# Chapter Two

# How to Reconstruct Schemas People Share, From What They Say

*Naomi Quinn*

Over twenty years ago, when I began the research that illustrates the methods advocated in this chapter, the theoretical issues about the nature of culture that I intended this research to address were very much unsettled. An older theory of linguistic meaning, on which the theory of cultural meaning that I had learned in graduate school had been predicated, was failing. It was up to my generation of cognitive anthropologists, I felt, to build a new and better theory of culture. An exciting new framework, that held promise for cognitive anthropology, was emerging from the multidisciplinary enterprise of cognitive science. But the ideas we were borrowing from cognitive science were themselves still young, undeveloped, and disputed.

This theoretical shift in cognitive anthropology demanded wholly new methods; and, when appropriate methods were not to be found in the existing research literature, they had to be invented. They were not, as methods never are, invented out of whole cloth; rather, I drew upon several sources for inspiration, particularly work in linguistics then coming to my attention. I did not feel any more bound to these approaches than I did to earlier methods from cognitive anthropology, however; I adapted them to my own uses. The first important methodological lesson I learned is not to assume that existing methods define the range of possible ones, and not to shrink from inventing our own ones. I hope the story that this chapter tells will inspire readers to invent their own methods, when the time comes, to suit their own theoretical and research needs.

The new methods I made up were quite different from those I had been trained to use. They were designed for a more naturalistic cognitive anthropology and for the wholly different kind of linguistic material—extended discourse—that this naturalistic approach demanded.[1] And these methods involved me in what were, for me, unfamiliar kinds of analyses of new features of language, and a different overall style of analyzing it. This new style was less mechanical than what I had been taught, and—what? More "organic," dare I say? By *mechanical*, I mean a method involving

[1] Parenthetically, it has been difficult to persuade funding agencies to cover the very labor-intensive collection and transcription of this discourse.

procedures specified from the outset and applied in an unvarying way and order to produce a unique solution. By *organic*, I am trying to convey how one analytic move grew out of the last, how each new analysis drew opportunistically on features of the material at hand, and how consecutive layers of analysis eventually added up to a whole. These characteristics of my method mark the second major methodological lesson of this chapter.

Time and again, I have seen graduate student dissertation research proposals flounder at the point of describing the data analysis phase of the proposed research. In part, this is because cultural anthropology graduate students do not learn to think in terms of data analysis, much less learn specific methods for doing it—a deficiency in their training that this volume hopefully begins to address. But in part also, the difficulty is generic to naturalistic research of the sort I do, and the sort that many cultural anthropologists want to do. In this kind of research, it is impossible to fully specify one's proposed methods in advance. This does not mean that one cannot and should not suggest, in one's proposal, general methodological approaches that one intends to pursue. But one is unlikely to be able to spell out, on the basis of these existing approaches, how one is going to analyze the discourse one has not yet collected and the characteristics of which one does not yet know, for research objectives of one's own.[2] Below I show how I analyzed metaphors, reasoning, and key words in the discourse I collected. Yet, it would be unhelpful to reify these analytic strategies as methods—to call them "metaphor analysis" or "reasoning analysis" or "key word analysis," for example, as if one were going to utilize these and only these methods, and as if they were "canned" so that one could apply them in a preordained way. Instead, as I have suggested, and as the collective chapters in this volume illustrate so well, each researcher is in the business of developing his or her own methods as these best suit the kind of discourse that has been collected and the research objectives for analyzing it.

I would not want to leave the impression that I foresook everything I had learned about method in graduate school. Quite the contrary. I had learned to believe, in the most general way, in the importance of method to good science—of being able to know, and demonstrate, how one had arrived at one's claims. To many social scientists this may seem too obvious to bear saying, but it is certainly a contested position in contemporary cultural anthropology. Two other general methodological lessons had also rubbed off on me in the course of my graduate training. One was a pragmatic, how-to approach to devising methods. The other was the value

[2] In experimental science, methods are specified in advance. Indeed, doing so, and following these methods exactly as specified, grants experimental findings much of their convincingness. Naturalistic research has different standards of convincingness, such as comprehensiveness, parsimony, and generalizability of the explanatory account. To the degree that agencies that fund cultural anthropology implicitly adopt the methodological standards of experimental science and assess naturalistic research proposals by these standards, a great injustice is done to prospective research in our field.

of employing systematic and close analysis. These are points that are illustrated in what is to follow.

## The Methodological Challenge

By the semantic theory I had learned, words derived their meaning from the larger set of related words—the so-called lexical contrast set—of which they were a part. Thus, in a favorite example of the day, the word *bachelor* was said to be defined as an unmarried man, contrasting, along one dimension of meaning, with a married man (for whom no discrete lexical term like "bachelor" exists in American English), and, along another dimension with an unmarried woman (for which the corresponding term is *spinster*). Similarly, *orphan* could be defined as a parentless child. Cognitive linguist Charles Fillmore (1975) argued against this "checklist theory of meaning," as he called it. He pointed out that such a theory did not account for why one could not properly refer to the Pope, for instance, or to a wolf-boy grown to manhood beyond the pale of civilized society, as a "bachelor." Fillmore suggested an alternative theory that made sense of such anomalies. We understand what it means to be a bachelor, he said, in terms of the "simple" or "prototype world"[3] that we imagine bachelors to inhabit. In this world, men become eligible to marry and are expected to do so around a certain age, and bachelors are men who, for one reason or another, have delayed marriage beyond this expected time.[4] The Pope, however, has foregone marriage at any age, while the wolf-boy is excluded from consideration as a marriage partner on grounds of unsuitability. In other words, neither inhabit the prototype world of marriage practices that *bachelor* invokes. In this world, boys are deemed eligible for marriage when they have grown into men, not only physiologically but socially, and, as social adults, are ready to leave their natal families and establish their families of procreation. Neither the Pope nor the wolf-boy follow this standard course of social maturation. The very decline in usage of this word in the United States today, and its seeming quaintness to us, are another kind of evidence pointing to the embeddedness of bachelorhood in a larger set of social conventions and understandings about marriage and the life-course. This decline signals the near-disappearance of a world in which it made sense to mark the marriageability of young men and women and worry about their marriage prospects—and hence to distinguish a man as a "bachelor" or a woman as a "spinster."

[3] Elsewhere in the same paper he also called these "scenes," and linguist Ronald Langacker (1979), to whom the *orphan* example is owed, named them "functional assemblies."

[4] We could note, although Fillmore does not, that recognized variants on such prototype worlds—worlds within worlds—may be identified by the terms assigned to them, too: So, for example, an *eligible bachelor* is one who is eminently marriageable, while a *confirmed bachelor* (sometimes used as a euphemism for homosexual) is one who has decided never to get married.

As things developed, Fillmore's notion of "prototype worlds" turned out to belong to a larger set of proposals that emerged from the cognitive sciences of the day, and that were to change the way everybody thought about cognition. I myself was initially and most deeply influenced by Fillmore's formulation, because it posed a direct challenge to the semantic theory that had governed the comparative study of kin terms, address terms, and ethnobiological terms and the like (hence its early names of *ethnoscience* and *ethnosemantics*), with which my subdiscipline of cognitive anthropology had been preoccupied. While Fillmore and other linguists were concerned to build a theory of word definition, and interested in the worlds or scenes behind words for their bearing on word definition, I had a different interest. I was drawn to the idea of these prototype worlds because they seemed to me to be exactly the kind of construct needed to capture the complexity of cultural meaning.[5] As time went by, a number of variant proposals for conceptual entities like "prototype worlds" and "functional assemblies" were subsumed under the label of *schemas*, and what schemas were began to be worked out. Cognitive anthropologists like myself found ourselves borrowing schema theory to reconceptualize cultural understandings in its terms.

A *schema* is a generic version of (some part of) the world built up from experience and stored in memory. The schema is generic—as Fillmore said, simplified and prototypical—because it is the cumulative outcome of just those features of successive experiences that are alike. Although schemas can change, those built on repeated experiences of a similar sort become relatively stable, influencing our interpretations of subsequent experiences more than they are altered by them. To the degree that people share experiences, they will end up sharing the same schemas—having, we would say, the same culture (or subculture). The social world is constructed in just such a way that many of our experiences—the language we speak, for example, or the way we are brought up as children, or the built environment we inhabit—are indeed shared. Hence, many, many of our schemas are cultural ones.[6]

Schemas can include words, but are hardly limited to these. They can include experience of all kinds—unlabeled as well as labeled, inarticulate as well as well-theorized, felt as well as cognized. Schemas, in short, can be as various and complex as the experience from which they are derived. The same is true, of course, for cultural schemas, which do not differ from other schemas except that they are built up from experience that has been shared.

[5] Subsequently, seeking a more developed theory of the prototype worlds behind words, along with many other people I became intrigued with the notion of *scripts* proposed by Roger Schank and Robert Abelson (1977). Ultimately, I found Schank and Abelson's formulation wanting, both in sensitivity to the cultural constructedness of understandings, and in generalizability to all the various ways (other than conventionalized sequences of temporally ordered events) in which cultural understandings can be organized.

[6] See Strauss and Quinn (1997).

The shift from a "checklist," word-bound, theory of cultural meaning to the theory that these shared meanings are embedded in complex schemas, carried with it an equally radical methodological departure. The method I knew, in which I had been so relentlessly schooled as a graduate student, was the formal analysis of lexical sets. The word *bachelor* provides a quick illustration of this method, by which a formal analysis of the word's meaning could be represented:

| | *Male* | *Female* |
|---|---|---|
| Married | 0 | 0 |
| Unmarried | *bachelor* | *spinster* |

The zeros in the upper row indicate that there is no single word for *married man* or *married woman* analogous to *bachelor* and *spinster*. (*Husband* and *wife* refer to the reciprocal relationship of a man and women who marry each other, but not their status as married people in the same way that *bachelor* and *spinster* refer to these individuals' status as unmarried; one says, not, "He is a husband" or "She is a wife"—unless one were stressing that being a wife was a woman's sole occupation—but "He is her husband" or "She is his wife.") Analyses like this one are accomplished by equating the meaning of cultural objects and events with the meaning of the words that label them, and then reducing word meaning to just that component of it that is contained in the contrast between each word and other words in its lexical contrast set. The dimensions of contrast that define *bachelor* are "sex" and "marital status." Such analyses have the great advantage of resting on specifiable, largely formalizable operations; this is a big part of their scientific appeal. The convincingness of the method rested (and sometimes also, as in the great dispute about the componential analysis of American English kinship terms, fell) on its ability to produce analyses in which these operations led to unique solutions.

Cognitive anthropologists who subscribed to this theory of word meaning often spoke (and some still do) as if the meaning derived from contrasts among words subsumed all of cultural knowledge. However, once we take cultural meaning to be much more than the words we attach to the objects and events in our world, the formal method I have illustrated no longer serves us as a useful tool for recovering that meaning. What kinds of method might capture the cultural schemas that cultural modelers theorize to underlie shared understanding? In my search for such a method, I had to start from scratch. As will emerge, I turned to a kind of linguistic data, and developed a mode of analyzing this, that were to share none of the old method's formalism.

I was determined to open an entirely new research project, one that would provide me with the rich material I needed in order to explore

cultural schemas. I made the decision to conduct this fresh research in the United States.[7] Because it seemed a topic on which Americans would have much to say and be willing to talk about, and also because it intrigued me personally, I decided I would investigate Americans' shared understandings of marriage. The most obvious and direct way to get access to these understandings appeared to me to be through what people had to say about marriage.

Because I was interested in ordinary people's understandings, this meant investigating what ordinary people had to say. It seemed extremely inefficient, though, to stand around in likely public settings—bars, perhaps—waiting for occasions on which people happened to talk about my research topic. Private occasions on which talk about marriage was likely to be thicker, such as married couple's tête-à-têtes or their marital therapy sessions, hardly seemed accessible to me. Thus it was that I embarked on an interview project.[8] I think interviews must always be the methodological strategy of choice for collection of discourse on a topic like marriage, a topic that cannot conveniently be recorded as it occurs naturally in discourse, because it neither arises frequently and regularly in all everyday talk (as do address terms, for example), nor appears predictably in a well-defined setting (like legal discourse, for example).

On the other hand, I chose marriage as the topic of my interviews precisely for the reason that people seemed ready to be interviewed about it at the drop of a hat, freely, and at length. Other researchers may have theoretical or policy-related reasons for investigating specific other cultural understandings. The topics they set out to study may turn out to be topics that people do not talk about all that often in any setting. Interviewees may not treat such topics as part of their life stories, for example, and may not be prepared to produce extensive discourse on this topic, nor find it easy to do so. Steven Bialostok (personal communication) has shared with me his difficulties in getting people to talk about literacy, for example. In such a case, the researcher will need to structure interviews much more tightly, around a series of queries about other topics that do arise in natural discourse, and within which the topic of research is likely to arise. In the case of literacy, Bialostok found, some queries that worked were asking about literacy-related activities such as reading to one's children, or specific literacy-related memories such as those of books and other reading materials that were part of one's world when one was growing up. Ingenuity and trial-and-error will certainly be required to locate such topics and design the right questions to ask about them. Even then, as Bialostok discovered,

[7] I should explain that this point in my research career coincided with the childrearing years of my life. I was a single mother, and my choice of field site had a lot to do with my misgivings about taking two small children to the field. (I had managed previous fieldwork among the Mfantse people of coastal Ghana with one child, and seen how much it slowed down my research.)

