

**ADULT FRIENDSHIP
AND THE BOUNDARIES OF MARRIAGE**

by

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=====

VOLUME 1



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For Robert

friend - companion - spouse

Mending Wall

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
 That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
 And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
 And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
 The work of hunters is another thing:
 I have come after them and made repair
 Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
 But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
 To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
 No one has seen them made or heard them made,
 But at spring mending-time we find them there.
 I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
 And on a day we meet to walk the line
 And set the wall between us once again.
 We keep the wall between us as we go.
 To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
 And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
 We have to use a spell to make them balance:
 "Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
 We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
 Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
 One on a side. It comes to little more:
 There where it is we do not need the wall:
 He is all pine and I am apple-orchard.
 My apple trees will never get across
 And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
 He only says, "Good fences make good neighbours."
 Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
 If I could pit a notion in his head:
 "Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it
 Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
 Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
 What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was likely to give offence.
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall.
 That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,
 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
 He said it for himself. I see him there
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
 He moves in darkness, as it seems to me,
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, "Good fences make good neighbours."

————— Robert Frost —————

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SUMMARY

Four core themes characterised this study: (a) adult friendship, particularly across the gender line, (b) the association between friendship and psychological well-being, (c) the role of attachment in friendship processes, and (d) the influence of the boundaries of marriage on friendship. Twenty six individuals were included in the initial research and 19 subjects participated in the main study. Theoretical principles of social cognition, constructive alternativism and attachment guided the collection and interpretation of data, which was collated, interpreted and then presented in case-study format. Self-with-other representation played a major role in data interpretation.

Investigation into the structure and processes of friendship revealed it to be a complex and fragile relationship, defined both idiosyncratically and existentially, as well as by specific distinguishing features, such as trust, loyalty and intimacy.

Attachment orientation and positive friendship experiences were noted as being contributory to the sense of interpersonal intimacy associated with feelings of well-being. Positive association was registered between 'secure' attachment orientation and self-ratings of well-being and happiness. Opposite-sex friendship emerged as an exclusive relational type, both similar to, and different from, same-sex friendship and romantic love relationships. Its ambiguous role is evidently compounded by the latent sexuality in heterosocial relationships. Respondents reported cases of opposite-sex friendships metamorphosing into romantic love relationships and, less frequently, vice versa.

Manifest in attachment and relational mental models, marital boundaries can facilitate or inhibit friendship. On both direct- and meta-perspective levels, securely-attached respondents were relatively accepting of opposite-sex friendships within a marital context. Insecurely-attached subjects tended to construe them as threatening to the marital reality. Responses to this threat varied: avoidantly-attached individuals used ego-protective mechanisms such as denial and repression, whereas the anxious-ambivalent attachment orientation seemed more closely associated with feelings of mistrust and jealousy, expressed through anger and anxiety.

Personal boundary structure plays an incisive role in adult friendship. Thick-boundaried personalities seemed particularly conscious of preserving marital identity. They were more territorial with regard to friendships within the marital context, and more conscious of social rules pertaining thereto.

Key terms:

Adult friendship; Opposite-sex friendship; Boundaries; Attachment; Social cognition; Mental models; Personal constructs; Constructive alternativism; Self-with-other representation; Interpersonal intimacy; Well-being; Sexuality; Social rules; Marital identity.

VOLUME 1

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Friendship is an ancient and honourable institution.
(Thoreau)

In this chapter, against the historical background of adult friendship, the justification for conducting the present study is discussed. The motivation and rationalisation of the research is presented and the focus of the study is briefly described. The broad aims and goals are stated and the chapter ends with an outline of the thesis.

1.1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Centuries before Christ, Aristotle claimed both that having a friend meant enjoying a supplementary life, and that awareness of a friend's existence and nature makes the individual more fully aware of his/her own (Enright & Rawlinson, 1991). Man seems always to have acknowledged the value of friendship, at certain times waxing lyrical on its virtues, and at others, cursing its darker side. Indeed, both in the expansive domains of philosophers and in the fertile, sometimes platitudinous, arenas of novelists and poets, friendship has been far from neglected (Rangell, 1963).

Plato, Aristotle and Cicero described the qualities of friendship, identified categories and functions of friendship and analysed its role in maintaining a stable society (Brain, 1976; Bukowski, Nappi & Hoza, 1987). More recently, scholars have given their attention to the changes in the enactment of friendship over historical periods (Lopata & Maines, 1990), in an effort to examine the genesis of contemporary friendship patterns (Silver, 1990). In her

extensive review of historical perspectives, Oliker (1989) examined gender differences in conceptions and styles of friendship. She found that the increasingly separate spheres of men and women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries yielded major changes both in romantic ideals of marriage and in the nature of women's friendships with each other.

Indeed, friendship has traditionally implied a relationship between individuals of the same sex, with friendship between the sexes being either inconceivable or forbidden (Pogrebin, 1987): 'inconceivable' because universally, women have been considered men's inferiors, and 'forbidden' because historically, women have been regarded as chattels belonging to either their fathers or their husbands. Thus, throughout the ages, the extent to which women have been valued in society has been measured not so much according to the companionship they have afforded, but rather in terms of the contribution they have made to decoration, fornication, reproduction or domestication.

Nonetheless, the worlds of history, literature and music have yielded a rich and diverse (albeit somewhat motley) crop of opposite-sex friendships (Enright & Rawlinson, 1991). A thousand years before Christ, an Israelite warrior, Barak, befriended Deborah, a prophetess ... and married woman, to boot. During the Biblical period of Judges, Deborah and Barak shared a friendship out of which arose a successful plan of military action used by the army of Israel against their enemies, the Canaanites. More than six centuries later, Aspasia, a colleague of both Socrates and Plato, developed a friendship with Pericles with whom she taught Rhetoric. All that history records, however, is that Pericles fell in love with her and that she became his lifelong mistress. As in most accounts of heterosocial relationships, whether ancient or modern, the romance is remembered, the friendship forgotten.

On the other hand, the relationship shared by Tchaikovsky and Nadezhda Von Meck seems to have been more of a friendship than a romance. Although they never met, they enjoyed a close companionship through lavish and lengthy correspondence. Theirs was a relationship which never slid into passion, probably because Tchaikovsky was homosexual and spurned personal, and certainly sexual, involvement with women. The character of Frederica, created by Byatt (1985), also desired to relate to men through friendship, not love, although she used sex to achieve her aim.

By contrast, the friendship between novelist John Masefield and the much younger Audrey Napier-Smith (in Buchan, 1983) provides proof that platonic male-female friendships can succeed. Mary Wollstonecraft disagreed. She avowed in "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" that love and friendship simply could not coexist because, she admonished, the fond jealousies of love were both antithetical to, and incompatible with, the tender confidence and sincere respect of friendship (Enright & Rawlinson, 1991).

And so, the debate regarding the feasibility and practicality of bonds of friendship between men and women has raged over the years, fuelled mostly by the theoretical diatribes of philosophers, poets and writers. Indeed, the viability of heterosexual friendship has relied heavily on its champions since, as a distinct genre, it competes perennially against a most hardy competitor: heterosexual love. Disappointingly, in contrast to the philosophical attention afforded the topic by poets and philosophers, the empirical attention granted it by social scientists has been limited.

1.2 RATIONALISATION OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH

Of the three most common areas of interpersonal research identified by Huston and Levinger (1978), friendship, de-

spite its fundamental importance as a core human relationship (Rubin, 1985), has received less research attention than have romantic love and marital relationships. Although it has received only sporadic empirical interest (Gareis, 1995), friendship has been recognised, since the days of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, as an important source of affection, enjoyment, understanding, support, companionship and counsel (Blieszner & Adams, 1992).

Defining friendship is a bold enterprise. Although its characteristic elements include sharing, caring, helping and supporting, the personally construed variations in emphasis amongst these factors are, themselves, defining attributes of friendship. Friendship is construed idiosyncratically: indeed, individuals are free to be friends with whomsoever they choose. Or are they? If friendship is voluntary, why do individuals tend to choose friends of the same age, race, religion and most significantly, sex (Booth & Hess, 1974; Griffith, 1985)?

Part of the answer may lie in the various sets of influences which impinge on friendship in adulthood. These influences, largely outside of the realm of individual control, function to restrict the freedom which, on first impression, seems to characterise friendship. On the other hand, people in Western societies are now more likely to divorce and less likely to live in close proximity to their families of origin, than they were in ages past (Blieszner & Adams, 1992). Consequently, their social opportunities have expanded and they are potentially able to exercise greater freedom regarding with whom they affiliate. This progression towards greater choice makes friendship an even more important area of research (Blieszner & Adams, 1992). "To understand how choice and constraint interact in friendship contributes to understanding how they operate in other, increasingly voluntary types of relationships" (Blieszner & Adams, 1992, p. 3).

Despite the broadening of scope and depth of social research over the past two decades, the majority of studies, by far, have been conducted within a Western societal context. For this reason, the literature surveyed within the present study deals mostly with research conducted in such societies, and specifically within America and the United Kingdom. Although some of the themes which emerge are likely to have universal significance, it should be borne in mind that social connotations and existential meanings are bound to vary inter-culturally, "from mere subtleties to great amplitudes" (Gareis, 1995). In this respect, cultures may differ according to a host of criteria (including belief systems; social structure; sex roles; interpersonal perception; attributional styles; expectations; communication patterns; and, conflict resolution), each having the potential to significantly influence friendship patterns and experiences.

Notwithstanding this fundamental consideration, a synthesis of the existing research reveals a major gap in the theoretical study of adult friendship: friendship across the gender line. Despite the universally acknowledged premise that all close relationships are worthy of investigation in terms of their contribution to global life satisfaction, positive affect and successful psychological functioning, only limited interest in opposite-sex friendship has been shown by researchers (Hacker, 1981; Bell, 1981b; Rawlins, 1982; Rose, 1985; Sapadin, 1988; Blieszner & Adams, 1992; O'Connor, 1992; Nardi, 1992), since the first major empirical investigation, conducted by Booth and Hess (1974). It is, indeed, a relatively unexamined research topic and one which "has received minimal attention in both anthropological ... and sociological enquiries" (Swain, 1992, p. 153).

O'Meara (1989) bemoans this lack of scientific research, commenting that the nature of heterosocial friendship as a "significant personal relationship ... is as yet barren of

social scientific insight" (p. 541). He calls for common-sense opinion to be supplemented by research-based insights into the character and dynamics of opposite-sex friendship in adulthood.

One of the reasons for this relative lack of sociological and psychological attention no doubt lies in the fact that "friendship relationships between males and females are somewhat of an anomaly among adults who are beyond the courtship period" (Booth & Hess, 1974, p. 38). Research has validated this supposition: for instance, only about 2% of the 678 friendships investigated in Adam's (1985) study of the aged, comprised mixed-sex dyads. Similarly, in a survey by Block (1980), only 18% of the sample reported having close opposite-sex friendships. Furthermore, 40% of the subjects held no aspirations of having such friendships, at all. Indeed, Walters (1988) observes that opposite-sex friendships "hardly exist at all, unless you count those practical alliances - little pacts of mutual selfishness and ego advancement - which go by the name of friendship" (p. 33).

In addition, O'Meara (1989) suggests that the limited research into cross-sex friendship reflects the lack of societal expectations of, and value attributed to, this relationship-type. Consequently, society offers little in the way of shared definitions, role models or institutional guidelines for the private culture of friendship across the gender boundary.

The dearth of research in this area thus reflects the difficulties which adults experience in forming and maintaining such relationships, especially within the context of marriage. Paradoxically, being heterosexual most often means being homosocial, whilst the individual who is heterosocial is in danger of being labelled as homosexual! Given society's near obsession with heterosexual relationships, and its

traditional ambivalence about homosexuality, it is indeed ironical that heterosexuals are, in fact, so homosocial!

Nonetheless, industrialisation has meant an increase in heterosocial contact and the accompanying need for social skills relevant to such contexts. Indeed, "...in today's world, professional men and women must interact together in many ways. They need to understand, appreciate and respect each other both in their personal and professional relationships. Cross-sex friendships provide an excellent opportunity to bridge these differences and learn more about oneself and the opposite sex" (Sapadin, 1988, p. 526). In order to achieve this, sexuality in male-female relationships needs to be de-emphasised in favour of other relationship qualities such as companionship, emotional support and platonic affiliation. In essence, the morality of cross-sex friendship needs to be re-negotiated so that men and women learn to relate to one another in platonic ways, in non-sexual contexts and across the many restrictive boundaries constraining platonic heterosocial relationships.

1.2.1. Heterosociality

The 'homosocial norm' is referred to by Lipman-Blumen (1976) and Rose (1985) as the seeking out, and enjoyment of, same-sex company. Likewise, 'homosociality' refers to the preference of individuals to form friendships with people of the same gender. These terms forge a clear conceptual distinction between the semantic implications inherent within the terms 'homosocial' and 'homosexual'.

In the present study, the term 'heterosocial' has been coined in order to describe social relationships between individuals of different genders. Likewise, the term of 'heterosociality' is used to indicate opposite-sex relationships - in this case, friendships. The term was deemed particularly appropriate because it diverts attention away

from the latently sexual nature of most male-female relationships, and instead, throws emphasis on their social characters. This, in turn, highlights the conceptual exclusivity of opposite-sex friendship as a relational class of its own, distinct from both heterosexual love relationships and same-sex friendships, and comprised specifically of non-romantic, non-familial, personal relationships across the gender line.

1.3. THE CONCEPT OF INTERPERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Because every human relationship encompasses some degree of uniqueness and exclusivity, 'boundaries', as a descriptive concept, is widely applicable to many dimensions of human behaviour (Hartmann, 1991). Boundaries exist between individuals and around families; they protect egos, feelings and thoughts and mediate between cognitive and affective processes. They represent defences against the development of potentially threatening relationships, cognitions and affect.

The concept of boundaries provides a useful framework within which to study opposite-sex friendship. Set within a marital context, such an analysis has the potential to disclose the delicate balance between opposite-sex friendship and marriage, to tease out subtle associations between the two relationships, and to provide conceptual leverage for understanding the processes of mediation between them.

1.3.1. The origin of the boundary concept

In ancient times, spiritual masters, teachers and philosophers conceptualised boundaries in various ways. Around 500 B.C., Buddha taught a path of wakefulness and detachment or boundary establishment (Whitfield, 1993). In ancient legends and myths, when a magician wants to work magic, he encircles himself within a bounded circle, in which magical powers,

lost outside of the circle, can be brought into play. World religions have also included various boundaries, in the form of commandments and guidelines for living.

The concept of boundaries has a lengthy history in psychology. The late 19th century heralded the scientific exploration of self-consciousness and awareness of self-other differentiation. In "Inhibition, Symptoms and Anxiety," Freud (in Strachey, 1953) made explicit reference to boundaries, referring to them as protective shields, or barriers, against stimulation. During infancy, boundaries serve a special function in dealing with external reality, as the infant moves from the pleasure principle to that of reality. Additionally, the concept of ego-defensive boundaries is germane to psychoanalytic theory.

Psychological discourse in the 1900s continued to include notions of boundary. For example, in Lewin's (1951) field theory, behaviour is described as a function of two different forces, one restraining and the other, driving. Later, clinicians such as Jacobson (1964) returned to, and expanded, the original theories regarding the dynamics of self and other, whilst Searles (1965) highlighted the functionality and appropriateness of distinguishing self from context. The family therapy movement in the 1950s stressed the importance of boundaries in relationships. Minuchin (1983) later developed the theme to emphasise 'boundary' as a crucial dynamic in individual and family health. Concomitantly, Bateson (1972) conceptualised boundaries as conditions of all communication and as loci of all relationships. Much more recently, Hartmann (1991) described the boundary concept as a framework within which to explain personality and behaviour.

1.3.2. **Boundaries of marriage**

Conjugal rules constitute the warp and woof of marital

boundary systems. Rules function to maintain and effectuate the esprit de corps - the foci or identities - within the relationship, dealing primarily with activities that are essential to the role support therein. Boundaries thus function to protect the social reality of marital relationships (McCall, 1970), with spouses determining such boundaries in the first place, and then negotiating what constitutes their transgression. Extra-marital relationships, such as friendships (especially with the opposite-sex), which may be construed as impinging on the boundaries, thus come to represent a threat to the relationship. It is this complex interweaving of two distinct relationship types that produces such a challenging area of research.

Surprisingly, the association between friendship and other relationships has not been extensively examined (Candy, Troll & Levy, 1981). In spite of the centrality of marriage as a core adult relationship, "research assessing its impact on friendship is relatively sparse" (Tschann, 1988, p. 67). Although Titus (1980) examined the influence of friendship on marriage, no researchers to date have systematically investigated the inverse relationship. Indeed, it would seem that, inimical to any real understanding of the nature of friendship, is a reluctance to demythologise this relationship. Yet, empirical interest in friendship within a marital context is particularly opportune in Western society as it faces growing instability in marriage, reduction in family size, attenuation of kinship ties and an increasing recognition of the need for interpersonal intimacy.

1.4. THE PRESENT STUDY

Idiographic by nature, and a case-study by design, the present study explores the dynamics and processes involved in adult friendships - particularly those across the gender line. The study also examines the influence of marriage as a core attachment relationship in adulthood; the role of

sexuality in opposite-sex friendship; the role of attachment in friendship processes; and, the association between friendship experiences and psychological well-being.

1.4.1. **Thesis outline**

Owing to the scope of the study, the thesis is presented in two volumes. Volume 1 (chapters 1-7) is concerned with various aspects of adult friendship, as well as the methodological and theoretical backgrounds upon which the study is based. In volume 2 (chapters 8-10), the themes of attachment and interpersonal boundaries are presented, along with the final conclusions and discussion of the findings. The second volume also contains the appendices and literature references.

The 10 chapters are interwoven with case-study data and conclusions are presented and discussed at the end of each one. Following the present chapter, which introduces the research topic and justifies the scientific study of adult friendship, the methodological design of the study is described in chapter 2. In chapter 3, the association between sociality and well-being is investigated, and chapter 4 examines the structure and processes of adult friendship. Chapter 5 focuses on the phenomenon of heterosociality, probes the role of sexuality in opposite-sex friendship, and differentiates between two major relational types: opposite-sex friendships and romantic love relationships. Interpersonal relationships from a social cognitive perspective are examined in chapter 6, whilst chapter 7 is concerned with personal construct theory. The theoretical principles of attachment are examined in chapter 8, and chapter 9 explores the association between friendship and the boundaries of marriage. Finally, chapter 10 presents a synopsis of the study and broadly examines the emergent conclusions and themes. The thesis ends with an indication of its contribution to the field of psychology.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Friendship always benefits; love sometimes injures.
(Seneca)

This chapter begins with a statement of the goals of the study and a description of the research design. Each of the interview sessions is described, together with the data-collection techniques which were employed. The chapter also includes biographical information regarding each of the 19 respondents.

21. GOALS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The goals which served to guide the present study were:

1. To investigate the phenomenon of adult friendship and more specifically, friendship between individuals of the opposite sex.
2. To estimate the impact of friendship on subjective experiences of well-being and life satisfaction.
3. To evaluate the influence of the boundaries of marriage on the participants' experiences of opposite-sex friendships.
4. To explore the role of attachment in friendship processes.

22. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Being idiographic by nature, the investigation was well-suited to a case-study design in terms of data collection and data analysis. Both with regard to the available liter-

ature and the experiences of the participants in the study, friendship between adults of the opposite sex emerged as being a rare and ambiguously defined phenomenon. Indeed, the majority of respondents reported having no, or few, close friends of the opposite sex. It was only after probing and redefinition during the interviews, that the respondents acknowledged that certain of their relationships with the opposite sex could, in fact, be classified as 'friendships'. Because of this, the phenomena was deemed to be poorly suited to nomothetic methods of study.

Data for the main study was collected via questionnaires and in-depth interviews. In addition, methods of construct-elicitation were employed, in line with Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory, which is based on the principles of constructive alternativism. Projective techniques, based on the Thematic Apperception Test method, were also employed.

23. THE SUBJECTS

The initial, exploratory stage of the study included interviews with 26 individuals (9 men and 17 women) over a period of 22 months. These participants, labelled 'interviewees' in the present thesis, included: (a) individuals who had expressed an interest in the phenomenon of friendship and who were consequently keen to express their ideas, (b) individuals who responded to newspaper and other advertisements, and (c) residents of a retirement village.

A second sample, containing 19 individuals (referred to in the present thesis as 'respondents') participated in the subsequent, and main, study. These respondents were obtained by: (a) recruiting volunteers at a local retirement village (see Appendix A1), (b) advertising for participants in several local newspapers, (c) advertising at the local Community Centre, (d) advertising at several libraries, (e)

recruiting volunteers from a local physical fitness programme (Run/Walk for Life), and (f) responding to newspaper advertisements regarding social/friendship clubs.

24. DATA COLLECTION: ACCESSING MENTAL MODELS

The interviews conducted with the participants in the first stage of the study, focused on their experiences of, and beliefs about, friendship before and after marriage; same-sex and opposite-sex friendship; friendship between spouses and the perceived boundaries to the development of cross-sex friendship, especially within a marriage context (see Appendix B1).

Of the 19 respondents (14 women and 5 men) who participated in the main study, 15 were married (5 for the second time), 1 was widowed, 2 were divorced and had not remarried, and 1 had recently ended a 9-year cohabitation which he described as being "just like a marriage" (see Appendix K2). Two married couples participated. Over a period of 18 months, a minimum of 6 sessions was conducted with each of the respondents.

25. SESSION ONE: INTERVIEWS, ACCOUNTS AND RETROSPECTIVE MEMORIES OF FRIENDSHIPS

The first interview session in the main study lasted approximately three hours and was aimed at accessing the mental (working) models of the respondents as regards the phenomenon of friendship. Respondents were interviewed in order to elicit, in a general sense, the extent and nature of their friendship networks, their past experiences of friendship, their attitudes towards friendship and their perceptions of the influence of marriage thereon. The two married couples requested that the initial interview should be a joint one, and they were thus interviewed together. All other respondents were interviewed individually.

Respondents were asked to describe their previous and current same-sex and cross-sex friendship experiences. The themes contained in the interview included the formation of friendships, friendship activities, friendship difficulties, experiences of friendship deterioration, concepts of ideal friendship, perceived restriction to friendship and the influence of marriage on friendships. Although the interview schedules were similar in their content, there were variations based on the respondents' life situations (see Appendix B2).

On completion of the initial interview, subjects were asked to complete questionnaires which elicited demographic information (see Appendix C). They were also requested to complete the Boundary Questionnaire (Appendix D), devised by Hartmann (1991).

2.5.1. Measuring boundary thickness: the Boundary Questionnaire

Hartmann's (1991) Boundary Questionnaire was designed to quantify the concept of thick and thin boundaries. The questionnaire consists of 145 items, divided into twelve categories, described by Hartmann (1991), as follows:

1. Sleep/wake/dream (14 items)

EXAMPLE: When I awake in the morning, I am not sure whether I am really awake for a few minutes.

2. Unusual experiences (19 items)

EXAMPLE: I have had deja vu experiences.

3. Thoughts, feelings, moods (16 items)

EXAMPLE: Sometimes I don't know whether I am thinking or feeling.

4. **Childhood, adolescence, adulthood** (6 items)

EXAMPLE: I am very close to my childhood feelings.

5. **Interpersonal** (15 items)

EXAMPLE: When I get involved with someone, we sometimes get too close.

6. **Sensitivity** (5 items)

EXAMPLE: I am very sensitive to other people's feelings.

7. **Neat, exact, precise** (11 items)

EXAMPLE: I keep my desk or worktable neat and well organised.

8. **Edges, lines, clothing** (20 items)

EXAMPLE: I like houses with flexible spaces, where you can shift things around and make different uses of the same rooms.

9. **Opinions about children and others** (8 items)

EXAMPLE: I think a good teacher must remain in part a child.

10. **Opinions about organisations** (10 items)

EXAMPLE: In an organisation, everyone should have a definite place and a specific role.

11. **Opinions about people, nations, groups** (14 items)

EXAMPLE: There are no sharp dividing lines between normal people, people with problems, and people who are considered psychotic or crazy.

12. **Opinions about beauty, truth** (7 items)

EXAMPLE: Either you are telling the truth or you are lying; that's all there is to it.

Respondents were instructed to respond to each item in the

questionnaire on a 5-point scale from 0 (no, not at all true of me) to 4 (yes, definitely true of me). Approximately 2/3 of the items are worded so that 4 is thinnest (e.g. I feel unsure of who I am at times); 1/3 are worded in the opposite direction so that 4 is thickest and 0 is thinnest (e.g. I have friends and I have enemies, and I know which are which). When scoring the questionnaire, the scores on the items measuring thinness are added directly; the scores on the items measuring thickness are first inverted and then added.

Each respondent obtained a sub-score on each of the 12 categories, a Personal Total based on the score for the first eight categories, a World Total which is based on the last four categories and an overall total boundary score, the Sumbound. High scores correspond to relative thinness of boundaries.

2.5.1.1. **Internal structure of the Boundary Questionnaire**

Hartmann (1991) reports that data analysis for the first 866 individuals who completed the questionnaire revealed a Cronbach Alpha of 0,93, indicating impressive reliability. An exploratory factor analysis using principal components extraction produced 13 factors, almost all of which corresponded to Hartmann's (1991) original conception of the major boundary categories. He describes the 12 factors which are easily interpretable as aspects of thin or thick boundaries, thus:

Factor 1: Primary process thinking. The 51 items on this factor are all keyed in the thin boundary direction. They describe a person who has many experiences of merging and of fluctuating identity; his/her imagery is so vivid that it is hard to distinguish it from reality. He/she experiences synesthesia and the merging of objects with self and with other. Theta reliability = 0,92.

Factor 2: Preference for explicit boundaries. Of the 37 items in this factor, 36 are keyed in the thick boundary direction. They express a preference for clear borders in respect to nations, cities, houses, pictures, stories or relationships. There is a secondary emphasis on neatness. Theta = 0,87.

Factor 3: Identification with children. The 19 items in this factor, 18 of which are keyed thin, describe individuals who feel partly child-like, and who identify with and enjoy children. Theta = 0,75.

Factor 4: Fragility. Twelve of the 13 items in this factor are keyed thin. They express sensitivity to hurt, a difficult and complicated childhood and adolescence, fears of falling apart, and fears of being overwhelmed by interpersonal involvement. Theta = 0,75.

Factor 5: Percipience/clairvoyance. The 16 items on this factor (14 keyed thin) include beliefs in one's clairvoyant powers, including knowing others' unexpressed thoughts and feelings, having premonitory dreams and experiencing vivid memories and imagery. The items also suggest a strong sense of self-identity from childhood through old age. Theta = 0,70.

Factor 6: Trustful openness. The 11 (thin-keyed) items on this factor describe a person who believes in being open to the world, trusting others, and disclosing personal experience. Theta = 0,70.

Factor 7: Organised planfulness. The 15 items on this factor (all keyed thick) describe a well-organised, methodical person who keeps track of everything. Theta = 0,67.

Factor 8: Belief in impenetrable intergroup boundaries. All 10 of the items on this factor are keyed thick. They de-

scribe an individual who believes in intergroup segregation whether a group is defined by nationality, race, age, or gender. Theta = 0,65.

Factor 9: Flexibility. Ten of the 12 items in this factor are keyed thin. The 12 items have four themes: the wish to shape one's own space, job and life; recognising separateness in close relationships; appreciating without analysing; and believing that people are more the same than they are different. Theta = 0,57.

Factor 10: Over involvement in fantasy. The six items in this factor (all keyed thin) are concerned with the problem of making transitions from one state to another - whether it is from being asleep to being awake, or from listening to music or playing a game to ordinary states of consciousness. Theta = 0,57.

Factor 11: Preference for simple geometric forms. The five items in this factor, all of which are keyed thick, describe an individual who likes straight lines, and would like to work as a navigator or engineer. Theta = 0,56.

Factor 12: Isolation of affect. Two of the five items in this factor (all keyed thin) describe a person who explicitly believes in the segregation of thinking from feeling, and who favours rationality over emotion. Theta = 0,56.

2.6. SESSION TWO: QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES

In addition to the initial interview with each of the respondents, two other methods of accessing the respondents' mental (working) models of friendship were employed. Firstly, a questionnaire was developed in order to evaluate aspects of the individuals' mental models of cross-sex friendship within a marriage context. The self-report procedure was chosen in order to tap not only behavioural ele-

ments of friendship, but also affectively-toned cognitive expectancies that form an essential part of working models. Secondly, an adaptation of the Thematic Apperception Technique was used as a projective device, to further elicit aspects of the respondents' mental models of cross-sex friendship.

2.6.1. The Mental Model Questionnaire

The Mental Model Questionnaire (MMQ) (Appendix E1) was developed to assess the respondents' relevant beliefs, attitudes, expectations and experiences with regard to cross-sex friendships. The questionnaire contained a total of 15 sections, 10 of which (61 items) aimed at accessing general schemata in terms of beliefs and expectations as regards the respondent's relational world, self and spouse. These 10 sections were entitled:

- a) Opposite-sex friendship, romantic love and sexuality
- b) Acceptability of opposite-sex friendships in marriage
- c) Marital status
- d) Privacy
- e) Benefits of opposite-sex friendship
- f) Age homogeneity
- g) Expectations of spouse's friendship role
- h) Loyalty
- i) Inclusion of spouse in opposite-sex friendships
- j) Social pressure

Five sections (33 items) dealt with experience-near schemata and were entitled:

- k) Spouse's approval of opposite-sex friendship
- l) Approval of opposite-sex friend's spouse
- m) Spouse's expectations
- n) Opposite-sex friendship, love and sexuality
- o) Spouse as friend

2.6.2. Use of projective techniques in the present study

As a means to explore an individual's evaluation and interpretation of reality, projection is the "inclination to see in all outside reality the values and convictions that are already part of the personality" (Henry, 1956, p. 7). As a means of eliciting the contents of the subjects' mental models regarding friendship, this technique therefore seemed particularly appropriate. Four pictorial scenarios were employed (see Appendix E2). The four cards depicted:

Green card: A picture of two men, two women and two young children, sitting on a mound of soil and rubble. The adults are approximately the same age. The man in the foreground holds a sledge hammer.

Pink card: A scene at a harbour. In the foreground, sitting at a table strewn with glasses, cigarettes and a bottle of beer, are three women, one man and a young child. The child is perched on the lap of the woman seated next to the man. In the background are several men and women.

Orange card: A picture of two men and four women in an open-plan dining room-cum-kitchen. The actors range in age, although several are elderly. Two men and two women are sitting at a dinner table, eating. The other two women are serving food.

Red card: A picture of two women and a man standing together at a social gathering. A second man stands in the foreground, looking back over his shoulder at the three individuals.

A fifth card was also used and, being blank, followed the lead of The Thematic Apperception Test. As such, it aimed at challenging the subjects to create for themselves a social situation in which they found themselves, together with two

people: a person of the opposite sex who had been a friend of the respondent before he/she was married and secondly, a person of the same sex as him/her, who had been a friend of his/her spouse prior to their marriage. The aim was to allow the respondents to provide a statement of their assumptions about cross-sex friendship within the marital context, by describing the interpersonal situation and the motives and feelings inherent therein. The technique also aimed at revealing the respondents' basic mechanism of relating to the situation as they interpreted it.

The following instructions were given to the respondents with respect to each scenario:

"This is a picture of a group of friends. None of the people you see in this picture are blood relations, although some may be marital partners.

Describe what is happening.

Describe the relationships between the people.

What preceded this activity?

What is each person thinking?

What feelings might each of the participants be experiencing?

What fears/concerns might each of the participants be experiencing, in terms of the relationships with the people in the picture?

What interpersonal problems might occur later on?

What could be the outcome?

With which character do you identify most?

Which character would assume the role of your spouse?"

The respondents' verbal responses were recorded verbatim and non-verbal reactions were also noted.

2.6.2.3. **Interpretation of responses**

Based on Henry's (1956) description of The Thematic Apperception Test, the task of interpreting the responses was based on the following:

Content: The content of the descriptions was evaluated in terms of what the respondents said and what they did not say, especially in light of what they might have been expected to say.

Rhythm and smoothness: Rhythm and smoothness of response were judged according to the degree of ease with which the subjects responded to the pictures, in terms of readiness of flow of words, hesitations, jokes to the researcher, absence of pauses, noticeable discomfort, contradictions and changes of mind. Indications of self-consciousness were also noted.

Tone of the story: The tone of the responses was evaluated according to whether their content was generally positive and accepting, or discouraging and sanctioning.

2.6.3. **Mental models of attachment**

The participants' mental models of attachment were evaluated through several questionnaires (Appendix F). Measures of attachment orientation (styles, patterns and dimensions) with regard to self, spouse and members of the opposite-sex, in general, were obtained. A trust scale (Appendix H) was also administered, as an extension of the evaluation of each subject's mental model of attachment within a marital context.

2.6.3.1. **Mental representation of self in relation to attachment: direct perception and metaperception**

Concerned with the bond that develops between an individual

and his/her care-taker, attachment has consequences not only for the individual's self-identity, but also for his/her view of the social world as he/she experiences it. Attachment is therefore a relevant concept in terms of investigating the ways in which individuals experience themselves within particular relationships, such as those of friendship and marriage. Moreover, attachment styles may be operationalised as beliefs and expectations about attachment relationships.

Initial tests of attachment developed by Hansburg (1972), Hirschfeld et al. (1977), and Henderson (1979), were followed by Henderson, Duncan-Jones and Byrne's (1980) development of an interview schedule to evaluate the availability and perceived adequacy of an individual's attachment relationships. Since then, attachment patterns have been operationalised and measured in several different ways: dimensionally, by two or three continuous factors (Collins & Read, 1990); typologically, by three or four discrete categories (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985); and prototypically by continuous ratings of four attachment patterns (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

On the basis of Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall's (1978) descriptions of the behavioural and emotional characteristics of avoidantly-, securely-, and anxiously-attached children, Hazan and Shaver (1987) developed a single-item, three-category measure that subjects can use to classify their experiences in relationships. Whilst being useful, this trichotomous description of attachment style is limited in several ways (Collins & Read, 1990). First, each description contains statements about more than one aspect of the relationship under examination. It is also not possible to assess the degree to which a single style characterises an individual. Also, as a discrete measure of attachment, it assumes that there are three mutually exclusive styles of attachment. Nonetheless, despite these criticisms, Shaver

and Brennan (1992) report that the three styles are related to a variety of close relationship processes and outcomes.

Following initial efforts to devise a measurement of attachment, Feeney and Noller (1990) produced a 15-item measure of attachment by using each phrase in Hazan and Shaver's (1987) trichotomy of attachment style. The items consistently produced a two-factor solution, indicating that the dimensions of, first, comfort with closeness and second, anxiety over abandonment, underlie the three categories of attachment. Subsequently, Strahan's (1991) principal components factor analysis of the 15 attachment items revealed a two-factor solution to the attachment construct: closeness (the degree of comfort felt with closeness in interpersonal relationships) and anxiety (degree of worry about relationships) - a dichotomy in keeping with Bowlby's (1981) general division between secure and insecure attachment.

In an attempt to address some of the shortcomings of previous methods of measuring attachment, Collins and Read (1990) developed an initial 21-item scale. This scale was based on Hazan and Shaver's (1987) original descriptions of adult attachment styles, as well as on additional attachment characteristics, as described in the literature. Hazan and Shaver's (1987) paragraphs were broken into their component statements, each forming a single item. This resulted in 15 items, 5 for each attachment style. Also identifying aspects of attachment not included in Hazan and Shaver's (1987) description of attachment, Collins and Read (1990) developed three further statements, each of which characterised one of the styles with respect to confidence in the availability and dependability of others. A second concern related to reactions to separation from the caretaker; three items characterising each of the attachment styles with respect to separation were thus also included by Collins and Read (1990). The final scale, the Adult Attachment Scale, contained a pool of 18 items. Factor analysis revealed three

factors, labelled Depend, Anxiety, and Close. Cronbach's alpha for the three were, respectively, 0,75; 0,72 and 0,69. Test-retest correlations for Close, Depend and Anxiety were 0,68; 0,71 and 0,52 respectively, indicating satisfactory stability.

A two-dimensional model of attachment such as that of Kobak and Hazan (1991) has the advantage of summarising attachment patterns in an uncomplicated manner, through the derivation of two scores. Typically, dimensional scales are bipolar, characterising an individual as a point along a continuous dimension or combination of dimensions. In terms of advantage, what is gained through economy and simplicity of measurement, however, is lost through failure to isolate emergent properties arising from combinations of dimensions.

Whereas dimensional methods of measurement assume that people differ along underlying dimensions, categorical methods postulate different kinds of people. Direct and indirect categorical approaches to measurement of adult attachment are often preferred, mostly because of their convenience in terms of economy of communication and statistical analysis. Thus, a few groups or categories can serve as a summary of a complex pattern of individual differences (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Whereas correlational analyses characteristic of dimensional methods prevent mistaken causal relationships being deduced from the data collected, data obtained from analysis of variance, often employed in categorical analysis, is susceptible to mistaken causal interpretation. Grouping schemes are also susceptible to inappropriate and simple generalisation and to cognitive and perceptual biases, with researchers tending to exaggerate the similarities between members of a category and to minimise the differences (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

By contrast, a method which acknowledges the value of within-group variance and integrates and addresses the limita-

tions of both the dimensional and the grouping approaches to measurement of individual differences, is the prototype approach. From this perspective, categories are indistinct sets that may overlap with one another and that contain members with varying degrees of typicality (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). This approach to categorisation allows for a complexity of patterns of individual differences and recognises that members of a group vary according to their typicality. Indeed, it is unlikely that individuals can be neatly classified into any one attachment profile, given the multiplicity of past influences and experiences, as well as the diversity of present situational and relationship-specific influences. Over time and across situations, individuals may exhibit characteristics of more than one attachment style. Prototype methods of attachment assess how well an individual fits each category (prototype) at any one time or within any one situation.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) describe a four-category model of adult attachment which is based explicitly on the prototype approach to measurement and categorisation, and implicitly on all three approaches to defining individual differences. Each of the four attachment patterns (secure, preoccupied, dismissing, fearful) identified by the model is conceptualised as a prototype with which individuals may correspond in varying degrees. It is also acknowledged that, in order to assess individuals' feelings, expectations and behaviours in the attachment domain, it is necessary to consider their profiles across all four attachment domains.

Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) Relationship Questionnaire is a distinct measuring instrument developed within the context of the four-category model. It consists of four short paragraphs describing the attachment prototypes as they apply to close relationships. Similarly, the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ) is also an indirect measure of the prototypes. Developed by Griffin and Bartholomew

(1994), it consists of 30 phrases drawn from the paragraph descriptions in Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment measure, from Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) Relationship Questionnaire and Collins and Read's (1990) Adult Attachment Scale. Participants rate, on a 5-point scale, how well each item fits their characteristic style in close relationships.

RSQ scores for the four attachment prototypes are derived by computing the mean of the items representing each prototype. Four items contribute to the score for the preoccupied and fearful patterns; five items contribute to the scores for the other two. Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) report variable and generally low internal consistencies largely because two orthogonal dimensions (self-model and other-model) are being combined. However, high convergent validity across methods (self-report, peer reports, partner reports and expert raters' judgment) is reported by these researchers. Furthermore, they report discriminant validity with relatively low correlations between the two different dimensions rated by the same method.

Other efforts to devise an attachment measure include those of Main, Kaplan and Cassidy (1985) who used semi-structured interviews, to derive three categories of attachment pattern: detached, autonomous and enmeshed. In addition, West and Sheldon (1988) used Bowlby's elaboration of insecure attachment patterns to operationalise their definition in a self-report scaled instrument. The results indicated four scales, which in terms of interscale correlations, differentiate the distant, detached patterns from the close, enmeshed ones: compulsive self-reliance, compulsive caregiving, compulsive care-seeking and angry withdrawal.

Following their initial research, West and Sheldon-Keller (1994) focused on the definitional aspects of attachment in order to develop scales of attachment dimensions and patterns. West and Sheldon-Keller's (1994) basic premise is

that attachment relationships in adulthood are based largely on internal working models of an attachment figure. In adults, the demonstration of a secure base and separation protest depends largely on an investigation of the individual's internal constructs about the degree to which the attachment relationship promotes exploration. In developing The Reciprocal Attachment Questionnaire, West and Sheldon-Keller (1994) first identified the components of each attachment pattern and then used the following facets of attachment as the basis of item generation:

1. Compulsive self-reliance: avoids turning to the attachment figure for help; avoids giving the attachment figure affection or closeness; is uncomfortable with attachment figure needing him or her.

2. Compulsive care-giving: always places highest priority on needs of other; has feelings of self-sacrifice and martyrdom; provides care whether or not it is requested.

3. Compulsive care seeking: defines life in terms of problems requiring assistance to solve; defines attachment relationship in terms of receiving care; expects attachment figure to assume responsibility for major areas of life.

4. Angry withdrawal: shows negative reactions to perceived unavailability of attachment figure; displays negative reactions to perceived lack of responsiveness of attachment figure; experiences generalised anger toward attachment figure.

The final scale employed a 5-point response ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Factor analytical studies based on a sample that included 136 non-patients and 110 psychiatric patients, confirmed the theoretical base of the Reciprocal Attachment Questionnaire (RAQ). West and Sheldon-Keller (1994) report that, for the five dimensional

scales, a four-factor solution was optimal. All factors had eigenvalues greater than 1, indicating that factors had contributed significant independent information to the overall instrument. Results indicated a high interscale correlation between availability and responsiveness; these two scales were therefore combined to form 'available responsiveness'. Factor analysis with the five scale scores was also performed and a two-factor orthogonal solution was optimal, with each factor having an eigenvalue greater than 1. The scales of 'use of attachment figure' and 'available responsiveness' comprised the first factor, each with coefficients greater than 0,80. The scales of proximity-seeking and separation protest comprised the second factor, with coefficients greater than 0,76. The scale of 'feared loss' had a coefficient of 0,56 associated with the first factor and 0,61 associated with the second factor, suggesting that feared loss is a pivotal concept.

Factor analysis of the pattern scales yielded two significant factors. The first contained patterns associated with avoidant attachment: compulsive self-reliance and angry withdrawal. The second factor contained the patterns associated with anxious attachment: compulsive care seeking and compulsive care giving. Although no normative scores are available for the scales, West and Sheldon-Keller (1994) point out that the RAQ can be used as a tool to enrich understanding of attachment relationships.

2.6.3.2. Operationalisation of attachment in the present study

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) single-item, trichotomous measure of attachment style was employed in order to gauge the respondents' general attachment orientations (see Appendix F1). In addition, after reviewing the various attempts (Collins & Reed, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Bartholomew & Perlman, 1994) to improve on Hazan and Shaver's (1987)

categorisation of attachment styles, a decision was made to adapt and employ the Relationship Scale Questionnaire (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). The aim was to assess the respondents' general attachment orientation within the context of opposite-sex friendships.

The Relationship Scale Questionnaire (Appendix F4) was selected because of its comprehensive nature, having been developed from several previous measures of attachment, including the original measure of attachment style developed by Hazan and Shaver (1987). The scoring was altered from the original 7-point scale, to a 5-point scale, similar to that of the other scales administered in the present study. Also, the wording of the scale was changed in order to specify attachment orientations within the context of opposite-sex friendship.

Furthermore, in order to assess the respondents' attachment orientations specifically with regard to their spouses, from the individual's own perspective and also from a metaperspective, West and Sheldon-Keller's (1994) measures of attachment patterns and dimensions were employed (see Appendix F2, F3, G1, G2).

2.6.3.3. **Trust scales**

As an hypothesised element of attachment, interpersonal trust was measured on two levels of perspective: a direct interpersonal perspective (the extent to which the individual trusts his/her spouse) and a metaperspective (the extent to which the individual thinks his/her spouse trusts him/her). Towards this end, an interpersonal trust scale, developed by Rempel, Holmes and Zanna (1985) and based on the types of attributions drawn about a partner's motives, was administered (Appendix H1). Participants were required to respond to statements about the trustworthiness of their spouse. In order to obtain a metaperspective of marital

trust, the respondents were required to complete the scale from the perspective of their spouse (Appendix H2).

Rempel, Holmes and Zanna (1985) initially developed a 26-item Trust Scale to measure the level of trust within close relationships. Items were tailored to represent predictability, dependability, and faith components. Items designed to measure predictability emphasise the consistency and stability of a spouse's behaviours, based on past experience. Dependability items concentrate on dispositional qualities (such as honesty and reliability), which warrant confidence in the face of risk and potential hurt. Items constructed to measure faith are centred around feelings of confidence in the relationship and the responsiveness and caring expected from the spouse in the face of an uncertain, unpredictable future.

The dependability scale included items such as: "I am certain that my spouse would not cheat on me, even if the opportunity arose and there was no chance that he/she would get caught," and "Even when my spouse makes excuses which sound rather unlikely, I am confident that he/she is telling the truth." Items which characterised the factor of 'faith' included: "Even if I have no reason to expect my spouse to share things with me, I still feel certain that he/she will" and "When I share my problems with my spouse, I know he/she will respond in a loving way even before I say anything." Amongst the five items loading on the predictability factor are: "My spouse behaves in a very consistent manner" and "I feel very uncomfortable when my spouse has to make decisions which will affect me personally." (The latter item was subject to reverse scoring.)

Item analysis by Rempel, Holmes and Zanna (1985), performed on the original scale, lead to the subsequent development of the final 17-item scale. The authors report an overall Cronbach alpha of 0,81, with subscale reliabilities of 0,80;

0,72; and 0,70 for the faith, dependability and predictability subscales, respectively. The three subscales were moderately correlated ($r = 0,46$; $p < 0,001$ for faith and dependability; $r = 0,27$; $p < 0,05$ for faith and predictability; and $r = 0,28$; $p < 0,05$ for dependability and predictability). Gender differences were reported, indicating that the three aspects of trust are relatively autonomous for men but not for women.

2.6.3.4. **Mental models of love styles**

In order to measure the respondents' mental models as regards their attitudes and beliefs about love, an adapted version of Hendrick and Hendrick's (1986) scale, entitled Love Styles Scale, was administered (Appendix I). The scale extends Lee's (1973) theory of six basic love styles: Eros (passionate love), Ludus (game-playing love), Storge (friendship love), Pragma (logical, shopping-list love) Mania (possessive, dependent love) and Agape (all-giving, selfless love). Each of the six love styles was measured by seven items and respondents were asked to respond on a 5-point scale (5 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree); the higher the score, the more a subject subscribed to the love style measured. Although the scale employed in the present study was essentially that developed by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986), several items were altered or re-worded in order to ensure consistency with the themes of the present study.

Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) report substantial factor loadings for the sub-sections of their typology: with respect to the seven items that defined each love style, no loading was less than 0,50 for either Ludus or Agape. For Agape and Mania, only one of the seven items had a loading of less than 0,50. Eros had two items loading at less than 0,50, and Storge had three items. The researchers also report that the seven critical variables for a scale showed

strong loadings on a factor, and the loadings for the remaining variables were mostly all low, often approaching zero. Alpha coefficients were all 0,70+, except for Storge (0,62). Test-retest correlations ranged from a low of 0,60 for Eros to a high of 0,78 for Pragma.

2.6.4. Analysis and concatenation of results

Details of the respondents' mental models of marriage, cross-sex friendship, attachment orientations and love styles formed individual profiles against which their self-with-other representations were interpreted.

27. SESSION THREE: FEATURE AND TARGET COMPILATION

Congruent with an idiographic approach to data collection, the crucial units of representation with respect to self-with-friend and self-with-attachment figure were supplied by each of the participants. This technique allowed the examination of the affective/cognitive dimensions of friendship and attachment experiences.

The initial foray into assessing self-with-other representation entailed four separate data-gathering sessions:

2.7.1. Eliciting personal constructs and self-with-other perceptions

Prior to these sessions, in response to a description of friendship role titles, each participant created a list of past and present friends, both male and female, termed targets (Appendix J1). The attachment figure of 'spouse' was added to each role list. During this session, the participants were asked to select any one of the targets and to describe him/her as fully as possible. Respondents were encouraged to focus on both positive and negative aspects of the target personality. As the target person was described,

the researcher wrote down the words or phrases used by the participant. The adjectives or adjectival phrases thus generated were termed 'features'.

The respondents were then asked how they experienced themselves within their relationship with each of the target persons. Each respondent described how he/she felt when with each of the target persons. From the comments made, the researcher again extracted descriptors or features. As before, the emphasis was on supplying a broad spectrum of both positive and negative features. The process was then repeated with respect to each of the target persons the participant had listed. All the descriptors (features), termed a personal vocabulary, were recorded.

In order to assess the influence on friendship of the critical turning point represented by marriage, where applicable, the respondents made time-1/time-2 distinctions, thus creating two individuals from one (for example, 'my friend before he was married' and 'my friend after he was married'). The consequence of the two divisions was that each individual split in that manner was then treated as two different interactive partners.

After this session, and in preparation for the next, the participant's personal vocabularies and target lists were edited and winnowed, such that each target list contained a maximum of 37 names and each personal feature list contained 28 adjectives or phrases.

For each respondent, a personal response-pack was then prepared, containing 40 response-sheets (example: see Appendix J2). On top of each of 37 sheets was printed the name of a target. Three further target sheets were provided to each participant, bringing each respondent's total number of lists to 40. The three researcher-generated targets were: "Me, as I would ideally like to experience myself with a

friend" (ideal social self), "Me as I dread experiencing myself with a friend" (dreaded social self), and "Spouse". In one case, a respondent (Lesley), who had been married more than once, responded with respect to each of her spouses. The three researcher-generated target-sheets were randomly spaced throughout each set of response-sheets.

On each of the respondent's target-sheets, was listed his/her personal set of 28 self-generated features. A further 12 (researcher-generated) features, relating to attachment orientations and representing the researcher's consensual vocabulary, were included in each feature-list. Nine of the 12 items in the consensual vocabulary were based on Shaver and Hazan's (1987) trichotomous typology of adult attachment processes. Three items from each of the three styles were included. For the secure style, 'secure', 'confident', and 'trusting' were selected. For the avoidant style, 'afraid of getting too close', 'uncomfortable' and 'suspicious' were used. Relating to the anxious-ambivalent style, the terms 'frustrated', 'anxious' and 'worried about rejection' were used. The experimenter-generated items represented descriptors which emerged from the attachment literature as being potentially relevant to the aims and goals of the study.

In addition, because of the centrality of the theme of sexuality in opposite-sex relationships, and because initial interviews had indicated a reluctance on the part of the respondents to discuss issues of sexuality, either because of the subconscious nature of their feelings or because of perceived constraints against such discussion, the features of 'sexually attracted', 'jealous' and 'flirtatious' were included.

28. SESSION FOUR: SELF-WITH-OTHER REPRESENTATION

In this session, subjects were presented with their re-

sponse-packs. Responding to each of the 40 sheets individually, the participants were instructed to bring to mind an image or memory of themselves as partners in a relationship with each of the targets. They were then required to rate themselves as interactive participants within each dyad. With respect to every target included in the pack, the respondents thus considered each of the descriptors in their list, in turn, and indicated those which were descriptive of their experiences during the particular scenario envisioned.

2.8.1. Rationale for procedure

The techniques used for elicitation of self-with-other representation are rooted in Kelly's (1955) methods of construct elicitation and based on Ogilvie and Ashmore's (1991) and Ogilvie and Fleming's (in press) method of representing implicit clusters of self-with-other experiences. Typically, feature lists up until the late 1970s were experimenter-generated; however, in the present study, since personal meaning structures of each individual were being explored, free-response procedures were more appropriate. A major advantage of free-response formats, in this regard, is that "the resulting idiographic vocabulary is more likely to contain the categories of a person's belief system" (Rosenberg, Van Mechelen & DeBoeck, 1996, p. 137).

2.8.2. Analysis of data

The data from sessions four and five were then entered into a computer, using a data gathering system (designed and written by Barry Wittman under the guidance of Dr Dan Ogilvie of Rutgers University), to be analysed by an algorithm dubbed HICLAS for HIERarchical CLASSES Analysis and developed by DeBoeck and Rosenberg (1988). Hierarchical classes models, of which HICLAS is one, are structural models for two-way, two-mode arrays with binary (0,1) entries (Van Mechelen, DeBoeck & Rosenberg, 1995). HICLAS, as

a data-analysis algorithm, aims at recovering the underlying structure in a data matrix by minimising the discrepancies between the data and the structure so recovered.

The algorithm is a "set-theoretical model based on a modified iterative Boolean regression technique" (Mickey, Mundle & Engleman, 1983), related to additive clustering (De Sarbo, 1982). Similar to blockmodeling, equivalent objects and equivalent attributes are grouped into respective classes (Rosenberg et al., 1996). HICLAS is different from both Boolean factor analysis and additive clustering, however, in that it postulates an order relation among rows and columns (Ogilvie & Fleming, in press). Thus, it recovers the contents of a two-way matrix by simultaneously computing subset-superset relationships contained in both the rows and columns of the matrix. This it does by alternating between rows (targets) and columns (features) of a matrix to locate the best-fitting row and column classes and their hierarchical relations.

