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Friendship and the construction of the person in adult development

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FRIENDSHIP AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PERSON IN ADULT DEVELOPMENT

by

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Abstract

Friendship and the Construction of the Person in Adult Development

by

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This study compared a psychological explanation of friendship to that of a sample of young adults in urban New York culture. The data supported the hypothesis that friendships form and remain close because of shared change. The data substantiated that participants linguistically organize their relationships to indicate close and far patterns of interaction. Finally the data demonstrate that friends use common themes and utterances to describe themselves.

The three hypotheses of this study support a generalizable theory of friendship. Friend relationships help consolidate future goals, current life and past experience into one life history. The cognitive and emotional aspects of personhood are organized into oppositional categories of inner or outer. The different types of intimacy in friend relationships emulate the linguistically expressed conceptual dichotomies between inner (closer) and outer (far) types of intimacy. Friends create a shared language which gives meaning to and thereby resolves the experiential contradictions of personhood.

"Indeed we share in this new world without even knowing it. This is the beauty of our lives in which we do not need to come up and gasp for breath."

Eduardo Levy-Spira

1958 - 1990

This thesis is written to honor Eduardo, my husband, my intellectual companion, my very best friend. Described by Carlos Fuentes as having a "passion for truth ," he has left behind in me the inspiration to seek the only truth there is - words to express the imagined.

PREFACE

My awareness that many conflicting components of culture and personhood get worked out in one's interactions with friends began in Kindergarten. My friend Ben Ty and I scuffled about who would get to be Batman. "You're a girl - Batman is a boy!" he scoffed. "Well", I retorted, "You're a Filipino and Batman is an American!."

At a recent meeting of my book club, I was asked about my dissertation. This group of mostly lawyers unanimously exclaimed that they should be in the study. They then proceeded to launch into their favorite stories of friendship. This led to an informative discussion about one man's upcoming security clearance for a federal position. The F.B.I. was to investigate his character by contacting and interviewing his friends. He was confident that his references would closely adhere to the ethics of friendship: no college drug use, no radical activism and an unswerving allegiance to American politics. That was the explicit message. The implicit message was the assumed, unexamined, and taken for granted notion that an adult person is equal to the summation of his or her friendships.

It has been an exciting opportunity to engage in participant-observation style research, the hallmark of interpersonal psychoanalytic, systems, and anthropological theory; the three intellectual traditions which have most influenced me. I am happy to have demonstrated my ability

carry out psychological research with a project which brings these orientations together. My goal was to work within a theoretical frame and a methodological approach to examine friendship, a topic that can enrich academic and clinical psychology. I hope the work I have done here has suggested a few interesting conclusions, and more importantly, will enable future research.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank my adviser, Dr. Vera Paster, for her years of support and validation of my choices. She posed important intellectual challenges in a straight forward manner which enabled me to expand my thinking. Her efforts in assisting me on this project have been exemplary. Dr. Wachtel has also been invaluable in his respect for my style and his patience during the early and most laborious stages of this process. He has pushed me to points of theoretical and linguistic precision I would not have thought possible. Finally, I am grateful to Dr. Crapanzano, whose anthropological work I first encountered over ten years ago, for agreeing to serve on my committee and concretizing my conviction that anthropological method and theory are crucial companions to clinical psychology.

I want to especially thank my readers for their time and effort. Dr. Shirley Lindenbaum's scholarship on medical anthropology has greatly helped my work with AIDS patients. Dr. I.H. Paul's thoughtful reflections about psychotherapy have been instrumental in the development of my clinical

work. In addition, I want to acknowledge Dr. James Youniss for commenting on this project in its early stages and Ms. Elise Swenson, CSW for reading and thoughtfully commenting on this manuscript.

The participants in this study were a brave lot who shared their most personal relationships with tremendous generosity. They were good teachers, and I know that my work carries the respect I have for each of them.

Any dissertation exacts an equal amount of intellectual and personal energy. My dear family, B'nai Jeshuran spiritual companions, close friends, and colleagues have been especially gracious, tolerant, and solid amidst the waves of my process. Each individual has contributed uniquely to this project and I look forward to the opportunity to reciprocate the love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Graphs

List of Figures

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Taking Leave of a Friend

Blue mountains to the north of the walls,
White river winding about them;
Here we must make separation
And go out through a thousand miles of dead grass.
Mind like a floating white cloud,
Sunset like the parting of old acquaintances
Who bow over their clasped hands at a distance.
Our horses neigh to each other
as we are departing.

-- Li Po

Overview

All relationships significantly alter and form the way people experience their being. Psychological theories of personality formation focus on relationships to family and primary partners. Yet many aspects of personality cohere when interacting with friends. This study is about friendship's additional role in an adult human's experience of his or her personhood. Section one of the introduction argues that friendships play an increasingly larger role in the life of the young urban adults who are the focus of this investigation.

To understand friendship's special role in the construction of the person during the development of urban adults necessitates exploring personality and cultural theory. Friendship belongs to the discipline of psychology because it pertains to personality. Friendships are

relationships through which culture is practiced and thus fall under the domain of cultural anthropology. The second section of this introduction discusses how psychological and anthropological theory can be integrated.

Since this analysis of friendship incorporates concepts of culture, the third section of the introduction briefly illustrates features of the participant's cultural context. Definitions of terms will be provided in the fourth section.

Friendship as a Topic of Clinical Exploration

The importance of friendships in adult development is a theme which recurs in popular culture. The films City Slickers and Thelma and Louise serve as testimonials to the ritualistic significance of same-sex bonding during adult developmental transitions.

Scholarly heritage abounds with the stories of great friendships and the ideas which were their product. Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem (See Scholem 1982) infused each other with a commitment to transform their respective fields, exchanging insights which became important in the development of post-war cultural criticism. Bacon described the advantages of friendship as "the ease and discharge of the fulness and swelling of the heart"; Cicero wrote "the essence of friendship consists in the fact that many souls, so to speak, become one"; Wilbur quipped in a short poem, "What is the opposite of two?/ A lonely me, a lonely you" (in Welty and Sharp 1991). When Christopher Robin helps

Winnie-The-Pooh get unstuck from the honey, A.A. Milne depicts the helpfulness of friends, a mutual process of caretaking and discovering.

There are numerous clinical anecdotes to support friendship as a salient topic for clinical inquiry. In a geriatric group therapy meeting, Mrs. H., tall, lean and elegant with her fresh grey wig swept back away from her cheekbones, explained, "You can only live when you have friends to love with."

In a recent therapy session, a male parolee two years free of drugs after a twenty-five year habit, explained how frightened he felt arriving to New York as an 11 year old Puerto Rican. "I just wanted to belong, somewhere, to something. My gang gave me a place to call home, an identity, friends to build my life with. The things I shared with those friends became who I was, and it just so happened that the things we shared landed us doing time together."

Changes in lifestyle, social structure and mental health conditions are forcing clinicians to contend with new relational paradigms. Lesbian and homosexual couples are raising children. Divorce, economic stress, and substance abuse have fostered the incidence of single parent homes and dependence on peer groups which have taken over some of the functions of the family. The cultural dislocation of immigrants who have been separated from their families necessitates primary bonding with friends who share a common language and other cultural symbols. Informal communal

lifestyles, and the rising efficacy of self-help groups as important therapeutic alternatives, are based on the replication of lost parenting through caretaking friendships. The Gay Men's Health Crisis has responded to the AIDS crisis with support groups, buddy-systems, caretaker's meetings, and a variety of other peer networks which validate and legitimize relationships in the face of death. Friendship bonds have been valuable alternatives to significant others, and are often more primary in adult life than relationships to family members.

Much has been written about the importance of Freud's friendships to the development of psychoanalytic theory, and the strong fellowship amongst the proponents of his ideas (See Jones 1961, Rachman 1988, and Little 1989). Freud did not examine the transformative properties of peer relations. He considered friendship as an extension of primal bonding - the type of solidarity experienced by the horde in relation to the leader. Most psychoanalytic attention has been given to understanding parental roles in modulating drive as the foundation of personality.

Some psychodynamic thinkers who embrace object-relations and interpersonal approaches have begun to examine friendship (See Weinberg 1989, Eichenbaum and Orbach 1988, Hymer 1984, Rachman 1988). The theoretical overlap between their ideas, symbolic interactionists and other anthropologists who conceive of constructivist approaches to the self (Mead 1934, Bruner 1986, Hallowell 1967) suggest

the utility of a theoretical formulation which looks to both psychology and anthropology for an examination of the role of friendship in adult personality development.

The Integration of Psychology and Anthropology

The relationship between personhood, development and sociocultural context has long been examined by thinkers from many disciplines and still persists as a salient area of investigation. Anthropologists in the field have struggled to link cultural events to personal experience. Mead (1930) and Bateson (1972) have grappled with unique and culturally sanctioned models of psychological development. Abu-Lughod (1986) notes that the exchange of honor which takes place through the conveyance of sentiment has helped Bedouin culture survive the onslaughts of modernization. Crapanzano (1973) suggests that the self-mutilative healing trances of a Moroccan cult express the anxiety and tension which have resulted from socioeconomic stress. Some anthropologists propose meta-theoretical statements about the relationship between personality and culture. Schweder (1991) explains culture as the different realities in which groups of people live. Collective group realities influence the formation of personhood and psychological process. Lutz and White (1986) postulate emotions as socially sanctioned rituals which communicate cultural values and ethics. Others focus on the way in which exposure to experience as shaped by cultural beliefs creates cognitive maps. Ideational

values become perceptual realities (Sperber 1985; Miller 1984).

Leaving aside the discipline of social psychology which deals with sociological phenomena at the level of individual explanation, clinical psychology has dealt with the concept of culture in a variety of ways. Some psychologists focus on how different ethnicities produce unique configurations of family systems, and values (Sue 1981; McGoldrick, Pearce and Giordano 1982). Others have located culture as the determinant of cognitive processes (Laboratory of Human Cognition 1979). The impact of language and symbols on the value systems which generate anxiety is central to the work of Sullivan (1964) in his use of Sapir (1949) and Whorf (1956). Horney (1973) extensively examines the role of cultural values in shaping character. Fromm (1941), Erikson (1975), Levenson (1983) and Fromm-Reichmann (1959) are all humanistic psychoanalysts who have explicitly recognized the influence of history, culture, and economics in personality adaptation and dysfunction (see Davidson 1988 for an excellent history of the psychoanalytic attention to cultural theory). In contrast to Freudian drive theorists who understand personality as organized by need gratification, interpersonalists and object relations theorists recognize the valence of relationships in the construction of the self (Greenberg and Mitchell 1983). Stephen Mitchell's (1991) newly identified relational school suggests that personality emerges as a result of the impact

of distinct relational configurations on biological proclivities.

This study builds on ethnographic and theoretical attempts to integrate psychological and anthropological perspectives. Although Sroufe (1970) has stated that psychological researchers mistakenly assume that the contextual environment represents a universal reality, many psychologists simply haven't figured out how to integrate universal tendencies with cultural particularism.

However, as modern cultural theorists reject structural-functionalist definition of culture as a reified and stable set of norms (See Harris 1968, p. 514-568), the concept of culture becomes more accessible to psychological, and in particular, psychodynamic theory. When culture is seen as a fluctuating system of meaning created by people in their interactions (Geertz 1973), the process of culture is easily understood as the macro-level result of what transpires in relationships. Relationships are the conduits of language and other forms of symbolic discourse, the actual entities through which culture and self are created, conveyed, and changed (Rosaldo 1980). Relationships are also the foundation of personality structure.

Therefore a study of relationships is a natural laboratory for insight into how culture and personality interact. Friendships are especially significant because they are a non-familial form of intimate relationships. This study explicitly integrates the theoretical traditions of

symbolic anthropology and the interpersonal, relational, and family systems schools of psychological theory.

The American Cultural Context of Friendships

It is important to note that the subjects in this study are young adults in urban American culture. In American culture, friendships are one subset of relationships where shared symbolic discourse is conceived, practiced and internalized; and therefore, during adult development the sphere of interaction where the individual self and the larger social context intersect. The communication between friends symbolically manages perceived states of opposition throughout the life span, oppositions which derive from cultural dialecticism (Rawlins 1992).

Analyses of American culture have emphasized that it is a contradictory culture which emphasizes individuality with regard to economic responsibility and conformity with respect to behavior, belief, and self expression (Tocqueville 1947). The American identity is considered a semiotic elaboration of mythical historical representations of egalitarian morals and values and economically based competitive imperatives (Singer 1977).

These contradictions have emerged as American family patterns have evolved from an extended kinship system to the nuclear constellation in response to modernization and industrialization (Schneider 1968; Gordon 1978; Yanagisako 1978). Families were considered the province where the

working and professional person (usually male) could gratify needs and lavish the rewards of labor in contrast to the competitive milieu of the work environment (Henry 1963). Recently, researchers have begun to document the breakdown of nuclear systems. The hidden stresses of class structure, the limitations of gender role, the economic pressure of racism, and the ensuing development of "gang culture" have burdened family structures, especially those of minority persons (Stack 1974; Keiser 1979).

Friendships, according to Henry (1963), were either incorporated into the family network or served as arenas for the institutionalization of competition, and the socialization of individuality, autonomy, and self reliance, particularly in urban settings (Wirth 1964; Warner 1959). However, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1983) points out, there is a sub-text to American urban life notably absent from the discourse about relationships in urban environments. While some relationships serve as extensions of social order, others appear to provide a context for the expression of self and experience in such a way as to generate new meanings and thereby serve a transformational purpose.

Ginsburg's (1989) comparative anthropological analysis of pro-choice and pro-life members of the abortion debate highlights the significance of the American quest for meaning. She writes:

> The cultural system requires that the individual constitute himself or herself in order to achieve a social identity, and the means for achieving identity are through

> voluntary affiliations with others in a group that offers a comprehensive reframing of the place of the self in the social world . . . becoming American, then, might be understood as a process of making oneself up (1989, p.221).

This dissertation will examine how a sample of adults in urban American culture contend with the construction of personhood by investigating the communication patterns amongst friends. The underlying aim of this research is to demonstrate that the shared discourse of American urban friendships evolves during transitional moments in development, organizes relational constellations for the expression of self and identity, and creates meaning which validates a personal reality. Friendships in American culture contain the communal properties of experience often overlooked by the modernistic concern with bureaucratic rationality, alienation and legalistic bonds and are as important to personality growth as family members during childhood. In the words of Bacon (in Welty and Sharp 1991):

> A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage (p.88).

Definitions

The terms relationships, peers, and friendship are frequently considered to be synonyms of one another and often used interchangeably by researchers. Despite differences in approach, orientation and methodology, friendship researchers work with a cohesive if implicit

definition of friendship: Friendships are non-familial relationships which derive from contemporaneous participation in life events.

Explicit definitions will be used in this study as follows:

A relationship is a recognition by two or more people of a shared connection.

Significant relationships are people with whom one is in regular contact in a meaningful way, and may or may not include family members.

Relatives and family members are closed network special relationships based on kinship and blood connections.

Lovers and spouses are a category of special relationships which cross the boundaries between family and friendship.

Friends are a subset of significant relationships composed of three categories.

An Intimate friend is defined as an individual who provides an emotionally based social connection with whom there is a reciprocity of attachment and need fulfillment, and mutual participation in life events.

A Regular friend is an individual who provides a social connection that is less emotionally based than intimate friends yet with whom there is an ongoing exchange of support services and some shared participation in life events.

Casual friends are based more on proximity, shared

status in relationship to authority figures, or institutionalized group. Synonymous terms include peer, acquaintance or colleague.

A cluster refers to intimate, regular and casual friends within a larger friendship network who form a smaller set based on some perceived commonality, such as professional experience, shared politics, or similar ideational values. They tend to communicate more with each other than they do with other members within a network.

Three other terms are worthy of explanation. Personhood is used to refer to the whole of a person's being as individually and culturally constructed. Self alludes to aspects of experience a person considers to be private and internally focused. Identity suggests aspects of personal experience a person considers to be social and externally focused.

The literature will explore how the different types of friendships pertain to the construction of personhood. It will also explicate how the shared language in relationships, especially amongst friends, is central to notions of self and identity.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is organized into two parts. Section one includes research about the importance of friendships in development throughout the life-span, the effect of gender on friendships, and their role during developmental transitions. Section two reviews authors who write about the meaning and function of friendship, especially its role in the symbolic construction consciousness. This section emphasizes how symbolic discourse, in particular the sharing of verbal language through relationships, is important to the formation of the person. These two sections summarize the theoretical premises from which the hypotheses of this study are derived. Section three presents the hypotheses of the study.

Friendship and Development

There is a vast literature on the role friendship plays at different stages of the life span. An attempt will be made here to summarize this material according to developmental stage, and to propose that significant friendships form during transition. The definition of transition is derived from dialectical models of development and change.

Friendship throughout the Life Span

Attachment theorists (Bowlby 1969, 1973; Ainsworth 1978) stipulate that human interdependence and the ensuing need to attach to others is an ongoing drive behind individual behavior as well as the organization of social life. Stern (1985) suggests that the initial conception of human experience in infancy, the very sensorimotor patterns which define a sense of self, are evolved through an infant's interaction with caretakers. Given the powerful urgency of connecting to others in the formation of personality, it is reasonable to examine how those needs, or the transformation of those needs, are expressed and attended to during adult growth.

Behrends and Blatt (1985) argue that since humans are the only mammals born without sufficient neurological and muscular development to ensure life support without dependence on a mothering caretaker, a mutually reinforcing reciprocal relationship which involves complex signalling and communication evolves. The internalization of the initial dyadic mothering relationship takes place through primarily representational expression. The infant signals the mother who in turn signals the infant. With the move to triadic configurations the developing human must conceptualize self, other and a third person. The need to develop additional representational modes creates a reliance

on more abstract and conceptual symbolic processes, such as language. This configuration becomes a template for all developmental sequences throughout the life span. They write, "the psychological growth of adulthood is not only stimulated by one's children, however but also emerges out of relationships with one's spouse, one's aging parents, one's mentors and one's friends" (Behrends and Blatt 1985, p.34).

Other psychologists emphasize the important links between friendship formation and personality development throughout the life span. According to Brissett and Oldenburg (1982), friendships nourish the continuity and substance of personal life throughout the life span. Tesch (1983) suggests friendships change according to a changing hierarchy of needs during different developmental stages. Mutual liking and shared activities characterize childhood friendships. Loyalty and mutual aid are important in late childhood. Intimacy and self-disclosure are significant during adolescence. Subjective well-being is the basis of adult friendships. Much research has corroborated that friendships begin in infancy and recur in different forms according to stage of development.

Friendships in Infancy and Childhood

Many studies indicate that friendships begin early in life. Gunnar, Senior and Hartup (1984) suggest that between

the age of 20 and 30 months peers facilitate play and the exploration of the environment. Buzelli (1988) suggests that young children who have best friends develop greater degrees of trust in others. This trust enhances confidence and helps a child sort out the power balances and imbalances of relationships. By sixth grade, children will respond positively to friends who reciprocate the same degree of self-disclosure (Rotenberg and Mann 1986). Intimacy is associated to equality. As children mature, their lives become more complicated and their relationships become organized around shared issues. The concept of friendship deepens with the increased intricacies of connections to others (Keller and Wood 1989).

Higgins and Parsons (1983) suggest that children share similar cognitive adaptations to sociocultural reality during discrete developmental stages. Shared cognitive patterns promote mutual systems of meaning. Children within the same developmental stage live within a subculture, similar to age-grades, or sets in non-western cultures. Friends are companions during culturally sanctioned age-related changes.

Furnam (in Porter and Tomaselli, op.cit.. 1989) builds on the work of Rubin (1980) who stipulates that children's friendships teach social skills, social comparison and group belonging. Furnham develops a dynamic, feedback model which suggests that socially unskilled children are rejected and lonely. The emotions that arise in lonely, rejected

children, such as anger, self-pity, or fantasized emotional roles, are important factors in delinquency, addiction and neurosis (in some cases, psychosis). Children with these types of problems become further withdrawn and neglected, which leads to decreased opportunities to learn, and the cycle is perpetuated.

Youniss (1980) notes the importance of interpersonal relatedness for the assimilation and accommodation processes necessary for development. Children have two interactive systems through which they negotiate and define reality. The parental system is governed by principles of conformity. The peer system is characterized by principles of "co-construction." Parental relationships are important in behavioral control and nurturance. Friendship relationships are crucial to the development of intimacy (Youniss and Hunter 1982). By participating in the mutual construction of reality with friends, children develop and change in the context of the structure provided by their parents, a process which becomes somewhat more complex during adolescence.

Adolescent Friendships

An important challenge during adolescence is the integration of competing parent vs. peer communicative systems. Youniss and Smollar (1985) note the tension in adolescent relationships with their parents as they attempt

to modify a hierarchical communicative structure into one which is more consensual. While parents continue to exercise authority through the management of peer groups, adolescent verbal interaction shifts to cooperative co-construction, symmetry, and a more human view of the parents.

Tedesco and Gaier (1988) suggest that the interpersonal aspects of adolescent friendship become more important than similarity of achievements - traits more common in younger friendships. French adolescents have reported that friendships are more important than their dating partners (Worebe 1987). Kandel (1985) identifies relationships between substance abuse and peer groups. The connection to a friend, the desire to belong to a group, and the wish to share events is often stronger than the prohibition against using drugs.

Gilligan, Lyons and Hanmer (1990) and other collaborators studied female adolescents at the Emma Willard School. Stern (in Gilligan, Lyons and Hammer 1990) notes that women develop a sense of autonomy through their connectedness to others. She believes young women have to confront very difficult conflicts between their preconceptions of female identity and their own self experiences. Adolescent women in particular have to choose between the assertion of their own needs over giving to others. On all matters of identity formation, including issues of morality, race, achievement and competence, young women seek to resolve conflict by seeking a sense of self

embedded in their friendships which is distinct from, yet related to, their mothers. Berzoff (1989) corroborates the relationship between mothering and the dynamics of separation and connectedness in adolescence. These issues appear again as adolescence progresses into adulthood.

Friendships in Adult Development

Children and adolescents have in common the fact that their relational world is organized by sociocultural institutions. Adults past thirty are on their own, interacting with people of different age groups from many facets of social life, yet equally in need of friendships for the developmental process.

Levinson (1978) states that the adult life structure, the basic pattern of life at a given time, continues to evolve throughout a person's life. He writes that an "essential feature (of an individual's life structure) is the interpenetration of self and world" (1978, p.47). The world becomes part of self experience through interpersonal relationships.

Mann uses Sullivan's definition of personality. "the relatively enduring patterns of recurrent interpersonal situations which characterize human life" (1953, p.110), to arrive at a theory of adult development. She states that the realities to which adults must adapt and respond continually renew the personality, the accumulations of ongoing

interpersonal processes (Mann 1985). Character formation takes place as people confront reality imperatives in the context of social relatedness.

