

Assessing Attributions in Marriage: The Relationship Attribution Measure

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A brief, simple measure of different types of attributions for partner behavior was examined in 3 studies of married couples. Reliability was established by high internal consistency and test-retest correlations. Causal and responsibility attribution scores correlated with marital satisfaction, attributions for marital difficulties, and attributions for actual partner behaviors generated by spouses. Responsibility attributions were related to (a) reported anger in response to stimulus behaviors used in the measure and (b) the amount of anger displayed by wives during a problem-solving interaction with their partner. The extent to which husbands and wives whined during their discussion also correlated with their responsibility attributions. The results address several problems with existing assessments, and their implications for the measurement of attributions in marriage are discussed.

The last decade has witnessed increased interest in the role of cognitive factors in the generation, maintenance, and remediation of marital dysfunction (e.g., Baucom & Epstein, 1990; Berley & Jacobson, 1984; Fincham, Bradbury, & Beach, 1990; Weiss, 1984). The two most frequently investigated constructs in this domain are causal attributions, which concern the explanations a spouse makes for an event (e.g., a partner behavior), and responsibility attributions, which deal with accountability or answerability for the event. Distressed spouses are hypothesized to make attributions for negative events that accentuate their impact (e.g., they locate the cause in their partner, see it as stable or unchanging, and see it as global or influencing many areas of the relationship), whereas nondistressed spouses are thought to make attributions that minimize the impact of negative events (e.g., they do not locate the cause in the partner and they see it as unstable and specific). Numerous studies document robust associations between causal and responsibility attributions and marital satisfaction (for a review see Bradbury & Fincham, 1990), yet the relative lack of attention to the measurement of attributions inhibits both clinical and empirical exploration of attributions in marriage. We therefore introduce the Relationship Attribution Measure (RAM), a reliable instrument that is short, simple in format, permits assessment of different types of attributions, relates to marital behavior, and yields the same association found previously between attributions and marital satisfaction.

The need for a measure of marital attributions is emphasized by several observations. First, the number of dimensions used to assess causal and responsibility attributions has proliferated,

and it is not always clear how the measures used in some studies relate to explanations or accountability for events (e.g., the descriptive trait attributions studied by Fichten, 1984; and the likelihood of marital success studied by Schriber, Larwood, & Peterson, 1985). Second, measures of the same attribution dimensions may not be comparable (e.g., causal stability has been assessed in terms of whether the behavior would occur frequently in the future and independently of behavioral frequency). Third, some findings are difficult to interpret because the measures used confound attribution dimensions (e.g., assessment of partner's state vs. disposition, a dimension that confounds the locus of the cause and its stability, cf. Kyle & Falbo, 1985). Fourth, different types of attributions need to be assessed. Recently, attributions of blame have been distinguished from causal and responsibility attributions. Whereas causal attributions establish who or what caused an event and responsibility attributions establish accountability for an event, blame attributions constitute evaluative judgments that involve fault and liability for censure (for further discussion see Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Shaver, 1985). It is hypothesized that these three judgments unfold in an orderly sequence in that blame presupposes a judgment of responsibility that, in turn, presupposes an attribution of cause (cf. Shultz & Schleiffer, 1983). To date, little attention has been given to measuring types of attributions in the marital literature, and the threefold distinction among causal, responsibility, and blame attributions should be evaluated empirically.

The above observations should not detract from the considerable progress that has been made in devising measures of attributions in close relationships. Three such measures have been published, the Marital Attitude Survey (MAS; Epstein, Pretzer, & Fleming, 1987), the Dyadic Attribution Inventory (DAI; Baucom, Sayers, & Duhe, 1989), and the Marital Attribution Style Measure (MASQ; Fincham, Beach, & Nelson, 1987). The MAS is unique in that it assesses attributional content (e.g., respondents rate statements such as "If my partner did things differently we'd get along better") rather than the dimensions underlying attributions (e.g., for the item cited above, causal stability might be assessed by the question, "Is the cause of your partner's behavior something that is likely to change?"). Al-

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though this makes the task more concrete, it assumes that the respondent's understanding of the dimensions underlying a particular cause is comparable to that of the researcher (cf. Russell, 1982). In addition, the domain of possible causes for an event is vast, and the sampling of such causal content is much more difficult than the sampling of the limited number of dimensions presumed to underlie causes. In view of these considerations, the measure reported in this article is based on direct assessment of underlying attribution dimensions rather than attribution content.

A strength of the MAS is its straightforward format, in which respondents rate their agreement with a set of statements. In contrast, the DAI and MASQ require spouses to generate a cause and to then rate the cause along various dimensions. This task involves a fairly high level of abstraction, and for some spouses it is not always clear that responses reflect judgments about the cause of the event rather than about the event itself. In constructing our measure of attributions, we therefore attempted to keep the respondent's task as simple as possible by obtaining ratings of agreement with concrete attributional statements.

Two further features of the DAI and MASQ point to the need for a new measurement instrument. First, the length of these instruments emphasizes the need for a measure that is brief and can be used in applied settings in which there is limited time for the administration of questionnaires. Second, both measures use hypothetical spouse behaviors as stimuli and thereby provide standard events for which attributions are made. However, the validity of this strategy requires investigation. Although Fincham and Beach (1988) showed that attributions for real and hypothetical events displayed the same correlations with marital satisfaction, they did not examine whether attributions for each type of event accounted for unique variance in marital satisfaction. The studies presented here therefore address both of these issues.

In summary, research on attributions in marriage has outstripped the development of attribution measures, and there is need for a short, reliable measure that uses a simple format and reflects conceptual distinctions made in the marital attribution literature. Toward this end, we conducted three studies to test and refine such a measure.

Study 1

In Study 1, we sought to examine attribution dimensions that captured distinctions among causal, responsibility, and blame attributions and to examine their relation to marital satisfaction. Although these three types of attribution can be justified on conceptual grounds, it is important to determine whether they have different correlates. If each has different correlates, distinguishing between them would be further justified. Toward this end, we investigated the effect of anger in relation to attributions because there are strong theoretical grounds for believing that anger relates differently to different types of attributions. Because anger "is a response to some misdeed" typically instigated by a "value judgment" (Averill, 1983, p. 1150), blame attributions are hypothesized to be the proximal cause of anger and should therefore be most highly correlated with anger. However, blame rests on a prior responsibility attribu-

tion that in turn rests on a causal attribution; we therefore hypothesized that responsibility attributions would correlate moderately with anger and that causal attributions would show the lowest correlations with anger.

