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BITTERSWEET ATTACHMENTS: THE BONDS AND BINDS OF MENTORSHIP

by

BONNIE D. OGLENSKY

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2002

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

BITTERSWEET ATTACHMENTS:
THE BONDS AND BINDS OF MENTORSHIP

by

Bonnie D. Oglensky

Adviser: Professor Robert R. Alford

Interweaving sociological and psychoanalytic perspectives, this dissertation delves into the relationship between *mentors and protégés*--exploring how these relationships unfold and analyzing the nature of the personal bond that develops between parties and the emotionally-laden dynamics of this process. Standing in the crosshairs of authority and love, mentorship is shown to be embedded with multiple sources of conscious and unconscious ambivalence.

This inquiry--based on in-depth interviews with fifty individuals in longstanding mentorships across a range of professional occupations with special case analyses of seven female/female pairs--is one of few to focus on mentor-protege *pairs*. As such, it contributes to an understanding of the complex relational underpinnings that are at the heart of mentorship.

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By closely examining three emotionally charged dynamics--idealization, loyalty, and generativity--this dissertation leaves no doubt that the central paradox of mentorship is that the intimacy that makes personal and professional growth possible can be its own undoing. Evidence shows that the hopes and expectations that grow out of the affectionate and trusting feelings between mentors and protégés are often met with disappointment as they clash with the realities of the instrumental and political motivations of the actors in the relationship as well as with the aggressive, competitive, deadline-oriented, productivity-driven, and unstable forces of organizations, professional life, and flexible capitalism.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been at this work for many years. It has been at times a joy and at times excruciating to stick with a project that has been life defining but an arduous journey. During the course of this research I lost my father to a failed heart and my mother to a stunningly quick decline from lung cancer. I grew up during these years. Beyond altering the timetable for the dissertation, these events had a profound influence on my thinking about mentorship and the links between generations.

There are many people and institutions to thank for supporting me through the process. First there was the financial assistance for which I have to thank City University of New York, Graduate Center and the Sociology Department immensely. The David Spitz Dissertation Fellowship, Alumni Research and Travel Grants, and Jesse and Birdie Fuchs Research and Travel Funds gave me time to think and write and go to conferences in other locales helping me to remain stimulated intellectually. The Jewish Foundation for Education of Women provided needed funds for the lengthy but critical task of analyzing interview data from transcripts. Early in the process, Bill Kornblum was kind enough to offer monies for postage for the mass mailing of my preliminary questionnaire and for that I was touched and grateful. I thank him also for his elegant comments and suggestions offered at my dissertation defense. Rob Sauté, Kinsey Wilson, and John Laspina also deserve acknowledgment for paving the way for me to gain entry to a major news organization--from which I tried to find mentors and protégés for the study. Thanks also to Jane Goldberg for putting me on to people in the arts.

For a year I was able to escape the isolation of working at home by going to The Mercantile Library in midtown Manhattan which granted me a residency at their Writer's Studio. I thank Harold Augenbraum for arranging this for me. And over the past two years, I've had the good fortune of working as a CUNY Writing Fellow at Bronx Community College where my thoughts about writing as a way of learning have been enriched by people like Marsha Cummins.

To my intellectual father and dear, dear friend, Bob Alford, I owe more than I can say. He trained me to love the discipline of inquiry and to tolerate its uncertainty. He taught me to be patient and compassionate about this strange and wonderful world of idea-making. I hope I can pass on to others what I have grown to treasure from him. And to my intellectual

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mothers--Catherine Silver and Cynthia Fuchs Epstein--I am deeply grateful. Having the chance to work with each of them on their own research projects--different as they were from each other--grounded me in the pleasures and pains of empirical sociology. I need to thank Catherine Silver, especially, for encouraging me to take the risk of bringing psychoanalytic perspectives to sociology. She is a model for me in this respect. The psychoanalytic framing of mentorship in this dissertation is testimony to her abiding influence. At the same time, Cynthia Fuchs Epstein deserves special recognition for anchoring me in the integrity of sociological traditions and going all out to groom me professionally. All of these mentorships have been bumpy. I was not so easy to work with--I made many (relational) mistakes. I have learned from them.

I have also to thank several friends who helped me work through conflicts at various stages of this research, listening patiently and attentively, always conveying trust that I could resolve the difficulties and finish the project: Meg Sandow, Jeanne Weiler, Shira Dentz, Alan Sokal, and Steve Lang. And to my spirited, delightful friend and intellectual comrade Neil McLaughlin--huge appreciation for his willingness to stay close to my work and for offering sensitive and strategic advice about my research and career to come. Core members of my dissertation group--Robin Isserles, Matthew Jeckerbyrne, and Pam Donavan--also should be acknowledged for providing important critical feedback and much needed peer consolation during the early stage of data analysis.

