	<.05	49.2 (4.19)	59.7 (3.59)	<.05
Dimension II: <u>Dyadic idealization (couple-indentification)</u>						
4. Living with my cohabitant/spouse is one of the most important things in my life (mean score)	87.8 (2.34)	92.0 (1.90)	<.05	90.6 (2.22)	87.5 (2.23)	n.s.

5. It is important for people who function as a couple to do things together as much as possible (mean score)	66.0 (3.36)	67.0 (3.08)	n.s.	59.8 (3.52)	74.5 (3.15)	n.s.
6. In a good couple relationship the two partners mean everything to one another (mean score)	57.0 (3.44)	84.9 (2.24)	<.001	46.9 (4.14)	67.1 (3.13)	<.01
7. I find my completion in my cohabitant/spouse (mean score)	55.6 (3.51)	73.7 (2.84)	<.01	31.7 (4.10)	65.1 (3.31)	<.05
8. I could not possibly ever have as satisfying a relationship as I have now with my present cohabitant/spouse (mean score)	37.4 (3.85)	61.0 (3.08)	<.01	30.2 (4.13)	50.8 (3.45)	<.05
9. I feel that self-sacrifice is a necessary ingredient to make a couple relationship work (mean score)	34.4 (4.53)	52.6 (3.75)	<.01	73.5 (3.05)	68.2 (3.13)	n.s.

Dimension III:

Autonomy (self-identification)

10. It is difficult for me to say "no" to my cohabitant/spouse even if I do not agree (mean score)	15.1 (5.65)	18.2 (5.59)	n.s.	15.1 (5.06)	23.5 (5.37)	n.s.
11. I try to do what others want me to do, even if they don't play a very important part in my life (mean score) (the higher the score the more individuated the more in agreement with):	24.3 (4.81)	40.4 (4.29)	n.s.	14.3 (5.40)	17.2 (5.24)	n.s.
12. I feel that personal freedom is a necessary ingredient for a successful couple relationship (mean score)	94.9 (6.07)	86.9 (5.64)	.01	93.7 (6.02)	92.2 (5.89)	n.s.

13. I feel my cohabitant/spouse is entitled to certain evenings out with his/her friends of either sex (mean score)	86.9 (5.83)	74.0 (5.04)	<.001	93.7 (5.95)	84.4 (5.29)	.01
14. I can feel right without always having to please others (mean score)	66.7 (5.11)	74.7 (5.21)	n.s.	71.9 (5.16)	64.1 (5.08)	n.s.
15. In life an individual should for the most part make his or her own decisions attempting to resist being influenced by others (mean score)	72.0 (5.18)	69.0 (5.09)	n.s.	43.7 (5.27)	68.2 (5.03)	n.s.
16. I feel that in issues that mostly concern myself, I should make my own decisions even though my cohabitant/spouse might not agree with me (mean score)	81.7 (5.39)	67.7 (4.83)	.05	87.3 (5.59)	79.4 (5.20)	n.s.

(Individuation 7-item scale)

Range 7-49; arithmetic mean: 28,
the higher the score the more
individuated, or the lesser the
idealization of the dyad
(mean score)

(24.49)	(20.03)	<.001	(25.06)	(21.77)	<.01
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Table 12: Product Moment Correlations between Individuation Difference and independent variables (difference and sum scores for each matching cohabiting and married couple) in the Netherlands and in the United States*

DUTCH Matching Couples ($N = 50$)