[8] See Linde (1993:57–58) for this same point, which bears repeating.

interviewees are likely to have much less to say about each topic, and it may be necessary to conduct shorter interviews with many more individuals in order to amass a corpus of discourse of desirable size.[9]

## The So-called Interview

I aspired to collect interviews that resembled as closely as possible the spontaneous discourse about marriage that might occur in all the likely places—for example, between strangers at bars, friends in coffee klatches, married couples themselves in moments of confidence, or married people and their marital therapists. I wanted ordinary talk, but found it impractical to collect. Can interviews come close enough to ordinary talk to provide ordinary cultural understandings? I think so.

I developed a style of interviewing in which I and my research assistants[10] deliberately ceded control of the "interviews" to the "interviewees," allowing them to decide how their interviews should be organized over all, what topics should come next and what might have been overlooked or unfinished, and when we were done. Our role was that of a good listener in a decidedly one-sided conversation. Our only intervention was to guide speakers back to the topic when they occasionally wandered off too far. We made every effort not to interrupt. As interested listeners, however, we asked our interviewees, whenever it seemed appropriate, to expand on their points, explain what they meant, spell out the implications of examples they gave, and give examples of generalizations they made. We also made note, either mentally during the actual interview or listening to it before the next, of comments dropped, key terms or phrases used, and paralinguistic, kinetic, and other clues that there might be more to tell; then, at appropriate junctures in the same or later interviews, we brought the conversation back to these topics. The quotation marks around "interviews" and "interviewees" at the beginning of this paragraph are meant to indicate how far from a traditional interview these ended up being; perhaps we need a different and more descriptive name for them, but I haven't been able to think of one.

At the end of each set of these interviews, we did do something more unnatural, taking each interviewee through a checklist we had developed of every aspect of their marriages and marriage in general that any interviewee had ever raised, including items such as pet names couples had for each other, the kinds of birthday gifts they gave each other, and dreams about their spouses interviewees had had. We did this to make sure we

[9] A possible advantage of such a research strategy is that individuals could be asked to write briefer accounts—say, of literacy-related activities or memories—circumventing time-consuming interview transcription.

[10] Then sociology graduate student Rebecca Taylor, who interviewed six couples, and Laurie Moore, a then Duke undergraduate, who interviewed one couple. I interviewed the remaining four couples.

were finding out everything each interviewee had to say, and eliciting roughly comparable material from all. That few interviewees had much to add in response to these checklist questions suggests that the approach of letting them organize and run the interviews, and talk as long as they wanted to, succeeded in eliciting from them all that they did have to say, at that time, about marriage.

I say "at that time" because I was very much influenced, in designing the interview process this way, by the manuscript of a book I had read by sociolinguist Charlotte Linde, since published (in 1993) as *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. The *life story*, Linde tells us, is one common kind—though, of course, not the only kind—of narrative people tell in the course of their everyday lives. People do not ordinarily unburden themselves of their life stories all in one sitting; instead, they tell them snippets at a time. Linde's insight is that these stories express people's senses of themselves and are central to their ongoing efforts to create coherence out of their lives. As such, they are always being updated and revised, so that the story one hears at any given time is always provisional. I came to understand that my interviews with people about their marriages tapped into a segment of their life stories at a given time.

Life "stories" are not cast exclusively in narrative form. Indeed, as it emerges particularly sharply in my discussion of the key word "love" later in this chapter, narratives about marriage comprised only a small fraction of our interviewees' discourse, and these were typically the bare frame for the much more extensive commentary on, and explanation about, what had gone on or was going on in their own marriages, other marriages, and American marriage as an institution. (It was, we see, the reasoning in these explanations that I was to capitalize on most heavily in my analysis.) It seems that when given the opportunity to talk about something meaningful to them, Americans not only report their own experience—their own life story—but they also contextualize, compare, reflect upon, and analyze it.

Interviews were each about an hour, a period of time that seemed both ample enough to encourage people to talk freely, and not so long as to tire them out. These interviews were usually held a week apart, and went on, as I indicated earlier, until a given interviewee had nothing left to say—which ranged from a taciturn 11 interviews to a garrulous 28. The thought behind this exhaustive interviewing was that it would yield a body of discourse rich enough for recuperation of the cultural schemas embedded in it. I also wanted to be able to sort cultural understandings from those that came from more individual or subcultural experience, in order to know when I was dealing with which and to be able to explore how the idiosyncratic and the cultural interacted.

A worthwhile side effect of lengthy interviewing was how comfortable interviewees became. If, when they began to be interviewed in my project, "the interview" was a strange experience to them compared to "the coffee klatch" or "the therapy session," it did not remain so. More than one interviewee, near the beginning of the first interview, asked, "Is this what

you want?" Encouraged to define the task for themselves, by the third interview or so all had done so. Not only did they treat it as an occasion for telling part of their life story, but also they made that telling meaningful in different ways. Their ease in turning the anthropologist–informant interview into something more familiar supports Linde's observation that there is no sharp distinction between the interview situation and "so-called real life." Some came to see it as an opportunity to record the history of their marriages, or to make public statements about what these marriages stood for. One of these couples contributed documents from their wedding, including the marriage vows they had written themselves; another interviewee contributed the thesis she had written on the topic of contemporary changes in the institution of marriage. Others viewed this as a chance to reflect on their marriages, as a way of gaining appreciation for them or a therapeutic time for rethinking them. One such couple reported talking over the interviews with each other in between times, and another requested copies of the interview transcripts to study. In this way I collected miles and miles of talk about marriage. All of it was tape-recorded and the tapes transcribed. Of course, the use of tape recorders needed little explanation to these American interviewees. One interviewee, in particular, would very occasionally ask the interviewer to turn off the recorder, when she wanted to tell the her something very private; otherwise, taping never posed an issue nor appeared to be felt as an intrusion.

Once I had a corpus of such discourse, what was I to do with it? This is the point in my research at which I really had to become inventive in my methods, and where I began to develop the organic methodological style I alluded to at the beginning of this chapter. What follows shows how my analyses were invented as I went along. It shows how each of these forays into analysis led me to the next. It shows how each consecutive analysis was opportunistic in the sense of taking advantage of features of the discourse that were at hand and that lent themselves to my research objectives. And, finally, it shows how consecutive analyses added necessary pieces to the final interpretation of my findings.

## The Analytic Approach

From the beginning, and unlike various other approaches to discourse analysis, mine was a search for patterns *across* interviewees and passages, that would be evidence of shared, stable understandings. My beginning search for features of the discourse that would reveal such patterns could only be described as groping. I remember, for example, that in early proposals for this research, I wrote that I intended to look at interviewees' use of "aphorisms" about marriage, and their invocation of "imagined scenes" from their marriages and those of other people. These seemed like promising possibilities, in the abstract. I soon abandoned examination of these particular features of talk about marriage in my analysis, as I did

examination of the narratives interviewees told, because none of these cropped up nearly often enough in this talk to make them helpful clues to underlying understandings of it.[11] I gravitated instead to the analysis of features of discourse that did occur frequently.

These turned out to be the *key words* and the *metaphors* in people's talk about marriage, and the *reasoning* that they did about it. In addition to their frequency, these features of talk about marriage that ultimately played major roles in my analysis are, in different ways that will be illustrated in what follows, *culture-laden*. To anticipate briefly and generally, because selection of metaphors, reasoning, and use of key words are all in different ways governed by cultural schemas, each provided an excellent window into the shared schema on which its usage was predicated.

A third important property of metaphors, reasoning, and key words, for my purposes, was that their usage was largely out of speakers' conscious control. Anthropologists have an uncommon nervousness about using what people say as evidence for what they think, as if their words were always bound to mislead us. Of course, the colonized and postcolonized people we have studied have often had good reason to try and mislead us, which may explain one source of our anxiety. The interviewees in the present study may have had various other reasons to mislead their interviewers. They might have wished to, and some certainly were overtly concerned to, put a good public face on their marriages. A few saw themselves and their marriages as exemplary, and the interview task as an opportunity to record and publicize their marital philosophies and accomplishments. Even these few, I should say, became increasingly less guarded and more confiding over the long course of the interviewing. In an important sense, however, interviewees could not have misled us even had they been bent on doing so to the end. Probably all but the most self-critical did represent their marriages as more successful than they really were, themselves as having fewer marital difficulties or resolving these problems more willingly or readily than they actually did. They undoubtedly distorted events to make themselves look good, and omitted others that might have discredited them. But it was not an evaluation of their marriages, or of themselves as spouses, that I was after. It was the framework within which

[11] Ochs and Capps (2001:7) make the point that "informal conversation with those one knows or trusts," such as the spontaneous conversations among family members that they record and analyze, "rather than more formal genres is the medium of choice" for narratives. This may explain why narratives were scanty in my interviews. These authors' larger argument is that, in these informal conversations, people tend to relate events, "not as a tidy narrative package but as incomplete and unresolved." Ochs and Capps (ibid.) argue persuasively that "conversation is the most likely medium for airing unresolved life events," and that "mundane conversational narratives of personal experience constitute the prototype of narrative activity rather than the flawed by-product of more artful and planned narrative discourse" (ibid.:3). Just because they are so unfinished—for example, their plot lines often lack a beginning, middle, and end (ibid.:57)—and so highly indexical, conversational narratives may be of limited use to cultural analysis such as I was attempting, even had I had access to such narratives on the topic of marriage.

they talked about these things. Within this common framework, as I describe more fully in the next section, marriage was a matter of compatibilities and incompatibilities, difficulties and effort, success or failure. There was no other way to talk about it. This framework emerged, willy-nilly rather than as a product of deliberate presentation, from the metaphors they drew upon, the reasoning they did, and their usage of key words. Speakers do, of course, choose particular metaphors deliberately to highlight, for example, the nature and extent of their compatibility (or incompatibility) with their spouses; what they do not and cannot choose is whether to talk about marriage in terms of compatibility, incompatibility, and metaphors for these.

As I have indicated, the premise behind interviewing was that people's talk on a subject is the best available window into its cultural meaning for them.[12] I came to see my analytic approach as the reconstruction, from what people said explicitly, of the implicit assumptions they must have had in mind to say it. My assumption is that the shared understandings I seek lie behind what people said—not, as our folk "Whorfian" theory of language makes us prone to assume, that these are meanings embedded in the words themselves. As is seen in what follows, the systematic analysis of multiple features of discourse that I favor converges on a substratum of cultural understanding underlying this discourse. I did indeed discover a level at which Americans shared a schema for marriage.

Schemas, I have noted, are built up from experience. In part, the shared schema I uncovered is built up from earliest experience and hence taps the deepest meanings marriage has for Americans, meanings that are shared because that early experience is shared. I return to this point when I later discuss my analysis of talk about marital love. At the same time, this schema serves other purposes. It supports internalized "mediating structures" (Hutchins 1995:290–312) or "scaffolding," (Clark 1997:46), that reframe and assist our performance of everyday cognitive tasks; it has evolved and spread in part, presumably, due to the repeated experience of many people who have confronted these tasks (Quinn 1997a). Coordinated with the task world, such structures facilitate actors' performance of these tasks. In my analysis of discourse about marriage, as we see, I identified and described the usage of two such mediating structures. One was the speakers' deliberate selection of metaphors from culturally exemplary domains to clarify their intended points about marriage. The second mediating structure

[12] I would not wish to be interpreted as saying, or believing, that talk is the *only* window onto cultural meaning, or that its analysis captures *all* such meaning. This is just the approach I have adopted because I have found it the most fruitful at my disposal. Some anthropologists are unconditionally hostile to the analysis of discourse in general and interview discourse in particular because it connotes, for them, a radical decontextualization from the complexities of actual behavior in real life. This is an old anthropological anxiety. In fact, any and all selections of what to analyze necessarily decontextualize; the only other choice open to us is to present without analysis, and even then we make choices in what we present. I believe that the discourse I have analyzed is a particularly rich segment of actual behavior in real life. I hope that any reader who brings to this chapter a categorical distrust of interviews will suspend judgment until they have seen for themselves how much can be learned from such materials.

assisted speakers in reasoning about marriage. I describe each of these more fully in later sections.[13]

These mediating structures are unreadable from language in any direct way, and otherwise quite transparent, so that their roles in selecting metaphors for marriage and in reasoning about it was previously un-guessed-at and totally surprising, and this is so even though we all rely on them all the time. It took some time for me to realize what they were and how they were being used by speakers. Philosopher Andy Clark (1997:80–81, 92) tells us how tricky, methodologically, it is to discover the kinds of content-bearing, jerry-rigged, unexpected task solutions that organisms evolve, let alone to figure out how these work. Of course, it is a good deal easier to identify them and figure them out when they are tangible and hence observable. Anthropologist Edwin Hutchins, for example, has studied ship navigation, demonstrating the way in which, and extent to which, the structures that mediate navigation tasks are embodied in physical artifacts and practices distributed across people, outside of individual minds. This demonstration is founded on meticulous, hard-won dissections of task performance and descriptions of the task world that surrounds and enables that performance. Even so, Hutchins (1996:67) has written about his choice of ship navigation as an object of study, how fortunate he was that "many of the resources available to the participants are directly observable by the researcher" as well, making "the analysis of the use of those resources much easier than it would otherwise be." He suggests that, more generally, "settings where problems and their solutions have been crystallized in physical artifacts are simply easier to study than settings that lack that kind of structure," and he recommends that we "tackle the methodologically easy cases first" when doing theoretical exploration.