According to Levinson (1978) and Erikson (1963) adult development has a sequence of stages as compelling as those of childhood. The early adulthood years (20-32) are preoccupied with establishing a coherent and independent sense of self, and formulating a life, often with partners.

By the early thirties, young adults have settled into relatively enduring relational patterns. When a person reaches the stage of middle adulthood (32-45) all relationships will have undergone significant changes which correspond to personality change, sociocultural expectations, historical traditions as well as biological requirements (White 1966). People settle into long-term pairings, and confront the possibility of child rearing (Benedek 1959, Belsky, et. Al. 1983, 1985). As they begin to assume leadership roles, and have experiences with death and loss in primary relationships, the struggle with values, goals and ideals becomes as central as the partners with whom they share these quandaries.

Friendships during this time continue to have the same function as that described in childhood and adolescence. Tokuno (1983) found that young women work out life issues with friends rather than parents. The intimacy of friendship constitutes the important interactive field through which development continues (Tokuno 1984). Roberto and Kimboko

(1989) state that the interpersonal dynamics of friendships during middle adulthood provide developmental functions despite gender differences in conceptions of intimacy.

The research of Larson, Mannel and Zuzanek (1986) indicates that friendships become even more important in the elderly than relationships to family members. Friends promote conditions of reciprocity and spontaneity. Due to a decrease in level of activity and an increase in leisure time there are more opportunities for friendship formation. In addition, and more significantly, friendships enable the interactiveness that creates meaningful exchanges and openness. Such exchanges are considered life-inducing, and thus an important antidote to geriatric depression.

Gender and Friendship

There are at least two subtexts which surface in much of the literature on friendships. The first regards the issue of gender difference. Some of the gender differences noted reflect distinct male and female conceptualizations of the importance of friendship. Males do not value friendships as highly, and do not have or make sufficient opportunities to forge them (Wall, Pickert and Paradise 1984). Farrell (1985-6) discusses four characteristics of male friendships: they are likely to be consolidated by shared socialization experiences; male friendships are organized by external structural principles; age-related

changes such as marriage and job affect the developmental process of the friendship; males are more likely to feel comfortable in public situations as a result of group and outdoor oriented male friendship activities. Griffin and Sparks (1990) support the notion that male to male friendships are more likely to form when there is a participation in shared social status.

Women's friendships tend to organize around emotions and personality. Berzoff (1989) demonstrates that even women with high ratings of autonomy and differentiation experience fusion in adult relationships with other women. Rather than pathology, the tendency toward fusion represents the extent to which women develop through a strong sense of connectedness with others. Becker (1987) developed a structural description of friendship dyads for women and also found that self-other differentiation is blurred. Eichenbaum and Orbach (1988) suggest that women's friendships are formed at times of change and help manage the "transformation from passive to active voices." Women seek "a bosom pal" with whom they can share "the new identities they are unveiling and practicing" (p.19). Women seek in their attachments to each other nuances of identification and separation as a way of integrating past conceptualizations of themselves with new formulations. Nostalgic friends are often re-engaged as a chance to re-encounter one's own changes.

The research on gender differences has not clearly

addressed many confounds about the differences between the sexes. In particular, male and female character differences may not be as prevalent as the way in which different socialization patterns have influenced the degree of comfort men and woman may feel discussing their attachments to others. Distinct male and female communicative strategies may more directly affect the way they represent their intimate relationships (Tannen 1990). Tannen argues that women are more directly verbal, and men often express themselves through actions. Women are more fluent in the terminology of relationships, whereas men have less of a vocabulary for feelings, although they are emotionally sensitive. Bell (1991) demonstrates that although females report having closer ties to friends, men and women feel equally as lonely when they have fewer friendships. Marriage more than gender tends to reduce the amount of intimacy when friends speak (Tschann 1988). In fact, male and female friendships tend to differ less regarding the quality of friendship relations and more on the maintenance and continuity of friendships during different stages of the life cycle (Fischer and Oliker 1983). Women tend to make new friends when their life circumstances change and men are more likely to keep friends from their youth.

In summary, men and women may communicate about their relationships differently, but share similar needs for friends and equivalent symbolic mechanisms for the management of intimacy. The literature seems to concur that

both men and women most easily form their closest friendships in the context of developmental transition.

Developmental Transitions

The concept of developmental transition, and the overlap between friendships and cognitive and emotional growth has been described, perhaps by different names, by developmental thinkers who follow Piaget. The interpretation of Piagetian theory used here is inherently a Hegelian dialectical model (See Overton 1989). Piaget (1987) outlines his dialectical thesis in terms of "possibilities", variations, or, improvisation, and "necessities", organization, or structure. Variation always occurs in the context of structure and structures are continually transformed by variation. When a developing child assimilates he or she gives meaning to the world by constructing understanding through experience. Accommodations are encounters with new information and must take place within the original meaning. The previous understanding will determine the perception of the new stimulus; however once the process of accommodation takes place the original meaning will have become transformed. Thus,

> "development is not caused by external mind-independent events, as empiricists would have it, nor by internal events, as nativists would have it. Instead development is a natural dialectical process that operates through successive assimilation/accommodation equilibriations, beginning with an initial active biological organization, and moving to

increasingly adaptive levels of novel psychological structures" (Overton 1989, p.630).

For example, consider a child's relationship to movement. Piaget (1970) states that a child's experience of a transition in space is determined by the sensory registration of the rhythm and pattern of their own body movements in relationship to one another. The conceptualization of that experience takes place as a novel aspect of the experience becomes incorporated into previous "schemas" (p.178). Piaget notes elsewhere (1954) that the incorporation of schema involves some recognition of causality. Causality may be performed in purely physical terms (a ball knocks over a cup); however, it is relationally defined. The actions of one thing affect another, and this generates new sets of perceptual experience which the child attempts to reproduce through imitation. Sensorimotor experimentation and imitation enable the symbolic construction of reality. The variations and the existing structures continually produce new meaning, and it is not long in a child's development before this process takes place in a relational context. He writes, "In projecting his own behaviors onto others (making animals and dolls cry, eat, drink or sleep) the child himself is imitating the actions they do when they reproduce his own actions" (1962, p. 122).

Youniss (1985) uses this model to describe the formative role friendships play in child personality processes. As children develop playmates and friendships,

they reproduce in each other their own feelings and behaviors in the continual process of mastery, which, according to Piaget involves the integration of necessity and possibility. Each moment of mastery is a developmental transition. In Sullivan's (1953) terms, this enables the child to comprehend the self from the observational perspective.

Vygotsky (1978), and Wertsch (1985) use the concept "zone of proximal development - the distance between actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined by problem solving with the aid of an adult or peer." There is a difference between the growth possible in isolation and in an interactional context. The zone of proximal development is the cartilage in the skeleton of consciousness. Friendships, throughout the life cycle, are formed in the transitional leap from potential mastery, the possibility of growth, to activated mastery, the actual incorporation of change.

Recent research has supported the formation of friendship at such points. People in special crisis situations created more friendship bonds than those people whose lifestyles did not contain a need for special growth. Adults with handicapped children in a daycare program were more likely to form friendships with one another (Bailey and Winton 1988). Veterans who joined support groups showed increased self satisfaction and well-being. Their

improvement was credited to participation in a homogeneous support community (Sweet, Stoler, Kelter and Thurell 1989).

Fischer and Oliker (1983) demonstrate that friendships are more easily made at transitional moments of the adult life cycle. Parenthood, new contact with co-workers, marriage, changes in social hierarchy, as well as dispositional factors and biological gender differences were found to be determinants in the formation of friendship. Adults are more accessible to friendship when they experience a change in social status (Bell 1981). They also reach out more when in a crisis, or period of change (Hirsch and Reischl, 1985, Bailey and Winton, 1988, and Sweet, Stoler, Kelter and Thurell, 1989).

The research cited in this literature review supports an understanding that relationships are significant conduits for developmental processes. Friendships are most easily formed at moments of developmental transition. Transition was defined according to Piaget's notions of structure and variation, and Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development. Both ideas purport that interpersonal dialecticism, the oppositional tensions between different aspects of relationships, motivates the ongoing symbolic construction of meaning. The conceptualizations of Vygotsky, Piaget and Sullivan demonstrate that a continuous process of creating meaning is at the heart of ongoing adult development . This study investigates the formation of adult friendships during moments of developmental transition and

further suggests that such friendships are relational experiences which concretize the notion of being a person.

Friendship and the Interpersonal Self

Psychologists recognize that there is an ongoing relationship between individual personality structure and sociocultural context. Relationships of all kinds are the building blocks of social structure and personhood. Friendships in American urban culture are particular relationships which are personal yet free of legal or biological responsibility. In this way friendships provide an important relational channel through which individuals can, on one hand, negotiate a sense of personhood from within the social matrix, and, on the other hand, engage in crucial meaning -making activities which constitute culture.

Structural-Functionalist Approaches to Friendship Systems

The psychological and anthropological literature often depicts friendship and relational networks as the agents for the maintenance of societal needs. Some researchers suggest that friendships manage development. Bell (1981) states that childhood friendships provide the socialization necessary for the learning of social norms and mores, similar to age-sets in many African cultural groups. Adolescent friendships manage the transition between childhood and adulthood (as

described by Turner 1977). Adult friendships begin to meet the emotional needs previously filled by family members. Although affected by gender dynamics, friendships become alternative choices when marriages fail, families become inaccessible, or when death and retirement force people into isolation. Bell emphasizes that friendships are sociocultural roles through which people engage in rituals which enable the passage through developmental transitions.

Some social psychologists suggest that friendships are the mechanisms through which social systems are enacted. For instance, Winstead, Dorlega, Lewis & Margulis (1988) have stated that management of mutual need in relationships through interdependence and incremental exchange theory parallels similar negotiations in larger scale institutional operations. Duck (1983) advocates a behavioral, cyclical understanding. He states that friendships are formed through the process of negotiating larger social phenomena. In order to fulfill the requirements of social tasks people need to work out complementary role relationships, a sense of other's and their own opinions, and the boundaries of self-revelation. The negotiation of this behavior results in friendship bonding.

There is also a body of research which suggests that friendship systems enable groups to function for the fulfillment of personal needs. In a study of self-help groups Maton (1988) notes that groups which have strong leadership and clear role definition had higher incidences

of formed friendships and members demonstrated improved self worth. Strong social networks aided the resolution of self-esteem problems observed in families with psychiatric and medical problems (Hirsch and Reischl 1985).

Another group of researchers state that friendships provide the function of linking individual thoughts, insights, and perspective to the ideological principles of the society (Shantz, 1983). In other words, people develop social consciousness in terms of relational ideals as practiced in friendship. Selman (1981) linked a child's ability to understand the concept of friendship to "social perspective-taking ability", the cognitive development of a set of independent thoughts based on the observations of others. His work develops the idea that the relationships which constitute social structure can form cognition. Relationships perform the function of organizing thought in accordance with societal concepts.

The above perspectives share an affiliation with a structural-functionalist approach to culture and personhood. Culture is a body of institutions which regulate social life and create roles such as friendship to perform the tasks generated by the needs of the institutions which support the culture. This is in contrast to theorists and researchers who employ a meaning based analysis to comprehend the significance of culture, personhood and friendship.

Friendship and Shared Meaning

Gurucharri and Selman (1982), Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1986) are researchers who suggest that friendships are mini-cultures which provide shared reality and consensual validation. Relational patterns become micro-level examples of larger social phenomena to which a group of friends can respond and build common principles and understandings. Friendships are the forum through which ideological principles are shared and reacted to and then accepted or changed as personal adaptations to development.

Damon (1977) recognizes that a child's peer world was a microcosm of culture through which social learning could take place in smaller, more condensed, arenas. Corsaro (1985) discovers that children's peer culture provides the opportunity to master the process of moving from individual activity to social interaction. Once within a social group children learned how to protect interactive space from intrusion, and recognized the salience of social boundaries for productive play. Rizzo's (1989) participant observation study verifies the importance of friendship to first graders. Entering, maintaining, and leaving social relationships was an emotion-laden focal point of activity. All the children claimed to have friends and demonstrated an understanding of concepts such as loyalty, sharing and helping.

Other work in the friendship literature focuses on the

manner in which friendships, like families, share meaning systems. Toman states, "friends interact within a person, in the mind that is; they also do so with each other in the real world around a person . . . they form a system" (1989, p.9) He suggests that friendship systems replicate family constellations and that they can be worked with in psychotherapy as one might work with a family to alleviate the impaired functioning of a particular individual.

Haber (1987) discusses the need to include friendships in family work to challenge an enmeshed nuclear system. He believes that families become troubled when there is no renewal or recreation of understanding. Beliefs become rigid and fixed. Friends can bring new information to which the system must respond thereby creating more flexibility. Haber argues that a family's recognition that their problems exist within a larger context increases connectedness and empathy with each other as well as those outside the system. Haber's recognition of the distinct but overlapping influences of individuality, family and social structure suggests the need for a interactive, non-static conceptualization of the relationship between self and society.

The shared systems of meaning amongst friends are among the many important interpersonal events which become transcribed as intrapsychic processes. The next section will elaborate on how the mutually constructed realities of friendship groups, the creation of meaning, occurs according

to interpersonal and object relations theory.

Interpersonal and Object Relations Theory

Interpersonal psychodynamic theory has focused on the analysis of relationships to family members and significant others. However, observations of friendship relationships suggest that they are equally laden with deep psychological significance. Jay Greenberg (1990) termed the relationship between patient and therapist a friendship. In the same symposium, Fred Pine (1990) noted that the ability to maintain friendships was an important developmental task. Neither explained these remarks further. Even the emergent relationship school (Mitchell 1990) focuses on relationships with parents, siblings and spouses as the main constituents of character structure.

Some psychodynamic thinkers have begun to explore the friendships by applying to them object-relational theoretical formulations about primary relationships. Hymer (1984) develops the idea of narcissistic friendships, friends who become "extra-familial self-objects." She examines these "ego-strengthening" dyads and suggests that the ability to form friendships can be important prognostic clues as to a patient's capacity for internal growth.

Little (1989), citing Winnicott's idea of transitional phenomena and Kohut's notion of self-object, links creativity, social fluidity and friendship. According to

Little, friendships provide a loose communal structure which promotes independence, autonomy, and the ability to achieve relatedness without adherence to an authority figure. These qualities emphasize the mental health ideal of humanists such as Fromm (1941) and Levenson (1972) . Little adds that the anthropologist Victor Turner (1977) has cited liminality, being in-between, as the flexible aspect of social structure which enables a culture to adapt to change. He suggests friendships are liminal relationships. They are flexible interpersonal structures which easily respond to change.

Winnicott (1965, 1971) suggested that relationships to transitional objects enable the child to shift the process of meaning making from an all-mother context to sociocultural reality. Ego-relatedness (Winnicott 1965) is the capacity to be alone while also becoming a part of the experience with others. Ego-relatedness is initially expressed through transitional phenomena, and later becomes an integral component of self experience and is expressed in friendship. Friends in adulthood replicate the role of transitional phenomena during early childhood. Winnicott states that friends are people who offer nurturance and support and provide contact that is autonomous and merged. Friends value and like each other and constitute the lived-out holding environment.

Sullivan (1953) developed his interpersonal psychiatry into an explicit theory of friendships named "chumship" -

the intimate exchange of empathy which permits "the capacity of seeing one's self through the other's eyes" (1953, p.261-262). During preadolescence it is important for the child to feel separate and merged through chumship relationships that are the precursors of friendships. It is through relationships with friends that parataxic distortions (cognitive percepts of parental failures) are expressed, and sometimes resolved. Self-identification with the other (the "chumship") enables the reorganization of old percepts to fit new meanings.

According to Weinberg (1989), analysis serves a similar function, chumship being the basis of the analytic working relationship. Her idea that friendship enables separation-individuation is deeply embedded in a transitional conceptualization of friendship. A certain rapport, or mutuality is important in friendship formation. In fact, people need to see in each other the same types of "reflected self-appraisals" as described by Sullivan. She writes:

> Friendship may not be a resolution that freedom provides but along with music, science, art and many of the other creations of our life, all the visionary and immortal things man can achieve, friendship as some kind of more immediate interpersonal answer to our questions comes close (1989, p. 370).

Reflected self-appraisals, and separations between self are constructed and shared at different levels of intimacy. According to Wilner (1975), interactions are linguistically organized to represent varying degrees of closeness when

meaning is mutually negotiated. Intimacy is associated to distinct types of cognitive patterning, and is negotiated between people as opposed to being located within an individual.

Wilner's theoretical analysis discusses three types of intimacy. The first type is that which is most inward, what Wolstein (1971) calls the personal self, what Jung (1928) would refer to as the archetypal self, what Levenson (1972) terms personal structure. This is the part of self experience which contains the reservoir of one's family and cultural imprints, awareness of which motivates the quest for new experience. Friends with whom one shares this form of intimacy are those friends experienced as most joined to the self.

The second type is referred to as private, belonging to oneself. This type of intimacy is largely derived from interpersonal experience, since the idea of belonging can only be defined in terms of not belonging to someone else. According to Wilner, "Intimacy would then be located in the individual through experience <u>with</u> another, and it would be located in the process <u>through</u> expression" (1975, p.212). People who share this type of intimacy are separate actors who identify with what each other holds as private.

The third type of intimacy is familiarity, that which becomes close under observation. This is the intimacy that is experienced as one crosses the boundary between what is old, and new, or what is distinctly self and other. Persons

who share this type of intimacy are aware of one another as different with few identifications; however, the experience of the other inspires awareness of previously unexplored aspects of the self. This intimacy creates anxiety, and is often experienced with ambivalence.

Each type of linguistic style reflects a different interactional conceptualization that speaks to unique states of thought and action. As Vygotsky (1967) and Bakhtin (1986) have written, different relationships and language formations cluster around each other to construct consciousness. This process is best understood by turning now to theoreticians who conceive of the person as a product of symbolic construction.

The Symbolic Construction of the Person

Phenomenological thinkers emphasize a mutually constructed reality as the basis of concrete experience (Heideggar 1979; Ricouer 1977). The symbolic theorists of concern here view the concrete experience of personhood as a mutual construction between self and other. They view consciousness, cognition, and symbolization as interactive processes between persons which emerge through the demands of an environmental field.

Werner and Kaplan (1963) derive the process of symbol formation from the idea that all meaning originates in a context, referred to as umvelt. Umvelt is an environmentally

determined field of interaction which every living organism must structure in order to survive. Symbolic representation is the act of making sense of cognitive perceptions developed in transaction with elemental principles of the environment. Symbolization is a dynamic process because the umvelt is as much affected by as it determines human interaction. Symbolization is continuously subject to the effects of previous and future actions. Werner and Kaplan succinctly summarize their perspective, "Man lives in a world of becoming, rather than a world of being" (p.13).

Vygotsky's (1978, see also Wertsch 1985) theory of mind explicitly focuses on verbal language as the sign system which evolves as an interaction between ontological factors of development and the phylogenetic process of the environmental field. Language gives rise to shared meaning.

His developmental model suggests that higher mental functions such as conceptualization and abstraction originate through the agency of small groups. Words are tools which mediate the mental processes of self as distinct from that of another person. Vygotsky distinguishes between social speech, the public use of word, and inner speech, an individual's own particular internalization of that speech based on his or her own developmental proclivities.

Internalization is not to be mistaken for incorporation of externally mediated semiotic processes. An individual's own developmental imperatives will transform how he or she responds to and records cultural interaction. Factors of

environmental reality will also place limits on what an individual can comprehend. Social determinants and individual tendencies are equally responsible for how perceptions become organized into consciousness. Consciousness in turn alters the nature of environmental reality.

Word meanings then are both public and private, products of negotiations between self and other. They are dynamic evolutions between individual and social speech. Speaking is an interpersonal activity which expresses individual thoughts so as to be understandable to others. Bruner, in the forward to the English translation of Vygotsky's book, writes, "word meaning is the system whereby man creates a mediator between himself and the world of physical stimulation, so he can react in terms of his own symbolic conception of reality" (p. viii).

Wertsch (1991) integrates Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981,1986) to further elaborate this theory of human consciousness. Wertsch utilizes Vygotsky's notion that language functions to mediate meaning in the context of small group interaction. Bakhtin refers to "utterances", dialectically formed individual speech acts. Utterances are units of linguistic analysis which express the internalized voices which compose speech, "the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness." All speech is dialogic in that it is created in response to some one or something. "An utterance reflects not only the voice producing it but also

the voices to which it is addressed" (Wertsch, p.53). Every utterance contains the internalization of many voices, a history of voices, both individual and social.

Vygotsky (1967) understood relationships as the context for a dialectical development of consciousness. People comprehend themselves in relation to their cultural milieu through the construction of word meaning. The ongoing formation of personality involves a dialectical process between individualism and social life that is mediated by and conducted through relationships.

Bruner (1984) integrates Vygotsky and concepts from symbolic interactionism into a model of personality formation. Bruner postulates that the concept of the self is initially organized around getting caretaking others to respond to requests, events which enact volitional control. These events, or transactions, are initially expressed in gestures and then developed into words and language. Speech, and other modes of discourse, which result in response to behaviors from others become "actions of intention." These actions become further elaborated into richer acts of meaning and continue to be learned through ongoing interactions between family and friends. Interactions with friends continually redefine the self. Social experiences create another aspect of being and identity emerges as an externally corroborated (something one does) extension of the internal experience of self (something one feels).

His formulation has much in common with the ideas of

Mead (1934, 1982), Cooley (1909, 1922) and to a lesser extent Hallowell (1967), all of whom agree that personhood evolves through interactive symbolic exchanges. Through relationships with other people, aspects of what an individual feels is observed in another. That which is experienced subjectively becomes understood as a shared experience. When an inner awareness is conceptually categorized as a shared experience it then becomes a part of how the social world is perceived. This leads to a composition of personhood as inner and outer, or private and social.

Pierce's (1931) contribution explicitly elaborates the importance of communication for the management of the dichotomous states of being. To formulate words in the process of shared conversation requires seeing in another being the reflection of one's self and vice versa. In order to express their mutual identification speakers must develop and rely on a shared set of symbols. Language is a particular set of symbols which enables the expression of what two speaking individuals recognize as not entirely private, not entirely public, but something which is both. Communication creates a third level of organization which embraces the opposition between inner and outer (for an integrative review and further elaboration of this perspective see Singer 1979).

Crapanzano (1982) writes about this "third" level of consciousness as distinct from self or other. He equates it

with main components of cultural reality, meaning, thought, or even law. He states:

> The Third permits a certain freedom in any dual relationship. . . Within certain limits of the Third, self and other are able to cast each other in order to cast themselves as they each desire (p.199).

