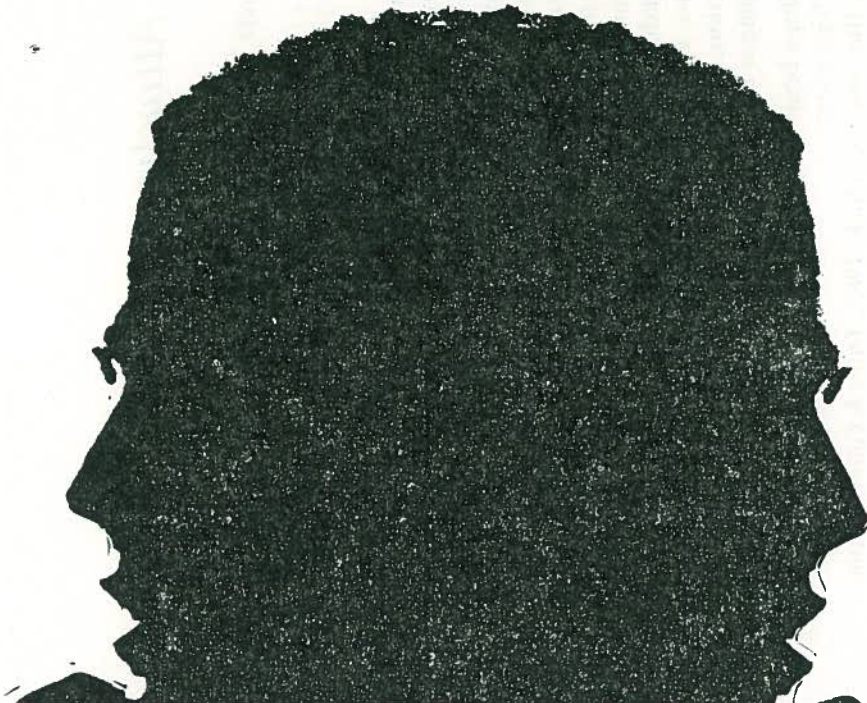Edited by George Stricker and Robert H. Keisner

FROM
RESEARCH
—TO—
CLINICAL
PRACTICE

The Implications of Social and Developmental
Research for Psychotherapy

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Interpersonal Attraction

SUSAN SPRECHER AND ELAINE HATFIELD

At every stage of an intimate relationship, couples must deal with difficult and unsettling interpersonal problems. As a consequence, therapists often find themselves dealing with clients when the problems have become too difficult and too unsettling.

Different problems characterize different stages of a relationship. Early on, one must deal with the problems associated with initiating a relationship; then the problems associated with keeping as established relationship vibrant and growing; or the painful experiences associated with relationship breakdown and dissolution.

In this chapter, we shall review the social psychological research on interpersonal attraction, love, and intimacy, and attempt to point out its relevance to three stages of a relationship:

1. How relationships begin.
2. How relationships grow.
3. How and why they end (see Duck, 1982; Duck & Gilmour, 1981 a, b, c).

We conclude by discussing some differences between men and women in what they expect from their intimate relationships.

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HOW RELATIONSHIPS BEGIN

"Who am I likely to fall in love with?" "Where can I meet someone?" These questions are often posed by people who are having trouble initiating relationships. Therapists may be more adequately equipped to advise them if they are aware of how couples generally meet and what factors are most important in initial attraction.

DETERMINANTS OF INITIAL ATTRACTION

Social psychologists have conducted a great deal of research to determine what factors are most important in determining how attracted people will be to one another (see Berscheid & Walster [Hatfield], 1978; Hatfield & Walster, 1978). Among these are proximity, physical attractiveness, and similarity.

Proximity

In a song from *Finian's Rainbow* there is a line, "When I'm not near the one I love, I love the one I'm near." Numerous studies have demonstrated that sheer proximity between two people is critical in determining how attracted they will be to each other.

In one classic study, Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1959) examined the development of friendships in a new housing project for married students. They found that proximity in apartment residences was the major factor in determining who became friends with whom. Although the linear distance between two apartment residences was important, the functional distance was even more important. They found, for example, that residents whose apartments were located near entrances or exits, or near utility rooms, were more likely to interact and become friends with other residents than were those who did not live near common areas. Other studies provide additional documentation that proximity matters. Co-workers become closer to those who work right next to them than to those who work farther away (Gullahorn, 1952; Kipnis, 1957; Zander & Havelin, 1960), and students who sit near each other in class are more likely to become friends than those who sit farther away (Byrne, 1961; Segal, 1974).

More interesting, however, is the apparent importance of proximity in mate selection. Studies have demonstrated that people are more likely to marry those who live closer than those who live at greater distances. For example, in an examination of 5,000 Philadelphia marriage licenses,

Bossard (1932) found that many of the couples were already living at the same address or within a few blocks at the time they applied for their license (see also, Clarke, 1952). After reviewing all the studies on the importance of proximity in mate selection, Kephart (1961) states: "Cherished notions about romantic love notwithstanding, it appears that when all is said and done, the 'one and only' may have a better than 50-50 chance of living within walking distance" (p. 269).

Operationalizing proximity as the actual or functional distance between two people at one point in time may be an outdated approach in a society that is becoming increasingly mobile. As suggested by Monge and Kirste (1980), a more appropriate conceptualization of proximity may be psychological distance, which can be thought of as "the opportunity to communicate." Viewed in such a way, proximity can be considered a phenomenon that fluctuates over time. Future studies that examine the importance of proximity for both the initiation and maintenance of relationships may need to take a more flexible approach to proximity.

A distinction has also been made between two different kinds of settings that encourage close physical proximity, a "closed field" and an "open field" (Murstein, 1970). In a closed field, people have little choice about with whom they interact. For example, the typist in the typing pool has little choice about who her co-workers are. However, when she leaves work and goes to a party, she is entering an open field. In an open field there are many opportunities to interact and begin relationships, and thus choices have to be made. It is possible that people differ on whether they are more successful socially in a closed versus open field. For example, as we shall discuss, people are initially attracted to others who are physically attractive. Thus, the attractive may well have the greatest advantage in open fields. The unattractive, on the other hand, may have better luck developing social relations in closed fields, where others are forced to get to know them over time.

The simple notion behind the proximity effect is the following: When people are thrown together, they are likely to interact; when people interact, they are likely to become attracted to each other. This has implications for those desiring to expand their social networks or to find someone to love. It suggests that people must arrange things so that they will be physically proximate to others—for example, by joining exercise clubs, by taking night courses, or by attending dances. Furthermore, less attractive people might do well to place themselves in settings that are closed.

Physical proximity can be considered a necessary but insufficient condition for attraction to occur between two people. It is an important

precursor for other personal and situational factors to have an influence on the attraction process.

Physical Attractiveness

People seem to work harder on their physical appearance when they are seeking a new lover or spouse. They suddenly lose several pounds, adopt a new hairstyle, and double the size of their wardrobe. They know that looks *do* matter; they, too, are searching for an attractive catch.

Considerable research has been devoted to the importance of attractiveness in heterosexual attraction, date selection, and marriage. The two questions that have received the most attention are: (1) Do people seek to date the most attractive persons? or (2) do they try to date others of the same level of physical attractiveness? The data indicate that although people would like to date the most attractive persons, they are generally realistic—they generally settle for someone near their own level of attractiveness.