	<u>Diff.</u>	<u>Sum</u>
(<u>Social-economic background</u>)		
Age		-.25
(<u>Dyadic history</u>)		
Duration cohabitation/marriage	-.26	-.34
Did cohabit with someone other than partner	-.27	
(<u>Dyadic quality</u>)		
Whether relationship will be permanent	.40	
Dyadic happiness	.35	
Whether to leave when partner has sex with other	.27	
Whether to leave when respondent dates others		.25
Whether to leave when partner becomes too dominant		-.27
Whether to leave when respondent becomes too dominant		-.28
(<u>Personal freedom/autonomy</u>)		
Sometimes I feel trapped in the relationship	-.29	
I routinely set apart private time	.31	
In issues that mostly concern myself, I should make my own decisions even though my partner might not agree	.40	
I try what others want me to do, even if they don't play a very important role in my life	.36	
(<u>Dyadic reciprocity</u>)		
I have to do more than my fair share of family tasks...		.29
I feel that quite often my partner does not understand my feelings	.28	
(<u>Reasons to marry</u>)		
Pregnancy or desire to have children	.28	
To find more self-fulfillment	.29	
(<u>Attitudes toward marriage</u>)		
To have children is the main purpose of marriage	-.45	
Marriage is like a secure haven.....	-.25	
(<u>Attitudes toward sexuality</u>)		
For cohabitants there is no justification for having sex with others than the partner	-.32	
For marrieds there is no justification for having sex with others than the partner	-.39	
I could possibly be romantically involved with more than one	.33	

U.S. Matching Couples ($N = 32$)

	<u>Diff.</u>	<u>Sum</u>
<u>(Social-economic background)</u>		
Church attendance	.34	
<u>(Dyadic history)</u>		
How long known before cohabitation/marriage	-.40	.39
Has dated others since cohabitation/marriage	-.39	
<u>(Finances)</u>		
It is alright for a couple to keep finances separate	.48	
Respondent not comfortable spending money earned by partner	-.39	
<u>(Dyadic quality)</u>		
Whether relationship will be permanent	.43	
Dyadic happiness	.66	
Frequency of thinking seriously about leaving	.51	
Whether to leave when partner becomes too dependent	-.55	
Whether to leave when respondent becomes too dependent	-.51	
<u>(Personal freedom/autonomy)</u>		
Sometimes I feel trapped in the relationship	-.57	
Partner's caring exerts a kind of restrictive power	-.33	
Personal freedom is a necessary ingredient for a successful couple relationship	.35	
It is difficult to say "no" to my partner even if I don't agree	.33	
<u>(Dyadic reciprocity)</u>		
I feel that quite often my partner does not understand my feelings	.35	
<u>(Reasons to marry)</u>		
To find more stability		.31
For practical convenience	.53	.36
To avoid loneliness	.32	
<u>(Attitudes toward marriage)</u>		
It is important to marry within a religious ceremony		.32
<u>(Attitudes toward sexuality)</u>		
One ought to overlook sexual infidelities in isolated instances	-.31	
I could possibly be romantically involved with more than one	.31	

*All significant correlations: $p = .05$

Table 13: Matrix of correlations between independent variables (difference and sum scores) and the dependent variable (Individuation Difference) ordered by the strength of the correlations for DUTCH cohabiting and matching married couples