Finally, I am indebted to family and close friends for reliable and sustaining emotional support: Michael and Stacy Oglensky, Andrea Mandel, Charlotte Ruben, Richard Mandel, Ruth Tiger, Dana Kaplan, Laurie Ross, Deborah Lewis, Marina Papa, and Matthew Lindholm.

To Carol Munter, whose enlivening presence in my life helped keep me on track, reminding me that when all was said and done--doing the dissertation was for *me*.

To Ira Schwarz, whose warmth, rock steady friendship, and loving support I so cherish.

And lastly, in memory of my parents, Ruth and Burtis Oglensky, I dedicate this work.

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As I see it, modern society is no lonely crowd, no horde of refugees fleeing from freedom. It is not Gesellschaft, soulless, egotistical, loveless, faithless, utterly impersonal and lacking any integrative forces other than interest or coercion. It is held together by an infinity of personal attachments, moral obligations in concrete contexts, professional and creative pride, individual ambition, primordial affinities, and a civil sense which is low in many, high in some, and moderate in most persons. It might be destroyed by modern warfare or the exhaustion of its resources, the lack of initiative of its inventors and enterprisers might so hurt its competitive position in the economic world that it would be doomed to the pressure of a standard of living below what its members aspire to. Aside from these, it is in no danger of internal disintegration. Whatever danger it faces in this respect would be far less from those who are charged with faithlessness and the inability to rise above their routine concerns, from the philistines, the dwellers in housing stages and new towns, than from those who think that society needs a new faith to invigorate it and give it a new pulse.

Edward Shils, *"Primordial, Personal, Sacred, and Civil Ties"*

If we move toward the broader implications of the place of the rational and the ambivalent in the social sciences, it becomes clear that we are dealing with a fundamental existential dilemma in the human condition. It is communicated in various dichotomies--freedom versus constraint, independence versus dependence, maturity versus infancy, and more--but whatever the dichotomy, the dilemma appears to be insoluble. Neither pole is a separate state or condition. Neither freedom nor dependence can be realized in a full or exclusive form because one is part of the other. Human beings long and strive for both but when they achieve a measure of either, the other reasserts itself. As in the nature of ambivalence itself, we want both sides at once, but cannot fully satisfy either side.

Neil Smelser, *"The Rational and the Ambivalent in the Social Sciences"*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Mentorships find their niche as social anchors in a turbulent world. Despite tremendous upheaval in the nature and organization of work and the

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workplace at the end of the twentieth century or perhaps because of it, mentoring relationships have become de rigueur. Attention on mentorship peaked in recent years as mentoring has become an almost ubiquitous feature of American culture. It seems that everyone has been talking about mentoring in its bloom of configurations between working adults in a vast range of occupations and organizations, as well as between youth and adults in conjunction with educational and social service programs.[1]

The fact that mentorships appear to be thriving during this postindustrial period is in some ways curious given what several scholars have noted to be the corrosive effects of flexible capitalism on workplace relations.[2] Weakened loyalty to companies and colleagues, for example, has been observed as one among several factors giving rise to a new kind of alienation and sense of social dislocation.[3]

Hence, the cachet that mentoring has gained, while interesting, is perhaps not too surprising. Human beings demonstrate time and again that they wish to find meaning, create social ties, and continue to learn and grow in whatever context they find themselves in. Human development presses for these connections and growth opportunities. And mentorship is one venue for realizing them.

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It is probably also true that one reason that mentorships can weather change in a work world filled with uncertainty in what Smelser (1998) has termed an "age of temporariness" (p. 8) is because they often evolve into emotionally-laden attachments. Thus, while it will be argued that mentorships are built upon fragile foundations, it also seems to be the case that the bonds that individuals forge as mentors and protégés can be quite tenacious. Though they are certainly impacted by the social transformations and cultural contradictions of the day, the affective ties of mentorship seem to sustain them and keep them breathing.