Perhaps. Without diminishing Hutchins' achievement and its importance, I would defend my choice of a research domain at the nexus of ideationally dense, culturally salient, psychologically laden understandings. I believe it is critical to psychological anthropological theory that we do not shy away from investigating such domains of experience, but, instead, develop methods for tackling them. Like the one I studied, many culturally, psychologically, and theoretically important domains are likely to be ones about which reasoning and other task performance is conducted by individuals or couples rather than large groups, out of public view much of the time, and unassisted by observable physical artifacts.[14] I am grateful that language afforded me a way, however indirect and imperfect, into people's understandings of marriage. I hope my analysis of this discourse demonstrates the feasibility of analyzing wholly internalized, largely tacit, but culturally shared understandings.

[13] Readers interested in the details of how they work should refer to Quinn (1991, 1996, and 1997a).

[14] Perhaps I might have studied the process of group problem solving in marital therapy sessions. However, I was intent on investigating people's ordinary, everyday understandings

I have said that the method of my parent school relied for its convincingness on its ability to produce analyses that led from specifiable operations to unique solutions. In the absence of such a formal method supplying such interpretive determinacy, I sought, in my analysis, another kind of convincingness. I relied on demonstrations that common patterns lay beneath considerable linguistic complexity, and that separate analyses of distinct linguistic features converged on these patterns. When one is able to reconstruct the same structure from the talk of different people, then this is evidence that they share the understandings embodied in that structure—that these understandings are cultural. When these speakers repeatedly, in different linguistic forms, express these shared understandings, this argues for their relative centrality and stability. One can have all the more confidence in the centrality and stability of these shared understandings when they are, as I have said these understandings are, implicit and hence not deliberately manipulable or readily suppressed.

I now attempt to demonstrate the method by which I reconstructed cultural understandings of marriage from discourse about it. I cannot, of course, recapitulate my entire analysis. Instead, I present some bits of it. Importantly, though, my presentation of these will preserve two things about the analytic process itself. First, I try to convey how opportunistic the analysis was, in exploiting what discourse revealed as these revelations were encountered. Second, I keep the order in which I devised the analysis itself, to show how one thing truly did lead to another, and how integral to the analysis was this process of working forward, from past patterns discovered to the next analytic move which, if it was not directly entailed by the last discovery, at least would not have suggested itself at an earlier point in the analysis.

I show, first, how regularities in metaphors for marriage provided the first evidence of a cultural model that interviewees shared. I go on to show how that provisional model led me next to an examination of interviewees' reasoning about marriage, and how that reasoning filled in the shared model, setting it in motion and suggesting how speakers used it to reason with. Finally, I describe how a separate analysis of the key word, "love," added a new, motivational, level to the analysis.

## Doing the Analysis: Metaphor

A striking early discovery was that the metaphors different speakers used to talk about marriage in varied contexts fell into just eight classes. These

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of marriage. Perusal of marital therapy manuals convinced me that this was an expert domain having, not only its own specialized language, but also its own goals and concerns. (Of course, not inconsiderable therapeutic language and thinking about marriage have crept into ordinary, everyday ideas and talk about it, but this is another matter.) As I have indicated, another consideration was inaccessibility, which also made it seem impractical to try and study occasions on which married couples talked about their marriages alone together.

were metaphors of *lastingness*, *sharedness*, *(mutual) benefit*, *compatibility*, *difficulty*, *effort*, *success (or failure)*, and *risk*. Within each class, marriage can be and is portrayed metaphorically as lasting or not lasting (although lastingness is the expectation and marriages that do not last are regarded as unfortunate), as being more or less difficult (although some degree of difficulty is expected), as succeeding or failing, and so forth. Here are some examples, chosen for their brevity, of each metaphor class;[15] in these cases, speakers refer to their own marriages and spouses, compare their marriages with others they know, and speak about marriage hypothetically:

*lastingness*: "To have that **bond between us.** I think he felt that once we had a child **we wouldn't split as easily**" [3W–4].
*sharedness*: "[O]ur existence is so **intertwined**" [9H–7].
*(mutual) benefit*: "But I feel pretty mutual about, we both have **as much at stake** in the relationship as the other person does" [4W–7].
*compatibility*: "We've scarred each other, and we've helped each other, and we've kind of **meshed in a lot of ways**" [4H–11].
*difficulty*: "[O]ver the years we've bit by bit **negotiated our way through the rough spots**" [7W–5].
*effort*: "[T]hey were different issues that were being **worked on** those marriages than in ours, I think" [5W–7].
*success (or failure)*: "[*referring to circumstances that might lead to divorce*] [I]f you're **in a no-win situation**, you've got to take the best door out" [10W–8].
*risk*: "[*When you get married*] you're **playing the odds**; you're **playing percentages.** You're **betting** that the great majority of the time with that certain person that you will enjoy being there" [7H–2].

Metaphors such as these are mappings from some source domain (the domain of things that are durably joined together by virtue of being bonded; the domain of things that are inseparable by virtue of being intertwined; the domain of economic investment in which one might find oneself having much at stake; the domain of machinery with its meshing parts, and so forth) onto some target domain (in this case, marriage). Of course, interviewees can and do talk about marriage, as any subject, nonmetaphorically. They said things like "You have decided that this is a person that you are going to exert yourself to spend your life with" (10W–10) to indicate their shared expectation that marriage is a lasting arrangement; or conversely, "I'm a firm believer in divorce if things are not going well" (7W–6) to convey the expectation, also shared by interviewees, that a marriage in difficulty can be expected to end. Hypothetically, then, I might have reconstructed the shared schema for marriage from such statements. Certainly explicit statements of this kind were useful to my analysis. What were the methodological advantages of relying primarily on metaphors? There were three such advantages.

[15] Other examples and, in particular, multiple examples of the metaphors for marital lastingness, are provided in other publications, especially Quinn (1987, 1991, and 1997a).

## Advantages of Metaphor Analysis

First, metaphors are frequent in speech. Because speakers take for granted its lastingness, benefit, and the other expectations they have about marriage, they do not often articulate these expectations as explicitly as they are stated in the two examples given in the last paragraph. Instead, these assumptions arise implicitly, as called upon in the course of interviewees' reasoning and other talk. Much more commonly than they made such announcements as "I'm a firm believer in divorce if things are not going well," interviewees made the same argument about the relation between marital lastingness (and success) and marital difficulty metaphorically.[16] They produce such metaphor-ridden discourse as "It's a rough time, I think, for marriages to make it" [5W–1]; or, "We are always surprised when we find out that finances and stuff is a point of contention really driving a wedge between people" [10H–3]; or, "It seemed we had weathered it and that at least gave us some precedent for staying together" [5H–5]; or, "It's a matter if you can deal with being hurt and move on, you know, and sort of be able to hang on to each other" [2H–8]; or, "I would make it clear that something's got to be done and I can't cope with it as it is and I'm getting out until you figure out whether you can cope with it or not" [10W–8]. Indeed, it appears that we are unable to talk for long on any topic without speaking of it metaphorically. My analysis exploited the relative frequency of such metaphors in my corpus of discourse.

Secondly, metaphors in speech are like flags waving, or Xs that mark the spot. Indeed, as my analysis progressed, the metaphors soon began to pop out at me. If the frequency with which we use metaphors suggests that they have some crucial role to play in our speech, this perceptual saliency effect supplies a clue to what that role is. Metaphors, I have elsewhere argued (Quinn 1997a), are used by speakers to clarify the points they are trying to get across to listeners. For this purpose speakers choose metaphors that are cultural exemplars of the point being made. A speaker can reasonably assume that such a cultural exemplar will be well known to listeners, who will not only readily apprehend the metaphor, but also readily understand the point the speaker intends to make with it. In other words, metaphors are particularly salient intersubjectively shared examples of what they stand for; it is for this reason that I call them *culture-laden*. That is how they do their work—and that is also how they help an analyst do hers.

The final methodological advantage of examining metaphors was that they gave me a convenient way of knowing that my analysis was comprehensive. All (with only a handful of possible exceptions)[17] of the

[16] Whether a phrase such as "if things are not going well" should be treated as metaphorical or nonmetaphorical is considered at the end of this section.

[17] I identified, in all, fifteen possible exceptions, six of which came from the same speaker—a man with a penchant, more generally, for novel metaphor creation. I say "possible": It is hard to say how many, if any, of these fifteen metaphorical usages stand as true exceptions because virtually all are open to interpretations that explain them away or stretch them to fit into one of the eight classes.

over four hundred metaphors for marriage that I analyzed fell into one or more of the eight classes I had identified. From this finding, I deduced that the metaphors captured a shared schema for marriage, each class of metaphors representing a key concept in this schema. It does not stand to reason that some shared concepts speakers had about marriage would be

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Two of these seemingly aberrant metaphors, for example, seem to be referring to marriage as something that is expected to "evolve" and not become "static." One wife complains about some "other people's marriages" that "they haven't evolved or they haven't—I mean they're still operating like they did day one" [8W–5]. And a wife says about her own marriage that "If it gets static in our relationship then that's when we'll split, I guess . . ." Certainly interviewees also talk nonmetaphorically about how their own marriages, in particular, change over the course of time. Perhaps the evolution of marriage is a minor theme that informs Americans' understandings of both how married couples learn, over time, to cope with inevitable marital difficulties, and how individual spouses change over the course of a marriage, developing new needs the meeting of which engenders new marital challenges and, sometimes, difficulties. Interviewees influenced by the growth psychology of the sixties and seventies, like the wife just quoted, may view change in marriage as not only inevitable but salutary—perhaps even one of the benefits of a marriage.

Other odd-seeming metaphors, upon closer examination, prove to fall into line with the larger analysis rather than introducing new, if minor, themes into it. For example, the following pair of metaphors for marriage as something "shiny" or in need of "spicing up" may appear, on first encounter, to reflect a previously unidentified expectation that marriage be novel and exciting. Examination of the contexts in which they occur, however, shows that these metaphors are being used to emphasize the *breach* of familiar expectations about marriage.

In the first of these cases, a wife remembers standing and ironing her husband's shirts in the first few months of her marriage and wondering,

> 5W–13: "Oh, is this what it's about?" But still it was shiny and fun enough and we were going out and meeting new people and all that kind of stuff and I was having fun setting up homemaking kinds of habits, so that I don't think that I allowed myself to think very much about whether I was happy or not.

On first consideration, it seems decidedly odd to describe one's marriage as "shiny" (and "fun"). However, context reveals that a "shiny and fun enough" marriage is being retrospectively critiqued by contrast to one that would make her happy, as a marriage should. Happiness in marriage comes about as the result of marital benefit, and to say that one is happy (or unhappy) in one's marriage or has a happy (or unhappy) marriage are common ways of talking about the expectation that the marriage be beneficial. This woman's "shiny, fun enough" marriage was not, if she had actually allowed herself to think about it, a happy, beneficial, one. Another passage from the same interview strengthens this interpretation. In another odd-seeming way of talking about marriage, in the second passage, this wife describes thinking that hers was "nice." She then observes that she may have been repressing her worries about her marriage, and goes on to report that, after seeing other couples with children, she began to think, "'Oh well that's part of what makes marriages good too. It's about time that we do that.' And we did." [5W–13]. The word "nice," then, like "shiny and fun enough," reflected both the papering over of early worries, and the superficiality of her understanding of the marriage during this early stage. The marriage was "nice," but not yet "good"—the latter a common shorthand for describing a beneficial marriage. Just as a "shiny, fun" marriage is counterposed to a "happy" one in the first passage, in the second a "nice" marriage is counterposed to a "good" one.

Not dissimilarly, a husband notes that his wife has never had to "come to the door in cellophane," an infamous recommendation from Marabel Morgan's book, *The Total Woman*;

routinely expressed in metaphor, while others of these concepts would not. Therefore, when I had exhaustively enumerated and classified all the metaphors for marriage, I felt confident that I had discovered the major pieces of the puzzle I was putting together. Other scholars who have looked at my material and at other metaphors for marriage have never found cause to challenge this finding. These facts convince me, and I hope, also, will convince readers that I have identified all the important components of a cultural schema of marriage that Americans share. (This claim to the exhaustiveness of an analysis based on metaphor has its limits, however, as will emerge in a final section of this chapter.)

## Finding Metaphors in Discourse

I turn to some actual analysis. Here I try to show how one would actually go about identifying and classifying metaphors in discourse. I do so using examples that, so far as possible, I have not published elsewhere, or, in the case of those few that have been published, I have not analyzed for the same purpose before. These cases will also provide readers with an opportunity to try their own hands at identifying and classifying actual metaphors as these occur in actual discourse. A handicap under which my demonstration labors, however, is that the metaphors may not jump out at the reader, at first, in the way I have told that they came to be so salient to me. At the same time that metaphors have a certain perceptual saliency, this saliency must be primed; in the ordinary course of using and hearing them, they recede into the background, along with much of the rest of our linguistic apparatus, to allow us to proceed smoothly and expeditiously with the business of speech production and comprehension. See if you can identify the metaphors in the following passages and then, perhaps, begin to notice metaphors for marriage in other talk that you encounter.

In this next passage, a husband is explaining what has been good about his marriage:

> 6H–4: I think that we were so different, and we had such complementary differences that our weaknesses—that both our weaknesses were such that the other person could fill in. And that quickly became apparent to us, that if we wanted to not deride the other person for their weaknesses, we would instead get their strengths in return. And that's what I think has been the asset—these are the assets that have been very good for us. And I suppose what that means is that we have both looked into the other person and found their best parts and used those parts to make the relationship gel, and make the relationship complete.

nor has his wife resorted to any such books that were popular in the seventies, and that tell you, according to this man, "Here's what to do to spice up your marriage." He goes on to say that "[W]e don't need that either. You know, that's for "a marriage that's troubled" [6H–9]. So, once again, the anomalous-seeming idea of "spicing up" is revealed to be this man's metaphor for what a marriage should *not* need—and an indication of marital difficulty.