In a classic study that demonstrated the importance of physical attractiveness, Walster (Hatfield), Aronson, Abrahams, and Rottman (1966) held a "college computer dance" and paired men and women randomly (with the only requirement that the man be taller than the woman). Each individual's personality, intelligence, social skill, and physical attractiveness were measured. It was assumed that men and women would be attracted to others of approximately the same level of social desirability—and that all of the preceding factors would be important in determining people's worth. The researchers found, however, that only physical attractiveness mattered! How much people liked their dates, wanted to see them again, and actually tried to see them again was influenced only by how attractive the date was. Similar results were found in other computer dating studies (Brislin & Lewis, 1968; Tesser & Brodie, 1971). There was no evidence that daters were willing to "settle" for "appropriate" partners.

These early computer dating studies, however, are different in a fundamental way from most dating situations. With the exception of arranged marriages in traditional societies, people are rarely "assigned" to date or marry particular others. Instead, people have to ask (and possibly be rejected) or wait to be asked (and possibly never be asked). When people are required to *choose* a dating partner and the possibility for rejection is made salient, people often do tend to choose someone of about the same level of physical attractiveness. This has been demonstrated in computer dating studies by Berscheid, Dion, Walster (Hatfield), and Walster (1971), Huston (1973), and Stroebe, Insko, Thompson,

and Layton (1971). A high degree of similarity in physical attractiveness of couples has also been found in natural settings (Murstein, 1972; Silverman, 1971). In summary, people aspire to date those who are most physically attractive, but assortive mating is pervasive—that is, people end up with someone of about the same level of physical attractiveness.

Why are the physically attractive preferred? There are several possible reasons. It may simply be that people have an innate preference for what is aesthetically pleasing (Valentine, 1962). What is aesthetically pleasing, however, seems to be greatly influenced by cultural standards. Attractive persons may also be preferred because it is assumed that beauty is *more* than skin-deep. Much experimental evidence exists to support the physical attractiveness stereotype, "What is beautiful is good." People assume that those who are physically attractive possess many other desirable qualities as well (K. K. Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972; Miller, 1970). Attractive people may be preferred for yet another reason, namely, that people hope that their physical attractiveness will rub off. Many years ago, Waller (1937) stated that there is a prestige value in being seen with attractive people. This has more recently been verified by an experiment demonstrating that men are most likely to be rated positively by outsiders when they are accompanied by a good-looking woman, and most likely to be rated negatively when they are accompanied by an unattractive woman (Sigall & Landy, 1973).

Therapists counsel attractive persons, unattractive persons, and persons of average appearance. Although unattractive persons probably have their share of interpersonal problems stemming from physical appearance (e.g., not being able to get dates, having low self-confidence), they do not have a monopoly on appearance-related problems. For example, very physically attractive persons (particularly women) may be more likely to attribute success in heterosexual relations to their appearance, which might result in a lowered overall self-evaluation (K. K. Dion, 1982). They may also have problems in being accepted by others on personal dimensions unrelated to physical attractiveness, which can lead to disappointing, superficial relationships.

Similarity

People who are similar on physical attractiveness often end up together. Similarity on other personal characteristics, such as social background, attitudes, and values, is also important in determining initial attraction. In one classic study, Newcomb (1961) examined the development of friendships in a group of college men who were given free housing in return for completing questionnaires on their friendship choices and attitudes. After the men had time to become acquainted, it

was found that mutual liking was greatest among those who had similar attitudes and beliefs. In a succession of laboratory experiments conducted by Byrne (1971) and his colleagues, it was found that the greater the proportion of attitudes expressed by a stranger that were similar to the subject's, the more liking the subject expressed for the stranger. In addition, evidence in naturalistic settings suggests that friends and married couples tend to come from similar backgrounds, similar family relationships, and have similar attitudes and values (Burgess & Wallin, 1943; Kandel, 1978).

Why are people attracted to similar others? There is one very simple explanation: People are more likely to live, work, and play near others who share their background, values, attitudes, hobbies, and so on—in other words, proximity. Another explanation is that similarity is reinforcing because it provides validation for people's beliefs and attitudes. Still another explanation is that similarity affects people's beliefs about the probability of being liked—people assume that similar others will like them.

It is also possible for similarity to be a consequence rather than a cause of attraction—that is, attraction can lead to actual and/or perceived similarity. Evidence does exist to support the attraction–perceived similarity link. In fact, it has been found that husbands and wives tend to overestimate how similar they actually are to each other (Byrne & Blaylock, 1963; Levinger & Breedlove, 1966). Whether husbands and wives actually do become more similar to each other, however, is less clear. Early studies found either no evidence that this occurred (Hoffeditz, 1934; Hunt, 1935) or mixed evidence (Newcomb & Svehla, 1937; Schooley, 1936). However, more recent studies suggest that actual similarity between husband and wife may increase for at least some couples. In a reanalysis of an earlier longitudinal study by Kelly (1955) of husbands and wives, it was found by Uhr (cited in Barry, 1970) that happy couples became more similar whereas unhappy couples became more dissimilar over 18 years of marriage. In a cross-sectional study by Ferreira and Winter (1974), couples who had been married for 3 years or more were more likely to express spontaneous agreement on various issues than couples who had been married less than 3 years. This was found, however, only for couples who did not have emotional or psychiatric problems. There is also evidence that couples may come to be more similar to each other in neuroticism (Kreitman, Collins, Nelson, & Troop, 1970; Nelson, Collins, Kreitman, & Troop, 1970).

Although the evidence suggests that people generally seem to prefer to associate with similar others, people may sometimes prefer dissimilar others. In marriage, people may be attracted to those who

complement their needs and personalities (Kerckoff & Davis, 1962; Winch, 1952). For example, dominant people may be attracted to those with submissive personalities. People may also differ in their need to be around similar versus dissimilar others. Snyder and Fromkin (1980) have proposed that people differ in their need to be distinguished from other people, and have developed a scale to measure this desire for uniqueness. They define uniqueness as "a positive striving for differences relative to other people" (Snyder & Fromkin, 1977, p. 518). In one experiment, they found that those who were high in need for uniqueness were more likely to react negatively to finding out that they were similar to other college students (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980).

Other Factors Important in Determining Attraction

There are many other factors in addition to proximity, physical attractiveness, and similarity that are important in determining how attracted people are to others. It helps, for example, if the others are competent (Solomon & Saxe, 1977) and have pleasant personalities (M. F. Kaplan & Anderson, 1973). But perhaps one of the most important determinants of attraction is reciprocal liking—people like others who like them (Mettee & Aronson, 1974; Newcomb, 1961). This is knowledge that anyone who feels deprived of love can use to his or her benefit. As the philosopher Hecato put it in the second century B.C.:

I will show you a love potion without drug or herb or any witch's spell; if you wish to be loved, love.

INITIATING THE RELATIONSHIP

We have discussed several important determinants of initial attraction. But how do relationships actually get started? How and where do people meet? These questions have been explored only recently.

Evidence suggests that many of our relationships begin with an introduction provided by a same-sex friend. In a study of East Carolina University students, Knox and Wilson (1981) found that one-third of the college students met their dating partners through a friend. This suggests that the best way of meeting someone of the opposite sex is to establish relationships with same-sex friends. Those couples who were not introduced often met in such commonplaces as parties, work, and classes.

Similar results were found in a study by Marwell, McKinney, Sprecher, Smith, & DeLamater (1982) at the University of Wisconsin.

The researchers asked a random sample of college sophomores to think of their most recent "couple" experience with someone of the opposite sex. The students were then asked a set of questions about when they first saw the other, how they met him or her, and what activities they were involved in at the time. Results indicate that couples often met at such common places as classes, parties, or work—or were introduced by a friend. Marwell and his colleagues argue that what is critical for the initiation of heterosexual relationships are *legitimating factors*—factors such as sharing a class or being introduced by someone. These legitimating factors help to overcome socially specified barriers to interactions between strangers.