To do this, HICLAS first determines the optimal number of bottom classes, or ranks, and proceeds from there to compute the relationships between the bottom, subset classes and bundles of targets and features that are connected with two or more of them (Ashmore & Ogilvie, 1992). In other words, a hierarchy of bundles is formed as higher order or superset clusters are layered upon the basic units of bottom classes. The dimensionality of the model is termed its 'rank', which is analogous to the concept of dimensionality in multidimensional scaling (Rosenberg et al., 1996). The choice of rank in HICLAS involves a trade-off between parsimony (low rank) and goodness-of-fit, which improves with increasing rank. A rank-3 solution was used for the analysis of the matrices in the present study.

The way in which HICLAS recovers individual units and locates them in the context of larger convergent, overlapping

and non-overlapping, subset and superset, interlocking categories offers leverage for idiographic analyses. Ogilvie and Fleming (in press) point out that, whereas most other models require as input the initial computation of proximity measures, HICLAS accepts the raw binary matrix in itself and graphically presents both target and feature groupings - as well as their hierarchical arrangements - whilst simultaneously describing the links and associations amongst the resultant groupings.

The set-theoretical structure so generated by HICLAS can be reproduced as a graphic representation that summarises the membership of objects (or targets) into object (or target) classes and attributes (or features) into attribute (feature) classes. The representation also summarises the order relations (including subset or superset relations) within each of these two sets of classes, as well as the way the object classes and the attribute classes are associated with one another. The HICLAS-derived structure of each respondent's representations of self-with-friends was configured and represented diagrammatically before being interpreted in collaboration with each respondent.

2.8.3. Structural representations of self-with-other data

The interpretation of the data focused on the types of HICLAS clusters identified by Gara (1990) (positive, negative, unelaborated, prominent and prominent-ambivalent), as well as on guidelines provided by Ogilvie (personal communication, December 2, 1995; January 3, 1996). Rosenberg et al. (1996) report that "each of the attribute classes formed by HICLAS is, with rare exception, very homogenous in evaluative tone; that is, a class consists either of positive or of negative traits and feelings" (p. 138). Thus, positive-negative is the most salient dimension or basis on which perceived traits and feelings are clustered (Rosenberg, 1977) - an effect which is extremely robust at the individu-

al level (Kim & Rosenberg, 1980).

2.8.3.1. **Classes**

Ogilvie and Fleming (in press) describe the steps in the formation of classes:

HICLAS starts by identifying two initial target classes and two corresponding feature classes. Targets that match a global pattern of 'yes'/'no' feature ratings are temporarily assigned to one class. All others are assigned to the second class. This 'first pass' recovery of the structure of a matrix is refined by subsequent iterations, each of which employs a number of classes to form the base upon which a hierarchical structure is built.

Figure 1 represents a standard hierarchical structure, with seven possible target classes and seven possible feature classes. Target and feature classes are arranged hierarchically; the hierarchy of target classes is depicted right side up and the hierarchy of feature classes is shown upside down. Hierarchies are created by stacking higher order classes on bottom (building block) classes located in the figure at level 1. Level 1 target classes are labelled A, B, C. Level 2 classes are linked with two bottom classes: target class A-B-C contains some properties contained in both A and B. Any items that appear in Target Class A-B-C, level 3 at the top of the hierarchy, share properties assigned to all target classes.

Feature classes and their hierarchy are similarly constructed and arranged. Neither hierarchy, however, is formed without reference to the other. HICLAS alternates between the rows (targets) and columns (features) of a matrix as it computes the best fitting model that describes how classes of targets and classes of features are organised in relationship with each other. The connective lines in figure 1

represent the associative target and feature class links.

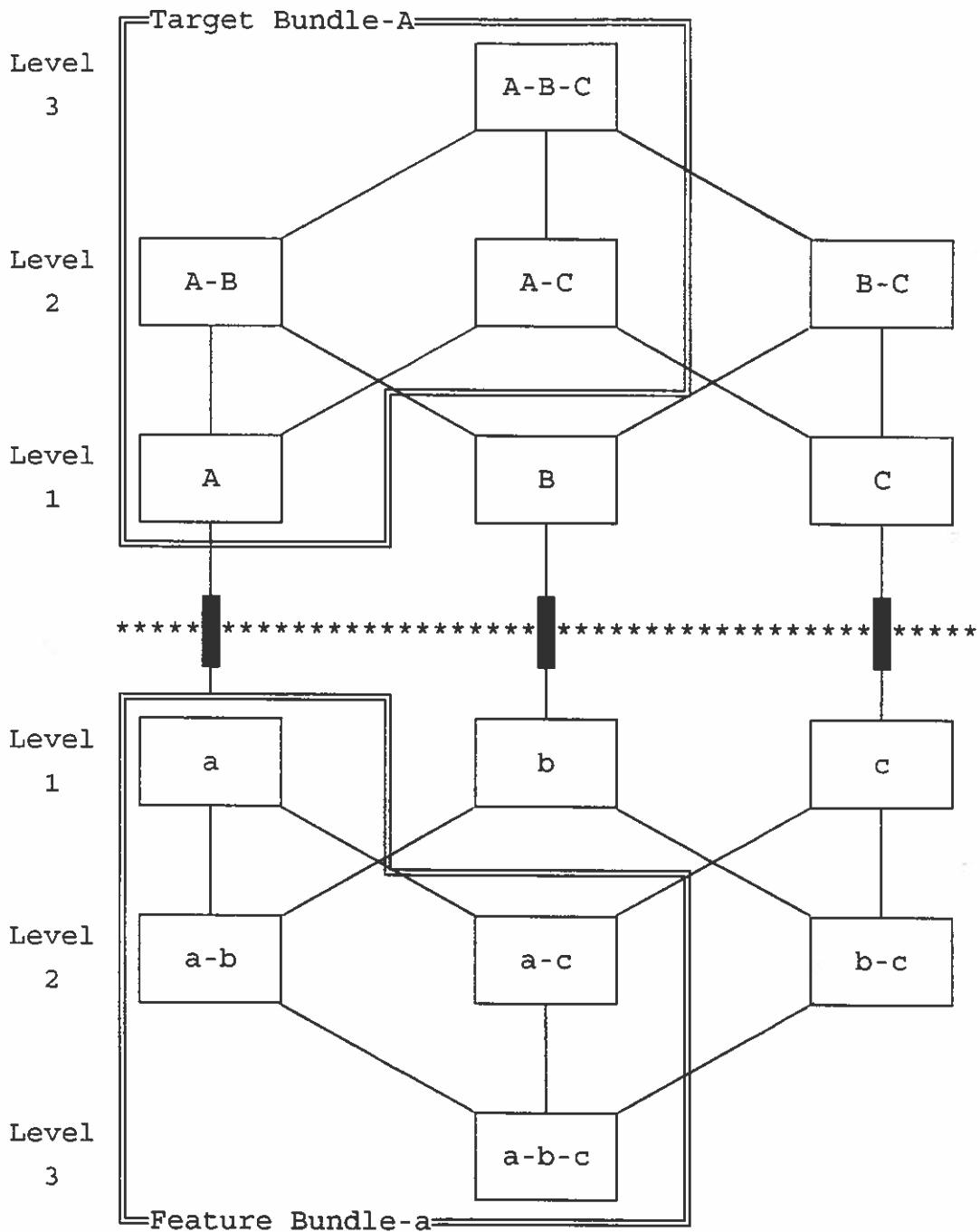


FIGURE 1: HICLAS DISPLAY

Ogilvie and Fleming (in press) caution against concluding that there is a one-to-one correspondence between target classes and their mirroring feature classes. Thus, the items

in Feature Class-a do not fully define items in Target Class-A. Instead, classes are organised into larger units: bundles.

2.8.3.2. **Bundles**

Bundles provide the essential context for the interpretation of representational models. A bundle is defined by starting with a Level 1 class and including any higher level classes connected to it, or associated with it. Figure 1 depicts two bundles: Target Bundle-A and Feature Bundle-a. Target Bundle-A is comprised of Class-A and all other classes with an 'A' in their labels: Classes A-B, A-C, and A-B-C (D. Ogilvie, personal communication, December 2, 1995). Feature Bundle-a is comprised of Feature Class-a and all other feature classes with an 'a' designation. In figure 1, the double line encompassing the two bundles indicates the presence of associative elements.

2.8.3.3. **Residuals**

Those targets and features which cannot be contained in the computed model are termed 'residuals'. Residual designation results if (a) the feature was seldom rated as descriptive of the targets, or (b) the pattern of scores for the feature or target cannot be contained by the number of ranks computed, in which case, additional ranks may be needed in order to decompose the matrix into more refined units. The rank of the model indicates the number of attribute and target bundles generated.

2.8.3.4. **Matrices depicting experiences of self-with-other**

In the present study, the focus of interpretation of HICLAS displays included the identification of:

1. Positive classes. These include attributes which the

participant considers to be positive features and therefore might be expected to contain the participant's image of his 'ideal' self-with-other experience (the ideal social self).

2. Elaborated clusters. Clusters with a large number of items are considered to be elaborated and the primary index of elaboration is thus the number of items in a cluster.

Elaboration refers to the extent to which an overall cognitive structure is organised in a relatively simple versus complex manner (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991). Rosenberg (1988) operationalised elaboration in several ways and included the number of clusters and the percentage of items in superordinate clusters. Robey, Cohen and Gara (1989) obtained validity for the construct of elaboration by noting that the self-perception structures of schizophrenics were less elaborated than those of non-schizophrenics and clinically depressed individuals.

3. Negative clusters. These contain attributes or features which the participant considers to be negative and which thus might be expected to contain 'dreaded-self' experiences (the dreaded social self).

4. Prominent clusters. These are located above the first level of analysis and may also contain features. For instance, if a participant perceives or experiences him/herself as "secure" no matter with whom he/she is, then that feature will be classified as prominent and can be interpreted as being one of the individual's fundamental beliefs, experiences or feelings. Such features are informative in that they reflect individuals' perceptions of their most durable identities, feelings and social experiences.

5. Prominent-ambivalent clusters. Clusters that are located above level 1, and that are directly linked to both negative and positive target clusters, are labelled promi-

nent-ambivalent. These clusters are rich in interpretative value as they reflect cognitions on a subconscious level. Feelings and relational experiences of ambivalence are indicated by a level 2 target cluster being a superset of two level 1 target clusters, one of which is defined by a cluster of positive features and the other is defined by a cluster of negative features. In these cases, the targets in the superset cluster can be interpreted as initiating contradictory feelings. Such ambivalence might also be taken to indicate the repression of feelings, such as those of a sexual nature.

6. Cluster contents of target people and features. Coalesced features indicate personal-attributes components of the respondent's self-with-other representational constellations. Target clusters reflect the people who directly activate the respondent's internalised experiences and feelings.

7. Features typically associated with same-sex friendships as well as those typically associated with opposite-sex friendships before, during and after marriage.

8. Patterns of association between targets and features.

9. Levels of targets and feature clusters, including supersets and subsumed sets.

10. Hierarchical and cluster positions of 'ideal social self' and 'dreaded social self' constructs. Similarly, the relative position of 'spouse' as attachment figure.

11. Interlocking units and interconnective positions of clusters.

12. The activation of attachment by specific target classes.

13. Residual features: those which the respondent never or seldom uses to describe him/herself-with-others, and their relation to the ways in which the respondent experiences his/her relationships with others before, during and, where applicable, after marriage.

14. Invariant features which are common to the respondent's experiences of him/herself-in-relation-to-others, before and after marriage. The centrality of these features defines the sense of self-continuity in the respondent's relationship with all others.

15. Commonalities and differences with respect to the respondent's self-with-same-sex and self-with-opposite-sex friends.

16. Comparison of self-with representations as regards opposite-sex friends (and same sex friends) before and during marriage (and, in certain cases, after marriage).

17. Goodness of fit: HICLAS provides a fine-grain goodness-of-fit value for each target and each feature; this indicates how well each fits into the class to which it belongs. Rosenberg et al. (1996) explain that this goodness-of-fit index is the Jaccard (1908) coefficient; it can be defined as the number of true positives (the occurrence of 1 in a cell of the data matrix and in the corresponding cell of the structure thus generated) divided by the sum of the false positives (0 in the data matrix and 1 in the structure), false negatives (1 in the data matrix, 0 in the structure), and true positives.

Generally high goodness-of-fit scores can be interpreted as meaning that the respondent has rigidly assimilated each self-with-other relationship into existing mental units of representation. On the other hand, a low overall goodness-of-fit score may be viewed as an indication of

structural flexibility or as a sign that the structure is in the process of accommodating to new or changing self-with-other experiences (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991).

29. SESSION FIVE: EVALUATION OF WELL-BEING

The assessment of well-being was undertaken in order to note the relationship between the respondents' experiences of friendship and attachment, and his/her global feeling of life satisfaction and well-being. In order to obtain a comprehensive and composite index of well-being, three measures were included. Predetermined ideas of well-being were not imposed upon the respondents. Instead, in line with Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory, well-being was defined existentially by each participant. In addition, the measurement of immediate mood was avoided in preference of a more stable and generalised assessment of the individual's life satisfaction.

2.9.1. Well-being measures

Despite the existence of several scales of subjective well-being, the choice of measurement depends on the format and goals of the specific study (Larsen, Diener & Emmons, 1985) as well as the researcher's theoretical conceptualisation of the dynamics of well-being. "Adequate measurement of complex psychological states usually requires an iterative process: researchers must move several times between conceptualization and operationalization, adjusting their ideas and measures as they go" (Warr, Cook & Wall, 1979, p. 129).

2.9.1.1. Single-item scales

Several of the most frequently used measures of well-being are single-item survey questions, aimed at measuring quality of life (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976). Although these measures have the advantage of brevity, because the reli-

ability of the measure is restricted to the temporal domain, internal consistency is impossible to gauge. Acquiescence is also a problem because the items are scored in one direction. In addition, the scales cannot cover all aspects of subjective well-being and rely, instead, on the subjects' integration of the various dimensions, expressed as a single response (Diener, 1984).

Cantril (1965) conceptualised well-being as a cognitive experience in which individuals compare their perceptions of their present situation with their conceptualisation of an ideal state. Cantril (1965) developed a single-item measure, the self-anchoring scale, aimed at providing a subjective indicator of well-being and at revealing an overall picture of the individual's reality. The self-anchoring scale is based on the premise that the difference between an individual's perceived life and his or her aspired-to life will be expressed in a measure of satisfaction-dissatisfaction; greater satisfaction is taken as an indicator of a sense of well-being. Campbell (1976) considers this type of measurement of well-being to be 'cognitive', although not totally devoid of an affective component, because it relies more on basically intellectual processes than do measures such as the Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969). A two-year study by Palmore and Kivett (1977) revealed a reliability coefficient of 0,65 for Cantril's (1965) ladder.

Other single-item scales include The Gurin Scale (Gurin, Veroff & Feld, 1960), and Andrews and Withey's (1976) Delighted-Terrible Scale. Single-item scales, by definition, cannot cover all dimensions of an individual's sense of psychological well-being. They therefore do not offer finely differentiated pictures of individuals' well-being, and information concerning the many components of well-being may be overlooked. Nonetheless, the validity and reliability of these scales suggest that they are adequate measures,

if very brief and general indexes of global well-being are required (Diener, 1984).

2.9.1.2. **Multi-item scales**

Several multi-item well-being scales have been developed, many designed specifically for older respondents. These scales tend to be mainly self-evaluations, directed at the respondents' affect (Diener, 1984). One of the best known multi-item scales is the Life Satisfaction Index (Neugarten, Havighurst & Tobin, 1961) which includes the measurement of the following factors: zest vs. apathy, resolution, fortitude, and the congruence between desired and achieved goals.

Dupuy's General Well-Being Schedule (cited in Diener, 1984) is a multi-item scale measuring seven specific aspects of well-being: life satisfaction, health concerns, depressed mood, person-environment fit, coping, energy level and stress. Because Bradburn (1969) found that positive and negative affect items were relatively independent of one another, he proposed that happiness is comprised of two separate components. In support of this, several researchers (Beiser, 1974; Moriwaki, 1974) have found that, although positive and negative affect scales are almost uncorrelated with each other, they show independent and incremental correlations with a global well-being item.

Having extensively documented the potential dimensions of well-being, Andrews and Withey (1976) corroborated Bradburn's (1969) model. Later studies (Zevon & Tellegen, 1982; Bryant & Veroff, 1982), too, have yielded support for the dual nature of affective well-being. Relevantly, however, Campbell et al. (1976) point out that 'happiness' evokes an absolute emotional state, whereas 'satisfaction' implies a more cognitive and relativistic judgment. Moreover, this judgment is compared with external standards, whether they be comparisons with other people or situations, or more

private levels of aspiration.

Several investigators have challenged the independence of the two types of affect. Diener (1984), for instance, suggests that there are times when each type of affect tends to suppress the other, and the more a person feels positive or negative, the less the person will feel the opposite affect. Moreover, Kammann, Christie, Irwin and Dixon (1979) obtained an average correlation coefficient of $-0,58$ between the positive and negative affects measured on their Affectometer Scale. Brenner (1975) also found negative correlations (averaging $-0,62$) between these two types of affect. Most damaging, however, have been Warr, Barter and Brownbridge's (1983) findings that, when the scale is re-worded in terms of frequency of feeling, a strong inverse correlation emerges between positive and negative affect. Thus, it appears that certain weaknesses inherent in Bradburn's (1969) scale serve to lower the correlation between positive and negative affects (Diener, 1984). Firstly, the positive affect items more strongly reflect arousal content and secondly, there is a large portion of specific nonaffective content in the items. Whereas the occurrence of feeling is measured by the scale, intensity and frequency are not. Furthermore, the scale may suffer from acquiescence response bias.

The measurement of well-being is also likely to be affected by the individual's mood at the time of completing the scale. Schwarz and Clore (1983) found that momentary mood affected subjects' responses to well-being questions, by influencing their happiness and satisfaction judgments. A second issue concerns the validity of the self-report measure. Words such as 'happy' contain an inherent ambiguity, and an obvious connotation, exacerbated by the possibility that even those people who are unhappy at some level may label themselves as being happy (Diener, 1984). Scores therefore tend to be skewed, with most responses falling

within the 'happy' domain (Andrews & Withey, 1976).

Other multi-item scales include Kozman & Stones' (1980) MUNSH, a 24-item scale measuring positive and negative affect and experiences; and the Index of General Affect (Campbell et al., 1976), which requires subjects to rate their lives on eight semantic differential scales such as enjoyable-miserable. The semantic differential technique (Osgood, Suci & Tannenbaum, 1957) was first developed as a tool for research into the psychology of meaning (Anastasi, 1982). It represents a standardised and quantified procedure for measuring the connotations of any concept. Congruent with the bipolar nature of personal constructs as described by Kelly (1955), each concept is accorded an opposite or 'polar' construct. Typically, the bipolar adjectives are set at the extremes of a 7-point rating scale and respondents are required to check a point on the scale that best represents their description of the situation or concept being measured. For each pair of adjectives, the individual checks the location between the extremes that he/she considers best describes his/her judgment or impression.

2.9.2. The measurement of well-being in the present study

Although most researchers (Osgood et al., 1957; Campbell et al., 1976) have employed researcher-generated scales when using the semantic differential, the present study adopted a more existential slant with respect to the measurement of well-being. Thus, the constructs which each respondent generated to describe his/her sense of ideal and worst states of well-being were elicited in a manner consistent with the principles of constructive alternativism.

2.9.2.1. Use of semantic differential techniques

Respondents were asked to conceptualise and describe situations in which they would experience ideal life satisfaction and well-being. The phrases and adjectives that each respondent used to describe his ideal situation/state in terms of maximum well-being were transcribed by the researcher. Secondly, each respondent was asked to conceptualise and to describe the opposite pole of each descriptor, this representing the opposite pole of ideal life satisfaction or well-being. For instance, if 'blissful' had been used, then the respondent might attach the opposite concept of 'tormented'.

In this way, each respondent generated 15 bi-polar descriptors of well-being and happiness. These descriptors were organised into a suitable format, ready for rating on a 7-point rating scale (see Appendix K1). The respondents then completed their semantic differential rating scale, according to their present feelings of happiness and well-being.

In addition, based on Cantril's (1965) "self-anchoring ladder", a second scale was used to obtain an overall index of life satisfaction and well-being. Respondents were asked to imagine a "best possible" degree of life satisfaction and well-being as forming one end of an 11-point scale and "a worst possible" degree of life satisfaction and well-being as forming the other extreme. They then located their present degree of life satisfaction and well-being somewhere on the scale between the two extremes, or poles. Respondents were asked to consider their feelings of life-satisfaction and well-being during the past few months, based on the premise that, "one's sense of well-being at any particular time might be thought of as a running average of the relative strength of positive and negative affect averaged out over the recent past" (Bradburn, 1969, p.13).

In line with the dichotomous nature of personal constructs, the Cantril (1965) format accentuates the relative nature of life satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The extremes of the respondent's own conceptions of 'best' and 'worst' are both personal and situational, idiographically reflecting the individual's expectations and conceptions of 'ideal' and 'dreaded'. The wording used ("Where on the ladder do you stand?") suggests an ipsatised index which is specific to the subject. Despite the findings of Larsen, Diener and Emmons (1985) that Cantril scales have relatively weak psychometric properties such as low temporal reliability, the scale's phenomenological nature was deemed appropriate for the present study.

The data elicited by semantic differential techniques were analysed in three ways. Qualitative analysis included visual inspection of each individual's constructs of life satisfaction and well-being. Quantitative analysis included the calculation of means by assigning the value 1 to the least favourable response, 7 to the most favourable and 2-6 to the intervening responses. In this way, an overall index of well-being was obtained. In addition, the items which each respondent generated, were sorted and categorised according to their indicated position within Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs.

2.9.2.2. Well-being in relation to dreaded social self and ideal social self

It has long been assumed that a very critical component of psychological well-being is the individual's degree of self-esteem or how he/she feels about himself/herself (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976). Based on the premise that one of the major functions of friendship and love relationships is to validate one's self concept by obtaining the support and understanding of the other person (Derlega & Chaiken, 1977), the relationships between the respondents' states of well-

being and their friendship experiences were examined.

Moreover, analysis of the self-with-other data provided insights into the association between the respondents' well-being and their constructs of dreaded social self (me as I dread experiencing myself within a friendship relationship), ideal social self (me as I would ideally like to experience myself within a friendship relationship), and usual social self (me as I experience myself within my relationship with each of my friends).

2.10. SESSION SIX: FEEDBACK

In this feedback session, the results of the participants' responses were discussed individually with each respondent. The respondents were encouraged to comment on the data.

2.11. CASE STUDY RESPONDENTS

To ensure anonymity, all respondents' names are fictitious. The following information was gleaned from the subjects' responses in the Demographic Details Questionnaire (Appendix C) and from the interviews. Further demographic details are contained in Appendix K2 and K3.

2.11.1. Tembi

Having a diploma in education, Tembi had been teaching for 8 years at a high school in Vosloorus. For a year, she had been registered for a degree through UNISA, majoring in psychology. She had, she confided, enrolled for psychology in order to help her understand her husband. Her philosophy about marriage was straightforward: "Each person is the architect of her life. Each person must work out her own principles and dictate the best ways to put their (sic) husbands right."

Married for 4 years to a professional Sotho man 4 years her senior, she seemed to be caught midway between traditional cultural values and Western, relatively liberal, attitudes about marriage. Her daughter lived with Tembi's mother during the week, but returned to Tembi each weekend and during the school holidays.

Tembi reported having 3 close female friends and 2 close male friends. Although she expressed no desire to have more close female friends, she would have liked to have had a greater number of close male friends. Within the past 12 months, Tembi and her husband had moved into a formerly White residential area. She explained that, in terms of physical proximity, this had isolated her from many of her friends. Currently, she spent approximately 10% of her total time with her friends.

"Before I was married," she admitted, "friendship was very important to me ... but I suppose friends aren't as important to me anymore." By and large, Tembi and her husband had separate friendship circles. Her husband's friendships seemed to be an enigma to her - and a source of great frustration at times. She explained: "In our culture, it's all right for the men to sleep out. It's a fashion these days - not to always sleep at home. He's with his friends, he says." Apart from living a separate social life from that of her husband, Tembi also indicated that she did not consider the spouses of her female friends to be her friends.

2.11.2. **Mary**

Twice-divorced, 26-year-old Mary was a long-term sufferer of myalgic encephalomyelitis (M.E.). She explained that the condition had a severely debilitating effect on her life, in general, and on her relationships, in particular. She complained of being permanently fatigued, of experiencing severe loss of memory and of frequently feeling depressed

and disoriented.

Mary had obtained a school-leaver's certificate and had held several secretarial posts. Although she had been included in a 15-member clique of friends at school, she expressed her distress at currently having no close female friends. Indeed, she expressed a desire to have more friends of both genders.

During the past 8 months, Mary had enjoyed a very close friendship with Dale, a single young man with whom she worked. She estimated that she was spending about 75% of her total time with him, each week. Mary's friendship with Dale had been initiated within the work context and had developed during the time she was going through divorce proceedings. It was during that time, that Dale had offered her the support that she needed, helping her to pack and leave her abusive husband, Christo, under threat of death. Christo was Mary's second husband, a policeman who was her second cousin and who had been married before. She had married him when she was 24 years old, the marriage had lasted a year, and she had been divorced for six months at the time of the present study.

Mary had married her first husband at the age of 21 years; that marriage lasted four months and ended when she discovered him abusing her only - and illegitimate - child, a son, who was 2 years old at the time of her first marriage. Four years after that divorce, she remarried.

2.11.3. **Jane**

A 42-year old Afrikaans-speaking teacher, Jane had grown up in a conservative, but loving, home. Competently bilingual, she had attended English co-educational schools and had taught in both English and Afrikaans schools. As a young teacher, Jane had found it easy to establish platonic oppo-

site-sex friendships; she commented that men appeared to seek her out for her friendship more than for romance. Overall, she placed high value on friendship, believing that "life revolves round friendships."

At the age of 22 years, she had married an Afrikaans-speaking man 6 years older than herself; two sons were born thereafter. Presently employed on a half-day basis, Jane described her main life-goal as being the education of her sons. The family's hard-earned money was channelled into this goal, with little left over for peripheral activities such as entertaining, joining clubs or socialising. She described her social circle as comprising friends met through her children and through work.

Although many of her same-sex friends had emigrated to countries overseas, contact was maintained via letter-writing - if only on a yearly basis. She reported having 7 close friends of the opposite sex, and expressed no desire to form additional opposite-sex friendships. Less than 10% of her total time was spent with friends each week. Most of that time (about 75%), was spent within the context of couple friendships: "My closest friends are those made before my marriage and hence their spouses have also become our greatest friends. During marriage, couple-friends are favourites."

Although she enjoyed a happy and stable marriage, Jane described her husband as being both 'insecure' and 'jealous'. Her extreme sense of loyalty and privacy prevented her from elaborating.

2.11.4. Leigh

Leigh, 41 years old and only recently married for the first time, described herself as interested in the dynamics of relationships in general. She had attended co-educational

schools throughout her school history and so had developed friendships with both genders. What had disrupted her relationships most, she said, had been the frequent moves which her family had made, thus necessitating changes of schools, some of which were in different countries.

Leigh presented as a dedicated teacher, whole-heartedly involved in the process of education. Despite her interest and commitment, she described her career as being "insular" in that she had only limited opportunities to meet people and, because of her degree of work involvement, very limited time with which to pursue her friendships. She described herself as having had a range of opposite-sex friendships, most of which had dissolved over the years. Her relative social isolation was indicated by her reporting that less than 10% of her total time was spent with friends or with family members.

Like Leigh, her husband was career-minded and ambitious. He had been raised in a liberal and well-to-do family which had included a high value being placed on academic achievement. She described him as being tolerant and secure, thus permitting her "a wide berth." More socially-minded and confident than Leigh, her husband maintained a relatively wide social-circle. He maintained both male and female friends established during his school, university and career years.

2.11.5. **Ron**

Fifty-one year old Ron had never been married, although he had been involved in several lengthy (romantic love) relationships with women. He had a 14-year-old son from one such previous liaison. Widely travelled and with an adventurous spirit, Ron lived alone, pursuing a solitary life more, he admitted, out of circumstance than design.

The relationship he had shared with his most recent partner

had dissolved, leaving him with feelings of "sadness ... terrible distress." His story about the relationship was as follows: "I was involved with a girl for nine years - she was Portuguese, 43 years old. Her parents were keen for us to get married. We are both Catholics, and we had to get special permission to get married in a church. It was then that I realised she didn't really want to make that commitment. She wanted her freedom. She came from a very controlled environment, so I suppose she was trying to recapture her lost youth, the experiences she never had. She denied getting older; always wanted to present a united front. She left me for another man; she said she couldn't live without him - that relationship lasted 6 months."

Ron had attended boys' schools and had never been a member of any professional organisations. He had a wide circle of friends, both male and female, and described his closest friend as being a female. He also expressed the desire to have more friends of both sexes. Although the irregular nature of Ron's work schedules had a negative impact on his social life, he estimated that he spent 25% of his total time with his friends, having weekly contact with many of them.

Commenting on the circumstances surrounding the formation of his friendships, he said, "I've met most of my friends through college and work. Also through organisations I have studied through. We've become friends through talking, through having close conversations and through doing things together." Having matured with the passing of years, his friendships had changed: "In my 20s, I guess I was foot-loose and fancy free. There was nothing to lose. Those were my college years. I was so uninhibited." He was, he said, more serious about his friendships at this stage of his life.

2.11.6. **Ann**

Ann had been married for 2 1/2 years at the time of the present study. Both she and her husband were Jewish and came from closely-knit, extended families. As a teacher, she had worked until the advent of her daughter's birth, one year earlier. Ann had lived in a farming community throughout her childhood, and had attended co-educational high schools. During her university days and thereafter, until her marriage, she had lived in Johannesburg. After her marriage, she moved to Pretoria, where she reported experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Content with the number of close same- and opposite-sex friends she had (three and one, respectively), she expressed no desire to form new friendships. Of her total time, 25% was spent with friends; 75% of that time was spent within the company of 'couple' friends rather than 'individual' friends. She reported being in touch with 'couple' friends on a weekly basis. Contact was made with her other friends approximately once each month.

Ann's closest friend was Marg, a 27-year old (married, female) school friend whom she had known for 18 years. Likewise, she had known her closest male friend, Reg, for 28 years. Both friends had been Ann's neighbours during her childhood. Although she considered Marg's husband to be a friend of hers too, she did not classify Reg's wife as her friend.

Ann felt that she had become much more socially confident since her marriage. "Before that, I was happy to take a backseat," she explained. Although having a baby to care for had changed her social life, Ann was able to keep contact with her friends through dinner parties, outings and telephonic contact.

2.11.7. Clinton

A 54-year-old English-speaking male, Clinton had a history of heart disease which had culminated in a quadruple heart bypass three years prior to the present study. After his heart surgery, he was judged as being unfit to resume his post as an accountant. Instead, he received a disability allowance from his former employers and had willingly adopted the role of 'house-husband' - a position which he thoroughly enjoyed. Apart from assuming the responsibilities of running his home (his wife worked half-day), Clinton was a member of the staff of a franchised fitness programme. He was also involved in the lay counselling of terminally-ill cancer patients.

Clinton had attended a boys-only high school, obtaining a school-leavers' certificate as his highest qualification. He had four children and described his life as being family-centred. Twenty-one years ago, Clinton married his second wife, shortly after being divorced from his first. He described himself as being very happily married and spoke warmly and encouragingly about his wife, describing her as his best friend. He maintained no contact at all with his former wife. He estimated that approximately 10% of his total time was spent with friends in general, explaining that, because he was not currently engaged in full-time employment, opportunities for making new friends were limited. He indicated that he would welcome having more friends of both genders.

Clinton described himself (and his family) as being rigid and perfectionistic; their home routine was precise and strictly adhered to. For instance, set meals were served on specific days, with no question of variety and "no desire for change." Similarly, both he and his wife strove to maintain their garden in a "highly manicured" way. Clinton described his (second) wife as being a gentle and peaceable

person - plain, steadfast and ordinary. "I've got a good wife," he said, "I mean she's wonderful. Nothing to look at but a good cook, a good mother, a good gardener - what more would I need?" His wife had maintained one major opposite-sex friendship from her single days. Clinton expressed his discomfort with this friendship, despite his complete trust of her. He admitted to being "just plain jealous" about it.

2.11.8. Irene

Like Clinton, Irene was a member of a fitness club where she admitted to having initiated and developed several of her friendships. She was also very actively involved in church activities, attending prayer groups or church meetings several times each week. She had been married for 24 years at the time of the present study. She considered 9 of her same-sex friends to be close friends and expressed no desire to establish more friendships. On the other hand, she expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that she considered only one of her opposite-sex friends to be close. She commented, "...it's sad when people don't have opposite sex friends but it's not always possible."

Significantly, Irene differentiated between different levels of friendship: "...there is a clear distinction - we make the distinction - between real friends and just work companions. He [her husband] has many work companions whom I wouldn't say are my friends - not real friends." She estimated that she spent 25% of her total time with her friends, although she only rarely (once a year) spent time with her close male friend, who lived some distance away. Less than 10% of the time she spent with friends, was spent in the company of couples. Although she did not consider the spouse of her closest same-sex friend to be a friend of hers, this was not the case with her closest male friend.

Although Irene rated her friendships as being an integral

part of her life, she admitted that time considerations imposed restrictions on their development: "I suppose one day when my children have left home, my responsibility will be diminished and then there'll be more time for friends; but I just don't get to see them so often, because I have children." She explained that she and her husband had a wide circle of friends, many made through participating in activities, like sport, which centred around their children. She kept in contact with her long-standing friends mostly by sending Christmas and birthday cards. Activities with those friends who were living nearby mostly included visiting and chatting.

2.11.9. Paula

Having been divorced for 3 years, Paula seemed to be wrestling to come to terms with her life. She was undergoing psychotherapy at the time of the present study. "I was married to a psychopath," she confided. "He was a lot of things: depressive, schizophrenic, paranoid." Moreover, she suspected him of having homosexual tendencies, adding that he "was ... very critical of me: he wore me down; I was always too fat, or neurotic, or stupid, or ugly. We never had friends. He wouldn't allow it." She had been married for 18 years and, by all accounts, most of those years had been traumatic. She admitted that she would like to have more friends - of both sexes - and mentioned that she currently spent less than an hour each week with her friends.

"Maybe because of my background, I'm very interested in friendship - all aspects of it," she mused. Regarding her friendships with the opposite sex, she explained: "I don't have close friends of the opposite sex. They are all friends within a particular context - I haven't encouraged [opposite-sex] friendships beyond that. I have always been most cautious. Perhaps it is only now that I'm beginning to

be a little more relaxed in this regard."

The friendships she had established since her divorce were mostly with single individuals, and had been confined within the context of social outings. She had founded the 'Forty-plus Friendship Club' which she described as a supportive institution. "The people who come to my social club - the regular attenders - are people without obligations. They want to form friendships without obligation too. They expect to have fun. Initially, there were a few married couples, but not any more. What people really get out of the club is freedom - freedom to talk, freedom to be friendly without being caught up in feelings of jealousy. You can be friends with the opposite sex without feeling the vibes that something is going to come of it. You can be who you are," she explained.

For as long as she could remember, financial difficulty had been a persistent issue in Paula's life. She had a history of ill health and at one stage during their marriage, her husband had had her declared 'disabled'. This had left her almost destitute after he refused to provide financially either for her or for their three children. After she had recovered from her illness, she resumed her work role and then "started moving on to total independence." After the divorce, her ex-husband expressed a desire to be an independent lodger in her home "with no questions asked" and "with no relationship with - or responsibility towards - the family." Paula refused. At the time of the present study, she was involved in an on-going, fierce legal battle with her ex-husband over maintenance issues. Concomitantly, she was receiving anonymous threats in the mail, ostensibly from him.

2.11.10. **Lesley**

Raised very strictly in a Portuguese home, Lesley had re-

ceived a convent education. She presented as a vivacious but troubled woman who was receiving only paltry financial support from both of her two ex-husbands and was obviously struggling to cope. Lesley vehemently expressed her intention not to marry again - "at least for some time yet!"

Lesley's first marriage, at the age of 21 years, was to an Afrikaans policeman. "I got married the first time to get away from home - it was so restrictive," she said. Her second marriage was to a Portuguese man. Her first marriage lasted 5 years, her second 1 year. At the time of the study, her divorce from her second husband was pending. Both men had abused alcohol - and Lesley.

She described one such abusive episode: "...he hit me across my head with the butt of a gun. I felt such a warm, peaceful feeling at that moment - as if a guardian angel had come to rescue me. My nose was broken, though - the radiologist said I was lucky to be alive - the bones were shattered. My husband had always told me that, as a policeman, he knew that a blow to that part of the head could kill a person."

She had two children from the first marriage and one from the second. Cheerful and witty, her demeanour belied the pain and suffering she had experienced. Nonetheless, she did seem to be very wary of men's intentions. She also seemed very resentful of the restrictive nature of her upbringing and of her parents, per se. Although they had supported her through her distressing marriages, she felt that they wanted to gain ultimate control of her. After the second divorce, they supplied her with a car but regularly threatened to take it away from her if she "didn't behave."

During a time when Lesley felt inadequate raising for her young baby, her mother agreed to care for him. Growing increasingly attached to him, however, her mother had become more and more reluctant to relinquish him back into Lesley's

care. Desperate, Lesley arranged to look after him during one weekend. She then refused to return him. Her mother was furious. The incident caused strong feelings of resentment between the two women and contributed significantly to Lesley's feelings of ambivalence towards her parents.

Describing her friendships, she said, "I've been temping for the last while and always, at each job, I'd make one or two friends. We'd help each other. Mostly, it would be a case of making friends with women who have gone through the same thing - the same experiences - as I have." She described herself as having three close female friends and one close male acquaintance, a budding friendship initiated six months previously. On both accounts, she would like to have had more friends. She commented, "Raul and I are friends - not close friends though. I have met other men, but due to commitments i.e. family, work, friends, these could-be friendships fade after a while ... I would really like to have a close male friend." She reported spending 50% of her total time with friends; half of that was time spent with couple friends.

2.11.11. Cheryl

A personnel consultant by profession, Cheryl (aged 34) had dedicated the last four years to the raising of her two children. She was a member of a sports club which met three times per week, but had never been a member of any professional organisations. At the time of her marriage, five years previous, she moved to her present abode and reported finding it easy to make friends in that environment. Socially-minded and self-assured, she estimated herself as having 15 close same-sex friends, and indicated that she would welcome having more. Cheryl also reported that she would like to have more than the five close male friends she currently had. She spent 25% of her total time with friends each week, and 50% of that time was spent in the company of

'couple friends'. Although she had daily contact with her closet female friend, she generally had weekly contact with her other friends.

Cheryl and her closest female friend seemed similar in several ways: both had degrees, were married, used English as her home language and had not attended a co-educational high school. They had been friends for 16 years, having met at school. Cheryl considered this friend's spouse to be a friend of hers. She described her closest male friend as being of similar age, and English speaking. He held a post-graduate degree and had attended a co-educational high school. Although most of the contact Cheryl and her male friend had was within the environs of her home and in the company of both her husband and his wife, she did not consider his spouse to be a friend of hers.

Of her friendships she said, "When I was single, it was a case of confiding in my friends, revealing problems with boyfriends - that kind of thing. Now, it's more friendships with couples, mostly couples with children. But now, they're closer friends than before, not as superficial. I suppose we're all more mature and that makes for more mature friendships. Many of my friends are from my church circle. They're a support group - we look after each other!"

2.11.12. **Cathy**

A member of MENSA, Cathy had devoted the last 20 years to raising a family, and she now maintained a small dress-making business, as a home industry. She expressed a keen interest in reptiles and proudly displayed a pair of exotic orange and black snakes in a glass tank in her home.

Cathy had attended a co-educational high school, but had not attended any tertiary educational institutions. She had

spent the past 35 years living in the same suburb and reported finding it easy to make friends. Married for 19 years, she had two teenage daughters. She expressed contentment about the number of friends in her social circle and estimated her close female friends to number 20. Although her close male friends numbered just 4, she felt no desire to establish more opposite-sex friends. She commented, "...it doesn't mean I'm not open to new friendships. I just don't go specifically looking for friends. They just happen." Less than 10% of her total time was spent with friends and 50% of that included social interaction with couples.

Cathy's closest female friend was also married and 42 years of age. She lived in the same suburb as Cathy and they had been friends for 38 years. Of this friend's husband she commented, "We're sort of friends. We are friends, I guess, but would lose contact if his wife and I fell out." Cathy had been friends with her closest male friend for 2 years. He was 30 years old and also lived nearby. They had met through Cathy's spouse and she also considered his spouse to be a good friend of hers.

Easy going and relaxed, Cathy seemed to have a happy-go-lucky personality, assuming an attitude which tended to mask some of her deeper feelings. "I'm not a well person," she confided, "manic depressive, actually, and that does cause problems with my friendships in that I'm sometimes moody. It's the manic swings that are the problem," she explained. "But still, sometimes one hits it off. I'm a person who makes strong first impressions and people make a strong first impression on me, too. I usually trust people easily but sometimes I instinctively feel negative towards them, then I avoid them - men and women alike! If I feel at all threatened, that's the end. I don't give a reason, I just avoid them."

2.11.13. **Charlotte**

A devout Christian, 49-year old Charlotte was an active member of a Christian prayer group which met several times each week. She had a school-leaver's certificate, had never been an active member of the work force, and had raised two children, both of whom were currently at university. She had attended a co-educational high school, but had never been a member of any professional organisation. For 24 of the 26 years she had been married, she had lived at her current address.

Charlotte's husband was often away on business trips and this had concentrated her need for friendship, she said. Although she initially admitted to having no close opposite-sex friends, she later spoke of Jerry, one of her husband's friends: "He has one long-standing friend whom he met in pre-primary. We've become good friends as couples. That's our longest-lasting friendship, I'd say. We're family friends." Although she considered Jerry's wife to be her friend, they had contact with the couple only once per year.

Charlotte nominated a person of the same sex to be her closest friend, although she did not rate this person's husband as a friend. More than 90% of the time she spent with her friends, was time spent with same-sex friends rather than in the context of couples. Of her total time each week, 25% was spent with friends; she reported having interaction, of one form or the other, with friends every day. On a monthly basis, she interacted with couple friends. Although she reported having about 5 very close friends, she chose Merle, a widower aged 45 years, as her closest. It was a friendship of 10 years' standing, having taken root and flourished within the prayer group they both attended.

2.11.14. **Helen**

Helen, the manager of a franchised fitness programme, was a 37-year old respondent who had been married twice. She had grown up amongst very close friends and within a supportive family environment. "As youngsters," she recalled, "we always hung around in a group - boys and girls. I had one very good friend but he became a semi-serious boyfriend for a few months. I had an older sister so there were always plenty of boys around, attracted by my sister. I had lots of boys around always. There were no problems - things were simple way back then!" She elaborated on her friendships saying, "... I have a wonderful friendship with my father. I had a good friendship with both my Mom and Dad. People are missing out if they don't have those types of friendship."

First married at the age of 18 years, she remained in the relationship for 13 years, during which time, two children were born. At that point she met her current husband, Brian, and, following a brief affair, they got married, "...before Richard [her first husband] could blackmail us; we'd had some terrible scenes where he'd tried to run in front of a car, in front of the children. We had some real scares. I thought I should get married again before I went back to Richard for the wrong reasons." She realised that, for her second husband (who had also brought two children into the union) their marriage, "was a lot to cope with - having to realise and accept my love for my children and theirs for me." At the time of the present study, Helen and her second husband were undergoing Christian marriage-counselling.

Helen counted 5 of her friends as being close. She expressed her satisfaction with the number and nature of her friendships - both with men and women. She rated as being 'close' two of her opposite-sex friendships. Less than 10% of her total time was spent with friends and less than 10% of that

time, was spent within the context of couple friendships.

2.11.15. **Eddie**

Eddie's first wife had died after 41 years of marriage. He had been re-married for 10 years to Pam, also a respondent in the present study. Like Eddie, many of his friends were members of Alcoholics Anonymous: "I met a lot of friends through the AA. We were friends - remained friends - without ever seeing each other - or seldom anyway. We still keep in touch; out of the blue one of them will call. There's a bond there. We pick up where we left off. When I was in the AA, one man made a particular friend of me. He really befriended me. He loved me. I don't know why. We're still in touch. He was a happy-clappy sort. Wonderful."

Aged 74 years, he was an active member of the Catholic church and many of his current friendships were contained within the boundaries of the church. He described his deep friendship with Father Gerard, a priest, and also with several of the nuns whom he had met through his wife, whose sisters were Carmelite nuns.

Eddie had been retired for 12 years, and had lived in a retirement village for 3 of those years. He considered one of his men friends as a close friend but regarded no female, other than his wife, as a close friend. He expressed the need to have more same-sex (but not opposite sex) friends.

2.11.16. **Pam**

Eddie's wife, Pam (aged 79 years) had worked as a school secretary before retiring. She remained actively involved in education by preparing tapes for the blind, on a voluntary basis. Like her husband, she was very involved in church activities. Family-oriented, she had 3 children and 4

grandchildren, with all of whom she was in close contact. Like Eddie, she was actively involved in church activities within the context of which, most of her friendships were maintained.

Describing herself as being withdrawn and not very social, she explained, "I'm not good at talking nonsense; I don't like tea parties." Pam counted 5 of her same-sex friends as being close and rated herself as being content with the number of her friendships. She considered none of her male friendships to be close. Of the time she spent with her friends, which amounted to 25% of her total time, 75% was spent with couple friends. She had maintained a friendship with her closest friend for 50 years.

2.11.17. **Ken**

Ken and his wife, Susan, were residents of the same retirement village as Eddie and Pam. They were relative newcomers to the village, however, having lived there for just 2 years. Ken was 79 years old and had been retired for 18 years, during which time, he adamantly asserted, he had not made any new friends. Although he met with fellow retirees on a weekly basis, he did not consider them to be his friends. On the rare occasion (usually within the context of formal luncheons and reunions) when he was in the company of people he considered to be 'real friends', he mentioned that they talked about, "...the old days; how things have changed; what we used to do together. Memories." Asked about his memories and whether they contained any regrets as regards his friendships, he answered, "No not really. Of course, I have got a few kicks in the backside, but I'm not prepared to fight about it."

Twenty years ago, Ken remarried, following his being widowed. He admitted to having only monthly contact with his three children and seven grandchildren ("...they don't want

to bother with us older people"). He spent almost no time at all with his friends, 10 of whom, all males, he considered to be close. His closest male friend had died 5 years previously. He admitted to having no close women friends and expressed no desire to have more friends of either sex. "Many of our friends have died," he explained. "I was friendly with a chap who died many years ago. It ended up that his wife lived just around the corner from this village, so we got to see lots of her when we moved into this village. But she died last year."

2.11.18. **Susan**

Married for the first time at the age of 49 years, Susan, Ken's wife, exuded a joie de vivre, despite the condition of retinitis pigmentosa which greatly curbed her activities. Susan had been retired for 17 years, and like her husband, expressed complete satisfaction with the number of friendships she had. Referring to her husband's luncheons with friends, she confided, "Men can do things like that, you know. But women can't. Women would just be looking at each other's wrinkles, and thinking my, how she's aged, not realising, of course, that they too have aged! But men don't; they enjoy each other's company for what it is. Men enjoy the activities they do together."

Susan estimated that she spent approximately 25% of her total time each week, with friends, mostly on an individual basis. Like her husband, she discounted having any opposite-sex friends - a situation about which she expressed contentment.

2.11.19. **John**

Having an intellectual personality and a wide range of talents and interests, John had lived in a retirement village for 8 years. He had been widowed a year prior to the

present study, after 50 years of marriage.

Afrikaans was John's home language. His wife, he explained, had been English-speaking and "...because she couldn't speak Afrikaans we withdrew from everyone." A member of the Catholic church, he attended church every week, even though he admitted to having a critical view of many of the traditional church policies.

Of friendship he admitted: "It means a lot. I found so few close friends in my life. That increases their value. I get on with people - always have - but it doesn't go further than that. My best friend at school was killed in the war. I also had a school friend who had polio; we're still friends. I always had different friends than my wife had. I never really got friendly with the husbands of her friends. I'd rather keep them at arm's length. If I really think about it, I've had no real friends - no close friends really ... but, how close is close?" Nonetheless, he expressed no desire to have more friends of either sex. He estimated that he spent only minutes each week with his 'friends' and was in weekly contact with his 3 children and 10 grandchildren.

Prior to his retirement 16 years ago, John, who held a degree, had worked as an electrical engineer. He had attended a co-educational high school and had been a member of several professional organisations during his work life.

2.12. PREAMBLE TO CHAPTER THREE

Chapter 3 deals with the relationship between sociality and well-being. Various definitions of well-being are discussed, as are the prominent theories of happiness and life satisfaction. An attempt is made to evaluate the contribution that friendship makes to experiences of well-being, and the relationship between well-being and attachment is also

examined. Finally, various potential sources of threat to psychological well-being are examined.

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIALITY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

A faithful friend is a strong defence: and he that hath found such an one hath found a treasure.

(Ecclesiasticus 6)

Beginning with a discussion of various definitions of well-being, this chapter examines the theory behind this psychological phenomenon. The association between well-being and aspects of social identity is then examined, before the effects of life stage are considered. Finally, the chapter explores the role of social relationships, including friendship, in promoting - or jeopardising - psychological well-being.

3.1. DEFINITIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Interest in the impact of social relationships on psychological well-being has a long history (Farris, 1934; Bowlby, 1969) with the significance of social relationships for personal well-being having been documented extensively (Cohen & Wills, 1985), albeit fragmentarily (Levitt, Coffman, Guacci-Franco & Loveless, 1994). "It has been widely accepted that contact with others, especially caring others, is associated with better physical and psychological survival in the face of life's stressors" (Winefield, Winefield & Tiggemann, 1992, p. 198). Having others to turn to for help or to disclose problems to not only enhances subjective well-being but also facilitates an individual's ability to cope with stress (Rook, 1984).

Far from being a unitary concept, subjective well-being is a complex and multi-faceted construct. Whereas one perspective defines it according to external criteria such as virtue or holiness (Diener, 1984), another (Brodsky, 1988) considers

it to be a general term, encompassing social competence, positive affect, global life satisfaction, self-efficacy and other descriptions of successful functioning - or quality of life (Keith & Schafer, 1992). In broad terms, well-being is a subjective emotional state that includes positive affect (feelings of happiness and pleasure), general life satisfaction (an individual's overall assessment of his or her life in terms of gratification and contentment) and relatively little negative affect (feelings of unhappiness, personal conflict, depression and anxiety). Importantly, it refers to more than simply the absence of personal conflicts (Brodsky, 1988).

Traditionally, well-being has been evaluated by focusing on individuals' overt behaviour - often in terms of the extent of their social participation and the range of their social activities. The implicit assumption, in this sense, is that the greater the individuals' social participation, the greater their sense of well-being. Early studies of well-being tended to focus on this aspect of sociality - and on that of the social self-concept (Neugarten, Havighurst & Tobin, 1961) - showing that the greater the extent of social participation, the greater the degree of happiness reported (Phillips, 1967). Certainly, sound relationships with others are of utmost importance in the lay formulations of positive functioning (Ryff, 1989a). Although social contact is often related to well-being (Rhodes, 1980), the precise parameters that mediate this relationship beg further investigation. In this respect, critical factors such as quality of relationship and/or social contact, constraints inherent within the context of the relationship (Smith & Lipman, 1972), and motivation for interaction (Hasak, 1978) are pertinent.

Most theoretical perspectives on well-being focus on individuals' internal frames of reference, with only secondary attention being given to level of social participation (Neugarten, Havighurst & Tobin, 1961). From

this standpoint, the variables to be measured are the individuals' own evaluations of their present or past life, their life satisfaction and their happiness (Kammann & Flett, 1983). Because happiness is a subjective state, as well as a desirable quality, its criterion is considered to be the actor's subjective judgment, rather than the value framework of the observer. People thus assume responsibility for the judgment of their own well-being.

Whatever its definition, happiness as an emotional sense of well-being, "is actually the result of numerous, complexly interacting factors in a person's life" (Fordyce, 1983, p. 484). Recent research also indicates that at least part of the variation in happiness between individuals is heritable and contributes to the stability of temperament ("In Pursuit," 1996). Bradburn (1969) hypothesised that happiness is a global judgment which people arrive at by comparing their negative affect with their positive affect. He postulated that the difference between the scores on the positive and negative feelings index (the Affect Balance Score) was an apt indicator of an individual's current level of happiness. From this perspective, subjective well-being is the experience of relatively more positive affect than negative affect, over a given period of time (Larsen, Diener & Emmons, 1985). Along these lines, social scientists have focused on the question of what leads people to evaluate their lives in positive terms. This process refers to the evaluation of 'life satisfaction' and relies on the subjects' standards to determine what comprises the 'good life'.