Sum (+) and Difference (-) Scores	*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
-Individuation	.																									
1. -Hard to be by self**	60	.																								
2. -Without partner incomplete**	46	69	.																							
3. -Do what others want	36	56	42	.																						
4. -Children marriage purpose	-45	17	07	34	.																					
5. -Private time	31	35	51	19	04	.																				
6. +Leave when respondent dates	25	37	43	12	-08	12	.																			
7. -Marrieds not to have sex with others	-39	40	20	43	47	18	-01	.																		
8. -Dyadic happiness	35	-06	-25	-11	21	10	09	28	.																	
9. -Partner doesn't understand me	28	05	-24	-23	-06	03	04	01	74	.																
10. -Feel trapped	-29	13	-22	-02	21	17	-10	21	64	56	.															
11. -Romance with more than one	33	17	-12	01	23	-22	-06	35	27	35	27	.														
12. -Dyadic permanence	40	03	14	01	26	12	-08	26	33	11	25	43	.													
13. -Make own decisions	40	37	38	26	28	42	18	37	14	-18	11	-09	11	.												
14. -Cohabited before	-27	17	33	10	25	30	28	25	10	-16	-12	06	18	42	.											
15. +Do more than fair share	29	25	29	10	00	08	23	21	-10	03	-06	08	-08	26	34	.										
16. -Marry to have children	28	16	08	24	58	18	20	18	14	-02	-01	14	05	20	25	-21	.									
17. -Marry to find self-fulfillment	29	15	-01	19	30	03	08	00	12	07	04	-07	-01	25	14	-15	52	.								
18. -Length of relationship	-26	28	23	11	-08	12	20	-07	22	15	18	00	01	22	08	35	-11	17	.							
19. +Leave when respondent dominant	-28	30	19	15	11	07	-11	25	-10	-31	19	13	27	31	08	04	-02	00	-09	.						
20. +Leave when partner dominant	-27	13	-01	-06	05	19	-10	11	00	-09	31	13	25	23	-05	06	-11	-10	-16	80	.					
21. -Cohabs. not to have sex with others	-32	16	00	23	30	06	-09	71	32	08	28	36	25	11	19	09	05	00	06	18	04	.				
22. -Leave when part. sex with others	27	13	-06	11	20	-05	13	54	10	03	29	41	15	00	19	01	21	01	-10	12	13	45	.			
23. +Length of relationship	-34	21	20	18	-05	07	-01	11	-17	02	-08	13	08	00	12	16	10	01	-01	19	06	20	22	.		
24. +Age	-25	29	20	27	-15	10	02	10	-23	-02	-14	05	-09	14	-04	11	00	-09	-12	18	19	-01	13	70	.	
25. -Marriage is secure haven	-25	-03	04	21	14	-02	-04	31	22	13	-04	20	30	13	21	-12	18	32	-03	-06	-25	27	11	13	-02	.

*Correlations between all independent variables and Individuation Difference are significant: $p \leq .05$

**Not further discussed since these variables are redundant measures of the dependent variable

Table 14: Matrix of correlations between independent variables (difference and sum scores) and the dependent variable (Individuation Difference) ordered by the strength of the correlations for U.S. cohabiting and matching married couples

Sum (+) and Difference (-) Scores	*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
-Individuation	.66	.																						
1. -Dyadic happiness	-57	57	.																					
2. -Feel trapped	51	82	67	.																				
3. -Thoughts about leaving	43	66	49	77	.																			
4. -Dyadic permanence	-33	64	67	54	31	.																		
5. -Feel restricted	35	61	57	56	45	61	.																	
6. -Partner doesn't understand me	-55	38	44	48	41	20	17	.																
7. -Leave when partner dependent	-51	38	42	45	42	25	29	88	.															
8. -Leave when respondent dependent	48	47	35	27	22	34	14	28	16	.														
9. -Keep finances separate	-39	22	36	24	45	37	27	25	31	55	.													
10. -Uncomfortable spending part. money	-31	26	47	-11	07	36	-05	23	25	52	27	.												
11. -Overlook sex. infidelities	35	27	40	17	18	30	01	28	15	45	28	38	.											
12. -Personal freedom important	-39	49	32	41	-03	64	10	30	15	42	-06	38	16	.										
13. -Respondent dates	33	05	-22	-08	-23	-33	-42	01	-08	43	-05	-04	-03	34	.									
14. -Difficult to say "no"	53	33	19	19	11	11	-03	09	05	25	10	33	38	24	07	.								
15. -Marry for practical convenience	36	08	-17	-06	-09	-11	-25	24	17	19	-04	30	12	28	20	67	.							
16. +Marry for practical convenience	31	14	04	00	-05	08	07	18	11	30	07	20	20	27	07	47	65	.						
17. +Marry to find stability	32	-19	-02	03	-05	-27	-18	29	16	00	15	07	-10	00	24	30	32	02	.					
18. -Marry to avoid loneliness	34	23	26	39	15	14	-06	53	46	09	10	01	60	22	23	33	22	07	-06	.				
19. -Church attendance	32	04	41	07	-02	21	01	20	30	-04	09	03	15	-11	14	-08	-32	-30	-05	30	.			
20. +Important marry religious ceremony	39	19	-05	-02	06	01	-09	16	27	-16	09	01	09	07	16	31	05	-11	14	24	20	.		
21. +Length of time known each other	31	24	39	23	-16	35	18	21	19	35	16	11	34	37	21	01	-13	-03	05	23	27	26	.	
22. -Romance more than one	-40	31	27	21	16	16	-21	10	15	12	27	23	06	20	-10	20	11	-07	10	02	-01	37	72	.
23. -Length of time known each other																								