Three classes of metaphor are represented in this brief excerpt. The first, and the one that can be said to be the passage's major theme, is a metaphor of *compatibility*. As interviewees talk about it, compatibility has a fairly complex folk social psychology with several aspects: primarily, the ability of each spouse to meet the needs of the other so that both will be fulfilled and hence benefited; but also, the capacity of each to change in order to do so; and sometimes, too, the willingness of each to overlook the incapacity of the other to meet certain needs and to stress, instead, those needs that do get met and the degree to which the relationship is fulfilling in balance. Interviewees may also stress the ways in which they and their spouses are compatible in the sense of being alike in crucial respects, so that they need and want the same things and hence work toward the same goals. Or, as in this case, they may stress the ways in which the two of them are complementary in crucial respects, so that they can compensate for each other's shortcomings and together fashion a viable relationship. This last sense of compatibility is captured in the initial metaphor of the passage, the idea that the other person "could fill in." It is iterated in a different metaphor of finding and using the "parts" of each of them to make a relationship that both "gels" and is "complete." The first of these metaphors conjures up for me the two chemical components in something like epoxy glue, that together make the glue harden. The second metaphor puts me in mind of the cannibalization of two old, broken machines to put together a working one. The complementarity of both the chemical components and the machine parts stand for the couple's compatibility.

The second metaphor class represented in the excerpt is *mutual benefit*. Mutual benefit is introduced, first, in the hint of an exchange metaphor: each person filling in for the other person's weaknesses would "get their strengths in return," where the two spouses' compensating strengths are the benefit that is being exchanged. These returns are then characterized in a further metaphor of mutual benefit, as "the assets that have been very good for us." The final metaphor class in the passage, *lastingness*, is represented by the comment about "their best parts" making "the relationship gel." Metaphors are capable of multiple entailments, and are not infrequently chosen precisely because these entailments allow the speaker to capture several aspects of a cultural schema at once (Quinn 1997a). Such metaphors may bear assignment to two or more metaphor classes. The metaphor of best parts that gel is an example: It can be said to capture benefit and lastingness as well as, we have already seen, compatibility. Benefit is expressed in the idea that these are the "best parts" of each spouse, and hence useful ones. That the resulting chemical compound is a "gel" allows the metaphor to be stretched to make the point that a compatible, beneficial marriage will last.

Of course, I had to find and sort many more metaphors than the few that appear in this passage. At the same time, I was able to cross-check my analysis against all these cases of metaphor. A further necessary limitation

of my demonstration here (besides the possibility that readers will not be as keyed as I am to notice the metaphors embedded in discourse) is that I cannot replicate, and readers cannot undertake, the full process by which I derived my analysis and was able to verify it. I go as far as I can in describing and illustrating this process.

How does one go about identifying the classes into which a set of such metaphors falls, and assigning these metaphors to their appropriate classes? I first identified all the metaphors I could locate in the transcripts from the first eight hours of interviews. I typed (using an old-fashioned typewriter; this was the early eighties) the excerpts onto three-by-five index cards (which I still have occasion to consult). The typing chore itself unexpectedly became a part of the analytic process because it overfamiliarized me with the material—to a point at which I could recall like metaphors and even recite whole interview lines. (Because I often returned to the original tape to verify particular words or phrases, for a long time afterward interviewees' voices ran around in my head.) Then I did a great deal of examining, shuffling, thinking, and reshuffling of these cards. The analysis ultimately "fell out." Of course, once I had noticed one or two metaphor classes, I was alerted to others. The truth is that, at first, I missed one of these metaphor classes altogether—compatibility—because there were relatively fewer instances of metaphors for compatibility than for some other metaphor classes[18] and because, like the case of the spouses who used their "best parts" to make a marriage that "gelled" and was "complete"—a metaphor that stands simultaneously for compatibility, benefit, and lastingness—a substantial proportion of these metaphors for compatibility had other meanings, had already been assigned to other classes, and did not call out, in any obvious way, for further analysis. Readers with long memories will recall that compatibility was altogether missing from the earliest publication (Quinn 1987) in which I analyzed the metaphors for marriage.[19]

[18] The roughly 400 metaphors I analyzed fell unequally into the 8 classes—ranging from 70 to 80 for *lastingness*, and a nearly equal number for *mutual benefit*, to 15 or 20 for *compatibility* and a slightly smaller number for *risk*. The undoubted reason for this variation in frequency is that, as we see in the next section, marital lastingness is the central conclusion to which speakers reason when they consider marital problems or dilemmas, and benefit an immediate cause of lastingness, while compatibility and risk are more distant causes in this chain of reasoning. When people want to explain why a marriage didn't last, for example, they have only to assert that it wasn't beneficial, for us to infer that the couple was not compatible; or that it faced difficulties and so it failed, for us to imagine that these difficulties posed a risk of failure while the marriage was still ongoing. These more remote links in the causal chain only receive mention when a speaker is concerned to convey in particular detail why some marriage may have succeeded and lasted, or not.

[19] In the 1987 analysis, as well, the class of metaphors for marital "sharedness" was labeled, instead, "marriage is joint." And the missing class of metaphors for compatibility was replaced by a class labeled "marriage is unknown at the outset." I have more to say, at the end of this section, about the decision to exclude metaphors for marriage as unknown at the outset.

## Metaphors of Marital Benefit

I think I can give readers at least a better sense of this process of identification and classification, finally, by describing the full range of metaphors I found for one analytic class. I demonstrate with metaphors of marital benefit. Analysis of this class shows how cultural exemplars of a given concept become favorite sources of metaphors for it. It is interesting to see what source domains Americans draw upon for metaphors of benefit, lastingness, difficulty, and so forth—the domains that, in our minds, are exemplary of each of these aspects of experience. In the case of mutual benefit, the favored cultural exemplar appears to be valued resources. Note, however, that identification of culturally exemplary *source* domains is not the primary point of the present analysis. Its point is to use these metaphors to identify all the classes of metaphors that speakers use to describe the *target* domain of marriage.

Some of interviewees' metaphors for valued resources—like the ones about the "assets" of marriage and what spouses "get in return" in the passage quoted earlier, and the one about both spouses having "as much at stake in the relationship" introduced at the beginning of this section—have an economistic flavor to them. These metaphors, and the ones below, suggest that economic exchange is a prime exemplar, for Americans, of mutual benefit. Thus one man said of his wife, "She's a great asset to me in my life, in dealing with my problems" (3H–2). Said a woman, "I'm scared it's going to cost me too much and leave me without being able to stay in the relationship" [4W–12]. Similarly, other interviewees said such things as, "You don't feel that you're being short-changed in this relationship" (7H–5); or spoke of "how much you have to give of yourself and feel like you're giving up and trading off" (5W–1). Another interviewee thought that it might be time to divorce "when the effort is more than the reward" [7W–6]. Similarly, a man reported that his wife "talks about marriage as some sort of reward" for prior time she spent in a religious order, serving humanity; her husband went on to say that this woman thought that "God was repaying her by giving her a good marriage" [9H–1]. Some of these metaphors, of being "short-changed," and "trading off," and "repaying," make especially plain the economic calculus being invoked.

But valued resources more generally, not just those with a market value, serve American speakers as cultural exemplars of benefit, and hence a source of metaphors for the benefits of marriage. This is illustrated by such comments as, "We have a very good thing together" [3W–14]; or "[*Marriage*] is something that I really hold as a treasure" [11W–16]. Others alluded in abstract terms to marriage and "what we hope to get from it and give to it" [7W–1]; or to "what we did or didn't want in our marriages" [5W–13]; or made observations such as, "There was no alternative, we were just married and you had made your choice and that was it. So you had to make the best of what you had" [6W–4]—resources that, while perhaps not optimal, can be converted into a successful marriage. Like the man who referred to his wife as an "asset," interviewees sometimes also spoke

of spouses themselves as valued resources: "He's become everything that I've always wanted" [7W–2]; or "I would tend to get very morose and gloomy and, you know, it's just a really great find to find somebody that could pull me out of that" [4H–6]. By extension of this metaphor, these valued resources were useful, productive, and irreplaceable: in the words of the husband quoted earlier, "[W]e have both looked into the other person and found their best parts and used those parts to make the relationship gel"; or, as other interviewees said, "Why in the world would you want to stop and not get the use out of all the years you've already spent together" [4W–3]; "What rate of positive experience do you have to have before a marriage stops being a productive one?" [7H–2]; "I couldn't find a replacement. I couldn't find another woman to replace Beth" (3H–2).

Interviewees also talked of marriages as resources of special value to particular people: as "a nice place to hide, if you wanted to hide" (9W–3) from a stressful work world as the speaker felt some women did. Spouses, in a parallel way, could be considered strategic resources. One woman reported that she thought of her husband as "an oasis" (2W–3) where, if one had been hurt by relationships as had this speaker, one could feel unthreatened, comfortable, and safe. A man observed that, after she finished college, his wife was "just sort of floating," and "looking for something stable"; he described how "I sort of provided a touchstone for her in terms of having something that she can rely on" who was stable and predictable (7H–7). Another told of how "I was predisposed to be out there like a kite floating over the earth, you know, the string has been cut or something like that" and how he "would have floated away . . . had not Nan—Nan was the string that held on to me" (4H–11). It can be noted that these metaphors of husbands who are their wives' oasis and touchstone, and the wife who is her husband's metaphorical kite string, are susceptible to an additional interpretation. These spouses are all highly compatible with their spouses' particular needs.

Once one has identified a domain that predominates as a source of given metaphors, in the way the domain of valued resources predominates as a source of metaphors for marital benefit, it becomes easier to notice and classify further metaphors that draw on this same source. However, valued resources and their use, production, and exchange are not the only choices open to Americans who wish to speak metaphorically about the benefits of marriage. That this is so is revealed by two cases of another metaphor that I found, of marital benefits as desired destinations. Thus, speaking of marriage, one husband observed, "And it can, you know, be upwards or downwards, I guess, or you know, you can go to some place that you'd like to be at or you can not" (4H–2). And a wife remarked, "It could have gone in so many different directions and that it didn't is incredible. But I think both of us take a whole lot of credit for the direction it went in, that we worked at this really hard" (5W–1).[20] However, these

[20] Note that the "oasis" categorized above as a valued resource might arguably be reconceptualized as a desired destination. But what distinguishes the last two cases from that of the "oasis" is that both of the latter emphasize that benefit is an outcome of travel or some kind

latter metaphors assume minor status beside those of valued resources that constitute the vast bulk of metaphors for marital benefits. This pattern of usage makes sense given the great emphasis put on commodities and other things, and on the value of things, in our society. One can imagine other cultural worlds in which desired destinations or some other kind of beneficial outcome—perhaps even the benefits of marriage itself and other social relationships—would play a much larger role in metaphors for benefit.

## Indeterminacies of Metaphor Analysis

We have already encountered one complication of metaphor analysis: the fact that some metaphors, like that of the marriage made up of the best parts of each spouse, may belong in more than one metaphor class. In such cases an analyst must be alert not to overlook additional metaphorical meanings, as I initially overlooked metaphors of compatibility. Other common pitfalls of metaphor analysis bear noting.[21] In particular, (1) some metaphors are used by speakers as metaphors of something other than the target domain under analysis—a fine distinction that may not always be easy to make; (2) some usages of metaphor are so sketchy and abbreviated that the metaphorical meaning the speaker intended is left uncertain; and (3) some metaphors are either so entirely conventional, or such in-built elements of the syntax of the language,[22] that they are likely not being deliberately selected and intended metaphorically at all. I take these up in turn.

1. Does the metaphor belong in the analysis? Consider the case of metaphors such as that contained in the comment, "People really do go into marriage with their eyes closed," [4W–1] from a passage I analyzed in 1987. In that analysis, I classified this as an example of "marriage is unknown at the outset," a class which I dropped from subsequent descriptions of the cultural schema for marriage (see fn. 19). I did so because I decided that such metaphors were not actually metaphors for marriage itself; rather, they described the way in which people characteristically *entered* marriage. People go into marriage unknowingly—"with their eyes closed," or, as another interviewee said about his own marriage, "We didn't really have any idea what we were getting into" [6H–4]; and this is tied to the understanding that they go into marriage precipitously—"And Sue really did jump right

of directional movement. As a result, both are amenable to the implication, which both speakers seem to want to highlight, that benefit requires effort ("hard work") to overcome difficulty ("upwards or downwards"). We have already seen that a given metaphor may have multiple entailments. Speakers may choose to highlight or ignore a given entailment, depending upon their purpose of the moment.

[21] I owe this subsection to the insistence of Steven Bialostok (personal communication) that I address these "nuts-and-bolts" problems of analysis.

[22] See Quinn 1999 for a discussion of the latter cases.

out of one and into the other. She really didn't have much of—any time. Maybe six months. Or maybe a year in between the breakup of her first marriage and marrying Greg" [5W–9]; or, "I don't think either one of us ever consciously thought about marriage. I mean we never talked about it . . . It was just something that we both kind of fell into together" [7W–1]. It is true that spouses' characteristic lack of preparation for marriage has a role to play in our expectations about how marriage will go—it is a large factor in the inevitability of marital incompatibility and hence difficulty.[23] Thus, when we ask Americans why married couples turn out to be incompatible, we are likely to hear, chief among reasons, that they didn't know each other well enough when they got married. In effect, I chose to regard this understanding about how people marry as a discrete schema that was *linked to* the schema for marriage. But schemas are only ever relatively discrete complexes of understandings; they are always linked to other such complexes. Therefore the question of whether to have included "people really do go into marriage with their eyes closed" and other metaphors of its class as part of my analysis of the schema for marriage was ultimately a matter, not of principle, but of pragmatism—of diminishing analytic returns. Its inclusion would have added detail and complexity to the analysis but not altered it; its exclusion did not invalidate it. Moreover, the decision to exclude it is not irreversible. All analysts of cultural schemas will face such decisions; but they should not anguish unduly over them.