3.2 DYNAMICS OF WELL-BEING

Based on the bifurcation of affective experience, Bradburn's (1969) model encapsulates the premise that a person's position on the continuum of well-being is resultant from his position on two independent dimensions: positive affect

and negative affect. Thus, an individual is high in psychological well-being to the degree that he/she has an excess of positive over negative affect. In Bradburn's (1969) research, the variables which were related to the presence or absence of positive affect bore no relationship to the presence or absence of negative affect. Likewise, the variables which were related to the presence or absence of negative affect bore no relationship to positive affect. Supposedly, there is a series of forces whose presence is related to the existence of positive affect, but whose absence merely results in the lowering of positive affect rather than in any change in negative affect. The same holds true, only vice versa, for negative affect. Thus, an individual's overall sense of well-being is dependent on the relative balance of the two sets of forces.

Bradburn's (1969) research pointed to variations in negative affect being associated with difficulties in marriage and work adjustment, interpersonal tensions, feelings of having a nervous breakdown, and more standard indicators of anxiety and worry. None of these was related to positive affect. Positive affect appeared to be related to a series of factors concerning social contact, an active interest in the world and the degree to which the individual was involved in the environment around him. "These factors include such things as the degree of social participation, which is reflected in organizational membership, number of friends, and frequency of interaction with friends and relatives; the degree of sociability and companionship with one's spouse; and exposure to life situations that introduce a degree of variability into one's life experiences" (Bradburn, 1969, p. 12).

Despite Bradburn's (1969) findings, frequency of social contact was not associated with correspondingly high self-ratings of well-being, happiness or life satisfaction, in the present study. Table 1 shows that most (63%) of the respondents indicated that they spent <10% of their total time with friends. Three of the five retired respondents

TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT WITH FRIENDS, AS RELATED TO WELL-BEING AND LIFE SATISFACTION SCORES

Respondents	Mean of semantic differential scale*	Rating on self-anchoring scale	% of total time spent with friends
Tembi	5,20	2	<10%
Mary	6,00	< -2	75%
Jane	2,67	4	<10%
Leigh	4,33	2	<10%
Ron	3,80	> 2	<10%
Ann	3,27	> 1	75%
Lesley	4,73	> 2	50%
Paula	3,53	1	<10%
Irene	2,60	> 4	<10%
Cheryl	2,13	3	25%
Helen	5,13	> 0	<10%
Clinton	1,93	> 5	<10%
Cathy	2,40	> 3	<10%
Charlotte	1,23	4	<10%
Ken	3,07	> 5	<10%
Suean	2,07	> 5	25%
John	2,80	> 2	<10%
Eddie	2,80	> 3	25%
Pam	3,80	> 2	25%

* Owing to the direction of scoring, lower scores indicate higher levels of happiness and well-being. (Range of scores = 1 - 7)

reported spending 25% of their time with friends, whereas Ann, a young mother, spent 75% with friends. Mary also spent a relatively high proportion of her time (75%) with friends, as did Lesley (50%).

Although Mary reported a relatively high frequency of contact with friends, her rating of < -2 on the life satisfaction self-anchoring ladder was the lowest of all the respondents' scores. Indeed, Mary admitted to being extremely emotionally unsettled. She reported spending a large portion of each week day in the company of her friends, but elaborated on this, saying that she was referring to work colleagues with whom she interacted during the course of the work day. As Mary's colleagues, these individuals were not necessarily in the position to play typical friendship roles in terms of social and emotional support. Although she spent much of her time in the company of these 'friends', they were not meeting her emotional needs, nor contributing significantly to her states of well-being, happiness and life satisfaction.

Clinton, on the other hand, who rated his life satisfaction at a maximum level (>5), admitted to spending only <10% of his total time with his friends. Other factors, and other relationships, rather than social contact with friends obviously influenced his psychological well-being. He suggested that his very settled family life and the "excellent relationship" he shared with his wife were his main sources of happiness.

Comments by other respondents also indicated that at their specific stages of life, social contact with friends was limited, and that other factors were contributing to their feelings of well-being:

Ann: "(After I got married)... I moved to Pretoria and that limits the time that would otherwise be spent with friends I have established in Johannesburg. Plus the fact that we now have a baby - time is so short! But, being a mother and wife compensates!"

Leigh: "The knowledge that I have friends who would stand by me is very important for my happiness; I have a limited family circle and that makes my friends assume even greater significance for me."

Cheryl: "Without friends, life wouldn't be as rich but what really matters now are my husband and children. My husband is very good with children He's a natural father, so he finds a lot of friendship with them! We have many friends who have children - we have lots in common."

3.3. THEORETICAL CONTOURS OF WELL-BEING

Apart from Bradburn's (1969) Affect Balance Model, the extensive literature aimed at describing positive psychological functioning includes such perspectives as Maslow's (1968) conception of self-actualisation, Rogers' (1961) view of the fully functioning person, and Allport's (1961) conception of maturity. An additional theoretical domain follows from life span developmental perspectives, and includes the psychosocial stage model of Erikson (1959).

Acknowledging the theoretical differences between these perspectives, Ryff (1989a) identifies core dimensions of well-being by teasing out three common factors: self acceptance, autonomy and positive relations with others. Individuals who experience a high degree of well-being have strong feelings of empathy and affection for others and are capable of greater love, deeper friendship and more complete identification with others (Ryff, 1989a). Adult developmental stage theories also emphasise the achievement of close interpersonal unions (intimacy), as well as the guidance and direction of others (generativity).

Much of the research into well-being has been based on an implicit model related to the fulfilment of needs, goals and desires. Theories of subjective well-being which maintain that happiness is gained when some state, such as a goal or need, is achieved are termed telic or standpoint models (Diener, 1984). Telic models make allowances for different origins of the striving towards well-being. Goal theories, for instance, are based on the specific desires of which the person is aware. Need theories, on the other hand, assume that there are certain inborn or learned needs that the person strives to fulfil. Supposedly, happiness flows from the fulfilment of these needs, regardless of whether or not the individual is aware of them. Maslow's (1968) need

hierarchy suggests that certain universal human needs occur in the same order in all individuals. Other theorists have also proposed a number of ubiquitous needs, such as those of efficacy, attachment, affiliation, achievement or social support. The acknowledged importance of social support to happiness (Campbell et al., 1976) suggests the inclusion of sociality in this respect.

From a humanistic perspective, Maslow (1970) emphasises the universal human tendency towards growth, self-actualisation, psychological health, well-being, excellence, identity and autonomy. He proposes that human behaviour can be explained by motivational processes that lead towards the achievement of goal states which, in turn, makes life rewarding and meaningful for the individual. Maslow (1970) considers that human motivations are arranged in a sequential, ascending hierarchy of potency or priority. This hierarchy includes: (a) basic physiological needs; (b) safety needs; (c) belongingness and love needs; (d) self-esteem needs; and (e) self-actualisation or fulfilment needs. "Underlying this scheme is the assumption that low-order, prepotent needs must be at least somewhat satisfied before an individual can become aware of or motivated by higher-order needs" (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1976, p. 257).

The constructs which the respondents in the present study generated (see Appendix K1) were categorised according to Maslow's (1970) need hierarchy. Table 2 indicates the categorisation of each respondent's constructs, presented as percentage proportions.

Few of the respondents' well-being constructs (8,53% of the total) involved physiological needs. This makes intuitive sense, given that each of the 19 respondents lived in socio-economic and social-physical environments which provided for an adequate level of satisfaction of primary needs. Although food, drink and protection would most likely have been considered by the respondents as necessary for their psychological well-being, they were, by and large, taken for granted.

TABLE 2: WELL-BEING THEMES

Respondents	Factors (Percentage Apportionment)					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Tembi	0	40,00	33,33	6,67	6,67	13,33
Mary	13,33	40,00	40,00	0	0	6,67
Jane	6,67	26,67	13,33	26,67	13,33	13,33
Leigh	6,67	20,00	26,67	20,00	13,33	13,33
Ron	6,67	26,67	33,33	6,67	6,67	20,00
Ann	6,67	33,33	40,00	13,33	0	6,67
Lesley	0	26,67	26,67	20,00	13,33	13,33
Paula	6,67	13,33	20,00	6,67	26,67	26,67
Irene	0	46,67	13,33	20,00	0	20,00
Cheryl	13,33	33,33	40,00	0	6,67	6,67
Helen	20,00	26,67	20,00	13,33	6,67	13,33
Clinton	13,33	53,33	20,00	6,67	6,67	0
Cathy	20,00	26,67	20,00	13,33	6,67	13,33
* Charlotte	15,38	30,77	30,77	0	0	23,08
Ken	6,67	26,67	40,00	20,00	6,67	0
Susan	6,67	26,67	40,00	6,67	0	20,00
John	13,33	53,33	13,33	6,67	13,33	0
Eddie	6,67	40,00	40,00	6,67	0	6,67
Pam	0	20,00	33,33	0	0	46,67
Mean percentages	8,53	32,15	28,64	10,18	6,67	13,85

* Charlotte listed 13, not 15 items

Factors

A: Physiological needs

D: Self-esteem needs

B: Safety needs

E: Self-actualisation needs

C: Belongingness, love needs

F: Other

Safety or security needs featured in each one of the respondent's scales and account for 32,15% of all the well-being items generated by the respondents. The word "secure" was mentioned by each one of the respondents, with more specific references being common: "secure job" (Tembi); "financial/income security" (Lesley; Heather; Cheryl; Clinton; John); and "physical security" (John). There were also references to themes of spirituality and religious belief systems in eight of the subjects' responses. (It may be hypothesised that in terms of well-being, spirituality contributes to feelings of existential safety and security.)

Of the 283 bipolar items generated by the 19 respondents, 28,64% were categorised as reflecting "belongingness and love needs" and included references to interpersonal relationships with family and friends. These needs, along with those of security, reflected the two major themes in the respondents' personal definitions of well-being and happiness. A sizable percentage (86,67) of the respondents mentioned the word 'friends' in their 15-item lists. Helen did not include any reference to friends and Pam referred only obliquely to friendships in her reference to being 'more sociable' vs. 'unsociable'.

Of the total number of bi-polar items generated, self-esteem and self-actualisation needs comprised 10,18% and 6,67%, respectively. The indication was that the respondents did not consciously consider self-esteem and self-actualisation needs, nor physiological needs, to contribute significantly to their sense of well-being. An exception was Paula: approximately 27% of her items were categorised as being those of self-actualisation. However, none of Mary's, Charlotte's and Pam's items were categorised in either the self-actualisation or the self-esteem groups. Significantly, each of these three respondents generated a relatively high proportion of items within the safety and security group: Mary (40%), Pam (20%) and Charlotte (30,77%). Consistent with Maslow's premise that gratification of needs lower in the hierarchy allows for awareness of, and motivation by, needs higher in the hierarchy, Mary's self-generated items showed an awareness of physiological needs (13,33%), safety and security needs (40%) and belongingness and love needs (40%), but no awareness (0%) of higher order needs (self-esteem and self-actualisation).

Cheryl, 33,33% of whose items were categorised within the 'safety' group and 40% in the 'belongingness' group, generated no items within the self-esteem group and only one in that of self-actualisation. Two respondents who obtained particularly high percentages with respect to items falling in the 'safety and security' bracket were Clinton (53,33%), and Irene (46,67%). Only one of Clinton's 15 items was categorised in the self-esteem

category; also, just one of his items was classified in the self-actualisation category. Of Irene's 15 items, 3 fell within the self-esteem category, but none characterised self-actualisation.

The 'other' category indicated in table 2 contained items such as 'happy/unhappy'; 'humorous/soberside'; and 'freedom/lack of freedom'. A significant theme was that of time- and (psychological) space-awareness: 'solitude/disturbance' and 'carefree/tied down' (Clinton); 'time out alone/imposed upon'; 'empty house after weekend/peace temporarily' (Cathy); 'having lots of free time/having no free time' (Leigh); 'independence/dependence' (Ron) and 'time for myself/at beck and call all the time' (Irene). Possibly, this theme reflects the effects of city life - as well as a counter-balancing (and necessary) side of interpersonal need: that for solitude and space. The theme of time restriction may also indicate feelings of conflict and frustration resulting from being unable to actualise personal goals.

According to telic models of well-being, several factors can interfere with subjective well-being (Diener, 1984). Firstly, individuals may desire goals that bring short-term happiness, but that have long-term consequences which negatively influence the attainment of other goals. Alternatively, the conflict which arises between certain goals and desires may prevent their integration and ultimately, their fulfilment. Thirdly, individuals who do not have definite goals or desires cannot experience the feelings of well-being which accompany their fulfilment. In addition, individuals may be unable to attain their goals because of inadequate skills, prohibiting conditions or simply because their goals are too lofty. Importantly, too, recent research has indicated that well-being may be related more to the state of an individual's wanting what he/she has, than of obtaining what he/she wants ("In Pursuit", 1996).

Similarly, Ogilvie (1987) argues against the culturally supported, telic notion that satisfaction is a state reached only when specific goals are met, certain rewards experienced or particular ideals obtained. Instead, he

considers that "there is both a push and a pull involved in satisfaction, with the push being more powerful than the pull in terms of a standard for measuring one's present place in life. Indeed, it is suggested that the contents of the push help determine the goals contained in the pull" (Ogilvie, 1987, p. 383).

The distinction between bottom-up and top-down approaches to subjective well-being suggests yet another theoretical perspective on happiness. Bottom-up theories propose that happiness is the result of many small pleasures - an accumulation of happy moments. Activity theories assume a similar position: instead of placing the locus of happiness in certain end-states, activity theories propose that happiness is a by-product of human activity. From this perspective, happiness arises from behaviour rather than from goal achievement. The top-down approach, however, proceeds from the higher-order elements down through more fundamental levels. The assumption is that there is a global tendency to experience situations in a positive way; thus, a person enjoys pleasures because he or she is happy, not vice versa.

Associationistic theories of well-being deal with how and why people experience their lives in positive ways. These theories are based on memory, conditioning or cognitive principles and include consideration of cognitive judgment and affective reactions (Diener, 1984). Well-being, from this perspective, is often used inter-changeably with terms such as happiness, satisfaction, morale and positive affect.

Some associationistic theories consider the attributions individuals make about their interpersonal experiences whereas others are based on elements of comparison. Judgment theories, for instance, propose that happiness results from a comparison between specific standards and actual conditions; if the latter exceeds the former, happiness

results. So, happiness is perceived as depending on the discrepancy between aspiration level and actual conditions (Carp & Carp, 1982). Social comparison theory uses other people as a standard: if one is better off than one's compatriots, one will be relatively satisfied and happy (Michalos, 1980). Similarly, adaptation theories (Brickman, Coates & Janoff-Bulman, 1978) and range-frequency theories (Parducci, 1968) suggest that an individual's past life is used to set a standard against which present life experience is compared.

3.4. WELL-BEING AND IDENTITY

Commenting on the role of friendships in her life, a 75-year-old interviewee, Marg, said: "Friends have always been important to me. They help me to know who I am. Old friends know what I'm about. That's important. My friends accept and love me. New friends don't know my background."

Thoits (1983) outlines the ways in which major role relationships can enhance psychological well-being. Firstly, an individual's sense of identity and belonging is produced by being embedded in a system of regularised relationships in which personal ties are defined by reciprocal rights and obligations. In addition, an individual's evaluation of his or her overall worth depends substantially on the received appraisals of those with whom he or she regularly interacts. Thirdly, an individual's sense of mastery and competence is rooted in successful efforts at meeting role expectations attached to important identities. Along these lines, Bryant and Veroff (1982), using confirmatory factor analysis to explore dimensions of self-evaluations, found evidence to support the premise that role expectations shape the evaluative schemata which individuals use to judge their own well-being.

The social self emerges through interaction and contains identities which are claimed and sustained in reciprocal

role relationships. In this sense, a sense of self emerges through an on-going dialectic between the self as separate and the self as experienced through relationships of attachment (Blatt & Blass, 1990). Role relationships are governed by behavioural expectations; the rights and duties of each interactant are normatively prescribed. Role requirements provide the necessary purpose, meaning, direction and guidance to life. Multiple roles may produce ego-gratification: the sense of being appreciated or needed by diverse role partners (Sieber, 1974). This enhancement hypothesis is balanced, however, by scarcity models which assume that social structure creates overly demanding role obligations - the more so, the greater the number of roles one occupies (Goode, 1960). It may also be, however, that the particular roles occupied, and the quality of experience in each role, affect the level of well-being more so than do the number of roles per se (Baruch & Barnett, 1986).

In the present study, direct references to particular roles and their contributions to well-being were few. Of the 19 respondents, 9 listed involvement in family relationships as contributing to their well-being, and 13 referred to friendships. However, few explicitly stated that their playing a particular role within those relationships contributed to their feelings of well-being. An exception was Charlotte whose tenth scale item was 'Being a friend vs. Having no friends'.

Importantly, it is the quality of experience in spouse/friend roles which is more accurate a predictor of psychological outcomes than role occupancy per se (Barnett & Baruch in Barnett, Biener & Baruch, 1987; Umberson & Gove, 1989). Wheaton (1990) demonstrated that the loss of a spouse-, parent- and occupational-role is psychologically damaging only if those roles previously carried few chronic strains; when prior strains are high, the loss may be construed with relief. The negative effects of stressors experienced in a role domain may counterbalance the positive effects of meaning, security and behavioural guidance derived from role involvement. For this reason, "...the

psychological benefits derived from meaningful role-identities might be observed only when stress in those roles is low" (Wheaton, 1990, p. 238).

For example, Leigh described how the growing tension in her friendship with Mike, a man over 30 years her senior, represented an increasing source of anxiety to her. They had met, coincidentally, when she was 21 years old, staying at the same hotel - he on business, she on holiday with a few friends. Having enjoyed each other's company, they maintained contact through occasional phone-calls, even though they lived in towns far apart. Occasionally, Mike would visit Leigh's home town, on business, make contact with her and the two would meet for dinner. "Mike sometimes seemed to be showing me off - almost using me as a trophy. He knew that I wasn't even slightly attracted to him in a sexual way. I had made that very, very clear by talking to him about my various boyfriends and affairs. When we were alone it was fine - almost as if we had an unspoken understanding about the definition and limits of our friendship; but, when we were in public places, he seemed to like the other men to think that he was romantically involved with me ... that he was dating a woman thirty years his junior! That put a lot of strain on our friendship ... I started withdrawing from him ... making excuses about not going to dinner with him. In a way, it turned me against him ... it affected our friendship a lot. At first, the friendship was really important to me; he was so much older ... I looked upon him almost as a mentor who could understand and advise me. But later, I began to grow a bit wary - the friendship began to mean less to me and instead of being a source of joy, it became a strain and a worry."

Individuals' role-identities vary in their centrality or salience for self-conception (Thoits, 1992). Multiple identities are organised in a salience hierarchy wherein salience represents the subjective importance which the person attaches to each identity. Each identity, in turn, is claimed and sustained in reciprocal role relationships. The greater the number of identities held, the stronger one's sense of meaningful, guided existence. The more identities, the more existential security is experienced (Thoits, 1983).

If individuals obtain existential meaning and behavioural guidance from their role-identities, those identities highest in their salience hierarchy should be more important

sources of psychological well-being than identities lower in their hierarchy. Supporting this hypothesis, Thoits (1992) points out that "...the salience of an identity should indicate its meaningfulness to the individual and thus its potential psychological impact" (p. 237).

Beyond the individual level, the salience of different role-identities and the effects of identities on psychological well-being are likely to vary systematically with social status. Women are socialised to value and invest themselves in primary relationships, whereas men are socialised to value and invest themselves in achievement-related activities (Gove, 1984). If individuals are still influenced by differential socialisation, despite changing gender-role expectations, one might expect family, relative and friend identities to rank higher in women's, as opposed to men's, identity structures. By contrast, occupational, organisational and athletic identities should rank higher in men's identity structures. It follows that identities based on primary relationships may be expected to reduce psychological distress more for women than for men and that achievement-related identities should reduce psychological distress more for men.

Clinton, who rated his level of life satisfaction beyond the maximum on the self-anchoring scale, was an exception. He explained that, "...since my quadruple [heart] bypass, I've been on disability pension. I don't work anymore. That wouldn't go down with many men. They wouldn't be able to relate to me being a house husband and that's what I am! I look after the kids, do the shopping, make the supper - well, prepare it - but Linda puts it all together. And I love it! I'm satisfied ... I'm very happy. You see, my home is my love." His responses on the semantic differential scale also indicate that achievement-related roles were not focal contributors to his well-being and happiness (see Appendix K1).

One of the most stable results to have emerged from androgyny research is that, despite femininity's positive relationship with a range of variables, masculinity is more

strongly related to various indices of psychological health, such as well-being (Cook, 1987). Similarly, Wish (1977) found that sex-typed women experience greater life satisfaction than men do. This, of course, may reflect certain characteristics of current measures of psychological well-being - specifically those that reflect a gender bias.

Durkheim (1951) viewed a stable social structure and strong, widely held norms as serving protective functions - in other words, as assuming boundary roles. Consequently, social integration provides normative regulation which protects individuals against despair and self-destructive impulses. One implication of these theoretical observations is that anxiety, depression and disordered behaviour should be reduced directly by the possession of one or more role-identities. This has been confirmed by the findings of studies by Baruch and Barnett (1986), Repetti and Crosby (1984) and others. It is also consistent with the repeated findings that having numerous social ties directly improves health and psychological well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Kessler & McLeod, 1984).

3.4.1. Multiplex identities and role strain

Because the person to whom one is attached in one role (for example, within a marriage) is often the same person with whom one interacts in other role-positions (e.g. the role of 'friend'), role identities may coexist or be rooted one within the other. These multiplex relationships maximise the efficient use of time and energy resources and also function to enhance the affective importance of the identities involved. Furthermore, the friendships which spouses sustain "not only add to each spouse's set of identities, but reinforce the meaningfulness of the marriage" (Thoits, 1983, p. 178).

As Leigh suggested, such friendships may also add to each spouse's understanding of the

other. "My husband and I have three sets of friends - his, from before we were married (and I don't like all of them!), mine from before I was married (he likes most of them), and 'ours'. I find it interesting meeting his friends. It helps me to appreciate the many different facets of his personality. He's not the same with all of his friends - I suppose none of us are?"

Although the relationship between multiple identities and well-being may be curvilinear rather than additive (Thoits, 1983), role strain and conflicting role-demands, beyond some optimal number of identities, may undermine psychological well-being (Sharpe & Heppner, 1991). Thoits (1983) points out that, if one assumes that commitment is reflected in the amount of time and energy invested in identity enactment, and that available time and energy are limited, then it is reasonable to imply that as the number of identities comprising the self increases, so the individual's commitment to any one identity will decrease. Likewise, as the number of identities decreases, commitment should increase. "The proposed inverse relationship between number of identities and degree of commitment has important implications for changes in psychological well-being" (Thoits, 1983, p. 178).

Noticeably similar, the comments by three divorced respondents illustrate the ways in which their husbands had tried to increase their commitment to them, by restricting their wives' social activities and social identities:

Mary: "I had a lot of friends before I was married, but my husband isolated me. He isolated me from my friends and my family, from everyone. I didn't have a choice. I wasn't allowed to visit my family or my friends. It was all about control; he wanted to control me and he did. That's it. He decided I couldn't have friends so I didn't."

Paula: "He wanted to control us completely - me and the children. So, he tried to isolate us: we lived in one place, the children went to school in another, and so on. It was all part of the isolation. He scorned friendship."

Lesley: "When I was married, it [having friends] was very difficult. My husbands - neither

of them - didn't really allow me to have my own friends. My marriage to Joe restricted my friendships. He wouldn't allow me to have friends. He was hungry for attention and my having friends drew some of that attention away from him..."

3.5. WELL-BEING AND SOCIALITY

Well-being is enhanced by contact with others, especially caring others, such as those within a friendship network. From the standpoint of symbolic interactionism, "social interaction is essential to normal personality development and to appropriate social conduct" (Thoits, 1983, p. 175). In addition, social support literature has indicated repeatedly that having diverse and enriching social ties directly improves psychological well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985) so long as the relationships are neither superficial nor characterised by ulterior motives (Brodsky, 1988). Fordyce (1977; 1983) also reports the effectiveness of social contact as a means to improve subjective well-being.

Social contact is generally acknowledged to be related to feelings of psychological well-being, even though the parameters that affect this relationship are not yet well understood. Although studies have assessed the impact on well-being of factors such as number of friends, whether the friends are freely chosen or not, degree of closeness of friends, amount of social contact and so forth, no probing empirical analyses of the effect of friendship experiences on well-being have been documented. These findings illustrate the need not only for the development of more sophisticated theory, but also for an in-depth analysis of the effect on well-being of particular types of social contacts or relationships.

Friendship in adulthood has the potential to open up to both sexes, an extravagance of social opportunity and thus to significantly affect psychological well-being. The relationship between psychological well-being and the

experience of friendship may be characterised along three broad dimensions. The first dimension is represented by the structure of the friendship network and the position of the individual's friendships within that network. The second dimension is represented by the nature of the friendship, and the third by the functions of the relationship in terms of affective and instrumental support.

Friendship experiences contribute differentially to psychological adjustment at different junctures during adulthood, especially in terms of their relative importance as mediators between the impact of marriage and psychological well-being. Thus, friendships are likely to influence psychological well-being differently, according to the particular stage of the individual's marital relationship. Personality and disposition may also play a role: for instance, despite research findings (Wilson, 1967) that extroverted people are happier, it could be that sociable individuals are simply happier persons, without their social activity having any effect on their well-being. It could also be that when people are happy, they are more sociable. Even though many studies have found a correlation between satisfaction with friends and subjective well-being (Anderson, 1977; Rhodes, 1980), the direction of influence remains uncertain, despite Bradburn's (1969) assertion that the relationship between sociability and happiness is likely to be bi-directional.

In terms of their well-being, several of the respondents emphasised the value of regular social contact and accessibility to friends. Rating her overall sense of life satisfaction at the level of '2', Leigh marked her 4th item on the semantic differential scale as:

Living near to friends ___:___:___:___:___: X:___ Living far away

Comments by other respondents also suggested that greater contact with their friends would contribute to their having a greater sense of well-being:

Ron: "When I was in the army and also at college, even at work too - in every instance, the problems I've experienced with friends have been because of distance. It really got to me - depressed me. I befriended people who didn't live near to me and so they formed a nucleus over there - and I was stuck out here. How can a friendship develop like that?"

Susan: "... but now distance is a problem - we look forward to our gatherings, when we get all our friends together. We'd really be happier if our friends were nearer."

Clinton: "Distance is a problem; one gets married and moves away and then the friendship grows less close. It peters out. Distance is a negative force in friendship. I'd be happier if certain of my friends lived nearer."

Although some (longitudinal) studies (Bradburn, 1969; Graney, 1975; Anderson, 1977; Liang, Kahana & Doherty, 1980), have indicated that increases or decreases in social contact are accompanied by changes in subjective well-being, others (Hasak, 1978; Solomowitz, 1979; Sauer, 1977) have found no relationship between social participation and happiness. The mixed evidence suggests that the issue is an intricate one - a conclusion drawn by Smith and Lipman (1972), who found that situational constraints play a mediating role between psychological well-being and social factors.

Israel and Antonucci's (1987) research focused precisely on this aspect of sociality: social context, or the social network. These researchers replicated their initial investigation into the relationship between well-being, as measured by the 10-item Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965), and social network characteristics, categorised along three broad dimensions: structure (size and density of the network); nature (frequency, geographic dispersion and reciprocity); and functions provided by the network (affective support and instrumental support). The results, which supported those from their initial study, indicated that most of the structural and interactional network characteristics were not significantly related to

psychological well-being. Further, there was evidence that social provisions and support were the most significant predictors of psychological well-being. Moreover, several other factors are also likely to confound the association between sociality and well-being: Phillips (1967), for instance, found that the effect of social participation on well-being depended on level of education.

Social support has been the focus of a proliferation of research into adult well-being. It has often been demonstrated, for instance, that social support can ameliorate psychological distress (Winefield, Winefield & Tiggemann, 1992; Horbeck & Tilden, 1983; Lowenthal & Haven, 1968). Moreover, people with spouses, friends and family members who provide psychological and material resources are in better health than those with fewer supportive social contacts (Mitchell, Billings & Moos, 1982; Leavy, 1983). The results of Weiss's (1986) study of couples who had recently moved far away from their original communities demonstrated that "adults may require for their well-being not only the provisions made by marriages but also the provisions of friendships" (p. 96). This supposition was supported by Winefield et al. (1992) who conducted a longitudinal study in which 483 adults were asked to rate the supportive behaviours they experienced, according to three categories of source: family and close friends, peers, and individuals in a supervisory/authoritative position. The results indicated that the support measure with the strongest association with well-being was the frequency of supportive behaviours towards the respondent, by close family and friends. Similarly, Armsden and Greenberg (1987) reported correlations between supportive relationships, such as peer attachments, and well-being.

In summary, although "there seems little doubt that individual well-being is mediated by the presence and functioning of supportive relationships", Levitt,

Antonucci, Clark, Rotton and Finley (1985-86, p. 62) point out that the significance of many research results in this area has been limited by a lack of theoretical integration and a unwieldy diversity of well-being measures.

3.5.1. Life-stage effects

The variable importance which people attach to their friendships, as they progress through adulthood may be inferred from data gathered by Campbell et al. (1976): the results of their national survey revealed that a sense of well-being for both young and older adults was more strongly rooted in the size of their friendship networks, than it was for middle-aged persons.

Examining the impact of social interaction on psychological well-being across various stages of adulthood, Ishii-Kuntz (1990) concluded that life course stages provide "important opportunities and constraints in interactions with family and friends" (p. 16-17). Because of the variations in quality and frequency of social interaction, the impact of interactions with family and friends on well-being was expected to vary across adulthood stages. Specifically, Ishii-Kuntz (1990) hypothesised that the quality of friendship would decrease in young adulthood, when individuals were establishing themselves within family or occupational realms, and that interaction with friends would thus have less of an impact on psychological well-being in early adulthood. Quality, rather than frequency, of social interaction (as measured by satisfaction with family life and friendship) was found to be positively related to well-being of adults in all age groups. A further examination of this positive effect revealed that the impact on well-being of interaction with family and secondly, with friends, was similar in each stage of adulthood. Although no significant differences were found, social interaction with family was found to be more important than that with friends for

individuals in younger age groups. The converse was true for older age groups.

Not so for Marg, a retired interviewee. She commented: "At this stage of my life, when I think of companionship, friends are less important than my family. Much less. Considerably less. In early life, you see, my friends provided more companionship than my family. You can't really be friends with a 2-year-old, now, can you? But I get far more enjoyment and companionship from my family now. I don't have to explain myself. And that's so important."

Comments by Clinton, father of three grown-up children, revealed similar sentiments. He commented that friends were "not so important, because I find the companionship I need within my family." Consequently, he rated the self-generated construct "friends vs. loneliness" as being low in importance in terms of his well-being: 13th in the 15-item scale. He rated his present circumstances, in terms of this construct, as being one point away from his ideal state. Four family-relationship concerns were included in the 15 bipolar constructs he generated, with maximum positive ratings given to "happy family life vs. family strife" and "good sex life vs. unhappy sex life." Commenting on the role that good sexual relations with his wife played in his experiencing of well-being, Clinton indicated that his wife assumed the multiple role of friend and lover: "Our whole relationship is friendship-driven. Even sex. It used to be sex and now it's lovemaking. Sex is still important but it's different now. The sex urge dominates the relationships initially, but now it's friendship and the love-making is part of it."

Likewise, the results of Ishii-Kuntz's (1990) study indicated that the quality of relationships with family members and with friends was found to be an important determinant of psychological well-being. Ishii-Kuntz's (1990) research indicated that frequency of interaction had virtually no effect on well-being but that, regardless of opportunities and constraints in interaction, the participants benefited from involvement in personal relationships.

Survey data consistently indicate that the psychological well-being of married individuals is substantially higher than that of unmarried persons (Andrews & Withey, 1976).

Role theory attributes this trend to the marital relationship itself, which supposedly produces high levels of well-being. On the other hand, the social selection perspective suggests that individuals who have high levels of well-being are more likely to get married and stay married than are persons with low levels of well-being (Gove, Style & Hughes, 1990).

3.6. WELL-BEING AND THE 'OTHERS' ORIENTATION

The association between well-being and social variables appears to be evident across the gender line and throughout the adult life cycle. Using an interview technique, Ryff (1989b) probed the well-being conceptions of 117 middle-aged and older adults. Questions centred on general life evaluations, past life experiences, definitions of well-being and views of the aging process. The data collected indicated that, in defining well-being, both age groups and sexes emphasised having positive social relations and an 'others orientation'. Specifically, the subjects considered that a sense of well-being resulted from being a caring, compassionate person and having good relationships with family and friends. Again, the emphasis was on quality, rather than quantity, of friendship experiences; indeed, it makes intuitive sense that 'experienced closeness' is more significant than more objective forms of contact (O'Connor, 1995).

Retired interviewees, Mr and Ms Banks, hinted at the distinction between these two forms of sociality in terms of their potential contribution to well-being. "We see a lot of people here, but I suffer with migraine, so that's always a problem for people who are not our close friends. But, we have tea together and chat and that's nice. They're not bosom friends, though, not buddies. It's not the same." Ms Banks explained.

Elaborating, her husband continued, "You see, I help people a lot with things; they know where to come for screws and bolts, so everyone's quite friendly - they know us around here. But no-one really cares; I mean, I don't have anyone I could really unburden myself

to. I don't want to be a burden either. It's not the same as our friendship with the Budds."

"The Budds!" Ms Banks responded, tearfully. "They were also from England; their daughter was very ill so they went to the USA to be there with her. A few weeks later she died. But they didn't want to come back here. I miss them so much." Obviously moved by her memories of their close friendship with the Budds, Ms Banks reminisced: "They really made us feel welcome. You could arrive there any time of day, no matter what they were doing, and they'd make you welcome. They were so special to us."

Ryff (1989b) points out that the prominence of an others-orientation stands in contrast to many other research indicators of positive functioning (affect balance, happiness and life satisfaction) which do not give central emphasis to relationships with others. Even though many measures of well-being do include items about family and friends, the quality of relationships with others, as a core dimension in the theoretical or empirical structure of well-being, is not always considered. Despite this, Flanagan (1978) found that open-ended research techniques yielded relations with others to be a central component of life quality. More than 80% of his nationally represented sample indicated that a close relationship with one's spouse, having close friends (70% for men) and having and raising children were important elements which contributed to the respondents' quality of life.

3.7. WELL-BEING AND THE REAL, IDEAL AND UNDESIRED SELF

In contrast to the premises fundamental to an 'others-orientation' of well-being, some theories have underscored positive views of the self. This is illustrated by the positive self-concept component of life satisfaction (Neurgarten, Havighurst & Tobin, 1961) as well as Erikson's (1959) and Jung's (1933) emphasis on self-knowledge and self-acceptance as central components of well-being.

Wright (1978) postulates a theory based on a conception of self that regards a central motive to be the individual's concern for well-being and worth. This concern manifests itself in tendencies to affirm both one's sense of individuality and one's important attributes, to evaluate one's self positively and to change towards positive self growth. According to the theory, friendship involves investments of self in a relationship characterised by the partners' voluntary interdependence and personalised concern for one another. This investment, which includes expenditures of time, personal resources, and personalised concern, yields dividends experienced as the partner's self-affirmation value, ego support value, stimulation value, or utility value.

According to Wright (1978), when an investment of self has been made in a relationship (be it a marriage or a friendship), that relationship becomes one of the subject's self-attributes. A dyadic relationship represents an investment of self on the part of the subject to the degree that the well-being and worth of the other person has implications for the well-being and worth of the self. In the case of relationships such as cross-gender friendships, however, this concurrent investment of self into the two relationships has the potential to create competition, and hence conflict, between the parties involved in each of the relationships.

The concept of 'ideal self', portrayed as the self perfected, is significant to several theories of well-being. From a psychoanalytical perspective, Freud (1965) located the ego ideal in the superego, considering it to be the standard against which the ego measures itself and assesses its worth. Focusing on the interplay between real and ideal selves, Cooley (1902) considered that distress results when one's present self consistently falls short of one's ideal self. However, as Sullivan (1953) theorised, the self

system also includes the un-ideal self, or the self which is least desired. From this perspective, the self is comprised of the 'good me', the undesired self or 'bad me' and the disowned self, the 'not me'. Whereas real-ideal (real-possible) self-discrepancies are ideational, real-undesired self-discrepancies are experience-based and less conceptual than the ideal self. As such, they represent a more embedded and less flexible standard against which one judges one's level of well-being (Ogilvie, 1987; 1992).

The undesired self resides in the "conceptual zone of mental representations and exists at the same level as mental representations of other possible selves" (Ogilvie, 1992, p. 51). Whereas hypothetical selves can be brought to consciousness and described in the same way as one might describe other conceptual entities, the undesired self, derived from past episodes, consists of non-conscious memories of discomfoting experiences that have been coded in affective terms (Ogilvie, 1992). In other words, the content of the undesired self probably contains images of undesirable traits, the unfortunate circumstances of others (my neighbour ran off with his best friend's wife), non-conscious impulses to engage in socially unacceptable activities, as well as memories of dreaded experiences, embarrassing situations, fearsome events and unwanted emotions that the individual has experienced (Ogilvie, 1987).

Ogilvie (1987) hypothesised that there would exist a negative correlation between level of life satisfaction and the distance between ratings of the real self and the undesired self. In other words, the further away the real self was from the undesired self, the more satisfied the subject would be. A second hypothesis in Ogilvie's (1987) study stated that the distance between the real self and the undesired self would be a better predictor of life satisfaction than the distance between the real self and the

ideal self.

These hypotheses were tested by using a method, based on Kelly's (1955) repertory grid test, in which Identities x Features matrices were generated by 45 college students. Subjects were asked to list on the rows of the matrix, the identities they considered to be most descriptive of themselves. Pre-existing on three of the rows in the matrix were the following items: how I am most of the time, how I would like to be, and how I hope never to be. Under the heading 'features', subjects were asked to list between 50 and 60 traits, characteristics, qualities and feeling states both that they liked and disliked. Subjects were then required to rate each of the features according to how applicable each one was to them when they occupied their various identities. The subjects were also asked to complete a Life Satisfaction questionnaire. Algorithms were used to analyse the matrices and to correlate the results with Life Satisfaction ratings.

The results of the study indicated that the implicit standard which the respondents used to assess their well-being was how close or distant they were from subjectively being like their most negative image of themselves. More specifically, the results showed that the distance between the real self and the undesired self correlated more highly ($-0,719$; $p = 0.001$) with life satisfaction ratings than did the distance between the real and ideal selves, for which a correlation of $0,368$ ($p = 0,013$) was obtained. Ogilvie (1987) thus concluded that life satisfaction is more a function of one's subjective distance from unwanted affects and circumstances, than a function of one's proximity to ideal states of existence. Based on this finding, Ogilvie (1987) proposed that the undesired self is an implicit baseline which individuals use in subjectively assessing their well-being.

Although the conceptual and methodological background of self-with-other representation is dealt with only in later chapters, cursory inspection of the respondents' self-with-other representations (SWORs) indicates informative patterns of association between well-being and dreaded or ideal conceptions of self. Clinton's SWOR, or self-with-other representation (figure 11), indicates that his concept of ideal social self is actualised when he occupies the identity of spouse (in other words, when he is with his wife). By contrast, he associates his concept of dreaded social self with several of his friends (those occupying Target-Class 'B'). More specifically, Clinton's undesired self is experienced in interaction with approximately 39% of the self-with-friend experiences included in his SWOR. Of these, 43% are experiences with opposite-sex friends and 57% with same-sex friends.

Considering the high proportion of friendship experiences which elicit Clinton's 'dreaded' social feelings (presumably those dissociated from his feelings of well-being), why is it that he should register such high well-being scores (semantic differential well-being scale $\bar{X} = 1.93$; self-anchoring scale = >5)? Part of the answer may lie within the undifferentiated and unelaborated composition of his self-with-other experiences: from Clinton's data, HICLAS is able to recover only 3 of the possible 7 feature, and 3 of the possible 7 target, classes; approximately 73% of Clinton's features are located in the Residual category and only one feature ('uncomfortable') occupies Feature-Class 'b', which is associated both with his dreaded social self and with the occupants of Target-Class 'B'.

In Clinton's 15-item self-generated semantic differential scale of well-being and happiness, he rates 'friendships vs. loneliness' at #13, well below 'happy family life vs. family strife' which occupies position #3. (Significantly, Clinton rates his friendship construct - and all his other constructs - close to the positive pole.) Thus, although a large portion of his friendship experiences are associated with his concept of dreaded social self, they do not significantly affect his well-being. In effect, his more important constructs supersede, and, in effect, cancel out, his less important ones.

At the other extreme of the well-being scale is Mary, who rated her life satisfaction as < 2 and her mean level of well-being and happiness at 6 (Appendix K1). Her SWOR (figure 22) indicates her dreaded social self to be located in Target-Class 'B', thus being associated with 3 of her friends, all of whom she admitted to "distrusting", although she was "not often in their company." Her dreaded social self was therefore likely to be activated relatively infrequently. Mary's ideal social self (that which is presumably most directed associated with her feelings of well-being) shares Target-Class 'A', together with

53% of her friends, 35,29% of whom are female and 64,71% are male. (This pattern seems congruent with her stated preference for male friends.)

Despite the experiential opportunities Mary appears to have in terms of her friendships, and the potential they have to activate her ideal social self, her relational experiences do not seem to contribute positively to her well-being. The overriding anxieties and concerns which dominate her life seem to discredit the positive effects of her friendship experiences and over-shadow their potential contributions in terms of her well-being. The most salient of her concerns is that regarding her health: she rated 'health' as the second most important contributor to her well-being and considered her present state of health to be at the extreme end of the negative pole. She also included concern about safety and security issues within her first 5 constructs, indicating her current state in this respect, to be close to the negative pole. By comparison, Mary considered 'good-friends' to be much less important to her well-being, ascribing a friendship construct to #13 on the 15-part scale, and rating it just to the right of the centre of the bipolar scale.

Thus, Clinton's and Mary's sets of data both suggest first, that ideal and dreaded social-selves can co-exist together with either positive or negative friendship experiences and second, that the association of such experiences with well-being is dependent on the meaning and importance which the individual ascribes to them. Leigh's data throws a finer light on these issues. She considers friendship as a much more salient contributor to her well-being. 'Having deep friendships vs. having shallow friendship' rated 3rd on her 15-item list, below the constructs 'secure vs. insecure' and 'happy marriage vs. unhappy marriage'. Her ratings of the secure construct (#1) was near to the negative pole, her rating of construct #2 (happy marriage) was close to the positive pole, and there was a medial rating of her friendship construct. Leigh's mean rating for well-being and happiness was 4,33 whereas she rated her life satisfaction at a level of 2.

Leigh's SWOR (figure 12) indicates her ideal social self to be associated with 32,43% of her friends (41,7% female and 58% male), whereas her dreaded social self is activated by 18,9% of her friends, 85,7% of whom are male. She commented that she was not in frequent contact with the friends contained in Target-Class 'C', which is associated with her dreaded social self, and that "most of them are husbands of my close girlfriends, or friends of my husband." Thus, although negatively associated with her well-being, these friendship experiences (through their infrequency) are unlikely to have a profound effect on it. Those friends occupying Target-Class 'A', on the other hand, are friends she is in close contact with and whom she considers to be "my best friends - long-standing ones.

ones I really care about!" Their association with her ideal social self is thus much stronger and, coupled with the importance she attaches to friendship, they are likely to be major sources of her well-being and life satisfaction.

Regardless of the source of well-being, the number and quality of social contact are unlikely to be the sole factors which foster psychological well-being. Rather, it could be the match between a person's social relationships and his or her needs and preferences for interaction (Perlman & Peplau, 1984), both of which may originate in past relationships or in social comparisons. In this respect, individuals' subjective expectations influence their own evaluations of their current life situation (Keith, Braito & Brecci, 1990), and by implication, their sense of well-being.

Leigh, for instance, commented: "I enjoy being with - or just having - friends, but I need to be alone much of my time. I'd be lonely without friends, certainly. But, having friends around too often or for too long makes me feel uncomfortable - even irritated."

3.8. WELL-BEING UNDER THREAT

Despite the diversity of individuals' social preferences and motivations, there are certain interpersonal factors that typically lead towards or away from a sense of well-being. In this regard, relationship satisfaction acts as a bulwark against experiences which have the potential to disrupt psychological well-being (Lu & Argyle, 1992).

Tembi expressed this in a nutshell: "Life isn't smooth and it's wrong to suppress one's feelings; you know, you can't live in a cocoon or it results in problems - like suicide," she said. "Friendship heals the pain in one's heart, gives one the confidence to face life. It makes one feel happy again, being with friends."

An individual's social network is a support system mitigating against life stressors. "Feelings of well-being for most people appear to be related to the quantity and perceived

quality of the person's network of social relationships" (De Jong-Gierveld, 1986, p. 241). Thus, contact with others, especially caring others, is associated with better physical and psychological survival in the face of life's stressors (Winefield, Winefield & Tiggemann, 1992). This 'buffering' model posits that social support protects, or buffers, individuals from the potentially pathogenic effects of stressful events.

Conversely, however, stressful life events can function to reduce the buffering effect of friendship. Retired interviewee, Mr Banks, commented on the effect that his ill health and his concomitant financial difficulties had had on his social life: "I had a quadruple bypass and I was very ill. Since then, I've had to be very careful. With reduced finances, we definitely lost friends. Oh, we still got invited out, but it just got too expensive. There's a certain heaviness about our friendship, now - a certain kind of caution and restriction. We've cut ourselves off, really. We've restricted ourselves - we've had to - but sometimes we do feel very lonely. There's nothing we can do about it."

An alternative model posits that social resources have a beneficial effect irrespective of whether individuals are under stress or not (Cohen & Wills, 1985). These social resources include close and enduring relationships; loyal, empathic friends; a lack of concern about sexual roles; honesty within relationships, and interpersonal cooperation (Brodsky, 1988). On the other hand, factors which can inhibit feelings of well-being include distant, transient and involuntary relationships; superficial friendships; friends with ulterior motives; dishonest and manipulative relationships; and, competition within relationships. Moreover, Shaver and Hazan (1987, 1988) consider that adults with secure attachment styles are likely to experience comparatively higher levels of well-being.

3.9. ATTACHMENT AND WELL-BEING

Attachment is an enduring and intense affectional bond which, if threatened, can result in emotional and psycholog-

ical disturbances (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1981). A sense of security is derived from the maintenance of a bond in which confidence about the accessibility of the attachment figure predominates over fears concerning unavailability of the figure. Weiss (1982) concluded that adults' attachments to their peers are typically characterised by seeking out attachment figures when under duress, by experiencing anxiety when these figures are unavailable and by feeling comforted in their company. Significantly, attachment bonds characterise only those relationships perceived by the individual as being emotionally significant. Moreover, Henderson (1979) suggests that, rather than the actual availability of social relationships, it is their perceived adequacy (or quality), especially in the face of adversity, that is the crucial factor with regard to the degree of risk of developing neurotic symptoms.

Armsden and Greenberg (1987) used a hierarchical regression model to evaluate the relationship between well-being and the quality of attachment to parents or peers. Several measures of well-being were used: The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, The Self-Criticism scale taken from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory L-Scale, and a single global question used to assess life satisfaction. To assess attachment, the Inventory of Adolescent Attachment was administered to the 86 respondents, who ranged in age from 17 to 20 years. The results indicated that perceived quality of parent and peer attachments in late adolescence was highly related to well-being, and particularly to self-esteem and life satisfaction.

In the present study, the mean (semantic differential) well-being ratings of the 11 respondents who described themselves as having a 'secure' attachment style was 2,77 (see Table 3). Only Tembi was self-rated as being anxious-ambivalent and she scored a mean well-being index of 5,20. The average semantic differential score for the seven respondents with avoidant attachment styles was 3,99. Owing to the direction of scoring, the lower the score, the greater the index of well-being. Thus, the well-being indexes of

the securely-attached respondents were noticeably higher than those of the avoidant respondents as well as the mean score for the anxious-ambivalent respondent.

TABLE 3: ATTACHMENT STYLES, WELL-BEING, HAPPINESS AND LIFE-SATISFACTION RATINGS

Respondents	Mean of semantic differential scale*	Rating on self-anchoring scale	Attachment style
Tembi	5,20	2	Anxious-ambivalent
Mary	6,00	< -2	Avoidant
Jane	2,67	4	Avoidant
Leigh	4,33	2	Avoidant
Ron	3,80	> 2	Secure
Ann	3,27	> 1	Secure
Lesley	4,73	> 2	Avoidant
Paula	3,53	1	Avoidant
Irene	2,60	> 4	Secure
Cheryl	2,13	3	Secure
Helen	5,13	> 0	Secure
Clinton	1,93	> 5	Secure
Cathy	2,40	> 3	Secure
Charlotte	1,23	4	Secure
Ken	3,07	> 5	Secure
Susan	2,07	> 5	Secure
John	2,80	> 2	Avoidant
Eddie	2,80	> 3	Secure
Pam	3,80	> 2	Avoidant

* Owing to the direction of scoring, lower scores indicate higher levels of happiness and well-being on the semantic differential scale. (Range of scores = 1 - 7)

3.10. FRIENDSHIP, KINSHIP AND WELL-BEING

Although rarely verified empirically, a compensatory kinship-role may be attributed to friendship networks in the absence of stable and positive family relationships (Weiss, 1986). In this way, in situations where institutional living is the norm (colleges, military barracks, prisons, mental hospitals and homes for the aged), the presence of peers may compensate for the enforced absence of family. Moreover, individuals who are dissatisfied with their marital relationships, in terms of affiliation or companionship, may look to friends to satisfy their needs for kinship.

Hylton, a retired interviewee, explained that he regularly helped out at the local Legion Club. "Since I arrived," he explained, "the old ladies have said there is much more fun and laughter emanating from the kitchen than ever before. At Christmas time some of them clubbed together and bought me a litre bottle of whiskey. They said it was my reward for being so kind and attentive towards them. They seem to like the attention I show them. Their own menfolk do not act in that way, and hardly any of them show any respect to females, so they lean on me for it."

Thus, friendships can serve as substitutes or functional equivalents for major roles, by providing expressive support and tension management in the learning or performance of instrumental roles.

Lorraine, also a retired interviewee, described how her friends had assumed functional kinship roles. "Friendship is everything to me ... more than family now - there's a bonding that's different from family. My family members are just too busy, now. It's not that they don't care. But my friends are there, instead. Some of my friends are much younger than me and they treat me like a mother, so they're a bit like my daughters and their husbands are like my sons! They really look after me ... and they take me out on my birthday, too!"

The substitutability of friendship and kinship roles does not apply solely to old age. Leigh admitted to having a very small family, to whom she had never felt particularly close. "Friends," she said, "assumed enormous significance and still do. When I first started

working, my friends became 'family' to me. They were more important to me than my family in many ways. I grew very distressed when there were friendship upheavals - it played havoc with my happiness. You see, I depended on them emotionally, much more so than on my own family whom I had grown to expect wouldn't necessarily be there for me, to support me and encourage me. Friends were my surrogate family."

Conversely, some of the respondents mentioned the reverse situation, in terms of role substitution: John's wife's family had represented friendship to her: "My wife found an interest on a domestic level. Her family really meant everything to her. Her family were her friends." Similarly, Eddie commented: "Our best friends are our family. Initially Pam gingerly summed them up. She's a bit shy to begin. She's hesitant until she sees the harmony. I have an unmarried sister who's in a flat. We've made that our focus now. We help her where we can. We show her friendship. We like to keep ourselves available for people who need us. We spent a lot of time with Pam's two nun sisters when they were old and dying. In 1992 my son was dying of cancer, so we kept ourselves available for him. We want to be available. We have no other need to make friends. We have friends in the family."

Although organisationally and symbolically different, friendship and kinship do share commonalities of character (Adams, 1968). Both facilitate social integration, although kinship reinforces more inclusive and highly regarded social systems, such as marriage. In western societies, friendship, as a non-institutionalised relationship, occupies rather more of a vagrant position. Hence, because of their non-institutionalised and potentially anti-institutional status, friends must continually justify their existence.

Whilst it is doubtful whether friends convey benefits as great as those produced by marriage, and whilst spouses are not necessarily friends, similarities between friendship and marriage do exist, as the following description of friends implies: "Friends are people who are liked, whose company is enjoyed, who share common interests and activities, who are helpful and understanding, who can be trusted, with whom one feels comfortable, and who will be emotionally supportive" (Argyle and Henderson, 1985, p. 64).

For 60% of the married couples in a study conducted by Argyle and Henderson (1985), the most valuable aspect of marriage was doing things together. However, the main differences between the activities shared by spouses and those shared by friends are that "while friends engage in eating, drinking and leisure, spouses have work to do and decisions to take. The work involved is rather like that in a small hotel, restaurant, nursery school, hospital, and market garden combined, except that there are no hours of work or payment" (Argyle & Henderson, 1985, p. 135).

3.10.1. Well-being as a benefit/reward of friendship

In terms of well-being, the specific contributions of friendship are numerous. Through experiences of friendship, individuals gain self esteem, acceptance, a sense of usefulness, affection, mutual assistance, intimacy, support and companionship, (Roberto & Scott, 1986a), all of which contribute to feelings of personal worth and fulfilment (Adams, 1967; Blau, 1981).