The symbolic construction of meaning present in the interpersonal fluidity of friendships can be observed through the microanalysis of communication. For instance, Felson (1985) states that people often make value judgments about themselves by relying on what other people think. These "reflected self appraisals" influence developmental decisions such as choice of partner, education, career, etc. Deutsch and Mackesy (1985) discuss the extent to which self-schemas between friends are shared, as well as the schemas used to describe a target person. In friendship, people incorporate dimensions of what the other person thinks into their own views. According to Morgan and Kafer (1985), as children learn to understand themselves they also understand others better.

This type of reciprocal thinking is often evident in language usage. Clark and Schaefer (1987) have demonstrated that pairs of friends develop special communicative keys which serve to conceal their information from outsiders. In fact, as friendships become closer, people begin to reveal private facts and personal responses to various types of information (Hornstein and Truesdoll 1988). Children as early as five years old already distinguish personal from

impersonal information and differentiate between friends and acquaintances in the sharing of such information (Rotenberg and Sliz 1988).

Children's initial early relationships form a conceptual category of friendship (See Rizzo and Corsaro 1988). Adults recreate friendship as a cognitive construct by linguistically evoking it from relationships through the selection of a special discourse. This discourse involves the usage of shared utterances, of internalized voices which are products of interaction, and at the same time, privately integrated into consciousness.

Children initially learn language and other primary symbols of his or her culture within the family. Children practice and modify these symbols in friendship relationships. When children invent new usages of old words to play with other children they participate in an interactional pattern as significant as the relationship to parents. The role friendships play in the resolution of an individual's relationship to social structure persists throughout the life-span. The self as exclusively defined by parental or familial influence is only a fleeting moment in the ongoing formation of consciousness.

Crapanzano's (1981) characterization of the transference-countertransference relationship in analysis suggests an interesting paradigm for the role of friendship in the symbolic construction of personhood. He states patient and analyst constitute each other through indexical

conversational markers whereby they stimulate, or evoke, thought and action in each other as they would in themselves. He writes:

> Self constitution, as I understand it . . . is a dialectical process in which individuals experience themselves as self not directly but only indirectly from the standpoint of the other. ... The self cannot cast the other just as it desires, for it is limited by the resistance - in Hegel's terms - of the other. It is limited, too, . . . by a third: by language, convention, law, and authority . . ."(Crapanzano 1981, p.140).

To translate these formulations back into the operative terms of this study, personhood is a generalized category of being. The individual experience of personhood is shaped by and creates culture through the mediated activity of symbolic discourse, the most observable of which is language. While all relationships are microcosms of this process, and in Crapanzano's terms containers of transference and countertransference, friends have a peculiar role by virtue of belonging to both self and other, to the individual as well as to culture, but not to family.

Friendships are often formed during moments of developmental transition. During times of mutual change friends must create a language together to express new formations in meaning. Shared meaning is experienced at different levels of intimacy accompanied by specific conversational codes. Each level of intimacy corresponds to distinct titrations between self and other. Taken in combination the levels of intimacy are the active expression of the process through which personality and culture

mutually act upon each other. The most intimate relationships are likely to reveal a shared consciousness, a mutual representation of self and reality, as evidenced by the usage of shared linguistic utterances. These theoretical conceptualizations are at the root of the hypotheses of this study.

Statement of Hypotheses

The literature review has demonstrated that friendship has been widely researched. Two different themes have been identified which are particularly salient to this investigation. The first is that friendships are an important component of development, and often play a significant role in developmental transitions. The second theme is that friendships form the intimate core of a relational network which intersects individual and social concerns. They are relationships which transmit through shared discourse the symbolic construction of meaning. Within these two themes three hypotheses about the role of friendship in the adult construction of personhood have been formulated and tested.

Hypothesis One

Those in the social network who have been defined as friends will have been consolidated as such during moments

of developmental transition.

Hypothesis Two

A sample of adults will use distinct strategies of verbal communication to distinguish three patterns of interdependence and intimacy in friendship relationships: 1) Verbal structures constructed with "we" as the subject and which demonstrate joined activity will be associated with intimate friendships; 2) Verbal structures constructed with "This person and I" as the subject and which demonstrate separate actors engaged in a similar activity will be associated with regular friendships; 3) Verbal structures constructed with "they" and which demonstrate undefined persons acting upon another will be associated with casual friendships.

Hypothesis Three

Young adults identified as intimate friends will use more shared utterances and similar content themes in spontaneous autobiographical narratives than will regular or casual friends.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes an explanation of the research methodology, strategies for data collection, and a brief discussion of the relevance of the data to the stated hypotheses. Copies of the questionnaires, and the structured interview will be found in the appendices.

Clinical Ethnomethodology

Glaser and Strauss (1967) called upon researchers to stop utilizing research protocols which employ logico-deductive approaches to already substantiated theoretical premises. Instead they argue for research which tests theories which are derived from actual observations of phenomena in everyday life. They argue that their "grounded approach" to qualitative research strategies can generate new ideas which may gradually propel the formulation of useful new insights.

Hypothesis generating research lends itself to an observational case study data base. This examination of the data will utilize ethnomethodological investigative strategies to build a theoretical consensus from subjects' own assessment of their experience. Meyer Fortes (1949) has said that with a focus on particular, yet pervasive, structures it is possible to observe the functioning of a whole. By focusing on subjects' own perceptions of their

friendships as a theoretical construct, extrapolations about friendship and personhood will be possible. An ethnomethodological, participant observation research protocol will ask people to reflect about their own psychic functioning by responding to a set of questions which represent the psychological and theoretical expectation. By analyzing the agreement or lack therefore between participant's own sense of their friendships and the theoretical assumptions, this study is able to usefully comment upon the common rules of symbolic discourse operative in friendships.

Ethnomethodologists have been particularly successful in this approach to the study of human social behavior (Garfinkel 1967, Garfinkel and Sacks 1970; see also Goffman 1959, 1963, 1971). These researchers have assumed that the everyday "lay" explanation of social events is one way in which these structures are perpetuated, and is therefore valid observational data. Indexical expression, situation specific words or phrases whose meaning may be situation dependent, are noted and queried in ethnomethodological research. The language in which people describe their own psychic function is useful information. A clinical ethnomethodological investigation enables everyday cognition, the "folk" wisdom of psychological events, to generate theoretical discourse.

Overall Research Plan and Design

In this section the results of the pilot study will be discussed as well as the process used in creating the measures. Then, the recruitment of participants and a full description of the research protocol will be elaborated .

The Pilot Study

The hypotheses for the study were developed from a series of pilot interviews. Ten people (6 males, 4 females) were asked to talk about their friendships in an unstructured manner. These ten people were all acquaintances of this researcher chosen to facilitate compliance. Their ideas were compared to salient themes in the literature. Once three hypotheses emerged that were supported by the literature and relevant to the pilot data, the measures of the study were designed by this researcher. The manifest ideational and linguistic trends of the people in the pilot study were used to formulate measures which would successfully test the hypotheses.

A background information questionnaire was considered necessary because the results of the pilot interviews suggested that people's thoughts about friendship clearly related to their environmental milieu. This researcher used a basic clinical intake interview as the basis for this measure (Appendix B).

The relational tree was developed to facilitate the collection of a simple list of a subject's relationships (Appendix C). The ten people divided their friendships into three categories of closeness and Wilner (1975) described three types of intimacy. The intimacy diagram which consisted of three circles extending outward from the a square which represented the subject (Appendix D) was designed to reflect the three groupings.

The three-circle structure of the intimacy diagram is more static in its presentation here than how it actually functions. Many subjects attempted to create subcategories, especially between circle one and two, and more than one person made remarks similar to this: "This is how it looks today, but tomorrow or later on this evening, it could be very different. It all depends on me, what I'm going through, and how I understand myself in a given moment." Nonetheless, the intimacy diagram was a useful way of reflecting extant categories of organization.

A questionnaire was then devised which gathered three types of phrases which were used when describing the activities the pilot subjects shared with friends. The phrases were constructed as follows: 1) Phrases that began with "We" and described two people equally participating in a single activity; 2) Phrases that began with "This person and I" and demonstrated two actors separately participating in a similar action; 3) Phrases that began with a more anonymous "They" who could either perform or not perform a

similar action.

The phrases were divided into five classifications the sharing of which the pilot subjects had mentioned as signals of friendship: 1) Vulnerability (the topics included illness, anxiety and family history); 2) Support (the topics included advice, influence, and shared events); 3) Self expression (topics included emotions, strength and weaknesses, and relaxation); 4) Interaction (topics included general conversations, conversations about sexuality, and play behavior); 5) Intrapsychic issues (topics included empathy, change and merger). The subjects were asked to answer three questions about each topic (15 topics total distributed across five themes) which were written in either the "we", the "this person and I' or the "they" form (Appendix E).

An interview was constructed to elicit detailed information about how each friendship on the intimacy diagram was formed, and why subjects assigned a friend to a particular intimacy level. The interview also elicited a brief autobiographical statement from each subject to collect spontaneous narratives about themselves (Appendix F).

Two subjects from the pilot group were given the protocol and each completed it with positive results. They were able to tolerate the time required to complete the questionnaires, length of interview, and the directions of the protocol. Interesting results were forthcoming in their

answers.

Recruitment of Subjects

Subjects were recruited from the friendship network of a target person, a 40 year-old adult white male professional. He was chosen for two reasons. The fact that he was known to this researcher greatly increased the chances of his willingness to participate and to make his friendship network available. Also, he has an extensive system of friends of both sexes and of various ethnicities and races. The sample here includes a subset of his friends and their friends. Each person knows several people in the study and cluster around three somewhat overlapping groups: work friends, artistic friends, and long-term friends from childhood and educational experiences.

Figure one depicts the friendship network according to where each participant falls on the target person's intimacy diagram only. The intimacy level of each person changes according to the author of the diagram. Only these thirty people are included in the statistical analyses. Of course, since every participant has their own network there are many additional people represented in the study, and these thirty people appear repeatedly on each other's diagrams.

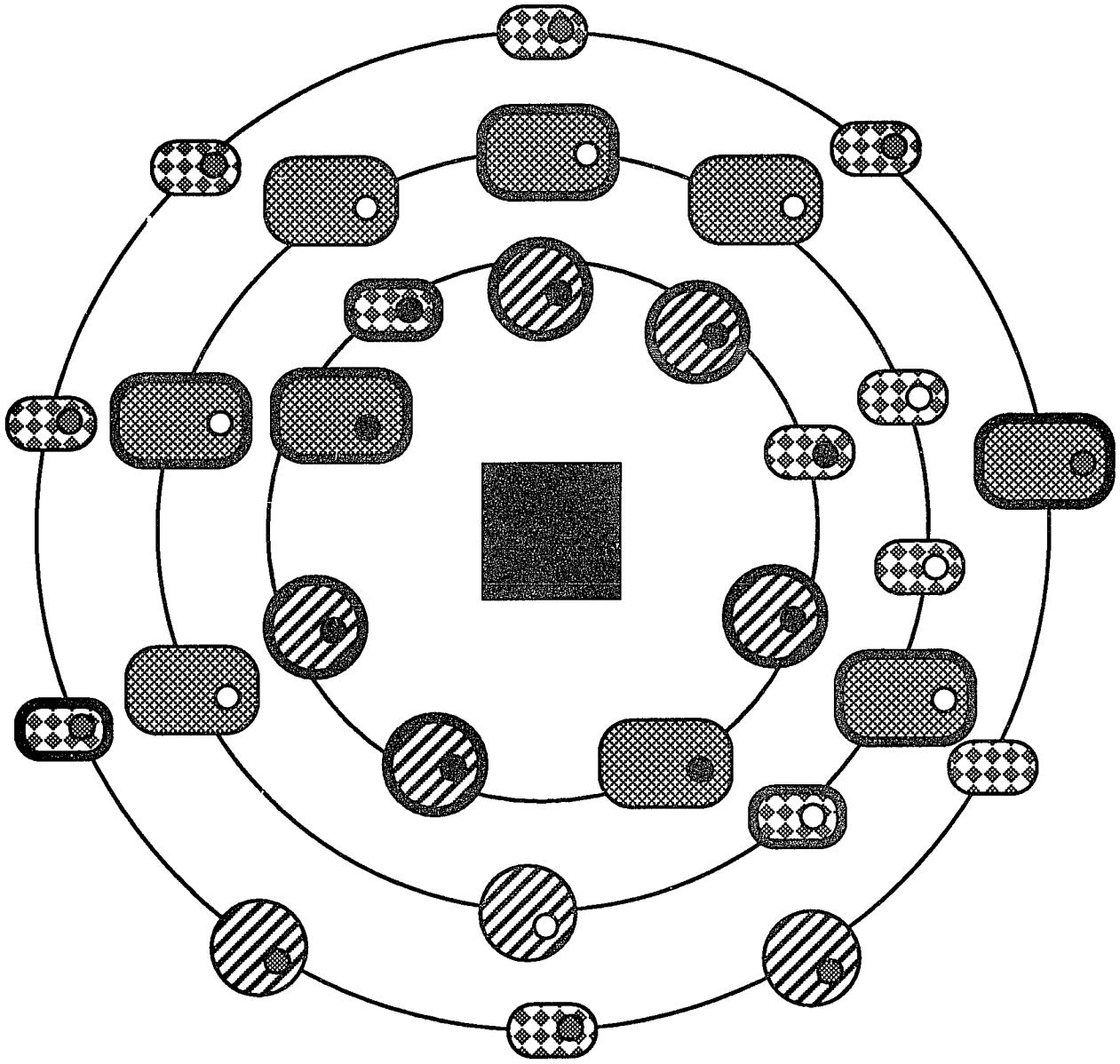
Figure two depicts the three clusters within the network. People within each cluster tend to have more contact with one another. Cluster A consists of friends known to each other because of their involvement in the arts. Cluster B includes people who are known to each other

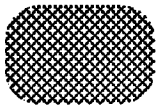
Figure #1

INTIMACY DIAGRAM

of

Target Person





- Cluster C

- Cluster A

- Cluster B

Male

Female

Intimate Friend

Regular Friend

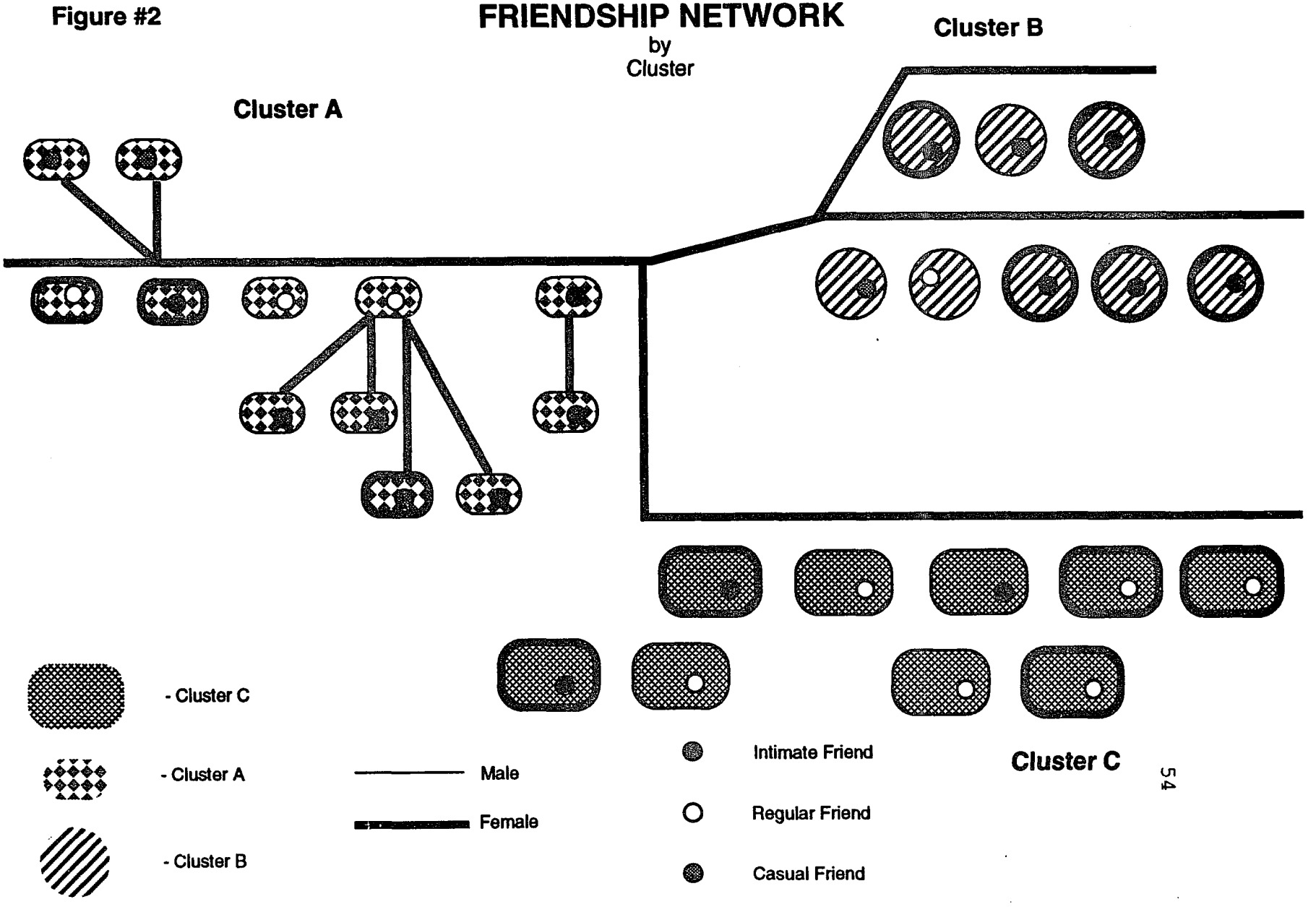
Casual Friend

Figure #2

FRIENDSHIP NETWORK

by

Cluster

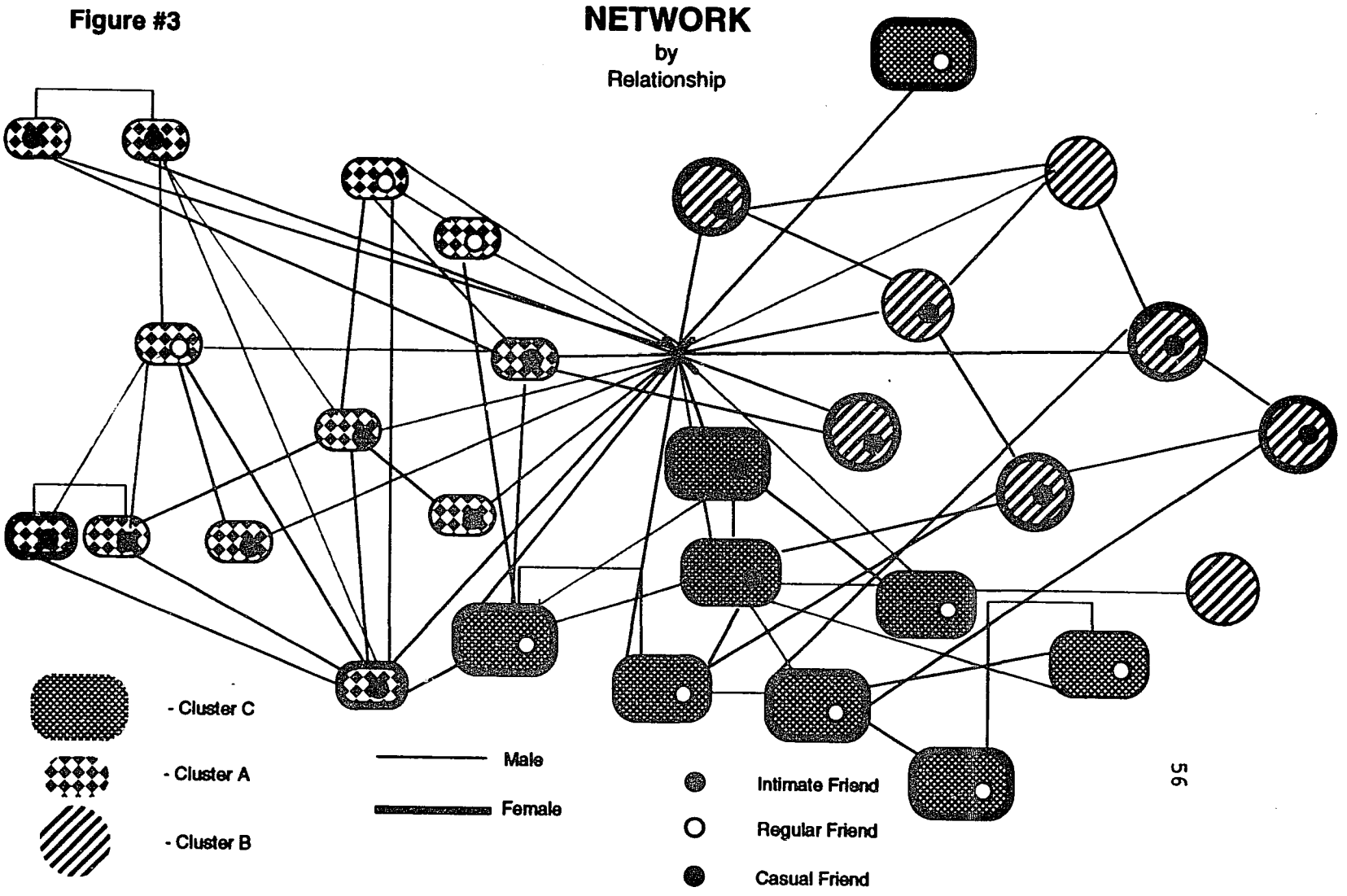


because they shared similar educational experiences with the target person. Cluster C includes people who know each other from professional organizations. The dark lines separate the clusters and also indicate particularly close sub-groupings within the cluster. Clusters are based on proximity of contact due to shared activities and are not related to intimacy level.

Finally Figure three depicts the relationships over the entire network. As can be seen from the connecting lines, most of the people in this system do know each other, although each participant's network is organized differently with respect to intimacy level and cluster.

Participants were not told who the target person was, nor were they privy to who else was in the study. However, given that they communicate with one another this information was soon widely known. Participants were curious and eager about each other's and this researcher's use of the material. Several people requested to be in the study, one person exclaiming, "I can't bear feeling left out." The study and this researcher's role become an important happening amongst the people who participated. At times, it was hard to discern the difference between role of researcher and friend, a dilemma nicely addressed by Dumont (1978) "A relationship between I and they is necessarily dialectical . . a process in which an exchange takes place, one in which they figure me out and I figure them out" (p. 5). The interdependence in communicative patterns which

Figure #3


NETWORK
by
Relationship
- Cluster C
- Cluster A
- Cluster B
Male
Female
Intimate Friend
Regular Friend
Casual Friend

transpired through the gossip about the study was an important component to the hypotheses of this study.