2. Is the meaning the analyst assigns to a metaphor the actual meaning intended by the speaker? Consider a subset of the metaphors I listed as examples of marital benefit: "what we hope to get from it and give to it"; "what we did or didn't want in our marriages"; and "we were just married and you had made your choice and that was it. So you had to make the best of what you had." Do speakers really intend these as metaphors of resources deployed in making a marriage beneficial, as I have labeled them? It is hard to know for sure, because the speakers are vague about what these benefits are. The only clue we have to go on is the verbal constructions in these sentences: These verbs are used, typically, to talk about resources of value to those who get, give, want, have, and make the best of them. Whether to count these relatively underdeveloped metaphors (and many other examples could be given) as standing for marital benefit is, once again, an analyst's judgment call. Some may decide that the case of "what we want in" marriage is less explicit, and hence less clearly metaphorical, than that of "what we get from and give to it"; what we "want," after all, is so general, applicable to far more than what we value. Others may accept the "want" example but draw

[23] Thus, interviewees can say about their experience as newlyweds, "I think also it raised for me kind of the whole idea that I really didn't know who she was very much" [5H–4]; or, "[W]e were relying on the kind of looking at each other and saying, 'Well,' you know, 'Who are you?' " [6H–2]. The precipitousness with which Americans fall in love and marry, and hence their lack of preparation for marriage, is only one source of marital incompatibility and difficulty. People can marry for the wrong reasons, for example, or they can change in such a way as to grow apart after they marry.

the line at "make the best of what you had" that seems to stress, not the value, but the limitation, of marital resources. I am comfortable in including all three instances because they fit the larger pattern established by many other, more obvious metaphors for marital benefit. Obviously, I would not determine this pattern from these cases alone.

3. Do speakers intend given statements metaphorically at all? There are many cases of metaphors that speakers use out of linguistic habit or convenience rather than select intentionally, to make a deliberate point. Some of these are usages of syntactic forms that may have originated in metaphor, but have become incorporated into syntax so that we no longer even recognize their metaphorical meanings. An example comes from the assertion examined earlier, "I'm a firm believer in divorce if things are not going well." We understand "things not going well" as a reference to unresolved marital difficulties. Are we to treat this as a metaphor casting these interpersonal difficulties as a hardship-beset passage over some physical course? The speaker may not intend any such thing; she may just be drawing upon a construction with the verb *go*—we can also speak, for example, of something going fast or slowly; smoothly or not; as expected or not; and so forth—available for talking about the progress of an undertaking. (Or, if asked, she might report that she was indeed thinking of the hardships of a physical journey, in which case this instance would be better understood, not as unintended as a metaphor, but as an underdeveloped metaphor like those considered under 2, above. I am guessing that this one was unintended; but we cannot know for sure.) This case, of things not going well, contrasts with others in which speakers clearly do intend a metaphorical meaning, as does the interviewee quoted earlier as saying "[O]ver the years we've bit by bit negotiated our way through the rough spots"; or another, reflecting on his difficult marriage, who remarked, "[H]owever long and stony a road it was we had agreed to set out on it" [4H–7]; or another, considering what he would do if his wife was persistently unfaithful: "I'd just say, 'Let me off. Stop the boat I get out here. Carry on with your love-life elsewhere' " [1H–13].

Also unintended are usages of what are called conventional metaphors, metaphors that have been so overused as to have lost their original meaningfulness. A good example of a conventional metaphor from the domain of marriage is the term "couple." We might imagine speakers using this term to make the point that a marriage is shared: The two spouses are "coupled" together (like two railroad cars, if you will). Indeed, one interviewee, talking about how her parents handled the fact that she and her husband-to-be were living together before getting married, makes plain that this is just the meaning she intends to convey:

> 7W-1: And they were wonderful . . . My maiden name is Dalton and with Dusseldorf, my mother just decided she really had to get something better than this Dusseldorf so she named us the Daltondorfs. And John and I were the Daltondorfs and it stuck, a lot of our friends still refer to us as the Daltondorfs. So they really did consider us a couple.

Equally, another interviewee uses the term to emphasize that some friends of theirs were socially recognized as being together even before they were married:

> 6H–2: And I knew them as a couple, even then. You know I always saw them as a couple, even though they really—they weren't in the same relationship that the other couples that we knew, but they ended up that way. What's amazing is how that couple formed the same sort of marriage that the other married couples that we knew already had.

These, of course, are metaphors of sharedness—shared identity in the eyes of others. But most usages of "couple" are not like this. As in "the other married couples that we knew," above, or "I can think of one couple in particular . . ." [8H–7], "couple" has come simply to stand for two people married to each other, without any metaphorical meaning attached to it. Or, as in the next two comments, there is the slightest whiff of intended meaning, a possibility that the speakers, perhaps even unconsciously, chose the term "couple" rather than, say, "marriages" (in the first instance) or "being married" (in the second) because the contexts were ones of "de-coupling":

> 6H–4: Should these couples that break up, as a result of having these things [*marital therapy and encounter groups that focus on the individual*], should they have been married at all?

> 3W–4: The only thing I can think where that [*divorce*] would happen would be where our values and priorities got so far apart that we wouldn't be able to continue as a couple.

I would treat the Dusseldorf example and that of the "couple" who later formed a marriage, as metaphors—though they are not metaphors of marital sharedness; in both cases the point being made is about a shared social identity attained before marriage. However, I do not regard the rest of these examples as intentional metaphors. I excluded all these instances from my analysis. It is important to realize that metaphors that cannot be interpreted, because it is impossible to know for certain what the speaker meant by them within the contextual information given (indeterminacy 2), or even if the speaker intended them metaphorically at all (3), do not constitute analytic exceptions, anomalies, or disproofs. They are simply not very analytically useful. Fortunately, there are plenty of other metaphors to be found that have obvious and unambiguous interpretations.

## Doing the Analysis: Reasoning

As I have indicated, in addition to metaphors for benefit, I uncovered metaphors for lastingness, sharedness, compatibility, difficulty, effort, success, and risk. I mulled over this set of metaphor classes for quite a while before finally making any larger sense of it. As happens many times when one is struggling with one's findings, there was a critical moment.

In August 1982 at the annual conference of the Cognitive Science Society, I sat in my hotel room with George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, showing them the analysis of metaphors for marriage that I had completed so far. It was the manuscript of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) book, *Metaphors We Live By*, that had first led me to the metaphors in my own material. Lakoff and I, especially, after meeting at an earlier conference where he had introduced me to his and Johnson's manuscript (and I learned from him that we were long-lost distant cousins), had embarked upon a long, intermittent discussion of metaphor. Their theory, first developed in that book, was that metaphor was fundamental to thought—that metaphors constituted our understanding and entailed the conclusions to which we reasoned.[24] Lakoff and Johnson were convinced that they could show how lastingness, benefit, and the other categories I had discovered all derived from a single, central metaphor which would prove basic to Americans' understanding of marriage. They tried and they tried, but they couldn't come up with a satisfactory metaphorical analysis. I remember napping (I was jet-lagged) and waking up and finding them still at it. As they wrestled with my material, I became more and more convinced that something other than a central metaphor, something that I remember describing to Lakoff and Johnson as a "cultural story," and that I would now call a cultural schema, underlay and organized the metaphor classes I had found. I also came to believe that my metaphors for marriage posed the challenge they did for Lakoff and Johnson's theory because my data was much more systematic than that which they had typically employed in their analyses. In culling all the metaphors used to describe one domain of experience, from an extensive corpus of discourse on that domain, I had unwittingly invented a new, more rigorous method for collecting metaphors.[25]

## What Reasoning Reveals

The story behind these metaphors that I had in mind was a product of intuitions I had, as an American myself, about American marriage. Roughly, I knew, people regarded their marriages as successful if they lasted. In order to last, though, a marriage had to be beneficial, and in order for it to

[24] See Quinn (1991, 1997a) for a critique of this position.

[25] As illustrated in the previous section with the case of metaphors of marital benefits as valued resources, metaphor classes may vary widely in the frequency with which they are drawn upon in ordinary speech. The frequency of their use might depend on, for example, their cultural currency and hence popularity, or the degree to which they may have become conventionalized in language. Without systematic culling of metaphors from actual discourse, it is easy for analysts to miss metaphors that are used with less regularity, and hence to mistake the most frequently used metaphors or frequently drawn-upon metaphor classes for "basic" ones. It is a short next step from this mistake to the position taken by Lakoff, Johnson, and their colleagues, erroneous in my view, that these so-called basic metaphors underlie and constitute the concepts for which they stand. I suspect that such a lack of systematic analysis of metaphors, as these occur in discourse, to have been at the root of this theoretical confusion. See Quinn (1997a:152–153).

be beneficial, its difficulties had to be overcome, requiring effort. How could I verify this story? What kind of evidence would convince others that it existed in Americans' minds, and convince scholars like George Lakoff that it did so independently of the metaphors they used to talk about marriage? It occurred to me at some point to cull out and examine instances of reasoning that interviewees did about marriage, to see if this reasoning conformed to, and supported, my intuitions about what led to what in the cultural story of marriage. Lo and behold, interviewees spelled out exactly the sequence of events I had surmised, not only confirming my "story" but filling in additional pieces of it.

I thought to look for evidence of this story-like cultural schema after I first formulated an idea of it, and I formulated the idea of such a cultural schema for marriage through my prior analysis of metaphors. Conceivably, I could have, or another analyst might have, begun with an examination of reasoning. I believe we would have ultimately arrived at the same analysis. Indeed, analysts working in other languages and cultures than their own who cannot rely so dependably as I did on their own intuitions to kick-start their analyses, may wish to go directly to the reasoning in discourse.[26] In this instance, I had my intuitions to fall back upon and I used them. The methodological lesson is not that a culture member's intuitions are indispensable for analysis of cultural schemas; they are not. The lesson is that every researcher follows her or his own nose, drawing upon any and all sources of inspiration encountered along the way.

On reflection, it is not surprising that their reasoning exposed these reasoners' cultural schema for marriage, because it is this schema that structures this reasoning. Only much later (Quinn 1996), did I come to see that what I had been thinking of as a somewhat disembodied cultural model *of* marriage was better understood as a model *for*—a schema designed for reasoning about marriage, and that had evolved and spread just because it served this purpose well. What this insight suggests is that reasoning about all kinds of widespread, recurrent dilemmas is likely to be similarly *culture-laden*, because organized around such shared structures for performing this everyday cognitive task.[27] Therefore, in the same way that metaphors are windows into shared knowledge of cultural exemplars, reasoning is an especially good analytic window into the shared structure or cultural schema being used to do it. This is a methodological observation

[26] As Edwin Hutchins (1980) did in his elegant analysis of reasoning in Trobriand land disputes. Hutchins focused on reasoning about a circumscribed set of causal relations that arose in the formal arena of land litigation, and he cast his analysis of this reasoning in a language of propositional logic that I think he might disavow today on theoretical grounds; while this logic is a good device for describing the cultural event sequence people reason from, it is a less adequate rendition of the way in which people actually reason (see Quinn 1996, 1997a). This said, Hutchins' book, which I reviewed (Quinn 1982), was a great influence on my thinking at the time of its publication, and I am sure it was a factor, along with the work to be described by Charlotte Linde (1993) on explanation, in directing my attention to the reasoning in the discourse I had collected.

[27] See Quinn (1996, 1997a).

that should hold for reasoning about, as for metaphors used to talk about, a wide variety of research topics.[28]

In the event sequence reconstructed from interviewees' reasoning on the topic, it emerged that *lastingness*, *sharedness*, and *benefit* played the role of prior expectations about marriage. These expectations were not unrelated. A marriage had to be shared in order to be beneficial, given the psychological fulfillment that spouses were expected to afford each other as the chief benefit of marriage—of which we have seen some examples in the hiding place, oasis, shrink, touchstone, and kite string metaphors. And, as I have said, it had to be beneficial in order to last—because twentieth century Americans regard marriage as a contractual relationship, and individuals will not remain in a marriage, as they would not remain in any contractual relationship, that does not benefit them. Lastingness and benefit then, were in potential conflict: A marriage should last, but if it is not beneficial, interviewees reasoned, it should not last. It is this conflict that sets the rest of the cultural story about marriage in motion. In their reasoning, interviewees resolved the potential contradiction between lastingness and benefit in a thoroughly American way: They tried to achieve a beneficial marriage and hence one that would last by overcoming the difficulties that stood in the way of benefit, and they did so by exerting effort. The risk, of course, was risk that despite their best efforts, difficulties would not be overcome, benefits not attained, and the marriage would fail to last. Compatibility came into the story because it was compatibility that insured benefit, incompatibility that posed the difficulties standing in the way of benefit, and the attainment of compatibility—through learning about the spouse's needs, learning how to fulfill them, sacrificing to do so, adapting to changes in their needs, and the like—that required such effort in marriage. In particular, because of the way Americans marry—for love—they almost always (as the wife I quote in Quinn 1987 so eloquently explains) "go into marriage with their eyes closed," without considering how well-equipped each spouse might be to meet the other's needs. So compatibility is not a given; a certain amount of incompatibility and hence difficulty is inevitable.[29] While the account assembled here may seem commonsensical to American readers, its elements and especially the way they are configured are not fully shared by other peoples in other places,

[28] At this point a theoretical caution may be in order. As popular, in recent years, as the idea that metaphor is somehow fundamental to human thought, has been the proposal that narrative (or, at least, "a readiness or predisposition to organize experience into a narrative form," Bruner 1990:45) is. To that claim, whatever its ultimate merit proves to be, my findings here cannot speak. The importance of reasoning in human affairs, and the consequent frequency of cultural schemas in the form of event sequences for reasoning with, like the one I next describe, should not be read as support for an argument that these culturally shared event sequences are somehow fundamental to human thought or privileged by neural wiring. There are many other cognitive tasks that humans perform besides reasoning, and other kinds of cultural schemas designed for the performance of these tasks.