The far-reaching benefits of friendship appear to enhance various aspects of life satisfaction and personal worth, including those associated with the spiritual domain:

Eddie: "I have a spiritual sort of view of friendship, but it's the agricultural type; friendship strengthens me spiritually."

Sheila (interviewee): "I would find it difficult to be friends with someone who didn't love the Lord as I do. I'm very drawn to the kind of person who loves the Lord. I'd find it difficult to continue a friendship with someone who was inhibited in loving the Lord. That's an important part of my friendship relationships - the deep faith; I like to share it. Spiritual friendships are an important part of my life."

Charlotte: "I'm an active member of a Christian group and we spend our time, as friends, praying in a group. So, in a sense, we reach the Lord through our friendship."

Gail (interviewee): "As a Christian you can't be superficial. But being a Christian tends

to isolate you. One flows in that direction, towards church activity. I'd feel happier if I had friends to work with me for the Lord. That would make me so happy."

Despite the potential that friendship has as a contributor to various aspects of well-being, the "question of benefits accruing is a ticklish one" (Enright & Rawlinson, 1991, p. 1) - and one not easily examined. Mostly, this difficulty results from the tenuous and mutable nature of friendship which, in itself, is often based on an exchange balance which includes benefits as well as costs. Certainly, even despite the sometimes lofty and always noble aspirations of friendship being its own reward, partners in a friendship are usually aware of a system of reciprocity at different stages of their relationship. "Relationships, we assume, grow, develop, deteriorate, and dissolve as a consequence of an unfolding social-exchange process, which may be conceived as a bartering of rewards and costs both between the partners and between members of the partnership and others" (Burgess & Huston, 1979, p. 4).

Despite the apparent logic of these suppositions, Irene's comments seemed to discount the ubiquity of the balance of exchange, or the direction of exchange, in friendships: "As I've got older, there's been a change in the way I see friendship - I now look at it more as what I can give a person not what I can receive from him or her." Charlotte's comments also expressed this theme: "...now I'm looking to being a friend - trying to fill a need where there is one. I'm not looking for other people to fulfil my needs, I'm trying to fulfil theirs. It's not necessary to establish long term friendships always; but it is important just to be there if someone needs you."

According to Clark and Mills (1979), exchange factors are monitored more closely at early, less intimate stages of friendship development. Early on, interactions are seen in a limited time-frame and current outcomes are evaluated with regard to a longer past and a more foreseeable future. During the plateau stage of friendship development, wherein pairs have established an enduring relationship, partners de-emphasise its exchange properties because they have an

economy of surplus (Levinger, 1979). Common interests allow partners to engage in joint activities that enhance mutual pleasure at low cost and thus promote a continuing high credit balance in their relationship.

If a long term friendship begins to turn sour, the participants pay close attention to its benefits and its costs, as well as to the benefits foregone as a result of not having explored alternative possibilities. By trying to re-establish the pair's former satisfactions, by attempting to renegotiate the current arrangements, or by trying to withdraw entirely, the participants are likely to throw the exchange balance into focus. During the decline of a relationship, however, temporal comparisons dissolve past pleasures and prospective gratifications tend to be discounted.

Thus, when petty annoyances began to mount within the context of her friendship with Mark, a friend of some years, Leigh found herself closely examining and analysing her friendship. The interpersonal irritations reached a climax after she got married: "Our friendship was based on intellectual interest - we met through a study group. He wasn't at all the type of person I would have befriended under other circumstances. He seemed to me to be a person who was mostly concerned about his own needs. If he wanted to visit my husband and I on Monday and I said that it would be more convenient for me on Tuesday, that meant nothing. On Monday, he'd arrive. After a while, when there had been one too many instances where he just ignored my needs and had ridden roughshod over them, I decided not to pursue the friendship any longer. The phone-calls between the two of us grew fewer and finally, we lost contact. In hindsight, I don't regret the friendship dissolving. It wasn't worth pursuing."

Cathy agreed: "It's just not worth carrying on with a friendship if you're not getting anything out of it," she said.

A comparison level is the standard used in evaluating the absolute attractiveness of a relationship. It reflects the quality of the outcomes (such as feelings of well-being) which persons feel they deserve. The standard represents the lowest level of outcome a participant will accept in the

light of available alternative relationships. It is the standard by which a person decides whether or not to remain in the relationship. An individual's motivation is thus towards finding a better bargain; in other words, a better reward-cost balance within his or her relationships. In this respect, Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) interdependence theory of friendship revolves around the concepts of interaction and the multifold consequences of it.

From a social exchange perspective, two types of psychological forces act to keep a person in a relationship: driving forces (attractions) and restraining forces (barriers). Despite their experiencing feelings of well-being within a friendship, individuals do not always consciously reflect on such benefits. In fact, they are not always aware of them at all, perceiving their friendships neither as solemn commitments nor as particularly spiritual ardours. Costs, on the other hand, are much more easily perceived.

According to Eidelson's (1980) affiliation-independence model of relationships, as involvement grows between two individuals, restrictive costs are likely to multiply. The affiliation-independence model views decline in relationship satisfaction as a major precipitant for the individual carefully evaluating the relationship in order to determine whether the present rewards and costs point toward greater involvement or reduced association with the partner. If the interactant decides, given the affiliative rewards, that the relationship is worth pursuing despite restrictive costs, the costs lose their salience and the effect on the individual's satisfaction is diminished. In this case, the result is a redefinition of the person's independence and the adoption of new frames of reference.

Sometimes, however, individuals decide that their friendships are not worth pursuing. Ann, for instance, explained: "After I met my husband, Russell, Alan came out with us a

few times but he really didn't enjoy it. I've got to take care of Russell's feelings. So now, I hardly see Alan ... we're not really in touch anymore. I mean, Russell comes first and I wouldn't want to hurt him." Thus, Ann's re-evaluation of her friendship with Alan led to reduced association, despite her admission that: "I really miss seeing him."

Formal models of social exchange incorporate the assumption that, as interpersonal involvement deepens, one's partner's satisfactions and dissatisfactions become more and more identified with one's own. Exchange theorists are also concerned with what is invested in relationships and how the outcomes compare with individuals' past outcomes, their partners' outcomes, or other friendships available to them. From a social exchange viewpoint, an economic analogy can be used to analyse motivational dynamics in social relationships. "Dyadic and person-group relations are seen as exchanges of commodities following the implicit calculation of rewards and costs" (Wright, 1978, p. 189).

Hays (1985) concludes that the critical factor in friendship satisfaction is the quantity of benefits experienced: if a friendship offers enough benefits, individuals are willing to put up with the accompanying costs. The results of Hays's (1985) research, involving 101 undergraduates, indicated that the amounts of interaction and behavioural intimacy levels of the participating dyads were positively correlated with their ratings of friendship intensity at all stages of relationship development. Consistent with the social exchange view of friendship development, dyads that successfully progressed to close friends reported more benefits. Higher benefits seemed to lead to greater friendship intensity. Within the context of cross-sex friendships, the question is whether, given the restrictions presented by the boundaries of marriage, such friendships are permitted to develop adequately to allow for the development of sufficiently high level of benefits.

In Jane's case, they weren't. She believed that, "Commitment to a successful marriage

must come first. The exclusion (of my spouse) encourages conflict and so my opposite-sex friendships have lacked depth ... (they) have always stayed very superficial. They've never become very significant relationships for me, as a married woman."

A later study of friendship, by Hays (1989), indicated that, when interacting with casual friends, individuals were particularly sensitive to the negative consequences of the social exchange process. However, with close friends, the benefits experienced through interaction more strongly impacted on the subjects' assessment of the relationship. Relationship satisfaction, according to Lloyd, Cate and Henton (1982), is influenced not only by the nature of the exchanged rewards and resources (such as feelings of well-being, love, attention and money) but also by the equitableness of the exchange process. In a friendship, for instance, participants would be concerned with how rewards are allocated and how equitable the relationship is.

Equity exists to the extent that partners perceive the value of each other's outcomes to be proportional to each partner's investments. Lloyd's et al. (1982) research showed that equity was the best predictor of relationship satisfaction - but only as regards casual relationships. For intimate relationships, equity decreased in predictive power and was replaced by information and love rewards/resources as the primary predictor of satisfaction. Possibly, individuals in the beginning stages of relationships are primarily interested in rewards in specific individual areas, whereas individuals in intimate pairings become more sensitive to rewards evolving from the relationship itself.

Wright (1969) proposes an analysis of friendship rewards in terms of their ego support value, their stimulation value and their utility value - in other words, their ability to confirm an individual's outlook, to lead in different directions and to offer help and cooperation, all of which are likely to enhance well-being. Indeed, although friendship

"means different things to different people with respect to the advantages or benefits of such a relationship" (Wright, 1969, p. 299), most approaches to friendship formation tend to agree that ego support is fundamental to the development of a relationship (Duck, 1973a; Levinger, 1974).

Eisenstadt (1974) writes about the concept of solidarity in friendship, a quality which includes the elements of positive effect manifested in mutual expression of concern, the development and repetition of private tradition and the feeling of right on each other's part to be able to make demands on the other. The pleasure of friendship also provides positive feelings of being reaffirmed and reassured by a significant other (Bell, 1981a) - feelings that are commonly associated with well-being.

While useful in explaining the dynamics of some phases of certain interpersonal relationships, social exchange models do not do adequate justice to the personal involvement, depth or continuity of many social relationships. The concept of investment and commitment (Levinger, 1974; Lund, 1985) goes some way in addressing these shortcomings and, in so doing, enhancing the exchange model. To a certain extent, the concept of commitment as an avowal of intent to maintain a relationship over some period of time is a transition that occurs between the formation of a growing relationship and the maintenance of a mature one (Levinger, 1979). Commitment involves the safekeeping of a valued relationship and the binding of two persons, often via a pledge, within such a relationship. This, in turn, involves a raising of barriers around the relationship (Levinger, 1965).

Investment manifests itself in various forms of commitment, centred around a personalised interest in the other person, the time and energy available for the relationship, and also the boundaries impinging on it. The dividend implied by the

label 'investment' may take the form of an enhanced sense of individuality, facilitated self-affirmation, self evaluation and growth (Wright, 1978). Importantly, "a dyadic relationship represents an investment of self on the part of the subject to the degree that the well-being and worth of the other person has implications for the well-being and worth of the entity the subject identifies as self" (Wright, 1978, p. 199).

3.10.2. **Friendship as antithesis to well-being**

Notwithstanding its many positive contributions in terms of succour, social support and well-being, friendship can also be a source of stress. As such, it may include temporary states of anger, disappointment, and mutual annoyance (Davis, 1985) which can impact negatively on well-being (Shinn, Lehmann & Wong, 1984; Rook, 1984). Specifically, it is the strain involved in the exchange process inherent in friendship which influences feelings towards the relationship and ultimately, the sense of well-being derived from it.

Several studies (Finch, Okun, Barrera, Zautra & Reich, 1989) have assessed negative social interactions and their associations with psychological distress and well-being. Recently, Lu and Argyle (1992) conducted a study using 65 subjects who reported the amount of social support given and received, as well as satisfaction with relationships where support exchanges occurred. Negative affect, psychological symptoms, and happiness (as an index of subjective well-being) were measured. Multiple regression analyses indicated that receiving and giving support were related to certain negative feelings towards the relationships concerned. It was also noted that receiving support was related to inflated anxiety symptoms. Thus, it seems, there is a dark side to even primarily positive human relationships like friendships - enough to make them a risky

business.

As Leigh said of her friendships, past and present: "They've been the source of some of my greatest joys, but also my deepest times of despair. Perhaps I care for my friends too much, perhaps I'm too sensitive... or just too vulnerable." Likewise, focusing on opposite-sex friendships, Jenny (an interviewee) pointed out that, "There are many risks if one or both friends are married. Having a friendship like that would put my relationship with my husband in jeopardy. I might neglect him by mistake, or he may feel as though I'm neglecting him. There would be huge limitations to a friendship like that: for one, we could never go out together. That's a big limitation for a friendship."

3.11. SUMMATION, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In summary, analysis of the data collected in the present study indicates that interpersonal intimacy and support are significant contributors to psychological well-being, happiness and life satisfaction. Support and intimacy were reported by the respondents as being gained through friendship experiences, family relationships and through involvement with attachment figures. Frequency of contact with friends, and length time spent with them, seemed to be contributory, although not sufficient, factors in the promulgation of feelings of well-being and life satisfaction.

The depth and quality of friendship also emerged as being important contributory factors in some cases (Mary), but not with respect to the retired respondents. As a factor associated with well-being, quality of marital relationship assumed greater significance than did time spent with friends, especially where security needs were major themes in the individual's construing of well-being (Clinton). Significantly, when the marital situation was dysfunctional (Heather), or when immediate-family circles were limited (Leigh), friends assumed more central roles in terms of well-being. Amongst some of the retired respondents (Eddie and Pam), family members adopted the multiple roles of both

kin and companion. At that stage of life, long-standing friendships (even those of dubious propinquity) tended to have a greater impact on the respondents' well-being, than did recently-formed friendships (Marg, interviewee).

With regard to companionship, kin seem to offer more at later stages of life, when all or most of the family members have reached adulthood (Marg, Clinton). Family-related concerns, especially for women with children, were cited as being important mediators of well-being (Ann, Cheryl). Role identities also appeared to be associated with well-being, but not if feelings of conflict or anxiety were concomitant to the roles, as in the case of Leigh's friendship with Mike.

As regards the respondent-generated components of psychological well-being and life satisfaction, most participants disregarded the importance of physiological needs. Two common themes emerged, however: security needs and interpersonal relationships, both with family and friends. Spiritual security was considered important by 50% of the respondents. Self-actualisation was not a prominent theme (except in Paula's case), although privacy was (Clinton, Cathy, Leigh, Ron, Irene).

Overall, the securely-attached respondents, followed by the avoidant subjects, had the highest mean (semantic differential) well-being and happiness scores. On this account, it may be hypothesised that firstly, secure individuals are more comfortable with social interaction, enjoy a higher frequency of social contact, and thus experience greater feelings of happiness and well-being. Secondly, avoidant individuals are probably more content with less social contact, whereas the anxious-ambivalent personalities are likely to experience feelings of frustration in terms of sociality. This frustration, or anxiety, may erode feelings of life satisfaction, negate happiness and work towards

reducing levels of well-being.

Belief systems appear to play a mediating role in the relationship between psychological well-being and friendship. As a function of an individual's belief systems, the contribution which friendship makes to psychological well-being was evident in the altruistic and philanthropic experience of assuming the role of friend to someone in need (Charlotte, Irene, Pam). Whatever the motivation to assume that role, sooner or later, individuals seem to start to examine the exchange-balance in their friendships: inequity in this respect may be hypothesised as having the potential to counter-balance the benefits of the friendship - and even to cause the deterioration, or demise, of it (Leigh). Other factors which function to strain friendship and to diminish its contribution to feelings of well-being are situations in which friendships come to represent a threat to a spouse (Ann, Jane).

The frequency and salience of both ideal and dreaded social-self experiences seem to mediate the influence of friendship experiences on well-being. Where the ideal social-self is associated with the quality and closeness of friendships, those friendships are likely to be more influential in terms of well-being (Leigh). However, where ideal social-self is not associated with close friendships, then friendship is less likely to be a major contributing factor in terms of well-being (Clinton).

The significance and importance attributed by the individual to friendship is a vital aspect in determining its contribution to well-being. Where it is construed as being a relatively unimportant aspect of life, its contribution to well-being is correspondingly less salient (Clinton). Where it is considered to be relatively important, its influence is relatively more powerful (Leigh). Finally, in line with Maslow's (1954) theory, where the salience of other needs

and concerns (such as illness or marital dysfunction) overshadow the value which the individual attributes to friendship, its impact on well-being is likely to be correspondingly diminished (Mary).

Chapter 4 focuses on adult friendship, presenting an in-depth analysis of its structure, nature and course over the life cycle. The impact of gender and other variables on friendship patterns and processes is also examined.

CHAPTER FOUR

ADULT FRIENDSHIP: FEATURES, PATTERNS AND PROCESSES

The temple of friendship has long been a household word, but it is well known that the place has been very little frequented.
(Voltaire)

The nature of friendship - its characteristic structure and processes - is examined in this chapter. Gender and age-stage differences are evaluated, and the evolutionary stages of friendship are discussed. Intimacy, as a major feature of adult friendship, is also examined - as are the various taboos surrounding friendship, especially within a marital context.

4.1. THE NATURE OF ADULT FRIENDSHIP

"I think as human beings, we are wired up to need others, to relate on a horizontal level. I don't have a vast number of friends - I never have had - but they've always been close friends - I prefer friendship in depth! I certainly don't like superficial friendships but I do need to share. Especially as women, I think we need to relate to one another on an emotional level, not a factual level like men do. We need one another." (Sheila, an interviewee)

Friendship "is the quintessential social relationship: mutual, enjoyed for its own sake, always in danger of dissolution, dependent upon, and illustrative of, all levels of social analysis (personality, social system, culture)" (Hess, 1979, p. 494). Adult friendship is generally acknowledged as being comprised of empathy (an emotional closeness and sharing of feelings); altruism, or mutuality of help; and companionship, the enjoyment of shared activity (Fox, Gibbs & Auerbach, 1985). Other defining features include trust, acceptance, intimacy and reciprocation (Button, 1979).

The sole goal of friendship, in its pure form, is its own preservation and enjoyment. In this, it exceeds even marriage in having no motive for existence other than self-maintenance. In contrast to marriage, there is no societal or contractual relationship regulation in friendship. It is voluntarily undertaken and self-managed. There are no formally prescribed rights and obligations and there is no legal protection against dissolution. This contributes to the exceptionally volitional and tenuous nature of friendship; indeed, it is a relationship which requires continual reaffirmation by the participants and which is constantly under threat of being terminated by defection. In essence, the friendship bond is a fragile one, both attractive and problem-fraught. At the crux of the relationship is a continuous pull between intimacy and commitment on the one hand, and voluntary association and freedom of behaviour on the other.

Hence, the risk of friendship bonds insidiously fraying over time: "Several of my friends have just drifted away," explained Cathy. "I've lost touch with others. And, some of my friendships have just fizzled out."

Once a friendship loses the qualities which make for its characteristic closeness and voluntariness, it chances dissolution. "There is no standard role or task around which the relationship can re-form and no societal mechanism is activated to ensure or even encourage reconciliation" (Wiseman, 1986, p. 192). Thus, the voluntary nature of friendship is potentially both its strength and its weakness, since the latent tension generated by the characterising traits of freedom and stability can coalesce to ignite interpersonal tension.

Despite its perennial characteristics, the nature of friendship has undergone historical change, and developments in the post-modern era have made new types of relationships possible. "The sheer number of people a person encounters

and the variety of relationships she or he knows about and/or engages in have exploded, transforming what it means to know another, be intimate, or be in a relationship" (Wood & Duck, 1995, p. 10).

4.1.1. Distinguishing features

The distinguishing features of friendship are buttressed by several premises and certain assumptions, each having an existential flavour. Firstly, individuals involved in a friendship are seen as both active and goal-directed in pursuing the relationship that they share. Secondly, friendships are not so much permanent states, as temporary transactions (Billig, 1987) and as such, continuous and dynamic processes (Duck & Sants, 1983) - directions rather than destinations. Moreover, the properties that characterise a friendship are continually evolving as the dyad progresses, being experienced differently at different times and within different contexts (Duck, 1990).

Ron aptly summarised this aspect of friendship: "Previously it was different. But, the older one gets, speaking for myself, the more the emphasis changes in the way you look at friends. When I was younger, friends were there in a transient sense ... not now, though."

The mutuality which evolves from the voluntary nature of friendship tends to set in motion a dynamic process from which emerges expectations of an idiosyncratic and shared attitude base, along with a mutual belief system. In this way, friendships generate their own culture and structure. Although friendship is a jointly realised social entity, each partner holds his or her own perceptions of the construction process involved. Each friend in a dyad comes to experience the pressure of the developing bond and begins to assume that the partner feels an equal emotional attachment to the relationship. "The seeming naturalness of the feelings that develop in close friendships is apparently not only pleasant - sometimes resembling a natural high -

but seductive in that persons in such a relationship seldom express doubts that anyone they consider to be close friends feels the same way about them" (Wiseman, 1986, p. 195).

4.2. FRIENDSHIP STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

Friendship patterns consist of structures, processes and phases (Blieszner & Adams, 1992).

4.2.1. Network structure

The major structural aspects of dyadic relationships are power, status hierarchy, solidarity and homogeneity. Friendship structure represents the form of the ties linking an individual's friends: the number of friends, the hierarchy, solidarity and patterns of connection among them, the similarity of their social position, and the proportion of them who know one another. These networks have characteristic structures in which dyadic friendships are embedded: radial structures are those in which none of the friends knows another, whereas in interlocking structures, all members know each other. In order to fully explain the dynamics of friendships, the specific relationship unit should be conceptualised in terms of a larger network of social systems (Chadwick, Albrecht & Kunz, 1976).

Bott's (1957) initial study of urban English families revealed interesting connections between the social networks of individuals and the patterns of interaction within their marriages. Bott (1957) found that when both spouses were integrated in close-knit kin and friendship networks before marriage, each continued, after marriage, to be deeply involved in outside activities. Each received support and help from respective networks, made fewer demands on, and had lower expectations for, support and companionship from their marriage partners. This pattern of network integration generated less frequent interaction between

husband and wife, fewer joint recreational activities and greater role specification in the division of household labour. But when spouses' networks were loose and fragmented because of geographic and social mobility, each spouse sought help from the other. This pattern resulted in less role specialisation, greater joint organisation in carrying out family tasks and more joint recreational activities.

Friendships "are affected not only by the larger cultural environment and the individual personalities of the partners, but also by the pair's own history of interaction with each other and with the matrix of social relationships within which their evolving partnership is fit" (Huston & Levinger, 1978, p. 132 - 133). Thus, the participants in any one relationship are simultaneously participants in other relationships. These relationships, in turn, combine to form still larger social patterns that ultimately create a social context within which any one of the individual relationships can be understood. As participants in a personal relationship interact with one another and with others of their network, series of theoretical processes come into play. These, in turn, serve to create interdependencies between the dyadic relationship and its surrounding networks. Interactions with network members can structure the participants' dyadic relationship by creating additional opportunities for them to interact with each other.

Clinton's comments suggested a relatively closed family system, highly enmeshed, and embedded in a restricted social network. For instance, he commented that, "My wife knows all my friends, most definitely. I mean, how could one have a friendship without one's spouse being included? If your friend came to your house, what would your wife do? Where would she go? No, my friendships must include my wife. How could it be otherwise? Besides, we don't have that many friends, really; we enjoy each other's company more." This theme of spousal interdependence was again evident in Clinton's responses in the Mental Model Questionnaire (Appendix E1). He showed strong agreement with the statements: "For a marriage to succeed, the spouses must be friends",

"Spouses should be also be friends" and "Part of one's duty and responsibility in marriage is to be a friend to one's spouse."

Cheryl considered "99%" of her husband's friends to be her friends as well, but indicated that she would accept a lower percentage of mutuality in the composition of their friendship circles. "A jealous spouse would resent the time you spent with friends," she cautioned. "If you have a husband who wants you to devote all your time to him ... to include him in everything ... that would affect your friendships; the friendships would just fall away. We're quite happy for each other to have some separate friends if it happened that way. Of course, it's probably easier if the friends are mutual, if they're friends of both you and your husband." Despite the indications that Cheryl's marriage was less of a closed system than was Clinton's, her expectations of her spouse's role as friend to her were similar to those expressed by Clinton.

Indeed, such expectations were pervasive amongst the 19 subjects: notwithstanding the variations in the nature of their marital systems, they all indicated similar sentiments regarding their expectations of their spouse's role in terms of friendship.

4.2.2. **Network processes**

The "processes that adults use in their friendship interactions are influenced by social structure and the historical context, the structural features of the dyads and networks in which they participate, their previous experiences in close relationships, their developmental maturity, and their personality characteristics" (Blieszner & Adams, 1992, p. 62). These processes include the thoughts, feelings and behaviours involved in acting as friends. They reflect the interactive aspects and adverbial properties of friendship patterns occurring between members of friendship dyads and among other members of friendship networks. Interacting with each other are the overt behavioural events as well as the covert cognitive and affective responses that occur when people interact. Each one of these three processes can have a strengthening or weakening effect on friendship.

For Cathy and her husband, the events surrounding their friends' tragic circumstances

both strengthened their friendship bond and affected the cognitive and affective processes involved in the relationship: "We have some friends now whose friendship with us has changed a lot. We were always quite friendly with them, but then they lost their son in a motor car accident. That brought us together - strengthened our friendship - and it has kept us together. Their son's death actually cemented our friendship. We're comfortable discussing the incident and so are they - I think it helps them and we like being there for them - we try to give them the emotional support they need."

As a voluntary relationship with a personalistic focus, friendship depends for its existence on the participants' interpretation of each other (Wright, 1978). Cognitive processes reflect the internal thoughts which each partner has about him/herself, his/her friends and about the friendship they share. These processes are concerned with how one evaluates one's own performance and friendship role - as well as that of one's friends. They also assess the stability of the friendship, help to explain events that occur therein, and aid the interpretation of behaviour, intentions and needs of self and other. Moreover, they include the evaluation and judgment one person makes of another's attractiveness, character, degree of similarity to self and other qualities.

Affective processes include one's reactions to friends and friendship. They include feelings of empathy, trust, loyalty, satisfaction, and commitment to continuing the friendship. Affective processes concerned with the negative aspects of friendship are feelings of indifference, anger, hostility, and jealousy. Affective processes, such as liking, trust, satisfaction and emotion management also play a central role in friendship formation and management. Behavioural processes are the action components of friendship. They include the following elements: expressions of friendship, communication (disclosure of thoughts, feelings, actions), friendship activities, displays of affection, social support, resource exchange, cooperation, accommodation, joint activities, betrayal, manipulation,

conflict, and competition.

4.3. ARCHETYPAL ADULT FRIENDSHIP

In Davis and Todd's (1983) paradigm case formulation of friendship, two individuals who are friends will exhibit the eligibilities of: (a) equality, (b) enjoyment, (c) trust, (d) mutual assistance, (e) acceptance, (f) respect, (g) spontaneity and individuality, (h) interpersonal understanding, and (i) intimacy, sharing and confiding. Importantly, these sub-relationships are not components, aspects or building blocks of friendship. Rather, they constitute a language for describing and clarifying ways in which friendships may succeed, or alternatively, may be deficient or damaged. The archetypal case is an idealised relationship, both unconstrained and unlimited. According to Davis and Todd's (1983) model, there are two major categories of constraint on the development of interpersonal relationships: first, the personal characteristics and individual differences of the participants, and second, the social standing or status that they have in the community.

Friendship develops from a point of opportunity for interpersonal contact towards varying degrees of voluntary interdependence. External constraints and pressures affect its growth, either limiting and circumscribing it, and so contributing to its insidious deterioration, or alternatively, enhancing and cultivating it towards its full potential. Importantly, such constraints "will necessarily limit the degree to which any specific relationship involves, to the fullest extent possible, the features of the archetypal case" (Davis & Todd, 1983). Because the individuals involved in personal relationships have freedom of choice, the ways in which the general constraints are manifest in specific relationships are empirical considerations; the differences are likely to be expressed in the different ways in which the participants

construe their friendship.

The results of a study by Lowenthal, Thurnher and Chiriboga (1975) indicate that individuals' perceptions of friendship, and the qualities thereof, remain similar across the various life stages. In their study, the factor of similarity, especially of experiences, encompassed 40% of all the discrete characteristics mentioned by the respondents. Reciprocity accounted for 20% of the descriptions applied to friends, with specific emphasis being placed on help and support, expressed through themes of giving and receiving. Compatibility accounted for 16% of the responses, and structural dimensions of friendships, such as duration, propinquity and convenience, accounted for only 10% of all types of attributes ascribed to the friendships of the respondents.

The support value of friendship was a prominent theme in the data collected from the retired interviewees:

Lorraine: "You see, when you're younger, you get around and make your own way about. Now, I depend on my friends - for things like transport and emotional support. We share our losses, comfort each other, and encourage one another."

Mr Banks: "They should be there to help you when you're in trouble, when you need something badly."

Ms Durran: "I'm embarrassed to ask people who aren't really friends to drive us places; so we need friends to take us when we have to go somewhere."

4. 4. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FRIENDSHIP

Men and women attach different meanings to friendship. For men, in general, friends are people with whom to share leisure-time activities. Women, on the other hand, value intimate, confidential relationships with a high degree of self disclosure, affection and social support. The situation

changes, however, within the context of cross-sex friendship. Men, in contrast to women, report gaining emotional support and therapeutic value (in terms of intimate personal contact) more from their opposite-sex friendships than their same-sex friendships (Aukett, Ritchie & Mill, 1988). Aiming to validate Aristotle's typology of friendship, Bukowski, Nappi and Hoza (1987) found that male college students differentiated between their same and opposite-sex friends to a greater extent than did females. In addition, the male respondents in the study emphasised the affective aspects of friendship, more with respect to their cross-sex friendships than with regard to their same-sex friendships.

The female participants in the present study indicated that they differed from their husbands in the ways in which they conceptualised and dealt with friendship. Describing their spouses, they commented:

Pam: "Dennis doesn't follow his friendships up. He neglects them."

Irene: "I'm much more involved than he is in friendship."

Helen: "He doesn't really have friends, it's a strange thing. Well, he has one very good friend who lives in Durban but he has strict standards about friends. He doesn't call just anyone a friend. Recently, I mentioned that we should have our friends over and I suggested a few names and I was surprised to hear him say about one lot, 'No, they're not friends.'"

Charlotte: "He has business acquaintances whom I think he'd consider to be friends. I wouldn't though."

Fox, Gibbs, Auerbach (1985) offer a dispositional explanation for these gender differences. According to their theory, men emphasise instrumental aspects of friendship whereas women emphasise expressive aspects. This was borne out by Becker's (1987) study which revealed that women tend to conceptualise friendship as: a loving relationship; a world of shared meanings and understandings; ongoing growth

and change containing the interrelated attributes of concern, sharing, commitment, freedom, respect, trust, equality; and, as being associated with the promotion of personal development. The study also indicated that, although men also define friendship in terms of trust and intimacy, they emphasise activity to a much greater extent.

When asked to list the defining qualities of their friendships, the respondents indicated specific themes in their comments, forging a schematic similarity congruent with Kelly's (1955) commonality corollary: similarity of psychological process underlies similarity of construing (see chapter 7). Expressive and emotional qualities of friendship (such as companionship and help or support) were more frequently mentioned, by both male and female respondents, as sought-after characteristics of friendship, than were instrumental or activity-related characteristics:

Jane: "Sincerity."

Helen: "Loyalty, moral support, honesty - I must have someone who is totally honest and with whom I can be totally honest and open. I don't like false pretence. That goes both ways."

Tembi: "Loyalty and reliability."

Mary: "Willingness and sensitivity."

Leigh: "Empathy, understanding a sense of togetherness, sharing, and commitment."

Ann: "Warmth, sincerity and loyalty."

Lesley: "Strength of character. I want friends I can be myself with. Friends who throw a different perspective on things."

Paula: "Fellowship."

Irene: "Loyalty, honesty, support - going both ways. It is important to me to enjoy their company. [A feeling that] I'm meeting a need in a person. My husband is content with a casual chat - that's friendship to him. To me, it's contact and interest on a spiritual level. I go for depth."

Cheryl: "Sincerity; I don't go for people with airs and graces. I don't like people to be affected. I hate superficial people with no depth. Anyone who I hit it off with, anyone who accepts me and I accept them."

Cathy: "Honesty. I must feel confident about them. I must know that I won't offend them with a little remark that I innocently make. If I'm having an off-day, then they should understand. So understanding is a big thing for me."

Charlotte: "Openness and sincerity. Trust. I want someone who will accept what I tell

them for what it is, and not see it as a big thing."

Susan: "Companionship..sharing memories."

Pam: "Helping others."

Eddie: "Being available for people who need us."

Ken: "Having reunions and lunches."

Clinton: "Companionship - and help when it's needed."

Ron: "Companionship ... I want to be able to rely on (them)."

John: "Friendship is based on common interests, common ground. But it goes way beyond common interests sometimes, even though it may initially be limited to that particular subject."

The effects on friendship of characteristics such as gender may also be conceptualised in structural terms (Gillespie, Krannich & Leffler, 1985) as determining opportunities and constraints, and, in psychological terms, as predicting personality traits and dispositions. For instance, women's friendships, compared to men's, tend to involve higher estimated levels of interaction (Rands & Levinger, 1979), to include more personalised communication (Knapp, Ellis & Williams, 1980), to be affectively richer (Booth, 1972) and to be characterised by more personalism and supportiveness (Weiss & Lowenthal, 1975). Compared with men, women also tend to share greater intimacy as opposed to mere sociability (Seiden & Bart, 1975), to develop deeper friendships (Chafetz, 1974) and to share more spontaneous activities and confidences (Booth, 1972). In addition, Williams (1985) found that male students were less likely than females to confide in close friends, to express feelings related to vulnerability, to display affection towards same-gender friends, to discuss personal issues, and to emphasise the understanding and responsibility aspects of friendship.

Reasons for these differences may also rest in the socially approved attributes of both masculinity and femininity. Whereas assertiveness, leadership, independence and self-reliance are valued male qualities, warmth, sympathy,

kindness, gentleness and cheerfulness are valued female qualities. In terms of cultural norms, men and women are taught to act differently and so have different friendship styles. Rubin (1985, p. 142) also points out that, for men, "work lies at the heart of life, even of their very identity" and relationships are of secondary importance.

Compared with women, men also distinguish more sharply between their same-sex and opposite-sex friendships. Whereas men regard their relationships with women somewhat uniformly, women are more discriminating, evaluating each relationship differently (Allen, 1987). In their relationships with women, men tend to seek a refuge from the competitive pressure of male interaction by using their friendship with women as a means for finding the interpersonal intimacy and closeness they are afraid to seek with men. Allen (1987) also suggests that men may seek women friends because they wish to be mothered. Alternatively, men may use their cross-sex friendships as subtle spring-boards into sexual intimacy. This, according to Allen (1987), results from their views of women being dominated to a greater degree by theories of romantic love wherein women are viewed as erotic pleasure objects and havens of bliss.

4.5. INTIMACY IN ADULT FRIENDSHIP

"We're very close to our friends - our real friends. Of course, we also have casual friends but they're not part of our hearts, not part of our lives in the same way" (Mr Jansen, interviewee, aged 83 years).

Hays (1985) perceives friendship along dimensions of breadth and depth of intimacy or friendship intensity. The breadth dimension includes friendship-behaviour content areas of companionship (sharing an experience or activity together); consideration or utility (friend as helper, providing goods, service and support; expression of concern for the other's well-being); communication or self-disclosure (disclosing

verbally or non-verbally, or discussing information about oneself); exchanging ideas, facts, opinions or confidences; and lastly, affection (expressing any sentiment - positive or negative - felt towards the other; any expression of the emotional bond between the partners).

The intimacy and reciprocity of friendship gratifies basic emotional needs, facilitating the achievement of the most fundamental social and emotional goals. Revealing the importance of the role of intimacy in sexual relationships, family relationships and in friendships, Erikson (in Santrock, 1983) labels his sixth stage of human development 'Intimacy versus Isolation', thus linking the development of intimacy to that of identity. In this respect, development is bifurcated into separateness and embedded attachment: the ability to fuse one's identity with someone, without fear that one is going to lose something of one's self.

The adjacent stages of 'Identity versus Role Confusion' and 'Generativity versus Stagnation' are also critical for adults: the young adult, for instance, finds intimacy through deep interpersonal relationships such as marriage (Tokuno, 1983). It therefore seems appropriate that these tasks should be translated into specific issues of early adulthood: understanding self (identity), relationships with the opposite sex (intimacy) and becoming a parent (generativity). Importantly, the self in a relational sense is "not a fixed essence but a teeming mass of potentialities, any of which may be realised in particular moments and none of which is invariant across time and context" (Wood & Duck, 1995, p. 9).

Intimacy and closeness, both integral parts of friendship, function to create mutual interpersonal expectations, thus increasing the participants' vulnerability to betrayals of trust. As an important aspect of friendship, intimacy is a

measure of the strength or intensity of the relationship (Tschann, 1988). Thoits (1992) suggests that more voluntary or easier-to-exit identities (such as that of 'friend') reduce psychological symptoms, whereas difficult-to-exit identities (husband, wife) reduce symptoms only when the stress experienced in the role domain is low. Moreover, some studies (Gitter & Black, 1976; Jourard, 1959) have shown that degree of self-disclosure, as a measure of intimacy, varies directly with the level of friendship and with the degree of closeness of the relationship.

Although similarities exist, there are differences in the meanings which individuals attribute to intimacy within specific types of friendships (Rubin, 1985). Conducting research to investigate these differences, Monsour (1992) had 164 college students complete an open-ended questionnaire, the responses to which were coded. The results revealed substantial similarities in the meanings attributed to intimacy: 5 of the 7 most frequently mentioned definitions of intimacy were specified by both cross- and same-sex friends: self-disclosure, emotional expressiveness, unconditional support, physical contact, and trust. Sexual contact was mentioned by cross- but not same-sex friends. Within cross-sex friendships, emotional expressiveness and sexual contact were given as meanings of intimacy by a higher percentage of males than females, but physical contact in such friendships was specified by a greater percentage of females. 'Sharing activities' was given as a definition of intimacy by 9% of the males in same-sex friendships, and by 4% of the females in cross-sex friendships.

4.5.1. **Self-disclosure: a vehicle for intimacy**

"I have a longing for intimacy," explained Gail, a retired interviewee, "and although I know that it could mean problems ... I need someone to tell my private things to. My secretive things. At this stage of my life, I need friends to pour everything out to; I need

to tell them my worries. I feel there's a lack of human contact now. Impoverished - that's how I feel my friendships are now."

Indeed, one of the major functions of friendships (and love relationships) is to validate one's self concept by obtaining the support and understanding of other people (Derlega & Chaiken, 1977), through intimacy.

Marg, a retired interviewee who had remained socially active and involved throughout her life, gave substance to Derlega and Chaiken's (1977) claim. She considered that, earlier in her life, people who had become her friends had taken time to get to know her, understand her and accept her. But, she added, that was not the case in the later stages of her life: "Friends are people who really know you. They know what you're about. That's so important. My real friends accept and love me. My new friends - my recent friends - don't know my background. I'm intense and even aggressive - but it's my sense of fun. It's difficult to explain all this to new friends. I shouldn't have to explain. That's why you can't find real friends at this stage of your life ... not people who really understand what you're all about, anyway."

Marge's sentiments were common amongst the retired interviewees. Lorraine, for instance, said, "When I meet people, I find I don't know their background and they don't know mine, so I find it difficult to make friends. The friendships I make are casual. I try to be polite to everyone, but they're not what I would call friends, most of them."

Intimacy is a process by which an individual expresses important self-relevant feelings and information to another, and, as a result of the other's response, comes to feel known, validated and cared for. In this way, an individual obtains confirmation about his/her world view and personal worth. As a multi-component process, intimacy involves both verbal and nonverbal communication of personally relevant information and emotions (Clark & Reis, 1988). The mechanism by which intimacy arises, develops and influences interaction is self-disclosure - more specifically, descriptive self-disclosure (revealing facts about oneself) and evaluative self-disclosure, or the revelation of personal feelings about one's life (Jourard, 1959; Morton,

1978).

From the standpoint of social penetration theory (Altman & Taylor, 1973), self-disclosure is an important conceptual variable in relationship development, with the breadth of self-disclosure being greater in the initial stages of a relationship and the depth of intimacy of topics increasing as the relationship continues into closeness. Two general principles regarding self-disclosure lie at the heart of this theory: (a) disclosure levels tend to be mutual or reciprocal; and (b) disclosure becomes more intimate as partners become better acquainted, and vice versa (Clark & Reis, 1988). Moreover, as relationships deepen, progressively more intimate disclosures provide a fertile inferential base from which higher-order, more psychological dimensions may be erected (Neimeyer, Banikiotes & Ianni, 1979). Using 34 subjects from a mixed-nationality population, Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1977) found that their targets' levels of disclosure were related to the number of psychological dimensions which they used to construe other individuals.

Although it was originally assumed that relationship dissolution would involve progressively decreasing levels of disclosure (Altman & Taylor, 1973), more recent studies have challenged this assumption. Tolstedt and Stokes (1984) for instance, demonstrated that as married couples become less close, the depth of their disclosure to each other actually increases, possibly as a result of their working through of relationship difficulties. Other researchers have noted similar patterns: Baxter (1987), for instance, found that intimate disclosure often increases as relationships dissolve, particularly when such disclosure concerns facts and feelings about the relationship itself.

4.5.2. Intimacy, self-disclosure and marital status

In friendship, as in marriage, intimacy can be defined in terms of companionship, communication, affection, and consideration. The nature of these elements within each of the types of relationships varies according to the particular definition that the dyads have evolved for their specific relationship (Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979). Although the exchange of intimacies, basic to close friendship, is also common in marriage, if there is a sufficiently significant degree of marital stress, there may be a need for outside support to offer the restorative services provided by intimacy. Button (1979) suggests that marriages might dissolve not only because of the stress within, but because of the dearth of outside support such as that provided by close friends.

In adulthood, single men and women confide more in cross-sex than in same-sex friends (Booth & Hess, 1974) but whether single or married, women are more likely to confide in a friend than are men (Hess, 1979). Reporting on the results of a 4-year longitudinal study which explored predictors of future closeness in non-romantic cross-sex friendship pairs, Griffin and Sparks (1990) noted that the cross-sex pairs had the lowest mean on a closeness index. This result illustrates the effect of perceived societal norms against non-romantic cross-sex closeness, as noted by Bell (1981a). Significantly, too, the only 1 of the 13 platonic relationships to register a statistically significant closeness z-score greater than 0,5 standard deviations above the mean was a friendship in which both partners were not married.

Through the revelation of expectations, desires, wishes and needs, self disclosure between married partners serves the important functions of providing each other with support and opportunities for coordination and understanding (Rosenfeld & Bowen, 1991). In addition, self-disclosure helps to reduce

stress by serving a cathartic function in allowing each partner to obtain self-clarification and emotional support. Morton (1978) found that spouses disclosed more private facts but, surprisingly, not more personal feelings than did other opposite-sex dyads. However, when topics of self-disclosure were distinguished by degree of intimacy, women scored higher than men did on items which were relatively more intimate (Morgan, 1976).

Unmarried males tend to have fewer close relationships with both sexes than do unmarried females (Knupfer, Clark & Room, 1966). Using three different measures of intimate self-disclosure, Tschann (1988) found that married men in a sample of middle-class urban adults disclosed less to their friends about intimate topics and problems than did unmarried men, married women and unmarried women. Furthermore, when disclosure about topics of low intimacy value was examined, it appeared that married people disclosed less than unmarried people, regardless of gender. The research results also suggested that marriage is associated with qualitative declines in friendship for men but not for women. Married men talked less to their friends than did single men, about all topics. Following the advent of marriage, women continued to share with their friends, highly personal information although they did not share as much superficial information. "This finding suggests that marital status has an important influence on intimate disclosure in friendship for men but not for women, and that if marital relationship boundary rules do exist, they operate differently for each sex" (Tschann, 1988, p. 78).

Overall, these results support those of Fischer and Phillips (1982) who report that the married men in their study had many acquaintances but fewer close friends than did single men, whilst married women had few acquaintances - but as many close friends - as single women did. In sum, then, self-disclosure seems to contribute to boundary regulation

Like divorce, the status of being widowed can also influence friendship patterns. Lorraine, a widowed interviewee, explained that, in her experience, "as a single person, you never fit in with couples. A wife can be very jealous. It can cause a lot of trouble. In a couple, the husband's eyes will always follow you. That's the trouble." From a male point of view, John threw a different perspective on the social effects of widowhood. He reported that his friendships had not changed much since his wife had died. Grappling to find a reason, he said, "It's because, I'm asocial I suppose." Mr Devine, however, an 81 year-old interviewee, described how his friendship network had dissolved, following the death of his wife: "Since I've got remarried, I've made friends of other couples. I felt more isolated before I got remarried, though. Now we are friendly with quite a few couples."

Amongst the retired respondents and interviewees, the problems incurred by remarriage, and its effect on friendship, surfaced repeatedly. Eddie recalled: "We had a friend who was a widow. But she since remarried and now we're not so close, although we try to keep in touch." Similar sentiments were echoed by Gail (an interviewee), about her friendship with her closest female friend, after she was widowed: "My best friend, Peggy, remarried and we don't like her husband much. We used to be so close as two couples. Peggy and I still phone each other, but we aren't couple friends so much anymore." Likewise, Mr Marks, a 79-year old interviewee, recalled: "We had a good friend but couldn't stand his (second) wife; she really wasn't nice and that made things awkward. The friendship broke up, you know."

5.5. HOMOSOCIALITY: ANATHEMA TO OPPOSITE-SEX FRIENDSHIP?

The homosocial norm refers to the seeking, enjoyment and/or preference for the company of the same sex (Rose, 1985). "The early segregation and separate contexts in which boys and girls develop their first friendships appear to influence the styles of intimacy that men and women prefer and feel most comfortable with" (Swain, 1992, p. 159). Yet, this predictability, gained from communicating with someone of similar gender, also inflicts a cost: set patterns and expectations can translate into restrictive implicit rules which function to restrain behaviour.

Norms, attitudes and values regarding cross-sex friendships take root during socialisation processes in early childhood.

Whether inadvertently or intentionally, boys and girls are often encouraged to develop friendships with children of the same, rather than the opposite, sex. In this way, fertile ground is laid for the development of a taut social tension between the sexes - a tension which flourishes in adolescence and is often nurtured and promoted throughout the entire adult life cycle. Bem (1981) explains that, as a result of gender-based schematic processing, individuals tend to typify non-kin, cross-sex interactions as necessarily signifying potentially romantic relationships. As a result of these internalised gender-based cognitive schemas, individuals are inclined to encode all cross-sex interaction in sexual terms.

From a sociological perspective, Lipman-Blumen (1976) proposes a homosocial theory which isolates two factors as contributing to the development of the homosocial norm: (a) gender-based socialisation norms which encourage homosocial behaviour from early childhood, particularly in males; and (b) the societal valuation of males over females. These two factors function to stratify men and women in a way such that women are apportioned lower-status roles, thus perpetuating norms of homosociality. If men and women enjoy differential access to resources, with men often controlling economic, political, educational, occupational and other resources, then they may have more to offer in same-sex relationships. This being the case, men would be more likely than women to be homosocial.

Flying in the face of this hypothesis, research findings reported by Rose (1985) indicate that the homosocial norm in close friendships is more characteristic of women than of men. Rose (1985) proposed that, due to the encouragement of same-sex interactions among children, same-sex friendships may come to constitute a prototype for later friendships. Furthermore, if this is the case, then sex differences in same-sex friendship norms may be related to areas of con-

flict, dissatisfaction or misunderstanding in cross-sex friendships. For example, if men are unaware of women's expectations of intimacy and self-disclosure within friendships, then they are unlikely to try to meet them within their cross-sex friendship relationships.

This is precisely what was borne out by Rose's study, based on a sample of 90 adults aged 20 to 28 years: women's friendships with men did seem to provide them with fewer acceptance and intimacy functions than did same-sex friendships. Consistent with Bernard's (1976) supposition, this finding points to the possibility that women might experience a sense of 'social deprivation' in their cross-sex friendships (Rose, 1985). The data also suggest that men have different standards for cross- and same-sex friendships. The cross-sex friendships described by the subjects were based more on complementary reciprocity (such as the exchange of companionship) than 'in-kind' reciprocity (such as the mutual exchange of acceptance), which is typical of same-sex friendships.

One of Rose's (1985) hypotheses was that young adults, in particular, would demonstrate a strong preference for same-sex friendships and that this preference would be even more pronounced for married, rather than single, adults. The results of the study, based on interviews with the subjects, showed that 60% of the women and 30% of the men reported being more interested in having a close same-sex as opposed to a close opposite-sex friend. The preference for same-sex friendships was especially strong among married subjects, compared to single ones. Repeated-measure analysis of variance indicated that 47% of the married women and 33% of the married men reported that they had no cross-sex friends, other than their spouse.

In the present study, 14 of the 19 respondents reported having more close same-sex friends than close opposite-sex friends (Appendix K3). Mary counted only 1 of her

friends as close: Dale, with whom she worked - hence the large number of hours per week spent with him. Ron reported having a network of 18 close friends, comprised of similar numbers of close same-sex friends (8) as opposite-sex friends (10). However, he spent 74% more time per week with his close opposite-sex friends, as opposed to his same-sex friends. Like Mary, he explained that this was largely because his close female friends were work colleagues. Although Jane reported having 7 close opposite-sex friends (as opposed to 10 close same-sex friends), she did not spend any time with them. Her reason was that they were friends established before her marriage and as such, not living nearby. The contact she maintained was telephonic or written, and even then, only very occasional. Overall, however, the validity of between-subject comparison of these details is tenuous since the respondents' definitions of both 'friend' and 'close' varied. It was John who pondered, rhetorically, "How close is close?"

Research persistently shows that men and women show preference for same-sex friendships (Larwood & Wood, 1977; Booth & Hess, 1974). Indeed, the most universal constraint on friendship has been to limit it to persons of the same sex (Haavio-Mannila, Kauppinen-Toropainen & Kandolin, 1988), a restriction most likely rooted in the latent sexuality of heterosocial relationships.

Nonetheless, several participants in the present study expressed heterosocial preferences, although these predilections were seldom actualised, often being stifled by societal norms and expectations. For example, Gail, an elderly interviewee, commented: "I've always preferred men's company to women's. But, being married has meant that I've not really been able to have many men friends. If anything happened to my husband - I mean if he died or anything - then, yes, I'd like to make men friends. But, not now. Not until then."

Cheryl, too, commented: "I also have many men friends, men who have no airs and graces, not like some women! In fact, I'm a person who prefers male company. I like men friends. There's not the superficial silliness you find with women. There's none of the petty jealousy. They're more honest, more open and I find I can be like that with them too. I find women friends are too demanding often."

Similar sentiments were echoed by an interviewee, Jenny: "I've always been a person who prefers male company." She rationalised her preference thus: "My men friends I approach on a more intellectual level. Men are generally more intellectual and therefore they're

more satisfying as friends, to me anyway. Men are usually brighter too, at least in my circle of friends. They're more interesting. They're more comfortable; I'm not on my guard all the time. I can be quite natural. With women, I feel I've got to be careful with what I say. One can't be so honest, to oneself or to anyone else. With women I find I have to be aware all the time of their feelings. Women think they must be feminine and dependent. It's the trend in South Africa, but it annoys me. I prefer men as friends because there's much more of a sense of fun."

Despite these idiosyncratic preferences, research shows that adult friendship networks tend to be homogeneous in terms of occupational status, ethnicity, age, marital status, income, education, gender, religion (Blieszner & Adams, 1992). Studies have consistently revealed that men tend to have fewer gender-homogeneous networks than women do, both in adulthood and in old age (Booth & Hess, 1974; Usui, 1984) and that the majority of married individuals have social networks which are more heterogeneous than those of their unmarried counterparts (Fischer, 1982). The possibilities for the development of non-sexual cross-gender friendships increases when (a) work situations are not dependent on a gender-related division of labour, (b) the participants are single and (c) the participants are not constrained by traditional gender-role injunctions (O'Meara, 1989), prescriptive of how individuals should behave and think in specific relationships (Reiss, 1986).

5.5.1. **Gender segregation - People would talk!**

"Running the hotel, there was lots of opportunity. But one had to be careful. You see, everyone notices what you're doing and they begin to suspect romances and things. People notice very quickly. They never consider it could be just a friend you're paying attention to. You've got to be so careful if a man starts to make a fuss of you. People start to talk." (Lorraine, an interviewee, aged 83 years).

In ages and societies where men's and women's milieus are relatively rigidly defended and segregated, friendships tend to be exclusively homosocial. O'Meara (1989) suggests that

some of the reasons for the rarity of cross-gender friendship in adulthood could be that men and women's spheres have remained largely separate and homogeneous, shaped by gender-specific sets of social experiences which, in turn, involve learning gender-specific rules and styles of relating.

Specific gender-related trends were evident in Ken's relational beliefs: his strong endorsement of item 108 in the Boundary Questionnaire ("I am a down-to-earth, no-nonsense kind of person") was manifest in his responses to the Mental Model Questionnaire (Appendix E1). His responses to the section entitled "Benefits of Opposite-sex Friendship" indicated strong disagreement with the premise that cross-sex friendships can be beneficial in a marriage; concomitantly, he strongly endorsed the item: "Having opposite-sex friends is risky for married people." The same no-nonsense attitude manifested itself in his responses to the scenarios in the projective procedure (Appendix E2), revealing his perceptions (and mental models) of opposite-sex relating. He seemed uneasy about the relationships depicted in the red scenario, in which two men and two women are shown in conversation with each other, in the context of a party. Sitting with his legs outstretched, looking intently at the scenario, he commented, "It's a conference of sorts, a social get-together. I'm not too happy about that chap with a cowboy hat. That could be trouble for ... well, he could have ideas about one of the ..." . At that point, he concluded, "I don't know, I just don't know."

