INTERPERSONAL PERCEPTIONS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN
DISTRESSED, ALCOHOLIC COUPLES AND DISTRESSED, NONALCOHOLIC
COUPLES

by

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August, 1989

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal perception was investigated with respect to distressed, alcoholic couples as compared to distressed, nonalcoholic couples. Twenty couples in each group were screened for their distress levels (Dyadic Adjustment Scale), drinking behaviour (Goodwin Criteria Checklist), and for possible psychiatric symptomatology (Symptom Checklist 90 Revised). Their perceptions of themselves and their partners in the relationship were compared through the use of the Structure Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB).

Although there were no differences between the two groups on several Initiating and Responding Focus variables, important significant differences were evident between the alcoholic and distressed men and the distressed women and women married to alcoholics. The nonsignificant results confirmed the troubled nature of the marriages studied and provided a context for the significant differences found between the two groups. Specifically, alcoholic men viewed themselves to be more hostile towards their spouses than did the distressed men. Plus, the alcoholic men believed their spouses to be more helpful and protective of them than did the distressed men. Similarly, the distressed men viewed their spouses to be more hostile toward them than did the alcoholic men. Women married to alcoholics viewed their spouses to be more hostile towards them than did the distressed women.

The interpersonal perceptions revealed by the alcoholic couple group seem to imply the existence of complementary marital patterns. That is, alcoholic husbands viewed their wives to be helpful and protective of them while they viewed themselves to be hostile toward their wives. Their wives, on the other hand, viewed themselves to be guarded while they viewed their spouses to be
hostile towards them. However, further research is required to expand upon this interpersonal description of alcoholic couple interactions.
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A. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

In the 19th century, alcoholics were considered morally weak and essentially evil (Efran, Heffner and Lukens, 1987; Kissin, 1983). These hapless individuals were considered to beyond hope unless they underwent a miraculous religious conversion. As a result, many people suffering from alcoholism found themselves in psychiatric institutions or in jails. In the 1960's, E.M. Jellinek introduced the idea that alcoholism was a disease that was worthy of treatment rather than punishment (Jellinek, 1960). This new conceptualization opened the way for the creation of new treatment facilities, professional training programs, research investigations and a somewhat more sympathetic attitude towards the alcoholic and his or her needs.

Other schools of thought also arose and continue to be popular concerning the notion of alcoholism. Behaviourists consider it to be a learned phenomenon, medical professionals consider it to be an addiction and still others envision alcoholism to be a form of social protest. Each perspective carries with it a set of assumptions and values regarding the alcoholic beverage and the implications of its consumption. While debate has raged over the various efficacies of each definition and subsequent treatment approaches, the effects and costs of alcoholism have been well documented. Recently, increased governmental and media attention has focused on the impact of alcoholism on the community and the treatment of this difficult problem.
1. Alcoholism Defined

Alcohol consumption has become part of the Canadian lifestyle whether citizens chose to imbibe or not. In its report, the Standing Committee on National Health and Welfare (1987), stated that over “80% of Canadians over the age of 15 consume alcoholic beverages, and the prevalence of use by younger adults exceeds 90%” (p. 27). A survey of Canada as a whole, revealed that consumption levels were lowest in the Atlantic Provinces and highest in the Western Provinces.

In particular, British Columbia “has the highest prevalence of traffic accidents, suicides and cirrhosis of the liver in Canada” (Report of the Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Work Place, 1987, p. 23). According to a British Columbia Task Force Report on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Work Place (1987), 10 percent of the adult population in this province suffers from alcoholism.

The Task Force (1987) defined alcoholism as:

... a disease characterized by the repetitive and compulsive ingestion of any sedative drug, ethanol (alcohol) representing but one of this group, in such a way as to result in interference with some aspect of the [person’s] life, be it health, marital status, career, interpersonal relationships, or other required societal adaptations. As with any other illness, alcoholism represents a dysfunction or maladaptation to the requirements of everyday life (p. 3).

This general definition can be expanded with the addition of the Goodwin Criteria for Drinking Categories (Goodwin, Schulsinger, Moller, Hermansen, Winokur and Guze, 1974). The Goodwin Criteria divides drinkers into four distinct categories: Moderate, Heavy, Problem and Alcoholic drinkers. The categories include both social, behavioural and physiologic criteria upon which judgments can be made regarding degree of problem drinking and alcoholism.
These criteria are similar to those used in the DSM III diagnosis of Alcohol Abuse (Steinglass, Bennett, Wolin and Reiss, 1987) when determining problem drinking. Also, when alcoholic drinking is described, the Goodwin Criteria is comparable to the DSM III diagnosis of Alcohol Dependence (Steinglass et al., 1987). The Goodwin Criteria are also considered to be a useful tool in the identification of problem drinkers and alcoholics for research purposes (See Table 1). Therefore, as Steinglass et al. (1987) stated:

One can also safely assume that a subject who had met Goodwin criteria for problem or alcoholic drinking would also meet DSM III criteria for Alcohol Abuse or Alcohol Dependence, and DSM III R criteria for Alcohol Dependence (p. 38).

2. The Implications of Alcoholism

Alcoholism can affect individuals and families across all social and economic groups as well as all races and both genders. The problem of alcoholism is costly to the community in terms of its social, spiritual, financial, physical, mental, and emotional repercussions. For example, the Province of British Columbia has been estimated to pay two billion dollars per year because of the negative results of alcoholism (Report of the Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Work Place, 1987).

Between 70 and 80 percent of the males in prision in British Columbia were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the offense or alcohol was considered to be a contributing factor in the occurrence of the crime. However, it has been noted that some of the serious consequences of alcoholism occur before the alcoholic is entangled in the legal system. That is, one of the earliest signs of difficulty for the alcoholic occurs in the family.

Evidence suggests that the family affected by alcoholism suffers from
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Drinker:</td>
<td>Neither a teetotaler nor heavy drinker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Drinker:</td>
<td>For at least 1 year, drank daily and had 6 or more drinks at least 2 or 3 times a month; or drank 6 or more drinks at least once a week for more than 1 year, but reported no problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Had problems from drinking but insufficient in number to meet alcoholism criteria.                                                                                                         |
2. Must have had alcohol problems in at least 3 of the following 4 groups.                                                                                                                                |
|                    | Group 1: Social disapproval of drinking by friends, parents; marital problems because of drinking.                                                                                                          |
|                    | Group 2: Job trouble because of drinking, traffic arrests because of drinking, other police trouble because of drinking.                                                                                      |
|                    | Group 3: Frequent blackouts, tremors, withdrawal, convulsions, delirium tremens.                                                                                                                            |
|                    | Group 4: Loss of control, morning drinking.                                                                                                                                                                  |

instability, inconsistency and reduced intimacy (Report of the Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Work Place, 1987). The British Columbia Medical Association (in Report of the Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Work Place, 1987) estimated that about two-thirds of child sexual and physical abuse occurs in homes where alcohol consumption has become a problem. The children of alcoholics are considered to be generally more prone to developing into alcoholics themselves and they often experience dysfunctional relationships later in
life. There is a tendency for daughters of alcoholic males to marry alcoholic men and if they divorce they tend to remarry alcoholics.

3. The Problem

Researchers have delved into the effects of alcoholism on the family and the couple subsystems in a number of ways and from a variety of standpoints. Investigations have ranged from the coding of behaviour in the home setting (Steinglass, Tislenko, and Reiss, 1985), and observing couples before and after intoxication (Billings, Kessler, Gromberg, and Weiner, 1979; Steinglass, Davis, and Berenson, 1977) to measuring marital satisfaction, communication and other aspects of their interpersonal perceptions. These efforts represent a sample of the attempts made to explore this serious problem in such a way as to illuminate the alcoholic relationship itself (Drewery and Rae, 1969); the transmission of alcoholic patterns (Bennett, Wolin, Reiss, Teitelbaum, 1987; Goodwin, Schulsinger, Moller, Hormansen, Winokur, and Guze, 1974); the adaptive consequences of alcoholism (Davis, Berenson, Steinglass, Davis, 1974); the differences between distressed, nondistressed and alcoholic couples (O'Farrell and Birchler, 1987); and finally, the prognosis for recovery from alcoholism and the mediating factors involved in that process (Steinglass et al., 1985). Research has generally shown that alcoholic couples do not differ overall from distressed couples on marital satisfaction or communication measures, but these two groups do differ on a variety of specific factors related to interpersonal perception (Chiles, Strauss, and Benjamin, 1980; Orford, 1975).

Interpersonal relationships represent a powerful human need and human existence is characterized by continuous patterns of interpersonal interactions
which occur over a lifetime. Sullivan (1953) considered human personality to be a result of the relatively stable recurring interpersonal experiences characterizing a human life. Experience, behaviour and self identity are all influenced by the individual's perceptions of others and others' perceptions of the individual (Laing, Phillipson, and Lee, 1966). An inquiry into the interpersonal perceptions of alcohol-involved couples as they compare to distressed couples may prove beneficial in contributing to the elucidation of the belief and interactional systems shared by the alcoholic and his spouse. This comparison may offer researchers and clinicians information regarding the problem of possible distress due to alcoholism as it is differentiated from the marital distress experienced by troubled couples in general. The study investigated how the interpersonal perceptions of distressed, alcoholic men compared to those of distressed, nonalcoholic men with respect to how they view themselves and their wives. In addition, comparisons were made between women in alcoholic marriages and distressed women regarding their views of themselves and their husbands.

B. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Interpersonal Perception: This term refers to the degree to which both husbands and wives believe themselves and their spouses to be engaging in a variety of initiating and responding transactions as reflected in the transactional behaviour clusters measured by the Structural Analysis of Social Behaviour (SASB) (Benjamin, 1974).

Distressed, Alcoholic Couple: The Distressed, Alcoholic Couple (ALC) was comprised of a dyad living together as either married or common-law for at least four months. The alcohol-involved marriage was characterized by a male alcoholic
living with a female nonalcoholic. He was considered alcoholic if he was actively drinking or had been recently sober for under two years. To qualify as an alcoholic the individual met the heavy drinking criteria and exhibited some difficulty in three of the four criteria for alcoholic drinking as outlined by Goodwin et al. (1974). The same forms were given to both spouses to ensure that the criteria of one male alcoholic and one female nonalcoholic in the dyad was met. The couple was also considered distressed when one or both spouses scored below 103 on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). The couple was not to have been engaged in counselling at the time of the study or to have received more than two sessions of marital therapy in the last six months in order to qualify for inclusion in the research.

**Distressed, Nonalcoholic Couple:** This couple also consisted of a dyad living together as either married or common-law for at least four months. They were characterized as nonalcoholic when measured by the Goodwin Criteria (Goodwin et al., 1974). In addition, the couple was considered distressed when one or both spouses scored below 103 on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). Finally, the pair was not to have been in therapy at the time of the study or to have received marital counselling for more than two sessions in the last six months.

C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

**Research Question A**

Do distressed, alcoholic husbands differ from distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their interpersonal perceptions as measured by the SASB?
Research Hypotheses

1. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of themselves initiating towards their wives as measured by the SASB.

2. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of themselves responding to their wives as measured by the SASB.

3. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of their wives' initiations towards them as measured by the SASB.

4. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of their wives' responses to them as measured by the SASB.

Research Question B

Do women married to alcoholics and women in distressed marriages differ from one another with respect to their interpersonal perceptions as measured by the SASB?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of themselves initiating towards their husbands as measured by the SASB.

2. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of themselves responding to their husbands as measured by the SASB.

3. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved
marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of their husbands' initiations towards them as measured by the SASB.

4. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of their husbands' responses to them as measured by the SASB.
A. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

A new mode of thinking about human functioning began to become popular at the end of the nineteenth century. The general belief in individualism which had characterized the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was giving way to more relational paradigms (Berman, 1984). Over 100 years ago, the philosopher Feuerbach (in Laing et al., 1966) made a considerable contribution to interpersonal theory. He noted that the notion of "I" or self can only exist in relation to "you." Following from this, fields such as physics and psychiatry began to become more interested in relational models of thought.