[29] See Quinn (1996) for a discussion of how the cultural schema for marriage allows reasoners to use a simplified causality.

although of course this account is bound to overlap substantially with a parallel account of western European marriage. The product of a particular American history, this schema for marriage is distinctively American.

## Analyzing Reasoning in Discourse

The sequence of events I have outlined was embedded in speakers' reasoning about marriage, but reconstructing it from this discourse was far from straightforward. I had first to locate and identify instances of reasoning about marriage. (This task was accomplished by simply scanning and marking the original transcripts, rather than copying the rather lengthy passages of reasoning onto cards.) Reasoning about marriage occurred fairly frequently in my interviews—certainly not as pervasively as metaphors for marriage, but still five or ten times in an average interview. Just as some interviewees were more imaginative metaphor-makers, some were more interested in explaining. Nevertheless, all used metaphors prolifically, and all provided multiple instances of reasoning. But this reasoning was not always easy to find. It stuck out most plainly when it was lengthy and well-formed.

Well-formed reasoning is what Linde (1993:90–94) calls "the discourse unit of explanation"; it begins with a statement of the proposition to be proven, follows with a sequence of statements as to why the proposition should be believed, and ends with a coda reasserting the original proposition. Such was the form of two longish piece of explanation that I have published elsewhere (Quinn 1987 and Quinn 1996, 1997a). Here let me supply a fresh example, of a wife explaining why she doesn't foresee her marriage ending:

> 7W–6: I don't know whether just at some point little things would mount up over the years to the point where one of us couldn't take it anymore but I can't imagine what. And I lose my patience with Tim a lot because he is constantly blaming me for starting arguments and maybe I am. Maybe it's because I am a little bit bored with being around the house sometimes until I find that job. And there are times that he's tired and I'm tired and he comes home from work and expects not to have to be hassled with things at home. And I have something on my mind and he just doesn't want to hear it and I get fed up with that. And I do get tired of always being blamed, having the burden of all our arguments past, present and future on my shoulders but at the same time I don't think something like that would ever be enough to make me pack my bag and go. Although this weekend—I thought in the past about packing my bag, not to leave forever, just to go away for a weekend and he was really—at first he thought I meant that I had thought about leaving him. Just for a weekend. Just to do something for a weekend but I can't think of something that would make me want to leave now or in the future.

The structure of this explanation is relatively simple. The proposition, put forward in the first sentence, is that there is not enough lack of benefit

("little things" wrong) in the marriage for this wife to imagine either she or her husband ever leaving it (i.e., things that would "mount up" to "the point where one of us couldn't take it anymore"). Having characterized these lacks as "little things" that would have to "mount up over the years" to some "point," the interviewee then sets out to demonstrate, by listing these things and considering them individually and collectively, that they do not, in fact, amount to a reason for leaving. She next bolsters her argument with the observation that the problems she has listed have never motivated her to leave. She has wanted to leave—but only for a weekend away and not, as her husband mistakenly thought, forever. Finally, she iterates the original proposition: "But I can't think of something that would make me want to leave [*permanently*] now or in the future." Benefit (posed, in this case, as insufficient lack of benefit) makes a marriage last (or, in this case, keeps it from not lasting). Such well-formed explanations are especially likely in ordinary speech when the speaker stops to provide evidence for some assertion he or she has made. What then seems to motivate a speaker to repeat the original proposition at the end, is a sense that the listener may not have held onto the original point in the course of the longish presentation of evidence.

These well-formed explanations are relatively uncommon, however. Much more typically, interviewees provided shorter fragments of reasoning devoid of supporting evidence; they may have felt their point was too obvious to require such support, or this point might have been a passing one, which they did not wish to stop and defend, on the way to some larger conclusion. Some of this less fully developed reasoning is as short as a single sentence or two, some instances of which were seen in the previous section. Consider: (1) "To have that bond between us. I think he felt that once we had a child we wouldn't split as easily"; (2) "[I]f you're in a no-win situation, you've got to take the best door out"; or, (3) "I'm a firm believer in divorce if things are not going well" (made by the same wife who asserts, in the passage just cited, that the little things in her own marriage will never amount to cause for divorce). As in each of these cases—which can be summarized as (1) sharedness helps to prevent a marriage from not lasting; (2) lack of marital success justifies a marriage not lasting; and (3) difficulty leads to a marriage not lasting—such reasoning typically asserts a causal relation between just two terms of an argument. Sometimes, as we see in the passage to be considered next, relations among three or more terms are introduced in a single piece of reasoning.

Not only are the majority of cases of reasoning fragmentary and relatively undeveloped; when they grow longer than a sentence they are not always particularly orderly. Yet, they are commonly occurring and potentially valuable evidence for the cultural schema that governs them. How does one identify them? As with the case of metaphors, knowing what I was looking for helped me find it; once I had familiarized myself with the reasoning in well-formed examples, and the causal relations governing these, it was easier to recognize the same causal relations between the same

terms of argument in more fragmentary cases. The explicit language of causality in which the terms of arguments were often linked together also helped to signal a piece of reasoning. This language takes many forms, ranging from brief and fairly regular markers of causality such as *once X, not Y*; *if X, Y*; and *X if not Y* illustrated in the three sentences above, to fuller and more variable expressions of causality of the sort found in the longer passage above: *X to the point where Y*, or *I can't think of an X that would make me want to Y*. However, sometimes causality is not so well marked in English, and must be inferred from the order of sentences or clauses.[30] In identifying all these varied expressions of causality, I relied on an eye for them that I developed with practice.

Once a number of instances of reasoning about marriage had been found and collected, their structure had then to be deciphered beneath its metaphorical, causal, and other language. Since I had already done an analysis of metaphors for marriage, decoding these was fairly routine, but the language of causality was a new challenge. Cultural patterning had to be discerned underneath much other linguistic variation and the particularities of given marriages and marital situations. Because speakers leave many basic assumptions implicit, knowing that listeners share these assumptions and fill them in automatically, it was necessary to make this implicit assumptions explicit in the analysis.

I have illustrated the process of reconstruction from reasoning elsewhere (Quinn 1987); here I introduce some new examples in order to give readers some feel for how it is done. Let us begin with the now-familiar passage I earlier used to illustrate the identification of metaphors and their classes. The reasoning in this particular passage is not especially regular or explicit, making it a good illustration of the problems I encountered in my analysis. Can this sequence of reasoning be reconstructed?

> 6H–4: I think that we were so different, and we had such complementary differences that our weaknesses—that both our weaknesses were such that the other person could fill in. And that quickly became apparent to us, that if we wanted to not deride the other person for their weaknesses, we would instead get their strengths in return. And that's what I think has been the asset—these are the assets that have been very good for us. And I suppose what that means is that we have both looked into the other person and found their best parts and used those parts to make the relationship gel, and make the relationship complete.

As we saw when we first examined this passage, the first two sentences simply describe the nature of this couple's compatibility. Reasoning about the consequences of this compatibility for the marriage begins with the speaker's assertion about the assets in this marriage. In "that's what I think has been the asset" and "these are the assets that have been very good for us," *that* and *these* refer to the couple's compatibility—specifically in

[30] See Quinn (1987, 1991) for examples.

this case their ability to fill in with their strengths for each other's weaknesses—and this compatibility is equated with mutual marital benefit, in "that's what I think has been the asset—these are the assets." We grasp, although the speaker's equation of compatibility with benefits leaves this understanding implicit, that the equation between the two stands for a causal relation: Compatibility causes benefit. Other instances of reasoning by this and other interviewees make this causal relation plain.

The passage contains two other causal relations. The remainder of the argument is that the couple's compatibility—iterated here, we have already seen, as using the "parts" of each of them to "make the relationship complete"—has caused (here expressed as "used to make") the marriage to last (or "gel"). Moreover, spousal compatibility has been beneficial: These parts are not only complementary to each other, they are the spouses' "best parts"—a reference to their previously mentioned "strengths," the "assets" or benefits of the marriage. That these "best" parts of each stand for mutually beneficial attributes of the two spouses is also clear from the fact that they can be used to make the marriage last. The speaker leaves implicit the final causal link in his argument, that compatibility makes a marriage last *because* compatibility enables marital benefits and these benefits then lead to a lasting marriage. Instead, compatibility and benefit, equated earlier in the passage, are now compressed into the same metaphor of complementary, useful parts. A causal connection between compatibility and benefit is at least implied, however, in the phrase, "And I suppose what that means is . . ." that links the two halves of the passage. In the first half, the speaker has established that spousal compatibility causes mutual marital benefit. In the second half, that compatibility and mutual benefit cause a marriage to last. If, then, compatibility causing benefit *means* that compatibility and benefit cause a marriage to last, it must be because compatibility causes benefit that then causes a marriage to last.

## Overlapping Pieces of Reasoning

It is interesting that speakers are able to produce such relatively elliptical, dense, and convoluted reasoning, and listeners can follow it, so readily and rapidly. This must be because both are so well-acquainted with the schema that underlies this reasoning. While the analysis I have provided of this passage may be intuitively convincing to those who share this cultural schema and can fill in its missing parts, this analysis may also seem to rest on fairly fragile and partial evidence. That would be so if it were the only piece of reasoning available. Analysis of multiple pieces of reasoning achieved two things. First, this analysis established that the structure encountered was indeed shared. Second, analysis of multiple instances of reasoning was necessary in order to piece together the cultural schema in its entirety. This was so because, in a given piece of reasoning, reasoners like this last one typically focused on one link at a time, between two terms

in the larger story of how to achieve a successful or lasting marriage. The speaker in the passage just analyzed is focused on what made his wife and him compatible, and how this made their marriage lasting. In so focusing, speakers set aside or leave implicit other terms in the story—as the causal relationship between compatibility and benefit is left somewhat vague in the previous passage. Juxtaposing separate pieces of reasoning provided the overlap between terms that was necessary to reconstruct and verify the whole event sequence that comprised this schema.

1. Let me show first how different pieces of reasoning can be used to corroborate each other. Just as with metaphors for marriage, reasoning about it is highly regular; interviewees repeatedly followed the same causal chain to reach their conclusions. If they did not do so, we would have to conclude that there was no cultural schema for reasoning about the topic under investigation. In the case of marriage, there proved to be such a structure. For illustration, I provide, here, just one additional example each of the two causal links in the relation between spousal compatibility and marital lastingness that we examined in the case of the gelled marriage. The first causal relation is that between compatibility and benefit. Remember that, in the gelled marriage excerpt, it was necessary to infer that compatibility enabled benefit from the assertion that compatibility *was* benefit—"these," the strengths gained from filling in for each other, "were the assets that have been very good for us." In the next excerpt and others, however, this causal link between compatibility and benefit is spelled out. In this excerpt, a husband is reflecting on how things worked out in his marriage:

> 7H–1: I didn't have any long-range understanding of what was going to come, or—I just felt, as I guess we both did, that we'd live things as they came along and make adjustments and be prepared to adjust and change course if necessary and just somehow things would work out. And so far they have, and very satisfactorily.

In my initial outline of the schema that governs Americans' reasoning about marriage, I noted that marital compatibility—the fit of one spouse to the other and, in particular, of each spouse's needs to the other's capacities for fulfilling these—was not automatic. Here the aspect of compatibility that is stressed is the capacity of the two spouses to change in order to become compatible. This is expressed in the two metaphors of making adjustments and changing course, and benefit is expressed as things working out satisfactorily—with a hint, in the metaphor of "working out," of a middle term, difficulty caused by initial incompatibility being overcome and compatibility achieved, for the attainment of a beneficial outcome. Beneficial because satisfactory; here, note, that we fill in some basic folk psychological knowledge, namely, that people's satisfaction is a reliable sign that they feel they have benefited. Causality is expressed, as it often is

in English, by the order of linked clauses: adjust *and* things will work out satisfactorily (with the "just somehow" adding a pinch of blind luck to this formula for marital satisfaction). Spousal compatibility leads to marital benefit.

Next, consider the causal relation between spousal compatibility and marital lastingness. Elsewhere (Quinn 1991) I have published three passages containing reasoning that exemplified this particular link; once again, let me provide a fresh example here. A husband describes the basis for compatibility in his marriage:

> 10H–7: I explained to you how, at least I felt, that in effect we made a good team in regard to that. That we complement each other in handling things with the kids. And we don't have basic disagreement on any kind of principles that have to do with it. And I guess that, you know, that may be the key issue. I married someone that came from a similar background. And I think other things equal, we're more likely to have similar attitudes, criteria as to what's important, what's not so important, standards for this or that. And that's probably been a very important factor. That's probably what—one of the contributing things to make us feel that we had a strong bond between us.