After the target person completed the study protocol, people from his relational tree were contacted by phone. If they agreed to participate, a questionnaire was mailed and an interview arranged three weeks later. Fifty people were contacted and forty eight agreed to participate. Thirty people (16 males, 14 females) completed the entire protocol. Ten people completed questionnaires, but declined to be interviewed. Eight people participated in the interviews but did not have time to complete the questionnaire. Two decliners were a married couple. The man explained to me, "We don't have friends anymore. Friendships require effort, and imply continual risk-taking. My marriage is my base, my stability. I don't want that to be disturbed by the anxiety of perpetual changes that being with my friends evokes." Two more decliners were single white men who found the material much too private, "things I might not even tell a wife, if I had one!"

This statistical results of the study are based on the thirty subjects who completed both parts of the protocol. Incomplete data were used for general information only.

Description of the Research Protocol

The research protocol consisted of three parts. Part one included an introductory discussion with the subject and

an explanation of the hand-outs. They were then given a packet with a consent form and an instruction sheet (see Appendices A1, A2, A3). Before signing the consent form they were told that the material they were being asked about was clearly of a personal and intimate nature. Reassurances about confidentiality were provided, and subjects were also instructed to contact this researcher should they at any point feel uncomfortable about the extent of their self revelations.

Part two involved the participant's completion of the packet of materials on his or her own time. The packet included the following tasks and questionnaires: 1) Background Information; 2) Relational Tree; 3) Intimacy Diagram; 4) Interactional Style Questionnaire.

Part three occurred within three weeks of the distribution of the questionnaires and subsequent to completion of the packet. It consisted of a structured interview about materials in the packet and an autobiographical statement. The interviews were held at this researcher's home, and included a meal as reciprocation for the participant's efforts. This also had the advantage of creating a setting which replicated an act of friendship. When the subjects first arrived, the structured interview was given. Detailed questions were asked about each relationship on the intimacy diagram. Participants also discussed their experience filling out the questionnaires. Then this researcher and the participant would eat, and

speak more spontaneously about their lives, their friendships and how the two intersected. Finally, as the meal concluded participants were told that the researcher would accord a great deal of respect to the information which they had imparted. There was no evidence of any negative impact from this process.

The questionnaires, the interviews and the informal discussion formed a text which the participants analyzed with the researcher to derive some understanding of the role friendship plays in their personhood. This is the manner in which the data were collected. The next section will explain how the questionnaires and interviews addressed the three hypotheses.

Testing the Hypotheses

This section will open with an explanation of how the information from the Background Information questionnaire was used (Appendix B). Then how each of the measures tested the three hypotheses will be explained. Finally, there will be a discussion about how the collected data were treated.

Background Information

All subjects completed a background information form (Appendix B) which asked questions about their childhood and family of origin. This information was used to describe the sample and to locate participants within their particular cultural context. This information was considered highly

relevant to the hypotheses because it made explicit some of the features which bond this group of participants.

Hypothesis One: Friendships Formed During Developmental Transition

Participants were first asked to list all the people in their relational world with whom they are in contact on a regular basis on the relational tree questionnaire. Then they were asked to select friends from that list and place them on a diagram of three circles according to three specific definitions: 1) The inner circle was for intimate friends; 2) The middle circle was for regular friends; 3) The outer circle was for casual friends. Subjects were asked the details of how they have come to know each of the people on their relational tree in the section of the interview protocol labelled "Relational Tree". (Appendix F). These data were collected to demonstrate that there was a high percentage of friendships which formed during moments of mutual change amongst those identified as intimate friends.

Hypothesis Two: Distinct Verbal Communicative Style and Patterns of Dependence and Intimacy

The data from the intimacy diagram as described above were used again.

Next, subjects were presented with examples of interactional style and asked to state which person on their intimacy diagram they associated to the particular phrase

(appendix E). Three types of phrases were represented: 1) Statements of joined activity using the pronoun "we" where the actors share similar affective experiences; 2) Statements of collaborative activity using the term "this person and I" where the actors clearly can empathize with each other's experience; 3) Statements which use the term "they" and imply an actor either carrying out or not carrying out a task.

The goal was to demonstrate that subject's would primarily associate the joined "we" statements to those people who clustered around the first circle of the intimacy diagram. Those people who clustered around the second level of the intimacy diagram would be associated to the "this person and I" statements. Finally, those people on the third level of the intimacy diagram would be associated to the ambivalent effect statements.

Hypothesis Three: Shared Utterances in Friendship

Subjects were asked in the interview section of the protocol labelled "Shared Linguistic Utterances" (Appendix F) to give a short autobiographical narrative. The statements were limited to no more than ten minutes. Content themes were listed and peculiar phrases were noted. The expectation was that those subjects who had been identified as the target person's intimate friends would have a higher percentage of shared content in their narrative, and that

they would manifest a higher incidence of mutual peculiar phrases.

Treatment of the Data

Frequency distributions and percentages, as well as measures of central tendency and correlation were used to analyze descriptive data. Tests of significance (the chi square distribution and the analysis of variance) were employed to the final results in order to evaluate whether or not the findings were statistically reliable. Finally, prototypic examples of friendships were examined from a case development point of view. The intent of the data analysis was to use statistical measures to structure the observations and describe the relationships between language, intimacy and personhood.

For the first hypothesis all friendships which appeared on the collective intimacy diagrams of the thirty subjects were given an intimacy score (1,2 or 3) according to where they fell on the subject's intimacy diagram. Each friendship was rated as developmental transition (1), shared experience (2), and proximity (3), (see Appendix G for the list of terms and definitions which will warrant rating as a 1, 2, or 3). A Pearson Chi-square analysis was used to discern whether or not there was a significant association between friendship formation and current level of intimacy.

For hypothesis two each question was assigned a value 1, 2, or 3. Value one included the joined "we" statements. Value two included the "this person and I" statements. Value

three included the "they" statements. The intimacy scores for each person listed in response to the question was averaged. Then, those averages were averaged over the thirty subjects. Each question received an overall score between 1 and 3 to signify the average intimacy level of the persons listed in response to that question. An analysis of variance was then performed to decide whether or not there was a significant difference between the means, the average level of intimacy of the people listed in response to the three types of questions (We, this person and I, and they).

Finally in hypothesis three the subject's intimacy score was used to determine if there was a significantly higher percentage of shared content themes, or repetitions of peculiar utterances, amongst those subjects identified as intimate friends.

This chapter has offered an explanation of the methodological approach. The procedures for the research have been reviewed. The pilot study was presented as the basis for the development of the measures. The recruitment of subjects was detailed. The manner in which the measures tested the hypotheses and the treatment of the data was explicated. The next chapter will present the results of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The statistical analysis of the data has strongly supported the first two of the hypotheses, and mildly supported the third. The full results of this study are presented in five parts. The first includes a thorough description of the sample based on data from the background information section of the questionnaire and interviews. Three case examples are included. These findings are useful for a thorough evaluation of the findings of the hypothesis. The next three parts correspond to each of the three hypotheses tested in this study. Finally, part five refers to unanticipated findings, general trends which would be worthy of further investigation and which also enhance a discussion of the results.

The hypotheses of this study were formulated with an overarching goal of examining the how the language, discourse and communication of friends is reflective of relational ties and the self-other experience. These processes are considered significant to the construction of personhood during adult development. The hypotheses were organized to tackle this rather large question from three supporting angles. The first was to consider the role developmental changes played in creating close friendships. The second two angles pertained more to aspects of communication and consciousness. Hypothesis two attempted to

examine a link between language and intimacy; hypothesis three investigated the role of intimate friendships in the creating of a shared discourse.

Characteristics of the Sample

All thirty subjects (average age 33) currently reside in the greater New York City area; 53% have lived in the New York City area their whole lives, and the remaining 47% moved to the city as adults, at an average age of 25.

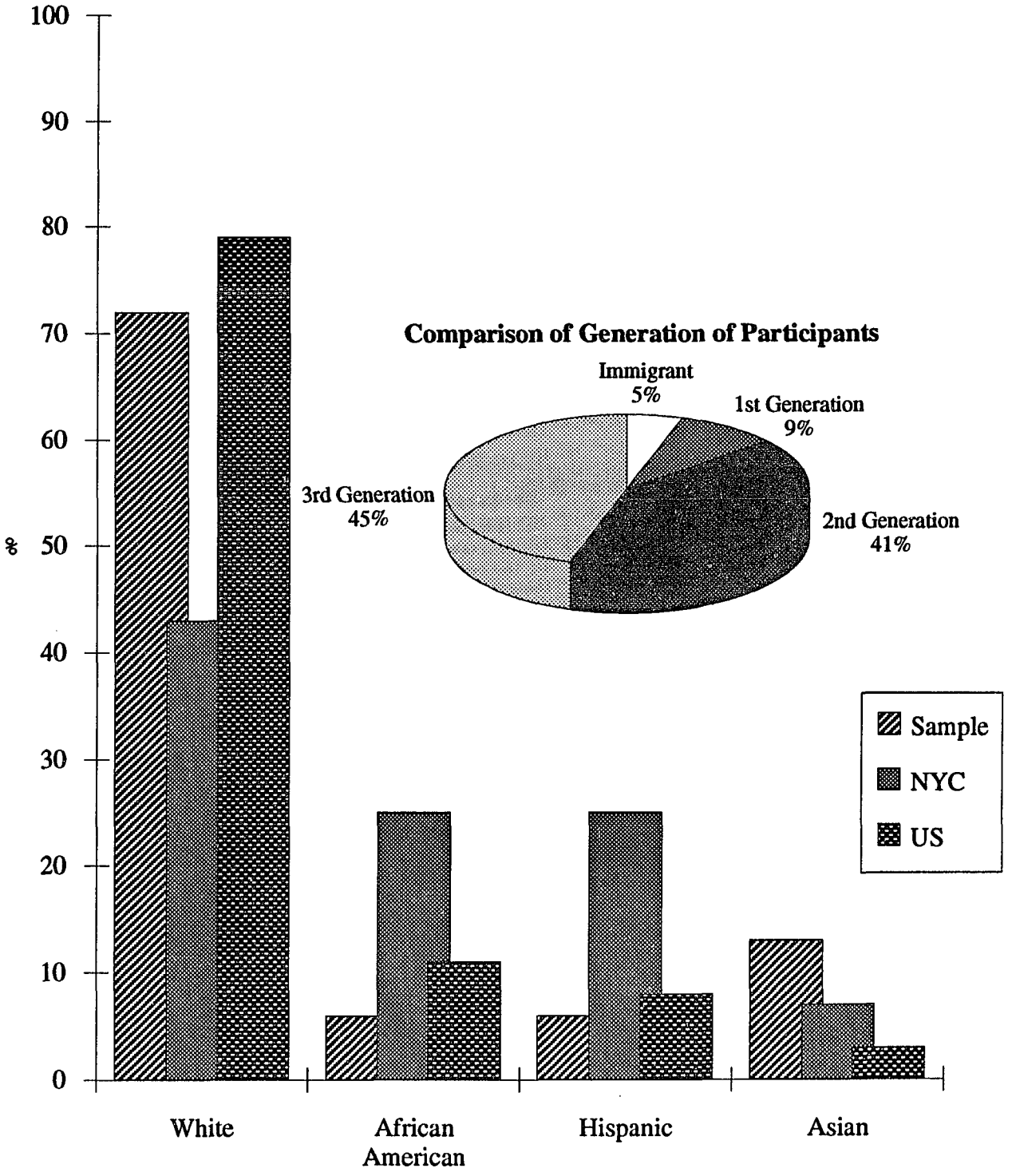
They represent a diverse group. Their racial composition is more varied than is average for the population of the United States. As would be expected in an urban sample there was a fair representation of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians. The majority of white non-hispanics were second generation of European descent. See Graph one for a comparison of the sample to the population of the United States and of New York City.

The participants were 73% heterosexual, 16% bisexual and 10% gay. However, it is noteworthy that of the identified heterosexuals, 100% of the women have had strong erotic feelings for other women, with 25% actually having had lesbian relationships. Of the heterosexual men, 66% acknowledge erotic feelings for other men, 25% actually having had homosexual relationships.

In comparison to the population of the United States, Protestants are markedly underrepresented and Jewish people are over-represented. The percentage of Jewish participants

Graph 1

Comparison of Participant's Racial Identification to N.Y.C.[a] & U.S.[b] Population



a. New York State Statistical Yearbook (1991)
SUNY: Nelson A Rockefeller Institute.
b. Statistical Abstract of the United States (1991)
National Data book, U.S. Dept. of Commerce,
Economics & Statistical Administration, Bureau of Census.

is even high for estimates of New York City's Jewish population (see Graph two).

The information about current family is significant with respect to the population of the United States. There is a higher representation of single people by a wide margin, and more divorced or widowed persons by smaller margins (see Graph three). Three of the participants are parents. Only one who lives with his children and spouse.

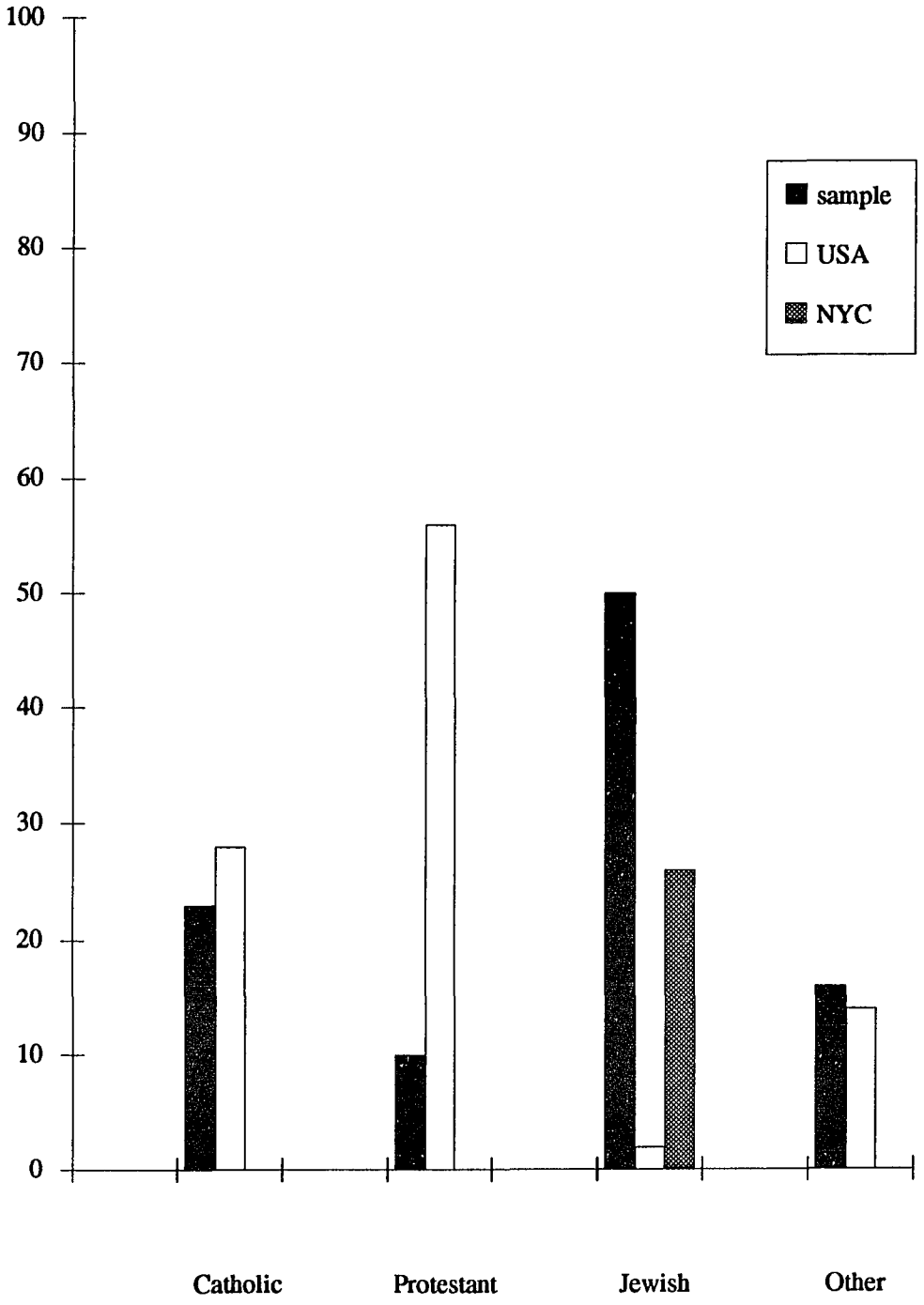
In regards to income, they earn less money than does the average wage earner in the United States. They are better off than the population of New York City as there are fewer people in the lowest income category (See Graph four).

As a whole, they are a very successful and highly educated group (see graph 5). In fact, a full 60% have earned advanced degrees. In addition, many of the participants have well known reputations. The participants are employed in professional (law, medicine, editorial, mental health) and artistic endeavors more than the general population of New York City. None of the participants has a technical, skilled labor, or clerical position as their primary identified occupation, while the majority of people from the greater New York City area consider themselves to be in this category (see Graph six).

The comparison of the sample demographics with that of New York City and The United States clearly establishes some of the common features which unite this group. It indicates that there is diversity among them. It also suggests some

Graph 2

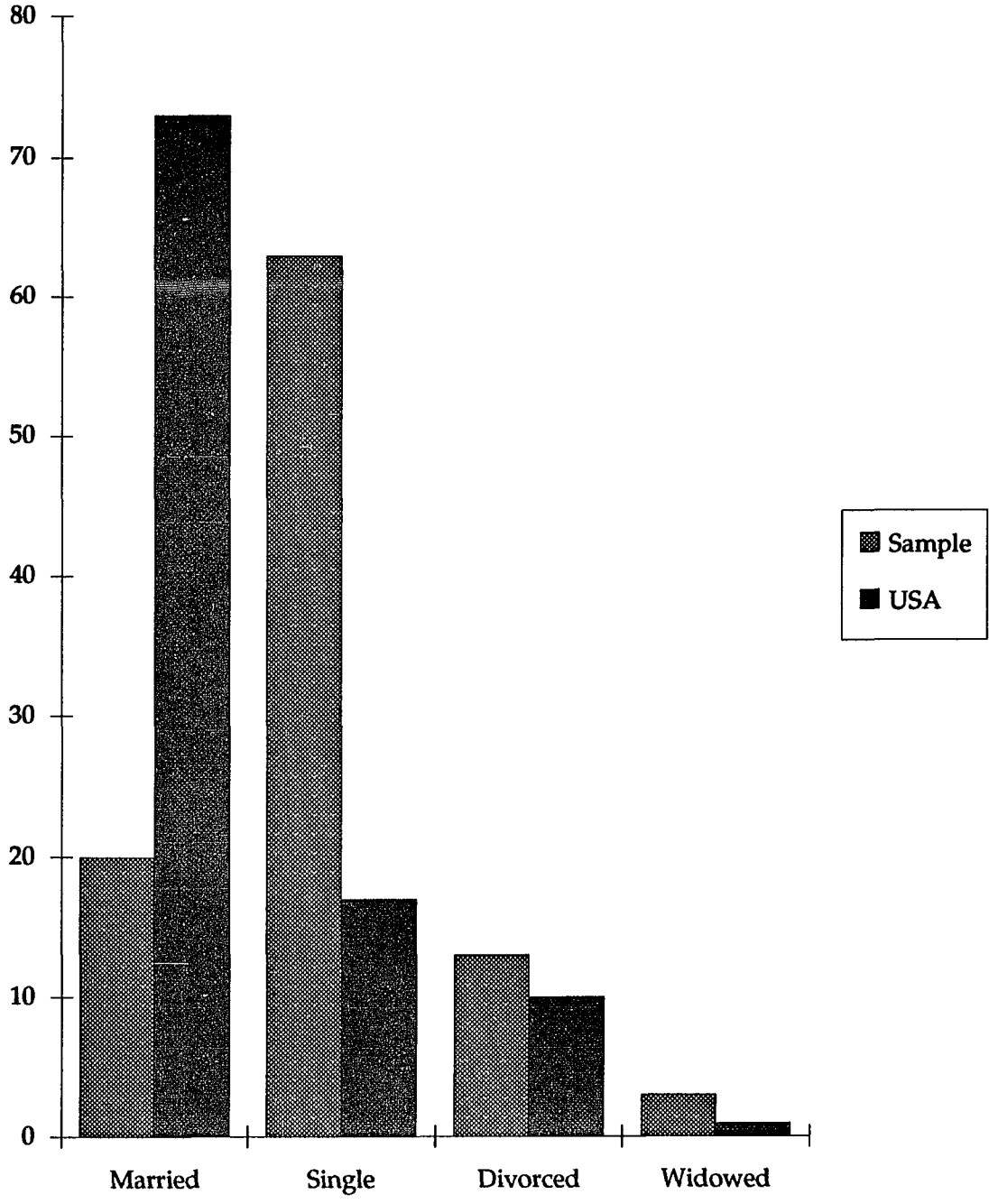
Religious Affiliation Compared to National Average[a]



a. Statistical Abstract of the United States (1991)
National Data Book, U.S. Dept. of Commerce,
Economics & Statistical Administration, Bureau of the Census

Graph 3

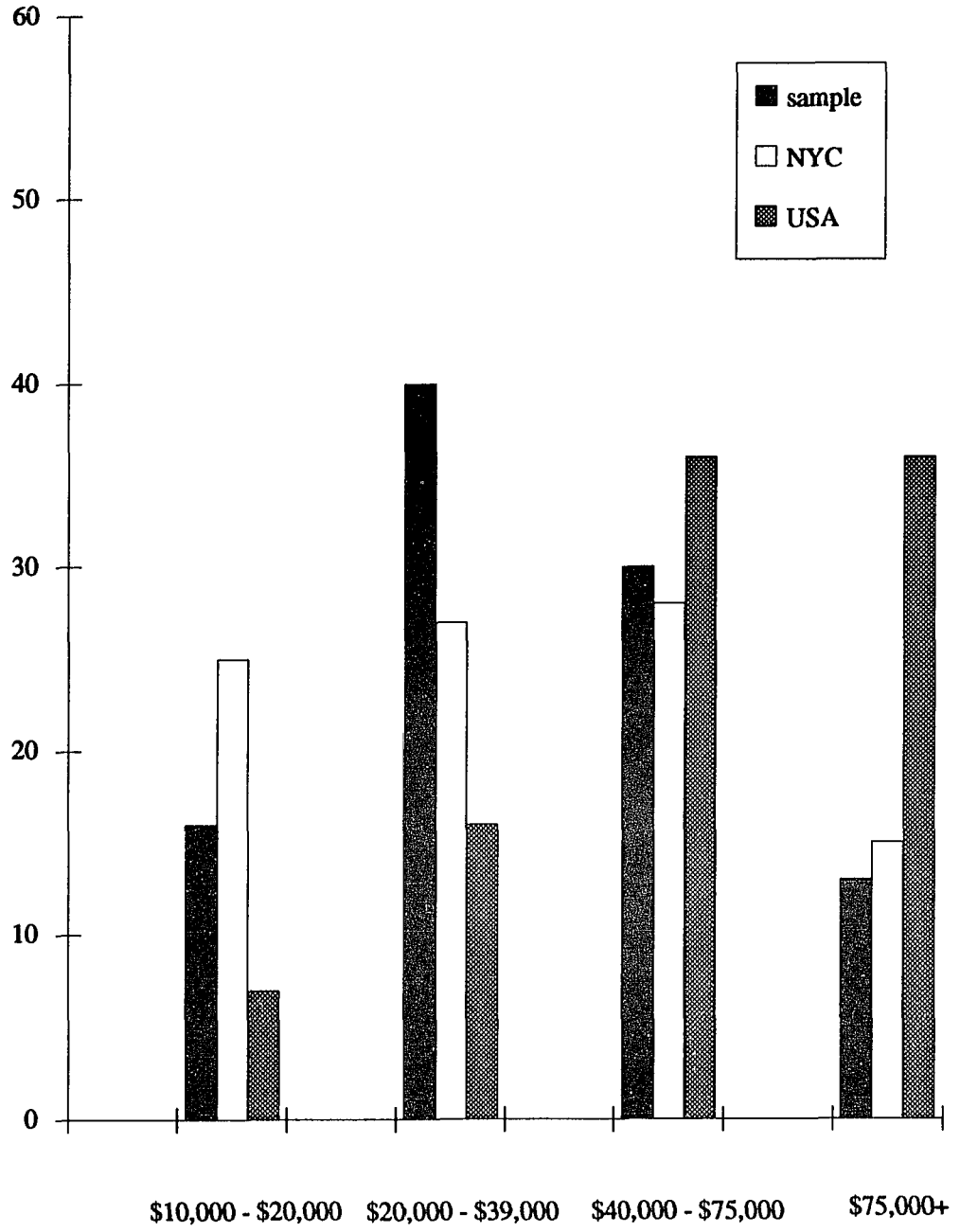
Marital Status of Participants In Comparison to U.S.[a]



a. Statistical Abstract of the United States (1991)
National Data book, U.S. Dept. of Commerce,
Economics & Statistical Administration, Bureau of Census.