1. Sullivan's Conceptualization of Interpersonal Perception

...what the personality does which can be observed and studied only in relations between personalities or among personalities is truly and terribly marvelous, and is human and is the function of creatures living in dissoluble contact with the world of culture and of people. In that field it is preposterous to talk about individuals and to go on deceiving oneself with the idea of uniqueness, of single entity, of simple, central being (Sullivan, 1944, p. 329).

The first comprehensive conceptualization of interpersonal psychiatry was presented by Harry Stack Sullivan. It developed through the integration of psychobiology, social psychology and cultural anthropology. Psychobiology holds that the individual is considered to be the highest embodiment of mentally integrated life. The infant's process of basic need satisfaction represents the individual's preliminary foray into the social world. Thus, biological needs give rise to interpersonal structures which characterize our existence. Sullivan also noted that the individual became mentally integrated on the basis of, as George Groddeck
wrote, "reflected appraisals from others and the learning of roles which one undertook to live or which live one" (Sullivan, 1953, p. 17). Therefore, as postulated by the founders of social psychology, Charles Cooley and Herbert Mead (in Sullivan, 1953), the individual is a complicated derivative of other individuals and intrapsychic processes which are temporary and based upon interactions between the organism and the environment. Finally, Sullivan drew upon the notions of Malinowski who made a study of the social heritage of humanity, namely, cultural anthropology.

In every organized activity human beings are bound together by their connection with a definite portion of environment, by their association with a common shelter and by the fact that they carry out certain tasks in common. The concerted character of their behaviour is the result of social roles, that is, customs either sanctioned by explicit measures or linking in an apparently automatic way (Sullivan, 1953, p. 18).

The integration of these three disciplines gave rise to the notions of interpersonal psychiatry.

Sullivan (1953) developed several themes which composed the essence of interpersonal theory. The first theme incorporated the notion of the need for others. He considered us to be vulnerable to social forces and subsequently shaped by them. Interpersonal relationships represent a powerful human need according to Sullivan and human life is characterized by continuous patterns of interpersonal interactions which recur over a lifetime.

Secondly, Sullivan (1953) maintained that a person's self-system is represented by the organized perception of his/her self. The self-system results from experiences individuals have with their physiological needs (e.g., the need for food) as these needs are satisfied in conjunction with important others (e.g., parents). The self-system therefore evolves in an interpersonal context.
Thirdly, in Sullivan's (1953) conceptualization, problematic behaviour is caused by dysfunctional interpersonal relationships early in the individual's life. Disordered interactions can be understood as rigidified patterns of inappropriate behaviour in interpersonal relations. Thus, the child who experiences inadequate or inappropriate parenting continues to have interpersonal difficulties later in life. They find themselves unable to form worthwhile bonds or to parent effectively.

Fourthly, the dysfunctional communication which results from disordered interactions reflects the individual's private experience of both internal and external stimuli. These private symbolizations are often out of context and can be only peripherally related to conventional consensus. Intrapersonal perceptions can have a marked effect on interpersonal transactions such as communication.

Lastly, all interpersonal interactions are considered to be characterized by the ongoing balancing of reciprocal needs through recursive patterns of behaviour. Sullivan (1953) suggests that we continue to function interpersonally over time due to the desire to satisfy complementary needs. This guarantees that we continue to exist as both social and biological entities.

a. Summary

Sullivan (1944) likened our cultural environments to oxygen and food saying that our society is as necessary to us as sustenance, air and water. Culture provides us with the necessary validation of our experience so that we are not isolated in our individuality. We can share the experience of others on a more or less parallel basis. It is for this reason, that Sullivan (1944) recommends we use the observable realm of interpersonal relations as our field of study rather than the study of personality which he claims is necessarily
hypothetical and ultimately out of our reach. As Sullivan (1944) maintained:

No great progress in the field of study can be made until it is realized that the field of observation is what people do with each other, what they can communicate to each other about what they do with each other. When that is done, no such things as the durable unique, individual personality is ever clearly justified. For all I know every human being has as many personalities as he has interpersonal relations . . . . (p. 329)

2. Ecosystem Epistemology

The recursive patterns of behaviour, postulated by Sullivan (1953), are essential to the notions of interpersonal theory and have been considered in detail by biologist Humberto Maturana. Maturana (1978) maintains that the conduct of two closed interactive systems, over time, establishes the two in some form of being in-the-world as well as creating an interlocking mutuality termed the consensual domain. He uses the term “structural coupling” to describe how two or more subsystems negotiate their interdependent existence.

If the medium is also a structurally plastic system, then the two plastic systems may become reciprocally structurally coupled through their reciprocal selection of plastic structural changes during their history of interactions. In such a case, the structurally plastic changes of state of one system become the perturbations for the other and vice versa, in a manner that establishes an interlocked, mutually selecting, mutually triggering domain of state trajectories (Maturana, 1978, p. 36).

What is established through the process of structural coupling is the consensual domain which refers to “a network of sequences which refers to mutually triggering interlocked conducts” (Maturana, 1978, p. 47). The conducts represent behaviours which are both arbitrary and contextual. They are considered arbitrary because they can exist in any form but they must “operate as triggering perturbations in the interactions” (Maturana, 1978, p. 47). They are
contextual in that the behaviours both exist in the domain and are defined by it.

In essence, the process of structural coupling and the generation of the consensual domain can be referred to as an ecology of behaviours and ideas when applied to the field of family psychology. That is, the behaviour of family members demonstrates pattern and order because the assumptions and premises underlying the actions of each member are consistent with the behaviour of the other individuals in the family (Bateson, 1972). Similarly, Bogdan (1984) asserts that “the ideas of each family member lead him to behave in ways that confirm or support the ideas of every other family member” (p. 376). These interpersonal perceptions, in part, constitute a description of how systems and subsystems operate to create consensual domains, an ecology of ideas and ultimately what is termed the Family or the Couple.

What we think and feel about ourselves is inextricably plaited with what we think others think of us. Our transactions have as a pervasive feature the presentation to others of the basic ways in which we view ourselves as well as our claims regarding the kind of relationship we want with others. Hence, to understand ourselves or others, it is essential to identify the dyadic system status, the interpersonal climates that we currently seek, shape, evoke and ensure in our interactions with others (Kiesler, 1982, p. 12).

It follows, when discussing troubled relationships, that the assumptions, expectations and behaviours on the part of both partners serve to facilitate the continuation of distressing patterns of interaction (Carson, 1982). Marital dissatisfaction results, in part, when a member of the couple experiences a discrepancy between his or her expectations of the spouse and the perceptions of that spouse’s behaviour (Bochner et al., 1982). The “interpersonal climates” described by Kiesler (1982) have been previously identified by Gregory Bateson
(1972) in terms of two patterns relating to the notion of reciprocity. The concepts of complementary and symmetrical relationships constitute overarching explanations of certain fixed interaction patterns. Complementarity refers to a rigid pattern which exists over time whereby the behaviours of A and B are dissimilar such that one member of the system “fits” with the other (e.g., spectatorship fits together with exhibitionism). A symmetrical relationship is characterized by a particular linkage whereby more of a given behaviour on the part of A stimulates more of the same in B and vice versa (e.g., the arms race). A third category has been suggested by Lederer and Jackson (1968) which entails a parallel relationship characterized by equality flowing easily and alternately between the two parties. The pair moves between complementary and symmetry depending upon the mutually agreed upon appropriateness of the shifts. Ultimately, our relationships are determined by our experiences of the interpersonal behaviours of others (Kiesler, 1982). As a result, certain patterns are believed to exist on the part of the observers who are themselves playing an interactive role with the sequences they perceive and can describe. Therefore, the terms complementarity, symmetrical and parallel relationship represent ideas or maps of observed patterns rather than the “actual” dyadic territory.

3. Laing’s Conceptualization of Interpersonal Perception

There are three essential factors, according to Laing et al. (1966), that guide our understanding of human motivation and these include an explanation of experience on the part of the observer, behaviour, and the idea of self. Firstly, experience, as described in interpersonal terms is governed by three perspectives.
These include: (a) a view of self; (b) a view of other; and (c) my view of other's view of me. These three perspectives of experience ultimately have bearing on the second guide to understanding human interactions, namely our behaviour. We act in accordance with the suppositions others make about us and our assumptions about these suppositions.

Through my behaviour I can act upon three areas of the other: on his experience of me; on his experience of himself; and upon his behaviour. In addition, I cannot act on the other himself directly, but I can act on my own experience of him (Laing et al., 1966, p. 22).

Thirdly, the synthesis between my view of other's view of me and my view of other serves to foster my self identity. In effect, I take on the assumptions I make about the assumptions I believe you make of me and incorporate them into my concept of self. For example, to say that Mr. X has low self esteem is to say that he assumes that we assume that he is worthless and he has ingested and digested this supposition.

Perception entails not only the interaction of two or more people but their interexperience as well. Laing et al. (1966) illustrate this idea through the use of the following example:

... Peter and Paul are persons, the behavior of each towards the other is mediated by the experience by each other of the other, just as the experience of each is mediated by the behavior of the each (pp. 9-10).

Thus, all the culturally conditioned, learned structures that contribute to the individual's worldview combine so that an individual transforms another person's behaviour into her/his experience. The act of perception necessitates interpretation and these interpretations are culturally determined and family dependent.
B. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

1. Interpersonal Perception and Distress

Interpersonal perception is considered an important and viable source of information and data regarding human functioning and research into this area has been conducted for many years. Previous investigators and theoreticians have recognized the relevance of interpersonal perception as it relates to dyadic functioning. According to Luckey (1960):

The bulk of theory and interpretations of research findings indicate that interpersonal behavior is closely related to, if not dependent upon, the way in which individuals perceive themselves, others, and the situation of the moment (p. 153).

Research efforts have traditionally centered on comparisons between distressed and nondistressed couples and between husbands and wives in both of these groups. These studies generally featured the measurement of spousal perceptions with respect to communication, marital satisfaction and self perception.

Luckey (1960) studied perceived marital satisfaction between distressed and nondistressed couples. She found that marital satisfaction was linked to the agreement between the wife's perception of her husband and his perception of himself. However, discrepancies between how the wives viewed themselves and how the husbands perceived their spouses are associated with less marital satisfaction. She concluded that discrepancies in perception were greatest amongst less satisfied couples.

In addition, Hawkins, Weisberg, and Ray (1980) found that men and women in marriages tend to view each other differently. In a study comprised of 171 white couples who were married for at least three years, the authors found
that wives are less satisfied with their marriages than husbands. The wives preferred to see less controlling communications from their husbands than the husbands preferred to see in themselves. In short, the wives valued a more contactful style than did the husbands. The authors discovered that “wives think of their husbands as engaging more often in less approved styles (e.g., controlling) and less often in the more approved styles (e.g., contactful) as compared to the husbands’ views of themselves” (Hawkins et al., 1980, p. 589). However, they did not screen for marital distress or psychiatric symptomatology.

Bochner, Krueger and Chmielewski (1982) conducted a study centered on the impact of role expectations on 126 middle to upper income white couples. They demonstrated that if the husband thinks that his wife believes he is performing the household duties (cooking, cleaning, maintenance) expected of him, the couple is more satisfied and affectionate with each other. In addition, the wife is more satisfied if she perceives her husband to be fulfilling his obligations in the work force. Finally, the couple is most satisfied and affectionate when the wife perceives her husband to be fulfilling his sexual and affective roles. This is also true if she thinks he thinks she is performing successfully in the sexual and affectional domains. The authors assert that a change in one spouse’s perceptions can affect the other spouse’s degree of satisfaction thereby demonstrating that interpersonal perception is a relevant construct to consider when investigating dyadic relationships.