This study brings a fresh perspective to mentoring by viewing its intellectual, affective, and strategic dimensions as structurally intertwined. One of my core discoveries is that a mentor's influence is limited if she engages a protégé only at an intellectual level or for purposes of career advancement. To be potent, the relationship between mentor and protégé must be, I believe, as emotionally rich as it is both intellectually substantive and professionally useful. Still, mentor-protégé relationships are often accompanied by complicated and intense feelings, disappointments, and seemingly irrational behaviors that can inhibit learning and undermine career goals. The build-up of loyalty and trust, for instance, that may drive mentor

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and protégé to go to great lengths to boost each other's careers may also blind them from seeing each other's flaws, may stymie the development of independent thought and result in cloning, may create dilemmas about whether to pursue challenging opportunities that would distance parties organizationally or philosophically, or may lead to sacrifices that sabotage careers. Thus, the intimacy that makes personal and professional growth possible in mentorship can be its own undoing.

I look closely at this paradox and the intricate weave that makes up the emotional fabric of mentorship. Borrowing from Levinson (1978), I define *mentor* as an older, more experienced person who is teaching a younger person--the *protégé*--how to navigate in the adult world and world of work. While overtly, the relationship may be defined as serving only the protégé, both parties are thought to benefit from the involvement. Mentorship provides an arena for experiential learning, satisfying developmental and emotional needs, and realizing career dreams.

Based on relationship history material from interviews with fifty individuals in longstanding mentorships--with special case analyses of seven female/female pairs--I explore the emotional character and dynamics of mentorship by focusing on three central themes: idealization, loyalty, and

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generativity. For each area, my aim is to show the paradoxical delicacy and tenacity that constitute the bonds of mentorship.

I should state up front that the pairs in this study were selected (among other reasons discussed in Chapter II) because they came closest to resembling the ideal type or classic mentorship. That is, prescreening procedures allowed me to identify the strongest and most multifaceted mentorships--involving intense emotional attachment, significant strategic and political interest, and expansive developmental goals aimed at professional and personal grooming and advancement. The relationships themselves were important, that is, way beyond the simple utility and mechanics of mentoring activity. The pairs chosen and the findings of this study, therefore, may not be representative of the wider spectrum of mentoring relationships--some of which focus almost exclusively on career assistance and/or sponsorship, yielding little in the way of a textured emotional connection.

Finally, although a study of youth-adult mentorships would be fascinating in its own right, I limit my investigation to mentorships among professionals from diverse fields such as publishing, academia, the arts, civic life, and industry. (A full description of interviewees appears in the methodology section.) My interest is in elucidating the emotional character

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and dynamics of mentorship--specifically the ambivalence that permeates these relationships.

Ambivalence in Mentorship

If I could make only one statement about mentorship it would be that it is a relation chock full of *ambivalence*. "The nature of ambivalence," writes Neil Smelser (1998) in his Presidential address to the American Sociological Association in 1997, "is to hold *opposing affective orientations* toward the same person, object or symbol" (p. 5). In this case, mentor and protégé--two adults who come together originally, typically, in connection with their work--form a relationship which in its course, stands in the crosshairs of authority and love. The mentor is an authority figure in the relationship, the protégé is the subordinate, apprentice, intern, et. al. As the authority figure, the mentor is the one who has power, often in the material sense when she is also the boss or senior colleague, but always symbolically and emotionally. She is the one who knows more and has more of something that the protégé wants (e.g., resources, networks, wisdom, skill, style, values, self-confidence, poise). The protégé is in the position of learner; sometimes she is also an assistant. She may also be a subordinate in the formal sense and have obligations to produce work and carry out official job duties.

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Psychic Ambivalence

As mentor and protégé, however, both parties go beyond the bare bones of an authority relationship defined only by differences in power and titled obligations. One premise of mentorship is that as an *emotionally-bonded authority relation* whose primary function is developmental, it is fused with an erotic (libidinal) element expressed through admiration, devotion, hope, protection, care, nurturance, recognition, influence, creative collaboration, etc. The mentor and protégé often develop an abiding affection for one another through their work together and through their involvements with each other's lives beyond work.

Yet there is much psychological and cultural baggage attached to the authority that lines mentorship. The warm glow produced by the "positive" side of the emotional attachment turns out to be only one aspect of a more complicated and messier story. Among other things, authority is also known to give rise to dependence, competition, resentment, hate, envy, idolatry and slavish conformity, vulnerability, disillusionment, narcissism, exploitation, as well as the fears, anxieties, and cultural taboos associated with these binding and aggressive states.[4]

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These "darker" aspects of mentorship, so to speak, are the flip side of the positive. Admiration and reverence sow the seeds of dependence and envy. Hope sows the seeds of disillusionment. Creative fusion and influence sow the seeds of competition, narcissism, and exploitation. Devotion sows the seeds of conformity and betrayal. Protection sows the seeds of vulnerability. Thus, the erotic forces in mentorship need to be viewed as operating in tension with aggressive and painful forces.