Most of this passage is about the couple's compatibility, and, as the metaphor of teamwork reflects, here the aspect of compatibility that is being stressed is the shared attitudes, priorities, and standards that allow this couple to agree on common goals. There is also the hint of another aspect of compatibility, in the comment about "complement each other in handling things with the kids"; in this domain at least, the couple may have found themselves able to complement the weaknesses of each with the strengths of the other, in the way that the husband with the gelled marriage stressed that his wife and he were able to do. The argument linking compatibility with marital lastingness does not occur until the last sentence in the passage, where "That" is a reference back to the entire previous discussion of their compatibility, and causality is complexly rendered as *X is one of the things to make us feel that Y* (in which *X* stands for similar background and attitudes, and *Y* stands for having a strong bond).

"That," this man says, contributed to the "strong bond between us" that signifies a lasting marriage. One of the common metaphors for marital lastingness is that of such a bond, as in comments like, "We're much more tied to each other now than we were then" [6H–1]; or "That just kind of cements the bond" (3H–2); or "And even though you have a good friend, if something really happens, you're not bound to them like you are when you're married" [6W–8]; or "There's a certain Biblical rightness to bonding together and, you know, still through sickness and health for you and me too by the by, this sort of thing" [5H–9]. As all these examples illustrate, metaphors that picture marriage as a tie or bond between two people carry the further implication that it is shared as well as lasting. Two people bound or tied or bonded together share a common fate, and they share it

for the long run. This latter meaning, of lastingness, is reinforced by adjectives like "strong," adverbs like "much more," and verbs like "cements," as it is in the content of remarks like, "through sickness and health." In saying, "That's probably . . . one of the contributing things to make us feel that we had a strong bond between us," the husband quoted above is concluding that his and his wife's compatibility contributed to their marriage lasting.

2. Second, Let me show how reasoning by different speakers (or by the same speaker on different occasions) makes explicit different parts of the whole causal sequence, filling in pieces that are left implicit or ambiguous elsewhere. We do not have to guess that the husband who says, "And I suppose what this means is . . ." alludes to the under-specified causal link between mutual benefit and lastingness. We find this causal relation made perfectly explicit in a great deal else that this man and others say. For example, a wife makes it in the following interview excerpt (the first part of which was quoted in the previous section):

> 4W–7: But I feel pretty mutual about, we both have as much at stake in the relationship as the other person does. We both express to each other the same desire to keep things going.

Here causality is implicit in the order of the two sentences: *Because* they both benefit from the relationship, listeners understand, they both have (and express) the same desire that it last.

For just one more example of the same argument, the next wife has been trying to convince her husband that an affair she is having does not threaten their marriage:

> 3W–4: Like what I tried to explain to Dan was that one person can't be expected to fulfill everything because they're not exactly the same. You know, fulfill everything that one person needs. And that Ron fulfilled something for me that Dan couldn't, you know. And, it wasn't as much—like Dan fulfills so much for me that I would never want to leave him for Ron, you know. Because Ron just fulfills this one added little block that Dan doesn't. I'm not going to leave thirty for one, you know, that's just—I mean, you know—I mean, I can't put a number on what he fulfills for me, but you know, that kind of ratio.

Fulfillment is the benefit of marriage, and this speaker, believing that one's spouse can not necessarily fulfill every need one has, still argues that the vast proportion of her needs are fulfilled by her spouse, and that therefore she would never leave him. Causality is made clear by the construction, *so much X that not Y*. A beneficial marriage will last.

For icing, let me lastly provide an example which, although somewhat complex linguistically, makes explicit all the links between compatibility, benefit, and lastingness. Readers can test themselves by trying to trace this chain of reasoning before reading my analysis of it. In this passage, a husband is talking about the other significant relationship he had before that with

his wife, and explaining why he ended up marrying his wife instead. This passage was prefaced by the speaker's telling how he had been looking for someone who shared his life philosophy and had the same value system, with whom he could really be friends and have a good time. Of his wife, he says,

> 3H–2: She fit the general mold I had conceived in my head.
> I: Was that a surprise, I mean did you keep being surprised that . . .
> H: No. No I more or less—I kind of knew where she was coming from, from early on. I was, you know—I wouldn't have made a commitment to a woman who didn't fit that kind of general image. The other heavy relationship I had with a woman before Beth Ann, that woman didn't fit the mold. She fit some of it, but it was—it was as much a physical attraction as anything else. Though we did—said we loved each other and we felt love. The love with Beth, I feel, is a lot more—it's a lot deeper and a lot—'cause we think alike. This other woman Karla and I didn't always agree, you know, about a lot of things.
> I: Mm hmm. And that's why it ended?
> H: But we both claimed we loved each other and it ended for all kinds of reasons but it ended, and that was probably for the best. 'Cause I don't think—I don't—I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have been as happy with her as I am with Beth. The type of thing—that whole relationship probably would have ended in divorce, chances are, in a few years.

This excerpt is woven together by a single metaphor, which is introduced in the sentence, "She [*his wife*] fit the general mold I had conceived in my head," then rephrased as "fit that general kind of image," and, finally, repeated in "That woman [*his former girlfriend*] didn't fit the mold." In one sense these comments allude to the image the speaker had in his head, of the kind of woman he wanted to marry, an image that one woman fit—in the sense of matched—while the other woman didn't. As the passage goes on, however, the speaker develops the metaphor in another direction that is well-served by the shift he makes from "fit the image" back to "fit the mold." In this second sense, we understand, the speaker and his first girlfriend would have been incompatible—she would not have met his need[31] for someone who shared the same values, the two of them thinking alike and agreeing about things.

Reasoning about this incompatibility is contained in the passage's last two sentences. Even had not this prior relationship ended when it did, and had this man married his first girlfriend, they would not have been happy.

[31] This man surely understands, as do other interviewees, that *both* spouses must meet *each others'* needs in a marriage. However, because he is focused here on his own side of this reciprocal relationship, and on the moment when he was preoccupied with whether he had found someone who had met *his* needs, the "mold" metaphor serves him well. Speakers intent on emphasizing the reciprocal nature of spousal compatibility are inclined to use different metaphors, such as that of two spouses "meshing" or being "fitting parts" of some larger whole. They also indicate that they appreciate the mutuality of need fulfillment and marital benefit by their use of the plural "we," by metaphors of resource exchange, and by phrases such as, "and vice versa" or "and I for her."

Happiness—like satisfaction, in an earlier passage in which things worked out "very satisfactorily" for another couple—is an emotion people feel when they are fulfilled and their marriages are beneficial. Hence, we understand, the lesser happiness this man speculates he would have felt in a marriage with his former girlfriend, in comparison with his happiness with the woman he did marry, stands for the lesser benefits of the hypothetical marriage compared to the actual one. Because the girlfriend and he were less compatible, their marriage would have been less beneficial. And, he goes on to say, because less beneficial, it would not have lasted but "probably would have ended in divorce." We understand the causal links this speaker is making between a potential spouse not fitting the mold and marital unhappiness, and between this unhappiness and divorce, because we are able to infer this causality, once again, from the order in which he presents these outcomes.

## Doing the Analysis: A Key Word

What followed after I had succeeded in reconstructing the shared schema for reasoning about marriage, was another lengthy hesitation in my analytic progress. Indeed, for a long time, I thought my analysis was finished—that I had delineated the American model of marriage in its entirety. I took to heart what one of my own interviewees (the same one who provided us with the piece of reasoning about making marriage "gel," in the passage we analyzed earlier) reported having told a Navy shipmate who was thinking of getting married. From his perspective as a married man, my interviewee warned the other,

> 6H–4: I hope you think about it real hard because I think you might find marriage to be a little bit surprising than what it is. Because it was for me. Shocking sometimes, you know, that it wasn't all love and sex and that's it. Yeah, that there was some work to be done.

That was the lesson that had emerged, so far, from my analysis too. But if it wasn't all love (and sex), any American, knowing firsthand how much we all make of the connection between love and marriage, might well have asked, Where *was* love, and why didn't it appear at all in my analysis of marriage? That is exactly what fellow anthropologist Michael Moffatt asked me, sometime during the year we got to know each other, the 1982–1983 academic year that I was at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, not far from Rutgers where he is on the faculty. I had no immediate response to Moffatt's question, but it provoked me to wonder.

In another way, it made sense to examine usages of the word "love" in my corpus. We might expect that key words such as this one—words that name culturally distinctive concepts or schemas and that arise frequently

in talk about a given domain—will prove to be culture-laden, just as are metaphors and reasoning. Why key words should carry a heavy load of cultural information is obvious. As anthropologists working in other societies and languages than their own have long appreciated, key words arise to permit speakers easy reference to the salient cultural concepts that they mark. Based on anthropologists' experience—even apart from the intuitions of a culture member like Moffatt—the word "love" could be predicted to be an excellent guide to what was salient to Americans about marriage and, hence, what should matter in my analysis of it. Eventually, I did take a systematic look at interviewees' usages of the word "love." I discovered a cultural schema for love, and it was one that did have important and interesting implications for marriage.

## Finding Correspondences between Love and Marriage

The analysis of usages of "love" proved to be straightforward. In the first place, key words are easier to find in discourse than are instances of metaphor or reasoning. And usage of this word turned out to be quite regular. Again, as with the analysis of metaphors, my method was standard pattern-seeking: making three-by-five cards again, sorting these cards, puzzling over them, and regrouping them until my cases fell into a set of categories. I found two kinds of detailed correspondences between love and marriage, in the way that interviewees talked about these, that I take to be aspects of a shared schema. The first involves an alignment between marriage as a social status, and love as an emotional state. In the second set of correspondences, the emotion of love instigates certain motivations in people, and these prove to fill in the motivational structure of marriage.[32] Having reported these findings and given illustrations of them elsewhere (Quinn 1997b), I only summarize them here. I then single out one feature of the alignment of love and marriage and one feature of the motivational structure that love provides for marriage, offering a few examples of each of these two pieces of my analysis for readers to follow.

The alignment between love and marriage is readily summarized. Americans know that, as the old song says, "love and marriage go together," and by this they mean that if you love someone, and only if you love them, you should marry them, if you are married to someone you should love them and nobody else, and if you no longer love someone you should end your marriage with them.[33] Here I focus on the first of these injunctions. Three different kinds of discourse proved particularly useful in revealing this expectation that if you fall in love you get married: speakers' tacit

[32] This was not all that interviewees had to say about love and marriage (see Quinn 1997a). Here I set aside these details of the story about love and marriage, confining myself to a demonstration of evidence for the fundamental correspondence between the two.

[33] With violations of this dictum, such as "loveless marriages"—one common variant of this is "staying together for the sake of the children"—being not only anomalous, but unfortunate and even morally questionable in the minds of most Americans.

assumption of it; their attempts to patch up its occasional violation; and narratives of this violation. While I do not know how general the utility of these three features of discourse for uncovering cultural expectations in other domains of experience than this one will prove to be, I believe all three are likely to have some application beyond my own analysis.

The expectation that if you love someone you should marry them was revealed most frequently in interviewees' tacit assumption of it.[34] This expectation has as its corollary that if you marry someone you do so because you love them, and it is this tacit assumption that is revealed in the next tale, by a woman whose husband found a way to tease her about it:

> 1W–5: I'd say, "Bobby, that's not true. Tell them the truth. You married me because you loved me." He'd just laugh and he'd say, "Ah I fooled you," or he'd say, "You didn't see that big wad of money that your dad gave me before we got married?"

Somewhat less frequently, but more strikingly, the expectation that people fall in love and get married was exposed in the way interviewees tried to repair violations of it. The man quoted earlier, who didn't marry his former girlfriend, provides a case in point. This man has a slight dilemma: He and the girlfriend "said we loved each other and we felt love." If so, according to American expectation, they ought to have gotten married. The interviewee resolves the apparent violation of this expectation by recasting the love he and his girlfriend felt and declared: first of all, it was not as deep as the subsequent love between his wife and him proved to be; furthermore, the girlfriend and he, it turned out, only "claimed" they loved each other. Both these disclaimers attest to the fact that what this interviewee and his girlfriend felt was not "true" love. Hence, they were right not to get married.

Finally, this same expectation was revealed in narratives interviewees told, that derived their reportability from the unusual circumstance that people who fell in love ended up not getting married, or, conversely, people ended up marrying who were not in love. Such narratives were infrequent compared to other evidence for the alignment of love with marriage, making them undependable sources of primary evidence for patterns like this relationship between love and marriage. When they do occur, however, they are telling confirmation. Probably, the American cultural emphasis on falling in love makes narratives about people who do so but then do not marry especially reportable. Elsewhere (Quinn 1997b) I gave an example of one such story I found in the discourse I collected; here is the other, an old-fashioned story about the interviewee's grandmother:

> 4W–5: She was very much in love with a young artist who had tuberculosis and went away for a cure and was gone for about three years. And had

[34] For example, the Navy man's comment that "it wasn't all love and sex and that's it" reveals his tacit assumption that married people love each other.