Yelsma (1984) conducted a study designed to measure communication, adjustment and perceptual differences between nondistressed and distressed couples. He found, through the use of the Primary Communication Inventory, that there was greater perceptual incongruency in the distressed couples’ communication than
in the communication of the nondistressed group. That is, the differences between the happy spouses’ perceptions of self and their partners’ views of them were smaller for the satisfied couples when compared to distressed couples. Plus, the discrepancies between the happy spouses’ perceptions of their marital satisfaction were smaller for the satisfied couples than for the distressed couples. Laing et al. (1966) also demonstrated that nondistressed couples showed fewer perceptual discrepancies than distressed couples on the Interpersonal Perception Method instrument.

The research conducted by investigators and generated by theoreticians for delving into the interpersonal perceptions of distressed and nondistressed couples has been fruitful in identifying differences between these two groups. However, there seems to be a paucity of literature investigating interpersonal perception in relation to the symptom of alcoholism as it relates to dyadic relations.

2. Spousal Interaction and Alcoholism

a. Theoretical and Clinical Observations

It has been demonstrated that of all presenting problems addressed by marital and family clinicians, alcoholism is considered to be the most challenging (Geiss and O’Leary, 1981). The possible reasons for this are threefold. Training in marital and family therapy for alcohol and drug counsellors has been limited (O’Farrell and Birchler, 1987; Steinglass et al., 1987); research into the area is still “barely beyond its infancy” (Jacob and Seilhamer, 1987, p. 547); and the interaction patterns associated with alcoholism are complex. These complexities have been theoretically (Kaufman, 1984; Straussner, Weinstein, Hernandez, 1979);
clinically (Steinglass et al., 1987; Steinglass, Weiner, Mendelson, 1971); and empirically (Frankenstein, Hay, and Nathan, 1985) documented. Spousal interaction has been the subject of keen interest from these various standpoints and theoretical/clinical formulations have been derived through observation.

Kaufman (1984) describes four types of alcohol-involved couple relationships. These include: the functional family system; the neurotic enmeshed family system; the disintegrated family system; and the absent family system. The first two categories represent intact family units. The functional family system is relatively stable and happy whereas the neurotic enmeshed family system is characterized by conflict and role shifts. He describes the alcoholic in this family as controlling and passively dependent. The alcoholic avoids responsibility and abandons his/her role as parent, spouse, and household maintainer. The alcoholic's spouse, in turn, attempts to facilitate family and dyadic functioning by performing as many roles as possible in the relationship. She/he becomes forceful, active, blunt, or suffering (Gorad, 1971) in the face of a chaotic family life.

An actively drinking alcoholic often is unpredictable, and undependable, making household and family management and decision-making difficult and chaotic . . . . The negative effects of excessive drinking leads the couple into an intense hostile struggle in which the nonalcoholic spouse tries desperately to control the alcoholic's drinking and the alcoholic, although at times promising to reform, keeps on drinking. (O'Farrell, 1986, p. 514)

Therefore over time, the nonalcoholic spouse seems inclined to feel "virtuous for putting up with the alcoholic" (Straussner et al. 1979, p. 118).

This is compounded by the tendency for progressive alcoholism to affect the couple's sexual functioning rendering the marriage asexual (Kaufman, 1985). The nonalcoholic spouse thereby relegates the alcoholic to child status as he/she becomes fully responsible for the family (Wolin, Steinglass, Sendroff, and Davis,
and the couple becomes increasingly sexual inactive. He/she may experience guilt feelings and overresponsibility in the early phases of living with an alcoholic. This progresses to feelings of pity, disgust, protectiveness and anger towards the drinking spouse in the middle phase. In the advanced phase, feelings of suspiciousness, withdrawal and hostility are frequent. Lastly, the alcoholic becomes a preoccupation with the spouse and his/her needs and interests go unmet (Kaufman, 1985).

Waldo and Guerney (1983) describe a clinical case example where they observe both the nonalcoholic and the alcoholic spouses’ behaviours as they correspond, in a complementary fashion, to one another. Mrs. B lamented that her husband did not understand her or meet her needs for intimacy as Mr. B sat quietly avoiding eye contact with his wife. He responded, when requested, that he was responsible for their problems and he felt too inadequate to meet Mrs. B’s needs for intimacy. The couple exhibited a pattern of ‘adequate wife married to an inadequate husband’ which served to sustain as well as promote the drinking behaviour. The self perceptions of each spouse and their views of other combined with the chaotic reality of daily life with an alcoholic to maintain the distressed interactions that prompted the couple to seek therapy.

In another case example, the alcoholic’s guilt, shame and promises of reform as well as his feelings of inadequacy are captured in the following excerpt:

Dear Sally,
What happened last night was completely wrong. I don’t know what happened to me but I know I can’t lose my temper like that again. I never hit you before and I’ll never do it again.
I love you,
Bobby

(Treadway, 1989, p. 4)
The abusive incident described above illustrates the complementary pattern played out by this couple. Sally remains painfully a 'victim' while Bobby continues guiltily as the 'abuser.' The interpersonal perceptions of each spouse in concert with the hostile behaviours of the alcoholic ensure the continuation of the alcoholic drinking, abuse/apology cycle.

b. Empirical Evidence

Empirical research has been conducted into the various interactional patterns observed between alcoholics and their spouses as compared to relevant contrast and control groups. The following review summarizes the pertinent studies related to couple communicative behaviour patterns and alcoholism.

Interactional studies conducted in the area of couple communications have often centered on the differences in spousal perceptions as they refer to sober and intoxicated states. Tamerin, Toler, DeWolfe, Packer and Neuman (1973) studied 20 alcoholics and their spouses and their descriptions of their moods during drinking and nondrinking periods. They discovered that both spouses describe the alcoholic in positive terms when he/she is sober and they note an increase in hostility and depression during intoxication. However, the study did not include a distressed contrast group.

Davis (1976) obtained perception data from alcohol-involved couples while the alcoholic was intoxicated and while he was sober as well as the couples' responses when they were asked to predict their answers if the alcoholic was intoxicated. The researcher focussed on the discrepancies between the predicted and actual intoxicated reports. The wide discrepancies in these perceptions indicated the dangers inherent in relying too heavily on retrospective data without
obtaining evidence during in vivo drinking periods.

In a study based upon in vivo observations rather than retrospective recollections, Steinglass, Davis, Berenson (1977) demonstrated that alcoholics and their spouses had differing interactional patterns during periods of drinking and nondrinking. Communication became emotional with the onset of drinking often preceding the alcoholic's physiological intoxication. That is, some couples became more disclosing and intimate, others became more assertive and still others became more willing to express anger and disappointment. These observations indicated that alcoholic drinking may serve a problem solving function. The study, however, was limited in that it failed to make contrast group comparisons or use reliable measures.

Billings et al. (1979) endeavoured to apply a more systematic approach to the question. They observed and coded three different groups of couples and their interactions rather than restricting the study to alcoholic couples only. These groups included: alcoholic couples; nonalcoholic/distressed couples; and nonalcoholic/nondistressed couples. The authors also controlled for marital dissatisfaction in their study. In contrast to the Steinglass et al. (1977) study, Billings et al. (1979) concluded that drinking does not have a consistent effect on the communication between spouses in an alcoholic couple. In addition, they demonstrated that alcoholic couples' communications were similar to those of distressed couples and these were different from those communications exhibited by the nondistressed group. Alcoholic and distressed couples engaged in more hostile actions and fewer friendly or problem-solving communications than did the satisfied control group. The general distress experienced by the two groups may result in limited problem-solving and increased negativity. However, this study
was limited in that there were no screening procedures conducted for psychiatric symptomatology.

Jacob, Ritchey, Cvitkovic and Blane (1981) compared eight alcoholic couples to eight nonalcoholic normal couples with respect to their communications around a problem solving task. Alcohol was served on one of the discussion evenings and nonalcoholic beverages were served on the second evening. The coded observations revealed a pattern of increased negative affect during interactions between alcoholics and their spouses in the drink versus no drink situation than was evident in the normal group. The wives of alcoholics demonstrated more disagreement with their spouses during the drinking versus nondrinking condition while the wives in the normal group showed less disagreement in the drink versus no drink condition. The study did not feature a maritally distressed group although it did add to the mounting evidence indicating that male alcoholics and their spouses are different from nonalcoholic, nondistressed couples. However, the sample size in this study was quite small.

Frankenstein, Hay and Nathan (1985) conducted research into the effects of intoxication on the marital interactions of alcoholics and their nonalcoholic spouses. The study, however, did not include a control or contrast group and was based upon a small number of subjects. Nevertheless, the results of this descriptive research are of interest. Nonalcoholic spouses tended to show more positive verbalizations when the alcoholic was intoxicated than when he/she was sober. The alcoholics, in turn, were more outspoken and made more problem-describing statements when intoxicated than when sober. They also were less positive in their nonverbal behaviours than were their spouses.

Jacob and Krahn (1988) studied 38 families in which the husband was
alcoholic, 35 in which he was distressed and 34 in which he was a social
drinker without psychiatric difficulties. Alcoholic beverages were served to the
couples during one of the two coded discussion sessions. These researchers found
that nondistressed couples were more friendly then were the alcoholic and
distressed couples. Alcoholic couples were found to be more negative than the
depressed or distressed couples when they were drinking. However, they were
indistinguishable from both control and contrast groups when not drinking.

This study represents a rigorous examination of alcoholic family
interactions which includes control and contrast groups as well as a large number
of subjects. However, the couples were considered to be distressed or
nondistressed based entirely upon the husband's symptomatic behaviour or lack
thereof. These researchers did not screen for level of marital satisfaction which,
in sum, is an important oversight since symptomatology in one spouse does not
guarantee a distressed marriage. Conversely, a lack of symptomatology in one
spouse does not connote the absence of distress in a marriage.

While the authors presented did not directly investigate interpersonal
perception, their findings serve to confirm the importance of research which
attempts to explore belief systems. Coded or observed patterns of verbal and
nonverbal behaviour such as communicative interactions between spouses are
important to record but they are incomplete. The subject's perceptions of self and
other during the interactions in which he/she engages are extremely useful in
providing a context by which researchers and/or clinicians can make sense of
overt behaviour.

If as Zweben (1986) suggests, "the extent to which problem drinking
interferes with the everyday functioning of the family determines the level of
distress in the alcoholic marriage” (p. 171) then the perceptions of distress and familial disruption may have an effect on dyadic behaviours and vice versa. The manner in which couples interact as observed and reported by researchers, may have little to do with the subject’s punctuations of their own behaviour. It is therefore, necessary to orient studies of alcoholism, at least in part, to the phenomenological experiences of the couple or family unit as well as to observable behaviour where possible.

3. Interpersonal Perception in Alcoholic and Distressed Dyads

Orford (1975) reviewed the interpersonal perception and marriage literature and cited findings made between 1956 and 1972. He concluded that spouses who view their relationships as satisfactory describe each other in positive terms. Plus, if male sex role stereotypes are shared, the same subjects will report the husband in these stereotypic terms as well. Thus, the “happy” couples appear more understanding than their distressed counterparts. He concludes that, “alcoholic marriages in general tend to resemble marriages which are self-admittedly unhappy, whether or not complicated by alcoholism” (Orford, 1975, p. 1548).

Orford’s argument is a cogent one but it fails to take into account the notion that while both alcoholic and distressed couples are dissatisfied, their perceptions of each other and themselves in that distressed relationship may be different. Few of the studies done to 1975 in this area indicated the use of relational measures to identify differences in interpersonal perception. Instead, they merely measured individualistic characteristics or opinions regarding personal satisfaction in marriage or various intrapsychic phenomena which may or may
not have been shared by the spouses. For example, Mitchell and Mudd (in Mitchell, 1958) compared 28 alcohol-involved couples where the husband was alcoholic and 28 matched maritally conflicted controls. These researchers studied the husbands' views of self and their spouses and the wives' views of self and their spouses on 17 personality traits. The alcoholics considered themselves to be easily hurt and perceived their wives as controlling and dominating. However, these group differences were not ascertained through statistical analysis.