Significantly, in response to the three other scenarios, Ken perceived interpersonal problems between the women. In response to the pink scenario, he commented, "But the wives don't get on. There're no arguments but they don't get on. Could be jealousies there." He passed the following comment in response to the green scenario, depicting two men and two men, with children: "The women aren't sure about each other. Their husbands can't be trusted here - maybe they can't trust their husbands!" Pondering on the scene depicted in the orange scenario, he said, "I wonder if those women get on. Probably not." The genesis of his disapproval of cross-sex friendship thus seemed rooted in his construal of interpersonal conflict within such contexts.

Twenty-five years Ken's junior, Clinton had been raised in a different social era. His responses in the "Benefits of Opposite-sex Friendship" section of the Mental Model Questionnaire indicated that he agreed that friendship with the opposite-sex could be beneficial to the participants' marital relationships. However, he expressed uncertainty

regarding two of the items: "The potential costs of spouses developing friendships with people of the opposite sex outweigh their benefits" and "Having opposite-sex friends helps a married person to understand his/her spouse." Nevertheless, Clinton perceived no friendship difficulties in any of the scenarios depicted in the projective test. Instead, his responses indicated a theme of superficiality. About the pink card he said, "I don't think they chose to be friends. It was circumstances. That's what made them friends - but not great friends." Interpreting the green card, he commented, "If their lot in life improved, they wouldn't be together as friends. These are two families thrown together because they can't live alone, but they're not real friends." It was this theme of spuriousness which seemed to be threaded so inextricably throughout the fabric of Clinton's beliefs and perceptions of opposite-sex friendship.

Indeed, depth of friendship was more a perception of the female respondents. "It's difficult to make real friends now. Acquaintances are no problem," commented Cathy. Yet, although commonly expressed by the women, this concern related more to their same-sex friendships than their friendships with men. Like Ken had done, Cathy perceived conflict between the wives within the context of cross-sex friendships. About the green scenario, she commented: "There's conflict between the two women; one is maternal and the other isn't. The two front people are not a couple but they have the same ambitions ... Maybe they'll swap partners - that's the friction - that could alter the friendships here; the women know how the situation is - they could swap partners to fulfil their own ambitions ... that threatens them both. The men aren't so aware of what's going on in that respect. Each woman knows she's a threat to the other."

Likewise, Cheryl perceived tension between the women in the scenarios: "The men are more friendly than the women - the wives aren't so friendly. Maybe that's the trouble. These relationships - these friendships are in trouble," she said about the characters depicted in the red scenario. Significantly, except for occasional perceptions of jealousy between the couples, none of the respondents interpreted the men in any of the four scenarios as being implicated in the latent interpersonal difficulties so perceived.

The ubiquity of tacit stereotyped sexual attitudes increases the vulnerability of heterosocial relationships. "Given the sex-based expectations in any male-female relationship today, the fact that legal marriage presupposes exclusive possession of the spouse ... it is almost a foregone conclusion that a close professional involvement between sexes

will be imbued with the taint of psychological adultery, disloyalty, and treachery - on the part of the man toward his allegedly wronged wife and of the women toward another member of her already exploited sex" (Adams, 1976, p. 183 - 184).

The prevalence of sex-segregation and homosocial behaviour in Western society is also evident in gender-segregated organisations such as Boy Scouts, sports clubs and combat units of the military. Within the context of homosocially-oriented societies, cross-gender friendship is a social anomaly, overshadowed by cultural emphases on same-gender friendship and the exclusivity of heterosexual love and sexual relationships. In fact, humans are unique amongst the primates not only with respect to the prevalence of exclusive homosexuality, but also with regard to the extent of their exclusive heterosexuality (Reiss, 1986).

Interviewee, Jenny, summed up her views in this respect: "These days, most people think you're a bit funny if you have men friends. Well, let's say S-O-C-I-E-T-Y would think you're funny. The society we live in - the media presentation and all that - it just doesn't allow for cross-gender friendships to develop. I blame the media for a lot of the difficulty in this respect. We're losing out not having friends of the opposite sex. I like to see people as people, not as one particular gender or race, but I feel restricted by society and by the impact of the media ... the influence it has on people, the way it makes people think."

5.6. OPPOSITE-SEX FRIENDSHIP - IS IT VIABLE?

"Opposite-sex friendships are viable if they're approached in the right way. But, of course, there's always the threat of sexuality." (Jenny, interviewee)

Although some married adults develop their closest friendships with members of the opposite sex (Aries & Johnson, 1983), where sex-role differentiation is most pronounced, as in the lower classes, husbands and wives tend to form sex-segregated networks of friends (Bott, 1971; Komarovsky,

1967). The results of Adam's (1985) study of older women's views on friendships indicated that just 4% of their personal relationships were with men; moreover, only 17% of the women interviewed reported having male friends. When asked why they did not have any - or more - men friends, most of the women expressed the belief that cross-sex friendships were preludes to romance. They also cited strong norms against courtship among older adults.

During an interview with Ms Hill, aged 78-years and married for 57 of them, commented, "I think that men make it difficult to have cross-sex friends. Not now so much but when people are young. As a younger person, there's no such thing as platonic, I'm afraid. Men always want to make something out of it."

Investigating the viability of non-sexual cross-sex friendship, Forgas and Dobosz (1980) found that the undergraduates in their study believed that close, long-lasting relationships, devoid of overt sexual activity, could indeed exist between sexually mature males and females. Such findings, of course, should not be taken to mean that sexual drives do not often play an important role in the development of heterosexual friendships or that opposite-sex friends are unaware of this role. Where friendship comes to include an element of romantic love, what results is a fluid and dynamic relational state, a potentially unstable interplay between the emotional and sexual expression of affection, and a mutable and often guilt-ridden exchange of tenderness.

5.6.1. **The role of homosexual status**

Jean, a 41-year-old interviewee, was a career woman who had been married for the past 20 years. Her marital relationship had, for some time, been amicable but not sexual: in fact, during the past 8 years, she and her husband had not engaged in sexual relations of any kind. During the past 2 years, she had developed a friendship with a colleague, Peter, - a friendship she obviously valued greatly and about which she spoke in positive, and overtly platonic, terms. During the course of her friendship with Peter, Jean and her husband agreed to separate, something which had left them both "feeling raw, but manag-

ing to remain on friendly terms."

It was around this time that Jean noticed a change in the friendship she shared with Peter: "...although I am always here for him, he usually pushes me away when I need him, and this bothers me," she explained. "I was sure I was not leaving John for him. Peter and I went away for the weekend and he asked me what my expectations were of our relationship. I explained as best I could and then asked him what he felt for me. He said he loved me dearly, but that he wasn't sure that his preference was for women. I could not believe my ears! I felt that I'm only ever good enough to be everybody's best friend I felt humiliated, betrayed and hurt. I'm so confused! I can't understand why, if I don't want a relationship with Peter, I feel jealous about the attention he pays other women (and no doubt in time, other men). Am I fooling myself that I'm not in love with him to protect myself? I really don't trust my feelings at the moment."

Months later, following the break-up of her marriage, Jean reflected on her friendship with Peter. She had started coming to terms with her changed relationship with him, she said, but still felt a sense of painful betrayal. Jean reported that he, on the other hand, admitted to feeling an enormous sense of relief at being able to discuss with her, his sexual orientation, saying that he valued her role as friend in this respect. "I never expected the feeling of inadequacy that has overtaken my life," she commented. "I can accept the rejection based on my personality and character, but to be rejected by a friend - because I am a woman - has made me feel as if I am some inferior being ... like I'm scum."

It seemed that Jean's divorce had forced Peter into a situation in which he felt it necessary to contain and limit their friendship - to erect boundaries in place of those which Jean's divorce had torn down. He obviously did not want their friendship to become a romance. It was only at that stage of their long friendship, when Jean was on the verge of divorce, that he broke the news of his homosexuality. That disclosure in itself, had brought him a sense of comfort. It had legitimised his continued involvement in their friendship, on purely platonic terms - his terms. The conundrum Jean faced, however, was different: although she had never consciously admitted to herself that she might be sexually attracted to Peter, her divorce had given her permission to allow such feelings to surface. Threatened both by his perception of Jean's expectations and by the concomitant new possibilities in their friendship, Peter cried, if not "Wolf", then, "No sex please - I'm gay!" In so doing, he re-established the limits of their friendship, thus liberating himself and at the same time, controlling, and navigating, the course of his friendship with Jean towards his own goals.

5.6.2. Gender effects

Most often, cross-sex friendships develop under three broad conditions: when either or both parties are homosexual, when they are not sexually attracted to each other, or when they are engaged in committed relationships with others. Cross-sex friendships are also more likely to develop when friends are not living sex-segregated lives. If men and women are at the same status levels and are non-competitive (such as in the educational and professional occupations), cross-gender friendships are more likely to form. Thus, one common source of heterosocial friendship is the work situation, where the required close collaboration between co-workers lends itself naturally to the development of friendship:

"But my friendships have always - or mostly - been kept platonic. The women I work with know I'm always there for them. They don't feel threatened. They know I'm open to experience." (Ron)

"Friendships with the opposite sex are viable in a professional sense: we [women] don't think the same as they [men] do - that difference is intriguing. Formal or professional interest motivates my friendships with men - it also prevents any sexual interest. My friendship with Brian, when we were both single, began in the workplace - we worked together and were both new in the job. We had similar interests, and backgrounds. I gained intellectual satisfaction but our different cultures and different religions prevented the friendship from becoming anything else." (Jane)

Research indicates that gender represents a powerful and universal barrier to cross-sex friendship in adulthood (Bell, 1981a). Having reviewed the existing research on gender-based analyses of cross-sex friendships, Banikiotes, Neimeyer and Lepkowsky (1981) conclude that men use different cognitive strategies to select their male, as opposed to their female, friends. Women, on the other hand, appear to use similar strategies when selecting both male and female friends. Smith-Rosenberg (1975) also suggests that cross-sex

friendships are affected by the degree of rigidity in the definition and segregation of male and female social spheres. That might help to explain why men have fewer gender-homogeneous friendship networks than do women in adulthood (Booth & Hess, 1974) and in old age (Usui, 1984).

Several researchers (Bell, 1981a; Booth & Hess, 1974; Powers & Bultena, 1976; Weiss & Lowenthal, 1975) have studied the structural characteristics of cross-gender friendships and the conditions that determine access to them. The results of Booth and Hess's (1974) study indicate that such friendships are less homogeneous in terms of interests and attitudes than are same-sex friendships. Importantly, friendships are not driven solely by constant uni-directional forces but also by volatile interior psychological psychodynamics and other unstable elements exterior to the relationship (Duck, 1990). From the perspective of attribution theory, a person may behave in a certain way, avoiding cross-sex friendship, for example, in order to fulfil role requirements or to adhere to expectations to support culture or societal requirements of marriage.

In the case of Rosemary, an unmarried, middle-aged interviewee in the present study, it was her own disapproval of her personally construed motivations that prevented her from forming friendships with men: "I have to be careful because I know myself. As soon as someone starts showing interest in me, I want to take everything. I get totally absorbed. I want to possess them. I think it has something to do with my childhood. I don't believe it's right."

Allen (1987) points out that "for a friendship between a man and a woman to develop and prosper, an awareness not only of the dynamics present in all friendship is needed, but also of the effects of this particular ideology" (p. 49). One of the potential values of cross-sex friendship is that it provides an opportunity for breaking an ideological hold, allowing the participants to act with more maturity in all female and male relations. The different interpersonal

agendas and perceptions or world views held by members of each gender can be translated for each other by cross-gender friends.

This potential benefit of opposite-sex friendship was evident in the comments of several respondents. "Opposite-sex friends are more inclined to give honest opinions," Jane considered. "Men friends have enabled me to gain a better understanding of how men think." Similarly, but with greater vehemence, Tembi remarked: "Our husbands are not friends to us. They're not open to us. It's difficult to know them better, to understand them. The only way to know them - to know their attitudes, understand their behaviour, to know what makes them shy and why - is through men friends. Our husbands are not willing to let us know them. My men friends will tell me, 'With us men....' - that makes me understand the way my husband is behaving. For instance, he'd never talk to me about sex. But my men friends might discuss it with me. They'll tell me what causes this and that. I look to them for advice about him, and also advice that he wouldn't give me."

Likewise, Irene explained why she so valued her friendship with Keith: "...he's a lovely gentle person - British. He taught me a lot about English values and the roles men play in a marriage. He seemed to help a lot around the house and was less aggressive than South African men. He also taught me a lot about the ways in which men view things - their perspectives on life. His marriage is good, but he showed me, he helped me, how to cope with things that worried me about my own marriage. I developed a much deeper friendship with him than with his wife. We're still in occasional contact. I see him in a helping role with respect to our marriage."

One of the major benefits of friendship with the opposite sex therefore centres on the roles that opposite-sex friends play in enhancing interpersonal understanding across the gender line. Cross-gender friendships may actually facilitate an individual's capabilities for reacting to situations in ways which encompass both men and women's styles of behaviour. Ironically, it is the ambiguity which characterises platonic friendships that pressurises cross-gender friends to be sensitive to both men and women's styles of intimacy.

Yet, despite the benefits involved, there are risks involved in pursuing friendship with the

opposite-sex, especially within the context of marriage. As Mary explained: "I used to have a very good male friend. He was very helpful; but then he got married and his wife was not very happy about our friendship. It's much easier for men to have women friends than for us to have men friends. Men just fit in, you know. Women don't just fit in. Cross-sex friendship makes life difficult. Time is taken away from your spouse. Time you'd spend with him or her." Then, weighing up the pros and cons of having opposite-sex friends, Mary concluded, "I just want peace so I think I'd be careful about having cross-sex friends if I got married again." Wistfully, remembering her days of physical abuse as a married woman, she added, "Anything for peace!"

5.7. SEXUALITY IN FRIENDSHIP

"Some men take an interest in women, beyond friendship, but mostly it's the kind of love or feeling you might feel for your brother. You'd throw your arms around him, be thrilled to see him, but it wouldn't go further than that. Once there's a romance, there're always complications." (Paula, commenting on the dynamics of relationships within the friendship club which she founded.)

"But sometimes I've felt that opposite-sex friendship is based on sexual fantasy. I wouldn't pursue them. When one's married, couple friendships are more practical." (Sheila, an interviewee)

"Perhaps the least studied area in the friendship literature is the role sex and sexual attraction play in the development of friendship" (Nardi, 1992, p. 174). The dearth of research in this area probably results from the indistinct boundaries between the transitional phases in both platonic and sexual male-female relationships.

Although cross-sex friendship is non-romantic in that its function is dissociated from courtship rites, it is not necessarily devoid of sexuality or passion. Indeed, although some theorists have done their assiduous best to separate friendship from love and sexuality, they have not been entirely successful. Because sexuality is an integral part of personality, there exists a measure of physical attractiveness in most types of social bonds. "During much

of an individual's life, a cross-sex friendship is potentially a sexual relationship, and thus in many societies, friendships between men and women are subject to negative sanctions ranging from suspicion to outright taboo. In preadolescent childhood, when sexuality is presumed to be absent or latent, there may be a relaxation of constraints upon cross-sex friendships" (Riley, Johnson & Foner, 1972, p. 364).

Clinton described a friendship he had had during his adolescence: "I had a great friend when I was 19. Roz and I would go along to the movies together and we'd even hold hands! We were such good friends, but never anything more. Then she got married and went to live in Zimbabwe and we lost contact." (It was one of the highlights of the present study, that coincidentally, Clinton's friend had been a former colleague of mine in Zimbabwe and I was able to put them in touch with each other. Six months after this conversation, Clinton took his family to Zimbabwe and, after 35 years, Clinton and Roz renewed their friendship.)

Because some heterosexual love relationships begin as platonic friendships, it is frequently presumed that, instead of being a legitimate relationship, cross-gender friendship represents a stage of development in the process of romantic attachment. This is especially true during adolescence. When an adolescent develops a friendship with a person of the opposite gender, it often elicits teasing by family members and same-gender friends who affectionately hint at, or taunt about, the possibility of a romantic attachment. Often, too, claims of being 'just friends' are viewed as an indication of embarrassment or shyness in defence of a budding romance. In later adulthood, heterosocial friendship is often constrained by the belief "that for either partner of a marriage to have a friend of the opposite sex is incompatible with the idea of marriage" (Allen, 1987, p. 46).

Outside of childhood and adolescence, cross-sex relationships are frequently associated with declarations of love,

affectionate touching, revelations of need and sexual sharing. Rubin (1985) notes that, in his study, "...only a few people, much more often men than women, said they could mix sex and friendship easily" (p. 151). This supports Brodsky's (1988) view that one of the "major reasons that appears to limit male-female friendships is the possibility of sexual relations" (p. 271). Since sexuality is a repetitive aspect of marital relationships and takes on special symbolic meanings concerning that relationship, cross-sex friendships may be perceived as threatening the total meaning of existing marital relationships. "Since cross-sex friendship is not a clearly defined or expected social relationship, it is often interpreted in terms of heterosexual coupling or sexual relationships" (Swain, 1992, p. 154). The element of sexuality within a cross-sex friendship is a matter of interpretation, not only by the participants, but also by members of their social network. Indeed, the nature of interpersonal relationships is defined by such interpretations, together with the social cognitions of all involved.

Affirming Kelly's fragmentation corollary (cf. chapter 7), Clinton's conceptualisation of opposite-sex friendship contained elements of contradiction. Despite his experiences of platonic opposite-sex friendships, and notwithstanding the stability and closeness of his marital relationship, he expressed discomfort about his wife's protracted friendship with a man she had known before she and Clinton were married: "There is one friend she has who I don't approve of. He lives in Durban and they keep in telephone contact. I'm just not comfortable about it. You see, they were very close friends when they were single. Then he asked her to marry him. She said no, that she didn't love him in that way. But they still keep the friendship going on a very loose basis. He's married too. I don't like it at all." In terms of Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory, Clinton's feelings of threat regarding his wife's friendship results from the invalidation of his core constructs. Judging by his responses to the Mental Model Questionnaire (Appendix E1), these core constructs include his belief that opposite-sex friendship within the context of marriage is unacceptable.

Similarly, despite the value Jenny (interviewee) placed on opposite-sex friendship, it was

with caution and reserve that she considered the prospect of her husband pursuing such friendships: "Him having women friends? That would depend on how pretty they were!! No, I have no problem with that. I'd watch him though. He's never really had women friends. He's not one to sit and chat on the phone or to discuss things at length like women like to do. If he did ever have women friends, I'd want to be included, though. It wouldn't matter whether the woman was single or married, but a lot would depend on how the friendship started. It's always easier if one's spouse likes one's friends. I think women are far more aware of innuendoes and hidden agendas." Ironically, Jenny, whilst indicating that she felt the need to be included in her husband's opposite-sex friendships, commented about one of her own opposite-sex friendships: "Our in-depth discussions are intruded on by his wife. But she doesn't contribute. She's very defensive I find." Such, the paradox of human nature?

The interlinked relationship between sexual and platonic interest in opposite-sex friendship may result in feelings of ambivalence. Differences in each participant's sexual agendas adds further tension to the delicate balance in the friendship; indeed, the merging of feelings of friendship and sexual attraction can cause significant interpersonal anxiety. In addition, the tenuous boundaries of sexuality are exacerbated by societal expectations regarding cross-gender friendships and by the resultant attempts by outside audiences to interpret them in terms of romantic love relationships. "Cross-sex friendships are both enriched and plagued by fluctuating and unclear sexual boundaries. Such friendships offer a unique relationship by providing a situation that fosters the sharing and exploration of the similarities and differences of masculinity and femininity without the pressure that accompanies the role of lover. However, the ambiguity between a platonic friendship and a sexual relationship can cause misunderstanding and may limit the relationship when either of the two cross-sex friends either becomes romantically attracted to the other or becomes involved in a separate heterosexual coupling relationship" (Swain, 1992, p. 167).

Cheryl's account of her friendship with Neil illustrates a successful example of what

Metts, Cupach and Bejlovec (1989) term 'post-disengagement friendship': the continuation, after an interruptive relational change, of an original relationship state. Although the relationship between Cheryl and Neil underwent several changes, it was their friendship which emerged triumphant: "Neil went from being my friend to being my boyfriend and then back to being my friend! I knew him before I knew my husband; for some reason, I'm attracted to the same type of men! We became involved but it just didn't work. I already knew my husband but we had split up for about a year. I was very vulnerable then and confided in Neil a lot; then our friendship became more than a friendship but it just didn't work! Then we (my husband and I) got back together and Neil and I became friends once more. We're still friendly and my husband and I are now also friends with his wife. My husband was furious though, when he realised what had happened."

Since platonic friendships can develop into romances, and platonic friendships can emerge from past love relationships, the sexual dynamic in cross-sex friendships has to be constantly defined and 'worked at' in order to balance the flux and ambiguity of the friendship. Moreover, because dominant cultural images link sexual interest or contact to any form of heterosociality, participants in a cross-sex friendship must consciously define and delimit the sexual boundaries in the relationship they share. However, owing to the paucity of institutionalised guidelines and models for working out sexual conflicts, the issue of sexuality remains an ambiguous and poorly defined element of friendship.

Research into sexuality within friendships has provided insight into individuals' ways of defining such issues. Avery and Ridley (1975) used anonymous questionnaires in order to identify the interpersonal factors which a sample of 229 college students considered in defining acceptable levels of sexual intimacy in both heterosexual friendships and dating relationships. Marriage commitment ranked particularly low and, along with love and responsibility, was infrequently thought to be an important factor. Thus, although love and marriage commitment have historically been linked to sexual intercourse as the ultimate level of sexual

involvement, the data produced by this research indicates that these factors appear to be less important in relationships involving a sexual element. Much, however, depends on gender. Gender-based perceptions of the associations between friendship, sexual interest and love reveal the differential expectations which men and women have of the different relationships.

Seemingly, unrealistic expectations of, misguided assumptions about, and inappropriate motivations for friendship have the potential to impact deleteriously on interpersonal relationships, not only in early adulthood, but throughout the life-cycle. Mr Jensen, for instance, a retired interviewee, was adamant that, "The only thing women want is love. Knowing that, I mix easily with the opposite sex and always have. It's easy to make them happy, whether they're friends or whether it's your wife."

5.7.1. **Sexuality and the influence of gender**

"At work now, there is a man who could be a friend. I feel no pressure to perform; there's no sexual innuendo, no sexual attraction at all. I've had only a few men friends - real friends. Men have always wanted more than just friendship. They've wanted the physical side too, and I just become bored with it. That's what's happening with Ron and I: I don't want to sleep with him. Men don't seem to know what to do with non-sexual relationships." (Lesley)

Brodsky (1988) agrees: "Men are clearly able to understand the roles of men and women as lovers and mates, but not all men are able to understand the roles of the sexes in friendships" (p. 273). The ways in which men and women express their feelings of uncertainty and ambivalence about sexual issues with opposite-sex friends are often different. Women may be afraid that friendship with a male is an initiation of a sexual relationship. They may also be concerned that others (friends and family) believe that the friendship is sexual. From a male perspective, the main impediment to cross-gender friendship is the development of their own sexual feelings, especially within the context of intimate disclosure by their women friends. In essence, it seems

that men and women tend to respond quite differently to the seductive power of corporal attractions.

Describing her friendship with Graham, Helen seemed incredulous when he, whom she knew to be happily married, made a pass at her: "Like one day he said, 'You know I could get into bed with you right now, if you'd agree,'" she recalled. Taken aback by his effrontery, she added, "Yet, I'm not attracted to him at all!"

Traditionally, men have been perceived as being more preoccupied with sex than have women. Possibly because men assume that women share the same level of sexual interest as they do (Gross, 1978), women's friendliness is often misperceived by men as seduction or flirtation (Abbey, 1982). In other words, men seem to be inclined to misinterpret the interpersonal cues provided by women and to assume that women's amicable behaviour is a sign of sexual interest. For this reason, the viability of sustained cross-gender relationships relies on the effectiveness of the communication between the two parties. A mild expression of interested behaviour and an exuberant expression of friendliness are both likely to be miscommunicated or misinterpreted.

Helen illustrated the confusion she felt regarding the way men responded to her: "You know, when I was going through a bad time with Richard, my first husband, we went for counselling and they stipulated psychiatric counselling. The psychiatrist, a man of course, said that I gave men the come-on, but that I sat covering my sexuality. That's always worried me: am I intending to attract men without even knowing it?"

Exploring this theme, Abbey (1982) designed an experiment in which male and female strangers were required to interact with each other by discussing their life at the university, while their behaviours were rated by observers. Whether actors or observers, the males in the study rated both male and female actors as being more 'seductive' and 'promiscuous' than did the females. Abbey (1982) concluded that the male respondents could not tell the difference between a woman's sexual interest and her friendly

behaviours. In a follow up study, Shotland and Craig (1988) tested this hypothesis with a 2 (sex of observer) x 2 (male intent) x 2 (female intent) x 2 (sex of actor) design, with sex of actor as a within-subject factor. Videotapes of five couples were prepared, each showing a male and female behaving in either a friendly or a sexually interested manner. After analysing the data by means of MANOVER, researchers noted that the males, compared with the females, perceived both males and females as having more sexual interest.

Following their research, Shotland and Craig (1988) concluded, as did Muehlenhard, Miller and Burdick (1983) using similar methodology, that both males and females differentiate between friendly and sexually-interested behaviour but that each gender has a different threshold for the perception of sexual intent. In this way, sexually-interested behaviour is likely to be misjudged as being friendly behaviour by those individuals (namely women) having a high threshold for labelling interested behaviour. Similarly, men, who generally have a low threshold for labelling interested behaviour, are more likely to misjudge friendly behaviour as being sexually-interested behaviour. This difference, Shotland and Craig (1988) proposes, results from men's greater sexual appetite, which is used as a model for the attribution of the sexual appetites of women.

Moreover, the results of a study by Rose (1985) showed that although the women in her sample were not motivated by sexual attraction to establish cross-sex relationships, the men were. "Women also frequently stated that their belief that men's motives were sexual made them distrustful of male friendship overtures and unwilling to establish friendships with men" (Rose, 1985, p. 73).

Lorraine, having been retired for many years, expanded on this theme, commenting that, "...men will cling to you if they're lonely. I used to say, 'Why bother to move in with a man

for companionship? All you become is a maid to him. And you know how much you can earn if you really want to become a maid!' Also, of course, there's always the attraction of money. Men quickly like to find out how well-placed you are, how much money you've got. Then they become clingy. No, it's just not practical to have men friends at this age."

The impact of interpersonal interpretation - and misinterpretation - was also highlighted by another interviewee, Linda, the 28-year-old founder of a Christian friendship club. She commented: "The women who join the club and develop friendships with men tend to misinterpret their relationships. Perhaps because they are hoping for something more than a friendship, they read more into their relationships. The women are often insecure, looking for security, but the men often just want a mother-image or a companion or a sexual partner perhaps, but often not marriage. Either way, pure friendships are usually difficult to develop because of the sexes' different expectations and interpretations."

Do women, in fact, have less sexually-based constructs for perceiving and interpreting male-female interactions? Bell (1981a) interviewed 87 female respondents having an average age of 34,5 years, and 54 men having an average age of 33,4 years. He categorised the respondents as 'Nonconventional' if they scored highly in terms of the following factors: (a) desire to influence change, to seek pleasure or greater happiness, to exert more control over their lives; and (b) overall satisfaction with life combined with willingness to take gambles. 'Conventional' women were at the opposite pole of these dimensions.

Bell (1981a) reports that 58% of the women categorised as 'Nonconventional' expressed a desire for a sexual dimension in at least some friendships and evaluated such experiences as being positive. Only 14% of the 'Conventional' women agreed with this sentiment. Also, more of the 'Conventional' women reported imposing limits in terms of what they disclosed to their friends. They revealed a greater sense of loyalty to their spouses in this respect. These women also had fewer close men friends and, if they did have cross-sex friendships, they reported less personal disclosure within them. Conventional women were especially more apt to hold-

ing back on revealing sexual or marital matters than were the Nonconventional women.

Over a third of the Conventional women could offer no positive statements about male friends, nor did they report having any personally good feelings about men as friends. Of these women, 21% reported having no men friends at all and some considered cross-gender friendship as inappropriate or threatening to their relationships with their husbands. Forty-two percent of these women (vs. 11% of the Nonconventional women) felt that there were sexual dangers in cross-sex friendships. Approximately 61% believed that, in cross-sex friendships, there were strong pressures to move from a base of pure friendship to one of overt sexuality.

Like the Nonconventional women, the Nonconventional men had had frequent experiences of, and held positive views about, sexuality as it relates to cross-sex friendship. In general, sexuality was less stressful an issue for the Nonconventional subjects than it was for the Conventional respondents of both sexes. Of the Nonconventional men, 52% reported that they had strong feelings of sexuality at least some of the time in their relationships with female friends. Only a few of the Conventional men had close friendships with women and almost all of them (94%) placed restrictions on what they would reveal to these friends, specifically in terms of sexual matters, personal feelings and insecurities. A number of the Conventional men also expressed anti-female feelings. Likewise, these men were characterised by traditional and sexist views of female/male behaviour. Over half of the Conventional men believed that there was a strong (and negative) risk of sexual involvement with women friends.

Most close friendships do include an erotic component (Nardi, 1992), although it tends to be denied or repressed, rather than openly expressed. Indeed, the explicit sexual

elements in close friendships are often muted, sometimes fully out of consciousness. Nonetheless, as an ubiquitous element of friendship, sexuality has the potential to assume the role either of facilitator - or destroyer.

For Helen, sexuality had always played the role of inhibitor/oppressor in her opposite-sex friendships: "I'm happy not to have friends of the opposite sex, and that's because men have spoilt it for me! They've put me off for life.... my problem has always been that I'm scared of men - scared of where it could lead. At school, I had a male problem too. I've always battled to keep my male friendships platonic."

How, then, is it possible to control the potentially destructive - or lethal - role of sexual interest within an opposite-sex friendship?

5.7.2. **The management of sexuality in friendship**

Contextualising her difficulties with the management of her heterosocial relationships, Helen described the attentions of a particular married man, a member of her fitness club: "... he and Debbie, his wife, came along and presented me with some Belgium chocolates! Debbie went off to walk and Carl runs so he's always back earlier than she is. Next thing, I saw him looking around to make sure that Debbie wasn't there and he went to his car and got out a huge bottle of perfume!! When he gave it to me, he kissed me on the head and told me I was his favourite blonde, his favourite fitness instructor and very precious to him." Concerned, and not a little disappointed in the perpetuation of what had come to be a recurrent theme in her life, Helen mentioned the incident to her husband: "...he's not happy, of course, but we came to an arrangement that it shouldn't be mentioned - he used to make little snide remarks - since it was happening at work." She went on to describe her way of managing Carl's increasing interest in her: "I thought I'd write him a letter just telling him I'm flattered but not interested." Although well-intentioned and well-thought out, the plan failed. "Since, then I've got another box of chocolates from Carl. They were called 'Mon Cheri'!"

"Women", Nietzsche is reported to have said (in Enright & Rawlinson, 1991), "are perfectly able to make friends with a man; but to maintain the friendship perhaps requires the assistance of a slight physical antipathy" (p. 130). A

necessary requirement, perhaps, but one not always entirely sufficient.

Linda, an interviewee who had founded the 'Christian Friendship Club', presented as pleasant-natured and astute. However, having defective vision, her eyes rolled uncontrollably and she required exceptionally thick spectacles which allowed her only marginal sight. She described the development of her friendship with a member of the club, before she was married: "One chap kept on phoning me and we'd have long, long talks. We grew quite friendly - I'd say a friendship began. I have a very well-modulated voice and can sound quite nice on the phone. Eventually, though, this chap insisted on taking me to dinner. But when he arrived and saw I was 'blind', he was physically shaken. He tried to get out of the date and said that he had a business appointment." Her method of handling the situation was novel, if punitive: "I decided to teach this one a lesson. I said, 'Where's your appointment?' and suggested coffee nearby. When I got there, I ordered a plateful of sandwiches. Then I called the waiter over and asked him what other sandwiches he could offer and I ordered a plate of those, too. After that, there was silence all the way home! I never saw him again - the friendship was over!"

Cross-sex friendships are notoriously difficult to manage, especially when relevant social networks view platonic involvement as unusual, unlikely or improbable, and when sexuality is an unresolved issue between friends (Rawlins, 1982). Ironically, such pressures can force the individuals into a dating relationship rather than into a more appropriate friendship framework. During interpersonal encounters within such frameworks, events occur which may promote tension because they impinge on conscious and unconscious boundaries. In cross-sex friendships, spontaneously-occurring events having a sexual connotation may place an unexpected and sudden burden on the suppressive work being done within the encounter or relationship. Sexual issues may be successfully suppressed until the unintentional usage of a word or words in the conversation connotes a degree of sexuality. This unexpectedly inundates the conversation with distracting considerations.

In Cathy's case, her husband's feelings about her friendship with a much younger man,

seemed well controlled - until a chance remark caused him to re-evaluate the situation. It seemed that, as he faced the potential sexuality of his wife's friendship, what surfaced were feelings of suspicion and anxiety about the friendship - threatening feelings which had been previously suppressed. Cathy explained: "Manfred and I became friends because he was friendly with my girls. Safety in numbers, you know! He used to pop in a lot. We became friends, I suppose, but I always got the impression that given the chance, he would have made a move." Although "the friendship was limited", Cathy enjoyed the light-hearted repartee which characterised it. "One day I made a remark to my husband ('That's my potential toy boy'), and he never forgot it. He didn't like Manfred and was very wary of our relationship. One day Manfred washed my car in return for my having given him a lift to the bank. When Ian saw my clean car and heard that Manfred had washed it, he wanted to know what I had done for him in return!! That caused a huge argument. I think some of the problem was that Manfred was always around here. The potential was there. Perhaps it was best that he moved!!" Thus, although Cathy's friendship with 19-year-old Manfred, a friend of her daughters, managed to take root, it was soon nipped in the bud - obliterated by the boundaries of marriage.

Goffman (1961) describes a 'sign situation' wherein the unintended and undesired occurrence of a configuration of environmental events expresses a recognition of identities previously not attended to. For example, a man and a woman having a meal together in a restaurant may be addressed by the maitre d'hotel as "Mr and Mrs". Having been previously effectively unconcerned about their identity as friends and not spouses, the two individuals are thus faced with the unplanned-for necessity of having to explain their status - or conceal it - without giving cause for suspicion, or giving offence. Goffman (1961) considers that social encounters that adhere to the tactful and standard rule of not acknowledging the marital status of participants are likely to be conducted with precarious ease. This is particularly apt since so many situations akin to friendship may set the stage for a sign situation and many common phrases can inundate the encounter with previously suppressed or spontaneously unattended matters.

How do cross-sex friends deal with situations such as these?

During encounters, the individual is obliged to try to cope with incidents by spontaneously treating them as if they did not occur, or by integrating them as best as possible into the official definition of the situation. Alternatively, he or she can attempt to sustain the tension so created without departing physically from the situation. Cross-sex friends may, of course, be caught in the crossfire between their joint identities as spouses to others and friends to each other. In cases like this, jokes and other methods for re-defining acts reduce the general level of tension.

Interviewee, Jenny, recounted her experience with a male friend and thereby illustrated this process of re-definition: "Once we - the four of us - went away for a weekend and my husband and this friend's wife went gambling in the evening. My friend and I stayed behind to play Trivial Pursuit - in the bedroom! We left the door open though. That's something we decided on, even though there was lots of fun and giggling about it. It was very funny. It was intimate, too, in that there were only two of us. My husband and my friend's wife were fine about it, they didn't mind. It was all a big joke."

If sexual attraction between two cross-sex friends is not present, or if it can be controlled effectively, then there is potential for a relatively uncomplicated and open relationship. If sexual attraction is present and recognised as such, the friends must draw on one or a combination of ways for managing it, using strategies that can be direct or indirect, long- or short-term, serious or light-hearted. For some, sexual bantering and teasing add a playful and light-hearted component to the relationship and function to lessen feelings of discomfort and threat.

For others, though, the sexual attraction within their friendship may be too intense to treat playfully, and explicit discussion of sexual attraction may allow partners to confront relevant issues and to make informed decisions. In this case, overt discussion can demystify and reify elements of sexual fantasy. Whatever method is used to defuse the tension, failure to acknowledge and manage sexual attraction

is likely to result in relational stress or interactional awkwardness that may impact negatively on the relationship.

It was this type of relational stress which seemed to characterise the concern that Lesley expressed about her friendship with Ron: "I know Ron wants more out of the friendship than I do. He wants to sleep with me. He wants a physical relationship and I'm not into that. I'm just not attracted to him. He's accepted it now and I don't discuss certain aspects of my private life with him ... like, the guy I'm keen on now - I don't tell Ron anything about it because I think it would hurt him."

Although both men and women view cross-sex friendship positively and both desire significant friendships with the opposite sex (Swain, 1992), "such friendships are not easy to achieve and maintain because many males appear to view sex as a primary means of achieving intimacy with women" (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, p. 187). Because of this, the issue of sexuality in friendship requires constant management and negotiation. Moreover, the inherent paradoxes contained within the ambivalent nature of cross-sex friendship complicate the processes involved in friendship management.

One such paradox is the role of privacy. "Privacy and exclusiveness are qualities commonly found in friendship. But these are often seen as important qualities of a love (or sexual) relationship between a woman and a man" (Bell, 1981a, p. 409). Ironically, in this way, the maintenance of privacy within a cross-sex friendship can function to threaten the relationship it initially intended to protect. Some form of negotiation is therefore necessary: "communication for the persons involved in a cross-sex friendship becomes critically important in managing both the private relationship between partners and the public relationship as situated within its social network" (Cupach & Metts, 1991, p. 94). Communication enables couples to interpret their sexual involvement and judge whether it is consistent or inconsistent with the norms of their friendship. Pragmatically, however, such communication is

not always viable: the results of Baxter and Wilmot's (1985) research, for instance, indicate that the state of the relationship is a taboo subject between cross-sex friends.

Some couples attempt to maintain their relationship as a friendship, but to incorporate a sexual component into the general framework. In this case, the relationship often becomes unstable because partners must alternate between the roles of friend and lover to fluctuate between the emotional and sexual expression of affection. These relationships are particularly difficult for women (Bell, 1981a), as the results of Sapadin's (1988) research also indicated: professional women reported less agreement than men with the statement: "Having a sexual relationship adds deeper feelings and closeness to friendship."

Context seems all important in this respect: Lesley's short-lived friendship with Conrad was set within the context of his having terminal brain cancer. When they met, they were both recently divorced and saw, in each other, an opportunity to express their feelings and to empathise with each other. They made love twice. Even though Lesley considered their relationship to have been a 'friendship' rather than a romance, she said, "We both knew he was going to die - that there was no future - and that made things easier for us, as friends. I liked him. I valued his friendship. Making love was part of that."

5.7.3. **Intimate friendships**

Ramey (1976) considers intimate friendships to be an open and honest way of relating - one that acknowledges the sexual aspect of living to be no more and no less important than any other aspect of life. In general, intimate friendship is built on the philosophy of open acceptance of potential sexual intimacy rather than on sexual involvement, per se. What is the motivation for developing such relationships? "Individuals report that they became involved in intimate friendships because of sexual attraction or a desire for deeper sharing with friends (through which one can experience deeper sharing with one's own partner if in a

primary relationship). Also the availability of sexual sharing among friends reduces the need to court or test (thus reducing the amount of actual sexual intimacy in the light of open acceptance of potential intimacy), which greatly enhances friendship" (Ramey, 1976, p. 138).

In order to protect primary relationships, such as a marriage bond, there are, according to Ramey (1976), certain ground rules for handling intimate friendships. These ground rules include being wary of potential intimate friends who are looking for a new primary relationship or are in the throes of therapy, a marriage crisis, or other highly unsettled personal situations. Time-consuming relationships and those which are emotionally draining should also be avoided. Family obligations should always come first and the sum of all outside relationships should not be allowed to impinge on the time frames or psychic territory of the primary relationships.

In addition, and in keeping with his idealistic philosophy, Ramey (1976) recommends keeping one's primary partner informed of the intimate friendship, in order to provide an opportunity for spousal veto. Ramey (1976) considers it to be very important to discuss what is going on, with all the partners in one's relationships. At all costs, uninvolved third parties must be afforded emotional protection because, in these contexts, they are not in a position to protect themselves. Lastly, one should strive not to emotionally damage or hurt any of the parties. Although interesting by virtue of their novel nature, Ramey's (1976) ideas on intimate friendships within a Western context might, at best, be described as illusionary - or, at the very least, naive!

More often than not, a "deep, long-lasting nonsexual friendship between a man and a woman is virtually impossible" (Walters, 1988, p. 32) because the natural erotic attrac-

tion pulsating between a female and male result in sexual tension and resentment accumulating and preventing the friendship from developing. Since social taboos keep friendly feelings from finding a sexual outlet, cross-sex relationships remain at a superficial level.

Cathy's perception of the latent sexuality within her opposite-sex friendships functioned to limit interpersonal intimacy and closeness: "I see my women friends much more often. I see my men friends, too, but usually with their wives, so it's not the same. When I think of my men friends - Tony for instance - it's a friendship but not a deep friendship. That's the difference."

Walters (1988) proposes a provocative solution to the problems inherent in platonic cross-sex relationships: sexual friendship. Sexual friendship, where sex is devoid of both emotional content and serial monogamy, is a relationship which offers a middle ground between superficial friendship and one-night stands. Sexual friendship goes beyond casual mating and may be mostly erotic or involve intense emotional, or even spiritual, ties. Friendship, in general, implies an emotional bond, and a sense of caring, trust and loyalty. Apart from the potential emotional gain attached to sexual friendships, such relationships can, according to Walters (1988), help people move beyond limiting sex-role stereotypes.

By way of illustration, Walters (1988) describes the Muria tribe of India to whom the whole idea of platonic friendship is foreign. In that society, he reports, sexual friendships between single individuals are easy to initiate, and sexual contact between friends is free from guilt. People experiment with sexual partners, jealousy is minimal, divorce is rare, violence almost unknown, and prostitution and rape non-existent. What is more, the Muria combine stable marriages and close-knit family life with a great deal of sexual freedom prior to marriage. Boys and girls spend much time in the village dormitory (ghotul) where they

sleep together. Although some of these young people do fall in love, romance is rare because the ghotul tradition of love stresses group solidarity and discourages exclusive love affairs. Sexual variety and experimentation are recognised as natural and important, and members of the ghotul view sex as an expression of both love and friendship. Once the obligations and duties of marriage are accepted, the people of the Muria tribe forsake the sexual freedom of the dormitory. Their social conventions and religious beliefs make fidelity in marriage a norm stringently adhered to.

Sexual activity is part and parcel of sexual friendship which, Walters (1988) describes, is "an emotional/sexual relationship which offers an alternative to meaningless 'casual' sex on the one hand, and, on the other, to conventional monogamy with its crushing restrictions on sexual freedom" (p. 5). Physical intimacy is considered to melt away certain interpersonal barriers in cross-gender friendships. Sex between friends represents a way of getting to know each other, an opportunity in its own right, rather than an explicit and morally questionable act.

Despite these novel forms of cross-sex 'friendship', the issue of sexuality in friendship remains obtuse. It is, perhaps, a matter of degree, as Allen (1987) implies. The image of cross-sex friendship as a process of progressive incrementalism with indistinguishable points of change permits the hypothesis that the boundaries of marriage may control its development, and thus prevent sexuality from taking root, or at least, from flourishing.

5.8. SUMMATION, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Opposite-sex friendships appear to be viable mostly within the context of work (Mary, Ron, Helen) or as dormant (but sustained) friendships, established prior to marriage

(Jane). Heterosocial preferences were common amongst the subjects (Clinton, Ron, Jenny, Cheryl, Gail), although they were seldom actualised because of the subjects' perceptions of societal sanctioning (Jenny, Lorraine). Opposite-sex friendships were also considered to be negatively affected by either or both participants' perception of sexual interest within the friendship (Paula).

Congruent with research findings by Abbey (1982) and Rose (1985), there was a tendency for the female subjects to interpret friendly male behaviour as seductive and thus constraining in terms of the development of opposite-sex friendship (Irene, Helen, Lesley, Lorraine). However, as in the case of Linda (interviewee), much seems to depend on the specific goals and intentions of the participants. Although sexuality can play a non-threatening and constructive role in friendship contexts where there is little possibility of a long-term relationship (as was the case with Lesley's brief friendship with Conrad, who was terminally ill), it can also function as a divisive force in friendship where there is disjunction between the participants' relationship agendas (such as in Lesley's friendship with Ron). Certainly, in order to remain platonic, opposite-sex friendships need to be cautiously managed.

Although opposite-sex friendships may metamorphose successfully into romances (Cheryl), the opposite is seldom true (Mary). In terms of ease and success of mutability, much seems to depend on the degree of passion, commitment, and closeness involved (Ron). The successful transitions which Ron accomplished between relationship states were also congruent with the research indications of Metts, Cupach and Bejlovec (1989) who note that being friends prior to romantic involvement is a significant predictor of friendship after disengagement. In this respect, the success of mutability also seems to hinge on the mutuality of both participants' desire for such a change: hence the success of

Cheryl and Neil's relationship transitions. Nonetheless, as Rangell (1963) hypothesises, changes in the status of heterosocial relationships can cause feelings of anxiety when friendships develop into romances (Mary, Pam), or feelings of rejection when an (even potentially) romantic love relationship becomes a platonic friendship (interviewee, Jean).

Several of the respondents considered opposite-sex friendship within the context of marriage to be viable, provided emotional closeness was restricted (Cathy, Irene) and the sanctity of marriage was upheld (Irene, Ann). Motivation for forming and pursuing these friendships outside of the boundaries of marriage seemed to be rooted in several factors. High motivation was noted in situations where household chores seemed repetitive and mundane (Helen), but not where housekeeping was construed positively as novel and satisfying (Clinton). In addition, low motivation to form or maintain opposite-sex friendships was registered in cases where the individual's spouse played the role of best friend (Clinton). The motivation to develop or pursue opposite-sex friendships can also develop from a spouse's dissatisfaction with the level of companionship within his/her marriage (Tembi). Moreover, men, more than women seemed to expect their spouses to occupy the dual roles of friend and spouse, as was illustrated by Irene, Clinton and Lorraine.

Although considered a worthy ideal, friendship between spouses appeared to be limited by feelings of jealousy about children and/or time (Sheila, Mary, Helen), displaced work-related stress (Tembi), differences in characters and in definitions of friendship roles (Jane), differences in spirituality (Irene, Helen), incongruence between interests (Clinton) and possessiveness (Paula). Although initially sexual, over time, marital relationships seem often to metamorphose into friendship (Cathy, Leigh, Clinton, John, Ken, Susan, Ann, Cheryl). Where there is no basis of friend-

ship to sustain the move away from passion, the marital relationship can become stressed (Tembi).

Notwithstanding hypothetical approval of opposite-sex friendships within the context of marriage, the reality of such relationships may be less readily accepted (Clinton, Jenny). Within a marital context, metaperceptions of spousal disapproval seem to hinder or prevent such friendships (Tembi, Mary, Leigh, Lesley, Paula, Sheila). In pursuing, or avoiding, opposite-sex friendships, the female respondents were guided largely by their goals of avoiding inter-spousal conflict (Jane, Tembi, Sheila, Paula, Mary, Lesley) and, specifically, by consideration of their spouses' feelings (Leigh, Ann). The male respondents did not identify these factors as being limitations to their forming or maintaining such friendships. They also appeared to be more content with the companionship offered by their spouses and so less motivated to form opposite-sex friendships (Clinton, Ken).

Although the boundaries of marriage can function to restrict friendships, divorce was noted as being a positive and liberating force for the divorcee (Paula) but not for the spouses of the divorcee's opposite-sex friends (Paula, Cathy), who perceived such status as a threat to their marriages. The status of widowhood seems to play a similar role in cross-sex friendship (Lorraine). Both statuses (widowhood and divorce) were construed as signals of sexual availability in terms of romantic love relationships (John, Lesley, Paula). In situations of remarriage, incompatibility between members of the existing friendship circle, and the new spouse, functioned to weaken friendship bonds (Mr Marks, Gail: interviewees).

In chapter 6, both macro-level and micro-level processes involved in friendship are examined. The basic premises of social-cognitive theory are discussed, as are the intricacies of social cognition and its application to adult

friendship relationships - especially those across the gender boundary, and within marital contexts.

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIAL COGNITION AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Remember, our conduct is influenced not by our experience
but by our expectations. (George Bernard Shaw)

The fundamental principles of social cognition and social cognitive theory are discussed in this chapter. Focusing first on the roles of norms, goals and beliefs in interpersonal behaviour, attention is then given to the processes of interpersonal perception. Thereafter, cognitive schema and scripts are discussed as a prelude to the examination of mental models and the roles they play in interpersonal processes and relationships.

6.1. SOCIAL-COGNITIVE PROCESSES

The most important mental processes implicated in personality are those involved in social cognition: "Mental representations of the self, other people, and situations in which interpersonal interactions take place; the procedures by which we construct and reconstruct our impressions and experiences and make evaluations, attributions, and other judgments of people and events in the social world; and the effects of social cognition on social behaviour" (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984, p. 155).

Social relationships have several distinctly similar features, including goals, which are sources of satisfaction within the relationship; a repertoire of characteristic activities often representing steps towards attaining goals; roles; an interpersonal context; and normative implications.

6.1.1. Interpersonal norms

Friendship processes and friendship structures are

influenced by societal and personal norms and beliefs. Norms can arise in two ways: firstly, they might emerge in the process of interaction, over time, either from trial and error or from negotiation; secondly, norms can be imported into a relationship from the larger social environment. Norms function to improve effective dyadic functioning by increasing the predictability of interaction. They represent a way of controlling behaviour without the conflicts and resistance involved in unrestrained ad hoc use of interpersonal power (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Norms reduce the costs of interaction and increase dyadic cohesiveness by fostering facilitative interactions, cutting costs of communication and ensuring that important tasks are accomplished. The consistency of activity patterns within dyads is based on the existence of relatively stable dyadic norms, whereas the similarity of patterns across couples is affected by shared problems of interdependence.

Within relationships, norms represent a form of cognitive control. In this respect, interpersonal habits develop from reinforcement contingencies, some not even consciously recognised by the participants. "Any particular relationship pattern is usually sustained by a web of interconnected causal factors. Isolating the effect of any one causal condition is often difficult" (Peplau, 1983, p. 241). Likewise, especially in times of social upheaval or change, divergent and contradictory social norms may coexist.

"Things are changing a lot nowadays," Leigh said. "It's never really been accepted that women can have platonic friendships with men, but things are more relaxed now ... it's becoming more acceptable for women to behave differently. They have greater freedom now - social freedom, too. But there's still a major focus on a woman's role in family life, and that can restrict freedom - it can restrict friendships!" Interviewee, Jill, also perceived certain double standards and contradictions in the norms of society: "Men have more freedom in society. Society allows them to do more. So, it's more acceptable for men to have women friends. It's also much easier for them to have women friends because they are less restricted by domestic ties."

Relational norms reside in cultural scripts which are shared, group definitions of the types of situations, people and behaviour appropriate in particular social contexts. Cultural scripts derive from shared, consensual beliefs that people have about what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in their society (Reiss, 1986). These scripts vary by ethnic group, social class, and by age level. Although there may be differences within each social group, there will typically be a dominant script shared by the majority. Despite this, friendship lacks normative scripts external to the relationship itself; it is a relationship characterised by an absence of formal bonds (Wiseman, 1986) and, as a result, it is the least role-bound of all important interpersonal relationships. In essence, it is "a relationship with extremely broad and ambiguous boundaries" (Wright, 1978, p. 199).

6.1.2. Roles and expectations

Social relationships characteristically conform to culturally established norms and patterns (Forgas & Dobosz, 1980). In other words, we base our roles on society's definitions, and behave as we think we should behave. Because identities are accompanied by normative expectations of appropriate role behaviour, they can be expected to provide behavioural guidance in specific situations (Thoits, 1983). In addition, Dyadic partners often influence the course of their relationship, deliberately or unintentionally, by trying to structure their interaction in accordance with their own preferences. So, although cultural attitudes about relationships influence roles by developing unique guidelines which create consistency, partners in a relationship also create their own norms for conduct. Importantly, too, the existence of certain norms and shared beliefs does not imply that they are necessarily realised or embedded in institutionalised relationships (Jackson, 1965).

Society has prescribed certain actions, feelings, behaviours and cognitions designated as being appropriate for certain roles which, in turn, serve as guides for individuals by producing common expectations. Thus, cultural expectations contextualise the nature of interaction in relationships and are often experienced as normative constraints. For every role, there is a reciprocal one which, as a result of socialisation, is assumed both spontaneously and unconsciously. Consequently, if an individual (P) interacts with a person (O) who takes the role of friend, (P) must either take the role of friend or affect a change of roles in the other individual (Lampe, 1976).