A second goal of this study was to examine whether the association between causal attributions and marital satisfaction is simply a methodological artifact resulting from the manner in which the two constructs are assessed. The standard measures of satisfaction used in prior attribution research include several questions about the extent to which spouses agree versus disagree on various marital issues (e.g., sex and finances). Because marital dissatisfaction is thereby defined, in part, as the tendency to report disagreement across several marital domains, scores on these inventories may be related to a tendency to see causes of events as operating across many areas of the marriage and, perhaps also, across time. That is, both instruments assess the degree to which negative events occur across many areas of the relationship. To address this issue, we used a measure of marital satisfaction that was based on overall, evaluative judgments of the marriage (Quality Marriage Index [QMI], Norton, 1983), as well as a standard assessment of marital satisfaction that combines evaluative judgments and reports of behavior (Marital Adjustment Test [MAT], Locke & Wallace, 1959).

Method

Subjects

Forty-nine married couples were recruited from advertisements in local newspapers to participate in this study. The mean length of marriage was 10.0 ($SD = 9.2$) years and the mean number of children was 1.8 ($SD = 1.6$). The mean gross family income before taxes was \$29,980 ($SD = \$16,990$). Wives averaged 32.5 ($SD = 9.5$) years of age, 14.5 ($SD = 2.4$) years of education, and obtained mean scores of 103.0 ($SD = 32.7$) and 34.2 ($SD = 10.2$) on the MAT (Locke & Wallace, 1959) and QMI (Norton, 1983), respectively. Corresponding figures for husbands were 34.0 ($SD = 11.4$) years of age, 14.5 ($SD = 3.9$) years of education, and scores of 103.9 ($SD = 29.3$) on the MAT and 35.6 ($SD = 9.2$) on the QMI.

Procedure

Couples were mailed two sets of materials with postage-paid return envelopes and a cover letter that thanked them for their participation in the project and that instructed them on their task. They were asked to complete the materials independently and to seal the completed materials in the envelopes before talking about the project. Couples were paid \$10 after we received the completed materials.

Measures

Attributions. Stimulus events on the *Relationship Attribution Measure* (RAM) consisted of 10 hypothetical negative partner behaviors (e.g., "your spouse criticizes something you say"). Hypothetical behaviors were used because of the advantage conferred by standard stimuli across spouses and because the pattern of responses to such behaviors is similar to that found for attributions for marital difficulties (Fincham & Beach, 1988). Because attributions for negative events appear to be related more consistently and more strongly to marital satisfaction than are attributions for positive events (e.g., Baucom et al., 1989; Fincham et al., 1987) and are most relevant in the clinical context, the RAM focuses on these events. The behaviors used as stimuli were

adapted from the Spouse Observation Checklist (SOC; Weiss & Perry, 1979) and were selected to be common enough to permit virtually all spouses to imagine them occurring in their relationship. Four positive partner behaviors were used as filler items.

For each partner behavior, we asked spouses to rate their agreement with several statements on a 6-point scale. Each scale point was labeled (ranging from *disagree strongly* to *agree strongly*) to make the task as concrete as possible (see Appendix). Spouses made the ratings after imagining that the behavior had just occurred in their marriage.

Three statements were used to assess each of the three different types of attributions. For causal attributions, respondents were asked about the extent to which the cause rested in the partner (locus), was likely to change (stability), and affected other areas of the marriage (globality). The locus dimension focused on the partner because partner attributions are likely to have the most important implications for marital satisfaction and for subsequent behavior toward the partner and because this causal locus has produced the most consistent results in prior research. However, it should be noted that conceptual analyses of the locus dimension in close relationships (e.g., Fincham, 1985; Newman, 1981) show that causal locus can be analyzed in terms of several components (e.g., partner, self, outside circumstances, partner in relation to self, and the relationship). Although correlated, the correlations between these components are quite modest (Fincham, 1985). Consequently, it should not be assumed that assessment of partner as the locus of the cause captures all possible information about the locus dimension. Indeed, there are likely to be circumstances (e.g., investigation of depression in marriage) under which other components of this dimension (e.g., self as locus) may be of equal interest.¹

The three responsibility attribution items assessed criteria believed to be fundamental for the ascription of responsibility, namely, the intentionality of the act, its motivation, and whether it was justified by mitigating circumstances. Although there may be several additional criteria for responsibility (e.g., foresight; see Shaver, 1985), these three dimensions are essential to its determination because the quintessential act for which one can be held responsible is an intentional, freely chosen act (Hart, 1968). In addition, several responsibility dimensions relating to the capacities (e.g., ability to appreciate the wrongfulness of an act) that need to be present before a person can be held accountable for his or her behavior are not included because most adults are seen to possess the capacities necessary for them to be held responsible for their actions (Fincham & Roberts, 1985).

Three statements assessed blame attribution. The first asked directly about the degree to which the partner was blameworthy for his or her action and the second focused on the extent to which the partner was at fault for what she or he did. Because liability for censure arises from the contravention of a moral imperative (Heider, 1958), respondents indicated also whether the partner should not have behaved the way he or she did.

Anger, behavior frequency, and behavior valence. In addition, respondents indicated how angry they would be if the partner behavior occurred, using the same 6-point response scale used for the attribution judgments. Finally, spouses made two judgments that were used to evaluate the appropriateness of the stimulus behaviors, concerning how often the target behavior had happened (5-point scale ranging from *never* to *frequently*) and the valence of the behavior (10-point scale ranging from *extremely negative* to *extremely positive*).

Marital satisfaction. The MAT (Locke & Wallace, 1959) is a widely used measure of marital satisfaction that yields a score ranging from 2 to 158. It includes a variety of items (e.g., evaluative judgments and reports of events) and reliably discriminates nondistressed spouses from spouses with documented marital problems. The six-item *QMI* (Norton, 1983) was used to assess judgments about the marriage that are unconfounded by reports of marital events.

Results and Discussion

Stimulus Events

To ensure that respondents viewed the stimulus behaviors in the intended manner, we analyzed responses regarding the valence of the behavior for the 14 items. On the 10-point scale used, husbands and wives rated each negative behavior as negative (wives' $M = 2.98$, $SD = .56$; husbands' $M = 3.55$, $SD = .33$) and each positive behavior as positive (wives' $M = 9.03$, $SD = .01$; husbands' $M = 8.43$, $SD = .01$). In no instance was a negative behavior rated as positive or a positive behavior seen as negative.