Drewery and Rae (1969) found, in their study of 22 alcoholics and their wives compared to 26 nonpsychiatric control couples, that the two groups were not distinguished on any measures with predictive success. These authors used the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (1959) (EPPS) which measures personality traits as expressed in terms of social needs. They attempted to create a more relational measure by combining the EPPS with the Interpersonal Perception Method designed by Laing et al. (1966). The methodology was unable to transform the already individualistic items into effective relational phrases. However, it did provide for a measure of spousal perceptual discrepancy. Thus, the authors discovered that quality of insight (e.g., amount of agreement and/or understanding between the spouses) seemed to be a means of discriminating between the two groups. For example, the control group husbands believed they were understood and they were. The alcoholic men, on the other hand, expected to be misunderstood and they were able to describe some of this misunderstanding. Control wives, however, expected their husbands to see them as they see themselves but they were mistaken. The wives of the alcoholics expected to be misperceived and they were extremely accurate in identifying how they were misperceived, whereas, the alcoholic men were only approximately
correct regarding their predicted level of misperception on the part of their wives.

Orford (1975) also lamented the preponderance of studies, similar to the research conducted by Drewery and Rae (1969), that compared alcoholic couples to nondistressed couples. He subsequently called for alcohol research which compared alcoholic with distressed couples with regards to interpersonal perception. Five years later Chiles, Strauss and Benjamin (1980) heeded his call in their important work in the area. These authors studied alcoholic and distressed couples who complained of sexual dysfunction. They demonstrated that alcoholic couples could be distinguished from other troubled couples.

As well as controlling for sexual dysfunction, Chiles et al. (1980) also expanded upon the previous intrapsychically based research by measuring perception through the use of the SASB model. The instrument detected several important perceptual differences between the couple groups because of its complexity and sensitivity to relational and intrapsychic themes. Firstly, Chiles et al. (1980) identified that alcoholic husbands and troubled wives believed themselves to be loving, reassuring, comforting, accepting, soothing, giving, flexible, enlightening, willing to please, listeners and considerate to others' needs. They also held the belief that their spouses learned and absorbed from them. Their spouses, on the other hand, did not share their views. The troubled husbands and wives of alcoholics believed themselves to be draining, insisting on neatness, refusing of offers and they perceived their spouses to be aloof but protective.

Secondly, the researchers found that both husbands and wives in the alcoholic group and the control group agreed that their wives were not dominating. Interestingly, the alcoholic husbands believed themselves to be submissive while their wives did not agree with this appraisal. This discrepancy
in perception was not found in the control sample. A second difference between the two groups was found when the alcoholic couples agreed that their wives were submissive while the spouses in the control group agreed that their wives were not submissive. These findings regarding perception of dominance and submission were in direct opposition to the conclusions made by Mitchell (1958). He claimed that alcoholic husbands attributed more dominance to their wives than the wives' attributed to themselves. Chiles et al. (1980) found that the alcoholic husbands felt submissive but were not being forced to be so by their "dominant" wives. This finding indicates the possible profound differences in interpersonal perceptions between these two groups. It is important to note that the observed differences were evident in an area considered to have been important to alcoholic relationships by practitioners, theoreticians and researchers alike.

Thirdly, the alcohol and control groups demonstrated no difference in pathology but the troubled controls indicated a desire for more inclusiveness and greater existing affection as measured by the FIRO-B than did the alcoholic group.

An influential study by O'Farrell and Birchler (1987) compared alcoholic, distressed and nondistressed couples on measures of marital stability, desire for change and communication behaviours in the relationship. The authors concluded that there were no differences between the alcoholic and distressed couples and both groups of troubled couples showed more distress than did the satisfied control group. However, the investigators were intrigued to find that there were differences in perception between the alcoholics and their wives and alcoholics and distressed husbands on marital satisfaction and desire for change measures. In particular, alcoholic husbands claimed to be more satisfied in their relationships
and to desire fewer changes in their partners than did their wives. Alcoholic husbands also demonstrated more satisfaction in their relationships and less understanding of their wives' desires for change than did the nondistressed, alcoholic husbands. The authors were interested in these anomalies and subsequently suggested the need for future research exploring the perceptual differences discovered in their investigation.

4. Conclusion

Interpersonal perception has been studied with regard to distressed versus nondistressed couples as well as alcoholic versus nonalcoholic, nondistressed couples and evidence suggests that differences do exist between these groups and between spouses in these groups (Billings et al., 1979; Bochner et al., 1982; Jacob and Krahn, 1988; Jacob et al., 1981; Laing et al., 1966; Luckey, 1960). Thus, both researchers and theorists have demonstrated the efficacy of explorations into the realm of interpersonal psychology. Unfortunately, forays into interpersonal psychology as it pertains to the transactions experienced by nondistressed, alcoholic couples and distressed, alcoholic couples have been few. The studies completed, however, indicate conflicting findings regarding the degree to which the two groups are dissimilar and whether they are indeed significantly different. Noteworthy discrepancies on a number of factors (Chiles et al., 1980; O'Farrell and Birchler, 1987) highlight the necessity to examine the differences that do exist in order to better understand the nature of alcohol-involved relationships.

Observations of alcoholic couples behaviour, and interactional patterns have been documented by researchers (Billings et al., 1979; Steinglass et al., 1977). These valuable research endeavours would be enhanced if they also included
measurements of the interpersonal perceptions held by the couples. The observation of couple dynamics on the part of an empirically or clinically minded researcher represents one perception of the couples' interactions. The subjects' perceptions of themselves are also extremely important when discussing alcoholism and its impact on the dyads.

However, it was not within the scope of this research to code interactions as well as measure interpersonal perceptions. Therefore, this research focuses on recording couple interpersonal perceptions with a view to exploring their phenomenological experience of the relationship from an empirical standpoint.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

A. SUBJECTS

Twenty distressed, alcoholic couples and 20 distressed, nonalcoholic couples were recruited for this study. They had all lived together for at least four months. The couples were screened for psychiatric symptomatology (using the SCL-90-R), alcoholism (using the Goodwin Criteria Checklist), and distress level (using the Dyadic Adjustment Scale). Couples were included as distressed if one or both of the spouses scored below 100-103 on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and only individuals who were nonpsychiatrically disturbed participated in the study. In addition, only male alcoholics and their nonalcoholic wives were assigned to the alcohol-involved couple group. The two groups of couples had no more than two marital or family counselling sessions in the last six months in order to qualify for inclusion in the study.

To summarize, couples were included in the alcoholic group if they were comprised of a male alcoholic married to or living common-law with a female nonalcoholic; they were also to be maritally distressed and not psychiatrically disturbed. In addition, they had had no more than two marital and/or family counselling sessions in the last six months. The distressed couple group was comprised of a nonalcoholic male married to or living common-law with a nonalcoholic female, both of whom were not psychiatrically disturbed. They were maritally distressed but they had not participated in more than two marital and/or family counselling sessions in the last six months.

The couples all resided in the province of British Columbia and were notified of the study through posters, newspaper advertisements (Appendix D) and
word of mouth. Subjects were obtained through private practitioners, alcohol and drug programs in Prince George, Parksville, Vancouver, Kelowna, Vernon, Victoria, Kamloops and Pacifica, a residential treatment centre for alcoholics in New Westminister.

The alcoholic and distressed couple groups were considered to be equivalent on all demographic variables since t-tests conducted on these variables demonstrated no significant differences between the two groups. The mean age of the males in the study was 36.8 years for the alcoholics and 38.0 years for the distressed men. The alcoholics and their wives had been married or living together for a mean of 9.9 years while the distressed couples have been married or living together on average for 7.1 years at the time of testing. The alcohol-involved and distressed couple groups earned an average of $35,000 to $45,000 per year in gross family income and both males and females in each group had obtained an average two years post secondary education at the time of testing. Those couples, included in the study, were raising an average of two children during testing.

B. MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

1. Structural Analysis of Social Behaviour

The Structural Analysis of Social Behaviour (SASB) was created by Lorna Benjamin (1974). The instrument draws on the theoretical work of Murray (1938), Sullivan (1954, 1956) and the interpersonal models of Leary (1957) and Schaefer (1965). The SASB is a circumplex model of interpersonal relations and their intrapsychic representations. The SASB Intrex Questionnaire measures the
interpersonal and intrapsychic perceptions of the respondent (Appendix A). However, the present study is concerned only with the interpersonal perspective rather than the intrapsychic one.

There are 144 interpersonal items to be answered by the subjects. These represent the Focus on other in relation to self (72 items) and Focus on self in relation to other (72 items). The respondents were requested to rate each item on a scale ranging from 0 to 100 at 10 point intervals with 0 representing Not at All descriptive; 50 representing Moderately descriptive and 100 representing Perfectly descriptive (Benjamin, 1974). In addition, the instructions on the Intrex answer sheets stated “A rating of less than 50 indicates ‘false’; a rating of 50 or more indicates ‘true’” for each item. The SASB categorizes transactional behaviours such as the one represented in the following item “I harshly punish and torture him, take revenge.” This item measures the perception of one individual in relation to the other person. The transactional behaviours are therefore classified in terms of mode of the event. There are four modes for each event from each spouse’s perspective and these are included in Table 2. It is therefore possible to identify how couples initiate and respond towards each other. These different modes are reported on separate surfaces or maps in the SASB output.
Table 2
Mode and Example Item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Example of Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View of Own Initiation:</td>
<td>I harshly punish and torture him/her, take revenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View of Own Response:</td>
<td>I whine, unhappily protest, try to defend myself from him/her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View of Other Initiation:</td>
<td>He/she harshly punishes and tortures me, takes revenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View of Other Response:</td>
<td>He/she whines, unhappily protests, tries to defend himself/herself from me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The maps relate to two central dimensions of the SASB namely affiliation and interdependence. Affiliation is represented by the horizontal axis and is characterized by the polar opposites of friendly, loving on the right side of the model and hostile and attacking on the left side of the model. Interdependence is represented by the vertical axis and is characterized by freeing behaviour on the top and dependent controlling behaviour on the bottom. All 36 items or points on each surface represent a blend of these two core constructs. The complete interpersonal version of the model is presented in Appendix A.

The model was refined (Benjamin, 1987) via collapsing the groups of individual items on each focus rendering eight clusters for each surface (Appendix B). Therefore, the item illustrated in the previous example is included in the “Belittling and Blaming” cluster when observing initiating behaviour and in the “Sulking and Appeasing” cluster when observing responding behaviour. For the purposes of this study, the cluster model was used (see Table 3). The items
defining each cluster can be examined in Appendices F and G. A cluster score was arrived at through the calculation of a mean averaging selected items identified by Benjamin (1987) as being specific to that cluster.

Table 3

Transactional Behaviour Clusters (TBC) Measured by SASB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TBC#</th>
<th>Initiating</th>
<th>TBC#</th>
<th>Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Freeing and Forgetting</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Asserting and Separating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Affirming and Understanding</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Disclosing and Expressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Nurturing and Comforting</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Approaching and Enjoying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Helping and Protecting</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Trusting and Relying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Watching and Managing</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Deferring and Submitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Attacking and Rejecting</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Protesting and Withdrawing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Ignoring and Neglecting</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Walling Off and Avoiding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The SASB has been described as a detailed, ambitious, conceptually demanding and clinically fertile model (Wiggins, 1982). It is, therefore, a useful, complex and sensitive tool for the measurement of interpersonal perception. Benjamin (1974) stated:

The ratings are interpreted as measuring the subject’s view of his relations with significant others in both his present and his past. It is assumed that these ratings of perceptions . . . relate more importantly to the rater than to the actual behaviours of the people being rated . . .. Stated in another way, the assumption is that one is moved by how one sees the world more than by how the world really is (p. 399).
The SASB is considered to have an internal consistency coefficient of around .90 (Benjamin, 1974). Autocorrelations, factor analyses and discriminant functions performed on the SASB in a variety of studies have shown that "the rating scales are reliable, internally coherent and able to differentiate among clinical and normal groups in predictable directions" (Humphrey and Benjamin, 1986, p. 982).