Graph 4

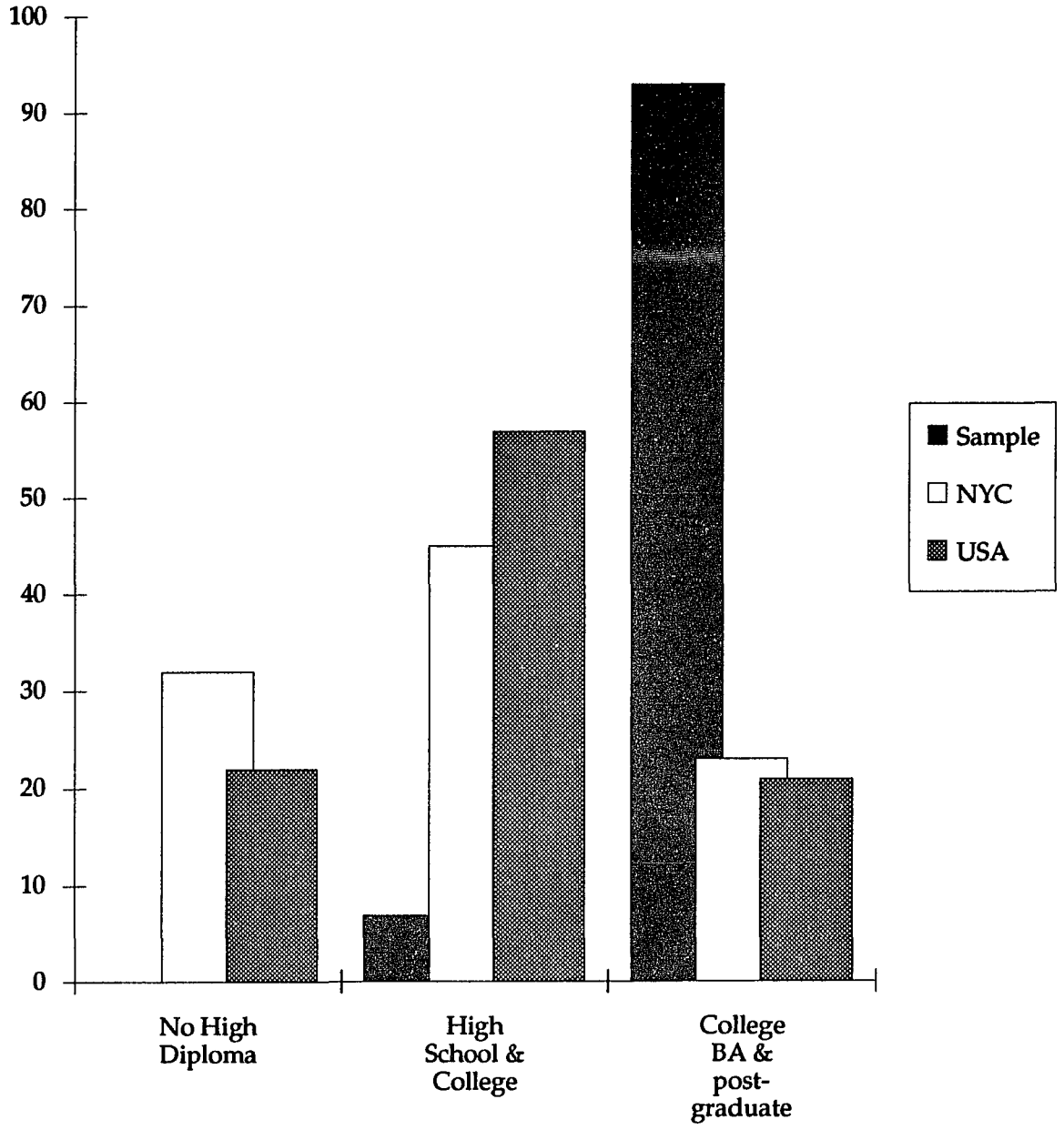
Participant Income in Comparison to N.Y.C.[a] & U.S.[b]



a. New York State Statistical Yearbook (1991)
SUNY: Nelson A Rockefeller Institute.
b. Statistical Abstract of the United States (1991)
National Data book, U.S. Dept. of Commerce,
Economics & Statistical Administration, Bureau of Census.

Graph 5

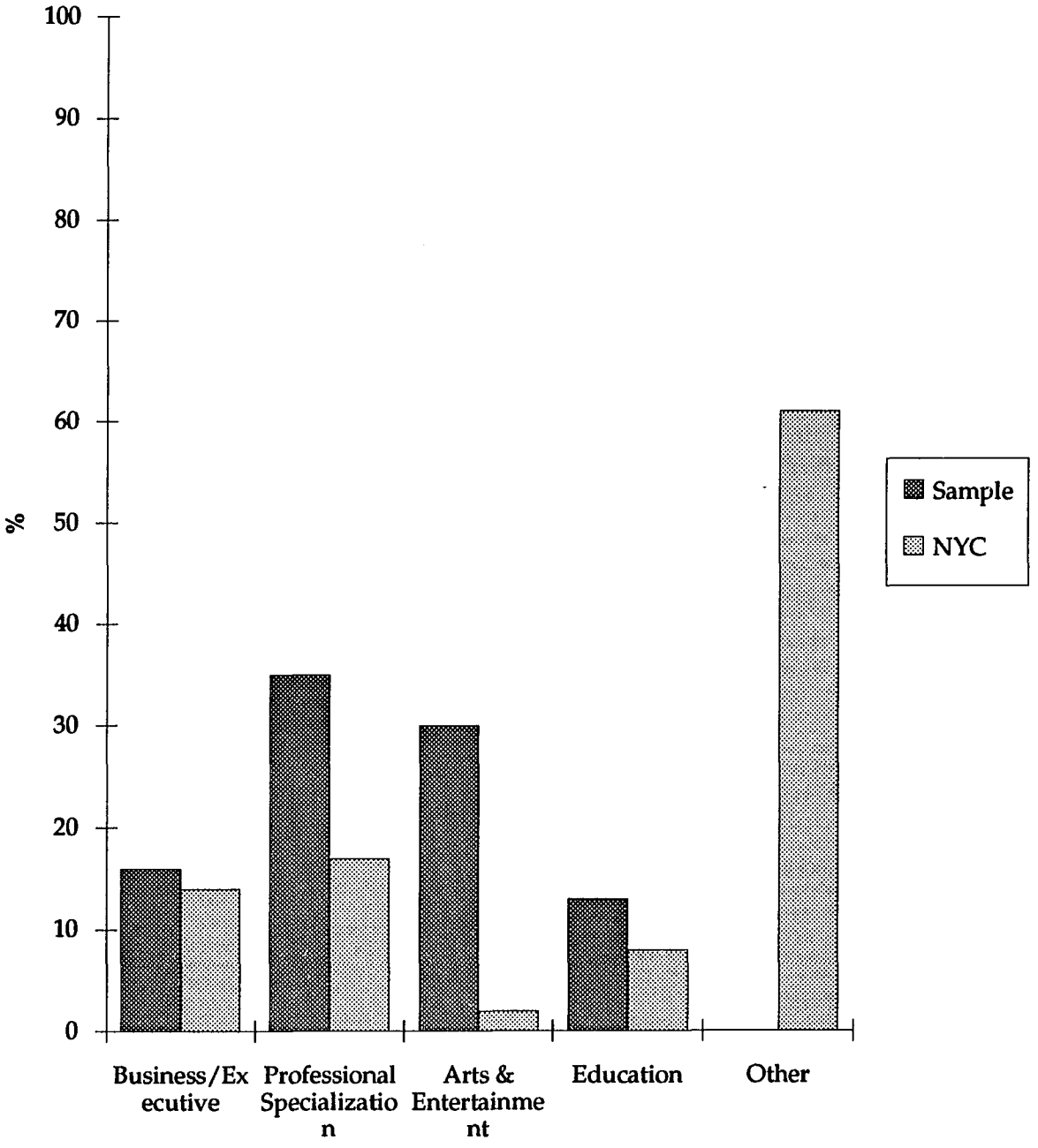
Attained Education Level of Participants In Comparison to N.Y.C.[a] & U.S.[b] Norms.



a. New York State Statistical Yearbook (1991)
SUNY: Nelson A Rockefeller Institute.
b. Statistical Abstract of the United States (1991)
National Data book, U.S. Dept. of Commerce,
Economics & Statistical Administration, Bureau of Census.

Graph 6

Participant Profession in Comparison to N.Y.C.Employed Population[a]



a. New York State Statistical Yearbook (1991)
SUNY: Nelson A Rockefeller Institute.

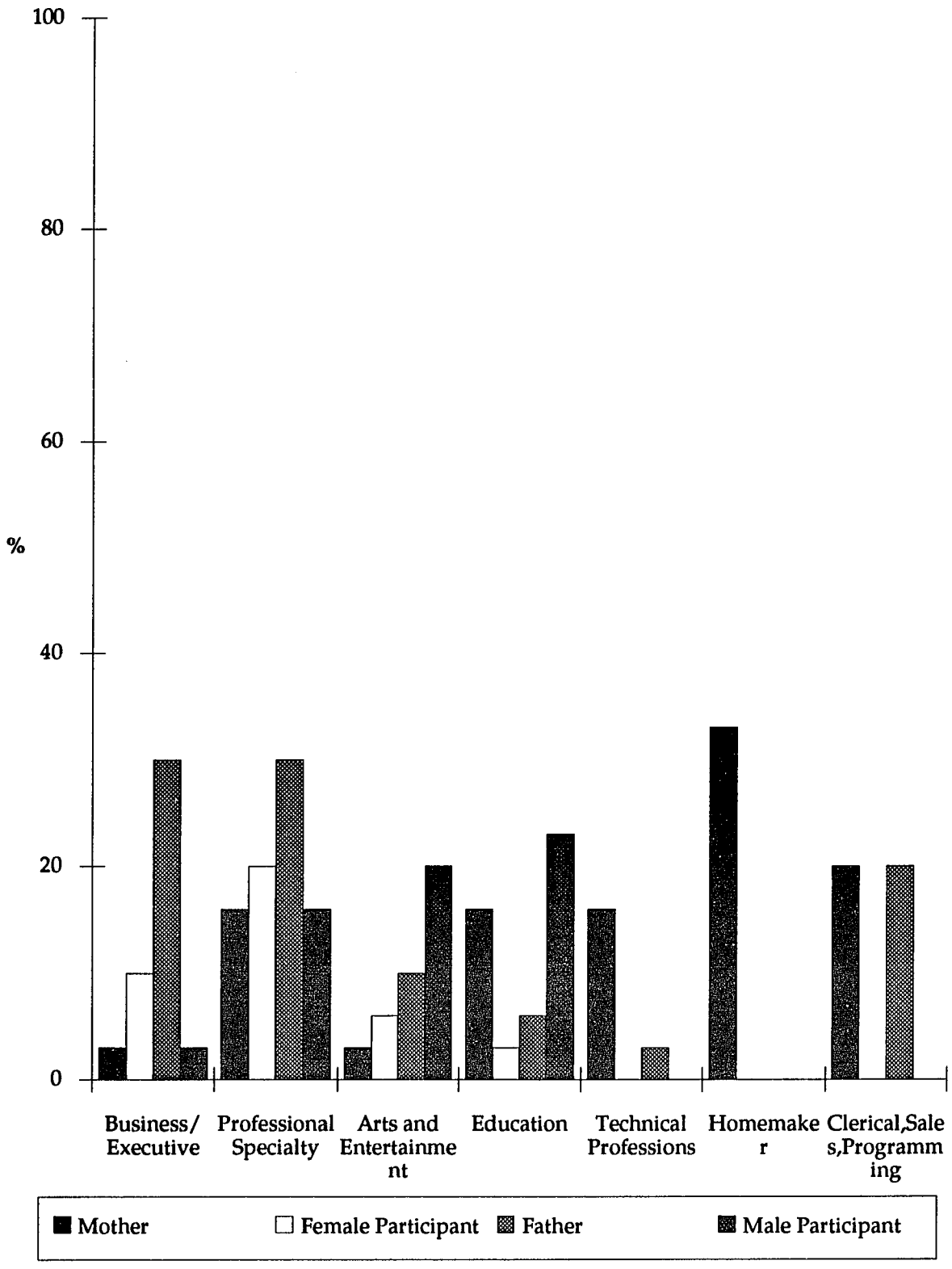
ways in which this sample is different in composition from what might be considered mainstream.

There are other notable findings pertaining to family of origin. When compared to the professions of their parents, the tendency for men to follow their mother's professions and daughters to follow their father's careers is notable. The majority of participant's fathers are either in business (many having been small business owners), or in professional specializations (medicine, law, mental health, editorial) whereas the majority of male participants are either in the arts or education. Most of the mothers were homemakers, with many of them splitting their time with part-time careers in arts, nursing and teaching. The majority of female participants have chosen professional specializations as their careers, with significantly few of them in arts or education. None of the women are homemakers. And, neither male or female participants who had parents in clerical and sales or technical specializations have pursued this line of work (see graph seven).

The participants in this sample have encountered many of the family problems commonly recognized as the issues of these times. Almost everyone in the study reported significant stresses in their childhood households, which include divorced parents, alcoholism or other substance abuse, incest and mental illness (12% having had members of their family commit suicide). In addition, many participants spoke about familial stress induced by cultural change which

Graph 7

Comparison of Participant's and Parent's Profession



included immigrant parents, holocaust survival, and racial struggles, and in one case internment in Japanese prisoner of war camps (see Figure four). Not unsurprisingly, whether due to social and educational status, or to the severity of family problems, 80% of the participants have been or are in psychotherapy for an average of five years.

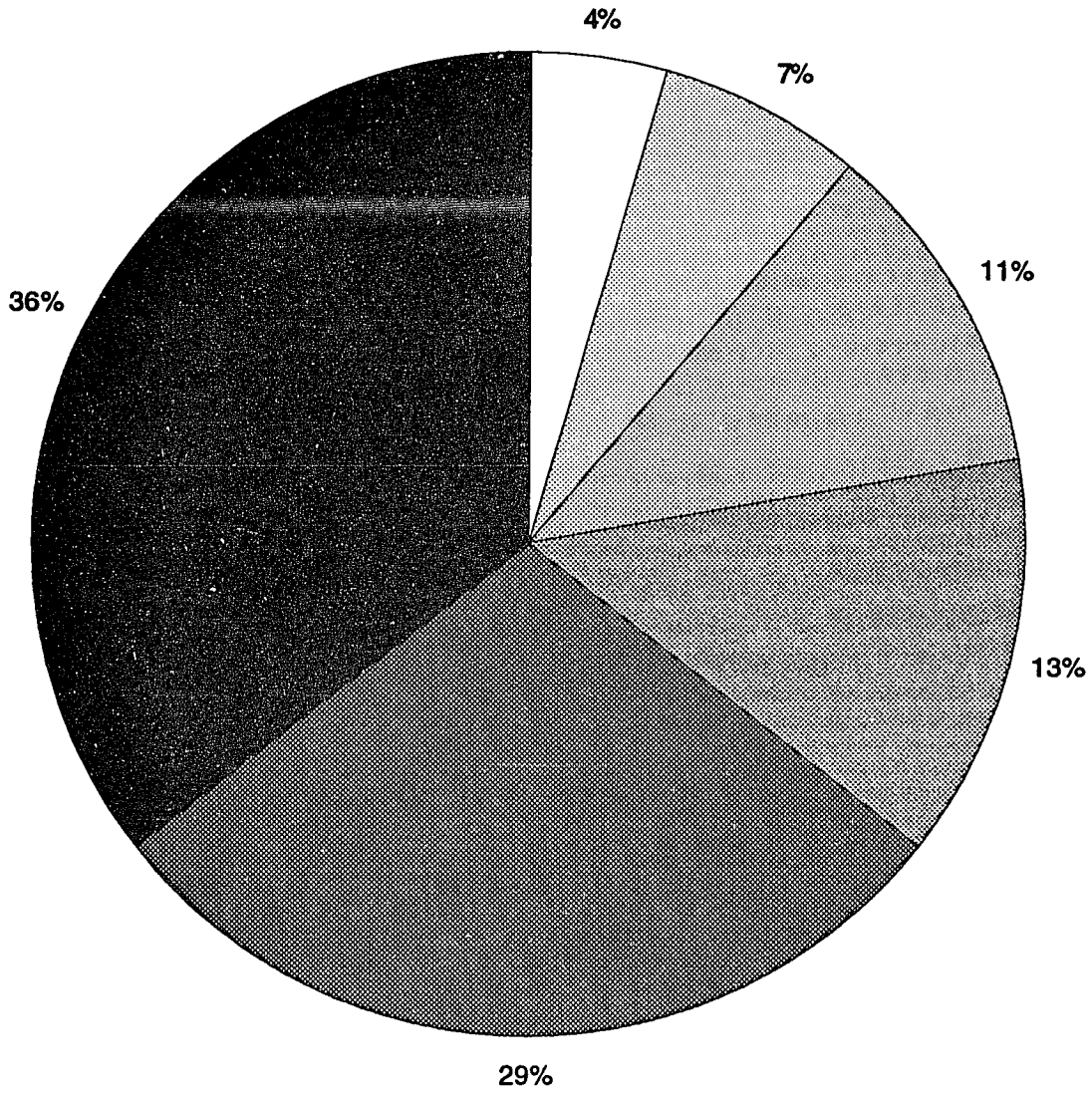
This group reflects another more recent trend. A full 97% know someone who is at least HIV positive, with many study members stating that they know someone with full blown AIDS. Of the 43% who have had a friend die either during childhood or early adulthood, 26% of those deaths were due to AIDS. One person in the study is HIV positive, and he commented:

> I'm just living my life and finding out that it is much larger and that I am more capable than I thought I was. My past has been one of looking for somebody to take care of me, and now I find that in wanting to be here so much, to be present, I'm taking better care of myself. The HIV has been a catalyst for changes I've wanted for a long time.

Finally, 70% of them either now have, or have had, a pet they consider to be an intimate friend. The capacity to be so close with pets is an interesting corollary to the data about what constitutes a relationship. Participants were quite specific about these relationships. The relationships with their pets were moving and heartfelt and often included valiant stories of rescue as well as the tragedies of abuse and abandonment. One person stated, "My cats are part child, part sweetheart." Another noted, "My dog is my best friend in the whole world." Still another

Figure 4

Participant's Reported Family Issues



explained, "As a child, my dog was the only person I could talk with, and sometimes, I still talk to him. I dream about him."

The background information can be easily summarized by referring now to three case examples. Their life histories are representative of the demographic features of the sample.

Case Examples

Jennifer

Jennifer is a 36 year old woman born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. Her mother trained as a concert pianist and taught in high schools and worked as an art therapist. Her mother had problems with alcohol. Her father had a construction business. Both her parents were the children of immigrant Jews. She had two older brothers. As her parents attempted to traverse the distance between their Jewish identity and the eclectic society to which they were adapting, they found themselves unable to parent.

Jennifer stated, "I always enjoyed my friendships, but didn't realize they were so strong and so much fun because I had no relationship with my parents." Her first friend was Kevin and they played horses together. Later she created a magic country with her best friend and sold handmade goods to finance trips there. During adolescence she became a "hippie" with her best friend. During this phase of her

life, she had a sexual relationship with her uncle and later became a lesbian.

She had demonstrated considerable skill as an artist during her mixed private and public school education. She was accepted to an exclusive arts college. Her brothers attended ivy-league universities.

During college she became active in feminist political movements and established herself as central to a well-known art movement. Her friends were lovers, and so was one of her important female teachers. She began to feel doubtful and insecure about herself in these relationships. After completing an MFA, she returned to New York to connect with the avant-garde art scene. During this time, her oldest brother and mother committed suicide within five years of one another.