*Correlations between all independent variables and Individuation Difference are significant: $p \leq .05$

Table 15: Variables explaining Individuation Differences between matching cohabiting and married couples in the Netherlands and in the United States

DUTCH Couples				
	<u>r</u>	<u>Beta</u>	<u>R²</u>	<u>R² change</u>
Sum Duration of relationship	-.34	-.32	.11	.11
Sum Do more than fair share	.29	.32	.17	.06
Sum Whether leave when partner too dominant	-.27	-.19	.23	.06
Difference Dyadic happiness	.35	.28	.41	.18
Difference Whether children main purpose of marriage	-.45	-.28	.55	.14
Difference Dyadic permanence	.40	.19	.57	.02
Difference Marry to find more self-fulfillment	.29	.25	.62	.05

Total variance explained	62%			
Total variance explained by sum variables	23%			
Total variance explained by difference variables	39%			
<hr/>				
U.S. Couples				
Difference Dyadic happiness	.66	.53	.42	.42
Difference Marry to avoid loneliness	.32	.41	.57	.15
Difference It is alright for a couple to keep finances separate	.55	.53	.69	.12
Sum How long known before cohabitation/marriage	-.41	-.43	.84	.15

Total variance explained	84%			
Total variance explained by difference variables	69%			
Total variance explained by sum variable	15%			

SAMENVATTING

Het hoofddoel van deze studie is een beschrijving te geven van ongehuwd samenwonende heteroseksuele paren in vergelijking met gehuwde paren in Nederland en in de Verenigde Staten.

De snelle toename van ongehuwd samenwonen in West-Europa en in de Verenigde Staten in het afgelopen decennium, het gebrek aan voldoende wetenschappelijke kennis over deze samenlevingsvorm, alsmede de huidige levensbeschouwelijke, maatschappelijke en politieke discussies naar aanleiding hiervan vormden de voornaamste redenen waarom dit onderzoek werd ondernomen.

De probleemstelling van deze studie luidt als volgt (Hoofdstuk 3):

1. Verschillen ongehuwd samenwonende paren van een parallel-groep van gehuwde paren (die niet eerst hebben samengewoond), en zo ja - in welk opzicht?
2. In welke mate komen verschillen tussen beide groepen (ongehuwde en gehuwde paren) in Nederland overeen met verschillen in de Verenigde Staten?

Aangezien de verschillen tussen ongehuwde en gehuwde paren wat hun "Individuatiegraad" betreft één van de belangrijkste onderzoeksthema's is, wordt dit thema reeds in Hoofdstuk 2 geïntroduceerd. "Individuatiegraad" is gedefinieerd als de uitkomst van het zoeken naar een balans tussen de paradoxale verlangens naar enerzijds individuatie (persoonlijke vrijheid en onafhankelijkheid) en anderzijds naar identificatie (geborgenheid in tweezaamheid). Dit uitgangspunt leidt vervolgens tot enige filosofische en sociologische beschouwingen en tot een opsomming van dichotome verlangens inherent aan de intieme paarrelatie (Chart 3, pg. 22).

In Hoofdstuk 3 wordt met behulp van enkele groundbegrippen

uit het functionalisme als ordenende principes, een overzicht gegeven van recente literatuur en theoretische ontwikkelingen op het gebied van ongehuwd samenwonen in Europa en in de Verenigde Staten. Eveneens worden hieruit voortvloeiende hypothesen geformuleerd (Bijlage B).