2. **Goodwin Criteria for Drinking Categories Checklist**

The Checklist (Appendix C) was be utilized to identify alcoholics and nonalcoholics in both distressed and alcoholics couple groups. The demarcation criteria are analogous to those used in DSM-III diagnosis (Steinglass et al., 1987) and are therefore useful in differentiating moderate, heavy, problem and alcoholic drinkers. The Goodwin Criteria have been used to identify alcoholics in a number of studies (Bennett, Wolin, Reiss, and Teitelbaum, 1987; Billings et al., 1979; Dunn et al., 1987; Goodwin et al., 1974; Jacob, Dunn and Leonard, 1983; Steinglass et al., 1987).

3. **Dyadic Adjustment Scale**

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) was authored by Graham B. Spanier (1976). The DAS measures four categories "considered to be conceptually and empirically related to dyadic adjustment" (Spanier, 1976, p. 22). These include: Dyadic satisfaction; Dyadic cohesion, Dyadic consensus and Affectional expression. There are 32 items in the test and respondents are requested to place a checkmark underneath the most descriptive phrase for each item. For example, the phrases for items 1 to 15 range from *Always Agree* to *Almost Always Agree*
to Occasionally Disagree to Frequently Disagree to Almost Always Disagree to Always Disagree. Each phrase is judged according to this range and is assigned a number for the purposes of defining adjustment. A score below 100 on the DAS indicates dyadic distress at the point when the test was completed. The DAS was given to both spouses in the alcoholic and distressed groups in order to identify and ensure that marital distress was common to both groups.

The scale has an internal consistency coefficient of .96 and is therefore considered a reliable instrument. The items included in the DAS were evaluated by three judges to determine its content validity. Items were incorporated in the test only if they were relevant to dyadic relationships, carefully worded and consistent with definitions of adjustment (Spanier, 1976). In addition, the DAS correlated significantly with marital status in that for each item a divorced group (n=94) differed significantly from a married group (n=218) (Spanier, 1976).

The DAS was compared to another frequently used scale the Lock-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (1959) and the correlations between these two tests were .86 among married subjects and .88 among divorced respondents (p<.001) (Spanier, 1976). Therefore, construct validity was established. The DAS was chosen for use over the Lock-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale since the DAS questions are applicable to both married and common-law relationships.

4. Symptom Checklist-90-Revised

The Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SCL-90-R) was authored by Leonard A. Derogatis in 1976. The inventory was developed to measure the "psychological symptom patterns of psychiatric and medical patients" (Derogatis, 1983, p.2). The SCL-90-R measures nine symptom dimensions and three global indicators of
distress. These symptom dimensions include:

I. Somatization
II. Obsessive-Compulsive
III. Interpersonal Sensitivity
IV. Depression
V. Anxiety
VI. Hostility
VII. Phobic Anxiety
VIII. Paranoid Ideation
IX. Psychoticism

The three global indicators of distress include:

i) Global Severity Index (GSI)
ii) Positive Symptom Distress Index (PSDI)
iii) Positive Symptom Total (PST)

The global indicators of distress offer more overall flexibility to the tool and have been shown to identify separate aspects of psychological dysfunction (Derogatis, 1983).

The 90 items included in the SCL-90-R are rated on a five point scale which ranges from 0 (not at all) to 4 (extremely). It generally requires 12 to 15 minutes to complete the measure. Respondents are instructed to reflect upon the last week including the day of testing when completing the form.

The SCL-90-R was used, in this study, to identify individuals whose psychological symptoms indicated that they may suffer from a psychiatric disorder. When this was the case, the data provided by the individual and subsequently the couple, did not qualify for inclusion in the study.
The SCL-90-R is a reliable tool because it has internal consistency coefficients for each dimension which range between .77 for Psychoticism to .90 for Depression (Derogatis, 1983). Internal consistency refers to the measure of the degree to which items representing each symptom construct reflect the underlying factor. The SCL-90-R test-retest coefficients range between .78 for Hostility and .90 for Phobic Anxiety. Thus, the tool is reliable in that it measures symptom constructs in a stable manner over a one week period through different testings of the same individual. The SCL-90-R has been shown to exhibit a high degree of convergent validity with the MMPI in particular. Derogatis (1983) demonstrates that the construct validity of the SCL-90-R is high in that the measure itself and the constructs it purports to measure are correlated.

The SCL-90-R has been used extensively in a number of studies including those concerning alcoholism (Derogatis, 1983). Steinglass (1979) used the tool for the assessment of treatment changes in alcoholic couples and again during a study concerning in-home evaluations of alcoholic families (Steinglass, 1980). He has used this measure widely in his ongoing alcoholism research programs (Steinglass, 1987).

C. EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

The couples completed the SASB Intrex Questionnaire after they finished the screening instruments. Testing required one and a half to two hours for completion. All subjects were instructed to read the directions and answer the questions in such a way as to reflect how they view their relationship in the present. In addition, they were to answer the forms honestly and to ask the
researcher for clarification at anytime. The instruments were reviewed and missing information was brought to the respondent’s attention before he/she left the testing area. This resulted in complete data for all respondents.

In recognition of the time they took to finish the questionnaires, couples were offered an hour long assessment based on the forms they completed. The assessment session was given immediately following the administration of the instruments and it was well received by the subjects (see Appendix E). Referrals to appropriate counselling agencies in British Columbia were then made on the basis of the assessment.

D. DESIGN

This exploratory survey study utilizes a three factor, mixed model, multivariate, repeated measures design. The three factors were GROUP (alcoholic and distressed), MATE (husband and wife), and FOCUS (self and other). GROUP was the between subjects factor and MATE and FOCUS were within-subjects factors. This design also allowed for the examination of the following group interactions:

1. G X M
2. G X F
3. G X M X F

The multivariate approach to the analysis of the data takes into account the dependency that exists among Transactional Behaviour Cluster (TBC) scores.

Figure 1 illustrates the design utilized in this study and the accompanying 16 variables of interest. That is, there are eight Initiating variables corresponding to each FOCUS for each MATE and eight Responding variables corresponding to
**Figure 1**

Three Factor, Mixed Model, Multivariate, Repeated Measures Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mate</th>
<th>Husbands</th>
<th>Wives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Initiation(^1)</td>
<td>Respond(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notation</td>
<td>HHI</td>
<td>HHR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)\(^n\)= Initiating Transactional Behaviour Cluster Variables in Each Cell
1. Freeing and Forgetting
2. Affirming and Understanding
3. Nurturing and Comforting
4. Helping and Protecting
5. Watching and Managing
6. Belittling and Blaming
7. Attacking and Rejecting
8. Ignoring and Neglecting

\(^2\)\(^n\)= Responding Transactional Behaviour Cluster Variables in Each Cell
1. Asserting and Separating
2. Disclosing andExpressing
3. Approaching and Enjoying
4. Trusting and Relying
5. Deferring and Submitting
6. Sulking and Appeasing
7. Protesting and Withdrawing
8. Walling Off and Avoiding
each FOCUS for each MATE.

The G X M X F interaction was of principle interest since the research questions center on the differences between alcoholic and distressed men as well as the differences between distressed women and women married to alcoholics regarding their perceptions of themselves and their spouses transacting in the relationship. Two separate and independent analyses were conducted on the three factors. The first analysis centered on the Initiating Mode variables and the second analysis centered on the Responding Mode variables. For the purposes of significance testing, alpha was set at .05.

E. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was conducted in five steps. The first step included the creation of the Transactional Behaviour Cluster (TBC) scores for each FOCUS and Mode for each individual. This was achieved by averaging SASB Intrex items to produce eight Initiating TBC means and eight Responding TBC means. For example, TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting (Initiating Mode) was created by the sum of the scores on five SASB items (#127, #128, #120, #118, and #117) divided by five to obtain a mean cluster score. Appendices F and G provide breakdowns of the items as they pertain to each cluster and mode.

The second step in the analysis, was to conduct the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on all the variables under consideration in order to check for normality of distribution.
The third step involved the determination of equivalency between the demographic variables between the groups. These variables include:

1. Marital distress level,
2. Subject age,
3. Number of children,
4. Gross couple income,
5. Subject education level, and
6. Number of years married.

Basic equivalency was established by conducting t-tests between the two groups on all these variables since there were no significant differences at the $p < .05$ level (see Table 4). While equivalency existed between the groups with respect to marital distress level, possible effects of differential distress levels were still an issue and subsequently investigated in the fourth step of the analysis.

In the fourth step, regression analysis was used to produce TBC scores adjusted for distress. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale scores for husbands and wives were used to predict their scores on each of the TBC variables. The predicted scores were then subtracted from the observed scores producing residual scores. The residual scores were then added to the group mean for each variable in order to approximate the original scale for interpretive purposes.

MANOVAs were conducted on both the adjusted scores and the unadjusted scores in order to provide a thorough examination of differential distress effects on the variables. The interaction of interest namely, GROUP X MATE X FOCUS, was investigated separately with respect to the two Modes (Initiating and Responding). MANOVA was implemented because of the large number of related variables being tested in this study. This procedure avoided the inflation of the
probability of type I error due to the repeated testing of variables.

Fifthly, when a significant MANOVA was found for the interaction, the univariate tests were examined and significant F tests were noted and Dunn's multiple comparison procedure (Kirk, 1968, p. 79) was used to test for significant pairwise differences between selected means (See Appendix H for the Dunn's Procedure formula).

The comparisons of interest were between alcoholic and distressed husbands with regard to self and to other, and between women married to the alcoholics and distressed women with regard to self and to other. Four pairwise contrasts were performed for each occurrence of a significant G X M X F interaction in the univariate tests.
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

A. VARIABLE EQUIVALENCY

T-tests were used to assess equivalency of groups for all demographic variables. No significant differences were found between the two groups with respect to any of the demographic variables (Table 4). In addition, an examination of the t-test comparisons for marital distress level showed no significant difference between alcoholic men and distressed men (Table 5). Likewise, there were no significant differences between the distressed women and the women married to alcoholics with regard to marital distress level (Table 6).

While it appeared that little difference between the two groups was due to differential distress levels, it was considered prudent to adjust the SASB Intrex scores for marital distress. A MANOVA was then conducted on both the adjusted and original means and the results of both the multivariate and univariate tests are reported in Table 7, with details given in Appendix I and J.

However, the unadjusted scores were utilized in the multivariate, univariate, and post hoc analyses (Dunn’s Procedure) because they corresponded to the scale originally used to obtain them during data collection and the two sets of analyses proved to be comparable as indicated in Table 7.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted on each variable to test for the normality of the distribution. The test indicated that the scores for each variable were normally distributed with means ranging from 19.75 to 60.85 and standard deviations ranging from 12.25 to 23.82.

The utilization of multivariate tests of significance was necessary in order to achieve reliable results. Chiles et al. (1980) apparently conducted at least 72
Table 4
T-Test Comparisons for Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group(^1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p(^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years married</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Age</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>36.75</td>
<td>7.43</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
<td>0.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>38.05</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Age</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>35.65</td>
<td>8.21</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple Income(^3)</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>0.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male education(^4)</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>-1.26</td>
<td>0.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female education(^4)</td>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>-0.98</td>
<td>0.334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)n=20 for each group  
\(^2\)\(a = .05, df=1.38\)

\(^3\)Gross Couple Income:  
1. Under $15,000  
2. $15,000—$25,000  
3. $25,000—$35,000  
4. $35,000—$45,000  
5. $45,000—$55,000  
6. Above $55,000

\(^4\)Education:  
1. Grade 10 or less  
2. Grade 12 or less  
3. 2 years of post secondary education  
4. Community college program completed  
5. University degree completed  
6. Graduate program completed  
7. Ph.D or equivalent completed
Table 5

Male Dyadic Adjustment Scale Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>91.95</td>
<td>16.42</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>84.80</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 a = .05, df = 1,38

Table 6

Female Dyadic Adjustment Scale Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>79.85</td>
<td>19.77</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>0.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>83.25</td>
<td>15.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 a = .05, df = 1,38

ANOVA on separate SASB Intrex items in order to generate their results, thereby increasing the probability of Type I error. In the present study, a more conservative approach was taken, yielding results which can be considered more reliable.