These events affected her profoundly, and a general questioning of her radical politics and lifestyle began to emerge. She began psychotherapy. After her brother died, she found an alley cat in the street who was near death. She rescued him, and this cat became her friend. She explained, "He was an angry cat, but he liked me." During this time she had developed different sets of friends. She had relationships with older more established couples who supported and nurtured her. She had a series of wild and carefree girlfriends. And then she had friends with whom she shared her growth as she redefined herself personally and professionally. This included marriage to a physician,

and a return to her cultural and religious heritage. She describes her life in this manner:

> I am a person who has had to go through tremendous personal change to reach maturity, and a lot of self-parenting to grow up. This was done through friendships, many of which became sexual. I've tended to confuse many of my friendships with familial relationships, and yet I've deprecated the value of friendships and people that I love, which I think reflects a great deal of ambivalence about need which isn't surprising given the suicides in my family.
>
> All my friends are special people, and together somehow they make me. I have an aristocracy of friendships, and I'm continually working now on being a better friend, to create a better match between what I need on the inside, and my sense of self and role in relationship to others. There are different pulls and tensions in very opposite directions within me, and its not always clear which of these are real, and which are sort of false identities.
>
> I'm at a moment of transition, getting to that point where my friendships are reciprocal, where I give as much as I get. I'm balancing a lot of different relationships, which reflect different parts of me -- some friends still parent me, and other friends are people who connect to my role as an artist, and now I have friends from my recent emergence in my spiritual life, and then I have friends who are specific to my newest role as the wife of a doctor, and friends connected to my environmental projects. And now I'm constructing a world with my husband, and as I do so, all these roles and relationships are undergoing a shift.

Ron

Ron is a 31 year old African American male lawyer. He was born in Harlem, and moved to New Jersey as a child. His parents were strongly influenced by the civil rights movement during the 1960's and pursued a better life for their family of four sons. His father earned a social work degree, and his mother developed expertise in a special form of clerical administration. They moved to a New Jersey neighborhood with few other African-American families. Ron remembers the difficulties this posed for him. Most of the

other members of his family remained in Harlem, and over the years of his childhood he felt a growing separateness between himself and his relatives. There were strong differences developing in ways of conceiving the world. Likewise, he had similar conflicts amongst his peer group. In the early years his family was subject to much discrimination, and minor racial attacks were not uncommon. While he felt his own nuclear family remained strong, he recognized that the impact of the change to a white neighborhood caused stress and tension for his parents.

His first friend was another African American child. They played together and ate lunch at each other's houses. When he moved to New jersey, he felt his friendships diversify. He learned to select sides of himself which could be shared with specific friends. He recognized that he had to be careful about what he exposed, and was keenly aware of having to construct himself in reaction to racial stereotypes. The friend with whom he felt least conflicted was the family dog, "a black and white German Shepherd. We were very close."

During adolescence he smoked pot, "lusted over girls we could never have", played music, and got in trouble with the "police for doing stupid things." He experienced himself as an actor in many of these events, not sure they were "real." He writes:

I wasn't totally satisfied with the friends I hung out with around my adolescence, there were always things with which I couldn't quite identify. A combination of the

> difference between our families, conflicting interests, our different ethnic backgrounds. When you are that age, you don't want to be left out of the crowd, but at the same time you feel you need to expand your horizons. It seems like friends keep you tied down, but also are the way you grow.

He describes these experiences with friends as continuing throughout his education and even being persistent now. He still feels that his closest friends are his family members, and considers his brothers and their families to be his primary companions. His life has changed through encounters with people much different than himself who have challenged his views of the world. He has felt that once another person has been experienced it is impossible to return to one's self in the same way ever again. He explains:

> I'm a lawyer. There are few people who really know me like I know myself, who are joined with me in that way -- my brothers, and my girlfriend. And then there are those people with whom I am close in a certain way. We play music together. We work together. People who speak to me from positions of authority, people I speak to like that. And throughout my life there are those who I could never be close to but who see me the way I want to be seen, or who are exposing me to something different, that one day is going to mean something to me.

Melanie

Melanie is a 34 year old editor with a well know press which has a strong focus on women's issues. She is also enrolled in an advanced degree program where she studies issues which pertain to feminist theory. She was raised in upper Manhattan. Her father and mother were both academics, her father an protestant theologian, her mother an historian. They were very liberal.

They lived in France during her early childhood, and this was where Melanie remembers her first friend. They played together and learned each other's language.

She had an older sister, and when she was six, they adopted a 7 year old African American child. Melanie felt that this event was a turning point in her family's life because it exposed them to realities which shocked them out of their sheltered world view. She attended an elite private girls school. She and her young girlfriends formed an "alliance against foes-- parents, sexism and the wrongs of the world."

One of these female allies died when she was seventeen, and this loss was powerful. She felt numb. She entered the prestigious university to which she had been accepted with a sense of fragility about the world in which she lived. The problems in her family which included alcoholism and incest became clearer to her and haunted her. She developed a firm feminist stance, travelled to Europe and became involved in a series of political and social rebellions.

When she settled in New York, she adopted two cats, who became her important friends. She settled down with a man who recently left her, and her female allies came to her rescue. They took her out and "laughed, talked, listened, cried and were otherwise beautifully supportive." She explains her life in this manner:

I'm a New Yorker, a 34 year old woman professional who lives alone. My work is okay, but I always feel the need for more intellectual stimulation. I'm a person who is

growing, who has a lot of work yet to do, because I want to feel that I have arrived. I feel like I'm living a typical life for my background with respect to class and gender -- struggling with relationships to men, working, economically independent but not well off. I'm at a turning point of growing to accept myself more. I'm constantly coming up against my shortcomings and getting over feeling badly about myself.

My friends, particularly my women friends are so important because we speak a language which acknowledges and accepts these things. The language we speak is the language of the times, and it's there like a security blanket, a safe place I can fall into which brings together all the different aspects of experience, the contrasts of my own existence. My long talks with women friends are probably the foundation of my life.

I want to be more settled. I want people in my life who will never go away. And I want the perfect balance between domesticity and romance, not just in the sense of relationships to men but in the sense of stability, you know, creating domesticity, and also having adventures, challenges, growth and the expansion of horizons. My job is not wholly satisfactory for this because our jobs put us into slots, and I feel there is more to me than that, and I have the desire for something more. But then there is this pull toward domesticity. I sometimes feel I would trade it all for something I could fool myself with as being security. I would like my cats to live forever.

Summary

The intent of this demographic, background information and case example data is to provide a baseline description of the sample. These are the people on whom the hypotheses were tested. The relationship between these observations and findings of the hypotheses will be included in the discussion chapter.

Hypothesis One: Relationship between friendship formation and intimacy level

It was hypothesized that those in the social network who have been defined as friends will have been consolidated as such during moments of developmental transition. As shown in Table one, the Pearson chi-square states that there is a

significant relationship between level of intimacy and the circumstances under which a friendship was formed and that the strength of the relationship is moderate (X^2=180.91, DF=4, p .001, ETA .45). This network included all the friendships represented in the intimacy diagrams of the 30 study participants. The findings revealed that 59.1% of those listed as intimate friends (category 1) became close while undergoing a developmental change which included such events as being roommates in university, a shared catharsis, a change in primary relationships (divorce, marriage, child bearing, or some form of personal tragedy). Friendships were formed due to proximity in 44.6% of people who were classified as regular friends (category 2). Finally, 59.6% of those listed as casual friends (category 3) met through professional affiliations where issues of status, hierarchy and authority were prominent.

The responses of participants when they were asked to describe how a person makes it onto the intimacy diagram suggest the utility of exploring this point further. The same correlation as described above was also found (see Table two). There is an even stronger relationship between why somebody is a friend now, as opposed to when they first met, and their level of intimacy (X^2=255.54, DF=4, p .001, ETA 55). Of those considered to be intimate friends, 47.4% are on the intimacy diagram because the participant is going through a developmental change in which the friend figures prominently. Of the regular friends, 40.7% are listed on the

TABLE ONE:

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTIMACY LEVEL AND FRIENDSHIP FORMATION

		Events of Friendship Formation			
		D.T..	Prox.	P.H.	Row Total
Intimacy Level	1	159	101	2	260
		59.1%	21.3%	2.1%	31.3%
	2	81	212	36	346
		30.1%	44.6%	38.3%	39.3%
	3	29	162	56	232
		10.8%	34.1%	59.6%	29.5%
Column Total		269	475	94	838
		32.1%	56.7%	11.2%	100%

Code

Intimacy Formation

1 = Intimate Friend

2 = Regular Friend

3 = Casual Friend

Events of Friendship

D.T. = Developmental Transition

Prox.= Proximity

P.H. = Professional\ Hierarchical

TABLE TWO:

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTIMACY LEVEL AND FRIENDSHIP CONTINUATION

		Circumstances of Friendship Continuation			
		D.T..	Prox.	P.H..	Row Total
Intimacy Level	1	247	12	1	260
		47.4%	4.3%	2.7%	31%
	2	216	114	16	346
		41.5%	40.7%	43.2%	41.3
	3	58	154	20	232
		11.1%	55.%	54.1%	27.7%
Column		521	280	37	838
		62.2%	33.4%	4.4%	100%

Code

Intimacy Formation
1 = Intimate Friend
2 = Regular Friend
3 = Casual Friend

Events of Friendship
D.T. = Developmental Transition
Prox.= Proximity
P.H. = Professional\ Hierarchical

diagram because of proximity and shared events. 54% of the casual friends are based on relations of hierarchy.

However, what is noteworthy is the movement reflected between the two Tables. When referring to how friendships were originally formed, 32.1% over all categories were formed during developmental transition. In contrast, when asked about what makes a person friend now, 62.2% of friends over all categories are friends now because of developmental transition. Whereas 56.7% of friends across all categories were formed through proximity, only 33.4% are friends now because of proximity. Finally, 11.2% of friends across all categories met when there was a hierarchical difference. Only 4% of friends are on the intimacy diagram now because of a hierarchical relationship.

The data support the findings of the first hypothesis. There is a significant relationship between how friendships are formed, and how friends are currently maintained and their intimacy level.

Hypothesis two: Relationship between language and intimacy level

The second hypothesis was that there would be a significant difference between the phrases associated to the different intimacy level. Each participant listed the friends to whom they associate three types of interactions; those referred to with "we", those with "this person and I' and those with "they". An analysis of variance was

performed to test the within subject effect of subject pronouns (See Table three). The variation between the intimacy level of friends associated to the "we" constructions, the friends associated to the "this person and I" constructions and to the "they" constructions was found to be significant (f=184.77, p .001).

The significance of the variance was found not to be an artifact of the different content themes addressed by the three types of phrases ("We", "This person and I" and "They"). The five content themes addressed by the questions were issues pertaining to revelation of vulnerability, needs for support, self expression, interpersonal interaction and intrapsychic events. The same analysis of variance was used to test whether or not a participant associated friends of one intimacy level to a particular theme (for instance, associating intimate friends to the content themes pertaining to the revelation of intimacy). The results indicated a significant variance (p .01) between the average intimacy level of friends associated to particular content themes (See Table four). However, when the actual differences are computed across the content themes, the within subjects effect analysis indicates that the differences occur only between two themes and are only mildly significant (p .05; see Table Five). There is a slightly higher representation of intimate friends on questions about vulnerability than on questions about support (1.544 vs. 1.659). There is also a higher

TABLE THREE:

SIGNIFICANCE OF VARIANCE ACROSS MEANS OF INTIMACY LEVEL ACCORDING TO SUBJECT PRONOUN

Analysis of Variance
Tests Involving "Pronouns" Within Subject Effect

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig.of F
WITHIN CELLS	1.52	58	.03		
PRONOUNS	9.71	2	4.86	184.77	$p < .001$

TABLE FOUR:

SIGNIFICANCE OF VARAINCE ACROSS THE MEAN OF INTIMACY LEVEL ACCORDING TO CONTENT

Analysis of Variance
Tests involving "Content" within Subject Effect

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig. of F
WITHIN CELLS	2.59	104	.02		
CONTENT	.35	4	.09	3.49	$p < .01$

TABLE FIVE:

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONTENT MEANS

An asterisk at the intersection of a common heading and row heading corresponding to a particular content headings implies that those two themes are statistically significantly different at $p < .05$, (2-tailed)

	V.	S.	S.E.	Ite.	Ita.
V .	-	-	-	-	-
S.	*	_	_	_	_
S.E.	_	_	_	_	_
Ite.	_	_	_	_	_
Ita	_	**	_	_	_

* -- 1.544 vs. 1.659

** -- 1.659 vs. 1.514

Code: V. = Vulnerability; S. = Support; S.E. = Self Expression; Ite. = Interaction; Ita. = Intrapsychic

representation of intimate friends on questions about intrapsychic phenomena than on those about support (1.659 vs.1.514).

Observation of the data reveal an interesting additional discovery of this result. Participants did not simply associate friends at a certain level of intimacy to the particular verbal structures. As the questions moved from the "We" construction to the "they constructions, they became more inclusive of people from the other categories. For example, participant one listed three people, all with an intimacy level of one, for the following statement: "We discuss sex." To the next statement, "These people and I talk about sexuality" participant one listed eight people, three of whom were the same friends with an intimacy level of one noted on the "we" phrase, four of whom were friends with an intimacy level of two, and one had an intimacy level of three. Finally, participant one listed most of the people on the intimacy diagram in response to the third presentation, "Sexuality might come up in a discussion with these people." This pattern was evident across all subjects.

Therefore rather than contending that participants will associate friends with specific intimacy levels to the three types of linguistic constructions, this data indicate that there is a process of inclusivity which takes place as participants shift their thinking from the notion of "We" to "They". This is highly relevant to the similar presentation of hypothesis one, where there is a similar inclusive

movement from the types of relatedness present when friends meet, to the types of relatedness which select a friend for inclusion on the intimacy diagram no matter how close or far they may be.

Therefore it appears that participants associate particular intimacy levels of friendship more to the different linguistic structures than to content themes. With the exception of the findings about the category of support which seems to include more regular and casual friends, the relationship between language and intimacy is based more on structure than on content. The second hypothesis is sustained and is not a factor of the different content themes, although an inclusive process is noted.

Hypothesis three: Shared linguistic utterances

This hypothesis indicated that there would be a significantly higher percentage of shared linguistic utterances during a spontaneous autobiographical narrative amongst the participants who were designated as intimate friends by the target person than amongst the participants who were listed as regular or casual friends. There were no findings to support this aspect of the hypothesis. However, there were findings to support shared linguistic utterances across the entire friendship network. This means that without coaxing the participants spontaneously described themselves using similar themes, and in some cases, using exact quotes.

Across all subjects, there were three shared content theme which had a high representation: 1) Transition (97%); 2) Integration (86%); 3) Pained teens (77%). All other recurrent content themes were used by less than 40% of the participant sample (see Graph eight).

While only the first utterance of a phrase was included in the count, most people would refer back to this idea in their narratives, making use of several different linguistic representations of the same idea. Figure five breaks down the specific first utterances amongst the 29 people who spoke about transition according to exact phrase and percentage. Fully 22% described themselves using the quote phrase, "in the middle of complete transition". Another 22% used the exact phrase, "in the midst of a process."

Figure six breaks down the specific first utterances amongst the 23 people who spoke about integration according to phrase and percentage. The same number of people who described their lives using the exact phrase "dialectical resolution" used the phrase "making life whole." And almost one half of the participants who spoke about integration used phrases about bringing together different parts, worlds or languages, while almost one third referred to "balance."

Finally, using the same breakdown for the topic pained teens as for the other two topics, more than one third used the exact phrase "different than everybody else." And almost half either used the phrase "knew I was alone," or "an outsider" (see Figure seven).