> stopped writing at some point or other. Then her father and mother really put a lot of pressure on her to marry my grandfather because he was obviously successful and well connected and going to go places and very smitten with her and she did it. 'Cause she thought her boyfriend was basically gone. And I think she was always very fond of my grandfather and appreciated him in a lot of ways but wasn't in love with him, and was never really in love with him. Many, many years later when my father was grown, she met again the young man she'd been in love with. And she said—she must have been eighty years old, Naomi, when she was telling me this. There were tears in her eyes. She said, "It was so sad. Here I was a grown woman with a child and I—my heart turned over." She said, "It was, you know, just so sad." And I don't—she didn't go into details so I don't really know any more about that. But obviously she had always regretted not having been able to follow through on having been in love and, you know—just really sad. I can see how it would happen that things that aren't finished stay with you.[35]

Next let us turn to the motivational structure of this schema for love. In short, interviewees said, if you love someone (1) you don't want to lose them; (2) you want to be with the person you love; and (3) you care about that person and want to do things for them, as they do for you. I illustrate with the third and most complex of these expectations. I found neither explanations nor narratives concerning violations of this expectation that people who love each other will care about and want to do things for each other. Perhaps this is because this motivation is regarded as flowing so naturally from the feeling of love as to be unproblematic. This is in contrast to the various ways circumstances can misfire—as illustrated by the story about the interviewee's grandmother—so that people who love each other don't end up getting married. Of course, even when they love their spouses and want to meet their needs, people can and do fail to do so; but that is another story.

Interviewees voiced the understanding that loving one's spouse made one care about them and want to do things for them. Once again, I have elsewhere (Quinn 1997b) published a string of illustrations in which husbands and wives said such things as, "[H]ow do you explain love? Except that you just—you care for somebody and that you want to do things for them" (1W–3); or "[L]ove is—to me, is the desire to give more to the other person than you're giving to yourself, at times" (6H–2). Here I just add a few more illustrations. The methodological point to be drawn from these cases is that, just as with metaphors and reasoning, they vary a great deal in both the specific content of the expectation, and the explicitness with which it is stated. Once again, it is necessary to look beneath this variation to discover the shared expectation itself.

[35] Interestingly, the teller of this story, some time after being interviewed by me, left her husband to return to an earlier relationship, one she would probably have characterized as having been "unfinished." I think she would have also agreed that she had always loved the former boyfriend to whom she returned. She is the same interviewee who said (quoted in Quinn 1997b:194) that she had always felt like she was cheating her husband because she was not really in love with him.

A first challenge to the analysis of usages of love comes from the variety of ways in which people may demonstrate their care for each other. The brief examples given above are nonspecific about it: you want to "do things" and "give more." The next woman, asked what she means by "being taken care of," gives a somewhat more specific answer:

> 4W–5: I definitely think that it's this feeling of having real faith and confidence that somebody else loves you and this—wants to support you through the trials and tribulations of life. Be there emotionally and that you want to do the same with them.

Other interviewees provide even more specific examples of what spouses do for each other. "If you love a person, you stick by them, for better or worse" [3H–16], one husband reports having told his mother when she worried that the woman he was going to marry had health problems. Another husband explains that a part of love is that you can be yourself and "it's never used against you" in the way people at work use it against you if you are frank and open about your feelings. A wife underscores the importance of providing one's spouse with unconditional acceptance when she criticizes her husband's family for pressuring him to achieve, saying, "I certainly didn't want him to feel that my love and acceptance of him depended on his achieving. And it really is so with his family" [9W–10]. The potentially open-ended variety of what people are motivated by love to do for each other challenges analysis, to be sure. However, once decoded, these often explicit statements about the particular things one does out of love for one's spouse provide rich evidence for the general understanding that love makes one want to do such things.

A second challenge to analysis is that, in the same way that, we saw, causal links in other reasoning are not always well marked, that between love and what it makes you want to do for the loved one is not always spelled out. Sometimes, speakers make the relation of love to wanting to do things for their spouse entirely explicit, as does the next man, talking about wanting to help his wife. He concludes, "[Y]ou do it out of love" [3H–2]. At other times, this assumption is left implicit. Remember the woman who talks about the "real faith and confidence that somebody else loves you and this—wants to support you through the trials and tribulations of life." As we have seen with other reasoning, that the other person wants to support you *because* they love you must be inferred, here, from the order of the two connected clauses. Even more has to be inferred from comments like these: "You do good and you get back something and, you know, being good to each other you're thereby getting back this love" [6H–2]; and, "I think that we both know that we have all the love that we need between us" [6H–6]. It would be difficult to interpret such shorthand statements about love—to understand why this husband thought he and his wife were getting back love, or why they felt they had all the love they needed—without first having analyzed passages in which the motivation

and behavior that love engenders—caring about and doing things for the person you love—are articulated and clearly distinguished from the emotion itself. Only then does it become clear that love is being made to stand, in these comments, for the things people do, and the benefit their spouses receive, as a result of it. As with metaphor and reasoning, I found, it is better to work with fuller, more explicit usages of a key word—certainly to begin the analysis with these—than trying to make sense initially out of fragments like the last two, in which the speakers have left crucial parts of the schema they have for love unsaid.

It may seem contradictory to have claimed, at the beginning of the earlier section on metaphor analysis, that one advantage of such an analysis was its comprehensiveness—and now to admit, at the beginning of this section, that this selfsame analysis of metaphor proved to be incomplete in such a crucial way. Why did marital love—so important in Americans' understandings and made so glaringly obvious in popular culture—not emerge from an analysis of metaphors for marriage? This is not to say that people do not use metaphors to talk about love, just as about anything else: They do. Like the interviewees quoted above, they say things like, "[Y]ou're getting back this love," and "[W]e have all the love we need between us." They say other things like, "I feel so filled up—all filled up with love" [6H–4]; or, "I think my love grows more and more every day" [1W–3]; or, "In my earlier days, I sort of threw love out the window" [2H–2]; or, "[L]ove doesn't conquer all" [7W–6]; and they use a number of more conventional metaphors such as "showing love," "making love," and "falling in love," all the time. But metaphors for *marriage* do not capture the expectation that married people will love each other, and other expectations about marital love, in the way they refer explicitly to the expectations that marriage be beneficial, say, or lasting. Nor, I should add, do people reason about the relation between love and marriage in the way they reason about the causal relation between benefit, lastingness, and their other expectations about marriage. The reason they did not do so is interesting. Love is not an explicit expectation about marriage; rather, it provides the implicit structure of marriage. This structuring of marriage by love is neither reasoned about nor highlighted in metaphor because, as we have seen, it is taken-for-granted and normally remains entirely tacit. Indeed, as I suggest next, it is partly unconscious. A methodological lesson to be drawn from my initial failure to recognize this important term in the analysis is that different methods of analysis are likely to be needed to reconstruct tacit understandings, than those about which individuals make deliberate points and explicitly reason. The more general lesson is that we should never rely wholly on analysis of metaphors or any one single mode of analysis, however seemingly rich its yield.

## Interpretative Leaps

The analysis of usages of the word "love," in this discourse, may have been relatively direct and obvious; but the next step—interpreting the pattern

I had found—was a leap. Occasions for such leaps inevitably confront us in the interpretation of our findings and they often lead us, as this one did, in new and interesting theoretical directions. In this case, I noticed an intriguing correspondence between the motivational structure of love and the three primary expectations interviewees had about marriage, as these had emerged from my analysis of metaphor. Put succinctly, just as we don't want to lose the person we love, but want that love to last forever, marriage is supposed to last; just as we want to be with the person we love, marriage is supposed to be shared; and, just as we want to do things for the person we love, marriage is supposed to be mutually beneficial in the sense of need fulfilling. My interpretation was that marriage is, in our society, the institutional realization of love.[36] As the song tells us, love and marriage go together in a particular way—"like a horse and carriage." Love is the "horse" that pulls marriage.

What comforts me about my failure to analyze usages of "love" in this talk about marriage earlier than I did, is that I could not have arrived at a meaningful interpretation of this analysis, even had I performed it at the beginning. This is because the interpretation, when I did arrive at it, depended on noticing the correspondence I have described between the motivational structure of love, and the three expectations that marriage be lasting, shared, and mutually beneficial. These three expectations emerged from my analysis of metaphors for marriage. As I have said, they set in motion the story about marital compatibility, difficulty, effort and so forth. But where did the three a priori expectations themselves come from? Only now was I in a position to speculate that they came from Americans' schema for love.

Still, this analysis was unfinished: Where did these understandings about *love*, in turn, come from? One final interpretive leap was left for me to make. I began with a sense that the three motivational components of love—not wanting to lose the person we love, wanting to be with that person, and caring about and wanting to do things for that person—had a regressive look to them. In making sense of this observation, I was drawn to a dim memory of something I had read in college by Sigmund Freud.[37] I realized that the three motivational components matched Freud's description of infantile preoccupations and anxieties. The infant fears that its caretaker will leave it, wishes to be with the caretaker, and is concerned that the caretaker fill all its needs (the adult version, of course, requires

[36] This mapping of love onto marriage has a history, and the certainty with which Americans today believe that "love and marriage go together" surely owes something to the struggle, beginning in the late eighteenth century and continuing on into the nineteenth, of individual couples to make their own marriage choices on the basis of romantic love, instead of entering marriages arranged to serve the purposes and reflect the judgment of parents and other kin. See Griswold (1982:1–17), among other historians, for a good summary of these developments.

[37] Which, when I tracked it down, proved to be from the third of his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, called "The Transformations of Puberty" (Freud 1962:88).

reciprocity, so that each fills the others' needs). The double correspondence I had discovered—first, between infant love and the way my interviewees talked about adult love, and, second, between their schema for adult love and the expectations they held for marriage—struck me forcefully. I concluded that infant experience was the motivational wellspring for marriage, as Americans knew and practiced it. Like the infantile roots of adult understanding and motivation more generally, the roots of this one are all the more implicit in discourse, because defended against and hence unconscious. (As I have pointed out elsewhere (Quinn 1997b:201), interviewees could tell of talking baby talk to each other, while indicating not a hint of awareness of the implications of this behavior.)[38]

There is a methodological footnote to this story. Love was not the only key word I examined. Indeed, much earlier in the course of this research, even before I analyzed metaphors for marriage, I had analyzed interviewees' usages of the word "commitment." As reported in Quinn (1982), I found that these usages fell into three classes: use in the sense of *promise* (as in, "We were making a commitment together" or "The marriage commitment is a commitment to grow old together"); in the sense of *dedication* (as in, "I feel totally committed to the relationship" or "It's a commitment to our marriage, a commitment to wanting our marriage to work"; and in the sense of *attachment* (as in, "We feel married already; we have the commitment to each other" or "Was I willing to commit myself to her?"). In retrospect (Quinn 1997b:fn.2), I conclude that commitment reinforces the institution of marriage by supplementing the powerful but sometimes erratic motivation of love with a more dependable source of motivation.[39] As patterned as was its usage, and as integral its role in marriage, however, commitment did not drive the schema for marriage I had derived from my analysis of metaphor and reasoning, in the way that love did. Love, as I have described, led back to the schema's motivational source in early childhood.[40] It turns out, then, that not all key words are equally key.

[38] See Quinn (1997b) for a more fully developed argument. My interpretation of the relation between marriage, adult love, and early experience remains speculative, certainly. But it is speculation that anticipates a promising synthesis of cognitive and psychoanalytic anthropology, suggesting how psychodynamics can provide an explanation for some of the most deeply motivating cultural schemas such as Americans' schema for marriage. (See, among other arguments for such a synthesis, Paul 1990 and Nuckolls 1996:3–23.) And, it is speculation that I plan to pursue as my next major research project.

[39] Indeed, commitment may predate love, in the history of Euro-American marriage, as a motivation for staying married.

[40] Chris McCollum (personal communication) has suggested to me that the relation between marital love and marital commitment can usefully be viewed in terms of Obeyesekyere's (1990) distinction (drawing on a point made by Freud in *Interpretation of Dreams*) between *regression* and *progression*. Regression involves a return to psychic origins in childhood while "a progressive movement of unconscious thought involves the transformation of the archaic motivations of childhood into symbols that look forward to the resolution of conflict . . ." (Obeyesekere 1990:17). Commitment, in these terms, can be seen as the progressive element in marriage. The married adult does not simply regress to a state of being

And no matter how intuitively we approach our analysis, and how attuned we are to the logic of what follows upon what in this analysis, and how opportunistically we utilize available clues in our data, we do not always hit upon the most important evidence first.

## Conclusion

While the theory of cultural meaning is still unsettled, it is less so than it was when I began. We can now explain how cultural understandings, or schemas, are built up from shared experience.[41] My own work on cultural understandings of marriage has led me to an appreciation of the way different sorts of shared experience eventuate in different kinds of shared schemas. I hope to have provided, as well, a description of the American cultural model of marriage that is fuller and more dynamic because of its grounding in schema theory. I hope, further, that my work so far has not only contributed to a theory of the cognitive basis of culture, and led to a better description of American marriage, but has also illuminated the inextricable involvement of culture with cognitive task performance, and the equal complicity of culture with deep human motivation. Such theoretical work, wherever it leads, cannot be separated from empirical work, and the methods that the latter demands. In this chapter, I have tried to demonstrate that, indeed, theoretical gains depend on the most minutely detailed empirical investigation and on systematic methods designed to do it. Most of all, I have tried to convey what the process of such an investigation is like, in research of the kind I do. In this process, the work does not stop with conceptualization of a research problem and application of some preselected methods to address it. Instead, there is an ongoing need to invent appropriate methods, to match these to opportunities provided by existing data, and to pursue the logic of each new finding to the next analysis. Like an American marriage, research takes continual effort to succeed.

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to Claudia Strauss for her usual careful reading and savvy suggestions for revision, and to Steven Bialostok for raising, and making me confront, questions that other novice users of these methods are also likely to have.

loved and fearing love's loss, but takes responsibility for loving reciprocally, and for putting in the effort necessary to make this love and the marriage last. Infantile dependency is recruited to an adult cause.

[41] See Strauss and Quinn (1997).

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