De methodiek van het onderzoek wordt in verkorte vorm geïntroduceerd in Hoofdstuk 1 (Paragraaf 2) en meer gedetailleerd verslagen in Hoofdstuk 3 (Paragrafen 3 - 5). Voor Nederland gaat het hier om een steekproef van 50 ongehuwde paren, van 20 tot en met 40 jaar, en 50 hiermee vergelijkbare gehuwde paren, getrokken uit het bevolkingsregister van de gemeente Amersfoort. Voor elk ongehuwd samenwonend paar werd namelijk een 'matching' gehuwd paar gevonden qua leeftijd, beroepsklasse, duur van de relatie, en aantal kinderen. Op analoge wijze zijn in de Verenigde Staten in twee gemeenten ten noorden van Boston 32 ongehuwde en 32 gehuwde paren geselecteerd. De gegevens zijn verzameld in de jaren 1980 en 1981. Partners beantwoordden onafhankelijk van elkaar een gestructureerde vragenlijst in het bijzijn van een interviewer.

Vervolgens worden in Hoofdstuk 4 de verwachte verschillen tussen ongehuwde en gehuwde paren vergeleken met de uitkomsten van deze studie. Bovendien worden aan het einde van dit hoofdstuk de resultaten van een dergelijke beschrijvende hypothesentoetsende analyse samengevat aan de hand van bestaande wetenschappelijke kennis op het terrein van samenwonen, huwelijk en gezin. Het blijkt, dat samenwonenden in vele opzichten van gehuwden verschillen. Bovendien bestaan er significante verschillen tussen de uitkomsten voor de Nederlandse koppels en de Amerikaanse koppels. Steekproeven van samenwonenden getrokken uit ongehuwde 20 tot en met 40 jarigen in beide landen, bestaan voor het merendeel uit tamelijk jonge (gemiddelde leeftijd is 28 jaar), kinderloze koppels, waarvan beide partners buitenshuis werken, en die gezien hun opleidingen en beroepen tot de middenklasse behoren. Zij kennen elkaar gemiddeld $4\frac{1}{2}$ à $5\frac{1}{2}$ jaar, waarvan ze de laatste 3 tot 4 jaar hebben samengewoond. Slechts een gering aantal is getrouwd geweest of heeft eerder samengewoond, dus het is voor velen een eerste ervaring samen te wonen

met een intieme partner van de andere sexe. Anders gezegd, het zijn tamelijk stabiele koppels die hun jeugdijaren achter de rug hebben en die met goede vooruitzichten de middelbare leeftijd tegemoet gaan. Hoogstwaarschijnlijk zullen ze in de nabije toekomst besluiten met betrekking tot huwelijk, gezin en ouderschap nemen en hierbij zullen de revolutionaire veranderingen die zich op dit terrein tijdens hun levensloop hebben afgespeeld ongetwijfeld een rol spelen. Het merendeel van deze respondenten is namelijk geboren in de vijftiger jaren uit ouders die de depressie en de oorlogsjaren bewust hebben meegemaakt. Alhoewel in de Verenigde Staten de Tweede Wereldoorlog van minder nabij werd ervaren dan in Europa, de maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen en tendensen sindsdien vertonen grote overeenkomsten. Om kort te gaan (zie Hoofdstuk 6 voor een meer uitgebreide discussie), de jonggetrouwden, na de omwentelingen en verwarringen van de oorlogsjaren, begonnen aan de herbouw van hun levens, achtten huwelijk, gezin en huishouding van groot belang, en vervolgens overspoelden zij de Westerse wereld met een geboortengolf. Ofschoon de respondenten hun levensloop in dit meer traditionele gezins- en leefklimaat begonnen, werden ze spoedig, als adolescenten, geconfronteerd met de diepgaande sociale veranderingen van de zestiger jaren, en vervolgens met nogmaals een ommekeer, tenminste in economische ontwikkelingen, in de jaren zeventig. Aan het begin van de jaren tachtig, ten tijde van dit onderzoek, zien deze intussen volwassen respondenten nieuw verworven 'vrijheden' geplaatst temidden van economische en politieke realiteiten die mogelijk een bedreiging vormen voor de wens tot zelfontplooiing en zelfverwerkelijking in een geïndividueerde maatschappij. Tegen de achtergrond van deze enigszins speculatieve observaties worden de gerapporteerde gedragspatronen en attitudes van jonge koppels onder de loep genomen.