Graph 8

Percentage Representation of Shared Content Themes

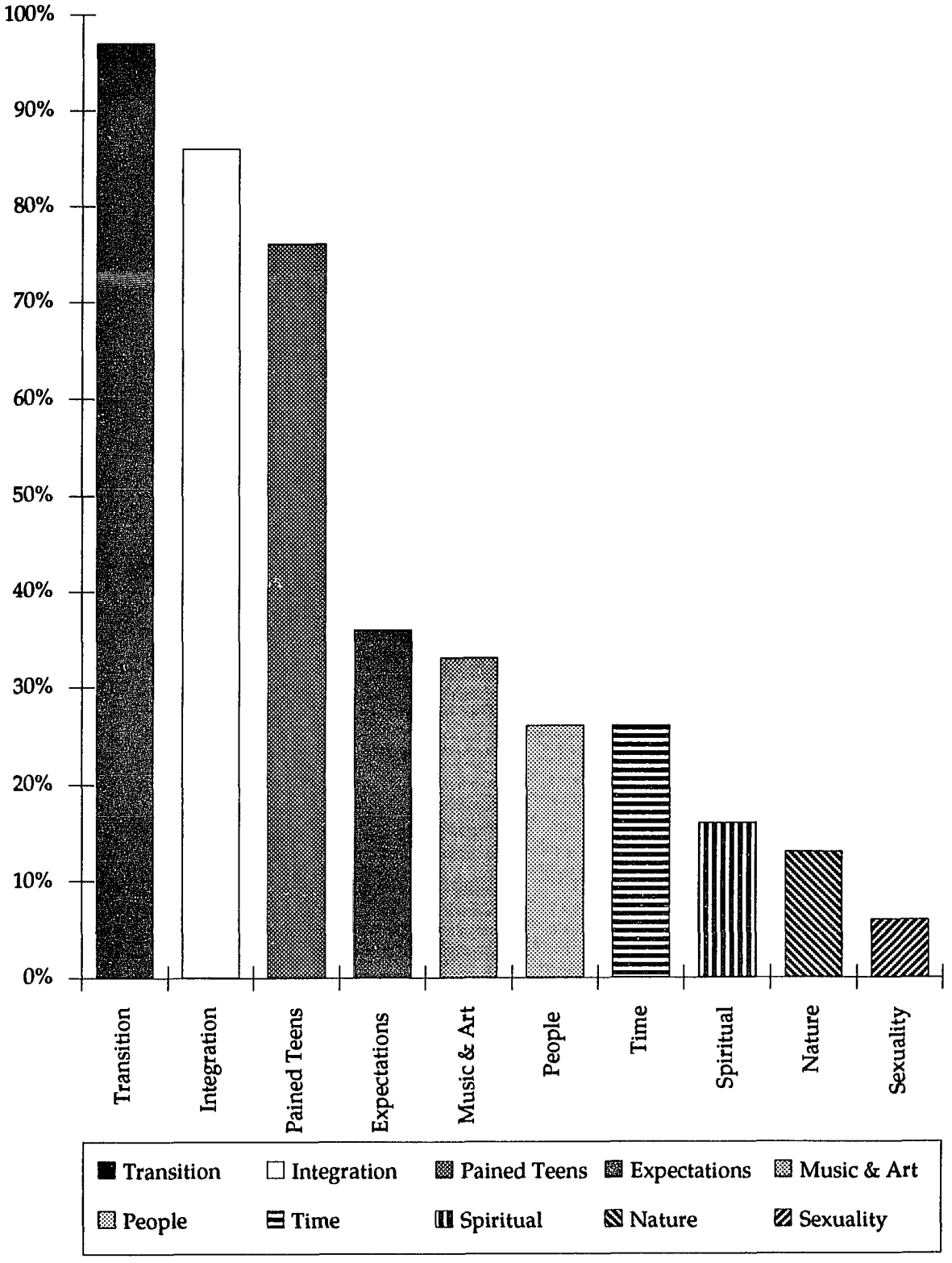


Figure 5

Percentage Breakdown of Shared Linguistic Utterances Pertaining to Transition

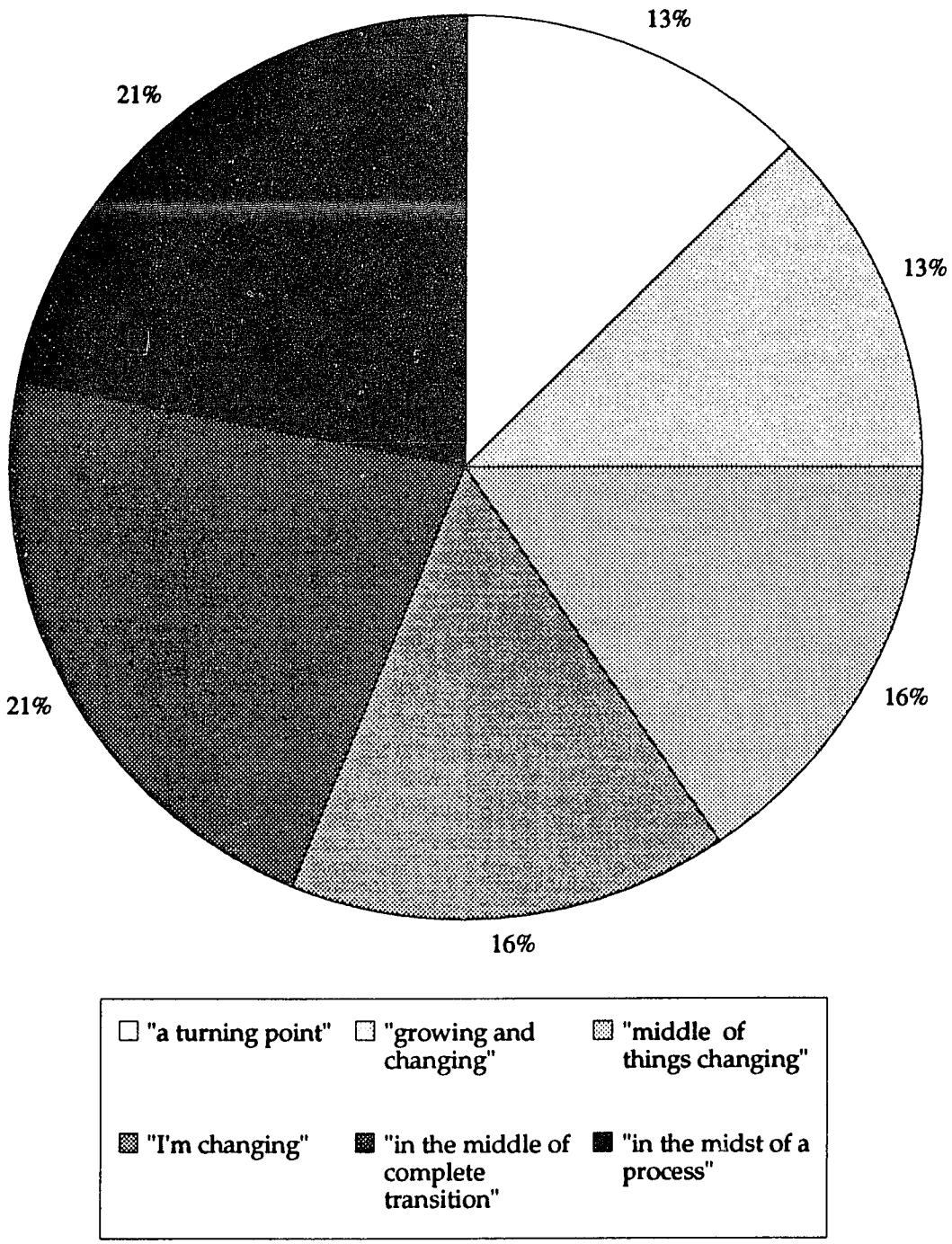


Figure 6

Percentage Breakdown of Shared Linguistic Utterances Pertaining to Integration

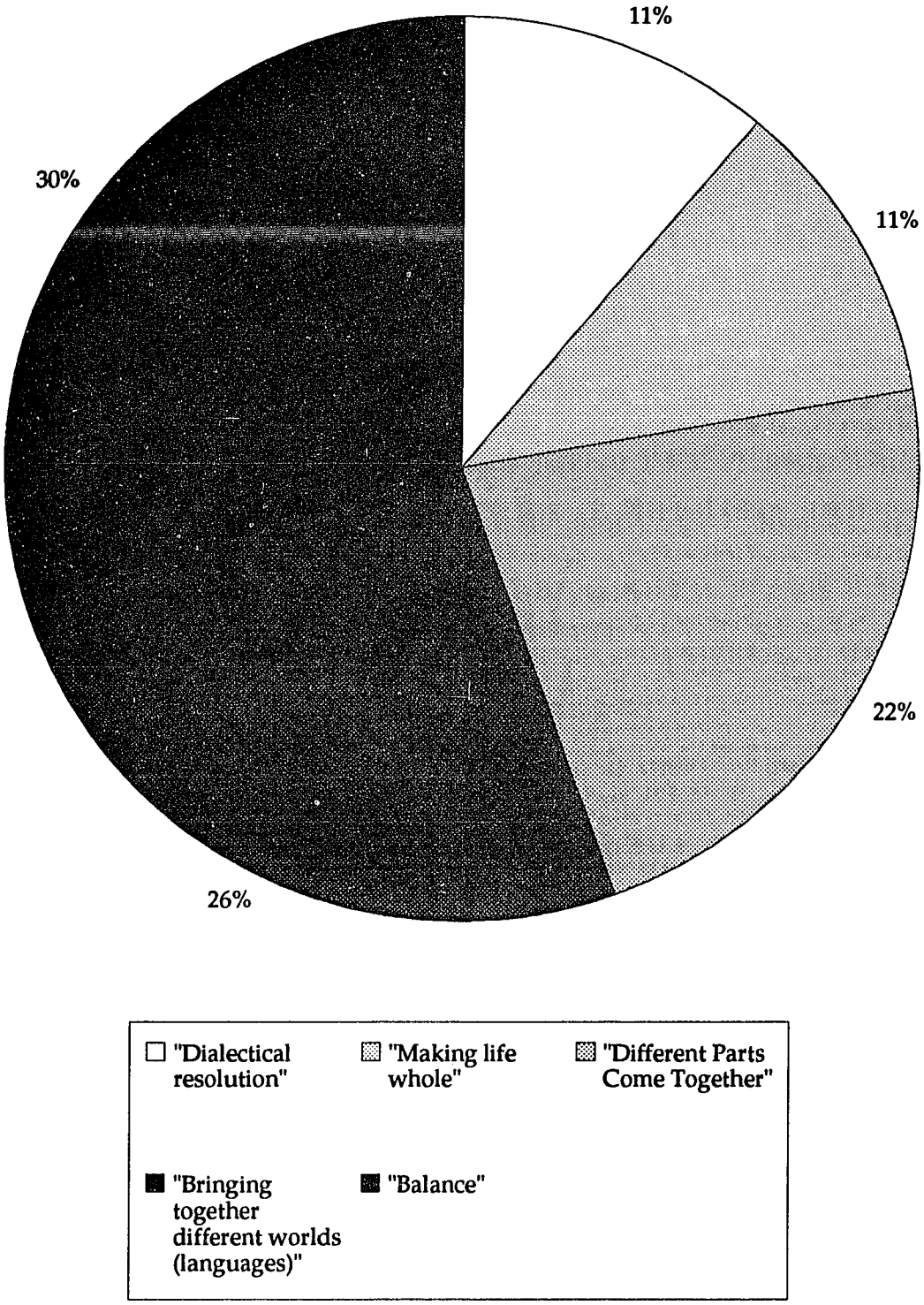
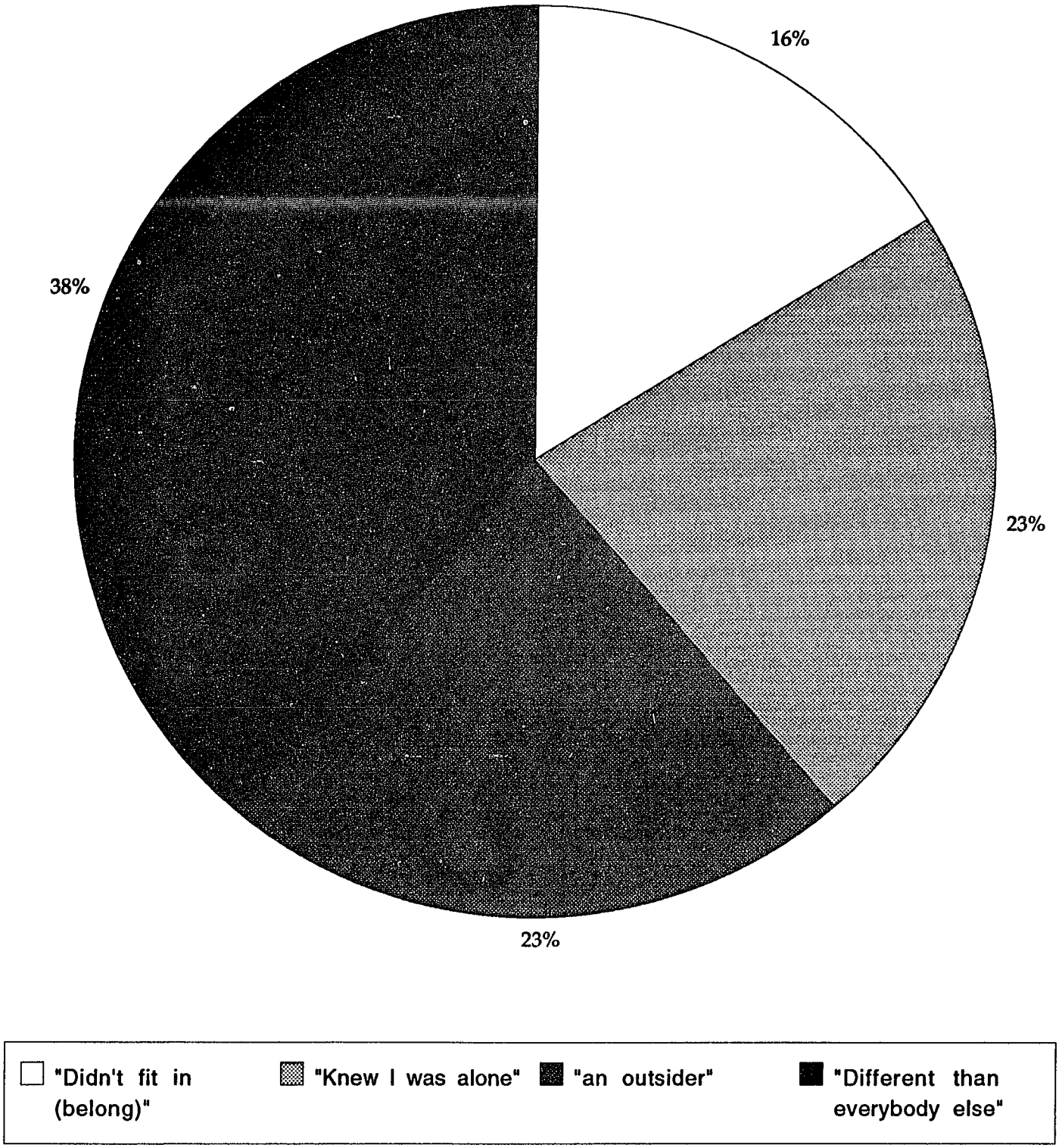


Figure 7

Percentage of Shared Linguistic Utterances Pertaining to Pained Teens



These findings are suggestive rather than confirming since there is no control data to test for a similar effect amongst people who don't know each other. However, they indicate that when this network of people creates a spontaneous autobiographical narrative, they share three common self-defining themes: transition, integration and a difficult adolescence. And, they used very specific shared utterances to communicate those ideas.

Other Findings

There were a variety of other unexpected findings which were not the subject of this investigation. They are important to note here as they pertain to a final analysis and discussion of the results. Additionally, they indicate new avenues for further research.

The first tendency is that there was often a notable lack of concurrence regarding where participants located each other on the intimacy diagram. This fact suggests a need to rethink the meaning of reciprocity in friendship.

Differences between male and female perspectives on friendship were observed in one area only. Of the men, 75% explicitly referred to certain friends as having been "mentors". Although women described relationships which seemed to involve mentoring, only one woman described a particular friendship using this term explicitly. In 31% of

the cases men think of themselves as mentors to other people. None of the women thought of themselves in this capacity.

The participants in this study have sexual feelings about their friends; 76% of the sample described having strongly erotic connections and sexual fantasies about friends. Of the total participants, 50% have friends who at one time or another were sexual partners without having taken on the role of primary partner (whether or not those were heterosexual or homosexual unions was not stated). One person stated, "my friends are the people in my life whom I care about, but for one reason or another am not sleeping with." The information about sexual relationships amongst friends was closely guarded. The participants who discussed this issue found it very embarrassing, and felt as though they had done something wrong, although they reported having very special feelings and affections for the friend and a "warm enjoyment" of the sexual experience.

The sexual connections within this network are especially interesting in light of the fact that 90% of the subjects depend on at least some subgroup of their friends for economic reasons. Of the people in this group, 76% seek referrals for their profession from friends, and fully 100% have utilized friends for the purposes of furthering or changing careers.

Another notable feature was the fact that the participants organized the interviews similarly. They

referred to what they once were (often meaning who they were as children) and what they had to overcome in their "problematic" families. Of the participants, 76% reported that they felt isolated and alone during adolescence, in contrast to their more "normal" peers who "fit in." As adults, 93% described having to transcend troubled pasts in order become the people they are today. They organized their narratives to reflect how they had accomplished more with respect to quality of life than had the parental generation.

Finally, 73% stated that they organized their friends into distinct groups which reflected different aspects of themselves. There are several interesting examples of this. One participant drew a relational tree that resembled a mandala - a circular design consisting of concentric geometric forms, or deities which symbolize the wholeness of the universe. She included the world of past family (her deceased ancestors) and the world of current family. Within that she drew three other circles, termed consecutively, "the world of work, the world of play, and the future (which she left blank with no names because this is the space for the people yet to enter her life). She drew a separate circle for her live-in boyfriend, and one for herself, "the real world me." In the real world me she included "memories of long-term friends since I know them, and go on knowing them, as the people they were or are in relationship to who I was -- and I know them very little as the real people they are now."

In fact, 93% made reference to concepts which pertained to distinctions between "the real me", and the "work", "professional", or "persona" self. Interestingly enough intimacy was not correlated to whether or not someone was a "real self" friend, or a "persona" friend. One participant explained, "Both parts are essential to my total being, who I am as a person. I need friends to maintain them both. I can be close to someone as my persona self, which is a completely different experience from being close to someone as me real self."

And furthermore, 56% of the participants were aware of the extent to which there was an aspect of fantasy or fiction in how they conceived of or represented even their closest friends. Another member of this friendship network has a special name for each person to whom he is close which is a combination of how he sees them, and how he sees himself in relationship to them, and these code names are connected to a particular linguistic style he uses with each of his different intimate friends.

Summary of the Findings

This study yielded many interesting results. A great deal of descriptive date was provided to characterize this sample. The hypothesis that the closest friendships are formed at moments of developmental transition was supported. That friendships are maintained because of developmental transition was also confirmed. The hypothesis that there

would be a difference between grammatical structures associated to intimacy levels was substantiated. Finally, shared linguistic utterances were observed across the entire friendship network. However, a correlation between intimacy level and incidence of shared utterances was not found.

In addition, several other findings have complemented the hypotheses, and will further guide how to interpret the results of the study. Intimacy level between subjects was not always reciprocal. Men and women differed in the explicit reference to mentoring relationships. Friendships have a strong sensual component, and are important in the maintenance of economic stability. The participants in this study used a similar format in representing themselves during the interviews, and they conceived of friendships in terms of distinct aspects of personhood. This material will now be synthesized into an analysis which can elaborate a useful understanding of the communication which characterizes friendship and its role in the construction of personhood during adult development.

CHAPTER FIVE:

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

There has been a wealth of information gathered about friendship from this study. The data reflect information about this particular network, and how some of this information compares to that of the population of New York City and the United States. This comparative description isolates features common to this particular system, in order to extract patterns which may apply to friendships in general.

The statistical indicators have supported the hypotheses which recognize important relationships between friendships, development and language as useful and tenable. The psychological explanation of friendship correlates with participant's own experiences, which is not surprising given the extent to which psychological principles have permeated much of modern urban culture, and the degree of therapy to which this sample has been exposed.

If this friendship network were to be considered a text, and the results of this study its signs, the network reveals information about itself, its cultural context, and about friendships in general. Thus, the data are informative about the psychodynamic and systemic presentation of friendship network in an urban cultural context. Friendship is experienced on an intrapsychic as well as on a social level. The full significance of friendship in the adult

construction of personhood intersects where developmental transition, shared language, and the linguistic correlates of intimacy overlap with sociocultural phenomena.

Characterization of the sample: Friendship and the link between real me and persona states

Bell (1981) writes that friendships provide socialization experiences necessary for existing within a culture. Many researchers (Damon 1977; Corsaro 1985; Gurucharri and Selman 1982; and, Neimeyer and Neimeyer 1986) state that friendships function as mini-cultures. There is an important link between this particular friendship system, and the larger sociocultural context.

The majority of the participants in this network are either second generation or later, with only 18% being themselves immigrants (6%), or first generation (12%). They are a group whose parents were middle class (including the participants who are immigrant and first generation). Many of them have had strong connections with immigrant and working class grandparents. Yet having been born roughly between 1952 and 1962, they have come of age at a peculiar time in American history, and their personalities have been formed within families that were coping with influence of a society which was changing and entering into a period of self reflection. The families represented by this sample struggled with the aftermath of World War II and Vietnam. They lost family members to the holocaust, were interned in Japanese prisoner of war camps, or experienced the impact of

the Civil Rights movements of the 1960's. They experienced class changes as greater proportions of the population acquired more material well-being and better economic status.

However, as their families were adapting to a more uniform ideology, and coping with the fallacy of the melting pot syndrome, the social changes of the 1960's began to expose the hidden stresses of the pressure to normalize. These participants were exposed to an array of family problems at quite an early age. They are the children of divorce, alcoholism, incest and mental illness. At least three of the participants have lost a parent to suicide. Major cultural dislocations took place as their parents achieved success in some areas and failed in other areas to adjust to a new culture. In this respect, the participants in this study are quite preoccupied with making sense of disjointed childhood experiences, as well as the ways they have internalized notions of class and ethnicity. They believe that they have had to transcend their parents' lives. They want to improve upon the parental generation by focusing on quality of life issues. In addition to coping with emotional problems, household responsibilities, and caretaking roles at an early age , they are more aware of death, having lost close friends at a young age to AIDS.

The awareness of death, the sense of tragedy about their parent's failed aspirations and perceived psychological problems, and the guilt about what their

parents have had to endure, have converged to create a strong pressure to succeed amongst these participants. In his autobiographical narrative one participant stated:

> "I've already had enough career success to satisfy the demons of the upper middle class - I've had my caricature in New York Magazine, and now I'm striving for other things, quality of life, my friendships, my love relationships and what I'm so desperately doing wrong in them. And so while I attempt to transcend issues of class I find myself head to head with them, how to strive without striving. How to be intimate, how to stop achieving, how to stop the pressure to always produce more and more and more, long enough to really get close. The big question in my life is whether or not this reappraisal takes place in solitude, or with others, but it seems as though it is a dialectical process.

They also have a sense of apology for not having done enough. They have gone to graduate and professional schools and chosen employment that provides ample opportunity to engage unique and creative projects which bear the maker's identity (even the two people in the study who do not have a BA are well known figures in their field). It is not enough for the members of this friendship network to simply have jobs and raise a family.

Some of the participants are artists who have recorded their own music, produced plays and choreographed and earned their living through their art. Many of the people in the professions have taken on socially oriented jobs - a lawyer for the D.A., a teacher in an alternative high school in the South Bronx, mental health practitioners who have worked with AIDS and other underserved populations, and a doctor who specializes in the terminally ill. Those in business have pursued similar paths. One woman who works for a major public relations firm donates large portions of her time to organizations she has developed for AIDS patients. Another woman has founded a company which designs products which are ecologically sound.

Since many of the participants have spent so much time focused on their ambitions, they are less comfortable with other people. Despite being a part of an extensive friendship system, they live alone more than their contemporaries. They are in fewer committed relationships. There is a great sense of awkwardness and shame, a fear of intimacy and a generalized rejection of commitments, as though committing might mean stopping the quest for a better life before one has actually "improved" enough to find it. These participants are all on a quest for greater meaning. This is what Ginsburg (1989) notes in her study of the pro-choice vs. pro-life movements. These participants are concerned with creating a meaningful identity, and at the same time aware of an undefined incompleteness.

Identity is considered to be something one must accomplish, whereas self remains some unexpressed state of being. Goffman (1959, 1963) has written extensively about the extent to which self and identity are considered separate entities. Stern (1985) addresses a similar point when he speaks about the development of a verbal self which is language based and hence an aspect of self experience exclusively dependent on interaction. The verbal self is distinguished from the subjective self which has its derivative in the "emergent", and "core" self states of perceptual reality and sensorimotor stimulation. Winnicott also alludes to a similar phenomenon when he speaks about the difference between the "true" self which is a person's most natural state of being, and the "false" self which is "the representation of polite and mannered social attitude" (1965, p.143). And Sullivan (1953) also describes the "me"(physically based - divided into notions of good and bad) and "not me" (dissociated, "uncanny emotions").

Most psychoanalysts, including Sullivan and Winnicott relate these differentials of personhood to aspects of behavior that were alternately accepted or rejected by the mother. Yet a mother's early spontaneous gestures with her child are often unconscious aspects of socialization. The mother, or parents, or "mothering one", communicate to their children that certain organizations of experience are an extension of inner phenomena. Others aren't and are attributed to external circumstances.

There is some notion of this type of duality in the literature about other cultures. In the highlands of Vietnam, the Mnong Gar (See Condominas 1977) believe that souls live inside the person and are the dominate force in internal experience. Spirits, Caak , live outside the body and are the dominant force behind social activity. (For more examples of these perceived dualities between outer and inner aspects of personhood, see Leenhardt 1979, Mauss 1973, Myers 1979). However both states are socially constructed. It takes both souls and Caaks to make a single person.

So when the members of this friendship network begin to speak about a "persona", "professional" or "work" self vs. a "true" self, they refer to two different levels of personhood, the social and the private. The "real me' and the "persona" self are equal components of being a person. Friendships figure importantly as they are the arena, Ginsburg's "voluntary affiliations with others in a group" which enable both parts of the person to exist. Friends maintain the "real me" and help to create the social identity, the "persona". Amongst the Mnong Gar, the souls and spirits are harmoniously united through the ritualized drinking of rnoom (fermented rice flour and bran). The rnoom symbolizes the soul, and the rnoom jars are opened to welcome outsiders (friends as opposed to family) who symbolize spirits. As each outsider drinks the rnoom, they ingest the same soul. In this way the inner and outer aspects of self are united. Likewise, the friendships

represented by this network help each other to unite the dualistic social constructs of self and identity. The process by which this takes place can be best understood by more closely examining the results of the hypotheses.

Friendship Formation and Developmental Transition

The results of the study confirmed that there is a strong relationship between developmental transition and friendship formation. As discussed in the literature review, friendships aid the process of personality formation (Behrends and Blatt 1985; Sullivan 1953), help accomplish tasks specific to a particular developmental moment (Brissett and Oldenburg 1982, Tesch 1983) and create an interactional context for learning social rules and cultural reality (Youniss 1980; Corsaro 1985). This thinking about friendship evolves from a an essentially interpersonalist and object relations view which sees development as taking place throughout the life span (Levinson 1978; Mann 1985).

The literature review also referred to the notion of developmental transition. The Hegelian dialectical components to the thought of Piaget (1987) and Vygotsky (1978) were highlighted. Both theorists implicitly suggest an alternative view to development as a linear evolution from one stage to another. They understand development as the continual attempt to bridge the gap between what already exists as a thought, action, idea, or concept and a new, or potential one. Relationships are important in making the

transition from the actual to the potential. Once this integration is achieved, another new set of oppositions present themselves. The process is ongoing, taking place within more than one set of operations at a time.

As can be seen from the data there is a flow between the two oppositional states, intimate vs. casual friends. Participants are generally in touch with more people than those who appear on the relational tree or intimacy diagram. People meet those with whom they are in contact largely through proximity, shared work, etc. Usually a shared developmental event, most often a "crisis of loss" (Levenson 1972) occurs (break-up with primary partner, death, illness, change in professional status which results in new life structure) and certain people within the proximal zone become part of a participant's system of friends.

People become a part of the network and obtain a place (not necessarily a close one) on the intimacy diagram in two ways: having mutually revealed vulnerability, shared sentiments of the real self, or helping to perpetuate the professional or identity self. Anyone who appears on the intimacy diagram has an essential role in maintaining different aspects of personhood - the real vs. the false which corresponds to the intimate vs the casual. Both are equally real and viable components of personhood.

The data have suggested that people become closest when they have met while sharing a developmental transition. If the above discussion of the sample characteristics holds

true, it can be inferred that what has joined people in this network is a shared sense of incompleteness, and the struggle for more achievement. An important form of bonding takes place when aspects of what is described as the real self surfaces in the persona identity. Many participants spoke about how intimate friendships evolved through the revelation of anxiety.

In this respect then, development is the ongoing process to create a match between the achievement goals of the persona self and the concrete needs of the real self. Rather than a progression, or a growth, adult development seems peculiarly linked to the process of reconfiguring dissociated parts of the self. Friends become the receptacles of aspects of personhood. As the participants juggle their different types of friends, their level of intimacy and to what cluster they belong , the process is experienced as a progression toward some reconciliation of the oppositional pulls. The characters of specific friends take on the properties of the real and persona selves. These friends become mutual actors in each other's quest to create some integration between the real and persona self. Through these friendships, participants engage in interactions that support social role and the real self. Participants use their relationships to each other to create defenses, and ensure that needs get met, as part of the process of attempting to reconcile what are construed as competing aspects of personhood. Language is one symbolic

system which identifies the nuances of these processes.

Intimacy level and Grammatical structure

The results of the data supported that there is a significant difference between the types of phrases associated to intimate, regular and casual friends. The literature review emphasized that there are close connections between personhood, language and relationships. According to systems theory (Toman 1989; Haber 1987), relationships provide an arena for the activities, events and happenings which figure prominently in the development of personality. These ideas are not far from interpersonalists who work in a Sullivanian tradition, and other theorists who stipulate the extent to which notions of personhood are constructed through interaction (Bruner 1984; Mead 1943; Cooley 1922; Hallowell 1967; Vygotsky 1967).