This inter-locking of role-playing was evident in Helen's friendships with men. She explained that, invariably, the presence of sexuality altered the friendship. By explaining how she coped with one such opposite-sex friendship, she illustrated the way in which she secured this individual in a friendship role, before he had the chance of assuming the role of lover: "Before things went too far, I wrote him a letter, saying how I felt - I'm better at writing than saying things. So, nothing ever developed and we're still friends, but I'm ever-wary."

Roles are comprised of interconnected patterns of behaviour, cognition and affect (Peplau, 1983). The affect component of roles in social behaviour includes the intrachain event sequences that are causally connected to each partner. These form the basis for a person's emotional investment in a relationship. Behaviour patterns are the most obvious and visible elements of roles. Most roles in close relationships are both directly or indirectly interdependent of the individual's partner. Marital roles, for instance, typically include face-to-face interaction between the spouses (direct interdependence) and both the solitary activities and the interactions with third parties which, in turn, affect the causal conditions of the relationship (indirect interdependence). At certain points in the life cycle, friendship roles might become fused to, and so contingent on, other more central roles (Riley, Johnson &

Foner, 1972). The opportunities for fused friendship roles is greater in middle age when individuals are involved in a wide variety of marital, parental, occupational and community activities.

A characteristic feature of interpersonal roles is the distribution or division of activities. For instance, in a friendship, participants may typically perform similar tasks, taking turns in doing so, whereas in a marriage, spouses usually adopt a pattern of greater specialisation. Thus, whereas friendship roles may largely involve conversation and recreational activities, marital roles typically include a more diverse range of behaviours, including sexual activities, homemaking tasks, and shared involvement with child-rearing. In this way, normative expectations function to shape a person's implicit theories about the proper development of a given relationship and to script role playing.

In this regard, gender roles also have a profound influence. An individual "becomes motivated - during the course of sex role socialisation - to keep his or her behavior consistent with an internalized sex role standard; that is he becomes motivated to maintain a self-image as masculine or feminine, a goal which he presumably accomplishes by suppressing any behavior that might be considered undesirable or inappropriate for his sex" (Bem, 1975, p. 634). Thus, the perceptions held by both females and males regarding cross-sex relationships consistently reveal sharp sex-typed distinctions. "It is as if an interaction between abstract cultural expectations and concrete human behavior in friendships continually functions to preserve stereotypical sex roles" (Rawlins, 1982, p. 346).

Even though sex-role expectations differ in precision and scope and in the extent to which they are learnt and internalised, the traditional sex roles of any particular era

significantly influence the nature of relationships such as friendships. A quarter of a century ago, for instance, Hess (1972) noted that the "fusion of friendship with the sex role is so nearly complete through most of the life course that 'friend' in popular usage... generally refers to another of the same sex" (p. 364). Just 15 years later, Allen (1987) commented that gender's "changing role has already had one visible effect: it has produced friendships between women and men" (p. 46).

Ten years after Allen's (1987) observation, there appears to be a steadily increasing acceptance of opposite-sex friendships. Responses to the Mental Model Questionnaire (Appendix E1), for instance, indicated that, amongst the 5 retired respondents, there was still a measure of resistance about the acceptability of such friendships. For instance, strong opposition for both the continuance and the initiation of cross-sex friendship after marriage was indicated by both Ken and Susan. Pam's responses indicated that she accepted the idea of having opposite-sex friends whilst being married, although she drew a distinction between friendship and emotional closeness. Eddie made no such distinction, although he expressed uncertainty about the acceptability of emotional closeness in terms of opposite-sex friendship. John indicated that he considered it unacceptable for married individuals to encourage emotional closeness with the opposite sex, although he showed moderate acceptance of continuing opposite-sex friendships which had been established before marriage.

In contrast, the majority of the younger respondents endorsed the moral acceptability of cross-sex friendships. Charlotte was an exception. Displaying a measure of uncertainty about the acceptability of cross-sex friendships within marriage, she strongly endorsed the following item in the Mental Model Questionnaire: "A married person should avoid becoming emotionally close to members of the opposite sex." She also agreed with the statement that "Married people should avoid having opposite-sex friendships" and that "When a person gets married, he/she should not continue his/her friendships with members of the opposite sex."

Possibly because Clinton grew up under a regimen of strict discipline, his responses indicated ambivalence. In the Mental Model Questionnaire, he exhibited a *laissez faire* attitude regarding the acceptability of cross-sex friendship: he showed agreement, though not strong agreement, with all of the items in the "Acceptability" sub-section. His

responses to the sub-sections which tapped his personal and experiential schemas, indicated that he preferred his spouse not to have opposite-sex friends. This reflects a two-tiered belief system comprised of positional expectations on a hypothetical and abstract level, existing in tandem with those which are more concrete and which reside on an experience-near level.

Comprised of expectations that are applied to an object person, roles may be held by the subject or attributed to him/her by others. Since role behaviours are context-specific, role conflict can occur when an individual is subjected to two or more contradictory expectations whose stipulations he or she cannot simultaneously meet in behaviour (Biddle, 1979).

This was evident in Cheryl's description of her friendship with Bernadette: "We worked together and she was like a mentor to me, initially. There was total trust and loyalty between us. As she rose up the ladder of success, she carried me with her. Then, the managing director decided to divide the personnel into two teams: she was the leader of one and I was made leader of the other. She seemed to be jealous of me in that role. She never allowed me to exercise my ability and it really affected our friendship badly. Eventually, I went to the managing director and asked if I could step down from being team leader. I was totally frustrated. Once I stepped down, our friendship reverted to what it had been, and what it still is today, so many years on." In this case, the conflict which Cheryl experienced between her role as team leader, in competition with Bernadette, and her role as friend and protegee to Bernadette, both threatened and altered their friendship. Consequently, conflict began to characterise Bernadette's dual role as Cheryl's friend and mentor, on the one hand, and as her colleague and competitor, on the other. Their dyadic friendship system resumed to its former functional status only once the women had relinquished the duality of their roles.

A different form of role conflict surfaced in Mary's friendship with Dale. As their friendship evolved into romance, role conflict took its toll. In her case, too, the merging of two roles - friend and fiancée - was fatal for their friendship - and later, for their engagement. In hindsight, she philosophised: "I've found that if you've been friends and it turns to mean something else, you'll lose a friend and gain a mate ... I think that's sad. I lost both."

Only when individuals share expectations for their joint

behaviour, is there likely to be behaviour uniformity. Formed as a result of experience, covert expectations, whether they be individual or shared, are expressed in symbols and include testimony concerning the past, present and the anticipated future (Biddle, 1979). Personal expectations are developed through direct experience and are more concrete and context-specific. Positional expectations are usually more abstract and context-general and are tied to other cognitive information, such as presumptions about values or the functions of roles. Role expectations are also mutable, altering with the tide of time and experience:

Grappling to come to grips with the change in her close and long-standing friendship with Emily, Susan described how her personal expectations of the friendship were no longer being met. Emily would, for instance, "answer the telephone by growling, 'Yes?' rather than saying 'Hello,'" she explained. In addition, she neglected to compliment Susan on her new retirement cottage, and in so doing, failed to meet Susan's expectations of her as a friend. Susan explained: "I'm too old to tell her what effect she's having on me. I'm too old to worry about these things. So, I have just learned to expect less from her. She's been very ill, I know, but still, I don't think she should be so sour. We used to be such good friends. I remember so much about our friendship, with such fondness. I hope for better, but expect what I get - no more."

Susan's defence against her disappointment in terms of the friendship, was to anticipate Emily's (negative) responses, and so, in a sense, to insulate herself from the hurt. As she plotted the probable terrain of her future relationship with Emily, she rationalised her behaviour and attributed to it, reasons she found acceptable. Importantly, she also altered her expectations of Emily. This gave her a base for predicting Emily's behaviour and contributed to the preservation of their friendship. To some extent, her memories of the good times in their friendship seemed to function to neutralise or discount the disappointments she now experienced, and enabled her to accept Emily even when she transgressed Susan's relational expectations.

Biddle (1979) distinguishes between three modes of expectation: prescription, cathexis and description. Expectations exhibited in the prescriptive mode (He should support his wife) are demands or norms which indicate

approval or request. Those in the cathectic mode (He likes supporting his wife) are values or assessments of how the individual feels about the behaviour. The descriptive mode (I support my wife) involves opinions, cognitions or belief systems and refers to assertions which may be expressed in present, future or past behaviour. Future descriptions for oneself (intentions) are probably the best form of expectation for predicting subsequent behaviours. Prescriptions are more likely than cathexes to be shared, because their implications for compliance are more direct. Additionally, expectations may be differentiated from one another according to: the subject who holds them; the object persons to whom they refer; the referenced characteristics that specify their content; their modality; and their form (Biddle, 1979).

As Ron's responses within the Mental Model Questionnaire illustrated, there is not always congruence between an individual's prescriptive, cathexic and descriptive expectations. Although he agreed with the prescriptive norms that "It is acceptable for a married person to have opposite-sex friends" and disagreed with the item "Married persons should avoid having opposite-sex friendships", his responses to items in the cathectic and descriptive subsections of the questionnaire indicated that he had disapproved of his ex-spouse having friends of the opposite sex. He had also perceived disapproval from his spouse regarding his having opposite-sex friends. Moreover, Ron's responses in the questionnaire indicated that he had sensed disapproval from the spouses of his female friends.

Sroufe and Fleeson (1986) explain that expectations "are the carriers of relationships. Carrying forward all of the specific behaviours and response chains from previous interaction would be an overwhelming task, but a limited set of expectations can generate countless behavioral reactions, flexibly employed in a variety of situations" (p. 68). Describing these expectations, Bowlby (1969) used the term 'working model' specifically because the term 'working' emphasises the always current, active role of the model in behaviour. Importantly, it is these internal working, or

mental, models which define the rules (or expectations) by which two people interact, and which govern their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. In this way, past relationships influence present ones through the constellation of attitudes and expectations they leave within the individual.

Explaining the influence that her father's drinking had had on the expectations she held about her present friendships, Charlotte, said, "I am very much against alcohol; my Dad was an alcoholic, and for that reason, I avoid some of my husband's friends. Not that they drink a lot, but for me to sit and talk at length with a man who's drinking - I think that's too awful! I'm very put off by drink and that has become a barrier in my development of friendships, especially with men." It was indeed ironical that Charlotte's husband worked for a brewery - a situation which seemed to have resulted in her experiencing feelings of ambivalence and conflict regarding those whom she called their "brewery friends!"

On the other hand, it was the experiences that Paula had had in adulthood, during her marriage, which seemed to have had the most profound influence on her expectations of friendship with the opposite sex. Describing one of her friendships with a couple she said, "I felt that I dared not disclose details about my unhappiness and marriage for fear of what might happen. Ivan (my ex) was an elder in the church! I was loyal to Iain at all costs." Her responses to the subsection "Spouse's Approval of Opposite-sex Friendship" in the Mental Model Questionnaire indicated her agreement with the items suggesting that (a) her spouse disapproved of her having friends of the opposite sex, and (b) that such friendships would have/had caused tension in her marriage. It was this tension which seemed to be transferred to her interpretation of the red card in the projective procedure (see Appendix E2): "The lady in red ... she's standing upright - there's an alertness. She's got to be careful about what she says. She shouldn't get too close ..." In this way, Paula's construal of the scenario not only echoed her own experiences, but also gave expression to the contents of her mental models.

Alterations and adaptations to individuals' experience-based cognitions and to the expectations they have of certain relationships may come about only once their conscious and subconscious fears and concerns are explored. Levitt, Coffman, Guacci-Franco and Loveless (1994) propose that close relationships are maintained through expectations of support that emerge through interactions with specific relationship

partners, and that they are governed by culturally shared values. These expectations have a stabilising influence on relationships and, as affirmed by Fiske and Taylor (1991), are resistant to change, once solidified (Holmes & Boon, 1990).

In sharp contrast to Paula's relational working model, Cheryl's schemas demonstrated the result of positive marital and affiliative experiences. Her success in always having easily controlled her opposite-sex friendships impacted positively on the expectations she had of them. She said: "I never think along the lines of romance with my friends - it just doesn't enter things at all" and "We've kept the friendship platonic just by knowing that the relationships are that way - nothing needs to be said." Her interpretations of the scenarios in the projective procedure were simple and brief, indicating little in the way of complex interpersonal themes or difficulties. Asked what potential friendship problems she perceived in each of the scenarios, she responded: "The two in front are looking the same - they have kids. Maybe that's causing problems" (green card). "She's unhappy about something in the group. The other two over on the right are romantically involved; this lady might be annoyed about something that's going on there, but the other two are too involved to even notice! They excluding the others - that's why she's annoyed. They're not aware of anyone else. She's totally involved with him. They're not even thinking about the others." (pink card)

Having had several experiences of friendships evolving successfully into romances and vice versa, Cheryl disagreed with the following items in the Mental Model Questionnaire: "Friendship with the opposite sex includes a sexual dimension" and "Romantic interest is part of opposite-sex friendship." However, acknowledging the viable coexistence of love and friendship, she strongly endorsed the items "Love develops out of friendship with the opposite sex" and "Cross-sex friendships are fertile grounds for the development of love." Thus, although she was aware of the latent presence of sexuality in opposite-sex friendship, this awareness did not dominate her expectations of heterosocial relationships. Her own positive experiences in this area had enabled her to expect more than a sexual inevitability from her friendships with men.

As Sroufe and Fleeson (1988) point out, working models of self, other and relationships, which are constructed from relationship experiences, powerfully influence: the ongoing selection of social experiences; expectations concerning the

availability, responsiveness, and attitudes of others; and the complementary expectations concerning the self in relationships. Friends are selected, responded to and influenced in directions compatible with previous relationship learning.

6.1.3. Normative rules

Relationships fail to function constructively "unless people keep to the rules, unless certain restraints operate" (Argyle & Henderson, 1985, p. 125). The normative implications of interpersonal functioning include the rewardingness value of the relationship (satisfactions must exceed costs if the relationship is to be maintained); rules of intimacy; rules to promote coordination and deal with conflict; and rules governing behaviour with third parties.

Particularly in old age, rules seem to play major roles in preserving privacy and strengthening the boundaries surrounding the marital dyad. Without exception, the retired participants (all of whom lived in the same retirement village), indicated a need for exclusivity and privacy within their marriages. Remarks made by interviewee, Gail, captured the essence of these respondents' attitudes: "I don't invite people in; I'm friendly but at a distance. Everyone is like that here." Eddie seemed to echo the sentiment: "... we're not friendly with the people here. We came to a decision when we first moved in: we don't want people living on our doorstep." Additionally, John's comments reflected elements of his wife's mental model regarding their friendships "My wife adopted the attitude: never let them get too close; don't let friends get out of hand. So, we didn't."

In a broad sense, normative rules are common across most relationships, although the accent falls differentially according to the nature of the relationship. Rules of marriage, for instance, contain little about exchange of rewards (as do the rules of friendships) but much about maintaining sexual and emotional intimacy which is, in itself, rewarding. In Western societies, where marital expectations limit the potential for opposite-sex friendship (Walters, 1988), an implicit rule seems to be that friend-

ship circles should be primarily homosocial.

6.1.4. **Goals, plans and relational resources**

Cognition is a dynamic process in which an individual initially imposes structure on incoming information through selective attention and categorisation (Smith & Kihlstrom, 1987). Once processed, ongoing information takes the form of plans, expectancies, schemas and scripts. In this way, interpersonal interactions are governed by the goals, plans, resources and beliefs of the participants (Read & Miller, 1989). Role schemas also contribute by describing the appropriate norms and behaviour for social categories (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Knowledge about individuals' goals often results from knowledge of the role themes and interpersonal relationships which characterise their lives (Schank & Abelson, 1977). Goals, many of which are subconscious, encompass social needs like companionship, love and friendship. Plans are organised sequences of behaviour aimed at the attainment of goals. A plan to disclose personal information to a friend would include perceptions of what to disclose and what not to disclose, the method, timing and context of disclosure and also how it is likely to be construed. Beliefs, in turn, affect the goals and strategies chosen and the way they are implemented, along with the inferences made about one's own, and others', behaviour. They enable the utilisation of plans to achieve goals.

Activating a goal motivates a consideration of plans, strategies and beliefs, as well as an assessment of resources needed to carry out the plan to achieve the goal. Goal integration is particularly important within the marital dyad because conflicting or non-complementary goals can lead to dissension. Laws of interpersonal complementarity suggest that interpersonal actions invite

responses which lead to the repetition of the original actions. An individual's style of evoking interpersonal responses tends to propagate the stable and complementary patterns of interpersonal interaction. This complementarity is necessary for the relationship to endure and, should it not be forthcoming, the relationship may be altered so that the complementarity is re-established (Hartley, 1991).

However, persistent lack of complementarity, together with a reluctance to alter established relational patterns, can lead to the deterioration of relationships. This appears to have been the reason behind the dissolution of one of Cathy's long-standing friendships. She explained: "I had a friend who had been a friend since school days. We were friends in junior school, kept touch in high school and then, when we were dating, we'd go out together in a foursome. We'd meet at my home for a couple of beers and listen to music. But Margaret didn't like us drinking (I didn't know then that her mother was an alcoholic who later died from alcoholism). She started distancing herself from the drinking and from us. She never came round to our way of thinking ... she never changed. Neither did we. So, we grew apart and the friendship ended. We didn't speak for four years."

Relational resources, provided through inter-associations with others in relationships, include transactional memories and affective resources such as shared understanding and social support. Read and Miller (1989) point out that, in this respect, resources include those to which the individual has access (including cognitive tools, attributes and time) as well as resources that are afforded by the nature of the situation (including norms, rules and roles). Rules and roles govern the appropriateness of behaviour within any given situation, making certain plans more salient than others, and even restricting some.

6.1.5. **Assumptions and standards**

Baucom, Epstein, Sayers and Sher (1989) have argued that five categories of cognition are important for understanding relationships: assumptions, standards, selective attention (cognitive content of judgments about behaviour),

attributions and expectancies. These categories emphasise cognitive content and, as such, they represent the structure (products or outcomes) of cognition. Processes of cognition (the operations that represent and transform knowledge) are more difficult to access because they include the nonconscious construction of phenomenal experience.

Individuals develop long-standing classes of cognition about the nature of the world. These classes include 'assumptions', or the way individuals think the world is, and 'standards' - the way they think the world should be (Baucom et al., 1989). Together, these cognitions, or working models, which are cognitive-affective-motivational schemata built from the individual's experience in his/her interpersonal world, serve as templates by which the individual processes the ongoing events in his/her relationships. These internalised representations contain rules for categorising events, for solving problems, for evaluating the appropriateness of events and for achieving certain goals.

By describing her expectations of opposite-sex friends, retired interviewee, Marge, illustrated the ways in which classes of cognition influence social behaviour: "My standards for friends among males are tough: I'd have to respect them for their intellect. And that's not the type of men I meet - certainly not at Bowls!" Her assumptions regarding such friendships were also clear: "Friendship with the opposite sex may be all right, but it's very difficult. Friends don't always stay platonic. If they're homosexual, that's a good safeguard."

6.1.6. Person perception and relational processes

As a cognitive process, person perception is particularly important in understanding relational processes. With regard to person perception within a marital context, it is important to give careful attention to the goals that each spouse perceives as guiding the other's relationship behaviour. If certain goals or personality dimensions are thematic in an

individual's descriptions of spouse, friends, family and others, then they are likely to be permanently, albeit subconsciously, primed (Higgins, King & Mavin, 1982). They are then likely to function to organise information related to interpersonal transactions.

Despite the contribution that such thematic consistency makes towards organising interpersonal perception and transactions, ambiguities can arise. For example, Leigh described her husband as being highly consistent and predictable: indeed, her scores on the Trust Scale (Appendix K5) indicate that high levels of predictability, dependability and faith characterise her perception of him. Despite this, she was 'unsure' about 86% of the items in the "Spouses' Approval of Opposite-sex Friendship" sub-section of the Mental Model Questionnaire. Leigh discounted any contradiction in the two sets of data, explaining: "I think that, on the surface, my husband does accept my having friendships with men. I mean, if I asked him about it, I'm sure that's what he'd say. But, I'm never too sure what he thinks deep down ... where the limits are. For instance, we have a friend, Gary, whom we see now and then. After we'd all been out together one evening, my husband said that he had noticed that I had been paying Gary a lot of attention. 'What nonsense!' I said. I denied it flatly! I had just been polite by talking to him and showing some interest - just like he had done, himself."

Thus, although a man may interpret his wife's behaviour as being provocative or seductive, he may consider his own behaviour as being friendly, or merely accepting. Differences in cognitive styles, in sensory intake and interpretation are thus the source of much conflict and unhappiness in marriages (Sager, 1976) as well as in other relationships.

6.1.7. **Interpersonal interpretation**

Fundamental to the theory of interpersonal perception promulgated by Laing, Phillipson and Lee (1976), are the axioms that, first, behaviour is a function of experience, and second, that both experience and behaviour are always in relation to someone or something other than self. "At the very least, we need concepts which indicate both the inter-

action and interexperience of two persons, and help us to understand the relation between each person's own experiences and his own behaviour, always, of course within the context of the relationship between them. Our concepts must also help us to understand the persons and their relations, in relation to the system which their relationship creates" (Laing et al., 1976, p. 21).

In the case of opposite-sex friendship within marital contexts, the friendship relationship and the marriage relationship are both functions of the participants' experience and behaviour towards each other. The behaviour of each towards the other is mediated by the individual's experience of the other, just as the experience of each is mediated by the behaviour of the other. The transformation of a participant's behaviour into experience entails all the constitutional and culturally-conditioned learned structures of perception that contribute to the ways that the individual construes his or her world, much of which is not open to reflective awareness. Thus, automatic processing in interactions is likely to affect the perception of interactional behaviour (Fincham, Bradbury & Scott, 1990). Judgments made under cognitions of uncertainty or complexity are likely to be influenced by simple cognitive rules and existing knowledge that, in turn, gives rise to expectations.

Laing et al., (1976) point out that for the other's behaviour to become part of the self's experience, self must perceive it; the very act of perception entails interpretation. Often, the intermediary steps (regulative schemata) that contribute to the determination of experience have been lost to awareness and individuals are not aware of why they interpret behaviour as they do.

Leigh, for instance, reported experiencing feelings of discomfort within certain interpersonal settings. She commented, "I don't know why but I feel a general feeling of discom-

fort in men's company - especially now that I'm married. It's almost as if I'm not sure of how I should act and what I'd do if they showed an interest ... maybe I was single for too long! Even the husbands of my girl friends often make me feel ill at ease. I'm much happier with women. Maybe I imagine things, but men always seem to have something else in mind; they seem to think sexually ... don't you agree?" The cause of Leigh's heterosocial anxiety was unclear; presumably, however, its genesis lay in negative experiences and cognitions now lost to consciousness.

Not all negative relational experiences are lost to awareness, however. Some continue to loom large in consciousness. John, for instance, related an experience which had had a noticeable impact on his relational mental model and his consequent interpretation of social reality. Rationalising the themes of avoidance in his friendships with women, he hinted at the root of his reluctance: "I had a good friend at university. Then, a terrible thing happened; she became very ill - appendicitis - and died when she was 22 years old. That was during the war. It took me a long time to get close to anyone after that. I always felt uncomfortable ...I still do sometimes!" His interpretation of the green scenario in the projective procedure contained a similar theme of interpersonal loss: "Gee, they do seem to be annoyed about something or put out about something. They're intent on destroying something. They've lost a lot too - maybe their friends."

6.1.8. **Attributions**

The bulk of research on cognition in marriage has focused on the types of attributions, or explanations, that spouses make about marital events, as well as the manner in which these attributions are made (Fincham et al., 1990). For example, Fincham and Bradbury (1988) showed that, for both husbands and wives, causal attributions and responsibility attributions correlated positively with negative behaviours. Specifically, the attributions inherent in perceiving the cause of marital difficulty as stable, global and located in the partner correlated with considerations of the partner's behaviour as being intentional, selfish and blameworthy.

Several factors influence the attributions made by individuals about their spouse's behaviour. Research by

Ajzen and Holmes (1976) has shown that observers are more likely to attribute intention when the actor's behaviour is unique in producing a particular effect, and less likely when alternative behaviours available to the actor might have produced the same effect. In addition, the number of effects that are unique to the actor's behaviour will influence the confidence of the observer's inferences about the actor. Thus, the meaning which individuals construe about their spouse's behaviour is influenced by the alternative ways they interpret it, as well as the inferences they make about its uniqueness or generality.

In an intricate and complex way, the confusion and uncertainty which Paula experienced in making inferences about, and deducing meaning from, her husband's behaviour seemed to be a function of her interpretation of his interpersonal goals. She explained: "Bear in mind that my 'ex' projected a different image to different people - depending upon what he wanted." Thus, in the present study, confronted with the task of completing questionnaires which required a metaperspective (in other words, her husband's viewpoint, as she reckoned it to be: see Appendix K5, K7 & K8), she expressed difficulty because, she said, he had always tried to impose a specific impression on her, to achieve his "dubious and manipulative objectives." Thus caught in a double-bind situation, Paula found that her relationship not only with her husband, but also with her friends, was affected in significant ways. In addition, she explained that her husband had presented an image of being open and responsive within the company of their friends and that she had longed to do similarly, but "dared not because he would humiliate me. Awful!" As a result, she reported that, within social contexts which included her husband, she typically felt 'uncomfortable', 'over-cautious', 'frustrated' and 'anxious' - feelings which she concealed from her friends. Wary of projecting her true self, Paula admitted that aspects of her friendships had consequently been "stunted ... undeveloped!"

Constraints related to behaviour can also influence attributions. An observer is likely to be more confident of an attribution if the behaviour is performed despite constraining forces such as marital rules or boundaries (Jones, Davis & Gergen, 1961). This is in line with research on 'discounting' and 'augmentation'. Discounting is the process that leads a subject to consider a behaviour

indicator of a trait or disposition less significant due to the presence of other forces that could also be responsible for the behaviour. Augmentation is the process that leads a subject to place significance on a behavioural indicator of a disposition due to its occurrence, despite constraints.

The value Mary attached to her friendship with Dale intensified while she was still married. Remembering the early stage of their friendship, at a time when she was being severely physically abused by her husband, she recalled, "Once, when I was married and in a terrible state because of the abuse, Dale hugged me. I really needed a hug - a good, solid hug. I enjoyed knowing he cared. I felt warm, but not sexual. I thought our friendship was so special - especially as he knew that my ex-husband was abusive and that if he had walked in and seen me in Dale's arms ... I'd never have put it past him to kill us. Never." Since she was married at the time, she attributed Dale's physical affection as a courageous show of fellowship, rather than as sexual interest - and thus demonstrated the process of augmentation.

Contextualised within the history of Mary and Dale's friendship, the incident had taken place in happier days. Later, after much water had passed under the bridge of their volatile relationship, she rationalised her behaviour - and thus discounted Dale's actions: "I don't seem to see other people's faults; I overlook them. I would do anything to please Dale. I'd make excuses for things he did, lies he told. I wanted to belong - now I feel so deserted, so desolate." Incurably, she attributed his intention to "crush the life out of" her to his financial woes: "He's been in financial trouble so he's been under a lot of pressure and that's caused all the trouble."

6.1.9. **Beliefs**

Much recent research on relationship beliefs has focused on the marital dyad. The first principle which motivates these studies relates to the structure of intermarital beliefs and specifies that the correspondence or similarity between spouses' beliefs is more important than the beliefs themselves (Fincham, Bradbury & Scott, 1990). Arias and O'Leary (1985) have shown, for instance, that happily married couples, compared with distressed couples, perceive greater similarity between themselves and their spouses in

their definition of several concepts (such as love, commitment, communication) considered to be important ingredients of a successful marriage.

By and large, the respondents in the present study were uncertain as regards their spouses' beliefs about friendship. Friendship seemed to be an infrequently-discussed topic within the marital dyads and most of the comments made in this regard, were metaperspective assumptions. Nonetheless, comments by Sheila, an interviewee, about her spouse, gave weight to the hypothesis that dyadic adjustment within a marital context is contingent not only on perceived similarity and congruence as regards beliefs, but also on accuracy of metaperception and on willingness to accommodate sensitively to perceived needs. "Kris seems to be carrying around a lot of costly baggage in terms of his relationships," she confided. "There's one thing I've noticed about him: he can't cope with emotional stress. We're so different in that way. He believes he's got to be in control when it come to me. So, I always leave him a note whenever I go anywhere - just so that he knows where I am - but interestingly enough, he never does that for me. I don't mind. It doesn't bother me at all. But, he believes that it's my duty to do it for him!"

Using the Relationship Belief Inventory (RBI) developed by Eidelson and Epstein (1982) in order to investigate relationship beliefs, Moller and Van Zyl (1991) found support for their hypothesis that marital adjustment related to relationship beliefs: the low dyadic adjustment group (as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale) displayed significantly more extreme beliefs than did the high adjustment group. Moreover, based on the results obtained from their research, Eidelson and Epstein (1982) found that couples' unrealistic beliefs were endorsed more frequently by discordant, than by nondistressed, couples. Furthermore, these researchers noted that unrealistic beliefs were part of an poorly adapted cognitive set regarding marital functioning.

A second theme in research on beliefs employs an intraper-sonal level of analysis. Along these lines, Neimeyer (1984) found that couples who have more complex cognitive structures (schemata) for understanding their relationships are

more adaptable in their interactions. In addition, from her studies of communication in marriage, Fitzpatrick (1988) developed a social-cognitive typology of marriage, based on both inter- and intra-personal levels of analysis. Fitzpatrick (1988) asserts, post hoc, that marital types are psychologically real and can be viewed as marital schemata or knowledge structures that represent the external world of marriage and provide guidelines about how to interpret and assign meaning to incoming data. As such, they serve to characterise individuals and to direct attentional focus, thus influencing the encoding, retrieval and processing of information.

6.1.10. **Abstracted representations and reconstructions**

The true causes of behaviour encompass a complex variety of factors present both at the time of behaviour and further traceable to prior factors (Orvis, Kelley & Butler, 1976). For this reason, Fincham et al. (1990) consider that "a central function of cognition in marriage is to understand past and present relationship events and to predict and guide future relationship behaviors" (p. 134). This perspective points to the potential influence of goals, needs and affect on cognition and suggests that a cognitive account of marriage must include cognition that occurs between marital interactions, and not just during interaction. Cognition occurring between interactions involves constructions of previously experienced events and affects the retrieval of relationship-relevant material from memory. The organisation of memories carries implications for what is recalled and what is subject to processing, as well as what is brought to bear on the processing of new information (Fincham et al. 1990). In this way, memories are used to interpret behaviour.

Lesley's accounts of her two marriages included themes of extreme jealousy on the part of both her husbands - as well as memories of violence and heavy drinking. These recollec-

tions were intricately embroidered within her interpretation of the pictorial scenarios in the projective test. Responding to the scenario depicted on the green card, she commented, "There're problems with alcohol, drugs - that leads to antisocial behaviour. There's jealousy between these friends - it could relate to the one couple being jealous of the other couple's happier marriage."

Helen's memories of her past marital experiences were also brought to bear on the ways in which she construed social reality. She had "... always found male relationships restrictive." She recalled: "When I was first married, my husband, Richard, was very domineering and jealous. I had friends at work, but they never came home. Never. Richard was jealous of me - full stop. Possessive jealous. Now my present husband, Brian ... well, I'm seeing the same pattern but only recently have I acknowledged it." These themes were also evident in Helen's mental model of cross-sex friendships. Her response to the pictorial scenarios included the following comments made about two of the characters: "He's saying, 'You're my property'; he's making sure that she's not getting too involved with the others."

Affect also influences recall. Negative material is more easily retrieved by distressed than by non-distressed spouses and is therefore more likely to influence cognitive processing (Fincham et al., 1990). Judgment may affect later cognition even after the mood passes because what is stored in memory is not only the event which the individual experiences, but also an abstracted summary, judgment or inference about the event. When further judgments are made, the abstracted representation, rather than the original event is usually recalled (Wyer, Srull & Gordon, 1984). Over time, an individual might not be able to pinpoint the precise behaviour on which the judgment was made, and yet the judgment remains intact. In effect, mental processes record and organise salient elements not only of behaviour but also of relationships. These "records of past experiences are automatically and nonconsciously scanned in order to discern evidence of any self-guiding matches among currently perceived cues and past ways of being in the context of such cues" (Ogilvie & Fleming, in press).

The accessibility of constructs is also determined partly by the individual's current expectancies, goals, needs, and recent experiences (Bruner, 1957) and, in turn, influences the encoding of behaviour. Chronically accessible constructs in marriage - in Weiss's (1980) terminology 'sentiment override' - may also be used to interpret behaviours, even though they are not activated by environmental events or controlled thought processes. Thus, a spouse's response to partner behaviour may be more a function of general sentiment towards the person, than anything specific about the behaviour itself.

In this way, the individual goes beyond the information provided by a stimulus, supplementing it with details derived from memory, expectations and inferences. In essence, "remembering is not a passive accessing of stored information but instead is an active, integrative process that makes extensive use of currently available information to fill in gaps in existing memories" (Holmberg & Holmes, 1994, p. 269). Schemas are the cognitive structures that mediate this organisational and inferential activity.

6.2 COGNITIVE SCHEMA AND COGNITIVE SCRIPTS

Cognitive schema are structures of meaning varying in complexity; they are sets of rules of a particular domain, hypothesised to function like a scientific theory, guiding persons in construing new experiences (Arias & Beach, 1987). As such, they indicate the salient and relevant aspects of a stimulus situation and so influence information search and retrieval processes. Knowledge about self and others is more likely to be represented in organised units or schemas, than to be stored as discrete propositions. Schemata develop as a consequence of an individual's repeated participation in behavioural episodes and reflect the regularities and invariants in these episodes (Landau & Goldfried, 1981).

Primarily causal in character and function (D'Andrade, 1991), schemas include closely related emotional, cognitive and experiential components, serving as guides to interpersonal perception and behaviour with reference to the full range of functioning (Hartley, 1991). Schemas can be characterised by degree of complexity (differentiation), as well as by extent of integration and patterning of structure. A third property of schemas is permeability of boundaries between and among components within or across schemas. Additional characteristics of schemas include their relative automatisisation and accessibility to consciousness as well as their linkage to overriding metacognitive scripts or strategies (Singer & Salovey, 1991).

Neisser (1976) has suggested that schemata are hierarchically organised, with the more detailed schemata being embedded within more general schemata. Cognitive maps are located at the highest levels of generality, whereas at the lowest levels, are semantic schemata, necessary for recognition and categorisation. Goals, themes, plans and scripts are interspersed between these schemata. Interpersonal themes are patterns or sets of goals which occur together because of some property of the individual or those with whom he or she interacts. Role themes represent those goals which are likely to become important in the course of carrying out the activities associated with social roles, such as those of husband, wife, sibling or friend. Schank and Abelson (1977) also describe several classes of life themes, including approval, ambition and personal quality.

Schemas are operationalised in verbally encoded sets of understandings (D'Andrade, 1991). As such, they are comprised of perceptions encoded in verbs such as see, hear, notice, look; beliefs encoded in verbs like love, mourn, pity; desires/wishes encoded in verbs such as want, need, wish; intentions encoded in verbs such as intend, mean, decide; and resolutions/will encoded in verbs like determine

and resolve. These states are considered to be linked together in a complex causal chain whereby perceptions cause one to believe or think certain things which result in one having particular feelings or emotions which, in turn, lead to the individual harbouring certain desires or wishes. Basically, one's desires and wishes are transformed into specific intentions.

The themes in Charlotte's case data, for example, revealed the interweaving of an interlocking chain of schemas, comprising memories, intentions and goals. Through synergic processes, the composite elements of this chain influenced her perceptions of, and beliefs about, opposite-sex friendship. Expressing no intention or wish to have opposite-sex friends, Charlotte described herself as having been a shy child: "As a younger person, I had so many hang-ups. I was self-conscious and felt I had nothing to offer. Now it doesn't bother me, I feel important in myself, I feel I have things to offer and to express."

In the Mental Model Questionnaire (sub-section: Spouse as Friend) Charlotte strongly indicated that all her needs for opposite-sex friendship were met within her relationship with her husband. Elaborating, she said that her relationship with her husband provided her with feelings of security, not experienced within the context of her opposite-sex friendships. "My husband has many business friends and they come to the house - I don't mind that," she confessed. "He has also become friendly with my friends' husbands and I have become friendly with his friends' wives. We've got quite a big friend-group. We know lots about one another, there's nothing hidden. We go camping together, and no-one's inhibited. But that's more a group scene and I really tend to seek out a one-on-one situation, even within a group. Having a one-on-one relationship with a male friend is difficult - for me, it's impossible! Perhaps that's because I was such an insecure shy child - my father's drinking used to embarrass me." Significantly, Charlotte's interpretation of the projective scenarios included a thematic emphasis on "couples interacting", thus indicating the context she considered as acceptable - indeed, necessary - for the perpetuation of opposite-sex friendships.

Ron's schemas, on the other hand, revealed his perception of opposite-sex friendships as exclusive, dyadic relationships in their own right. He perceived a mixture of couple-friendships and individual-friendships within the given scenarios: "This looks like one couple talking to a female. This other guy - something has stopped him in his tracks and he's having to listen. I'd say it's a married couple - the woman's on her own. All three

are good friends, they get on well, there's no problem here," he said of the red card. Interpreting the green card, he said, "There's one married couple there, but the other two - I'm not sure. They could just be friends. Things look strained here, especially between the two who might be single." Similar themes were contained in his interpretation of the pink card: "There are some singles - some are married." Congruently, in the "Spouse as Friend" sub-section of the Mental Model Questionnaire, Ron indicated that he saw value in, and was motivated to have, platonic friendships with members of the opposite sex. In this respect, his relational schemas seemed to be less rigid and rule-bound than those of Charlotte. His relational mental model was certainly less sanctioning.

Like scientific theories, cognitive schemas provide inference rules. If a scientist observes a value on dimension X, he or she can predict a particular value on dimension Y. Similarly, if an individual experiences a certain characteristic of a stimulus, he or she will infer other, unknown or ambiguous, aspects in a way that is consistent with the schema (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Information which is perceived but which does not fit the schema is ignored or misinterpreted. Furthermore, as sets of assumptions, schemas significantly influence stimulus selection and provide inference structure. In this way, they guide individuals in seeking information in a way that maximises the likelihood that the schema will be confirmed (Rothbart, Evans & Fulero, 1979). Thus, when a schema is activated in a friendship situation, it guides cognitions concerning the friend. Similarly, in marital situations, expectations regarding the spouse's behaviour are activated, thus "increasing the probability of eliciting behaviour from the spouse congruent with and so confirming the schema" (Arias & Beach, 1987, p. 116).

6.2.1. Mental models

Comprised of schemas, mental models may take the form of abstract scripts that contain the individual's expectations or theories about events in the social world (Holmberg & Holmes, 1994). Mental models consist of complex, integrated

sets of impressions and information built up about situations or people, over time (Holmberg & Holmes, 1994). Structurally similar to attitudes, mental models consist of cognitive (Peter has sexual intentions towards me), affective (I like Peter in a platonic sense) and evaluative (Peter is trustworthy) components. Mental models of a given individual can become increasingly complex over time as one comes to know and understand other individuals more and more. They aid not only the understanding and prediction of an individual's behaviour, but also past recollections of the target individual (Holmberg & Holmes, 1994). Mental models are therefore major sources of idiographic knowledge.

Mental models, represented as interpersonal knowledge, shape the processing of information about the individual's interpersonal world. They are cognitive structures representing a person's views and expectations about relationships, moulded on the basis of past experience. As metaphorical descriptions, they are rooted in the same brain processes that construct schemata to organise and process information. They are, however, considered to include affective and defensive, as well as descriptive cognitive components.

The activation of any particular mental model is likely to depend on which model best applies to the situation. Such applicability depends on the strength of the model, whether the model matches the features of the situation, and the specificity of the model (Collins & Read, 1994). Models that are more central in the network, in that they are based on greater experience, are more densely connected and have been applied more often, are most likely to be preferred. Thus, models based on experience with one's parents are likely to be highly accessible whereas those based on cross-sex friendships will probably be much less accessible because of the rarity of the relationship.

In terms of the comparatively uncommon phenomenon of opposite-sex friendship, the relative inaccessibility of mental models can result in inappropriate inference-making and social prediction. Eddie's stereotyped perceptions and expectations of his (second wife's) friends (whom he described as his friends, too) were dashed when he initially met Maria: "... when it came to meeting her, I thought, well, I know this type ... I may have to put a black mark against this one. There she was: a plump lady - not beautiful at all - flat shoes and so cross looking! She's a nun, you know. That afternoon, the three of us sat talking - the first time I met her. She talked about religion and Israel and all sorts of serious things. Eventually I thought: I'm going to put a spoke in all this. I said, 'Who do you think will win the rugby this weekend?' That was it! It proved to be her favourite topic ... we couldn't stop her talking! After that, she'd phone me when she couldn't watch rugby on TV. Often she'd say, 'It's at such and such a time' and I'd know that she, and the rest of the nuns, should be in church or should be praying. So I'd tape it for her. She's a real enthusiast! Our friendship has continued over all these years and we still talk and talk about rugby." In this case, the set schema which Eddie initially employed within this interpersonal context was altered sufficiently, through relational experience, to permit a close and long-lasting opposite-sex friendship to develop.

Although they are susceptible to modification, mental models have a strong propensity to resist change by virtue of their role as organisers of experience and as filterers and interpreters of information. Schemas not only tend to persevere even in the face of conflicting evidence (Fiske & Taylor, 1991), but often bias information in the direction of confirming the original schema (Singer and Salovey, 1991) or expectation. This resistance to change is particularly true of dyadic patterns of relating because of the reciprocal expectancies therein (Bowlby, 1981).

For these reasons, there is a natural inclination to assimilate information into pre-existing models, rather than to modify one's model - even despite repeated evidence that the model is inappropriate. Likewise, an individual will expect to be perceived and treated by others (such as his/her spouse) in ways that are consistent with his/her self-model (Bowlby, 1979). "Such biased perceptions and expectations lead to various misconceived beliefs about the

other people, to false expectations about the way they will behave and to inappropriate actions, intended to forestall their expected behaviour" (Bowlby, 1979, p. 142). Inconsistent information is thus likely to be disregarded or reinterpreted.

An unyielding resistance to change was evident in Paula's description of self within the context of friendships and marriage. Revealing her mental model of opposite sex friendships, Paula described herself at college as having been, "very staid and never flirtatious. I could not believe anyone could be interested in me and almost always kept guys at bay." It was perhaps a self-fulfilling prophecy that Paula later married a man who relentlessly eroded her social confidence. Emotionally traumatised by 18 years of marriage to man she labelled as "a psychopath", followed by a lengthy and "soul-destroying" divorce, Paula's negative expectations of friendship with the opposite-sex were exacerbated by her husband having been "very crude and intensely critical" of her in the company of opposite-sex friends. She seemed incredulous when, after her divorce, a male friend invited her to his home for coffee. "Why me?" she pondered, noticeably perplexed. "I didn't believe that he was interested in me, but rather that he wanted to satisfy his own passions." Experience proved differently - and thus began not only a friendship, but also the first small adjustment in a long process of schema-amendment.

To remain adequate in the role of guiding and planning interpersonal transactions, mental models of self and other in a relationship must undergo change, being deconstructed and reconstructed to cope with the vagaries of interpersonal experiences. In any relationship, as two participants come to know one another better, so they learn to respond differently to each other. These changes are eventually reflected in the cognitive complexity, sophistication and content of each participant's internal mental or working model. The extent to which working models are open to updates and revision varies from individual to individual (Bowlby, 1988). However, it is only those models which are sufficiently flexible to incorporate new information about self or other that are liable to promote adaptive behaviour in relationships (Bowlby, 1988). In essence: "Accurate models provide partners with more realistic expectations for

each other's behaviour" (Kobak & Hazan, 1991, p. 863).

This principle is applicable not only within marital contexts, but also within the context of friendship: Cheryl described her sense of confusion regarding Jenny, a friend of some years' standing: "It's taken me a long time to get to really know Jenny. Even now, I'm not too sure about her sometimes. She is the kind of person who falls over you and will do anything for you - so long as you stay at a distance from her. As soon as I tried to get close to her, emotionally, she'd backed off and become - well, almost unfriendly. At first, I couldn't take it, then I began to think that maybe she needed the space. I've accepted it now and I think probably only because of that, we're still friends." Once Cheryl's mental model of Jenny was appropriately adapted, the friendship system (although initially threatened by unrealistic expectations) became more functional, thus contributing to the maintenance of the friendship.

Opposite-sex friendship, too, seems to thrive best in the nurturing context of realistic expectations. Mary's comments on her failed friendship with, and later, her brief engagement to, Dale reflect both her misperception of his expectations of their relationship, and the contents of her own mental model in this regard: "It has really cut me up, he let me down so much. His motives weren't what I thought they were ... I never thought, though, that he would ... I just felt protected - I suppose for a while I had a silly crush on him. But it was more sisterly love. Now there's nothing left. He's made it his purpose in life to crush me, he's ruining my life. He says he will bug me till the day he dies. I can't trust him. I just never expected it of him ... I thought it would be a friendship to last."

Flexibility and mutability are necessary to keep mental models adapted to reality. Although qualitative changes, in positive or negative directions, may occur in response to changed circumstances or new experiences, the quality of prior relationships is also likely to moderate the influence of external stress, such as that represented by extra-marital cross-gender friendships. What processes facilitate the revision and updating of mental models so as to ensure that first, participants in relational dyads make accurate hypotheses about each other's behaviour and second, that their expectations of each other are congruent? Bowlby (1988) suggests that open communication helps by allowing

individuals access to potentially disconfirming information.

The role of open communication in this regard, was evident in (retired interviewee) Gail's description of a lapsed friendship. "Years ago I had a friend - much younger than myself - who was recently divorced. I was a mother image to her, I think. Yes, I think she looked upon me as her mother; she even used to send me Mother's Day cards! Anyway, we got along well but then I got the feeling that she didn't want to continue the friendship because she didn't like being friendly with someone so old. She said it depressed her. That hurt, but I tried to understand. I suppose it made her think of how she would be in twenty years or so. We saw less and less of each other. It made me think and after that, I was careful about making friends, well close friends, of people much younger than myself." Gail's account reveals not only how the channels of communication between the two friends operated, but also the function that flexibility had in terms of the updating of her mental model of friendship.

Acting as mechanisms of cognitive closure, schemas and mental models influence impression management by substituting 'missing' information with expected or default values (Baldwin, 1992). Processes of selection and reception also influence interpretation: what might be highly significant to one individual might be trivial to another. Even when two individuals perceive an act similarly, their interpretation of it may be very different. Thus, a wife's perception of her husband's friendship is a unity of the given and the constructed - a synthesis of her own interpretations of her perceptions, based on her expectations, and her fantasy about the stimulus which originates from her husband's friendship.

In this way, and because of their role in shaping social perception and emotional appraisal, schemas and working models are likely to become self-fulfilling prophecies (Collins & Read, 1994). Individuals contribute to their interpersonal environment by adopting patterns of behaviour that create expected outcomes. Alternatively, individuals may select environments which are consistent with their expectations about self and others.

Tembi's expectations of her spouse's role in terms of inter-spousal friendship were evident in her endorsement of the item, "Spouses should also be friends", in the Mental Model Questionnaire. In addition, she strongly endorsed the items "For a marriage to succeed, the spouses must be friends" and "Married couples should include each other in their leisure time pursuits." But, antithetical to her hypothetical beliefs, expectations and goals, friendship was not an integral part of Tembi's marital relationship. Consequently, as a result of her unrequited friendship in this context, what emerged were potentially destructive feelings of frustration and anger, directed at her spouse.

Despite her ideals or fantasies, Tembi's experiences had taught her that friendship with one's spouse (or other kin) was an unattainable goal. In response to the orange projective scenario-card she commented, "It could be a family. Nobody is talking though ... no-one is talking to anyone else. They're minding their own business ... there's no communication ... even those preparing food. It's just a family. There're no friends here." Her responses also indicated a theme of anger within both friendships and kin relationships: "He's tense ... there's something wrong. Maybe he was angry and it's carrying over," she added in response to the red card. Interpreting the green card, she said, "Ooh! I see anger here. This person is furious. He's waiting to attack someone. There's a problem with these people ... there's a problem with the relationships here." Congruently, Tembi's responses to the relationships depicted on the pink card contained references to interpersonal coldness, anger, and seriousness.

Similar themes were contained in Tembi's description of her relationships with both her spouse and her friends. Discussing these relationships, she would often raise her voice and slam her hand on the table as she fervently recalled events which she construed as having been interpersonal injustices. She valued friendship with men but was frustrated by her inability to maintain such relationships because her husband strongly disapproved of them. "My husband would slap me!" she said, when asked about her spouse's reaction to her having men friends. Thus, inextricably caught within a tangled skein of traditional values and modern, but idealistic aspirations, Tembi had developed relational mental models of heterosociality which contained a labyrinth of conflicting norms, roles, beliefs, intentions, wishes and expectations. The result? Forced adherence to culturally-based normative codes of behaviour - and passionate feelings of ambivalence, frustration and resentment.

6.2.2. Schematicity

Schematicity refers to the degree to which an individual employs specific relational schemas when interpreting social events. Along a continuum, relational patterns may be schematic or aschematic, according to the individual's experience and mental representation of particular types of interaction. An individual is considered to be highly schematic if he/she has a cognitive structure for a specific type of relationship and often uses that schema to understand social experiences. Such individuals possess cognitive representations of how to achieve possible selves or to prevent selves from being threatened (Markus, 1983). By contrast, an aschematic individual has no experience as regards a specific type of interaction. Between these two types of people are those who, being relatively schematic or relatively aschematic, have the targeted relational schemas available in memory but for whom these schemas are not chronically accessible in their day-to-day processing of information (Baldwin, 1992).

High-schematicity was illustrated by the similarity of the respondents' interpretations of the orange card in the projective procedure. Notwithstanding the diversity of responses produced in response to the other cards, all the respondents, without exception, interpreted the orange card as a family get-together, despite having been told that the scenario depicted friendships. The interpretations included:

Ann: "Oh - this is a family meal."

Mary: "This is definitely a family get together ... there're all sorts of generations here."

Ron: "This is a family gathering; there're three, maybe four generations. It's a pretty homely scene - a bit subdued - no-one's talking."

Lesley: "This is strictly family, not friends. The older people would probably not want friends there. They'd say, 'What do you need friends for - you have family.'"

Paula: "This is a family - they tolerate one another but are emotionally isolated."

Irene: "This is a big family gathering."

Cheryl: "This is obviously a family occasion."

Helen: "This is very European. We don't have such family relations here. Not in South

Africa."

Cathy: "Aah! the gathering of the clans. There're four generations here, maybe five. It's a family gathering. Really, it's not one of friendship at all. It's one of duty."

Clinton: "This is just a family Sunday lunch. Ja, that's it. They're all related."

Ken: "There's the father, a youngster, the grandfather. Could it be - yes it is - the wife of the man sitting here. It's Sunday, something like that. It's amazing. Eventually they'll talk about 'do you remember?'"

Leigh: "Family, family, family - there're probably both friends and enemies in this bunch!"

The relative speed, ease and thematic consistency of these responses point to the highly schematic nature of family relationships as a relational type. By comparison, opposite-sex friendship, especially between members of different age-groups, appears to be a considerably less common relational type. Moreover, Clinton's comments ("I like this. It's happy, relaxed ... it's a nice gathering. I am more relaxed with this one, you know - I think it's the family aspect. It's not stressed ... this is beautiful ... I'd like to be there!") indicate that the highly schematic nature of this scenario afforded him more comfort than did the less-schematic scenes. For instance, he seemed to have particular difficulty - and discomfort - in responding to the green card: "Oh jees..," he said, shuffling in his chair and sitting forward, "...this is awful. The one fellow is slouching to the side ... I have no idea ... what are their relationships? I'm totally unimaginative aren't I? ... Do you pick them out for a reason? Jees! They're bloody unhappy ... I don't know. Could they be friends, these men and these women? Friends? Aagh!" Although, like Paula, Clinton seemed troubled by the picture, he seemed more frustrated by his inability to interpret it on a relational level. The scenario was, it appeared, completely out of his experience. Aware that his mental models of opposite-sex relationships were inappropriate in this case, he seemed confused - almost threatened and defensive - as he grappled to make sense of the scenario.

Assessing an individual's schematicity limits attention to self-characterisations which are consciously held. Nonetheless, self-report measures access declarative knowledge aspects of the schema and these may well mirror procedural aspects (Baldwin, 1992). Individuals may also be prone to distorting their responses on schema measures through defences such as denial. Schema-related information, whether consistent or inconsistent, tends to be better recalled and

recognised than schema-irrelevant data (Baldwin, 1992). Schemas assist access to exemplar memories of past significant experiences as well as to memory for any new information that is relevant to the stored knowledge.

The centrality of this knowledge or cognition component highlights the fundamental difference between schemata and mental models (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). Schemata belong to the cognitive domain, convert perceptions to knowledge and enable the formulation of decisions and actions based on that knowledge. Although mental models include knowledge, they are most closely concerned with converting discrete behavioural interactions into relationships and evoking emotional responses based thereon. In essence, whereas schemata organise information, mental models organise relationships. As a class of schema, they encode affective as well as cognitive information and lead individuals to preferentially recall information that is consistent with the model.