Samenwonende paren, in vergelijking met gehuwde paren, zijn meer autonoom en de partners onderling zijn meer onafhankelijk van elkaar: zij bezoeken familieleden minder frequent; zij gaan minder vaak ter kerke; slechts enkelen komen tot wettelijke regelingen of maken onderlinge afspraken; zij zijn meer geneigd hun financiën gescheiden te houden. Ofschoon de samenwonenden

in het algemeen de relatie met de partner zeer positief beoordelen, zijn ze iets minder extreem (significant verschil) in loftuitingen dan de gehuwden. Ook zijn ze naar verhouding iets minder bereid zich volkomen in te zetten voor de relatie, lopen ze iets vaker rond met de gedachte de relatie te beëindigen, en zijn ze iets minder gelukkig. Nogmaals, hieruit mag niet geconcludeerd worden, dat de samenwonenden in een crisissituatie verkeren, verre van dat, ze drukken zich echter, relatief gezien, iets kritischer uit. Het is mogelijk dat de samenwonenden meer bereid zijn zich kritisch op te stellen gezien het feit, dat het merendeel het samenwonen met de partner als een uitproberen van de relatie is begonnen en ze sterker de nadruk leggen op evenwaardigheid in de relatie wat o.a. dominantie en onafhankelijkheid betreft. Bovendien impliceren hun antwoorden dat ze in een meer ambigue situatie verkeren. Bijv. de overgrote meerderheid is niet principieel tegen het huwelijk maar heeft het tot nu toe om verschillende redenen uitgesteld. Alhoewel het huwelijk als een romantische droom heeft afgedaan, vooral onder de Nederlandse samenwonenden, de paarrelatie zelf blijft omringd met hooggespannen verwachtingen. Enerzijds benadrukken ze persoonlijke vrijheid, anderzijds richten ze zich naar het ideaal van grote saamhorigheid en gebondenheid met de partner, alhoewel, in vergelijking met de gehuwden, de huidige partner minder exclusief als de vervuller van het levensgeluk wordt beschouwd. Zij behouden een zekere mate van zelfstandigheid in hun saamhorigheid; ze wensen beide. Zij geven daarbij blijk van een grotere onduidelijkheid wat het paar-imago betreft: uiterlijk (bijv. door het behoud van financiële gescheidenheid) en ook innerlijk (bijv. door een iets geringere inzet voor de relatie) zijn ze een minder scherp omlijnde twee-eenheid, maar tegelijkertijd stellen ze de paarrelatie centraal.

Wat attitudes omtrent het huwelijk betreft vertonen de Nederlandse en Amerikaanse samenwonenden onderling significante verschillen. Voor een meerderheid van de Amerikaanse samenwonenden blijft het huwelijk een uitdrukking van wederzijdse liefde en is het de kroon op een met succes afgelegde proeffase van een duurzame paarrelatie. Daarnaast speelt de wens tot ouderschap