Language is one main venue of interaction (Sapir 1949; Whorf 1956; Vygotsky 1967). It follows then that different aspects of personhood will be generated by different types of interaction, and that these differences will be indicated through distinct verbal strategies (Wilner 1975).

The data have reflected that distinct linguistic styles indicate the three types of intimate interactions which embrace the contrast between real (close) , or false (casual). Phrases which utilize "we" as the subject are the model of the real self intimacy. Friends are experienced as

joined to one's self. Phrases which utilize "this person and I" as the subject are associated to friends in between close and casual. Friends are experienced as separate but identified. Finally phrases which utilize "they" as the subject represent the casual friend, or the friend who is experienced as an other but simultaneously inspires new realizations about one's being.

The three distinct styles of intimacy are different forms of friendship, each manifesting unique constructual components of personhood. Each type of linguistic style reflects a different interactional conceptualization that speaks to different states of consciousness. As Vygotsky (1967) and Bakhtin (1986) have written - different relationships and language formations cluster around each other to construct thoughts and actions.

The different types of intimacy express the types of consciousness evoked by being a person interacting with the social world. If personhood is conceived of as a diametric opposition between what is genuine, and what is false, the intimacy levels of friendships correspond to psychological conceptualizations self-other relationships in the experience of being a person. Language differentiates styles of interaction. The three distinct linguistic constructions organize personhood and the friendships through which personhood is experienced into an oppositional pattern. This oppositional conception of being is the characteristic conception of personhood amongst this sample of urban New

Yorkers. While language is used to mark the differences in intimacy and friendship, it also unites the dichotomous experience of being a person into an organized system of meaning, the point to be taken up in the next section.

Shared Linguistic Utterances

The results of the study indicated that this network of friends utilizes similar themes and phrases to describe themselves. The literature review indicated the importance of shared language amongst members of an interactional group in creating an explanation of reality, a cultural system of meaning (Geertz 1973; Vygotsky 1967). The sdata indicated that while there was no correlation between intimacy level and shared content and structural attributes of speech, there were a number of shared features across the entire network. This finding supports the claim that both far and close types of intimacy relations are equal components in the structure of a meaning system.

The participant's shared content themes have already been alluded to in previous discussion. These participants feel unaccomplished, as though there is a gulf between the genuine and persona self which can only be bridged by bringing aspirations more into line with expectations. They share a language which revolves around transition, integration and the painful adolescence when the status of "different," or "outsider" is a way of justifying the focus on achievement as opposed to the limitations imposed by a

social group.

The fact that these themes are expressed through common utterances attests to a shared reality, and again this is explicit to the work of Vygotsky (1967) and Bakhtin (1981). When people join together and share a language they create in each other representations of each other's experience. By creating a language which shares structural (the utterance choice) and content (choice of theme) similarities, in this case about integration, transition, and being the outsider, a mutually validated reality is created. The study participants perceive themselves as working in contrast to societal expectations. The friendship network validates the choices which appear to be distinct from the norm. Their behavior becomes ego syntonic to the culture of the group.

The oppositional tension between aspects of personhood is resolved by a language which integrates the oppositional states into a processual movement - from we to they, from close to far, from intimate to casual. The language amongst friends, that which defines the group, or network, has much in common with Crapanzano's (1982) description of the "third", as distinct from self vs. other - which he equates with meaning and culture.

Shared language creates a meaning, a system, within which friendships operate as pieces of a whole. Each participant defines the whole with reference to themselves as the center. The struggle between real and persona selves

is often an antagonistic relationship as these states take on qualities of self - other relationships. The third, the creation of meaning in friendship, establishes a reconciling presence, where aspects of real and person self, self and other, can be explained as belonging to the same person.

In this way friendships are to the person what metaphors are to language. Ricouer (1978) suggests that metaphor is an act of integration through which new congruences emerge, Metaphors contain dual reference to the content of a topic and to the subliminal meaning conveyed through the structure of the discourse about a topic. Friends amongst this network are people who interact together to support the different aspects of personhood - the genuine self and the persona self. Their relationships become solidified through developmental transitions. The shared language within relationships integrates the old and the new, the close and the far, the real with the false, the self with other.

Conclusion of the Discussion

The data supported hypothesis one and indicate a relationship between development transition and friendship formation and continuation. Friends are important in development, in this case development being the urgency to unify the identity and self within one's personhood.

The data also supported hypothesis two. Friendship relationships are interactions linguistically organized into

different intimacy levels. The three kinds of intimacy parallel conceptualizations of personhood - a self, a sense of self and other, and identity. The opposition between self and other is similar to that between attained and expected competence. The anxiety of not being competent enough seems importantly linked to issues of race, gender, class, and other features of American cultural ideology.

The data also supported the hypothesis that there is a shared system of meaning among friends. A sense of meaning and purpose is very important to those who participated in the study. Friendships, like metaphors, are integrative interactions within which new universes are being conceived -- universes which will thrive on the quest for meaning, in this case, the meaning of transition, integration, and the transcendence of a pained youth.

The participants are searching to reconcile an internal state with external roles. The fluid concepts about identity and self speak to a duality of existence which is an adaptive response to American culture. As Henry (1963) and other writers (Fitzgerald 1986, Tocqueville 1947 , Warner 1959) about American culture have pointed out, self striving is very much a product of culture whose system of meaning is economically based. Identities are Synonymous with the role necessary to maintain a particular economic structure. Baumeister (1986) calls this the "weighty" self which is overloaded with expectations. He contrasts the weighty self to the "negative affect self" which is

profoundly aware of the disparity between what feels real and already attained and that which feels false and expected.

There may be a social need for this gulf between the real, essentially individualistic, free self and the false, inherently social, constrained self. A social self is dissociated from the personal and meaningful, and the struggle to express the real self in addition to the professional self keeps people achieving. The true self is constructed as more real, and is in someway the more valued core of experience, but the false or professional self plays more with what is not self - imagination, fantasy, possibility and change.

This is similar to Piaget's (1987) notions of possibility and necessity. The real self is the world of necessity and the concrete. Identity is the world of possibility, of experimentation, change. Self experience stays the same, and is something of an historical anchor. Identities come and go, and can be experiments. The tension between the two propels development and growth, because in those rare moments when the experimental identity also expresses an important component of self, a new order is created within a person's life. This is a process inherent to the creation of meaning, and this is what generates the discourse of friendship.

SUMMARY

This dissertation used psychological and anthropological theoretical premises to investigate friendship and the construction of adult personhood. The importance of this analysis for clinicians and researchers in psychology was noted. The current literature on friendship was reviewed. The explanation of how the formulation of the hypotheses originated from the pilot study was detailed. The development of the measures and interviews was explained . The hypotheses, the psychological explanations of friendship, were compared and contrasted with participant's own understanding of the significance of friendship in their lives. The statistical study served to structure and guide the observational material.

Significant observable patterns were found to support the hypothesis that there is a relationship between the events surrounding friendship formation and intimacy level. The hypothesis which claimed a significant difference between the grammatical structures associated to levels of intimacy was substantiated. No findings were found to support a relationship between intimacy level and shared utterances, but shared utterances and content themes were found across all subjects.

Limitations of the Study

It is important to note that the observations were not

independent (the participants knew each other). In addition this researcher collected, coded and interpreted the data. Therefore, the information here is filtered through the researcher's biases. These two facts challenge the significance of the statistical measures. However, the discovered relationships and differences were strong enough to suggest that the results were crude indicators of the veracity of the hypotheses.

There are many ways in which this research can be improved upon. It would be useful to work with a control group to evaluate whether or not there is a similar frequency of shared themes and utterances amongst people who don't know each other. Comparing the shared themes of this system to that of another would also be a fruitful endeavor. Many of the questionnaires could be re-written to more accurately capture the desired data. Some of the unanticipated findings could be taken up as topics for further investigation.

However, despite the ways in which this research could be improved upon in the future, the strength of the relationships of the supported hypotheses suggest that there are here useful ideas for discussion and interpretation. The results of the data analysis are of sufficient strength to serve as crude indicators as to the usefulness of the hypotheses when thinking about friendship.

Conclusion

The three supported hypotheses strengthen the theoretical claim that friendships are the relational context through which adults resolve an oppositional construction of personhood which includes polarities between a genuine self and a persona. Friendships therefore play a role in the definition of personality that is as important as the familial relationships which have been heavily emphasized in the psychological literature. Hopefully, this dissertation may usefully supplement the literature on friendships and delineate new areas for further investigation.

APPENDIX A1

Susan Bodnar
Phd Candidate
in Clinical Psychology

(212) 721-0637

Consent Form

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of relationships. I will ask you to sign this as a written consent form. I will then give you a packet which contains some materials for you to complete at home within the next two weeks. In June I will call you to schedule an interview about the materials which you have completed.

All information will be kept strictly confidential. If I publish this material the data will be disguised so that you cannot be identified. If you wish to receive a summary of the results of this work, please check the box below.

I hope you enjoy your effort in this project, and that it contributes to your life in some way. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the above number.

Sincerely,

Susan Bodnar

I agree to participate in this study:

_____

Your Name

_____

Your Signature and Date

_____ I would like to receive information about results of this study. My address is:

APPENDIX A2

SUBJECT NUMBER : DATE:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

How recruited:

Contact with Study Result? _____ Y _____ N

APPENDIX B

Background Information

1. Date of Birth:

2. Circle One: M, F

3. Where were you born?

4. Where did you grow up?

5. What languages did you speak?

6. What languages can you speak now?

7. Is your mother still living? If so, where?

8. Did your mother work outside of the home? If so, what did she do?

9. Where was your mother born?

10. Where did she grow up?

11. Is you father still living? If so, where?

12. What did your father do?

13. Where was he born?

14. Where did he grow up?

15. List by relationship each adult and child in the household of your growing up.

16. Please list sex of siblings and their respective ages now.

17. Where did you go to school?

18. Who was your first friend? How and at what age did you meet? What did you do together?

19. During adolescence, age 12-20, who were your friends? What did you do together?

20. Did you feel satisfied with the quality of your friendships while growing up? Please explain.

21. Please discuss one of the best moments you ever had with a friend. Give an age, describe the friend, and the moment.

22. Please describe one of the worst fights, or other negative experience, you had with a friend. Give an age and describe the friend and occurrence.

23. Please describe the amount of education you have had:

Years in elementary school	_____	
Years of junior high	_____	
Years of high school	_____	
Years in college	_____	Degree?_____ Type? _____
Years in post-graduate education	_____	Degree?___ Type? ___

24. What is your religion?

25. Are you observant?

26. Did you grow up observant?

27. Please check the box which best describes your sexual orientation:
heterosexual _____
homosexual _____
bisexual _____
undecided _____

28. Where do you live?

29. With whom do you live? Please list their relationship to you, and their age.

30. If not married, in common-law, or living with someone, do you have a romantic partner? State where he or she lives.

31. Do you have children not living at home? Please list ages, and location.

32. What is your current occupation?

33. How would you describe your ethnicity a/o race?
_____ Non-Hispanic white
_____ African American
_____ Hispanic White
_____ Hispanic Black
_____ Asian
_____ Other

34. Do you own any pets? How many? For how long?

35. If you currently have or have ever had a pet you consider to be a friend, please describe the pet and your relationship.

36. Have you ever had a friend die? Please tell me about your friend, what he or she meant to you, and how his or her affected you.

37. Have you ever been in psychotherapy, or some other type of self work? Please describe this experience.

APPENDIX A3

Instructions

Packet Contents: 1) Background Information Questionnaire; 2) The Relational Tree; 3) The Intimacy Diagram; 4)Interactional Style Questionnaire.

The enclosed packet of materials includes questionnaires which ask how you think about and organize your current relationships. Each form comes with a set of instructions. However there are some general guidelines which apply to all the forms.

1. A relationship is defined as a person with whom you share at least some degree of important ongoing contact.

2. Relationships include friends, relatives, spouses, sexual partners, and colleagues.

3. A relationship can also be someone from your past whom you see or with whom you speak less frequently, but who continues to be important to you.

4. A deceased person may be included if the relationship is important to you now.

5. Many questions will refer back to the Relational Tree, the first item in your packet. Please keep it accessible while you complete the interactional style questionnaire.

7. Many of the questions will ask you to describe aspects of how you interact with people you know. For each question please list all the people who best fit a particular description.

8. Please answer all questions on the basis of how you feel at the time you complete the questionnaire. Do not attempt to generalize the interactions over time.

9. If you should have any questions while completing these forms, do not hesitate to call me at (212) 721-0637. I am available to clarify all material.

10. I will contact you in June to schedule you for an interview.

Thank you.

APPENDIX C

Relational Tree

Please list and number all the people with whom you consider to play a role in your life now. Make sure to indicate which of these people are related, married or living together by using connecting lines between them. Indicate a deceased person with parentheses. Indicate a spouse, past or present sexual partner(s) with a check. Stipulate role relationship (mother, sister, brother) if you include a family member.

APPENDIX D

Intimacy Diagram

Instructions

1) On the following page you will find a diagram consisting of three circles.

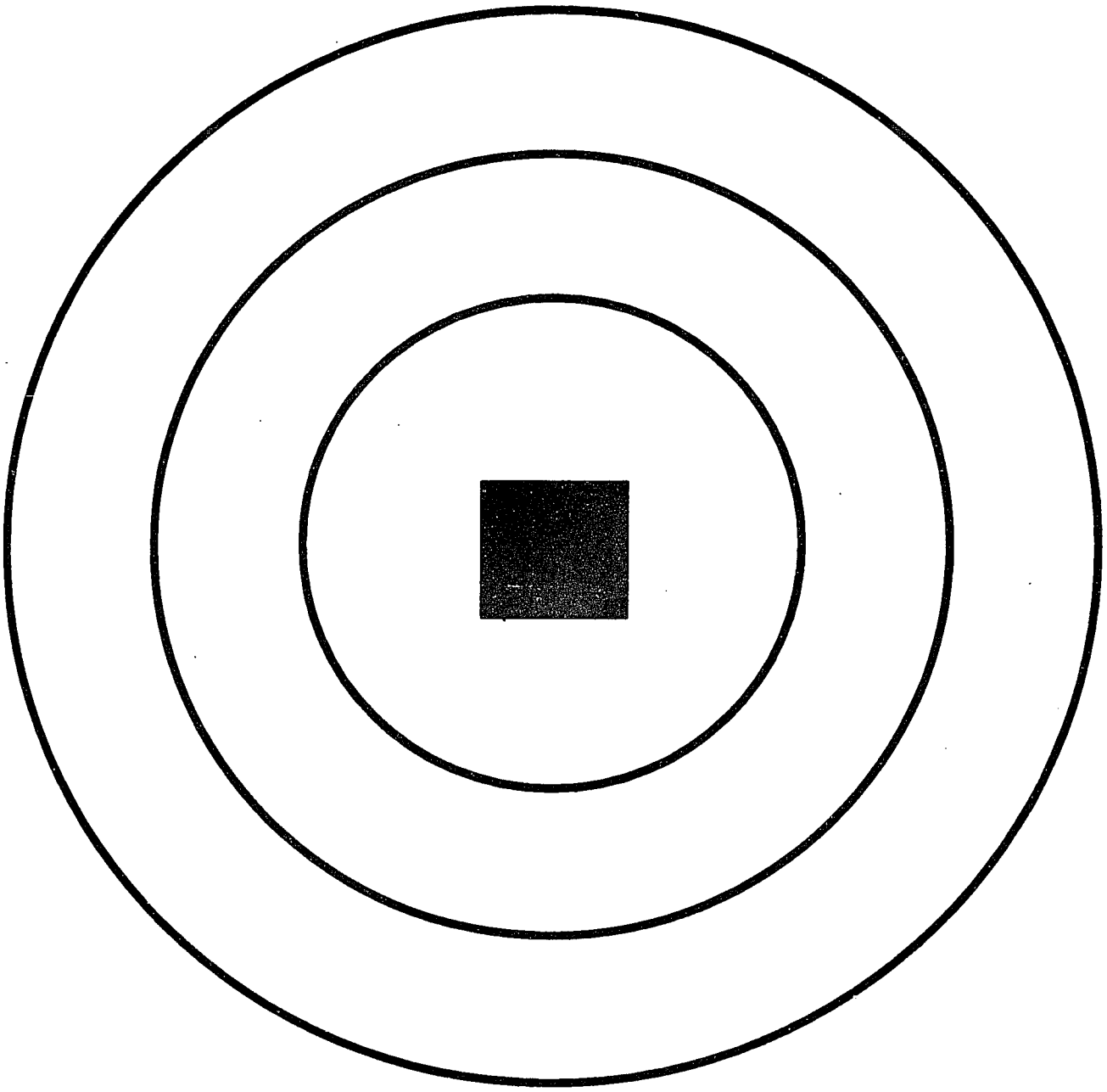
2) The small square in the center of the page represents you.

3) On the first circle please list the numbers of the people from your relational tree whom you consider to be an intimate friend. A intimate friend is defined as an individual you support, and who supports you. You have strong feelings about each other. You feel attached to him or her. You share some interests, do things together, and are interested in each other's perspectives about life. You may include relatives, spouses, sexual partners if they meet the above criteria

3) On the second circle please list the numbers of the people you consider to be a regular friend. A regular friend is defined as an individual with whom you socialize. You like this person but don't have strong feelings about him or her. You do things for each other , and share some interests but not with the same intensity as you do with the people listed on the first circle.

4) On the third circle please list all the people you consider to be casual friends, like an acquaintance or a colleague with who you have contact based mostly on proximity, or some other external factor which brings you together. Although you may like this person, you would not necessarily seek him or her out if the circumstance which brought you together should change.

INTIMACY DIAGRAM



APPENDIX E

Interactional Style Questionnaire

In this section, you will be presented with statements which characterize types of interactions. Please list all the numbers of the people from your relational tree with whom you interact in the manner stated.

1. We've cared for each other when ill.

_____

2. These persons and I are interested in each other's advice.

_____

3. Sometimes I feel like myself when around these people.

_____

4. We accept each other.

_____

5. These people and I influence each other's point of view.

_____

6. We converse fluidly.

_____

7. The influence of these people on my point of view is negligible.

_____

8. We know each other's family secrets.

_____

9. These people and I know each other well enough to understand the impact of important events.

_____

10. We have cried, argued and laughed together.

_____

11. These people may not recognize that a particular event was meaningful to me.

_____

12. This people and I talk about sexuality.

_____

13. These people may or may not notice that I had made a significant change in my life.

_____

14. These people and I have been anxious about something in each other's presence.

_____

15. Sometimes I mention family matters with this these people.

_____

16. These people and I have witnessed each other's expression of emotion.

_____

17. We influence each other's thinking.

_____

18. Sexuality sometimes might come up in a discussion with these people.

_____

19. These people and I empathize with each other's emotions.

_____

20. If these people really knew me, they might not hold the same opinion of me.

_____

21. We get lost in each other.

_____

22. These people might sometimes see me in an emotional state.

_____

23. These people and I have watched each other grow.

_____

24. These people and I are aware of our strengths and weaknesses.

_____

25. We depend on each other for advice.

_____

26. These people and I discuss family issues.

_____

27. Sometimes I might be playful with these people.

_____

28. These people and I have been helpful to each other when ill.

_____

29. We discuss sex.

_____

30. These people and I can speak comfortably.

_____

31. We relax together.

_____

32. I might or might not find myself feeling absorbed by these people.

_____

33. These people and I are generally relaxed in each other's presence.

_____

34. I give advice to these people, or they give it to me.

_____

35. We are sometimes anxious.

_____

36. These people might find out that I had been seriously ill.

_____

37. These people might not know that I was anxious.

_____

38. We have grown together.

_____

39. These people and I play.

_____

40. We experience each other's moods.

_____

41. I might or might not speak about personal experience with these people.

_____

42. We play together.

_____

43. These people might sometimes respond to and understand my moods.

_____

44. These people and I have gotten caught up in each other.

_____

45. We share the impact of important events in each other's lives.

_____

APPENDIX F

Relational Organization Interview

"Last week you completed a packet of questionnaires about the different ways you interact with people you call your friends. Now, I would like to ask you several questions about the packet. This will take approximately one hour and I will be recording this interview. Please feel free to ask questions."

The Relational Tree

"For each person on your intimacy diagram tree I would like to ask you a series of questions." (Questions will be repeated for each person on the intimacy diagram tree.)

1. How long have you known each other?

2. How did you meet?

3. How did your relationship form?

4. What was happening in your life at the time?

5. What was happening in this person's life at the time?

6. In what way does this person continue to be important to you?

Interactional Style Interview

"You were asked to list the different types of communication patterns and self experience you have with people on your relational tree. For each person on the first ring of intimacy diagram I would like to ask you questions about your decision making process." (The same questions will be repeated for each person on the first circle).

1. I noticed you described your relationship with this person in this way (cite responses from the questionnaires). What aspects of your relationship contributes to this particular style of interaction?

2. Are you happy with this way of being together, or how you experience yourself with this person? Why, or why not?

3. If you had a different interactional style with this person how would your relationship change if at all?

4. What about your relationship with this person made you decide that they should occupy their position on the intimacy diagram?

5. In what ways would you interact with this person differently, or feel differently with this person if you felt they occupied a different place on the Intimacy diagram? What other place might you have put them and why?

6. How did you decided what people from your relational tree you would list as one of the three types of friends on the intimacy diagram?

Shared Linguistic Utterances

" I would like you take a minute now to reflect upon this interview, and how you have spoken about yourself, your friends and your relationships. I would now like to ask you to give a brief autobiographical narrative." Interviewer will use the following prompts:

1. How would you describe yourself (what do you do, how do you live, what activities are important to you, what are your current preoccupations)?

2. How do you conceptualize what you do? How do you feel about yourself when you ....

3. What role does your background play in who you are now? (Consider issues pertaining to class, ethnicity, race, religion).

Appendix G

Coding Guide For Hypothesis One: Friendship Formation

Circumstances of Friendship Formation

Developmental Transition: Score 1 if any of the following are true.

-Roomates during educational experience.

-Met during childhood and friendship has persisted.

-While undergoing separation or divorce from a loved one.

-While morning the loss of a loved one.

-While expecting, or having just had a child.

-During a shared, cathartic group experience.

-Shared hardship, or other poignant emotional event.

-Competitive Situation (ie teammates, co-leaders, etc.).

Shared Experiences: Score 2 if the following are true

-Went to same school.

-Attend same place of religious worship.

-Common Friends

-Shared interest

-On vacation

-Through children

-Working together

Proximity: Score 3 if any of the following are true

- Work together with hierarchical difference.

- Met through parental generation.

- Conference, workshop or other professional affiliation.

- Neighbors

-Shared mutual convenience (petcare, carpool).

-Business Interest.

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