Although hypothetical behaviors were selected as stimulus events, they had actually occurred for most respondents (for wives, 94.7% of responses; for husbands, 91.3% of responses). On average, the behaviors occurred somewhere between *sometimes* and *often* (wives' $M = 3.18$, $SD = .39$; husbands' $M = 3.34$, $SD = .34$). The response *did not occur* was distributed randomly across behaviors.

In short, the stimulus events used in the RAM are common marital behaviors that are viewed in a way that is consistent with their classification as positive and negative behaviors.

Reliability and Correlates

We summed responses to corresponding attribution statements on the RAM across the 10 negative spouse behaviors to form subscales for each attribution dimension. Higher scores on each subscale reflected attributions that accentuated the impact of the negative behavior (e.g., see it as more stable, intentional, and blameworthy). Reliabilities of the nine attribution subscales were computed using coefficient alpha. Although the coefficients were acceptable, item-total correlations for two of the stimulus behaviors (one involved affection and the other dealt with finances) were consistently low across several of the attribution dimensions. Coefficient alpha was therefore recomputed with these two stimuli deleted. Table 1 shows the alpha coefficients and intercorrelations of the causal, responsibility, and blame attribution dimensions. With the exception of one blame attribution dimension for wives (where $\alpha = .67$), all subscales met the minimum criterion of reliability recommended for research instruments (i.e., $\alpha > .70$, Nunnally, 1978).

Marital satisfaction. The two measures of marital satisfaction correlated highly (for wives, $r = .90$; for husbands, $r = .95$) and did not differ significantly in their relation to any of the attribution dimensions. Thus, no evidence was obtained to support the view that the attribution-satisfaction association is a methodological artifact. To facilitate comparisons with prior research, we report the correlations between the attribution scales and the more widely used MAT. As shown in Table 1, all

¹ Conspicuous by its absence is the controllability dimension, a central feature of Weiner's (1986) taxonomy of causal dimensions. It was not included because control (like intent, with which it is categorized in Weiner's taxonomy) is not a property of a cause but of a person. In our analysis, control judgments therefore are viewed as a summary index of responsibility rather than as a dimension of causation (for further discussion see Fincham, Bradbury, & Grych, 1990).

Table 1
Correlations Among RAM Attribution Dimensions, Anger, and Marital Satisfaction for Husbands (Above Diagonal) and Wives (Below Diagonal)

Attribution dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	α		
												Wives	Husbands	
Causal														
1. Locus	—	.58	.64	.40	.51	.42	.50	.51	.39	.32	-.58	.74	.75	
2. Stability	.45	—	.50	.50	.54	.50	.58	.43	.43	.25*	-.54	.85	.83	
3. Globality	.48	.46	—	.60	.63	.43	.50	.44	.50	.31	-.50	.87	.88	
Responsibility														
4. Intent	.26*	.70	.44	—	.80	.69	.75	.68	.61	.56	-.70	.83	.80	
5. Motivation	.31	.69	.48	.75	—	.67	.78	.72	.66	.55	-.74	.89	.85	
6. Justification	.54	.70	.49	.71	.70	—	.68	.68	.67	.55	-.56	.85	.90	
Blame														
7. Fault	.41	.69	.47	.76	.67	.81	—	.85	.81	.65	-.62	.81	.77	
8. Blame	.41	.51	.47	.50	.64	.60	.62	—	.74	.80	-.64	.67	.81	
9. Should	.55	.66	.55	.62	.59	.83	.80	.71	—	.45	-.56	.71	.83	
Correlates														
10. Anger	.28*	.34	.16*	.36	.32	.36	.44	.64	.44	—	-.45			
11. MAT	-.33	-.59	-.66	-.57	-.59	-.50	-.46	-.51	-.53	-.33	—			

Note. RAM = Relationship Attribution Measure; MAT = Marital Adjustment Test.

* Nonsignificant at $p < .05$.

the attribution dimensions correlated with marital satisfaction in the expected manner and replicated previous findings.

Anger. We predicted that the three types of attribution would relate differently to reported anger. To examine this issue, we formed a measure of anger, following the same procedure used for the attribution dimension scales (for wives, $\alpha = .67$; for husbands, $\alpha = .83$). The correlations between attribution dimensions and anger are also shown in Table 1. Consistent with predictions, correlations involving the causal attribution dimensions were lower than those for responsibility dimensions, which were, in turn, lower than those for blame attributions. Because no differential predictions were made for the dimensions within each type of attribution (and to reduce the large number of significant tests needed to test differences between correlations involving each dimension), composite indices were computed for each of the three attribution types. This was done by summing scores across the dimensions pertaining to each type of attribution. These composite scores were highly reliable (alpha for wives—cause = .90, responsibility = .94, and blame = .89; alpha for husbands—cause = .91, responsibility = .94, and blame = .93).

The hypothesized pattern of correlations between anger and type of attribution was obtained (for wives—cause = .37, responsibility = .45, and blame = .60; for husbands—cause = .26, responsibility = .56, and blame = .65). The t tests for differences between nonindependent correlations confirmed that the blame attribution composite correlated more highly with anger than the causal attribution composite (for wives, $t = 2.59$, $p < .05$; for husbands, $t = 3.42$, $p < .01$). However, the responsibility attribution composite was more strongly related to anger than the causal attribution composite for husbands, $t = 2.71$, $p < .01$, but not for wives, $t = .73$, $p > .05$. Differences between the correlations involving responsibility and blame attributions were not significant for either husbands or wives.