MANOVAs were conducted separately for the Initiation Mode and the Responding Mode variables. The multivariate tests resulted in significant overall F-values for the Initiation Mode but not the Responding Mode variables (Table 7). Subsequently, the univariate tests were examined revealing significance for four of the variables in the Initiating Mode. These variables include: TBC#4-
Table 7
Multivariate and Univariate Analyses for Original and Adjusted Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Original</th>
<th></th>
<th>Adjusted</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>p&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>F&lt;sub&gt;.&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multivariate</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univariate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 1</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>.653</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 2</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>.668</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>.556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 3</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 4</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.041&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 5</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 6</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>.046&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 7</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.031&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 8</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>.009&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multivariate</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>.951</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univariate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 1</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>.513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 2</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>.698</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 3</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>.481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 4</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.851</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>.981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 5</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>.464</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 6</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 7</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC 8</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>.338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup>Approximate F for multivariate tests based on Wilks Lambda test.

<sup>2</sup>α=.05, df=1,38

<sup>*</sup>p<.05
Helping and Protecting (p = .041); TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming (p = .046); TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting (p = .031); and TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting (p = .009) (Table 7). There were no significant differences found between the groups with respect to the Responding Mode as indicated in Table 7.

Dunn’s Procedure was performed on these four variables of interest. The contrasts generally revealed significant differences between the men and between the women of both groups with respect to their views of themselves initiating and their perceptions of their spouses initiations in the relationship. The following discussion will center first on the results obtained via Dunn’s Procedure for the two groups of husbands and subsequently for the two groups of wives on the Initiating and then on the Responding Modes.

B. TBC FINDINGS ON THE INITIATING MODE

1. TBC Findings for Husbands on the Initiating Mode

In discussing differences between distressed and alcoholic men, it is important to reiterate that a score of 50 or above indicates that the respondents considered the item in question to be true about themselves or their spouses. A score below 50 indicated that the respondent considered the statement to be false in some degree (Benjamin, 1974). For most variables, both groups of husbands obtained means below 50 with respect to each of the clusters tested.
Findings for Self Focus. No significant differences were observed between the groups of husbands with respect to their views of their own initiations towards their wives. That is, both groups believed they were moderately Helping and Protecting of their wives (See Table 8).

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Husbands</th>
<th>Wives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Mean S.D.</td>
<td>Mean S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic Group</td>
<td>55.40 22.83</td>
<td>50.45 23.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed Group</td>
<td>57.70 12.55</td>
<td>41.60 18.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute Difference¹</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>8.85*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Critical value of absolute difference = 3.72 (α=.05)

Findings for Other Focus. The only significantly different pairwise contrast for this cluster referred to the husbands' views of their wives' initiations towards them. Alcoholic husbands viewed their wives to be significantly more Helping and Protecting (x̄=50.45) in their initiations than did the distressed husbands (x̄=41.60). However, both groups of men, on the whole, believed that their wives were marginally Helping and Protecting in their behaviours towards them (See Table 8).
b. TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming

Findings for Self Focus. One of the four pairwise contrasts proved to be significant for the husbands on this cluster. Generally, the two groups of husbands did not consider it true that they were Belittling and Blaming in their initiations towards their wives. However, their means on this cluster were inflated to the extent that they characterized themselves as Belittling and Blaming some of the time. The alcoholic men viewed themselves to be significantly more Belittling and Blaming (\( \bar{x} = 37.60 \)) than did the distressed men (\( \bar{x} = 30.10 \)) (see Table 9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Husbands</th>
<th></th>
<th>Wives</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic Group</td>
<td>37.60</td>
<td>17.89</td>
<td>36.60</td>
<td>24.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed Group</td>
<td>30.10</td>
<td>16.83</td>
<td>40.25</td>
<td>22.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute Difference (^1)</td>
<td>7.50*</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>12.85*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Critical value of absolute difference = 4.65 (\( \alpha = .05 \))

Findings for Other Focus. No significant differences were observed regarding the husbands views of their wives Belittling and Blaming behaviours towards them. They both considered it false to say that this transaction was evident in the marriage to any large extent but they did report that it occurred
c. TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting

Two of the four contrasts yielded a significant result for men on this cluster with respect to both the self and other foci. Generally, these husbands did not perceive themselves or their wives to be overly Attacking and Rejecting in their behaviours. However, the alcoholic husbands viewed themselves to be more Attacking and Rejecting ($\bar{x} = 22.75$) than did the distressed men ($\bar{x} = 17.20$) while the distressed men viewed their wives to be more Attacking and Rejecting ($\bar{x} = 27.90$) than did the alcoholic men ($\bar{x} = 21.35$).

The somewhat inflated means obtained by these men were descriptive of their experiences of being slightly hostile in the relationship as well as perceiving some hostility directed towards them on the part of their spouses (Table 10).

d. TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting

Two significant contrasts were noted for the husbands on this cluster. These were observed in both the self and other foci. Overall, the men did not consider themselves or their wives to be Ignoring and Neglecting in their initiations. However, the alcoholic husbands believed themselves to be more Ignoring and Neglecting of their wives ($\bar{x} = 32.35$) than did the distressed men ($\bar{x} = 22.95$) and the distressed men viewed their wives to be more Ignoring and Neglecting ($\bar{x} = 35.50$) towards them than did the alcoholic husbands ($\bar{x} = 28.10$) (Table 11).
Table 10
Spousal Means, Standard Deviations and Absolute Differences for TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting, Initiation Mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Husbands</th>
<th>Wives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic Group</td>
<td>22.75</td>
<td>15.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed Group</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>13.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute Difference</td>
<td>5.55*</td>
<td>6.55*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Critical value of absolute difference = 3.70 (α=.05)

Table 11
Spousal Means, Standard Deviations and Absolute Differences for TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting, Initiation Mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Husbands</th>
<th>Wives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic Group</td>
<td>32.35</td>
<td>17.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distressed Group</td>
<td>22.95</td>
<td>16.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute Difference</td>
<td>9.40*</td>
<td>7.40*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Critical value of absolute difference = 4.57 (α=.05)
e. Summary

The husbands generally viewed themselves and their spouses to be marginally Helping and Protecting in their initiations. They also believed that they and their wives were not overly Belittling and Blaming, Attacking and Rejecting and/or Ignoring and Neglecting in the marriage. However, there were significant differences between the groups with respect to the degrees to which they perceived these initiations to occur.

Findings for Self Focus. Alcoholic husbands perceived themselves to be significantly more TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming, TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting, and TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting than did the distressed men. However, the distressed men did not believe they were any more Helping and Protecting than the alcoholic men. In fact, there were no significant differences between the two here.

Findings for Other Focus. Alcoholic men viewed their wives as initiating in a Helping and Protecting manner compared to distressed men. In contrast, the distressed men perceived their wives to be more Attacking and Rejecting and Ignoring and Neglecting of them than did the alcoholic men. Both groups considered their wives to be somewhat Belittling and Blaming of them.

2. TBC Findings for Wives on the Initiating Mode

The following sections will describe the significant and nonsignificant findings evident on the four TBCs identified by MANOVA and subsequently tested using the Dunn's Procedure. It is again important to note that both groups of women generally obtained means below 50 with respect to each of the clusters tested as did the two groups of men.
a. TBC#4-Helping and Protecting

Findings for Self Focus. There were no significant differences between the wives when their views of themselves initiating were compared. They, in turn, perceived themselves as marginally Helping and Protecting towards their husbands (Table 8).

Findings for Other Focus. One pairwise contrast yielded a statistically significant result for women on this cluster and it referred to the wives views of their husbands' initiations towards them. Both groups believed that their spouses were only somewhat Helping and Protecting as evidenced by the fact that their means fell on the false side of the demarcation point. However, when the degree to which the women viewed their husbands as unsupportive was considered, evidence suggested that they were significantly different. Women married to alcoholic men viewed their husbands as significantly less Helping and Protecting in their initiations ($\bar{x} = 40.80$) than did distressed women ($\bar{x} = 48.75$) (see Table 8).

b. TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming

Findings for Self Focus. There were no significant differences between the two groups of women with respect to their views of themselves initiating on this cluster. They both believed that they did not generally Belittle and Blame their mates but they agreed this transaction occurs to an uncomfortable extent (see Table 9).

Findings for Other Focus. The only significant pairwise contrast found for this cluster, again referred to the womens' views of their husbands' initiations towards them. They did not consider their husbands to be generally Belittling and Blaming of them but they did cite the incidence of these transactions as
existing to an inflated extent in the marriage. The women married to alcoholics held the belief that they were significantly more Belittled and Blamed by their husbands ($\bar{x} = 47.05$) than did the distressed women ($\bar{x} = 34.20$) (see Table 9).

c. TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting

Findings for Self Focus. No significant differences were found between the two groups regarding their views of their own Attacking and Rejecting initiations towards their husbands. That is, they both believed that they Attack and Reject to a slight extent but this was not generally how they viewed their conduct in the relationship (see Table 10).

Findings for Other Focus. The two sets of women perceived that their husbands exhibited hostile behaviours towards them some of the time. However, they did not perceive this to be generally true. Yet, when these behaviours were believed to occur within the marriage, the women in alcoholic marriages viewed their husbands to be significantly more Attacking and Rejecting of them ($\bar{x} = 23.70$) than did the distressed women ($\bar{x} = 17.30$) (see Table 10).

d. TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting

Findings for Self Focus. Women in both groups believed they were slightly Ignoring and Neglecting of their husbands although this was not perceived to be generally true in the marriage (see Table 11).

Findings for Other Focus. A significant difference was observed between the two groups regarding the wives’ views of their husbands’ initiations. Specifically, the women married to alcoholics perceived their husbands to be more Ignoring and Neglecting ($\bar{x} = 49.00$) of them than did the distressed women.
The means obtained by the two groups of women testify to their perceptions of being somewhat Ignored and Neglected by their husbands. However, they did not consider this to be the rule in the relationship (see Table 11).

e. Summary

The two groups of women did not characterize themselves or their husbands as typically Helping and Protecting; Belittling and Blaming; Attacking and Rejecting and/or Ignoring and Neglecting in their initiations. However, there was evidence of significant differences between the groups regarding the degree to which these initiations were believed to be evident in the relationship. Specifically, distressed women viewed their husbands to be significantly more Helping and Protecting than did women married to alcoholics. Evidence also demonstrated that women married to alcoholics view their husbands as more Belittling and Blaming, Attacking and Rejecting, and Ignoring and Neglecting than did the distressed women.

3. Summary of Nonsignificant TBC Findings for Husbands and Wives on the Initiating and Responding Modes

a. Initiation Mode

Four remaining clusters, on the Initiation Mode, were found to be nonsignificant for both groups of men and both groups of women when tested by MANOVA. They included: TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting; and TBC#5-Watching and
Managing. The following summary outlines the nature of these findings (see Appendices K and L for details).

The two groups of men generally viewed themselves as initiating towards their wives in TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; and TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting manner. However, their scores were deflated on these clusters relative to the original SASB scale. They did not consider themselves to be TBC#5-Watching and Managing towards their wives, yet their means here were inflated when compared to the scale. The alcoholic and distressed men did not believe their spouses to be particularly TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting; or TBC#5-Watching and Managing of them.

The two sets of women did not perceive themselves or their spouses to be particularly TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; and TBC#5-Watching and Managing in their initiations in the relationship. However, they perceived that they were marginally TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting towards their spouses and that their spouses were also Nurturing and Comforting of them.

b. Responding Mode

There were consistent nonsignificant differences for both the two groups of men and the two groups of women with respect to the Responding Mode. Generally, these two sets of groups viewed themselves and their spouses as friendly in their responses. However, an overall tendency towards somewhat deflated means on the friendly-pole clusters and somewhat inflated means on the hostile-pole clusters, indicated the degree to which both spouses in the distressed,
alcoholic and the distressed, nonalcoholic relationships considered their marriages to be marginal and troubled.
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION

The importance of the role of interpersonal perception in human functioning has been both theoretically and empirically documented. Interpersonal perception is believed to play an important part in our behaviour towards others (Laing et al., 1966) and our expectations regarding their future behaviour (Dunn, Jacob, Hummon, Seilhamer, 1987) towards us. The following sections examine the research questions and hypotheses in light of the study findings and integrates these results with a empirical, clinical, and theoretical framework.