een belangrijke rol in het besluit al of niet te trouwen. Overigens, hun huwelijksidealen moeten in het licht van grotere huidige onzekerheden in de relatie met de partner gezien worden. Tenminste, in vergelijking met alle andere respondentengroepen zijn zij het meest onzeker over de duurzaamheid van de relatie en het meest geneigd financiën gescheiden te houden. De Nederlandse samenwonenden devalueren en de-mythologiseren de huwelijksinstitutie. Het huwelijk is niet langer een symbool van het zo fundamentele en meedogenloos nagejaagde menselijke sentiment: de grote liefde. Weinigen onder hen verwerpen het huwelijk volkomen, maar de rest kan slechts enkele redenen noemen die belangrijk zijn om in de toekomst te gaan trouwen. In plaats van zich in te zetten voor het huwelijk zetten ze zich voor de paarrelatie zelf in. In plaats van 'trouw' te associëren met trouwen, berust de paarrelatie per se op wederzijds vertrouwen. Vertrouwen in elkaar bezegelt de 'onwettige' paarrelatie. Tevens blijkt dat zowel voor het merendeel van de Amerikaanse als voor de Nederlandse samenwonenden een gebrek aan vertrouwen de primaire reden is de relatie te beëindigen. Dit is niet verbazingwekkend in een 'entzauberte Welt' waarin secondaire relaties en het nodige wantrouwen als een bijkomende omstandigheid vaak de overhand hebben. Dus, zonder wettig contract ligt vooral wederzijds vertrouwen ten grondslag aan de duurzame paarrelatie. Overigens, de notie dat het huwelijk grotere zekerheid en stabiliteit zou bieden, is een gedachte waarover de Nederlandse ongehuwden en gehuwden het meest van mening verschillen. De resultaten van een discriminant-analyse, gebaseerd op 63 variabelen volgens welke de ongehuwde en gehuwde paren significant verschillen, tonen aan dat we met behulp van een combinatie van slechts twee variabelen, 75 procent van de paren correct kunnen classificeren als ongehuwd samenwonend of als gehuwd. M.a.w., de antwoorden op twee vragen voorspellen met een betrouwbaarheid van 75 procent of een paar al of niet gehuwd is. De vragen beschrijven het huwelijk als een veilige "haven" waarin grotere stabiliteit en zekerheid gevonden kan worden. Hiermee zijn de Nederlandse samenwonenden het geheel niet eens, in tegenstelling tot de gehuwden, waarvan een meer-

derheid hiermee instemt. Een analoge discriminant-analyse voor de Amerikaanse koppels toont aan, dat met behulp van drie vragen (alle drie zijn redenen te gaan trouwen) 89 procent van de Amerikaanse paren correct geclassificeerd kunnen worden als ongehuwde of als gehuwde paren.

De verwachting is dat het merendeel van zowel de Nederlandse als de Amerikaanse samenwonenden op de lange duur gaat trouwen, vooral als ze kinderen wensen en zolang ze, uiteraard, de relatie willen continueren. Voor Amerikaanse samenwonenden is het huwelijk een "rite de confirmation" na een proeffase; voor Nederlandse samenwonenden is het een wettelijke formaliteit in het belang van kinderen en met zekere daaruit voortvloeiende voordelen. In beide landen speelt de wens tot ouderschap dus een cruciale rol in de beslissing al of niet te trouwen. Dit suggereert, dat het huwelijk, hoe neutraal en hoe indifferent men hier ook tegenover staat, in wezen bestaat om kinderen in de wereld te brengen en te laten opgroeien. Het feit dat slechts een minderheid van de samenwonenden in beide landen zeker is in de toekomst kinderen te willen hebben geeft hierbij stof tot nadenken. De veronderstelling is, dat de Nederlandse samenwonenden die geen kinderen willen, het minst geneigd zijn naar het stadhuis te gaan om hun relatie met een wettelijke huwelijks-sluiting te bezegelen.

De samenwonenden in deze studie zijn noch een exponent van een nieuwe moraal, noch de vertegenwoordigers van een meer traditionele paarrelatie. Ofschoon samenwonenden in vergelijking met gehuwden grote tolerantie vertonen wat niet-traditionele gedragingen van anderen betreft, slechts weinigen rapporteren zelf (alhoewel meer frequent dan gehuwden), de taboes van seksuele ontrouw en ongehuwd ouderschap te hebben doorbroken. Wel zijn ze iets minder geneigd tot volkomen exclusiviteit in de man - vrouw verhouding en vandaar dat onder hen, meer dan onder gehuwden, een minder traditionele leefwijze en de aanzet tot een open paarrelatie potentieel aanwezig is. Maar, gezien deze koppels een duurzame en hechte paarrelatie van groot belang achten zal voor velen, vermoedelijk, een duurzame relatie met de partner gebaseerd op monogame partnertrouw het toekomstideaal blijven.