Sometimes, however, people do meet opposite-sex individuals in ways considered somewhat less legitimate—for example, they may be picked up at single bars. Perper and Fox (1981) spent 2 years observing how people meet for the first time in singles bars, college pubs, or other public settings. For a total of 350 hours they observed over 500 couples make initial contacts. They also interviewed some men and women on what happened when they either tried to pick someone up or were picked up. The researchers found that the pickup can be characterized by steps of escalating flirtatious behaviors, often initiated by the female. *Approach* is the first step. One person (usually the female) acknowledges the presence of the other. If the other is also interested, the acknowledgment is returned. Then the two people begin to *synchronize* their body movements—for example, they make take on identical postures or lift drinks at the same time. Finally, *touching* occurs. This is often initiated by the woman, and is the most obvious sign of interest. The touching is either acknowledged by the other, or the interaction begins to wane. From the personal interviews, the researchers discovered that women were more aware than men of what goes on during the pickup.

HOW RELATIONSHIPS GROW

Once people get involved in relationships, their problems are far from over. Many people complain of relationships that lack honest and open communication, relationships full of conflict, strife, and frustration, relationships that do not seem to go anywhere. Relationships can simply exist, or they can be exciting intersections between two unique individuals. According to some theorists (Kelley, Berscheid, Christensen, Harvey, Huston, Levinger, McClintock, Peplau, & Peterson, 1983), interdependence is critical for close relationships. We shall explore those

actions that can lead the lives of two people to become more and more intertwined.

SELF-DISCLOSURE

A central theme of many love stories is that lovers attempt to "know" each other. Pope (1980) describes how important knowledge of each other is for lovers:

They sought a knowledge of not only what made the beloved human but also of what made him or her different from all other humans. They acquired a knowledge not only of the head but also of the heart and body. (p. 8)

To gain knowledge about the other is important not only for lovers, but also for close friends and family members. Mutual self-disclosure is the means by which this knowledge is gained. Self-disclosure has been defined as "the act of making yourself manifest, showing yourself so others can perceive you" (Jourard, 1971).

Altman and Taylor (1973) have written about the importance of self-disclosure for the growth of intimate relationships. They describe the personality as an onion, with different layers of skins that need to be peeled in the process of self-disclosure. The outer layers are superficial items, such as biographical information. The inner layers contain that which is most critical to the person, involving "basic core feelings about life, trust in others, and the nature of one's self-image" (p. 17).

According to these theorists, as relationships grow, self-disclosure is likely to increase in both breadth and depth. Breadth refers to the number of surface areas that something is revealed, and depth refers to how far the penetration proceeds to the basic core feelings in each area. People move to greater self-disclosure and intimacy in relationships only if it is rewarding to do so.

Altman and Taylor (1973) describe the stable exchange of self-disclosure achieved in very few intimate relationships:

Stable exchange: Achieved in only a few relationships, stable exchange continues to reflect openness, richness, spontaneity, and so on in public areas. . . . Dyad members know one another well and can readily interpret and predict the feelings and probable behavior of the other. . . . For the first time, perhaps, there is a considerable richness of communication in the central core areas and a high degree of mutual spontaneity, permeability, and dyadic uniqueness. In addition to verbal levels, there is a great deal of exchange of nonverbal and environmental behaviors, movements, touching, and so on. They are more willing to allow each other to use, have access to, or know about very private apparel and belongings. (pp. 136-141)

Much research has documented that self-disclosure tends to be reciprocal (for a review, see Chelune, 1979). One relationship for which this may be an exception, however, is that between the therapist and the client. The client is expected to self-disclose, the therapist to listen and give advice. (For exceptions to this model, see Doster & Nesbitt, 1979.)

The norm of reciprocity in self-disclosure may change at different stages of the relationship. Altman (1973) has suggested that the obligation to immediately reciprocate self-disclosure is more important in early stages of a relationship when mutual trust and respect are being developed. At later stages of the relationship, when mutual trust is well established, self-disclosure reciprocity can become less important. In support of this contention, it has been found that reciprocity of self-disclosure is higher among strangers than spouses (Morton, 1978) or friends (Derlega, Wilson, & Chaikin, 1976).

Altman and Taylor's self-disclosure theory assumes that self-disclosure precedes love. However, it is also possible that love generates greater self-disclosure. A recent study explored whether love is more predictive of the development of self-disclosure than is self-disclosure of the development of love. In the two-wave panel study of over 300 college students, it was found that romantic love led to self-disclosure for women, but self-disclosure led to romantic love for men (Adams & Shea, 1981). In general, and disregarding the causal direction, evidence indicates that self-disclosure in the relationship is related to love feelings (Rubin, Hill, & Peplau, 1980) and to satisfaction with the relationship (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Jorgenson & Gaudy, 1980; Hendrick, 1981; Komarovsky, 1962; Levinger & Senn, 1967).

There is some partial evidence to suggest that too much self-disclosure may not always be good for relationships. When people are first getting acquainted, the person who confides information about skeletons in the family closet or about personal problems may be seen to be very peculiar indeed (for a review, see Kleinke, 1979). Later in the relationship, too much self-disclosure may result in difficulties in a relationship because partners become bored with each other or begin taking each other for granted. Evidence for a curvilinear relationship between self-disclosure and satisfaction in marriage has been found by Cutler and Dyer (1965), Gilbert (1976), and Shapiro and Swensen (1969).

One interesting question therapists often face is: Should intimates disclose things that might upset their relationship? For example, should a husband admit to his wife that he had a casual affair while on a business convention? Many theorists have argued that some things are best kept undiscussed. Goffman (1959) suggests that there are things that should not be revealed because it might be too costly to the self-discloser and/

or might hurt the recipient of the information. However, compelling data suggest that unhappiness in intimate relationships is related to suppressed negative feelings (Gilbert, 1976). There is obviously no straightforward answer, but in practice we have found that in families there are no "secrets"—but there is sometimes confusion. When people disclose their deepest feelings, the disclosures usually turn out not to be so lethal as they had supposed. Self-disclosure is risky. In casual encounters one must often be false to oneself. But in intimate relationships, it is a risk worth taking.

EVERYDAY EXCHANGES

As two people become closer, they also become increasingly interdependent. Characteristic of close relationships is a high degree of exchange. Intimates exchange not only confidences but a wide variety of things including love, sex, money, helping favors, and emotional support. Recently, social psychologists have tried to examine the exchange process in intimate relationships. In studies by Hatfield, Traupmann, Sprecher, Greenberger, & Wexler (1981), couples were asked about the level of give-and-take in the following areas.

Personal concerns: How attractive were they and their partners? How intelligent? How sociable? *Emotional concerns:* How much liking did they express for one another? How much loving, understanding, and acceptance? How much sexual pleasure did they give and get? Were they faithful? Were they committed to one another? Did they respect their partner's needs for freedom? *Day-to-day concerns:* How much of the day-to-day maintenance of the house did they and their partners do? How were finances handled? What was the situation with companionability; conversation; decision making; remembering special occasions? Did they fit in with one another's friends and relatives? *Opportunities gained and lost:* How much did they gain simply from going together or being married? (For example, how much did they appreciate the chance to be married; to be a parent or a grandparent; or to have someone to grow old with?) What opportunities had to be forgone?

In these studies, men and women were asked how fair they thought their relationships were. Were they getting more than they felt they deserved, just about what they deserved, or less than they thought they had coming from the relationship?

It has been found that, in general, equitable (fair) relationships are happy, satisfying, and growing relationships. However, when the exchange is unbalanced and participants report that things are grossly unfair, both participants are likely to be unhappy with the state of affairs.