6.2.3. **Self- and person schemas**

Self-schemas are cognitive generalisations, including traits, values and memories about the self, based on repeated categorisations of one's own, and others', behaviour (Markus, 1977). From a cognitive-social perspective, the self is envisioned as a node in an associative memory network (Kihlstrom et al., 1988). These nodes are linked to nodes representing semantic information such as traits and characteristics, as well as to nodes representing episodic information such as specific actions. Self-knowledge is thus mentally organised and processed within an associative network, and it is the unveiling of this structure that ultimately reveals the effects of self-schemata and self-schematic knowledge (Markus, 1977).

Stored in long term memory, self schemas are hierarchically

organised bodies of knowledge and beliefs regarding one's intentions and capacities. Mechanisms of selectivity, they function as interpretative frameworks for understanding behaviour, shaping the perceiver's perceptions and expectations and influencing the nature of inferences that are drawn. Essentially knowledge structures about the self that derive from past experiences, self-schemas function to organise, interpret and guide the processing of self-relevant information contained in the individual's social experiences (Markus, 1983).

They are, however, not simply passive generalisations of past experiences, but also responsible for one's present and future behaviour; as such, they define not only a past self but also a possible, or future, self. Indeed, an individual's conception or image of self can contain a myriad of facets, including good selves, bad selves, ideal selves, dreaded selves, hoped-for selves, ought selves, not-me selves or core selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), as well as hypothetical or possible selves, hypothetical others and others not readily available (Merluzzi, 1991).

Possible selves are those selves which an individual could become - and would like to become - but which he may be afraid of becoming; they are cognitive structures within the self-concept that are carriers of a person's aspirations, goals and motives. Providing a conceptual link between cognition and motivation, they influence information processing and mediate overt actions. Possible selves reflect the dynamic, future-anchored properties of the self (Markus, 1983) - the selves which are hoped for and also those that are perceived as threats and consequently, feared or dreaded. Possible selves not only mediate personal functioning by operating as incentives for future behaviour, they also provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). In this way, anticipated future selves can severely constrain

present behaviour alternatives as well as future events.

Exploring motives for relatedness, Baldwin (1992) introduces the concept of 'possible relationships'. Individuals might be motivated to re-create patterns of relatedness that in the past were reinforcing. Alternatively, they might wish to attain an idealised relationship which exists only in fantasy. They may also be motivated to avoid images of negative interpersonal experiences associated with particular relationships.

From the perspective of role-relationship models (which portray a schema of self in interaction with the other), Horowitz (1979, 1989) identifies at least four - and up to seven - components of the association between self and other, including the characteristics and role of the self; the characteristics and role of the other; the motives, intentions, expectations and defences that lead to aims of self toward the other; and the view of the aims, expectations and likely responses of the other toward the self. (The latter two aspects are the script components of the model.)

Person schemas summarise past interpersonal experiences into integrated, generalised, modular forms against which incoming information is measured, reorganised and evaluated (Horowitz, 1991). They affect both external and internal events by organising externally occurring, internally remembered or wishfully fantasised interpersonal situations. Moreover, their defensive functions ward off schemas which might activate wishes that have feared consequences. Such schemas seem to have particular relevance within the marital context in which schemas about the self, the spouse, marital roles and particular events are inter-linked.

Considering the multiplicity of influence in terms of the convergence of schema-components, incongruities in marital mental models are bound to surface. This seemed to

be the case for Paula. In the Mental Model Questionnaire, she strongly endorsed 5 of the 6 items in the "Loyalty" sub-section, thus indicating strong agreement that having friends of the opposite sex did not represent a breach of marital loyalty. Her responses also indicated her belief that one's spouse should be included in one's friendships with the opposite-sex. Moreover, she positively endorsed those items indicating that she believed friendship with the opposite sex was not only acceptable, but could be beneficial to one's marriage. However, in responding to the items in the sub-section "Spouse's Approval of Opposite-sex Friendships", she indicated her perception of her husband's disapproval of, and jealousy about, her having friendships with the opposite sex. As a result, she tended to maintain opposite-sex friendships within the context of couples, only.

Inconsistencies were also reflected in the contents of Tembi's marital mental model. Evident therein, were notions of approval as regards opposite-sex friendship within a marriage context - with one important proviso: that the friendship should include the spouses of the participants. She expressed uncertainty about her spouse's approval of her having opposite-sex friendships (her responses to 6 of the 8 items in the "Spouse's Approval of Opposite-sex Friendship" suggested that she was 'unsure'). However, unlike Paula, she showed strong disapproval of her spouse having opposite-sex friendships. In terms of opposite-sex friendship, in general, she showed higher schematicity regarding her spouse's relationships, than she did regarding her own. Tembi's definition of 'friend' seemed to be blurred by sexual connotations, and there were clearly indications that she construed her husband's opposite-sex friendships as threatening to her marital relationship. For instance, she described one of her husband's friendships thus: "One of his friends phoned all the time ... even in the middle of the night. Then she'd be silly ... giggle and put the phone down. I didn't feel right. 'Listen, lady,' I said, 'I know what's going on.'" Then, defending her husband, she added, "I'm also jealous though. I suppose it's love, that's all."

By way of contrast, Jane's spouse had "never given reason for (her) suspecting that his friendships with the opposites sex had ever been more than just friendships." Although her responses in the Mental Model Questionnaire indicated her acceptability of opposite-sex friendship within a marriage context, she expressed a sense of caution regarding the possible negative effects of such friendship. Her agreement with 80% of the items in the sub-section "Privacy" suggested that she perceived the possibility of a marriage being put at risk through the invasion of marital privacy. Despite her comments during the interviews, Jane's responses in the sub-section "Spouse's Expectations" reflected a sense of discomfort (possibly indicative of feelings of ambivalence) about her husband having

opposite-sex friends. Even though her negative endorsement of the items suggested that she had not sensed sexual attractions within the context of her friendships with men, she seemed well-aware of the potential thereof, as well as of the negative implications which such complications could have. She said, "Genuine friendship should be valued too highly to spoil with sexual emotions." Notwithstanding the semantic irregularities within her marital mental model, Jane's over-riding schema regarding opposite-sex friendships within a marriage context seemed to indicate the theme: 'Proceed with caution.'

Enduring schemas are intrapsychically retained meaning structures which may be activated because of wishes and other internal motives, or because of their appropriateness to a set of perceptions of the external environment. Because enduring schemas affect perceptual processes, a mental model may be discrepant from the real, external situation. An individual may have a repertoire of several different enduring person schemas to apply to any specific relationship or situation. The different elements which form this repertoire may then be activated in order to construct mental models (Horowitz, 1991), containing self- and other-knowledge.

Contradictory self knowledge may result because diverse modules and different self schemas are operative in different states of mind (Horowitz, 1991). Whether more than one schema will be relevant to a given situation depends on how often the schema has been activated previously, whether the context has served to prime the schema and whether the affective situation is schema-consistent. Certainly, it is possible that alternative schemas may be recruited by the individual under differing circumstances.

Multiple schemas of each significant relationship serve to integrate modules of person knowledge. 'My spouse and I' may have different roles in different states of mind, in different contexts and at different stages of life. Self schemas are anticipatory in that they constitute a collection of hypotheses about incoming stimuli, as well as plans for

interpreting and collecting schema-related information (Singer & Salovey, 1991). Like beliefs, they may also include strategies for activating behaviour sequences, as well as expectations about others' behaviour towards oneself. "Self-schemata are cognitive generalisations about the self, derived from past experiences, that organise and guide the processing of self-related information contained in the individual's social experiences" (Markus, 1977, p. 64). Representing the way that the self has been differentiated and articulated in memory, self-schemata influence both input and output of information related to the self.

Object relations schema are unconscious, organised structures or codifications of images of the self and others, along with the needs and affects which characterise the relationships between the images. Since object relations concern the cognitive, affective and emotional processes that mediate interpersonal functioning in close relationships (Stricker & Healey, 1990), object relations schemata evolve out of contact with different psychosocial contexts and impact on an individual's actual and fantasised interpersonal interactions (Rush, Barry, Hertel & Swain, 1974). Object relations schemata imply scripts for action wherein the images one has of oneself and another guide the directions that behaviour will take. In part, they determine the expectations each person has about the behaviour of the other and imply rules of conduct that govern interactive behaviour as it proceeds (Peterson, 1983).

6.2.4. **Scripts as cognitive representations**

Scripts represent a form of schema and, as such, a form of stereotyped cognitive representations of action episodes. Scripts are hypothesised cognitive and performative structures which organise an individual's comprehension of situations and guide his or her performance (Abelson, 1981). They relate to shared understandings of what typically occurs in

specific situations (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). A script is "a hypothesised cognitive structure that, when activated, organizes comprehension of event-based situations. In its weak sense, it is a bundle of inferences about the potential occurrence of a set of events and may be structurally similar to other schemata that do not deal with events. In its strong sense, it involves expectations about the order as well as the occurrence of events" (Abelson, 1981, p. 717). As stereotyped knowledge of routine activities, operationally defined as consensual agreement (Bower, Black & Turner, 1979), scripts deal with the individual's rules for predicting, interpreting, responding to, and controlling behaviour (Tomkins, 1979).

In their role as knowledge structures, scripts are similar to other schemata. They function to simplify and cloze elements of information provided by the environment, and they also act as interpretative frameworks. Rose and Serafica (1986) suggest that scripts influence the conduct of personal relationships by defining roles and establishing actions within them. Over time, relationships can modify scripts by influencing the participants' conceptions. As individuals link particular scenes by recalling or imagining them, acting upon them or feeling about them, so experiences may become psychologically magnified (Carlson, 1988).

Reed and Weinberg (1984) used a path analysis of interview responses to examine the sexual scripts of 301 college students. Using input variables of religiosity, fraternity or sorority affiliation, dating frequency and beliefs about the sexual experience of their close friends, they noted differential path relations on the basis of the availability of sexual scripts. For males, a sexual script was presumed to exist, and for engaged males and females a marital script existed; in the latter cases, the influence of friends was reduced, due to the individuals' withdrawal from friendship networks. In addition, the influence of the input variables

on the coital activities of these respondents was direct. For women who were not engaged, but going steady, the perceived behaviour of their friends was the exclusive mediator of the influences of the other input variables. In this case, only the close-friends variable had a direct effect on coital behaviour.

Scripts for self and other include role slots for the individuals participating in the interaction. They can be defined as "generalisations or theories about self and other in particular relational contexts that are used to guide the processing of social information" (Baldwin, 1992, p. 468). Script theorists advocate that an abstraction of the relationship is represented internally and thereby affects subsequent social perception. The interpersonal script defines a stereotyped relational pattern and has both declarative and procedural aspects. The declarative aspects include knowledge about the expected pattern of interaction and can be used to interpret social situations and interpersonal behaviour.

As procedural knowledge, multiple if-then contingencies can be organised into complete production systems which guide and plan behaviour and generate interpersonal expectations. An interpersonal script contains not only sequences and patterns of observable external behaviours, but also descriptions and inferences of internal states of self and other in interaction. "Included in an interpersonal script thus will be expectations about the thoughts, feelings, and goals of both self and other" (Baldwin, 1992, p. 468). Subsets of interpersonal scripts may also include metaperspectives and inferences about the other's evaluation of, and response to, one's behaviour.

6.2.5. Relational schemas, mental models and the 'we' system

An essential aspect of human existence is the formation and reformation of cognitive representations of self, much of which occurs within the context of real or imagined interactions with an audience (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991). As a hypothetical and hierarchically arranged concept, self-with-other assumes important functions, including summarising past experience, guiding present actions (especially interpersonal behaviour) and interpreting own and others' behaviour (especially that of interaction partners). Thus, the self-system can be expanded to include the 'we' dimension, three dynamic aspects of which are: (a) the experience of self; (b) the experience of the other, such as an attachment figure or friend; and (c) the experience of self with the other, or the 'we' (Blatt & Blass, 1990).

By recalling how he or she was in various social situations, an individual forms a basis for self-knowledge. However, critical elements of self-images are also formed of "how I should be", and "how I might be in the future" (Markus & Nurius, 1986). As with images of other people, self-images are internalised and encoded, and function to guide ongoing and future behaviour. Furthermore, beyond these two processural domains of affective and cognitive encodings of self and other, relationships are also internalised (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991).

As two individuals come to know, and to influence each other, a unique model of their specific relationship develops (Miller & Read, 1991; Baldwin, 1992). During the course of a relationship or during the course of an interaction, individuals develop mental models not only of their interaction pattern, but also of the relationship itself (Park, 1986). These mental models are causal models representing the characteristics of the person, including their goals,

plans, resources and beliefs - as well as the interplay of causal and goal-based relations between these aspects. As such, they can be used to simulate how the person might behave and so to predict and to explain behaviour (Read & Miller, 1989). Individuals entering a relationship make inferences about the likely goals, beliefs, plans and resources of the other. An individual's mental model of a partner - and of their unique relationship - is gradually developed by the individual, combining his or her perception of their two sets of goals, plans, resources, and beliefs. Some interconnections are incompatible, however, and it then becomes necessary to learn to understand and to explain motives, beliefs and feelings.

Relational schemas shape individuals' expectations about, and interpretations of, relational behaviour, although precisely how individuals extrapolate to new, never-before-encountered events remains somewhat obscure. Since a relational schema is a cognitive structure representing a person's views, interpretations and expectations about relationships, based on past experience, it may be hypothesised that individuals with well-defined scripts should be more able to generate multiple instances of specific behaviour.

Cathy's interpretation of the orange card in the projective procedure illustrated a relational script she had developed through a particular set of personal experiences: "The younger generation are forced to be there. You know how I know? We have the same situation when we go to my in-laws! The guy on the right - he doesn't want to be there. The girl is bored, too. The old people are doing what they usually do - munching away! The women at the stove are the middle generation here. They're OK, but they'd rather not be there. Everyone is busy eating, there's no communication. The food ritual is all-important, no-one's facing anyone else. No eye contact. It's very quiet. Just like my situation - very similar!"

A common assumption of social psychological theory is that interpersonal behaviour is mediated by structured cognitive

representations of self and others, interaction episodes, interpersonal roles and relationships, and group goals (Jones, 1983). Focusing more on cognition about relationships than on cognition about self and other in isolation, Baldwin (1992) considers that individuals' working models of their relationships function as cognitive maps to help them navigate their interpersonal worlds. These cognitive structures are assumed to include images of self and others, together with a script for an expected pattern of interaction based on generalisations from repeated, similar interpersonal experiences.

What experiences had contributed to the assumptions that retired interviewee, Marg, made about opposite-sex friendships? Why did she interpret them as being "difficult"? What relational events had helped to write the script she used to deal with such friendships? She recounted an illustrative interaction episode: "I was friendly with one male bowler - also retired. We used to joke a lot. He'd say, 'I haven't put you on my team today, because people might talk.' And I'd play along. I'd say, 'O.K., I understand.' Then one day, I dropped my bowl-case and we both stooped to get it and as I stood up, his hand deliberately brushed my breast. Why did he have to do that? He spoiled the friendship we had. That was it. The friendship just could not continue. Now I'm most careful - I keep men friends at arm's length. I'm very cautious."

Baldwin's (1992) relational-schema approach indicates conjoint schematicity (mutual association) between the three elements in relational schemas: self-schema, other-schema and the interpersonal script. All scripts include specification of the roles for members in an encounter (Abelson, 1981). Whereas person schemas "are structures of meaning that integrate knowledge about self and others" (Horowitz, 1991, p. 1), relational schemas contain a self schema for how the self is experienced in an interaction situation, a person schema for the partner in the interaction and a script for the expected interaction pattern (Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Baldwin, 1992).

In this sense, a script is an event schema comprised of

interaction expectations or the expected ordering of events in a situation; like schemas, scripts guide encoding, memory and inference and have implications for affective experiences in relationships (Berscheid, 1994). Scripts are thus representations of stereotyped sequences which provide information about behaviour, including its typical goals, concomitant roles, appropriate context and the conditions which must be fulfilled to constitute the script (Read & Miller, 1989). Such information facilitates the making of inferences and predictions about the behaviour and the likely goals of the participants.

Horowitz (1991) proposed the role-relationship model (RRM) as a conceptual tool for representing a set of inferred or hypothetical transactions between self and other. There are four types of RRM: dreaded (containing the worst fears and outcomes); desired (containing the most positive wishes and outcomes); adaptive compromise (which involves settling for less gratification than the desired RRM but does not result in severe conflict or extremely negative outcomes); and problematic compromise (which is associated with troublesome outcomes, but not as negative as those in the 'dread' category).

From this perspective, social reality for an individual is a product of the individual's experiences with others; these experiences are symbolised and represented in organised cognitive structures and, in turn, they regulate future interactions (Rudy & Merluzzi, 1984). Past relationships thus come to influence the interpretation of events in current, ongoing relationships and in possible future relationships. Models of past relationships may be connected to structures relevant to our current relationship that contribute to coherent representations of the partner (Miller & Read, 1991). One individual's behaviour is influenced by his or her cognition about the meaning of the other's behaviour. This behaviour, in turn, influences partner cognition,

perceptions of intentionality and subsequent responses.

6.3. ACCESSING SCHEMAS AND MENTAL MODELS

Because individuals may not have full access to their cognitions or might not be able to fully verbalise them, reported cognitions should not be taken as necessarily veracious representations of cognitive processes (Arias & Beach, 1987). Cognitive processes may thus best be assessed by spontaneous cognitions collected over time. Regardless, certain guidelines should be followed if the assessment of cognition is to be predictive of affect and behaviour. Cognitions and behaviours should also be measured at the same level of specificity and ought to be based on experience, since individuals who have vested interests in the topic are much more likely to act on existing attitudes (Sivacek & Crano, 1982).

It is also advisable to assess cognition in an appropriate context, relevant to the behaviour being investigated. Consideration should be given to the assessment of different aspects of underlying cognitive structure. Although redundant information might be yielded in the assessment of beliefs, attributions, spontaneous cognitions and perceptions, relationship schemas are difficult to assess without these elements. Further, consideration might be given to the assessment of not only cognitive products, but also of cognitive structure and cognitive processes, both of which are not easily accessible (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977).

Singer and Salovey's (1991) approach to assessment of schemas involves accessing an individual's conscious and most critical beliefs. Individuals' views of social ethics, norms or 'oughts', their personal goals with respect to these domains and lastly, the personal qualities or traits relevant to such prototypes are also relevant. Commonalities across domains are then established in order to assess the

relative maturity of the schemas. In this way, the relative predictive power of self schemas versus schemas about others is enumerated.

6.3.1. **Retrospective reports and accounts**

Hartley's (1991) Structural Analysis of Social Behavior Model (SASB) posits that, by looking at samples of interpersonal behaviour, both observed and recalled in the form of memories of past relationships, as well as by eliciting accounts of ongoing relationships, one can begin to construct, from bottom up, a mosaic-like picture of internalised schemas. Like schemata, accounts (as sets of thoughts and feelings) affect the future encoding of information, the anticipation and reconstruction of events and finally, interaction patterns themselves (Harvey, Agostinelli & Weber, 1989). By coding the content of past relationships as they are remembered, the process of transferal to new relationships can be examined. In this way, accounts are similar to expectations and are embedded within the matrices of interpersonal relationships.

Aiming at tapping the content and organisation of people's mental schemas for the social world, Pervin (1976) asked subjects to list certain situations in their lives. They were then asked to describe each situation, as well as how they felt about, and their characteristic behaviour in, each. These lists were collated, edited for redundancy and then subjects were asked to rate each situation on each attribute. The resulting matrix was factor-analysed for each subject, separately, and yielded basic dimensions in the perception of interpersonal situations. Arguably, a weakness in this method is its exclusive tapping of conscious and preconscious mental schemas, as it relies on the subject's awareness of what is important in his or her social world.

Although partners' retrospective accounts do not replicate

perfectly their original interactions, they do provide the partners' 'story' about their relationship and its meaning to them (Masheter & Harris, 1986). The ways that partners report those transitions retrospectively is relevant to their historical view of the transitions. Data from the time of transition may or may not reflect the ways people rationalise their behaviour, or the way they create the transitions through accounts (Duck & Sants, 1983).

As a method of self-report, "accounts are a valuable means of understanding the actors and events of a close relationship." They provide clues about individuals, the groups with which they are involved and the historical contexts surrounding them. "They also provide clues about the gamut of psychological processes attendant to the termination of close relationships - from penetrating rational analysis to unmitigated panic and fright" (Harvey, Weber, Galvin, Huszti & Garnick, 1986, p. 190).

Similar to scripts, accounts often have all the components of dramatic presentation: plot, characters, scenes and lines. They serve as summaries of personal history including actions, thoughts and feelings that stretch across time - and people - and that embody many levels of intensity and currents of direction. Accounts are formed to make retrospective sense out of what may have been beyond understanding when it happened. They often represent products of psychological processes: a search for understanding together with its accompanying assuaging, tranquillising effect. As such, accounts function as a soothing emotional release, serving as a catharsis to help purge such feelings as distress, anger, insecurity, confusion, loneliness, and depression. Furthermore, account making serves the drive for homeostasis in all physical and psychological systems.

Retrospection and account-making functioned to enable Cheryl to order and formalise her relational mental model of a past romance which had become a valued friendship:

"Craig was a serious boyfriend of mine - I was madly in love with him. I met him through my brother, and my friend, Peta, then met him through me. She was a very good friend of mine when I was 19 and at University. I could see a spark between the two of them and it worried me. I felt threatened - I didn't want to live if Craig wasn't part of my life. I decided to ignore it - to hope it would go away, but in the end it caused a lot of unpleasantness. In time, Craig's relationship with Peta grew stronger ... I didn't speak to Peta for some time. Eventually Craig and Peta got married. Then I met my husband and I realised what love really was. That changed everything. But before all this, Peta and I could share everything. We had a very close friendship and we have that again now. The funny thing is that we get on better now than ever before and we laugh about what happened in the past. It's a much more balanced friendship the four of us have now. I suppose we're older and wiser. My husband and Craig are buddies too; he doesn't perceive Craig as a threat. Craig and I are also great friends. As a foursome we get along well ... we spend weekends together and visit each other. We all talk about the old days and laugh. In a way, it has given depth to our friendship - helped us to understand each other better."

Helen, too, seemed to gain an understanding of her past friendships through her reflective accounts: "I had a very close friend - we were like sisters - but we're not in touch any more because now we have nothing in common. She's married to a pilot, lives in Rivonia (whereas we live on the East Rand) and she has no children. But we were very close right from grade one until I had my first son at the age of 22. She had become an air hostess and we just lost touch. Our lives were suddenly so different. She lives a very sophisticated life and I think she thinks, 'Oh no! Helen's living such an ordinary life - children, housework et cetera. So boring!' I have tried to renew the friendship several times but she's never picked up on it. I get heart-sore at times when I think of it. It seems so sad. But, I suppose we're so different now."

Accounts thus involve quests for understanding. In terms of friendship dissolution, they can involve and contribute to a sense of control over the emotional vicissitudes of separation. In addition, they can contribute a feeling of predictability about the future, thus serving a clarifying function. The development of accounts, based on the individual's perceptions and experiences with significant others, answers not only a need for assimilating these private aspects of experience, but also represents a vehicle for sharing hopes and fears intrinsic to close relationships

(Harvey et al., 1986). Accounts also serve a social-presentational function through their audience-specificity.

6.3.1.1. **Vagaries of autobiographical memory**

Although individuals are continually constructing scenes and, through psychological magnification, devising personal scripts in order to make sense of their lives, these scripts are not easily decoded (Carlson, 1988). The content of accounts is influenced by the accuracy and adequacy of the retrieval processes involved. Schank (1982) argues for the existence of multiply interconnected hierarchies composed of schemata that range from being very experience-specific to being very general and abstract. Thus, information derived from episodic or autobiographical memories is reprocessed, partitioned, cross-indexed and summarised into a variety of different schema categories, each preserving some or other aspect of the spatiotemporal-causal structures of experience in the external world. Some of these schemata order event representations into coordinated, longer event sequences, whilst others summarise information.

Current knowledge structures pertinent to a relationship have an effect on the retrieval from memory of information about the relationship. Moreover, "an individual's present construction of past relationship events, whether accurate or not, may reflect the meaning of those events to the individual and thus represent the individual's present orientation towards the relationship" (Berscheid, 1994, p. 93). Thus, the meaning individuals attribute to past events has implications for their future relational behaviour. Nigro and Neisser (1983) found that recent memories tend to relate to experiences from the individual's point of view at the time the event took place. Older memories, on the other hand, show evidence of reconstruction and the use of an outside observer's perspective, indicative of emotional distancing.

Emotional distancing and event reconstruction was evident in the incongruence between Eddie's and Pam's divergent accounts of an opposite-sex friendship Pam had kindled many years previous. Eddie recalled: "My wife was just good to him, this Edgar fellow - he was one of the priests - and I got a bit jealous, that's all. Just shows you what can happen at our age, hey! It's just that Pam is a bit nicer to men than I think she should be, that's all. Oh well." Questioned about her friendship with Edgar, Pam discounted her husband's concerns: "Edgar needed a friend - that's all. It was the beginning of our courtship - Eddie and I - and I think he felt unsure. I've always been involved with the church and that means helping people - men and women alike."

As research (Cantor & Mischel, 1977) has shown, individuals tend to use knowledge contained in their broader mental models to fill in the gaps in their memories with plausible but often inaccurate details. Individuals are likely to interpret an old partner's new behaviour in line with old constructs; indeed more frequently primed constructs become more accessible than other constructs. This chronic accessibility of person constructs within a relationship schema is a reason for the difficulty experienced in trying to change an individual's view of his or her partner in a long-term relationship (Berscheid, 1994) and contributes to the self-perpetuating quality of working models (Collins & Read, 1994) and to the resultant set ways of interpersonal interaction.

For this reason, Helen's frequent experiences of having had her friendships with men negatively affected through their making passes at her, resulted in her withdrawal from opposite sex friendships: "There was a time when I would rather have had men friends. In my teens, for instance, I'd have preferred men friends because women are so bitchy. But not now."

In terms of the automatic processing aspects of social cognition, an individual is more likely to notice and to remember behaviours that are relevant to his/her chronically accessible constructs or that are construed as negative social stimuli (Bargh, 1993). Chronically accessible con-

structs are presumably unique to each individual and develop from frequent and consistent experiences of social interaction. Although the nature of the constructs are more or less idiosyncratic, different individuals may employ psychological constructs which are similar to each other. In this case, two individuals may employ a similar construct but weigh the construct's importance differently and apply it differently (Rudy & Merluzzi, 1984).

6.4. IDENTIFICATION OF RELATIONAL SCHEMAS

There are several routes to pursue in identifying relational schemas or mental models, and the degree to which individuals use them. Hypothesised interpersonal patterns can be extracted from theoretical models, from observation of interpersonal behaviour or from consensus among observers. Alternatively, individuals can be asked directly whether certain patterns characterise their relationship experiences. These patterns can also be accessed indirectly through various personality measures or through analysis of free descriptions of interpersonal experience. An idiographic approach, pioneered by Kelly (1955), involves asking subjects to generate a list of significant relationships and then to rate these relationships on a number of characteristics. Using research methods based on this approach, sophisticated statistical analyses such as multidimensional scaling and hierarchical cluster analysis have been employed by Forgas (1982), Merluzzi (1991), and Ogilvie and Ashmore (1991) in collaboration with De Boeck and Rosenberg (1988).

Person schemas, too, are notoriously difficult to carry forward into valid and reliable methods of investigation (Horowitz, 1991). Part of the reason is that self schemas include current images and evaluations of self, as well as images of past selves (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984) and expectations of future selves. Nevertheless, several methods for studying the representation of information about self and

others have been developed: Kelly's (1955) Repertory Grid Technique, the mapping of interpersonal space (Rosenberg, 1977; Pervin, 1976), the Core Conflictual Relationship Theme (Horowitz, Luborsky & Popp, 1991), the Structural Analysis of Social Behaviour (Benjamin & Friedrich, 1991) and methods of self-with-other representation (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991).

6.5. SUMMATION, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a method of revealing mental models and relational schemas, accounts facilitate interpersonal understanding. As Berscheid (1994) contends, accounts, as present constructions of past events, are relevant in that they indicate the individual's present orientation to past or present relationships. They are, however, often inaccurate (Eddie) yet pervasive (Helen).

Accounts reveal an individual's schemas and mental models, formed through experience. However, the accessibility of schemas influences and biases perceptions - especially initial impressions. As Kobak and Hazan (1991) explain, and both Mary and Cheryl discovered, mental models continually need to be updated in order to remain accurate and realistic expectations if friendships (with both sexes) are to be sustained. Thus, schemas can be altered through experience - a process which, according to Bowlby (1988), is necessary for adaptive behaviour. Both Eddie's and Paula's accounts of past friendships presented evidence of the functionality of this process.

The data collected in the present study supported the hypothesis that schemas exist at various levels in a hierarchy. As an example, Tembi, Clinton and Ron each exhibited sets of over-lapping but conceptually distinct expectations, existing both on higher (hypothetical) and lower (concrete) levels, with those in the lower levels of the hierarchy being more directly linked to experience.

The respondents' mental models of sociality were also noted as being influenced by age and gender. For instance, greater congruence between prescriptive and descriptive expectations was noted within the female (as opposed to the male) participants' responses. Moreover, the mental models of the retired respondents appeared to be more rigid and conservative than those of the younger respondents, who approved of opposite-sex friendship more readily. Most respondents, regardless of age and gender, were noticeably low in schematicity as regards opposite-sex friendships, but comparatively high as regards family relationships.

Both cognitive perception and interpretation are rooted in experience (John), even though the relevant regulative schema may have been lost to awareness (Leigh). The presence of such schemas is likely to be experienced affectively, even if memory of the events has been lost. Within marital contexts, metaperception, attribution and rationalisation also play powerful roles in guiding behaviour, particularly as regards heterosocial friendships (Paula, Mary, Tembi). These individual elements tend to establish a chain of influence, affecting schemas, mental models, beliefs, cognitions and emotions. As such, they have a major influence on the construal of opposite-sex friendships (Ron, Charlotte).

In adulthood, the role of friend, and especially that of opposite-sex friend, is complicated by its juxtaposition with other roles - particularly those akin to the marital system. Role conflict can occur when an individual is required to assume multiple roles - such as those of friend and colleague - especially within competitive work contexts (Cheryl). Role conflict can also arise when two social roles are fused, as in the case when an opposite-sex friendship becomes a romance (Mary). However, relational metamorphosis does not necessarily result in conflict. The deciding factor seems to be whether or not the transition is mutually de-

sired, negotiated and agreed upon by both partners (as in Cheryl's case, where her friend later became her husband).

Schemas of sexuality in opposite-sex friendship are core elements in the processes involved in such relationships. Being able to control sexuality seems to facilitate the continuance of such friendships (Cheryl). Negative learning in terms of heterosocial relationships influences friendships in compatible directions, resulting, inter alia, in patterns of avoidance (Paula). Moreover, the defensive function of schemas can inhibit the activation or acknowledgement of sexuality in opposite-sex friendships, resulting in repression, denial or ambivalence (Jane). On the other hand, interlinking schemas of different relationship types - such as opposite-sex friendship and sexual or love relationships - can result in the formation of conceptually indistinct mental models. In Tembi's case, the indistinct boundaries between the mental models she held of 'friend' and 'lover' appeared to be blurred by the frequency with which these enduring schemas were activated. This led to her inability to separate the two conceptually different types of relationships, and resulted in her experiencing feelings of suspicion as regards opposite-sex friendships in general - and those of her husband, in particular.

In Leitner's (1985) terms, Tembi experienced the 'terrors' of emotion - a concept expanded upon in the next chapter, which focuses, in depth, on Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory and the associated principles and techniques of self-with-other representation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PERSONAL CONSTRUCT THEORY AND INTERPERSONAL REPRESENTATION

"In our endeavour to understand reality we are somewhat like a man trying to understand the mechanism of a closed watch. He sees the face and the moving hands, even hears its ticking, but he has no way of opening the case. If he is ingenious he may form some picture of a mechanism which could be responsible for all the things he observes, but he may never be quite sure his picture is the only one which could explain his observations. He will never be able to compare his picture with the real mechanism and he cannot even imagine the possibility or the meaning of such a comparison. But he certainly believes that, as his knowledge increases, his picture of reality will become simpler and simpler and he will explain a wider and wider range of his sensuous impressions. He may also believe in the existence of the ideal limit of knowledge and that it is approached by the human mind. He may call this ideal limit the objective truth."

(Einstein & Infeld, 1950, p. 33)

This chapter deals primarily with Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory, and the principles of constructive alternativism. Founded on these principles, and based on relational experiences, self-with-other representation, a major theme in the present study, is then explained, with emphasis being placed on aspects of interpretation and analysis.

7.1. PERSONAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF REALITY

Freudian theory cultivated the awareness of reality as being perceived on two levels, conscious and subconscious, with the interpretation of reality on both these levels being a dynamic process hinging on the stimulus, as well as on the knowledge and experience of the interpreter and his/her empathic qualities. Fundamentally, the way reality is interpreted depends on the individual's underlying psychological structure (mental models), his/her techniques of adapting to personal feelings and emotions and to external demands, and on both the manifest and latent contents of the stimuli. The interplay of these "personal and social demands raises

many problems in the mind of the individual, presents many questions, and in some instances gives rise to much conflict and anxiety" (Henry, 1956, p. 8).

Personality is, in essence, the psychological counterpart and residue of the individual's life history of experiences (Henry, 1956). The manifestation of an individual's feelings, values and conflicts is expressed indirectly through his/her evaluation of the social world. In this respect, behaviour is symptomatic of underlying characteristics of the personality. The component perspective on personality recognises that behaviour is a simultaneous function of the person, the situation and of their interaction. Ogilvie (1992) takes this perspective a step further and proposes that the individual creates meaning from both past and future subjective realities.

Although it may be that everyone constructs a highly personalised theory of reality, not consciously or deliberately, but spontaneously (Epstein, 1991), two competing world views capture the discrepancies between major but different theoretical standpoints. Psychoanalytically oriented theories lean in the direction of supporting the supposition that reality constructs the individual, whereas cognitive-social theorists are more likely to endorse the view that it is the individual who constructs reality (Ogilvie, 1992). According to the latter perspective, individuals, in their search for meaning, do not respond to their environment *per se*, but rather to their perceptions and interpretations of it (Kelly, 1955; Arias & Beach, 1987). The individual interprets reality to conform with his/her expectations of it. In essence, individuals see only what they want to see, and are capable of seeing. In addition, they respond to their personally defined reality in terms of their own feelings, values, expectations, attitudes and convictions, thereby screening, selecting and interpreting stimulations from outside.

An individual's theory of reality includes two major sub-theories, with inter-connecting propositions: a self theory and a world theory. These two sub-theories are loosely represented by the Personal Total and World Total domains in Hartmann's (1991) boundary theory. The most basic schemata in a personal theory of reality, known as postulates, represent the highest constructs in the hierarchy of a personal theory of reality. As one descends through the hierarchy, schemata become narrower and more closely related to direct experience. Lower-order constructs can readily change without affecting higher-order ones, thus making the system stable and flexible at the same time.

According to Epstein's (1991) cognitive-experiential self theory, experiential beliefs (which are not conscious) are either descriptive or motivational. Descriptive beliefs include those about what the self and the world are like. Motivational beliefs, on the other hand, exist at various levels of generality and complexity and include constructs such as values, goals and plans. Motivational beliefs are derived primarily from emotionally significant experiences. Whereas Kelly's (1955) theory of constructive alternativism assumes that the only purpose of a personal construct system is to understand the world for its own sake, Epstein's (1991) theory assumes that the function of the cognitive system is to make life as emotionally satisfying as possible, under the perceived circumstances.

Notwithstanding the intricacies of these two theoretical diversions, the contrusal of existential meaning is a significant and universal motivating force in human behaviour (Frankl, 1978; Maddi, 1970). The processes by which individuals gain knowledge about the behaviour they encounter in social interaction, and the ways in which they use this knowledge to guide their own behaviour, forms the very fabric of social cognitive perspectives on human behaviour (Snyder, Tanke & Berscheid, 1977). Individuals' perceptions

of meaning help them to make sense, order and coherence out of their existence (Reker, Peacock & Wong, 1987). It is this construal of meaning which is at the core of Kelly's (1955, 1963, 1970) personal construct theory.

7.2. PERSONAL CONSTRUCT THEORY

Social cognition involves making inferences about the construct systems of others in social situations (Adams-Webber, 1979). Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory is concerned with the constructions which individuals make of reality. Individuals do not passively observe the context in which they live; they actively construe their surroundings. Their construction of how the world is to be understood constitutes the totality of their psychological processes. Each individual has his/her own way of interpreting the world, his/her own expectations of it and his/her own hypotheses about it.

The fundamental assumption in personal construct theory is that the individual is actively trying to understand the world (Leitner, 1985). This understanding is tested by predicting future events; if the prediction is borne out, then the construct is validated; if not, the construct may be altered. "The basic undertone of man's personality is taken to be his method of making predictions about the changing environment and these 'constructs' are cognitive elements which act as yardsticks to measure and characterise the world, including those whom he meets" (Duck, 1973c, p. 2). It is these personal constructs which give each individual his individuality (Duck & Spencer, 1972). An individual's interpretations and hypotheses are not just reflective of deeper personality processes, but rather the fundamental elements of the personality itself.

Thus, for Kelly (1955), an individual's personality is his/her construct system. Kelly's (1955) central metaphor

of the scientist may be considered a proscription, rather than a description, of human nature (Walker, 1992). As incipient or lay scientists, individuals create theories about what other people are like and how they are predisposed to behave. The constructs which individuals use to construe other people, and the ways in which the constructs are hierarchically arranged and organised, reveal information about the individual's personality. Moreover, the constructs an individual applies to others are central items of self-evaluation. According to Kelly (1955), information about personality structure can be obtained by asking respondents to consider other individuals as objects of comparison. Moreover, consensual validation for one's view of the world and of interpersonal events is achieved by associating with those who have similar constructs (Kelly, 1955).

Enmeshed within Kelly's view of man as scientist is the individual's potential to put theories to the test, to venture beyond the obvious and to interpret reality not only as what is, but also what ought to be, or could be (Walker, 1992). Kellian theory formalises the structural aspects of personal perception in psychological terms (Landfield, 1977). Interpersonal relating is expressed most profoundly in Kelly's sociality corollary: "To the extent that one person construes the construction process of another, he may play a role in a process involving the other person" (Kelly, 1955, p. 95). A role is thus defined in terms of interpersonal acting based on the understanding of other individuals, rather than as a socially prescribed course of action. Core role constructs are an individual's most important constructs, his/her most defining experiences.

7.2.1. **Kellian 'roles'**

Unlike traditional conceptions of roles, Kelly's (1955) definition emphasises the understanding of the other per-

son's inner world to the extent that an individual construes the construction processes of another. Construing the organisation of an other's experience, in depth, enables the individual to establish a more extensive 'role' relationship with the other. Kelly's (1955) emphasis on construing the construction process, rather than just the constructs, of the other suggests not only that the individual's construing can change but also that one tends to understand an individual as a growing and evolving organism. In fact, an individual tends to construe the process of the other's construing, more than the content of his/her personal construct system. In this respect, core 'role' constructs govern the process of construing: "Core constructs are those which govern a person's maintenance processes - that is, those by which he maintains his identity and existence" (Kelly, 1955, p. 482). Thus, 'role' relationships also involve acting on the understanding of others.

From this perspective, 'roles' are ongoing patterns of behaviour that follow from a person's understanding of how the others associated with him, think or view reality. Role behaviour is regarded as an ongoing interactional process played out in the light of the partners' understanding of one another (Neimeyer, 1984). This understanding, represented as organised sets of bipolar constructs, is based on an implicit matrix of assumptions, expectations and requirements akin to intimate interpersonal contact. "An interpersonal construct is essentially a bipolar dimension of judgment, a cognitive 'tool' individuals use to construe people and social situations" (Zorn, 1995, p. 130).

In playing a 'role', one behaves according to what one believes another person thinks. In other words, "one's construction of his role must necessarily be validated in terms of the expectancies of the persons with respect to whom he construes his role" (Kelly, 1963, p. 178). Interpersonal intimacy is a reciprocity of extensive 'role' relationships

(Leitner, 1985). In general, deep and personal access to one's core role is allowed only once a bond of trust has been established. In conjunction with closeness, 'role' relationships also involve respecting the integrity and separateness of the other person - a simultaneous experience of closeness and distance.

7.2.1.1. **Validational fortunes of 'role' constructs**

In addition to having particular core constructs with which to understand reality, an individual also has constructs, or beliefs, which subsume the most important aspects of the external world and which, when invalidated, produce a feeling of threat. Similarly, fear is the awareness of an imminent incidental change in one's core structures. Kelly (1955) defines several emotions which are related to the invalidation or validation of constructs: anxiety, fear, threat, hostility and guilt - in Leitner's (1985) words, the 'terrors' of emotion.

Because it is impossible to know others totally, there is the likelihood of the invalidation of core constructs in a 'role' relationship and consequently, the experience of anxiety (Leitner, 1985), resulting from an inadequate or under-dimensionalised understanding of impending experience (Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985). In other words, anxiety results when individuals can no longer understand or predict one another. "We become anxious when we can only partially construe the events which we encounter and too many of their implications are obscure" (Bannister & Fransella, 1982, p. 32).

Similarly, guilt is an awareness of dislodgement of the self from one's core role structure, or from those core role constructs by which we evaluate the central aspects of our behaviour (Bannister & Fransella, 1982). Feelings of guilt or anxiety precipitate pressure to change the personal

construct system. The anticipation of such change, in itself, can be experienced in terms of fear and threat, depending on how major and comprehensive the modifications are. Threat and anxiety, which involve an awareness of the possibility of comprehensive change in one's core constructs, are major mechanisms which influence interpersonal understanding.

Too much threat translates into hostility, the unwillingness to alter a construct system even when it is invalidated (Leitner, 1985). For example, a wife whose core 'role' structure involves trusting her spouse is likely to feel threatened when she learns of his friendship with a woman at work; the invalidation evidence results from an inaccurate superordinate construction of her marital 'role' relations (Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985). "Instead of changing the personal construct system to fit one's experience, one tries to change the environment to fit one's personal construct system" (Leitner, 1985, p. 87). Hostility may easily be the consequence of intimacy, because deep 'role' relationships carry the potential for disrupting the foundations of personality. The awareness that one is acting against 'role' constructs is manifest as guilt.

If the negative emotions of 'role' relationships appear to be too overwhelming to an individual, and the relationship appears to be potentially invalidating of major aspects of the core personal construct system, the individual is likely to shun deep relationships. Role relating may thus be avoided when engaging in the 'role' is construed as being potentially devastating. The consequent role retreat can result in loneliness, meaningless, emptiness and guilt (Leitner, 1985).

Retired interviewee, Gail, described her husband's social isolation which suggested a pattern of retreat, possibly anchored in negative mental models regarding friendship, and in the consequent avoidance of friendship-roles: "My husband hasn't got friends of his

own. He says he's an island and that's the way he likes it. He has never said as much, but I think he might be able to get friendly with my brother's wife; if we lived closer, I think they might become friends. He'll never admit it, but I think he's afraid of getting too close to people, of becoming too friendly. He buries himself in his woodwork; he says he doesn't need anyone, but I think he gets lonely. All his previous friends have died, so now he's a loner. They were buddies. I think their death made him feel he didn't want to get close to anyone again."

Possibly, too, it was these 'terrors of emotion' (Leitner, 1985), expressed in fears of loss, that motivated so many of the retired participants in the present study, to avoid social intimacy. "There are some people here who make it known that they don't want friends," Mr Jensen had observed. "They say they won't be visiting anyone and they don't want anyone to visit them. They cut themselves off. Well, they look very unhappy to me."

7.2.1.2. **'Roles' and religion**

Beliefs about God are central to the personal construct system (Leitner, 1985). Certain fundamentalist and authoritarian religions allow for the global retreat from 'role' relationships: in contrast to the choice corollary of personal construct theory, the individual thus submits his/her choice-making exclusively to God.

Rosemary, a 50-year-old interviewee, had never married. She was a member of a fundamentalist Christian group and, by choice, had few friends outside of the church. Asked about her opposite-sex friendships within the group, she commented that the Lord had deemed her unfit to have such friends because He knew that she could not control her reactions to them. It did not worry her beyond the discomfort she experienced in terms of her friendships with the men at church. "However," she explained, "should the Lord wish me to relate to them more closely, He would show me how to go about it." Despite there being many male members in the congregation, Rosemary avoided all interaction with them, thus isolating herself from a large portion of the members -- and leaving herself with little in the way of deep 'role' relationships with the opposite sex.

7.2.1.3. **Roles and sexuality**

From the perspective of personal construct theory, sexuality

concerns the personal meaning of sex to the individual (Luria & Rose, 1979). Horowitz (1989) argues that individuals learn role-relationship models (schemas of self in interaction with another) and that they, in turn, shape the person's interpretation of particular interpersonal situations in order to form a working model of the interaction. An individual can use sex to express intimacy or to retreat from 'role' relationships. In the latter case, sex helps to define the relationship on solely sexual grounds and allows the participants to escape from the terrors associated with 'role' relating.

Partially-sighted interviewee, Linda, admitted to having always experienced difficulty in forming both sexual and platonic relationships with men. An active member of a Methodist church community, she met many young men but had difficulty sustaining her friendships with them. She faced two equally negative alternatives: becoming emotionally close to a man (role relating) and thus risking painful rejection - a terror of emotion in Leitner's (1985) terms - or alternatively, avoiding role-relating completely. Having initially decided on the first course of action, she became depressed and lonely as the men with whom she developed friendships avoided all but a superficial level of interaction with her. In Kellian terms, they resisted understanding her personal construct system or her processes of construing. Eventually, she started a friendship club, ostensibly to help other single persons within the church but also, she admitted, to help her to meet friends, particularly males. Published in a national Christian newspaper, her adverts invited contact "through telephone calls and letters only," rather than through meetings. Linda established many friendships this way, and so long as they were kept on a pen-friendship or telephone-friendship basis, she managed to sustain them over time. In this way, Linda avoided risking the 'terrors' of direct interpersonal relating, especially with people of the opposite sex. At the same time, she escaped the loneliness and emptiness associated with rejection.

A second illustration of retreat from role-relating in terms of opposite-sex friendship, is based on an interview with Dawn, aged 32 years. She had grown up in a home characterised by a hostile and domineering father and a submissive mother, who had submitted to her husband's demands and control, all her married life. Afraid of being controlled by men and of having to relinquish her identity (as she perceived her mother had done), Dawn became promiscuous at college. Her account of college life suggested that men had

been interested in her, not only because she was attractive, but also because she was intelligent and warm. Indeed, she felt that some of the college men were, in fact, wishing to relate to her in a non-sexual way (as she wished to relate to them), but that any friendship so established might compromise her femininity. She thus defined her cross-sex relationships exclusively in sexual terms, and so retained not only her independence and individuality, but also control over her relationships, before they could exert 'control' over her: her greatest dread.

7.2.1.4. **The role of values in personal construct theory**

Described by some researchers (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) as being bipolar, values provide standards against which to evaluate people, ideas and behaviour. At the innermost core of the total belief or value system, are self-cognitions (Rokeach, 1973). In fact, Horley (1991) proposes that the term 'value' is interchangeable with 'core construct' and 'ordinary belief' with 'peripheral construct'. Beliefs, like personal constructs, are ways of making sense of the world. Values may be appropriately expressed as construct pairs (free - enslaved; wealthy - poor), whereas beliefs are more typically expressed in propositional format.

Kelly (1955) equated value systems with "a comprehensive superordinate construction system" (p. 259). However, because his references to values and value systems are oblique, it is difficult to determine his exact view of the definitions and roles of the two concepts. Nonetheless, he describes core structures as providing a sense of personal identity and as such, as tied to a set of roles and relationships. Core role constructs in personal construct theory correspond to a subset of values and not to values in general. The core constructs which govern social interaction are called core role constructs. As such, they may be considered as interpersonal values (Horley, 1991). In Kelly's (1955) view, the "perception of one's apparent dislodgement from his core role structure constitutes the experience of guilt" (p. 502). Insofar as core construction

contains the expectations and behavioural strictures of others, it is the seat of individuals' ideals (Horley, 1991).

7.2.2. **Personal constructs**

A basic assumption underlying several theories of social cognition and behaviour is that individuals organise and summarise their knowledge about other individuals, interpersonal behaviours, traits and roles into cognitive structures (Jones, 1983). In turn, these cognitive structures are hypothesised to shape the perception, encoding and interpretation of future inputs from those domains. Cognitive representation, and its inherent conceptual frameworks or personal theories, is thought to be inferable from judgments about these domains. Duck (1973b) describes constructs as cognitive dimensions of conceptualisation, employed by individuals in the meaningful interpretation of their relationships.

As basic structural and process units, personal constructs are ways of feeling, thinking, knowing, valuing and behaving. They are described by Kelly (1955) as an awareness of how two things are alike in a way that differentiates them from a third. "Events do not tell us what to do, nor do they carry their meanings engraved on their backs for us to discover. For better or for worse we ourselves create the only meanings they will ever convey during our lifetime" (Kelly, 1970, p. 3). The channel through which we learn about the nature of personal meaning is the personal construct (Epting, Probert & Pittman, 1993).

Meanings are represented in the form of contrasts, although these bipolar and dichotomous dimensions do not necessarily stand in opposition to one another. Constructs serve many purposes: they may indicate conflicts, values, parameters of choice within certain contexts, and indications of

misunderstandings of self or other (Landfield & Epting, 1987). Kelly (1955) emphasises the essential duality, complementarity, antagonism and contrasting nature of the human process. The dichotomy represents a way of describing and explaining what the nature of meaning is like. Moreover, meaning is organised so that the psychological nature of understanding becomes clear only when one considers both sides of the dichotomy. By the same token, a unity or complementarity exists within a significant polarity of awareness.

"A person's construction system is continually in a state of flux" (Kelly, 1963, p. 83). Two people can be involved in the same event, but experience them differently. Because they construe them differently, they anticipate them differently and thus behave differently. An individual who is to play a constructive role in a social process with another person does not need to construe things in a similar way to the other person. However, he does need to effectively construe the other person's outlook. Mutual adjustment to each other's viewpoint occurs because, to a certain extent, our construction system subsumes the construction systems of others and theirs, to some extent, subsume ours.

Individuals erect a system of constructs with which to represent and understand experience. The dimensionality of personal constructions stretches back into "highly complex systems of experiencing, systems that we may never completely contain or comprehend" (Landfield & Epting, 1987). As an abstraction, a construct is a way in which some things are construed as being alike and yet different from others. In describing self or others, individuals are essentially stating the coordinate axes with reference to which they must plot their own behaviour; in other words, they are stating their personal construct system (Kelly, 1963). "As one construes other people, he formulates the

construction system which governs his own behaviour" (Kelly, 1963, p. 133). Individuals are not likely to express their whole construction systems; indeed, many constructs have no symbols. Constructs are channels in which mental processes run; "controls that one places upon life - the life within him as well as the life which is external to him" (Kelly, 1963, p. 126). Constructs represent means of operationalising individuals' interpretative outlooks.

Personal constructs represent a dimensional control system in which one's roles are played out or readjusted. The constructs one forms are constructs of trend or movement perceived within a context of elements. This permits prediction based on an if-then-but-not quality (Kelly, 1963). To have focused meaning, the prediction must have a differential quality and so be able to distinguish between what will - and what will not - occur. Because of this characteristic, predictions always have a positive expectation and a negative forecast. Thus, personal constructs are synonymous with "funds of expectations" with which we structure our experience (Rowe, 1973, p. 11).

Both accounts and personal constructs are related to specific interpersonal expectations. If a husband, for example, develops a set of personal constructs about his wife, focusing on her kindness and warmth, it is likely that he would be able to recount illustrative stories (accounts) containing these themes. This construct system then permits him to anticipate his wife's future, or most likely, behaviour within their relationship. These representative accounts suggest the ways he construes her and forms evidence for the development of his constructs about her.

Clinton, for instance, applied the following self-generated constructs to the feelings he typically experienced with his wife: 'secure', 'confident', 'trusting', 'sexually attracted', 'sincere', 'steadfast', 'caring', 'close' and 'in control' (figure 11). When he was presented with a blank card as part of the projective procedure in the present study, and asked to

imagine a scene which included himself, his wife and an opposite-sex friend of hers, he commented: "If we got together in that situation ... it would be with someone we see regularly, not a casual meeting. And it would be a home meal - definitely." Would there be any latent interpersonal difficulties in the situation so described? "No! there wouldn't be problems even at a later stage. You see, my relationship with Linda is the central force, that's all that counts and so the others wouldn't matter. Anyway, we wouldn't be involved in this type of scene - it just wouldn't happen." At this point in the interview, Clinton seemed to become annoyed and started shuffling. "Jees, man!" he exclaimed. "If there was any difficulty in a situation like that, it would come from me. Linda has no problem with my friends - she even reminded me about my interview with you today. Now if she said she was going to some man's house - wow, no, I wouldn't be happy. Not because of her, but because of the men - I wouldn't trust them! I just wouldn't be happy about that. She's such a super person" (smiling).