Vervolgens wordt in Hoofdstuk 5 de vraag beantwoord of het gevonden verband tussen het al of niet gehuwd zijn en de individuatiegraad beïnvloed wordt door andere factoren. Het blijkt namelijk dat samenwonenden, in vergelijking met gehuwden, zich meer individualistisch opstellen en zich iets minder idealistisch uitlaten over de paarrelatie. Met andere woorden, de toetsing van welke factoren de gevonden verschillen mede verklaren is het centrale onderzoeksthema in Hoofdstuk 5. De resultaten van regressieanalyses tonen aan dat bepaalde factoren het gevonden verband dusdanig beïnvloeden dat het verschil in individuatie/idealisatie tussen een samenwonend paar en het daarbij behorende gehuwde paar (een 'matching' kwartet) grotendeels verdwijnt. Voor de Nederlandse 'matching' koppels kan 62 procent van de variantie van de individuatiegraad door overige factoren verklaard worden; voor de Amerikaanse koppels 84 procent. Het blijkt namelijk dat de gevonden verschillen verdwijnen indien de 'matching' kwartetten overeenkomen wat de volgende factoren betreft: beide paren zijn even kritisch in hun beoordeling van de paarrelatie; beide paren eisen eenzelfde mate van egaliteit in de relatie; beide paren hebben bepaalde overeenkomstige attitudes omtrent het huwelijk; beide paren zijn reeds geruime tijd samen. Dit betekent dat individuatiegraad in de eerste plaats afhangt van deze variabelen en dat het al of niet wettig gehuwd zijn van weinig invloed is. In principe kan elk koppel, zowel gehuwd als ongehuwd, zich plaatsen tussen de polen van het continuum - individuatie enerzijds en identificatie anderzijds - het centrale thema van deze studie.



CURRICULUM VITAE

Geertje Else Wiersma werd op 10 mei 1941 te Leeuwarden geboren. In 1960 behaalde zij het HBS-B diploma aan de Christelijke Hogere Burgerschool te Leeuwarden. In hetzelfde jaar begon zij aan de Landbouwhogeschool te Wageningen haar studie in de landbouwhuishoudwetenschappen, sociaal-economische richting. In 1969 werd het doctoraalexamen met als vakken de leiding en het beheer van de huishouding, de sociologie van gezin en huishouding, de woning en haar bewoning, en de voorlichtingskunde met lof behaald. Datzelfde jaar vertrok zij naar de Verenigde Staten, waar zij haar werkzaamheden begon als een wetenschappelijk onderzoekster, verbonden aan Boston University en vervolgens (in 1971) bij het Survey Research Program, a facility of the University of Massachusetts and The Joint Center for Urban Studies of M.I.T. and Harvard University. Zij hield zich toentertijd voornamelijk bezig met sociologisch onderzoek op het gebied van het grootstedelijk woon- en leefmilieu. In 1974 aanvaardde zij een aanstelling aan het Salem State College van de Commonwealth of Massachusetts, alwaar zij tot op heden werkzaam is als Assistant Professor. Zij doceert onder meer de vakken sociologische theorieën en onderzoekstechnieken in de sociale wetenschappen.

In 1979 begon zij met het promotie-vooronderzoek. Dank zij een in het kader van het Nationaal Programma Demografisch Onderzoek verleende subsidie werd het nodige veldwerk in Nederland in 1980 voltooid, terwijl in het jaar daarop dat in de Verenigde Staten afgerond kon worden. In 1982 stelden een stipendium van de Landbouwhogeschool te Wageningen en een verlofjaar van het Salem State College haar in staat, als tijdelijk medewerkster van de Vakgroep Sociologie van de

Westerse Gebieden, met het schrijven van het proefschrift te beginnen en het vervolgens in de herfst van dat jaar in de Verenigde Staten te voltooien.

Momenteel is zij woonachtig te Marblehead, Massachusetts, Verenigde Staten.