When the causal attribution scores were statistically con-

trolled, partial correlations showed that the relations between responsibility attribution and anger (for wives, partial $r = .28$; for husbands, partial $r = .53$) and between blame attribution and anger (for wives, partial $r = .51$; for husbands, partial $r = .63$) remained significant ($p < .05$). In contrast, the correlation between causal attribution and anger disappeared when either responsibility (for wives, partial $r = .08$; for husbands, partial $r = -.17$) or blame attribution (for wives, partial $r = -.13$; for husbands, partial $r = -.17$) scores were partialled from the correlation. When responsibility was held constant, the relation between blame and anger remained significant (for wives, partial $r = .45$, $p < .01$; for husbands, partial $r = .40$, $p < .01$), and when blame was statistically controlled, the correlation between responsibility and anger disappeared (for wives, partial $r = -.14$, $p > .10$; for husbands, partial $r = .04$, $p > .10$). This pattern of results is consistent with the posited relations among attributions and anger (i.e., cause \rightarrow responsibility \rightarrow blame \rightarrow anger). That is, controlling for attributions earlier in this sequence does not influence the relations between later attributions and anger, whereas attributions later in the sequence do appear to mediate the relation between earlier attributions and anger.

The overall pattern of findings supports the distinction between causal and blame attributions and between causal and responsibility attributions but provides limited evidence for the distinction between responsibility and blame attributions. In fact, the average correlation between the responsibility and blame attribution dimensions ($r_s = .70$ and $.68$ for husbands and wives, respectively) was similar to the average intercorrelations found within each of the two types of attributions (husbands' responsibility $r = .73$ and blame $r = .72$; wives' responsibility $r = .80$ and blame $r = .72$), and the composite responsibility and blame indices correlated highly ($r_s = .86$ and $.84$ for wives and husbands, respectively). The logical distinction between responsibility and blame attributions that is embodied in social institutions (e.g., the law) therefore does not appear to reflect psycho-

logical functioning in close relationships. That is, a spouse who holds his or her partner responsible for an event also seems to blame him or her. Consequently, no distinction was drawn between responsibility and blame attributions in subsequent studies.

Study 2

Study 1 suggests that the RAM may be a reliable and valid measure of attributions in marriage. However, the measure is relatively long and its psychometric properties require further investigation using a larger sample of spouses. The first purpose of this study therefore was to examine a short version of the RAM. The length of the RAM was reduced by halving the number of stimulus events and by assessing only causal and responsibility-blame attributions. In addition to obtaining further data on its reliability, we investigated the validity of the RAM by examining (a) the relation between RAM responses and attributions for actual marital difficulties and marital satisfaction; and (b) the utility of distinguishing causal from responsibility attributions in a two-factor model compared with a simpler, single factor model, given the positive correlations found among attribution dimensions in Study 1.

Method

Subjects

Through advertisements in local newspapers, 130 married couples were recruited to participate in this study. Couples had been married an average of 9.4 ($SD = 9.9$) years and had an average of 1.5 ($SD = 1.6$) children. Gross family income was \$25,000 to \$30,000. Ninety-seven percent of the wives were White and 55% specified protestant as their religious preference (Catholic = 19%, other = 17%, and no religious preference = 9%). Wives averaged 32.0 ($SD = 9.8$) years of age, 14.3 ($SD = 2.2$) years of education, and obtained a mean score of 111.1 ($SD = 22.9$) on the MAT (Locke & Wallace, 1959). Husbands were also predominantly White (97%) and Protestant (54%; Catholic = 14%, other = 17%, no religious preference = 15%). Husbands averaged 34.0 ($SD = 10.2$) years of age, 14.5 ($SD = 2.6$) years of education, and a score of 110.4 ($SD = 21.7$) on the MAT.

Procedure

As in Study 1, couples were mailed two sets of materials that they were asked to complete independently. Couples were paid \$15 for completing and returning the materials.

Measures

Attributions were assessed for four hypothetical partner behaviors using the RAM (see Appendix) and for actual marital difficulties. Each stimulus was followed by six statements rated in a manner similar to that used in Study 1. Three of the statements assessed causal attribution dimensions and focused on causal locus, stability, and globality. The remaining three statements concerned responsibility-blame. For continuity with earlier research on attributions in marriage, these statements assessed partner intent, motivation, and blame (see Appendix). We made minor changes to the wording of items to increase their clarity. The attribution statements appeared in random order for each behavior.

Attributions were also assessed for the two most important difficul-

ties in the marriage. Spouses were asked to write the most important disagreement or difficulty (e.g., "finances," and "communication") in the marriage at the top of a page that included the assessment of the six attribution dimensions described above. Once they had answered the attribution items they proceeded to the next page, on which they wrote the second most important difficulty in the marriage and then responded to the same attribution items. Coefficient alpha was computed across the six (2 difficulties \times 3 ratings) causal and six responsibility attribution responses. These composite indices showed reasonable internal consistency (responsibility—husbands = .70, wives = .72; cause—husbands = .63, wives = .68). For individual dimensions, ratings of corresponding items for the two marital difficulties were summed to form more reliable measures.

Results and Discussion

Reliability

Responses to corresponding items on the RAM were summed across the four negative spouse behaviors to form subscales for each of the six attribution dimensions. The reliability and intercorrelations among these scales is shown in Table 2. Because coefficient alpha for some of the scales was below the criterion of .70, composite attribution indices were also formed. This was done by adding the responses across the 12 (3 ratings \times 4 stimulus events) causal attribution responses and across the 12 responsibility attribution ratings. These composite attribution indices were highly reliable for husbands (alpha—cause = .86, responsibility = .84) and wives (alpha—cause = .84, responsibility = .89). Higher scores on the causal attribution composite indicate that spouses were more likely to locate the cause in the partner, see it as stable, and see it as global, whereas higher scores on the responsibility attribution composite indicated more intentional, selfishly motivated, and blame-worthy attributions.

Validity

We conducted two sets of analyses to examine the validity of the RAM. First, we computed simple correlations to examine whether the attribution dimensions assessed by the RAM were related to corresponding attribution dimensions for marital difficulties and to marital satisfaction. Second, we used structural equation modeling to compare a simple, single-factor model of the RAM with a two-factor model that distinguished causal and responsibility-blame attributions.