Those who are getting more than they feel they deserve experience, not delight, but guilt. Those who are getting far less than they deserve feel angry. In general, both are motivated to set things right.

CONFLICT

A distraught newlywed woman cries to her therapist, "My husband doesn't love me anymore. He yelled at me this morning. What am I to do?" The therapist may well reassure her that conflict is an integral part of intimacy. In close relationships, people have intense feelings about each other—both positive and negative. Having negative feelings or experiencing conflict is not necessarily a sign that the relationship is about to end, but may actually suggest the contrary. Most theorists state that the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference.

That negative feelings are an integral part of intimate relationships is evidenced by several recent studies. In one study, college students were asked to report their most recent outbreak of anger. The first most frequently mentioned source of outbreak was a family member or relative, and the second most frequently mentioned was a lover (Fitz & Gerstenzang, 1978). In another study, lovers were most likely to be named as the source of feelings of depression (Berscheid & Fei, 1977).

Braiker and Kelley (1979) found conflict to be typical among married couples. Husbands and wives were asked to independently complete a questionnaire about four different stages of their relationship: casual dating, serious dating, engagement, and marriage. The questions were about attitudes, feelings, and behaviors they may have experienced in each stage of the relationship. The researchers found that as the relationship developed over time, the partners became increasingly interdependent at several different levels—emotionally, behaviorally, normatively, and even in personal characteristics and attitudes. The researchers found not only a large increment in interdependence as the couple became more serious, but also an increase in conflict. The couples were more likely to feel angry, communicate negative feelings, argue with each other, and try to change bothersome aspects of the other in the serious dating stage and later than in the early, casual dating stage. Interestingly, the researchers found no correlation between the level of love and interdependence and the level of conflict. That is, couples who reported conflict were just as likely to feel love and commitment toward each other as those who did not report conflict.

Kelley (1976) and others have pointed out the importance of the attribution process during interpersonal conflict. According to attribution

theory (Heider, 1958; E. E. Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967), people attribute their own behavior and the behavior of others to various sources—to the person, to circumstances, to the situation. Evidence suggests that people are generally biased in their attributions, and this tendency may be particularly aggravated in interpersonal conflict. More specifically, people are likely to attribute the actions of the other to personality characteristics and dispositions, but attribute their own actions to situational causes (Heider, 1958; Ross, 1977).

This actor-other discrepancy has been found in investigations of intimate relationships. Orvis, Kelley, and Butler (1976) found that members of close relationships tended to attribute their partner's behavior to such stable dispositions as traits, whereas they attributed their own behavior to such unstable causes as judgments or environmental states. Perhaps if couples become more aware of this bias in how they make attributions, they can prevent conflict from escalating to unmanageable levels.

In an insightful article on conflict in close relationships, Braiker and Kelley (1979) discuss ways in which conflict can, in fact, facilitate growth in close relationships. Some of these ways include: (1) Expressing conflict may lead the couple to devote thought to the relationship. This increased thought about the relationship may actually result in the couple coming to realize that they are more important to each other than originally realized. (2) Expressing conflict may also allow the couple to come to a new definition of the relationship, with new norms and goals. (3) In the process of resolving the conflict, the couple may come to see their relationship as unique and special.

The authors admit, however, that conflict may not always be a constructive experience; it may also have many destructive effects on the relationship.

The escalation that is characteristic of open conflict often lays bare basic disagreements—differences at the higher levels of interdependence—that might have remained implicit had the interaction remained at the concrete level of specific behaviors. The two persons may realize that they have not only specific conflicts of interest but also basic and perhaps irreconcilable differences in moral principles and human values. (p. 163)

HOW AND WHY RELATIONSHIPS END

Sometimes relationships fail. Conflict may escalate until it appears that there can be no reconciliation in the relationship. Or, the imbalance of exchange may become so inequitable that the participants feel indifferent and lack motivation to try to set things right again. Every day

people fall out of love, break engagements, and get divorces. Therapists are frequently faced with couples who are deciding whether or not to finally break up their relationship. However, other relationships exist that endure and continue to grow over a lifetime. Why do some relationships work, whereas others do not?

To examine breakups among dating couples, Rubin and his colleagues (Hill, Rubin, & Peplau, 1976; Rubin, Peplau, & Hill, 1981; Stewart & Rubin, 1976) interviewed 231 dating couples in the Boston area, and then followed them up after a 2-year period. By that time, 103 couples had split up, 65 were still dating, 9 were engaged, 43 were married, and 11 could not be reached. In examining the dating partners' original questionnaires, it was found that those couples who reported higher love feelings for their partner at Time 1 (1972) were more likely to be together at Time 2 (1974). However, whether the couple had engaged in sexual intercourse or had lived together did not affect whether the couple was still living together 2 years later.

The study did find that similarity of the two partners on some dimensions was related to whether the couple remained together. In particular, similarity on age, education, intelligence, and physical attractiveness was important in predicting the success of the relationship. However, similarity (or dissimilarity) on religion, sex-role attitudes, and desired family size was not seen to matter.

One intriguing factor that was found to be related to breakups was the man's need for power. Couples in which the man had a high need for power (as measured on TAT cards) were much more likely to break up than couples in which the man had a lower need for power. On the other hand, need for power in women was not found to be associated with breaking up (Stewart & Rubin, 1976).

Most of the breakups were not mutual. Furthermore, people were likely to say that they were more interested than their partner in breaking off the relationship. This can be interpreted as a strategy to protect one's self-esteem. By combining the men's and women's independent reports, the researchers determined that women were more interested in breaking up in 51% of the couples, the men in 42%, and that there was mutual interest in 7% of the couples. Other evidence also suggests that females are more likely to initiate breakups (Hill, 1974).

The researchers had speculated that in our society men tend to fall in love more readily than women, and that women fall out of love more readily than men. Thus, it was expected that breaking up would be a more traumatic experience for men than for women. Indeed, it was found that men were more likely to feel depressed and lonely after the

breakup than were women. As suggested by Goethals (1973; cited in Rubin et al., 1981):

> The notion that the young adult male is by definition a heartless sexual predator does not bear examination. In point of fact some of the most acute cases of depression I have ever had to deal with occurred in attempting to help young men with their betrayal by a young woman in which they had invested a great deal and who had, as the relationship developed, exploited them rather ruthlessly. (p. 94)

Whether the man or the woman initiated the breakup also influenced whether or not the couple remained friends. If the man broke up the relationship, the couple was likely to remain casual friends. On the other hand, if the woman broke up the relationship, this was much less likely to be so.

Other than the study by Rubin and his colleagues, very little research has examined the process of relationship breakdown. However, some theorists have speculated on what happens during relationship dissolution. Taking a social psychological perspective on marital dissolution, Levinger (1979) suggests that relationships break up when there is a shift in the perceived rewards and costs of the relationship. That is, the rewards in the relationship become fewer, the costs greater. Furthermore, attractive alternative states (e.g., being alone, beginning a new relationship) can be a threat to the relationship.

More recently, Duck (1982) discusses several reasons why relationships can break down.

1. *Personal factors.* There may be certain characteristics of individuals that make them unsuccessful at maintaining relationships. For example, the personality trait of neuroticism has been found to be related to high levels of marital disruption (Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978). Age and sex have also been found to be important. Females seem more likely than males to fall out of love (Hill et al., 1976; Rubin et al., 1981), and young people are more likely to have unstable relationships than older people (Duck, Miell, & Gaebler, 1980; Foot, Chapman, & Smith, 1980).

2. *Exterior influences.* These include circumstantial events (such as the relocation of one partner) or the effect of other people (a rival) on the relationship. These exterior influences can actually be the cause of the relationship breakdown, or may just be the last straw or an "excuse" to dissolve a relationship that is actually falling apart for other reasons.

