"Remarriages are common and are even more likely to end in separation and divorce.

Premise 1: Understanding how marriages develop and change is important and can contribute to the prevention and treatment of marital dysfunction.

Premise 2: Understanding marital development is best achieved through longitudinal research designs.

...relationships grow, develop, deteriorate, and dissolve as a consequence of an unfolding social-exchange process, which may be conceived as a bartering of rewards and costs between the partners and between members of the partnership and others..

Individual's weigh the attraction of the relationship
Individuals consider the barriers to leaving a relationship
Individuals consider the presence of attractive alternatives

What are the strengths?
What are the weaknesses?

The focus is on interpersonal exchange of specific behaviors
Cognitive responses affect marriage through their influence on subsequent interaction behaviors
What are the strengths and weaknesses of this theory?
The nature of a child’s first close relationship (between infants and their primary caregivers) determines the nature of an individual’s close relationships throughout life.

Close relationships between adults reflect enduring styles of attachment developed in infancy and early childhood.

Individuals’ early experiences in close relationships shape the nature and development of subsequent relationships in adulthood.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of this theory?

Tries to explain how families react to stressful events

What are the strengths and weaknesses?

A cohort is followed from their wedding day until a substantial portion of them divorce;

13 year longitudinal study of 168 couples who first married in 1981;

Why do some marriages succeed while others fail?

The disillusionment model

The emergent distress model

The enduring dynamics model

What are some of the problems with the longitudinal research on marriage?

What are some of the main findings from the longitudinal research on marriage?
Research Findings

* Do spouses’ early marital trajectories differ according to marital-outcome group?

Research Design Issues

* Demographer Linda Waite uses correlational data to argue that marriage causes positive outcomes. What are the limitations of those data for that conclusion? Describe ways to test the causal connections between marriage and positive outcomes. Be creative. Can it be done ethically? If not, why?