Attributions for hypothetical and real events. Table 3 shows the results of the first set of analyses involving Pearson product-moment correlations. Responses to the two attribution measures correlated significantly on all attribution dimensions for husbands, whereas only half of the attribution dimensions correlated significantly for wives. These nonsignificant correlations could reflect attenuation due to the reliability of the attribution scales because they were obtained on the three dimensions that failed to reach the .70 reliability criterion. In contrast, the more reliable attribution indices obtained from the two measures correlated significantly for both husbands and wives. The relations found between the two attribution measures are consistent with the results of a prior study in which attribution ratings for hypothetical partner behaviors and marital difficulties were combined to form a single attribution

Table 2
Intercorrelations Among RAM Attribution Dimensions for Husbands (Above Diagonal) and Wives (Below Diagonal)

Attribution dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6	α	
							Wives	Husbands
Cause								
1. Locus	—	.53	.49	.30	.50	.41	.63	.70
2. Stability	.59	—	.62	.54	.37	.46	.76	.65
3. Globality	.52	.61	—	.44	.49	.50	.75	.78
Responsibility-blame								
4. Intent	.31	.46	.45	—	.60	.62	.58	.60
5. Motivation	.48	.46	.54	.50	—	.73	.78	.83
6. Blame	.37	.47	.51	.54	.65	—	.69	.79

Note. RAM = Relationship Attribution Measure. All correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

measure that showed a high internal consistency (alphas ranged from .73 to .83; cf. Fincham & Bradbury, 1987b).

Relations to marital satisfaction. As regards the RAM's relation with marital satisfaction, the findings were consistent and straightforward. Without exception, the attribution dimensions correlated significantly with marital satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the results of Study 1 and replicate, with four behaviors as stimuli, the association between attributions and marital satisfaction documented in a large body of literature.

Single-versus two-factor models. To date, the distinction between causal and responsibility attributions has been made on rational grounds. Although Study 1 is among the first to show that these types of attributions have different correlates, the correlations found among the attribution dimensions investigated raise the possibility that a single factor underlies attribution dimensions. To test this possibility, we computed single-factor and two-factor models for the RAM using LISREL 7 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989). The single-factor model required parameter estimates for all six assessed attributions on a single factor, whereas the two-factor model required estimates for the three causal attributions on one factor and estimates for the three responsibility attributions on a second factor. The goodness of fit of the two models was then compared.²

Although no formal test is available to evaluate the relative fit of the two models, compared with the single-factor model, the two-factor model showed a substantial decrease (over 55%) in χ^2 . In fact, the single-factor model did not fit the data, $\chi^2(9, N = 120) = 31.8, p < .001$, goodness-of-fit index = .91, adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .79. In contrast, the two-factor model provided an adequate fit, $\chi^2(8, N = 120) = 14.4, p > .05$, goodness-of-fit index = .96, adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .90, and an inspection of parameter estimates showed that fixing any of them would make the fit of the model significantly worse (for all t s, $p < .01$).

Although encouraging, the results of Studies 1 and 2 are limited by several factors. First, no control was exerted on the conditions under which data were obtained because spouses completed the questionnaires at home without supervision. The integrity of the data therefore rests on the assumption that spouses were able and willing to follow the instructions that accompanied the questionnaires. Second, the anger responses

assessed in Study 1 were reports of anticipated behavior rather than actual behavior. The correlations obtained may be due to method variance or, if valid, may pertain only to anticipated behavior. It is therefore important to examine the relation between attributions and observed behavior. Third, in Study 2 only half of the wives' RAM attribution dimensions correlated with corresponding dimensions from a second measure of attributions. As noted, this may reflect the reliability with which these dimensions were assessed. However, it may also be due to the fact that the stimulus events for which attribution ratings were made differed (partner behaviors vs. marital difficulties). Consequently, it is important to show that attributions for the hypothetical partner behaviors used in the RAM correlate with attribution ratings made for actual partner behaviors reported by the spouse. We conducted a third study to address these limitations.

Study 3

The purpose of this study was to obtain data on the RAM under controlled conditions and to examine the relation of responses obtained on this measure to (a) attribution ratings for behavior that had occurred during the past week and (b) behavior displayed in a problem-solving discussion. The results of Study 2 led to the hypothesis that attributions for hypothetical and real behaviors would be significantly correlated. On the basis of Study 1, we hypothesized that responses on the RAM, particularly responsibility attributions, would be related to anger displayed by spouses during interaction. More specifically, spouses who tend to see negative partner behavior as intentional, selfishly motivated, and blameworthy are more likely to display anger toward their spouse in marital interactions. No specific hypotheses are offered for causal attributions.

An attempt was made also to extend the study of behavior to include a second negative affect that might be expected to relate to causal and responsibility attributions differently. Like anger, whining has an interpersonal focus in that it usually arises out

² Consistent with theoretical expectations, the comparison of one- and two-factor models for husbands and for wives yielded identical results. Hence, the models compared were computed using correlations averaged across gender.

Table 3
Correlations Between RAM Attribution Dimensions and
Attributions for Marital Difficulties and Marital Satisfaction

Attribution dimension	Marital difficulty attributions		Marital satisfaction	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Cause				
Locus	.27*	.18	-.27*	-.22*
Stability	.34**	.41**	-.41**	-.34**
Globality	.44**	.38**	-.40**	-.44**
Causal composite	.48**	.43**	-.44**	-.40**
Responsibility-blame				
Intent	.40**	.13	-.39**	-.40**
Motivation	.62**	.44**	-.40**	-.38**
Blame	.43**	.21	-.38*	-.33**
Responsibility composite	.63**	.31**	-.45**	-.44**

Note. RAM = Relationship Attribution Measure.
* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

of dissatisfaction with the partner's actions (or failure to act) and often represents an attempt to change partner behavior. The proximal cause of such dissatisfaction is likely to be a judgment that the partner did not do what she or he ought to have done, that is, a judgment of responsibility-blame. In view of these similarities between the two negative affects, we hypothesized that whining would relate to attributions in the same manner as anger.

Method

Subjects

The 47 couples who participated in the study were recruited through advertisements in the local media. They had been married an average of 8.5 ($SD = 6.8$) years, had an average of 1.8 ($SD = 1.4$) children, and had a median family income of \$25,000 to \$30,000. Husbands averaged 32.6 ($SD = 7.4$) years of age and 14.0 ($SD = 2.3$) years of education and obtained a mean score of 101.3 ($SD = 28.7$) on the MAT. Wives averaged 30.7 ($SD = 6.8$) years of age and 13.7 ($SD = 2.2$) years of education and obtained a mean score of 101.5 ($SD = 30.1$) on the MAT.

Procedure

All couples participated in a single assessment session in our research rooms. On their arrival, a research assistant explained to the couple the procedures that would be followed during the session and obtained written consent from each spouse concerning his or her participation in the study. Both spouses then independently completed a number of questionnaires, including a demographics questionnaire, the MAT, the RAM, a shortened version of the Spouse Observation Checklist (SOC) and the Inventory of Marital Problems.