3. *Processual/behavioral/management features.* In order for a relationship to exist, the participants must have a certain amount of social skill. For example they must be able to express their feelings, maintain an equitable exchange, and self-disclose an appropriate amount. To the

extent that these features break down in the relationship, the relationship may also be likely to break down.

4. *Emergent properties of the relationship.* Sometimes the relationship can break down because of relationship properties. For example, a relationship could be too intense for one or both partners—or not intense enough. The partners may find that there is not enough similarity between the two of them—or too much similarity. Or, they may disagree on the future of the relationship.

LONELINESS

We have described how relationships begin, grow, and dissolve. At every stage of a relationship, loneliness can be experienced. Loneliness can be the impetus for people to begin relationships, but people enmeshed in relationships are certainly not immune to this unpleasant experience. It may be during particularly stressful conflicts in a relationship that each partner, focusing on his or her own pain and bitterness, feels the most loneliness. Indeed, the evidence indicates that dissatisfaction with one's intimate relationships is positively related to feeling lonely. In one study of senior citizens, it was found that marital dissatisfaction was related to feeling loneliness (Perlman, Gerson, & Spinner, 1978). In another study conducted with freshman college students (Cutrona, 1982), dissatisfaction with friendships, dating relationships, and family relationships were all associated with loneliness experienced during the first year on a large college campus. Dissatisfaction with current friendships was found to be the most important predictor of student loneliness.

Loneliness has only recently been subject to theorizing and empirical research.

WHAT IS LONELINESS?

Loneliness has been defined by Perlman and Peplau (1981) as an unpleasant experience that results when there is a discrepancy between one's expectations about social relationships and what actually occurs. In particular, when there is a deficit in social relations, either quantitatively or qualitatively, the person may experience loneliness. Perlman and Peplau (1981) further define loneliness as a subjective phenomenon (being alone is not synonymous with being lonely) that is unpleasant and distressing. The most frequently used scale to measure loneliness

is the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Ferguson, 1978). It consists of 20 items such as "I feel starved for company," "I lack companionship," and "I am unhappy being so withdrawn." Research indicates that the scale is reliable and valid.

WHO ARE THE LONELY?

Everyone can experience loneliness at some point. Research on loneliness, in fact, is starting to gain momentum because of the awareness of just how widespread it is.

According to recent research, however, there may be certain types of people who are prone to experience loneliness. Although the stereotype is of the lonely elderly person, large-scale surveys suggest that loneliness may actually be more common in youth. Adolescents tend to report the highest levels of loneliness and older age groups the lowest. This was found in a study by Rubenstein and Shaver (1982) of persons throughout the country ages 18 to 87, and in other studies as well (Fidler, 1976; Parlee, 1979; Woodward & Visser, 1977).

It is not yet fully understood why loneliness is more common among younger people, since they generally have more social opportunities. One hypothesis is that they may have high and unrealistic expectations about social relations that would lead them to experience loneliness. Another possible explanation is that younger people may be more willing to acknowledge such negative feelings as loneliness (Peplau et al., 1982).

Other research has also disproved common notions about who the lonely are. In a survey by Rubenstein and Shaver (1982), geographic mobility was not found to be related to loneliness. In a study of loneliness in middle-age women (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982), it was expected that women living in large urban cities would experience greater loneliness than women living in rural areas, and that women who were homemakers would experience greater loneliness than working women. Surprisingly, loneliness was found to be unrelated to both the size of the city the women lived in and whether or not she worked.

THE EXPERIENCE OF LONELINESS

What is it like to be lonely? Rubenstein and Shaver (1980) published a questionnaire on loneliness in several newspapers around the country. The respondents were asked to indicate how loneliness feels by indicating to what degree they experienced 27 different possible negative

Changes in one's actual social relations can occur because close relations terminate, either through death or divorce. Studies indicate that widowhood, divorce, and even the breakup of dating relationships are associated with feelings of loneliness (Gordon, 1976; Hill *et al.*, 1976; Lopata, 1969; Weiss, 1973). Changes can also occur when there are physical separations. Some research indicates that people who move are subject to feelings of loneliness (Weiss, 1976), although evidence also indicates that people adjust quite rapidly and make new friends (Rubenstein, Shaver, & Peplau, 1979). Changes in one's actual social relations can also occur because of a status change. When people go through significant role changes—losing their job or retiring, getting a promotion, having children leave home, entering parenthood—they can experience loneliness (see Bart, 1979; Dickens & Perlman, 1981; Rubenstein, 1979).

Changes occur not only in one's actual social relations, but also in the desire for social relations. An increase in desire for social relations that is not matched by actual changes is likely to precipitate the feeling of loneliness. There are several situational factors that can influence an individual's desire for social relations. It has been found that people seem very desirous of being around others when they are anxious. In a classic experiment by Schachter (1959), it was found that when subjects believed they were going to receive very painful electric shocks (high-anxiety condition), they were more likely to want to wait with others (vs. alone) than when they thought they were going to receive only painless shocks (low-anxiety condition). People may also want to be around people when they need to compare themselves to others in order to evaluate themselves on attitudes, values, and skills (Festinger, 1954).

People who experience loneliness also try to determine the precipitating factors—that is, they tend to make attributions for their loneliness. The types of attributions that are formed are important for how the individuals react to their loneliness.

Researchers applying attribution theory to loneliness have used the theoretical work of Weiner and his colleagues (Weiner, Russell, & Lerman, 1978). According to Weiner's model, causal attributions can be classified on two major dimensions: locus of causality (internal vs. external) and stability (stable vs. unstable). More recently, Weiner has added a third dimension, controllability—that is does the individual have control over his or her behavior? Michela, Peplau, and Weeks (1981) examined the reasons students gave for their loneliness. When the students attributed loneliness to stable and internal (personal) characteristics (e.g., being physically unattractive) or to stable characteristics of the situation, they were more likely to feel pessimistic and hopeless about the future.

feelings such as desperate, sad, empty, uneasy, angry, and insecure. After factor analyzing the responses, the researchers found the following major factors: (1) desperation; (2) depression; (3) impatient boredom; and (4) self-deprecation.

Other investigators have also found that the experience of loneliness is related to negative feelings about the self or others. In a study of adolescents, Brennan and Auslander (1979) found that loneliness was related to self-pity, feeling rejected by parents, and feeling unpopular among peers. In a study of college students, Russell, Peplau, and Cutrona (1980) found that lonely students had low self-esteem, were unassertive, and were sensitive to rejection. Several other studies have also found loneliness to be related to low self-evaluation and to such negative feelings as pessimism, social alienation, hostility, mistrust of others, and lack of control (Barrett & Becker, 1978; Jones, Freemon, & Goswick, 1981; Jones, Hansson, & Smith, 1980).

How do people react to their loneliness? Rubenstein and Shaver (1980), in the study described earlier, also examined this question. They asked in their newspaper questionnaire, "When you feel lonely, what do you usually do about it?" Twenty-four possible behaviors were listed. It was found that the most common responses were reading, listening to music, and calling a friend. A factor analysis of the responses yielded four factors. The first, called "sad passivity" by the researchers, contained behaviors related to self-pity: cry, sleep, sit and think, do nothing, overeat, take tranquilizers, watch television, drink, or get "stoned". The second, called "active solitude", contained such behaviors as study or work, listen to music, and go to movies. The third factor involved behavior related to spending money, and the final was seeking out social contact.