A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

1. Research Question A

Do distressed, alcoholic husbands differ from distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their interpersonal perceptions as measured by the SASB?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of themselves initiating towards their wives as measured by the SASB.

While there were five initiating mode clusters that were found to be statistically nonsignificant including TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting; TBC#4-Helping and Protecting; and TBC#5-Watching and Managing, significant differences were found between the two groups of men. The hypothesis was subsequently rejected. Alcoholic husbands considered themselves to be significantly
more TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming, TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting, and
TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting in their initiations towards their wives than did
the distressed husbands. In short, the alcoholic husbands considered themselves to
initiate in a more hostile manner towards their wives than did the distressed
men.

2. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands
and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of
themselves responding to their wives as measured by the SASB.

This hypothesis was not rejected since no significant differences were
observed between the two groups of husbands regarding the responding mode.
That is, there were no significant differences between the two groups when
measured on the following variables: TBC#1-Asserting and Separating;
TBC#2-Disclosing and Expressing; TBC#3-Approaching and Enjoying;
TBC#4-Trust ing and Relying; TBC#5-Deferring and Submitting; TBC#6-Sulking and
Appeasing; TBC#7-Protecting and Withdraw ing; and TBC#8-Walling Off and
Avoiding.

3. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands
and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of their
wives’ initiations towards them as measured by the SASB.

This hypothesis was rejected when significant differences between the two
groups of men were noted for TBC#4-Helping and Protecting; TBC#7-Attacking
and Rejecting; and TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting. That is, alcoholic husbands
viewed their spouses to be significantly more Helping and Protecting of them
than did the distressed men. The distressed men in contrast, considered their
wives to be significantly more Attacking and Rejecting, and Ignoring and
Neglecting than did the alcoholic men. However, there were no significant differences between the groups regarding their views of their wives initiations on the remaining five variables of interest. These included: TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting; TBC#5-Watching and Managing; and TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming.

4. There are no significant differences between distressed, alcoholic husbands and distressed, nonalcoholic husbands with respect to their views of their wives' responses to them as measured by the SASB.

This hypothesis was not rejected since no significant differences were observed between the two groups of husbands regarding their views of their wives responses to them. That is, no statistically significant differences were observed between these groups of husbands on the responding variables which included: TBC#1-Asserting and Separating; TBC#2-Disclosing and Expressing; TBC#3-Approaching and Enjoying; TBC#4-Trustin and Relying; TBC#5-Deferring and Submitting; TBC#6-Sulking and Appeasing; TBC#7-Protec ting and Withdrawing; and TBC#8-Walling Off and Avoiding.

2. Research Question B

Do women married to alcoholics and women in distressed marriages differ from one another with respect to their interpersonal perceptions as measured by the SASB?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of themselves initiating towards their husbands as measured by the SASB.
The hypothesis was not rejected given the observation that no significant differences existed between the two groups of women regarding their views of themselves initiating towards their husbands. That is, the two groups of wives demonstrated no significant differences in their initiations when measured on the following variables: TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; TBC#3-Nurturing and Comforting; TBC#4-Helping and Protecting; TBC#5-Watching and Managing; TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming; TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting; and TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting.

2. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of themselves responding to their husbands as measured by the SASB.

This hypothesis was not rejected when no significant differences were observed between the two groups of women regarding their view of themselves responding to their spouses. The two groups of women did not differ when compared on the following responding variables: TBC#1-Asserting and Separating; TBC#2-Disclosing and Expressing; TBC#3-Approaching and Enjoying; TBC#4-Trust ing and Relying; TBC#5-Deferring and Submitting; TBC#6-Sulking and Appeasing; TBC#7-Protesting and Withdrawing; and TBC#8-Walling Off and Avoiding.

3. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of their husbands’ initiations towards them as measured by the SASB.

Although there were no significant differences evident between the two groups of women on four of the eight Initiation Mode variables (TBC#1-Freeing and Forgetting; TBC#2-Affirming and Understanding; TBC#3-Nurturing and
Comforting; and TBC#5-Watching and Managing), there were statistically significant differences between the two sets of wives. That is, the women married to alcoholics viewed their spouses as initiating towards them in a hostile fashion. They viewed their husbands as significantly less TBC#4-Helping and Protecting; and significantly more TBC#6-Belittling and Blaming; TBC#7-Attacking and Rejecting; and TBC#8-Ignoring and Neglecting than do the distressed women.

4. There are no significant differences between women in alcohol-involved marriages and distressed women with respect to their views of their husbands’ responses to them as measured by the SASB.

This hypothesis was not rejected since no statistically significant differences were observed between the two groups of women regarding their views of their husbands' responses to them. They did not differ on any of the Responding Mode variables which include: TBC#1-Asserting and Separating; TBC#2-Disclosing and Expressing; TBC#3-Approaching and Enjoying; TBC4-Trusting and Relying; TBC#5-Deferring and Submitting; TBC#6-Sulking and Appeasing; TBC#7-Protesting and Withdrawing; and TBC#8-Walling Off and Avoiding.

3. Summary

The finding that both groups of husbands and both groups of wives demonstrated few significant differences with respect to both the Initiating and Responding Modes is illustrative of the marginal, troubled and distressed nature of these marriages. The spouses in both the distressed, alcoholic and distressed, nonalcoholic groups obtained deflated means on the more friendly, loving clusters (TBC#1-4) and inflated means on the hostile, attacking clusters (TBC#5-8). That is, despite the type of initiation (hostile or friendly) both groups tended to view
themselves as responding guardedly and they also had a tendency to view their spouses as responding to them in guarded fashion as well.

However, within this distressed and guarded marital context, there were several noteworthy significant differences between the two groups of men and women with respect to the Initiating Mode. Alcoholic husbands perceived themselves to be more hostile and attacking (TBC#6,7,8) in their initiations than did the distressed men. While the alcoholics viewed their spouses to be more Helping and Protecting (TBC#4) of them than did the distressed men, the distressed husbands perceived their spouses to be more hostile and attacking (TBC#6,7,8) than did the alcoholic men. The women married to alcoholics concurred with their spouses view of themselves initiating in that they believed their husbands were less Helping and Protecting (TBC#4) and more hostile and attacking (TBC#6,7,8) than did the distressed women.

B. INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS WITH EMPIRICAL, CLINICAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Previous research endeavours have demonstrated there to be significant differences between alcohol-involved couples and nondistressed couples (Drewery and Rae, 1969; Frankenstein et al., 1985; Jacob et al., 1981; O'Farrell and Birchler, 1987) regarding their communicative interactions and their interpersonal perceptions. However, a paucity of research exists comparing alcohol-involved couples with distressed couples regarding their interpersonal perceptions. Researchers comparing alcoholic couples to distressed couples have concluded that the two groups are different from one another not only in their communicative interactions while drinking (Jacob and Krahn, 1988) but also in their
interpersonal perceptions (Chiles et al., 1980). Indeed, even studies maintaining
that there were no significant differences between the groups have cited curious
anomalies pointing to certain between group differences (O'Farrell and Birchler,
1987). However, these findings and the results of the present study partially
contradict Orford's (1975) assertion that alcoholic marriages resemble other
distressed marriages. That is, this study supports Orford's statement in that it
provides evidence for the supposition that distressed, alcoholic spouses and
nonalcoholic distressed spouses experience their marriages as troubled. This
research diverges from Orford, however, when the degree to which the couples
are estranged is examined, revealing a series of significant between group
differences which are meaningful within a theoretical and clinical context.

The constellation of significant differences, demonstrated in this study,
appear to conform to various clinical observations of alcoholic couples and the
manner in which their marriages are organized. It has been noted that the male
alcoholic is often undependable, unpredictable, and dangerous (O'Farrell, 1986)
leading to the observation that the female spouses of alcoholics perform as many
roles as possible in the relationship in order to facilitate family functioning
(Kaufman, 1984). She may feel active, forceful, virtuous and valued (Gorad,
1971; Straussner et al., 1979) in her role as functional family member as well
as sexually frustrated, angry, preoccupied, and lonely (Kaufman, 1985).

The couple organizes around alcohol in a complementary fashion which has
been described in a variety of ways including 'Adult/Child' (Wolin et al., 1975);
'Adequate wife/Inadequate husband' (Waldo and Guerney, 1983); and 'Abused/
Abuser' (Treadway, 1989). The findings of this study appear to capture the spirit
of these roles as they are implied in the interpersonal perceptions of the
alcoholic couples. That is, the significant differences demonstrated between alcoholic men and distressed men and women married to alcoholics and distressed women hint at a set of complementary roles similar to the ones identified in the clinical literature. That is, the roles of ‘Guiltily Grateful Alcoholic’ married to a ‘Hurt but Enduring Woman’ may be foreshadowed in the alcoholic’s view of his spouse being helpful and protecting of him while he is hostile towards her. The nonalcoholic spouse, in turn, confirms her husband’s perception of himself by maintaining that, in her view, he behaves in a hostile manner towards her.

Interpersonal theory and ecosystemic thought combine to create a sound rationale for interpersonal perception research and they also supply a means by which researchers and clinicians can begin to organize their findings and observations. Couples act in accordance with each others’ assumptions and suppositions (Bateson, 1972; Laing et al., 1966) thereby creating recursive patterns of behaviour which give meaning and form to their interdependence (Sullivan, 1953).

In effect, the pair structurally couples establishing the consensual domain (Maturana, 1978) represented in the combination of their perceptions of themselves, one another and the complementary manner in which they organize. The ongoing network of sequences which serve to foster complementarity are “negotiated” through a series of triggering perturbations which occur in the interpersonal, intrapsychic and physiological domains. The alcoholic couple’s consensual domain (Maturana, 1978) or ecology of ideas (Bateson, 1972) has been partially explicated in this research. These ideas or domains can be considered interpersonally logical since the drinking behaviour of the alcoholic serves to confirm the assumptions underlying the actions of the spouse which are, in turn,
consistent with both spouses' suppositions about self and other (Bogdan, 1984). The ideas both spouses hold concerning each other contribute to their identities as a couple and their identities as individuals (Laing et al., 1966). This heightens the possibility that they continue in a distressing complementary pattern despite themselves (Carson, 1982).

The rigidity of these complementary patterns is illustrated when alcoholic clients and their spouses tell clinicians: "We're stuck in a rut. He drinks, he hurts me and expects to be forgiven, then drinks again. Nothing ever changes"; "I'm leaving if something doesn't change"; "This has gone on too long"; "I can't get a handle on this . . . ." The frustration clinicians report, with these seemingly intractable patterns (Geiss and O'Leary, 1981), provides validation for the client's experience of helplessness in the marital system in which they live and which inevitably lives them (Groddeck, in Sullivan, 1953).

C. IMPLICATIONS FOR TREATMENT

One of the first aims of therapy with couples where alcohol dependency is an issue is the cessation of drinking and a commitment to sobriety (Treadway, 1989). Once this is established, the therapist and the couple are free to begin the therapeutic work necessary to change the couple's behaviour, self perceptions, their views of one another, and patterns of interactions with the aim of increasing marital happiness. Tombaugh (1984) notes the importance of concurrent treatment which decreases drinking and improves marital satisfaction.

The measuring instrument (SASB) utilized in this study is a rich, clinical tool that provides useful transactional data aiding practicing therapists to develop treatment strategies when working with alcoholic and distressed couples. An
examination of these research findings indicates that distressed, alcoholic men are
different from distressed, nonalcoholic men regarding their views of themselves
initiating in their relationships as well as their views of their spouses initiating
in their relationships. A difference was also found when women married to
alcoholics and women in distressed marriages were compared with respect to their
views of their spouses initiating in the relationship. Arising from these findings
are several implications for treatment specific to each couple group.