The SOC was used to identify actual negative partner behaviors that had occurred in the last week. No attempt was made to assess the importance of each behavior. The first two negative partner behaviors checked off were each transcribed onto the top of a page containing the six attribution items used in Study 2. Each spouse was asked to rate the items contained on these two pages. This procedure meant that attributions were made for behaviors that might differ in importance across spouses, a circumstance that could mitigate against finding

meaningful results. To the extent that prior patterns of relations involving attributions are obtained using these stimuli, we can infer with greater confidence that attribution findings are not specific to important stimulus events.

The Inventory of Marital Problems asked about the extent to which each of 19 topics constituted a difficulty in the marriage and was used to identify a topic that both spouses had rated as a difficulty. This difficulty then served as the topic for a problem-solving discussion. After verifying with the couple that the topic was indeed a difficulty in the marriage, the assistant instructed the couple to work toward a resolution of the difficulty as best they could in a 15-min discussion. After answering any questions, the assistant signaled the couple to start the discussion and after 15 min signaled them to end the discussion. With the couple's prior consent the entire discussion was videotaped.

Materials

Spouse behaviors. The SOC (Weiss & Perry, 1979) comprises 409 behaviors that can occur in marriage on a daily basis. Twenty-five percent of the behaviors were randomly chosen for use in this study.

Marital difficulties. The Inventory of Marital Problems consists of 19 issues (e.g., in-laws, sex, trust, and friends) that are common problems in marriage (Geiss & O'Leary, 1981). Spouses rated on 11-point scales the extent to which each item was a source of difficulty or disagreement in the marriage.

Coding of Affect

Videotapes were coded for the expression of anger and whining (owing to a technical difficulty, one tape was omitted, leaving 46 tapes available for coding). Three trained coders rated each videotape. Each worked independently and indicated on a 4-point scale the extent to which anger and whining were present in each of seven timed intervals; the first six intervals were 2 min long and the last interval was 3 min long. The affects expressed by husbands and wives were coded from separate viewings of the videotape. We summed each coder's judgments for the two codes over the seven intervals and assessed reliability by examining the median correlation among coders; these were .78 for anger and .68 for whining. A final set of data was derived for analysis by resolving discrepancies among coders. Analysis of these codes across intervals with coefficient alpha indicated a high level of internal consistency for anger (husbands = .89, wives = .94) and for whining (husbands = .86, wives = .76).

Results and Discussion

Reliability

Coefficient alpha for attribution dimensions and their relation to marital satisfaction are reported in Table 4. With the exception of the causal locus dimension for wives, all RAM subscales showed acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha > .70$), and each attribution dimension correlated with marital satisfaction in the expected manner. These findings correspond to those of the earlier two studies and the lack of any obvious discrepancies suggests that collecting data through the mail did not affect the quality of the data.³

³ The promising findings obtained in the three studies led us to examine test-retest reliability. Twenty-four couples from a larger research project completed the RAM at two times separated by a 3-week interval. With the exception of two attribution dimensions (wives'

Table 4
Coefficient Alpha for RAM Attribution Dimensions and Correlations With Attributions
for Real Behavior, Observed Affect, and Marital Satisfaction

Attribution dimension	α	Attribution for real behavior ^a	Observed affect		MAT ^a
			Whining	Anger	
Husbands					
Cause					
Locus	.83	.50	.03	.18	-.54
Stability	.81	.45	.26*	.21*	-.52
Globality	.76	.58	.22*	.15	-.40
Causal composite	.86	.60	.19	.23*	-.61
Responsibility-blame					
Intent	.73	.57	.33**	.26*	-.39
Motivation	.81	.51	.23*	.02	-.34
Blame	.80	.58	.16	.09	-.36
Responsibility composite	.91	.66	.30**	.14	-.41
Wives					
Cause					
Locus	.62	.40	-.01	.26*	-.37
Stability	.81	.38	.15	.31*	-.54
Globality	.83	.73	.03	.47***	-.66
Causal composite	.89	.71	.07	.41***	-.62
Responsibility-blame					
Intent	.73	.33	.42***	.54***	-.52
Motivation	.88	.73	.32**	.63***	-.68
Blame	.85	.59	.30**	.66***	-.54
Responsibility composite	.93	.73	.37***	.65***	-.63

Note. RAM = Relationship Attribution Measure; MAT = Marital Adjustment Test.

^a All correlations involving this variable are significant at $p < .05$.

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

Attributions for Hypothetical and Real Partner Behaviors

It was hypothesized that RAM scores would be related to attributions obtained for real behaviors reported by spouses. Table 4 shows the correlations between corresponding attribution dimensions from these two sources. Consistent with Study 2, the correlations for all the attribution dimensions were significant for husbands (mean r s—individual dimensions = .53, composites = .63) and wives (mean r s—individual dimensions = .55, composites = .72). Although they covary reliably, much of the variance in responses to these two measures was not shared. We therefore conducted two further sets of analyses.

In the first set of analyses, we examined the possibility that attributions pertaining to real behaviors and to hypothetical behaviors may have different correlates. The corresponding correlations between the two attribution measures and marital satisfaction were tested to determine whether they differed significantly. No significant differences were obtained (all p s >

.05). Similarly, the correlations between the two measures of each attribution dimension and each specific affect were examined to see whether they differed. Again no differences were obtained.

Although the results of these univariate analyses are encouraging, they do not rule out the possibility that attributions for real and hypothetical behaviors account for unique variance in marital satisfaction, anger, and whining. To examine this possibility, we used the three causal attribution ratings for real partner behaviors and the three causal attributions for hypothetical partner behaviors as predictor variables in simultaneous regression analyses in which marital satisfaction, anger, and whining served as dependent variables. A second, analogous set of three regressions was computed using responsibility attributions as predictor variables.