PRECIPITATING FACTORS

In addition to the personal factors (i.e., age) mentioned earlier as being related to loneliness, several antecedent factors of loneliness have been defined. In fact, a distinction has been made between *predisposing factors*, such as characteristics of the individual, and *precipitating factors*, which are events that actually lead to the onset of loneliness (Perlman & Peplau, 1981). We shall describe some of these precipitating factors as discussed by Perlman and Peplau (1981).

Precipitating factors to the experience of loneliness usually involve *changes* for the individual—either in the individual's actual, or desired, social relations.

It has also been found that when attributions are made to stable individual characteristics, the individuals are likely to feel depression (Bragg, 1979; Peplau, Russell, & Heim, 1979).

COPING WITH LONELINESS

How can therapists help distressed individuals deal with their loneliness? First, there can be intervention into the attributions made for loneliness. It has been found that people are more likely to attribute their loneliness to personal factors than to the situation (Peplau et al., 1979). This may result in lowered self-esteem and a helplessness about the future. Thus, lonely people should be taught to focus on situational or cultural factors that might have caused their loneliness.

If the individual is suffering from a social deficit, the therapist can help the client pinpoint what kind of deficit it is. Are close romantic relationships needed, or a wider social network of casual friends? Although lonely people are most likely to say that they need "one special person" (Rubenstein & Shaver, 1982), a loneliness treatment proposed by Young (1982) suggests that individuals should go through stages of commitment to others. In particular, he suggests six stages:

1. To overcome anxiety and sadness about spending time alone.
2. To engage in activities with a few casual friends.
3. To engage in mutual self-disclosure with a trustworthy friend.
4. To meet a potentially intimate, appropriate partner (usually of the opposite sex).
5. To begin to develop intimacy with an appropriate partner, usually through disclosure and sexual contact.
6. To make an emotional commitment to an appropriate partner for a relatively long period of time. (p. 391)

If the actual social contact cannot be altered, the therapist can help the client change the desired level of social contact.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LOVE AND INTIMACY

Often men's and women's descriptions of what goes wrong in their relationships can be reduced to a single problem—men and women seem to want very different things out of love and intimate relationships. Here we shall review what social psychologists know about such gender differences, focusing on gender differences in four areas: (1) concern with love; (2) concern with sex; (3) desire for intimacy; and (4) desire for control.

CONCERN WITH LOVE

According to folklore, women are more concerned than men with love. Theorists seem to agree that women are intensely concerned with love, whereas men experience more muted feelings (see, e.g., Langhorn & Secord, 1955; Parsons, 1959; Parsons & Bales, 1955).

What do the facts say? The data suggest that the facts are more complicated than one might expect: Men and women seem to differ in how much they love, but the direction of the difference seems to depend on how love is conceptualized and measured.

Hatkoff and Lasswell (1979) argue that men and women differ in the way they conceptualize love. They interviewed over 500 males and females from several different ethnic and age groups. They concluded that men were more likely to experience romantic love (eros) and self-centered love (ludis). Women, on the other hand, were more likely to experience obsessive, dependent love (mania), companionate love (storge), and logical, sensible love (pragma).

Other studies have focused on gender differences in the experience of one specific type of love. Romantic love has frequently been examined. The finding of Hatkoff and Lasswell (1979) that men are more romantic than women has also been verified in several other studies. For example, Hobart (1958) asked 923 men and women to complete a romanticism scale. The scale included such items as: "Lovers ought to expect a certain amount of disillusionment after marriage" (scored, of course, in a negative direction) and "To be truly in love is to be in love forever." Hobart found that men had a considerably more romantic view of heterosexual relationships than did women. More recently, social psychologists have replicated Hobart's work and found much the same thing—men are still more romantic than women (K. L. Dion & Dion, 1973, 1979; Knox & Sporakowski, 1968; Rubin, 1973). Most of these studies, however, dealt with young dating couples. In one study of married couples (Reedy, Birren, & Schaie, 1976), it was found that married women were somewhat more romantic than married men.

A romanticism scale is a way of measuring a set of ideological beliefs. Other researchers have asked people directly about their romantic love experiences—how soon in relationships they fall in love, how frequently they fall in love, and so on. For example, Kanin, Davidson, & Scheck (1970) interviewed 700 young lovers. They asked, "did you become aware that you loved the other?" Whereas 20% of the men fell in love before the fourth date, only 15% of the women fell in love that early. At the other extreme, only 30% of the men, but a full 43% of the women, were not sure if they were in love by the 20th date.

Men seemed willing to fall headlong into love; women seemed far more cautious about getting involved. In another study, Hill et al., (1976) asked dating partners to rate how important various factors had been as reasons for entering the dating relationship. Men were more likely than women to rate "desire to fall in love" as important. Kephart (1967) asked 1,000 college students the following question: "If a man (woman) had all other qualities you desired, would you marry this person if you were not in love with him (her)?" A full 65% of the men said no, but 24% of the women said no. However, in a more recent study (Adler & Carey, 1980), 86% of the men and 80% of the women said they would not marry without love. Final evidence that men may be more romantic than women comes from a computer dance study by Coombs and Kendell (1966). It was found that women were less impressed than men with the date to whom they had been randomly matched. Fifty-two percent of the women and 38% of the men reported absolutely no romantic attraction for their computer-matched date. Conversely, 19% of the men, but only 7% of the women, reported strong romantic attraction.

Other researchers have focused on interviewing men and women about the intensity of love feelings they actually experience in their relationships. This research has focused more on mania, or passionate love. Contrary to the evidence presented here that suggests that men may be more romantic than women (at least before marriage), researchers have found that women experience the euphoria and agony of love and romance more intensely than do men. For example, Kanin et al. (1970) asked men and women to describe how they felt when they were in love—for example, to what extent they experienced such love reactions as "felt like I was floating on a cloud," "had trouble concentrating," and "felt giddy and carefree." In this study, it was found that women appeared to be more passionate. Women experienced the symptoms of passionate love with greater intensity than did men. Similar results were also found by K. L. Dion and Dion (1973). But although women seem to experience more of the "symptoms" of passionate love, both men and women seem equally likely to say that they "passionately love" their partner (Sprecher, 1980; Traupmann & Hatfield, 1981).

Many researchers have measured romantic love via the Rubin Love Scale. In the original study by Rubin (1973), no differences were found between men and women in how much romantic love was expressed. Other studies have also found no differences between men and women on romantic love measured on Rubin's scale (Black & Angelis, 1974; Cunningham & Antill, 1980; Sprecher, 1980).

Finally, how much companionate love is experienced in the relationship has been examined. In studies by Sprecher (1980) and

Traupmann, Hatfield & Wexler, (1983), it has been found that women companionately love more than men.

In summary, there seems to be no simple answer to the question whether men or women are more loving. Men tend to have a more romantic view of love; women seem to experience the euphoria and agony of love more intensely. Both men and women seem to report equal amounts of passionate love, but women seem to love more companionately.

CONCERN WITH SEX

According to several theoretical perspectives, men and women differ in their enthusiasm for sex—with men being the more enthusiastic gender. According to the sociobiological perspective (which argues that sexual activity is determined primarily by genes, hormones, and anatomy), men are genetically programmed to seek out sexual activity and women to set limits on it. According to a cultural-contingency perspective (which argues that sexual behavior is learned), because it is a man's world, men have been encouraged to express themselves sexually whereas women have been punished for doing so. But regardless of theorists' debates as to *why* men and women may differ in their enthusiasm for sex, there is general agreement that they do. But what do the data say?

In the earliest sex research, scientists found fairly sizable gender differences. In more recent research, investigators find that although some gender differences still exist, they are no longer very strong. Gender differences have begun to narrow or disappear.