1. Treatment Issues for Distressed, Alcoholic Couples

While it is important to recognize the similarities between the distressed,
alcoholic men and the distressed, nonalcoholic men as well as the similarities
between women married to alcoholics and distressed women as evidenced by the
nonsignificant findings of this study, there are also noteworthy differences between
the groups that may have implications for treatment. For example, it would be
advisable to delve into the alcoholic's positive views of his spouse's helping and
protecting behaviours towards him and any subsequent guilt feelings this may
elicit. Also it is important to examine the relationship between his negative views
of himself in the relationship and his overt behaviour. In addition, exploring the
role of drinking as it pertains to his negative views of self and his positive
views of his wife may be advantageous. An exploration of the wife's views of
herself as being guarded as they relate to her views of her husband's hostility
may also be warranted. This examination may reveal feelings of intense
suffering, heightened self worth, loyalty, ambivalence and blame on the part of
the woman married to the alcoholic. Finally, it may be helpful to delve into how
the guarded, cautious behaviours of the wife relate to her views of her
husband's hostile behaviour and the role the couple perceives this to play in the alcoholic's drinking and nondrinking behaviour.

In addition, these findings highlight possible avenues of clinical enquiry which may center on the manner in which complementary patterns are "negotiated" by couples affected by alcoholism. An empathic exploration and the subsequent sharing of the underlying beliefs and emotions behind the complementary roles as they are implied by spousal interpersonal perceptions may result in enhanced intimacy between the pair as well as a shift in their perceptions of themselves in relation to other. Painstaking work is necessary to perturb the marital system in such a way as to rebalance spousal perceptions and roles. This may further the goal of the creation of a flexible, parallel relationship (Lederer and Jackson, 1968) characterized by the latitude to adopt complementary or symmetrical roles dependent upon the couple's circumstances.

2. Treatment Issues for Distressed, Nonalcoholic Couples

The differences between the distressed men and the alcoholic men as well as the differences noted between the distressed women and women married to alcoholics are suggestive of certain treatment concerns. That is, a distressed man's views of his spouse's hostility towards him may be explored in concert with how these perceptions affect the couple's behaviour towards each other. In addition, an examination of his guardedness towards her and his possible feelings of being attacked by his wife may be helpful in exploring their troubled relations. In addition, delving into the wife's feelings of ambivalence and her perceptions of her husband's ambivalence could help the couple focus on how their guardedness may continue their distressing patterns.
D. LIMITATIONS

A potential threat to internal validity centers around the issue of self selection. The samples surveyed were not randomly selected at the outset and further to this, subjects were asked to volunteer for the study. They also had the opportunity to terminate their participation at any stage of the survey. However, no couples or individuals exercised this option.

It is difficult to control for self selection since there are obvious ethical considerations surrounding the subject of volunteer participation in research studies. Unfortunately, the generalizability of the study is subsequently affected. The results of this research apply to voluntary couples who are concerned about their marriages and seek assessment.

The reactive effect of experimental arrangements (i.e., social desirability) are of concern to survey researchers. It may be possible that the participants hope to represent themselves and their relationships in the best light possible and for this reason they do not answer the items authentically. The SASB functions under the assumption that the respondents are answering the items honestly and therefore does not control for social desirability. The interpersonal perceptions offered by the subjects in this testing situation are considered valid in that they reflect the respondents' views as they exist in the survey context and on the particular day of testing. Also, all the participants were subject to the same testing conditions.

The number of couples in each group (n=20) may not have been large enough to allow for the detection of all the significant differences between the distressed and alcoholic groups of men and women. This may partially account for the consistently nonsignificant results obtained for the Responding Mode
variables and certain variables on the Initiating Mode. The absence of a control group composed of nondistressed, nonalcoholic couples is also somewhat problematic. A normal couple group may have added to the interpretability of the findings since such a baseline would provide a norm from which to make comparisons to the distressed couples. The use of the original scale (for the purposes of interpretation), however, was viable but could have been further augmented with the control group data.

The heterogeneity within the alcoholic and distressed groups was not accounted for in this study. For example, alternator (binge) drinkers were not separated from stable wet drinkers during data collection. Thus, if there are differences between these “types” of alcoholics and their marriages, they were not measured in this study. Plus, questions regarding the nature of the distressed couples' presenting problems were not formally addressed. Therefore, this distressed group may also contain unaccounted for within group differences.

E. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research begins the empirical work necessary in describing the intrapersonal and interpersonal perceptions and dynamics of the distressed, alcohol-involved relationship as it is differentiated form the distressed, nonalcohol-involved relationship. Continued work is necessary, however, to expand upon the sketch presented in this study. The measurement of each spouse’s intrapersonal perceptions of themselves in the relationship as well as their interpersonal perceptions is important since an understanding of how each spouse views himself or herself would provide more information regarding the personal beliefs behind clinically observed complementary patterns. In addition, the measurement of the
level of couple agreement between one spouse’s views of self and the other spouse’s perception of their partner’s views of self (e.g., Laing et al. 1966) may help to describe the perceptual discrepancies inherent in alcohol-involved couples’ distressful marital dynamics. Measuring the degree to which couples understand one another (e.g., Laing et al., 1966) is also important to comprehending the kinds of expectations and beliefs that help to sustain troubled marital interaction patterns in alcohol-involved couples. The comparison between what one partner believes and what the other spouse perceives the partner thinks constitutes a measure of understanding.

This research focuses on couples’ self reports regarding their interpersonal perceptions. An expanded articulation of the dynamics of alcoholic couples could be achieved if a study was made of couples’ in vivo interactions in addition to the collection of intrapersonal and interpersonal self report data. Plus, recording alcoholic couple perceptions of their dynamics immediately following sober and drinking interactive periods may serve to empirically strengthen the theoretical association made between interpersonal perception and behaviour.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

INTERPERSONAL VERSION OF THE SASB MODEL AND INTREX

QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE ITEMS
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, INTREX QUESTIONNAIRE
SAMPLE ITEMS (Benjamin, 1983)

A. Instructions to Respondents

Please use the attached answer sheet marked B and indicate how well each question describes YOUR PARTNER.

There are 72 items to be answered by the respondents when they reflect upon their partners. For example, the following items are found in the Initiating Mode with an Other Focus.

TBC #4 Helping and Protecting
#1. With much kindness and good sense he figures out and explains things to me.

TBC #7 Attacking and Rejecting
#12. Murders, kills, destroys and leaves me in a useless heap.

The following corresponding items are located in the Responding Mode with an Other Focus.

TBC #4 Trusting and Relying
#26. Willingly accepts, goes along with my reasonable suggestions, ideas.

TBC #7 Protesting and Withdrawing
#27. In pain and rage, he screams and shouts that I am destroying him.

B. Instructions to Respondents

Please use the attached answer sheet marked B and change from rating him to rating YOURSELF IN THIS RELATIONSHIP.

There are 72 items to be answered by the respondents when they reflect upon themselves in the relationship. For example, the following items are located in the Initiating Mode with a Self Focus.

TBC #4 Helping and Protecting
#73. With much kindness and good sense, I figure out and explain things to him.
TBC #7 Attacking and Rejecting
#84. I murder, kill, destroy and leave him as a useless heap.

The following corresponding items are located in the Responding Mode with a Self Focus.

TBC #4 Trusting and Relying
#98. I willingly accept, go along with his reasonable suggestions, ideas.

TBC #7 Protesting and Withdrawing
#99. In pain and rage, I scream and shout that he is destroying me.
APPENDIX B

TRANSACTIONAL BEHAVIOUR CLUSTERS
APPENDIX C

GOODWIN CRITERIA FOR DRINKING CATEGORIES CHECKLIST
Drinking Checklist

Please circle the correct answer as it applies to you.

1. I drank alcoholic beverages everyday for one year and during that time I drank a minimum of 12-36 alcoholic drinks per month. Yes No

I drank six or more drinks at least once a week for less than a year. Yes No

2. (a) My friends have disapproved of my drinking. Yes No

My parents have disapproved of my drinking. Yes No

I have had some trouble in my relationship due to my drinking. Yes No

(b) I have been in trouble at work due to my drinking. Yes No

I have been arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Yes No

I have been in trouble with the police due to my drinking. Yes No

(c) I have frequently blacked out due to my drinking. Yes No

I have experienced tremors (the shakes) due to drinking. Yes No

I have experienced withdrawal. Yes No

I have experienced convulsions due to drinking. Yes No

(d) I have lost control of myself due to drinking. Yes No

I have lost control of my drinking. Yes No

I drink in the morning. Yes No
Drinking Category Criteria

An individual is considered alcoholic if he/she answers "Yes" to either item in question number one. Plus, he/she must have had an alcohol problem in at least three out of four of the item groups (a-d) listed in question number two.
APPENDIX D

ADVERTISING SOLICITING DISTRESSED AND ALCOHOL-INVOLVED COUPLES
APPENDIX E

CORRESPONDENCE FROM SUBJECTS
APPENDIX F

CLUSTER VERSION FOR INITIATING MODE
Figure 4.2a The SASB model, interpersonal other (O) focus. The quadrant version appearing at the center of the figure simply divides each type of focus into four sections. The middle ring provides names for eight clusters or subdivisions for each type of focus. The outer ring contains eight boxes corresponding to each of the eight clusters; the boxes contain 1983 questionnaire items for each of the model points from Figure 4.1 belonging to a cluster. The clusters are numbered from 1 to 8, starting at 12 o'clock on the top of each surface and proceeding clockwise. Familiarity with cluster numbers is important in interpreting the cluster profiles to be described subsequently. The quadrant model is from “Structural Analysis of Differentiation Failure” by L. S. Benjamin, Psychiatry, 1979, 42, 1–23 © 1979 by the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation. Copyright on the cluster model has been registered by INTREX Interpersonal Institute, Inc., 1981, copyright on the questionnaire items, by Lorna Smith Benjamin, 1983. Reprinted by permission.
APPENDIX G

CLUSTER VERSION FOR RESPONDING MODE
Figure 4.2b  The SASB model, interpersonal self (S) focus. See Figure 4.2a legend for explanation. © 1979 by the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation. Copyright on the cluster model has been registered by INTREX Interpersonal Institute, Inc., 1981; copyright on the questionnaire items, by Lorna Smith Benjamin, 1983. Reprinted by permission.
APPENDIX H

DUNN'S PROCEDURE FORMULA
Dunn's Procedure Formula (Kirk, 1968)

Difference Between Means = $t' \frac{D}{a/2}; \; C, \nu \sqrt{\text{MS}_{\text{error}} \left[\left(\frac{(C_j)^2}{n_j}\right) + \ldots + \left(\frac{(C''_j)^2}{n''_j}\right)\right]}$

$C = \text{number of comparisons among means.}$

$\nu = \text{degrees of freedom.}$

$C_j = \text{coefficient for the } j^{\text{th}} \text{ mean for any pairwise comparison.}$

$n_j = \text{number of observations.}$

The number of comparisons was $C=4; \; \text{at } a=.05; \; \text{with } \nu=38; \; \text{and } n=20.$ A difference between means equal to larger than the calculated $d$ value satisfied the criteria for significance at $a=.05.$
APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF ANOVA

ORIGINAL AND ADJUSTED MEAN SQUARES FOR INITIATING MODE
Summary of ANOVA

Original Mean Squares for Initiating Mode

<table>
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<tr>
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*p<.05
APPENDIX J

SUMMARY OF ANOVA

ORIGINAL AND ADJUSTED MEAN SQUARES FOR RESPONDING MODE
Summary of ANOVA

Original Mean Squares for Responding Mode

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df = 1, 38
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APPENDIX K

NONSIGNIFICANT TBC FINDINGS FOR HUSBANDS
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## Nonsignificant TBC Findings for Husbands on the Responding Mode

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APPENDIX L

NONSIGNIFICANT TBC FINDINGS FOR WIVES
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### Nonsignificant TBC Findings for Wives on the Responding Mode

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