For husbands, neither the set of causal attributions pertaining to real nor to hypothetical behaviors accounted for unique variance in marital satisfaction, anger, or whining—a pattern of findings that also obtained for individual attribution ratings. With one exception, similar findings were obtained for wives. The exception involved the prediction of marital satisfaction from causal attributions; the set of causal attributions for real partner behaviors accounted for unique variance in marital satisfaction, $F(3, 38) = 3.4$, $p < .03$. Of the three causal attribution ratings for real partner behaviors, only the global attribution

locus and husbands' intent), test-retest correlations were high (for wives—locus = .43, stability = .90, globality = .80, causal composite = .84, intent = .75, motivation = .88, blame = .76, and responsibility composite = .87; for husbands—locus = .57, stability = .60, globality = .83, causal composite = .72, intent = .32, motivation = .79, blame = .51, and responsibility composite = .61).

rating accounted for unique variance, $t = -2.26$, $p < .05$, with the stability rating approaching significance, $t = -1.94$, $p < .07$.

The overall pattern of findings suggests that the use of hypothetical partner behavior as stimuli in attribution research does not lead to artifactual results. This is important because the use of standard stimuli rules out the possibility that attributional differences between groups (e.g., distressed vs. nondistressed spouses) found in prior research simply reflect differences in the nature of the behaviors that they generate as attributional stimuli. Nonetheless, this does not imply that attributions for hypothetical and real behaviors are equivalent. Two observations suggest considerable caution in making inferences about the relation between attributions for hypothetical and real events. First, the finding obtained for the prediction of wives' satisfaction from causal attributions shows that attributions for real behaviors account for unique variance. Second, Fincham and Beach (1988) found significant differences in the corresponding attribution ratings for hypothetical behaviors and for marital difficulties. Although such differences are important, it is the correlates of attributions that have been the subject of inquiry in the literature on close relationships. To date there is little evidence to suggest that the pattern of associations for attributions relating to hypothetical stimulus events differs substantially from that obtained for attributions pertaining to real stimulus events.

Attributions and Observed Affect

We hypothesized that attributions measured by the RAM would relate to spouse whining and anger displayed during a problem-solving discussion. Support was obtained for this hypothesis in that 7 of 12 correlations involving responsibility attribution dimensions were significant ($p < .05$, see Table 4); the composite responsibility attribution index also correlated with husbands' and wives' whining and with wives' anger. In contrast, few significant associations were found for causal dimensions; only wives' ratings of stability and globality were related to their anger. Assuming that spouses make attributions in conversations that reflect their responses on the RAM, this pattern of findings is consistent with the position that responsibility attributions, rather than causal attributions, mediate behavior in marriage.

A plausible alternative interpretation of these correlations is that the relations obtained between attributions and affect simply reflect their joint association with marital satisfaction. To test this possibility, we computed partial correlations between attributions and affects, controlling for marital satisfaction. All but two of the seven significant simple correlations relating to responsibility attribution dimensions remained reliable at $p < .05$ (the relations involving partner blame and partner motivation with wives' whining were not significant). The composite responsibility attribution index also remained significantly associated with wives' whining ($r = .32$, $p < .05$) and wives' anger ($r = .46$, $p < .01$) and was marginally significant for husbands' whining ($r = .31$, $p < .06$). No significant partial correlations were obtained for causal attribution dimension scores or causal composite scores. These partial correlations show that marital satisfaction does not account for the association between responsibility attributions and negative affect and they underline

further the usefulness of distinguishing causal attributions from responsibility attributions.

The present results extend the findings of Study 1 in important ways. First, they show that for wives, responsibility attributions are related to observed anger and not simply to self-reports of anticipated anger. Second, they provide evidence that the association between responsibility attributions and behavior applies to wives' whining and suggest that it holds also for husbands' whining. However, no relation like the one obtained in Study 1 was found between responsibility attributions and anger for husbands. Indeed, the sex difference in the magnitude of the correlations involving responsibility attributions and anger is striking. Significance tests revealed that the differences between the correlations were reliable for the motivation ($z = 3.1$, $p < .01$) and blame ($z = 3.0$, $p < .01$) responsibility dimensions and for the responsibility attribution composite index ($z = 2.76$, $p < .01$).

This reason for this gender difference is unclear. Although speculative, it can perhaps be understood in terms of Gottman and Levenson's (1988) hypothesis that men function more poorly than women in the context of high negative affect and that this difference is due to the possibility that men are more physiologically reactive to stress than women are. As a consequence, men may be more likely to engage in interactional behaviors (e.g., withdrawal) that minimize negative affect and avoid the escalation of negative affect. Because it is possible that anger may be more physiologically arousing than whining (and therefore more "costly" to men), sex differences might be expected in the manifestation of anger but not whining. We found using t tests that men did indeed exhibit less anger than women, $t = 1.99$, $p < .05$, but that husbands and wives did not differ with regard to whining, $t = .47$, $p < .10$.⁴

In summary, the results of this study show that the RAM is a short, internally consistent measure of attributions that yields theoretically meaningful correlations. Moreover, it exhibits adequate test-retest reliability over a 3-week interval.

General Discussion

Although a large body of research has emerged on attributions in marriage, the assessment of attributions shows considerable variation, and several measurement problems have become apparent. These problems include inadequate specification of the constructs assessed, the failure to assess different types of attributions, the use of items that inquire about partner behavior rather than attributions for such behavior, and the use of items that confound different attribution dimensions, resulting in interpretational ambiguity. Such shortcomings threaten to limit the contribution of attribution research to an understanding of close relationships. An attempt was therefore made

⁴ Although these findings suggest that the sex difference obtained in the correlation between responsibility attributions and anger might be due to limits in the amount of anger displayed by husbands, this position would be strengthened considerably if a sex difference was also obtained for the variance in anger scores. A t test of correlated variances provided such support; the variance in husbands' anger scores was significantly smaller than that found in wives' scores, $t = 2.35$, $p < .05$.

to develop a measure of attributions in marriage that built on the strengths of the existing assessments and addressed several of the problems found in research on marital attributions. Accordingly, the RAM was devised in an attempt to provide a short, concrete measure of attributions that was reliable and valid and assessed the different types of attributions discussed in theoretical writings.

The results of the studies reported here suggest that the RAM is a reliable and valid measure. Reliability was established by showing the measure to be internally consistent and by demonstrating adequate test-retest reliability. Regarding the scale's validity, all three studies showed a relation between attributions and marital satisfaction, and our data show that this relation is not an artifact of overlap between measures of the two constructs. Second, responses on the RAM were related to attributions for marital difficulties (Study 2) and to attributions for real partner behaviors reported by spouses (Study 3). Moreover, attribution responses on the RAM had the same correlates as attribution responses for marital difficulties and real behaviors.