Gender Differences in Responsiveness to Erotica

Early research supported the traditional assumption that it is men who are most interested in erotica. Kinsey (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953) found that the women in his sample were unlikely even to have been exposed to erotica. Even when both sexes were familiar with such literature, men reported being more aroused by it than women. For example, 47% of the men had been aroused by erotic stories; only 14% of the women reported such arousal.

Recently, however, researchers have begun both to ask men and women about their feelings and to get objective measures of their physiological arousal in response to pornography. In such studies, researchers generally find that there are few, if any, gender differences in responsiveness. For example, Veitch and Griffitt (1980) found no gender

differences in response to literary erotica. In fact, some data suggest that explicit portrayals of sexual activity may evoke equal or greater erotic responsiveness in women than in men. Heiman (1977) observed that both men and women found audiotapes of exclusively "romantic" encounters less arousing than audiotapes describing either romantic-erotic or exclusively erotic sexual encounters. Women actually rated the explicitly erotic audiotapes as more arousing than the men did. Heiman found no sex differences on physiological measures of sexual arousal.

Eagerness to Initiate Sexual Activity

In Kinsey's day, a double standard existed. Men were allowed, if not encouraged, to get sex whenever and wherever they could. Women were supposed to save themselves for marriage. In light of such double standards, it was not surprising that men were more likely to initiate sex, and women to resist sexual advances (see Baker, 1974; Ehrmann, 1959; Kaats & Davis, 1970; Reiss, 1967; Schofield, 1965; Sorenson, 1973).

Recent evidence suggests that traditional standards, although changing, are not yet dead. Contemporary college students reject a sexual double standard (Hopkins, 1977; Komarovsky, 1976; Peplau, Rubin, & Hill, 1976). Yet the existence of a new single standard does not seem to have changed things much—it is still men who are the sexual initiators, women who are the limit setters (McCormick, 1979). In a recent study, Peplau, Rubin & Hill (1977) found that, among unmarried students, the man has more to say than the woman about the type and frequency of sexual activity—except when the dating couple has decided to abstain from sexual intercourse, in which case the woman's veto is the major restraining influence.

Gender Differences in Sexual Experience

There is, however, compelling evidence that men and women are becoming very similar with regard to sexual experience.

In the classic studies of sexuality, researchers found that society's double standard influences sexual experience. For example, Kinsey and his colleagues (Kinsey et al., 1948; Kinsey et al., 1953) tried to assess comparative sexual activity of men and women throughout their lives. They found that (1) indeed, men did seem to engage in more sexual activity than did women, and (2) men and women had strikingly different sexual histories. At 18, it was usually the man who pushed to have sex. Kinsey and his associates found that most men were as sexually expressive at 15 as they would ever be. In fact, according to Masters

and Johnson (1966, 1970), 25% of men are impotent by age 65, 50% by age 75.

Women's experience was markedly different. Most women were slow to begin sexual activity. At 15, most women were quite inactive. Sometime between the ages of 16 and 20, they slowly shed their inhibitions and began to feel more enthusiastic about sexual exploration. They continued their high rates of sexual activity for fully two decades. It was not until their late forties that sexual behavior began to ebb.

> In commenting on women's sexual histories, Kinsey et al., (1953) observed:
> One of the tragedies which appears in a number of the marriages originates in the fact that the male may be most desirous of sexual contact in his early years, while the responses of the female are still underdeveloped and while she is still struggling to free herself from the acquired inhibitions which prevent her from participating freely in the marital activity. But over the years most females become less inhibited and develop an interest in sexual relations, which they may then maintain until they are in their fifties or even sixties. But by then the responses of the average male may have dropped so considerably that his interest in coitus, and especially in coitus with a wife who has previously objected to the frequencies of his requests, may have sharply declined (pp. 353–354)

Does this still hold true? Since Kinsey's day, researchers (DeLamater & MacCorquodale, 1979; Ehrmann, 1959; Reiss, 1967; Schofield, 1965; Sorenson, 1973) have continued to interview samples of young people about their sexual behavior: Had they ever necked? At what age did they begin? Had they fondled their lover's breasts or genitals or had their own genitals fondled? Had intercourse? Oral-genital sex? When we compare the data from these studies, we find that a sexual revolution is indeed occurring. In the early studies, in general, men were far more experienced than women. By the 1980s, these differences have virtually disappeared. As DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) observe,

> There are virtually no differences in the incidence of each of the behaviors. Unlike most earlier studies which generally reported lower frequencies of more intimate activities among females, we find that women are as likely as men to have ever engaged in these behaviors. The only exception occurs with coitus, which women . . . are less likely to have experienced. (Among students, 75% of men and 60% of women had had intercourse. Among non students, 79% of men and 72% of women had had intercourse) . . . Thus, the gender differences in lifetime behavior which were consistently found in studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s have narrowed considerably. This is also an important finding; it suggests that those models which have empha sized gender as an explanatory variable are no longer valid. (p. 58)

When men and women are together in a close loving relationship, they seem equally likely to desire to engage in sexual activity. There is only one type of situation in which scientists find women are still more

reserved than men—if men and women are offered a chance to participate in uncertain, unconventional, or bizarre sexual activities, men will be more willing to take the risk than will women (Clark & Hatfield, in press).

Other scientists have documented that even today men are more eager to have sex with a variety of partners, in a variety of ways, and so on. For example, Hatfield et al. (1981) interviewed casually dating and newlywed couples about their sexual preferences. They assessed desire for variety via such questions as: (1) "I wish my partner were much more unpredictable about *when* he/she wants to have sex." (2) "I wish my partner were much more variable about *where* we have sex."

The authors predicted that men would be more interested in exciting, diverse experiences than would women; this was exactly what they found. It was the men who wished their sex lives were a little more exciting, whereas women tended to be slightly more satisfied with the status quo.

In summary, then, recent evidence suggests that although some gender differences remain in men's and women's concern with sex, a sexual revolution is occurring. Gender differences in responsiveness to pornography, willingness to initiate sex, and sexual experience are rapidly disappearing. Recent studies indicate that women and men are becoming increasingly similar in their sexual preferences and experiences.

DESIRE FOR INTIMACY

We conceptualize intimacy not as a static state but as a process. Thus, we would define intimacy as a process by which a couple—in the expression of thought, emotion, and behavior—attempts to move toward more complex union.

Theorists from a variety of disciplines have agreed with Klimek (cited in Hatfield et al., 1981) that "nearly any observer of family life and of the human condition in general has probably suspected—or has at least amassed subjective evidence that—women generally have a higher capacity for intimacy than men" (p. 248).

According to many clinicians, one of the major tasks facing people is to achieve a separate identity while at the same time achieving a deeply intimate relationship with others (Erikson, 1968; Kantor & Lehr, 1975; L. J. Kaplan, 1978). Both separateness and intimacy are generally considered to be basic human needs (see Freud, 1922; Maslow, 1954). Kaplan suggests that adults spend much of their lives resolving the dilemma between achieving a sense of self while at the same time establishing close, nurturant relations with others.

According to family therapists, men have the easiest time achieving an independent identity; women have the easiest time achieving closeness with others. Napier (1977) describes two types of people (Type 1 and Type 2) who seem, with uncanny accuracy, to attract one another. Type 1 (usually a woman) is only minimally concerned with maintaining her independence. What she cares about is achieving emotional closeness. She seeks "fusion with the partner," "oneness," "we-ness" in the marriage; she invests much energy into planning "togetherness" activities. What Type 1 fears is rejection and abandonment.

Type 1's partner, Type 2 (usually a man) is most concerned with maintaining his sense of self and personal freedom and autonomy. He feels a strong need to establish his territory within the common household—to have "his study," "his workshop," "his car." What he fears is being "suffocated," "stifled," or "engulfed," or in some manner intruded on by the spouse.