The 'secure', 'trusting' marital relationship which Clinton construed as existing between himself and his wife, had influenced the way in which he interpreted the hypothetical scenario. In an effort to remain 'in control', he first denied such a situation could occur and then, as he reconsidered its possibility, he grew uncomfortable (shuffling in his seat) and then angry ("Jees man!"). He seemed threatened by the image he had conjured up, and by the subsequent lack of control he felt as he cathartically experienced the scenario. Finally, he came to terms with the evocation, and, with the personal reminder that his wife was "such a super person," smiled - so indicating the subsidence of his feelings of discomfort as he gained a sense of control over the image.

7.2.3. **The relational system and constructive alternativism**

"All thinking is based, in part, on prior convictions" (Kelly, 1963, p. 6). As an anticipatory rather than reactive system, Kelly's (1963) theory of constructive alternativism emphasises the creative capacity of individuals to represent the environment, rather than to simply respond to it. The meaning individuals ascribe to an event is anchored in the event's antecedents and consequences (Kelly, 1970). Events in consciousness are available only through processes of restructuring, reinterpreting and modification. In effect, they are always theories about events. In Kelly's (1955) work, constructive alternativism emphasises two themes: the

inner activity of human systems and the element of choice (Tyler, 1992). Because constructs may be conceptualised as patterns or systems of perception, interpretation depends on the particular system employed.

Congruent with systemic concepts of organisation and interaction, personal constructs (like schemas) are hierarchically organised for the purpose of structuring interpersonal perception. Clusters or concatenations of constructs function together to facilitate perception. Loosening of the construct system leads to varying predictions (Kelly, 1955), causing fragmentation or, from a systemic view, disengagement. On the other hand, constructs can be so closely connected that the construct system becomes unidimensional, or enmeshed.

Adams-Webber (1970) makes the point that the more unidimensional the structure of an individual's system, the fewer options he has for interpretation. The more closely related the constituents of a system are, the more the constructions will fit the logical constraints on a single set of construct relationships. In terms of systems theory, this implies that extreme differentiation of the system results in disintegration whereas extreme integration results in a unidimensional system. Unidimensional systems, in turn, require superordinate constructs to become more permeable in order to allow alternatives to emerge (Tyler, 1992). Where a system is too fragmented, the constructs need to be integrated into a system of hierarchies. The normal course of development of personal construct systems involves the progressive differentiation of the system into relatively independent, internally organised subsystems. Concomitantly, there is an increasing functional integration of subsystems within the overall systemic network (Adams-Webber, 1970).

As devices which aid interpersonal processes within

relationship systems, constructs play a major and dynamic role. Duck (1973b) explains that, within the context of their relationships, individuals modify their interpersonal constructs as the relationship progresses. Initially, in the acquaintance phase of a relationship, constructs tend to be physicalistic and as such, relatively concrete. As disclosure increases, the relationship deepens and, possibly in order to maximise the meaningfulness of the relationship, these constructs are eschewed in preference for progressively more abstract psychological inferences.

7.2.4. **Fundamental postulates and corollaries**

Kelly (1955) advances the central tenets of personal construct theory by using one fundamental postulate and 11 elaborative corollaries. The fundamental postulate states:

"A person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events" (Kelly, 1955, p. 46).

Translated, this postulate stipulates that how an individual predicts future occurrences determines his/her behaviour. The predictive and motivational features intrinsic to cognitive theory are conveyed in the phrase 'anticipates events': like scientists, individuals seek prediction of reality to facilitate the anticipation of events affecting their lives (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1976). This anticipation is carried out through a unique template of personal constructs. These constructs, in turn, "are used for predictions of things to come and the world keeps rolling along and revealing these predictions to be either correct or misleading. This fact provides the basis for revision of constructs and, eventually, of whole construction systems" (Kelly, 1955, p. 14). Thus, the individual reacts to the world through a system of feedback and anticipation.

Eleven fundamental postulates encapsulate personal construct theory:

1. **Construction corollary:** A person anticipates events by construing their replications.

2. **Individuality corollary:** Persons differ from each other in their construction of events.

This corollary refers to the uniqueness of the models which individuals construct, despite there being resemblances between them.

3. **Organisation corollary:** Each person characteristically evolves, for his/her convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs.

4. **Dichotomy corollary:** A person's construction system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs.

In other words, every description or prediction, explicitly or implicitly, has a contrast-pole (Ryle, 1975).

5. **Choice corollary:** A person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomised construct through which he anticipates the greater possibility for extension and definition of his/her system.

The choice corollary embodies the assumption of man as actively engaged in acting on the world. Kelly (1955) thus defines the personal construct as both what is and what is not. The paradox is that first, the individual chooses the alternative within a construct dimension that better defines and extends the system. Second, the person functions in a way that can obscure the alternative to his/her choice.

6. **Range corollary:** A construct is convenient for the anticipation of a finite range of events only.

A given construct can be used appropriately to construe only a limited range of elements; words label the poles of constructs, but are not the constructs themselves (Ryle, 1975).

7. **Experience corollary:** A person's construction system varies as he successively construes the replications of events.

8. **Modulation corollary:** The variation in a person's construction system is limited by the permeability of the constructs within whose ranges of convenience the variants lie.

9. **Fragmentation corollary:** A person may successively employ a variety of construction subsystems which are inferentially incompatible with each other.

This corollary accounts for the fact that individuals can hold beliefs which are not compatible with each other.

10. **Commonality corollary:** To the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his/her psychological processes are similar to those of the other person.

Thus, similar personalities result from similar construction processes. This corollary suggests that social interaction consists mostly of one individual trying to understand how another perceives and interprets his/her environment (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1976).

11. **Sociality corollary:** To the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another, he may play

a role in a social process involving the other person.

In other words, it is not enough merely to construe another's behaviour; it is necessary to construe his/her construction processes, to have some grasp of the rules by which he is operating, or some idea of what he thinks is happening (Duck, 1973b).

7.3. THE ROLE CONSTRUCT REPERTORY TEST

Kelly (1955) developed the Role Construct Repertory Test in order to identify the significant constructs an individual uses to construe people in his/her life. The Rep Test also has diagnostic potential, enabling therapists to understand a client's construct system and the way in which he employs it. Many forms of the Rep Test have been developed, based on one traditional procedure, wherein the subject is asked to write the names (termed 'figures') of persons who best fit each of a list of role definitions (for example, 'brother', 'intelligent person' and 'disliked teacher'). Presented with three of the names, the subject suggests a way in which two of them are alike, but different from a third. This procedure is repeated with several other triads, with the aim of determining how the subject categorises and differentiates the individuals. The end result is a sample of the subject's personal construct system and of the way it is used. The analysis of the subject's construct system may be based on several factors including the number and variety of constructs elicited, the substance and tone of the constructs, the interrelationships between the constructs, and their characteristics such as permeability, looseness and communicability.

7.3.1. Assumptions germane to construct elicitation

The following assumptions concern the elicitation of constructs via the Rep Test:

i) **Permeability of constructs elicited**

A construct is permeable when it is open to the addition of new elements, beyond those explicitly formed. The role titles used in the Rep Test represent individuals with whom the subject has a measure of interpersonal understanding. This, in turn, provides a context of elements out of which the constructs governing the individual's own role take shape (Kelly, 1955). These constructs need to be sufficiently permeable to permit him/her to add new figures to their contexts and so to provide an outline for anticipating the part he/she is to play.

ii) **Elicitation of pre-existing constructs**

Although there might be some new developments in the subject's constructs, if the test is to be useful, it must be assumed that there is a degree of permanence in the elicitation of the constructs.

iii) **Representativeness of new elements**

If the test is to indicate how subjects develop their roles in the light of their understanding of others, the people listed in the test must be sufficiently representative of all those to whom the subjects might relate their self-constructed role.

iv) **Construction systems of element figures**

The test assumes that a usable number of the constructs elicited by it do represent the subject's (accurate, incomplete or even preposterous) understanding of the way others view reality. So long as it is the basis of real social interaction with the others, it is indeed related to his/her role construct system.

v) **Construct role regnancy**

In the unlikely event of subjects dissociating their own identity from the figures, or failing to organise their own behaviour under the constructs elicited with regard to the figures in the test, the constructs cannot be considered as role constructs.

vi) **Functional communicability of constructs**

It is presumed that the words that subjects use in naming their constructs - and the explanations they supply - are adequate in providing some practical understanding of the way they are organising the elements in the test. In addition, the skill of the tester counts.

Landfield and Epting (1987) list a further set of assumptions:

i) Construct dimensions may be verbalised or unverb-
balised expressions of contrast.

ii) Personal constructs often reflect the concerns and values of one's past and current cultural milieu. Vital aspects of self-construction can reflect our interpretations of the ways in which individuals have construed us.

iii) Personal constructs and their contrasts do not necessarily follow the principles of semantic logic. Personal logic does not always conform to arbitrary definitions.

For instance, a degree of logic transgression seemed to be present in Charlotte's list of bipolar constructs concerning well-being:

Being a friend - having no friends

Having friends - having no friends

Although 'being a friend' and 'having friends' are semantically different concepts, Charlotte construed 'having no friends' as being the contrasting construct in both cases. Questioned about it, she explained that in the first instance, having no friends was to be taken to mean having no friends to whom she could be a friend - a concept essentially different from that indicated in the second bipolar item.

iv) Each pole of a personal construct tends to enhance the meaning of, and to define, the opposite pole.

v) The meaning of a construct symbol can vary, both within and across individuals. No common language exists that can be uniformly employed at the individual level.

Although 'not together' was a construct generated by Helen, she expressed uncertainty about its meaning when she was required to apply it to her feelings within the context of her different relationships with friends. She queried, "Does 'not together' mean 'not together with' or 'lost my marbles'?"

vi) Constructs may be stated in ways that communicate little of their meaning. Slang and colloquialisms as well as eccentric verbalisation and puzzling constructions may convey confusing meaning to interpreters.

For instance, Cheryl was asked to elaborate on the meaning of one of the idiosyncratic constructs she used: 'chilled-out' (relaxed).

vii) Verbalised constructs that appear to be different may be shown to be highly related in application. Personal motivations tend to link constructs that might not seem overtly connected.

viii) A personal construct may have components of feeling, valuing and behaving. Landfield and Epting (1987) point out that the term 'friendship' could be associated with a 'warmth of feeling' and lead to certain specific behaviours: approaching, sharing, disclosing and sympathising.

ix) At any stage, either the feeling, valuing or behaving component of a construct can predominate.

Whereas a behavioural theme was predominate in Jane's list of constructs ('talkative', 'energetic', 'organised'), Ann's construct list included almost no reference to behavioural components. Instead, she included constructs such as 'warm', 'neglected', 'unsure', 'tense' and 'stifled' - all within the affect domain. John's construct list also included an affective, rather than behavioural, theme. In addition, many of his constructs were evaluative by nature: 'trustworthy', 'introverted', 'unrecognised' and 'open-minded'.

x) A personal construct may vary in importance for the individual along a dimension extending from core to peripheral interest, concern and value.

xi) A personal construct may vary in importance according to the context of application.

xii) Constructs applied to others reveals the parameters of the subject's own behaviour. Any personal construct belongs first to the individual and is only then applicable to others.

xiii) One's concept of self may be construed along the same axes the person uses in describing others. Overused constructs which are applied to many others but not to self, might indicate guilt, anxiety or threat to the individual's ego.

xiv) Verbalised constructs can point to the person's immediate concerns, conflict areas and important contexts of decision making.

Thus, consumed by strong feelings of conflict, depression and confusion, Mary produced a list of constructs which revealed a deeply negative theme: 'serious', 'difficult', 'tense', 'depressed', 'in a dark mood', 'angry', 'removed' and 'sneaky' (see figure 22). Similarly, the negative poles of the constructs she generated to describe her conceptualisation of well-being (Appendix K1) included: 'insecure/unsure/worried', 'unhappy/sad', 'empty',

'unloved', 'alone/cold/one against the world', 'angry', 'unstable/thrown about', 'tired/weak' and 'confused'.

xv) The personal construct, as both likeness and difference, ties together the processes of integration, differentiation and generalisation to the future. Integration relates to abstracting from familiar events; generalisation is used in the context of abstracting across familiar and unfamiliar events.

7.3.1.1. **Repression and denial**

Indirect evidence of the operation of repression and denial is provided by the subject's choice, or non-choice, and use, or non-use, of constructs (Ryle, 1975). Some subjects have difficulty in providing constructs to do with feeling; others produce those to do with positive feeling only. Some subjects include negatively charged constructs but do not use them in a discriminating way. This is common in relation to sexual and angry feelings, where subjects may rate all elements as equally low on aggression or sexuality (Ryle, 1975). This tendency is reflected in the data from the grid analysis where the constructs concerned account for a small proportion of the total variance. The range of constructs, and the power of the constructs used, may yield valuable information. The percentage of all the variance in element distribution accounted for by a given construct represents the degree to which it is an important construct in discriminating between elements. In addition, relationships between constructs provide insight into an individual's assumptions and may indicate constructs of which the individual is unaware.

Although Eddie generated a list of 28 constructs to describe both the individuals and the feelings he had experienced in interpersonal situations, he used only 2 of them to describe his feelings within specific relationships. (In addition to the 2 self-generated constructs, he used 5 of the constructs supplied to him.) The substantial bank of residual constructs

so created illustrated a lack of differentiation of affect experienced by him within his relationships - mostly with friends (see figure 9).

Although this pattern could suggest that Eddie was not in touch with his feelings, or at least not adept at analysing and labelling them, it could also indicate repression and denial. The latter explanation seems more consistent with the patterns of social withdrawal reflected in Eddie's comments: "I was - well am - a member of the Alcoholics Anonymous. I became a member at the age of 31. Part of the help they give you is to get you to go out and do things ... join committees. But I overdid it. That strained my marriage. We were committee people - both of us - but we've had rebuffs and now we're less social."

7.3.1.2. **Fantasy**

The existence of fantasy in construct sets may be suspected wherever particular attributes are linked with others not normally so linked or where the movement of self in the construct space implies specific costs to the self (Ryle, 1975).

Clinton's responses also suggested that fantasy may be reflected in the inappropriate or fanciful application of constructs to individuals with whom one has little or no personal experience. Responding to the research instruction to think hypothetically about a person of the opposite sex whom he wouldn't mind making a friend of, he chose 'Penny'. Although it transpired that he had never met 'Penny', whom he described as a "beautiful model (he'd seen) on television over the years," he selected the following constructs as descriptive of his feelings when he was 'with' her: 'secure', 'confident', 'trusting', 'sexually attracted', 'sincere', 'caring' and 'sentimental'. Construing in a fantasy world indeed, or, to use Clinton's own words, "Wishful thinking!"

7.4. **KELLIAN THEORY AND DYADIC RELATIONSHIPS**

Most of the scientific research involving Kelly's theory seems to have been either theoretical (Walker, 1992; Horley, 1991) or evaluative, in terms of appropriateness of, or alternatives for, construct elicitation procedures (Epting, Suchman, & Nickeson, 1971; Epting, Probert & Pittman, 1993).

Other areas which have received empirical attention include general studies of reliability and validity (Bavelas, Chan, & Guthrie, 1976), the examination of construct-usefulness in the clinical setting (Ryle & Breen, 1972; Ryle & Lunghi, 1979), and the assessment of construct-suitability for the study of object relations (Rowe, 1973).

Although much attention has focused on the nature and content of individual construct systems, Kelly's (1955) theory has also been applied successfully in other domains to: assess the relationship between self-disclosure and personal constructs (Neimeyer, Banikiotes & Ianni, 1979); provide information about interpersonal perceptions (Higgins, King & Mavin, 1982; Benesch & Page, 1989; Byrne & Blaylock, 1963), assess attitude similarity (Levinger & Breedlove, 1966); examine dysfunctional marital relationships (Ryle & Breen, 1972); monitor friendship deterioration (Duck, 1988; Duck & Spencer, 1972; Duck & Allison, 1978); assess the psychological features of individual group members and changes occurring in persons having undergone therapy (Watson, 1970), and to investigate the psychological aspects of patients showing regular and profound mood changes (Rowe, 1973). Recently, too, cognitive models of behaviour, such as Kelly's, have shifted research emphasis from individual to interpersonal appraisal processes (Holmes & Boon, 1990).

7.4.1. Self-with-other as a unit of analysis

A basic premise in Kelly's (1955) theory is that the constructs which individuals employ in construing other people, and the manner in which they are hierarchically arranged, have implications for the respondent's own personality. "In other words, it is assumed that the constructs applied to others are also central items of self-evaluation" (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991, p. 285). The self-with-other unit of analysis captures a similar, but

essentially different, aspect of relational schemas: self-other interactions or experiences.

In ascertaining the properties of relational and self schemas, it is important to consider the definitions and appraisals of particular situations or individuals (other-schemas); the valences attached to particular situations; the conscious reports of expectations and intentions with regard to particular situations and individuals (alternatively, our estimate of their components if we believe they are outside of awareness); the present valences or hierarchical structure of the intentions; and the perceptions of traits, abilities and potentialities in a given domain (Singer & Salovey, 1991). Likewise, it is necessary to acknowledge the value of systematic evaluation of the range, variety and hierarchical structure of self schemas.

Ogilvie and Ashmore (1991) scrutinised the constructions of individuals' internal representations of interactions with specific people. The unit of analysis they employed was "self-with-other", a concept explored by several others (Mitchell, 1988; Modell, 1984; Atwood & Stolorow, 1984), and which refers to a structured set of thoughts and feelings about self when with others. The concept also has certain similarities with Hermans, Kempen and Van Loon's (1992) conceptualisation of the self as being dialogical by nature, "a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous *I* positions in an imaginal landscape" (p. 28).

The 'self-with-other' conceptualisation results from individuals' interactions with others, during which, codes are internalised, both on conscious and unconscious levels. These codes include propositional/verbal (I am friendly), affective/emotional (feelings of comfort and interest) and behavioural/motor (speaking in a quiet voice) components. "Mental representations of past self-with-other experiences

serve as templates that offer guidance regarding how to be, how not to be, and what to anticipate in subsequent episodes with a particular significant other" (Ogilvie & Fleming, in press).

Self-with-other units may be combined into groupings, or self-with-other constellations which, in turn, are organised into an overall structure. Ashmore and Ogilvie (1992) point out that an individual does not create only discrete self-with-specific-other units. He/she also builds up a more articulated, or differentiated, and integrated structure of self-with-others by grouping specific self-withs together. These are then organised into a more complex representation with cognitive/affective links among all the self-with units. Such self-with-other structures are both categorically and hierarchically arranged, in ways rather similar to the propositional networks of memory (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Ogilvie and Ashmore's (1992) model is based on the premise that the formation of cognitive representations of one's self occurs in the context of real or imagined interactions with an audience. Individuals recall how they were in various situations and this forms the basis of self-knowledge. Self-images and images of other people are internalised and mentally arranged; they then serve as guides to ongoing and future behaviour. The model goes beyond the two dimensions of affective and cognitive encoding to declare that individuals internalise the whole of their relationships. In other words, "we not only internalize and mentally represent ourselves and others; we also form images of what we are like and how we feel when we are with specific other people" (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991, p. 286). The variability of self-experience may be unique to the individual or specific to context and is influenced by situational norms and cultural prescriptions.

Ogilvie and Ashmore's (1991) model shares similarities with Tomkin's (1979) concept of 'scenes' (idealised, affect-laden happenings which are actively constructed) as contained in his script theory. A scene is a 'happening' that minimally includes one affect and one object of that affect. It is a composite image extracted from a pattern of multiply recurring events involving self, an affect and another person. A scene is formed from an average of repeated self-with-specific-other experiences. Consequently, it can depict a self-with-other relationship that never happened, just as the generalised scene depicts it. Mostly, scenes of self-with-other units rest beneath consciousness and are powerful motivators of behaviour. We strive to magnify a family of safety-related scenes by seeking ways to re-enact them (Tomkins, 1987). By the same token, we are motivated to avoid recreating anxiety-related scenes in which we have experienced discomfort and/or insecurity. In accordance with families of internalised scenes, important elements of scenes are scripts, which contain rules for enhancing, creating, interpreting, responding to, controlling, defending against or modifying our construal of external reality (Ogilvie & Ashmore, 1991; Ogilvie & Fleming, in press).

Ogilvie and Ashmore (1991) accept that internalised self-with-other representations which are encoded in childhood form the foundation for later self-with-other experiences. Just as personal constructs are components of an interlocking construct system, so self-with-other representations (SWORs) are organised into an overall system of representations, unique for each of an individual's primary relationships (Ogilvie & Fleming, in press). Through similarity of self-experience, the individual develops constellations or clusters of representations. Referring to Sullivan's (1953) concept of 'dynamisms', Ogilvie and Fleming (in press) consider that a useful way to conceptualise the constellations or representations so

created is as patterns of energy transformation, triggered in the presence of cues associated with their enactment. These building blocks inform individuals how to interpret events, what to feel during different interactions and how to behave in various self-with-other episodes. Despite this, psychologically healthy individuals do not simply attach new relationships onto existing constellations of experience. Growth in this respect involves updating, modifying, regrouping and transforming earlier representations in order to make them more congruent with the realities of present interactive experience.

Addressing the question of how individuals record one self-with-other experience as being similar to another, Ogilvie and Fleming (in press) refer to Tomkins's (1987, 1979) proposal that innate affects serve as primary filters for sorting, linking and coassembling 'scenes' according to convergences of in-common affects or blendings of affects. Prominent affects are those which have been magnified or accentuated during critical - and probably repeated - episodes or scenes in childhood, thus forming scripts. Experiences and contexts relating to attachment, for instance, might magnify certain affects.

For instance, a child who feels neglected or ignored by his parents, might learn that getting into trouble with his parents and even getting punished is at least getting attention - albeit 'bad publicity'. Through repeated experiences, the child develops a script of behaviour whereby he comes to invite attention through bad behaviour, followed by parental attention in the form of corporal punishment. Based on Tomkins' theory, Ogilvie and Fleming (in press) suggest that, after a script becomes an effective strategy for dealing with a magnified set of scenes, a shift can eventually take place: the well-rehearsed script increasingly determines the scenes to which a person is drawn, and how such scenes are interpreted.

This theoretical conjecture might explain both Lesley's and Mary's histories of abusive marriages: two in both cases. Why was it that both women repeatedly gravitated to relationships with men who were physically abusive? Possibly, their well-rehearsed scripts, revolving around ways of dealing with spousal abuse provided comfort, in a paradoxical fashion, by virtue of their accessibility.

Such self-defeating behaviour might result when affective experiences, even those which are negative, provide a certain degree of comfort in that scripts are available for knowing what to do when the abusive behaviour arises (Ogilvie & Fleming, in press; Tomkins, 1987). The scenes become associated with a set of rules of conduct and affect management which, in turn, become integral to the individual's sense of self.

7.4.1.1. **Analysing self-with-other representations**

Based on the theoretical background to self-with-other representation, De Boeck and Rosenberg (1988) developed HICLAS as a statistical method of graphically representing and analysing the data. Because self-with-other representation is a major theme in the present thesis (especially within the following two chapters), an in-depth and systematic explanation of the principles of interpretation is set out below, as applied to Lesley's data:

The application of HICLAS to Lesley's ratings of self-with-others (more specifically, self-with same- and opposite-sex friends, self-with-spouses, as well as her concept of 'dreaded social self' and 'ideal social self') produced the graphic representation (SWOR) in figure 2. The features (adjectives and adjectival phrases) and targets (names) which have been underlined are those supplied by the researcher; all others were generated by Lesley. HICLAS computes a 'goodness-of-fit' score for every target and every feature. These indices indicate how well or poorly each item fits its parent class. In figure 2, the goodness-of-fit scores are shown in parentheses. The horizontal lines of asterisks bisecting the SWORs separate the classes of target people (top portion) from classes of

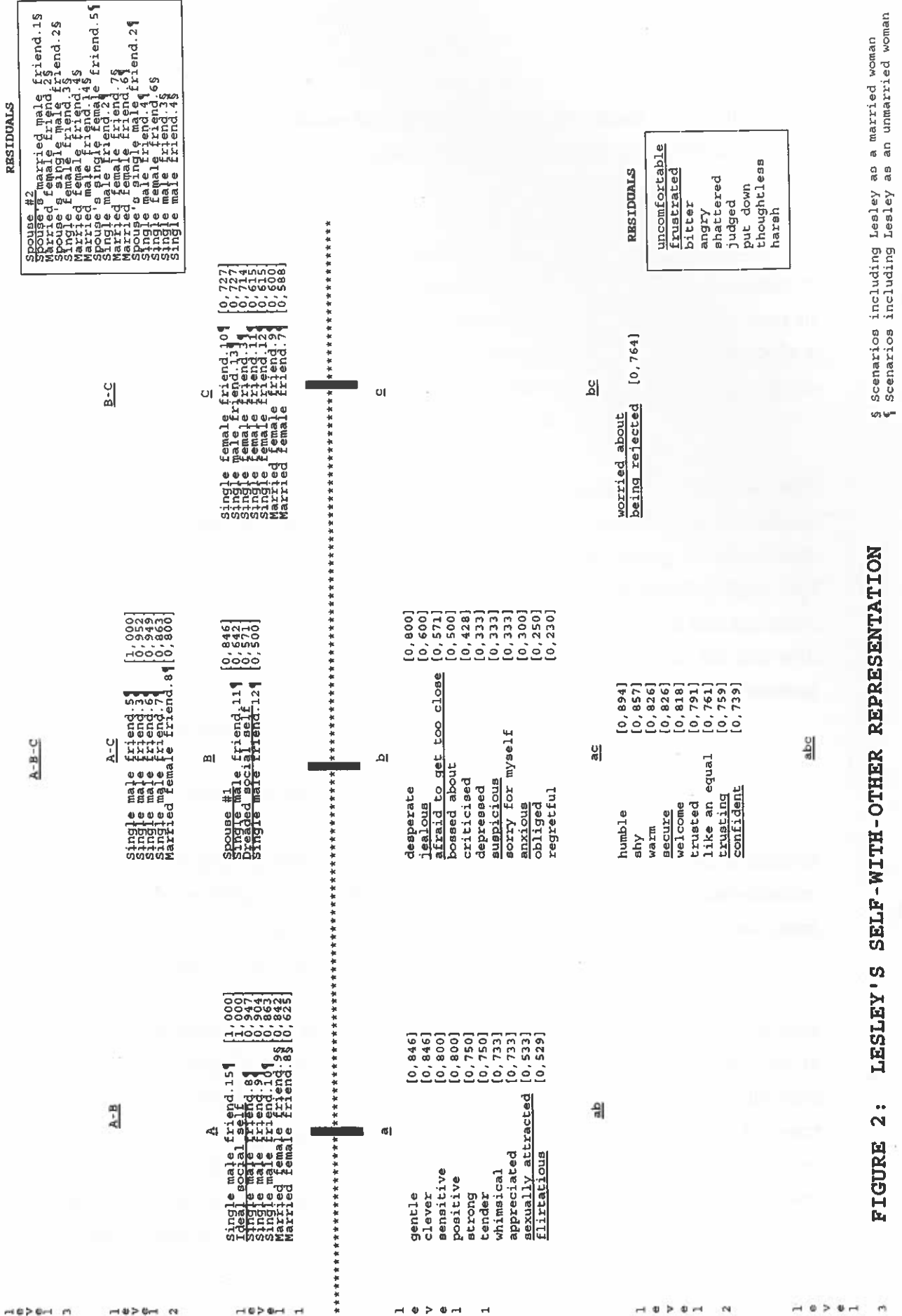


FIGURE 2: LESLEY'S SELF-WITH-OTHER REPRESENTATION

§ Scenarios including Lesley as a married woman
 ¶ Scenarios including Lesley as an unmarried woman

features (bottom portion). To facilitate interpretation, the target classes are labelled using the letters A, B, C, A-B, A-C, B-C, and A-B-C. The feature-classes are labelled a, b, c, a-b, b-c, a-c, and a-b-c.

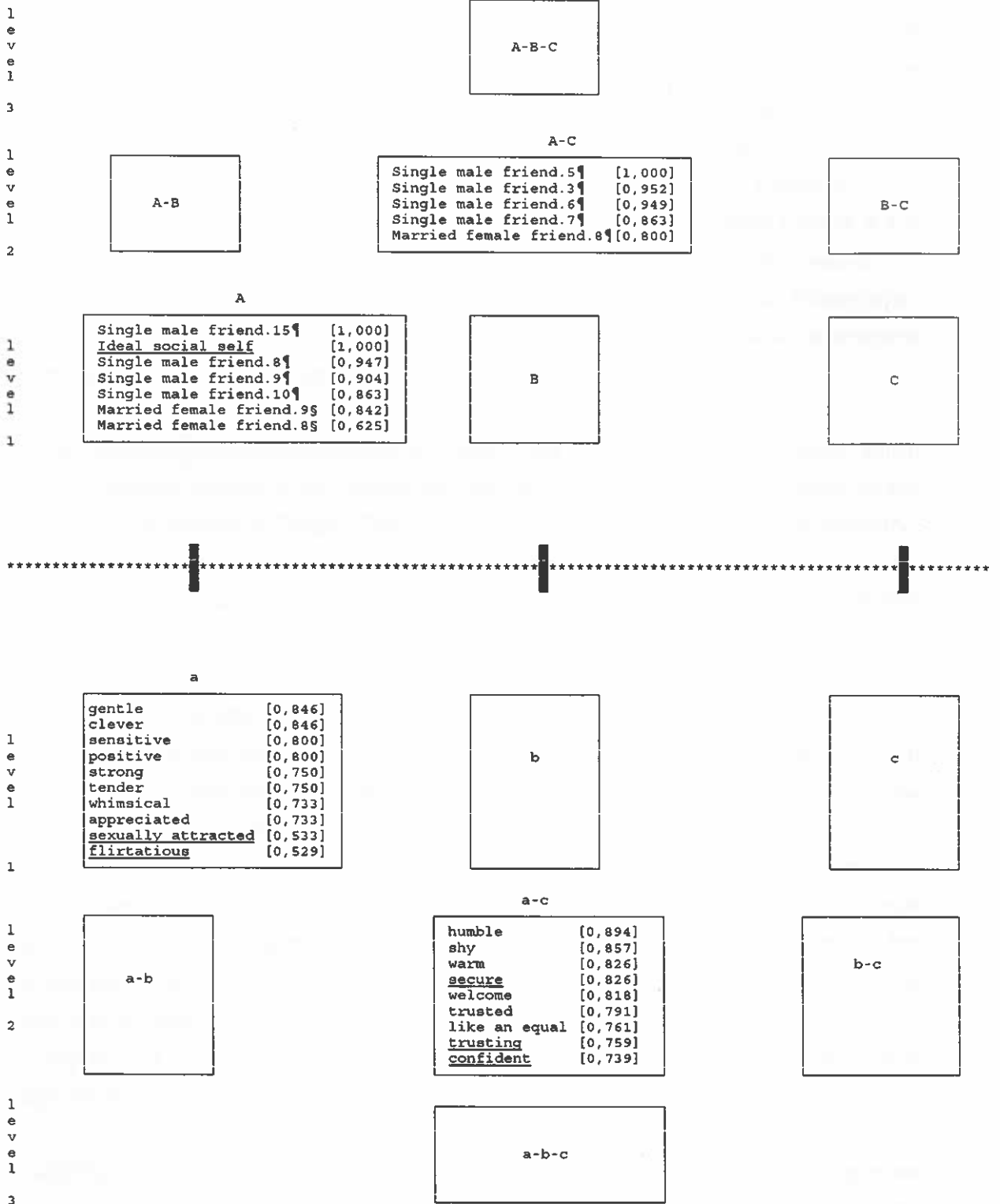
In a sense, the 40 features contained in Lesley's SWOR reflect her interpersonal constructs - her personal way of construing social and relational experience, specifically in terms of friendship. In line with Kellian theory, these features also reflect the ways in which she construes and evaluates herself. She applies level 2 and 3 constructs in a relatively general sense, whereas those constructs positioned lower in the hierarchy, in level 1, are more directly related to certain of the constellations of targets.

The graphic representation in figure 2 reveals three primary constellations of self-with experiences: a 'desperate/anxious' cluster (also termed bundle or grouping, or dynamism), an 'ambivalent-conflicting' cluster, and a 'secure/confident' grouping, or dynamism. Noticeably absent are level 3 classes for both features and targets, suggesting firstly, that none of Lesley's feelings was common to all of the relationships depicted and secondly, that none of the targets (people) generated in her the entire spectrum of her self-with feelings. For clarity of interpretation and ease of reference, each of Lesley's 3 dynamisms has been reproduced separately, in figures 3, 4 and 5.

Sensitive-secure (S-S) dynamism

The lower section of figure 3 shows the two classes which comprise the bundle of features indicating Lesley's sensitive-secure (S-S) self-with-other dynamism. Both Feature-Classes, 'a' and 'a-c' are involved in Lesley's sensitive-secure bundle which includes descriptors such as 'tender', 'gentle', 'welcome', 'humble' and 'warm'.

Target-Class 'A' is most directly associated with Lesley's S-S self-with feelings. This class contains Lesley's conception of her "ideal" self-with-friend experiences, as well as four of her men friends and two women friends. The friendships she shares with her single male friends #10, Dave, and #9, Conrad, (who is now deceased), were established between her two marriages; Ron (single male friend #8) she described as a friend she met after her second marriage; Garth, single male friend #15, is a friend she had before she was married (the friendship dissolved when she got married).



§ Scenarios including Lesley as a married woman
 ‡ Scenarios including Lesley as an unmarried woman

FIGURE 3: LESLEY'S SENSITIVE-SECURE (S-S) DYNAMISM

Significantly, the male residents of Target-Class 'A' are all single, as is Lesley in each of the four male-friend scenarios referred to in this class. However, the two resident female friends are both married - as is Lesley in both of the scenarios she envisaged with them. Her friendship with Lynda (married female friend #9) was initiated between Lesley's two marriages. It was maintained throughout her second marriage (although Lesley admitted to not being "in a position to devote much attention to the friendship, then") and it is still intact. Before she was married, Lesley met Rosemarie (female-friend #8) whom, she said, "saw me through two marriages." Their friendship, too, is current. Rosemarie's inclusion in Target-Class 'A' is also reflective of Lesley's self-with-Rosemarie experiences during Lesley's second marriage.

Notably, all the friendships referred to in Target-Class 'A' are current friendships, which Lesley established outside of her marital contexts and which did not include either of her husbands. The friends in Target-Class 'A' evoke Lesley's subjective sense of 'security', 'confidence' and 'sensitivity' - all positive self-with-other feelings, reflective of her 'ideal social self' and of a secure attachment orientation. (Significantly, this secure attachment style is not associated with either of her spouses in their roles as attachment figures.)

Target Class A-C is also associated (although less directly so), with Lesley's S-S dynamism. It includes her self-with-other feelings with Rosemarie (female friend #8) - but this time, in a scenario which included Lesley as an unmarried person. In fact, in keeping with the predominant pattern reflected in Target-Class 'A', Lesley's roles in each of the five self-with scenarios represented in Target-Class 'A-C' include her as an unmarried woman. The A-C Class also includes: Gary (single male friend #5); Fernando, single male friend #3; James, single male friend #7, with whom Lesley was friendly between her two marriages (the friendship dissolved once she remarried); and Gideon (single male friend #6), a friend established since her separation from her second husband. Like those of Target-Class 'A', all the residents of 'A-C' are either single men (whom Lesley knew whilst she was not married), or married women.

In addition to their association with Lesley's S-S bundle of features, the A-C Targets are linked to her second dynamism (Desperate-Anxious), through the feature of 'worried about rejection' (Feature-Class 'b-c'). This suggests a degree of ambivalence or conflict in the way Lesley experiences herself within the context of her friendships with the targets in Class 'A-C'. Although these friends share qualities enabling Lesley to experience herself as 'gentle', 'welcome' and 'warm' etc., she also experiences anxieties about being

rejected by them. The personal significance to Lesley, of interpersonal rejection, is verified by her generation of the following bipolar well-being constructs (see Appendix K1): 'feeling loved - unloved'; 'loving someone - having no-one to love'; 'friendship - loneliness'. Congruent with this theme of fear of rejection is the avoidant attachment style she rated herself as having.

A significant theme in Lesley's 'Sensitive-Secure' dynamism is that of sexuality, suggested by the features 'sexually-attracted' and 'flirtatious' - features mostly absent from the other respondents' SWORs. Like Tembi, Lesley seemed to have difficulty in differentiating between opposite-sex friendship and romantic love relationships. The indistinct boundaries she construed between these two relationship types are possibly indicative of her thin-boundaried personality (cf. Chapter 9; see Appendix K4). However, her definitional obscurity also reflects the contents of her relational mental models. She endorsed as 'true' of herself, all 8 of the items in the category 'Opposite-sex Friendship, Love and Sexuality', thus indicating that she found it "difficult to maintain friendship with the opposite sex on a platonic level", that she had "not experienced opposite-sex friendship without an element of romance" and that she sensed "an element of romantic interest from friends of the opposite sex."

A desperate-anxious (D-A) dynamism

Concerns about being rejected strongly characterise the second major bundle in Lesley's self-with-other representation: her 'desperate-anxious' (D-A) dynamism. The lower section of Figure 4 indicates the two Feature-Classes ('b' and 'b-c') which constitute this bundle. The people most directly associated with these features ('desperate', 'anxious', 'jealous', 'afraid to get too close', 'regretful', 'depressed' etc.) are all men. In addition to her first spouse, Target-Class 'B' includes Ian (single male friend #12) and Lindsay (single male friend #11) - both primarily friends of her first spouse. Target-Class 'B' also includes Lesley's 'dreaded social self'. Significantly, the scenarios Lesley depicted in terms of Ian and Lindsay were those prior to her marriage. She explained, "I had to be very careful about being friendly to any males when I was married. The most innocent thing - a comment, anything - could spark off a horrible scene."

Lesley's fear of initiating a 'horrible scene' (which usually contained physical and verbal abuse), and the negative impact such scenes had on the lability of her emotional state, were evident in 4 of the 15 self-generated sets of well-being constructs: 'serenity - moodiness'; 'humorous - sour, unhappy'; 'peaceful - violence'; 'harmony - discord'. The

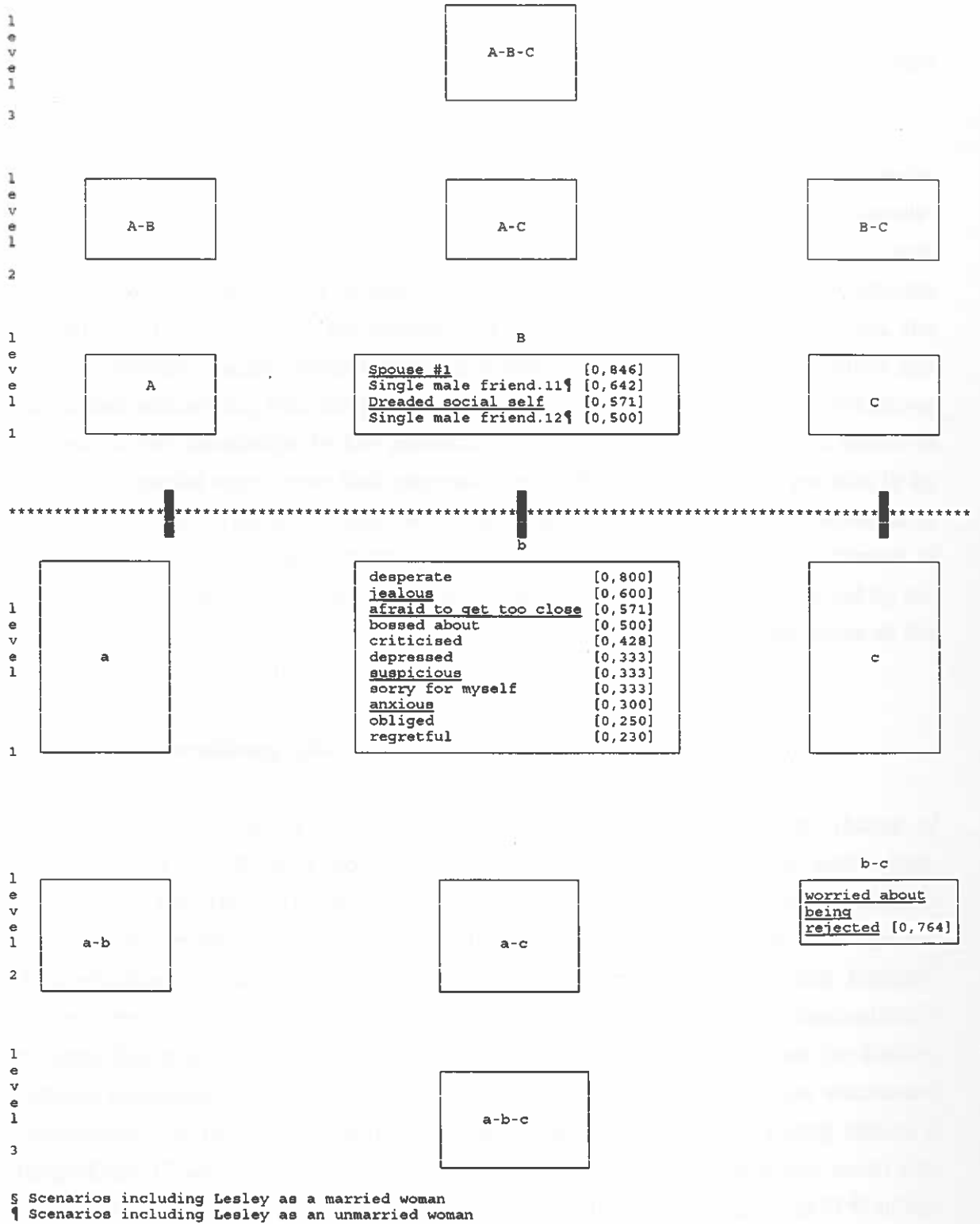


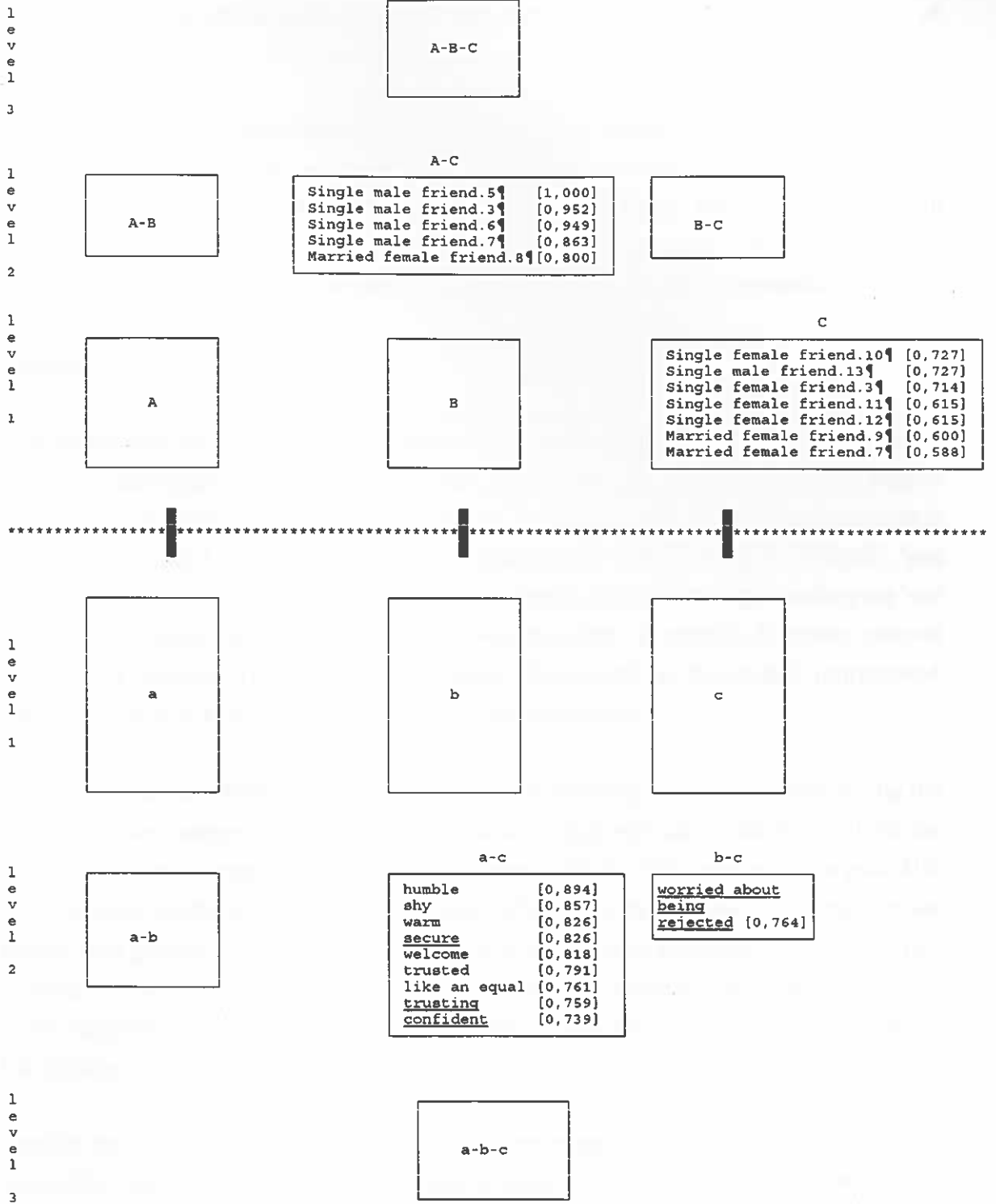
FIGURE 4: LESLEY'S DESPERATE-ANXIOUS (D-A) DYNAMISM

importance Lesley attached to maintaining marital 'harmony' and to avoiding the elicitation of her spouses' vengeful jealousy probably exacerbated the profoundly negative influence which the boundaries of her marriages imposed on her friendships - especially with men.

Lesley's responses in the Mental Model Questionnaire (Appendix E1) reveal that, despite her husbands' jealousies in this respect, she did not consider friendship with the opposite-sex to be a breach of marital loyalty. She disagreed with all six items in the "Loyalty" subsection, which included, "Being faithful to one's spouse entails doing without opposite-sex friends" and "Friendship with the opposite-sex is a form of marital betrayal." Thus, she seemed hopelessly caught within a dilemma between her personal relational beliefs and motivations concerning friendship with the opposite sex, and the coercive restrictions imposed on her friendships by her husband. The content of Lesley's mental model as regards her marital experiences finds expression in her Pragma love style (Appendix I): by adopting a logical, pragmatic orientation to her romantic-love partners, she attempts to defend herself from the vulnerability inherent in love relationships. Similar themes of defence, but this time within the context of opposite-sex friends, are also reflected by her strong endorsement of the 'preoccupied' (3,00) and 'fearful' (3,00) components of the adapted version of the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (Appendix F4).

An 'ambivalent-conflicting' (A-C) dynamism

Although also present in Lesley's 'desperate-anxious' dynamism, the theme of ambivalence in her SWOR is most noticeable in the third bundle, labelled 'ambivalent-conflicting' (see figure 5). The conflicting nature of the features in this bundle is illustrated in Lesley's self-with-other description of being 'shy', 'humble' and 'worried about rejection', on the one hand, and yet 'confident', 'secure', 'welcome' and 'trusting', on the other. This semantic dichotomy also brings into conflict two theoretically incompatible attachment styles ('secure' and 'avoidant'), suggesting that, for Lesley, different constellations of self-with experiences are associated with different attachment orientations. The Target-Class with which Lesley's ambivalence is most closely related is Target-Class 'C' within which she again plays an unmarried role in each of the seven self-with scenarios depicted. Only 1 of the 7 occupants of this class is male and 71% of the targets in this class are single. Lesley considered the ambivalence which characterises her friendship with these individuals to have arisen because of the "unsettling experiences" she had during her marriages which, she admitted "had shaken" her confidence and made



§ Scenarios including Lesley as a married woman
 ¶ Scenarios including Lesley as an unmarried woman

FIGURE 5: LESLEY'S AMBIVALENT-CONFLICTING (A-C) DYNAMISM

her hypersensitive about being accepted and concomitantly, about the possibilities of being rejected.

Most of the scenarios contained in Target-Class 'C' are located either between Lesley's first marriage, or after her separation from her second husband. This points to the possibility that, after the dysfunction of her abusive marriages, she sought, and found comfort in, same-sex (rather than opposite-sex) friendships, gaining from them, the succour, understanding and acceptance she needed to heal her emotional wounds.

Residuals

Lesley's residual features (figure 2) include those which, although personally meaningful to her, are not integral to, or consistent with, the ways she experiences - or has experienced - herself in the relationships referred to. A theme within the residual features is that of internalised anger or resentment: 'frustrated', 'bitter', 'angry', 'judged', 'put down'. (HICLAS recovers and represents convergent and contrasting, overlapping and non-overlapping patterns contained in two-way matrices. It cannot, however, recover non-existing patterns. Thus, features and targets that cannot be structurally represented, because there is no structure to represent, become residuals.)

Most of the targets (83%) associated with Lesley's self-with-friend scenarios during her marriages, are categorised as 'Residuals'. As such, they are cast aside by HICLAS because they do not contribute to the structural space. Of the total number of targets, 41% are contained in the Residual category (and 56% of this class is male). These are the people who generate in Lesley a set of self-with experiences incompatible with the patterns recovered by HICLAS. The lack of consistency in these self-with experience patterns suggests the disorienting and disturbing effects that her marriages had on her friendships.

Despite the destructive influence that Lesley's marriages had had on her friendships, it was whilst she was married that she came to appreciate the value of friendship. She commented: "Before - say when I was single - my friendships were superficial. We thought, then, that men were special - the be all and end all! But circumstances change and one finds that one has to survive. It's a case of survival, often, in marriage. That's when I realised how important friends were. They became my support system and I began to develop those friendships and to nurture them. I needed to unburden myself, I

needed to cope and they helped." But, although this realisation occurred to Lesley during her marriages, it was not until after her divorce from her first husband, and then her separation from her second, that she was able to actualise her feelings - to pursue her friendships, especially with the opposite sex. "I was just not 'allowed' to have friends when I was married," she explained. Of her second husband, she said, "I suppose he must have been insecure - he needed so much attention."

She elaborated: "There was also the problem of my husbands' jealousy; if I did get friendly with any men and they showed interest, it was always my fault and then there'd be trouble. Yet both of them had women friends - I never stopped them. They were, I always thought, transferring their guilt to me. Their guilt about what they were doing with other women. It was nothing for them to beat me up because I wore make-up - they always said I did it to attract other men. I needed to get permission to go anywhere." These experiences strongly impacted both on the expectations she developed regarding her friendships with the opposite sex, and on the ways in which she came to construe marital reality.

The theme of domestic violence and alcohol abuse surfaced in Lesley's interpretation of one of the scenarios presented in the projective procedure. She commented: "There's a sense of conflict here: first of all, there are two common problems: a lack of money - and jealousy. There's domestic violence too. This man goes out drinking - while he's out, his wife flirts, she's a bit flighty. ... Maybe they accept the violence - expect it. Those men wouldn't allow their wives to have many friends - definitely not men friends. Maybe the men would have women friends - 'friends' ha!" This cynicism was manifested in Lesley's lack of (marital) trust, a theme evident in other aspects of her data and reflected in her low scores on the Trust Scale (Appendix K5) - especially with regard to her first spouse. Furthermore, although, from a metaperspective, her scores indicate that she considered that both husbands would have rated her as relatively trustworthy, she later admitted to having interpreted 'would have' as 'should have'.

7.5. SUMMATION, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Kelly's personal construct theory is concerned with the personal ways in which individuals construe meaning from reality. Because constructs are privately created, their meaning may not be unequivocally apparent to interpreters, as in the case of the constructs generated by Cheryl and

Charlotte; in this regard, it is necessary to obtain the individuals' personal explanations. Personal constructs are associated with specific interpersonal expectations, which, if invalidated, can cause feelings of threat, expressed through anger, anxiety or denial (Clinton).

Individuals form mental models of significant players in interactional contexts. Scripts act as mediators of constructs, providing individuals with ways of responding to familiar situations. Despite their usefulness in this regard, scripts can, ironically, draw individuals towards destructive interpersonal contexts in which they repeat self-defeating behaviours (Lesley, Mary).

Based on personal construct theory, self-with-other representations are constellations of experiences, affects and cognitions, rooted in earlier experiences and the mental models which develop as a consequence. Self-with experiences can be differentiated into distinct constellations. Specifically, Lesley's SWOR indicates that different constellations of friends enable her to experience two different - and opposing - attachment orientations. It thus seems likely that mental models of different relationships can elicit different attachment (and interpersonal) styles.

The cognitive principles involved in attachment are examined in chapter 8. The chapter also explores the genesis of attachment and its role within the context of marriage, as both bulwark and facilitator of friendship - especially with the opposite sex.