Third, Study 1 extended previous findings that documented an association between attributions for negative partner behavior and anticipated affective responses to the behavior (Fincham, Beach, & Nelson, 1987; Fincham & O'Leary, 1983; see also Doherty, 1982; Miller, Lefcourt, Holmes, Ware, & Saleh, 1986; Sillars, 1985) by showing that the relation held for a specific affect, namely, anger. Moreover, responsibility attributions mediated the relation between causal attributions and anger. Study 3 showed that the responsibility attribution-anger association also obtained for the actual anger displayed by wives during a problem-solving discussion with their husbands. In addition, both spouses' responsibility attributions tended to relate to the amount of whining they displayed in their marital interaction. These findings show that responses to the RAM have behavioral correlates and are consistent with the view that responsibility attributions mediate behavior exchanges between intimate partners (cf. Bradbury & Fincham, 1991; Fincham & Bradbury, 1988a, 1988b).

We began by attempting to distinguish between causal, responsibility, and blame attributions. The use of this tripartite distinction was motivated, in part, by the conceptual differences among these constructs in moral philosophy and in jurisprudence (Fincham & Jaspars, 1980; Shaver, 1985) and, in part, by social psychological studies showing that people respond differently to questions of cause, responsibility, and blame when judging vignettes about hypothetical others (e.g., Fincham & Roberts, 1985; Harvey & Rule, 1978; Shultz & Schleiffer, 1983). The different correlations found for causal and responsibility attributions emphasize the importance of distinguishing between these two types of attributions. In contrast, no evidence was obtained to support the distinction between responsibility and blame attributions. The lack of evidence for a distinction between responsibility and blame cautions against presuming that logical distinctions between constructs necessarily reflect psychological reality and suggests that findings obtained in basic attribution research should not be extrapolated to close relationships without empirical verification. Indeed, simply identifying the spouse as the cause of a negative event that abrogates a moral imperative may

be indistinguishable from assigning blame. That is, in some real-world contexts the assessment of causation "is tantamount to assessing blame" (Zuk, 1984, p. 146). Because there are likely to be occasions in close relationships when causal ascription may be synonymous with the determination of blame, an important task of future research is to identify parameters that change the utility of distinguishing causal from responsibility-blame attributions.

Whether it is always necessary to distinguish types of attributions, the optimal means of investigating each type of attribution remains an issue: Should researchers examine simple, composite attribution indices or should they analyze separately each constituent dimension of a given attribution type? In related research on learned helplessness, the study of individual causal attribution dimensions has been forgone in favor of research on a composite attribution measure that collapses scores across dimensions. Carver (1989) has argued cogently against this practice and we agree with his position that this does not make sense when, as in learned helplessness theory, different correlates are postulated for each attribution dimension. However, in the area of close relationships, differential predictions regarding attribution dimensions within a given attribution type are rare (for exceptions see Doherty, 1981; Fincham & Bradbury, 1987a), and the rejection of composite attribution indices in this context is less clear-cut.

On one hand, we have argued that a premature focus on attribution composites may preclude the identification of correlates unique to individual attribution dimensions (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). On the other hand, composite scores tend to show the highest reliability and validity coefficients and may yield a broader range of correlates than their constituent attribution dimensions. Because perceived causation and responsibility are assessed incompletely by any single attribution dimension, it seems acceptable to investigate composite scores. However, exclusive reliance on such indices would be inappropriate and could lead to the inappropriate conclusion that the constituent dimensions of an attribution type are equally important. As Carver (1989) recommended, it would be best to examine both individual dimensions and composites until sufficient data is available to justify an exclusive focus on composite scores. In any event, the pattern of findings in the present studies shows that the results obtained for composite measures and constituent dimensions are not identical.

In summary, basic attribution research has paid limited attention to measurement, a circumstance that is also reflected in research on attributions in close relationships. The RAM was therefore devised to address this gap, and we conducted three studies to examine its viability. Although future studies are likely to result in the need for further refinement, sufficient evidence has emerged to suggest that this short measure meets minimal psychometric standards for a research instrument.

We should finally point out several limitations of the RAM. First, the RAM does not exhaustively assess all attribution dimensions relevant to understanding close relationships. Similarly, we made no attempt to exhaust all possible components of each dimension assessed (alternative causal loci, additional motivations for behavior, etc.). The decision to focus on dimensions that have proven useful in prior research and that thus provide continuity in the literature should not preclude the in-

investigation of other attribution dimensions or of components of dimensions that are not assessed in the RAM. Indeed, continued flexibility in the area of marital attribution research is likely to be important in maintaining its continued vitality.

Second, the data offered to document the validity of the RAM should be supplemented in several ways. These include the examination of a wider range of potential correlates to document more fully the nomological network of the measure, the conditions under which attributions assessed by the RAM are equivalent to those for events that occur in the marriage, and the collection of data to establish its discriminant validity in applied settings (e.g., investigation of couples seeking therapy).

Third, it is possible that responses on the RAM reflect stable characteristics of the respondent (e.g., personality), his or her current state (e.g., mood), and the reality of partner behavior. It would be useful in future studies to establish how much each of these accounts for variance in RAM responses. Notwithstanding these limitations, the advantages conferred by a standard, efficient measure of attributions recommend use of the RAM in future research.

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Appendix

Relationship Attribution Measure

This questionnaire describes several things that your spouse might do. Imagine your spouse performing each behavior and then read the statements that follow it.

Please circle the number that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement, using the rating scale below:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Agree strongly

Your Husband Criticizes Something You Say:

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 My husband's behavior was due to something about him (e.g., the type of person he is, the mood he was in)
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 The reason my husband criticized me is *not* likely to change
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 The reason my husband criticized me is something that affects other areas of our marriage
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 My husband criticized me on purpose rather than unintentionally

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 My husband's behavior was motivated by selfish rather than *unselfish* concerns
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 My husband deserves to be blamed for criticizing me

Stimulus Events

4-item version: Your husband criticizes something you say; Your husband begins to spend less time with you; Your husband does not pay attention to what you are saying; Your husband is cool and distant.

8-item version (additional items): Your husband doesn't complete his chores; Your husband makes an important decision that will affect the two of you without asking for your opinion; Your husband doesn't give you the support you need; Your husband is intolerant of something you do.

Suggested filler items (for 8-item version): Your husband compliments you; Your husband treats you more lovingly.

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