Napier observes that men's and women's efforts to reduce their anxieties make matters worse. Women—seeking more closeness—clasp tightly at their mates, thereby contributing to the men's anxiety. The men—seeking more distance—retreat further, which increases their wives' panic, inducing further clasping.

Theorists agree that women are far "better" at intimacy than men. Family therapists take it for granted that women are very comfortable with intimate relationships and men are not, and that this is a common cause of marital friction. There are literally dozens of books exhorting men to share their feelings. Considering these facts, it is startling that there has been so little research devoted to gender differences in intimacy.

Worse yet, it is difficult to draw any conclusions from the research that does exist. If we were forced to make a guess as to what future research will reveal, it would be as follows: Women's complaint that men refuse to share their deepest feelings is a legitimate one. In general, women are indeed more comfortable with intimacy than men. But, paradoxically, even though women complain about men's lack of intimacy in their love relationships, it is in a love affair that male-female differences are smallest. Women find it fairly easy to be intimate with their lovers, with men friends, with other women, and with children. For many men, it is only with their lovers that they can be intimate. It is here that they reveal most of themselves—not as much as their lovers might like, but far more than they share with anyone else. It is most difficult for men to be close to other men.

These overgeneralizations are based on sparse data. A few social psychologists have explored male-female differences in willingness to get close to others. Generally, such researchers have defined intimacy as a willingness to disclose one's ideas, feelings, and day-to-day activities

to lovers, friends, or strangers . . . and to listen to their disclosures in return. Jourard (1964) developed one of the most commonly used measures of intimacy, the Jourard Self-Disclosure Questionnaire. Consisting of 60 questions in all, the JSDQ asks people to think about how much they typically disclose to others in six different areas of life: attitudes and opinions about sex, religion, and politics; tastes and interests; concerns about work (or studies); concerns about money; revelations about their personalities; and their feelings about their bodies.

In self-disclosure research, three findings on differences between men and women have emerged.

1. In their deeply intimate relationships, men and women often differ little, if at all, in how much they are willing to reveal to one another. For example, Rubin *et al.* (1980) asked dating couples via the JSDQ how much they had revealed themselves to their partners. The authors found that it was a small minority of traditional men and women who differed on emotional sharing. More egalitarian couples were more likely to disclose themselves fully to one another. Overall, men and women did not differ in how much they were willing to confide in their partners.

There was a difference, however, in the sorts of things men and women were willing to share with each other. Men were more willing to share their views on politics and their pride in their strengths; women to disclose their feelings about other people and their fears. Interestingly enough, Rubin *et al.* found that the stereotyped form of communications is not common with traditional couples.

Some authors have observed that neither men nor women may be getting exactly the amount of intimacy they would like. Women may want more intimacy than they are getting; men may want far less (there is evidence that couples do tend to negotiate a level of self-disclosure that is bearable to both—ensuring, in the words of *My Fair Lady*, that "neither really gets what either really wants at all"; (see Derlega & Chaiken, 1975).

2. In less intimate relationships, women disclose far more to others than do men (see Cozby, 1973; Jourard, 1971). As Rubin *et al.* (1980) point out:

> The basis for such differences appears to be in socialization practices. Whereas women in our culture have traditionally been encouraged to show their feelings, men have been taught to hide their feelings and to avoid displays of weakness.

Kate Millett (1975) puts it simply: "Women express, men repress" (p. 306).

3. Finally, women receive more disclosures than men. This is not surprising, in view of the fact that the amount of information people

reveal to others has a great impact on the amount of information they receive in return (see Altman, 1973; Davis & Skinner, 1974; Jourard, 1964; Jourard & Friedman, 1970; Marlatt, 1971; Rubin, 1975; Worthy, Gary, & Kahn, 1969).

There does seem to be evidence, then, that women feel slightly more comfortable with intense intimacy in their love relationships than men, and are far more comfortable revealing themselves in more casual relationships than men are.

Tradition dictates that women should be the "intimacy experts." Today, women are indeed more comfortable sharing their ideas, feelings, and behavior than men. But what would happen if this were to change? (Rubin *et al.*, 1980, suggest that such changes have already begun.)

The prognosis is mixed. Young women usually say they would be delighted if the men they love could be intimate. As a family therapist, one is titled to skepticism that it will be so easy. Change is always difficult. We have seen more than one man complain that when he finally dared to reveal his weaker aspects to a woman, he soon discovered that she was shocked by his lack of "manliness." Family therapists such as Napier have warned that the struggle to find both individuality and closeness is a problem for everyone. As long as men were fleeing from intimacy, women could safely pursue them. Now that men are turning around to catch them, women may well find themselves taking flight.

The change, on the whole, should be a healthy one. As Rubin *et al.* (1980) observe:

> Men and women should have the freedom to decide for themselves when they will reveal themselves—and when they will listen to another's revelations. "Full disclosure" need not be so full that it eliminates all areas of privacy, even within the most intimate relationships. . . . Especially when contemplating marriage, it is valuable for women and men to be able to share rather fully—and equally—their thoughts and feelings about themselves, each other, and their relationship. . . . It is encouraging to discover that a large majority of the college students we studied seem to have moved, even if incompletely and sometimes uneasily, toward the ethic of openness. (p. 316)

DESIRE FOR CONTROL

Traditionally, men are supposed to be in control—of themselves, other people, and the environment. The "ideal" man carefully controls his thoughts. He is "objective," "logical," unemotional. He hides his feelings, or if he does express any, he carefully telescopes the complex array of human feelings into a single emotion—anger. Men are supposed to be "dominant"; women "submissive."

There is considerable evidence that most men and women hold these stereotypes. Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosenkrantz (1972), in a study of sex-role stereotypes, found that women are perceived as expressive and nurturant, whereas men are perceived as in control and instrumental.

The purpose of all this control seems to be achievement. It may sound strange that some people may view intimate relations—the one area where people can be themselves, fully relaxed, confident that they will be accepted no matter what—as yet another arena for achievement. Yet apparently, some people do.

In reviewing the male sexual myths, Zilbergeld (1978) observes that even in their most intimate relationships men are more goal oriented than women:

As boys and men we socialized in . . . the three A's of manhood: Achieve, Achieve, Achieve. . . . Give us a job with a goal, some job specificaitons, and perhaps a time limit, and we are in business. . . . It is understandable that we should bring this performance orientation to sex. . . . How else could we, given our training, handle such an anxiety-laden experience. . . . We make work of sex. It becomes businesslike and mechanical, another job to be done, another goal to be achieved. Rather than seeing sex as a way for two people to relate and have fun, and asking how much pleasure and closeness there was, we view it as a performance and ask how hard the erection was, how long we lasted, and how many orgasms she'd had. The goals—usually intercourse and orgasm—are the only important factors. (pp. 35-37)

According to theorists, then, there are marked gender differences in concern about being in control, dominating others, and achieving at love. As yet, however, there is no evidence for these speculations.

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10

The Experience of Injustice
Social Psychological and Clinical Perspectives

JANICE M. STEIL AND JOYCE SLOCHOWER

> Justice is the first virtue of social institutions.
>
> (Rawls, 1971, p. 3)

> The first requisite of civilization . . .
>
> (Freud, 1933, p. 42)

> The uniting function in the individual man and in the social group . . . .
>
> (Plato, in Tillich, 1954, p. 55)

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAPTER[1]

Despite our universal social need for justice, the presence of injustice is ubiquitous between people, groups, and societies. How the injustice is perceived and interpreted will determine how the individual responds

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