Freud called attention to the phenomena of ambivalence in what could be called the "original" authority relationship--that between children and parents. Borrowed from a paper written by Bleuler in 1910, Freud first used the term ambivalence to account for the psychodynamics between son and father within the reconstructed family dramas that became the paradigmatic scenes of psychoanalysis. He interpreted the son as both loving and hating his father; as wanting to be close to him and simultaneously rid of him; both seeking his advice and resenting parental control.

Relational Structure as a Source of Psychic Ambivalence

A number of psychoanalysts and organizational and management scholars who study workplace relationships share the view that the authority

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configuration of mentorship resembles the structure of the parent-child relationship and as such, calls forth and reactivates its core paradoxical dynamics.[5] The same pattern has been observed among students and teachers.[6] Mediated by unequal power and strength,[7] the emotional tie to parents, teachers, and mentors is ambivalent from the start because it is linked simultaneously to a desire to identify with and a desire to replace the authority figure. In Freud's words, "identification ...can turn into an expression of tenderness as easily as into a wish for someone's removal" (1959 [1921], p. 61).

The central idea is that our first relationships as children are with authority figures on whom we depend for survival. As Smelser points out, "these relations...are those *from which the child cannot escape*: this is a critical point" (1998, p. 8). The reason it is critical is because a good deal of ambivalence originates from the fact that the authority bonds of childhood, and later, mentorship, contain elements of emotional unfreedom. They bond and bind. They connect and constrain. They socialize and control. They nurture and clutch. They protect and surround. They involve giving and loss, etc. On this point, Smelser elaborates:

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> When we bond with people deeply, or even superficially, we become to some degree less emotionally free as a result. These relations invariably become fused with some ambivalence (p. 8).

Hence, like our relationships to parents, we love mentors because they nurture, comfort, protect, and teach but also because they serve as lifelines. We *must* love them as they supply us with the resources to live and grow. At the same time, we envy them for what they have and we don't. And we fear them because they are stronger than us and can discipline, withhold, and punish. We also hate them because their strength and control remind us of our dependency, smallness, helplessness, lacks, and our limits. To some extent, they hold our future in their hands. And we feel profoundly disappointed by them because it is through experiences of inevitable deprivation by them that we realize that a perfect, easy, tension-free, pleasure-filled existence is not possible. They remind us, that is, that we have no choice but to struggle to grow.

Thus, the possibilities and constraints posed by the emotional attachments to parents as the first authority figures are thought to be rekindled in mentorship. It is important to point out, however, that even when we don't know the particular details of an individual's history, we can expect, according to psychoanalytic theory, that early childhood

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ambivalences over authority will be revisited in later life. This occurs through *transference*.[8] On this Smelser (1998) writes:

> Although fixed mainly in childhood, ambivalences generalize readily to other real and symbolic situations. Freud's most dramatic evidence is the patient's positive and negative transferences toward the psychoanalyst, evoked in the absence of any stimulus that might excite strong reactions (p. 6).

The argument I am making starts then with the premise that psychic ambivalence in general has its origins in the early childhood relationships. This ambivalence is given additional punch in mentorship because like the most important early childhood relationship, mentorship is also an authority relationship, and thus involves elements of inequality, dependence, and unfreedom, and thus re-evokes the original struggles and wishes.

Relational Character as a Source of Psychic Ambivalence

I want to underline that aside from the ambivalence about authority, mixed feelings are also generated in mentorship by virtue of the fact that it grows to be an emotionally intense relation--irrespective of its authority basis. The intimacy, sharing, commitments, obligations, and affection that develop between mentor and protégée arouse ambivalence on their own. Moreover, the strength of the ambivalence will vary with the strength of the bond. The stronger the positive feelings and views about the relation, the

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stronger the negative side. The more we love, in other words, the more we hate.[9] "Freud wrote about this 'law of ambivalence' of feeling, which to this day governs our emotional relations with those *whom we love most*" (Smelser, 1998, p. 6).

So far it may seem that the only party to have ambivalence is the protégée. But this is not the case and as the reader will see, my research amply demonstrates this. The ambivalence that the mentor experiences also stems in part from early childhood experiences with authority. How the mentor feels about being involved in an emotionally bonded authority relation--regarding such issues as dependence, self-sufficiency, responsibility, etc. are also partly shaped by her past relationships and family history. How the mentor feels about her own authority, power, ambition, influence, competitiveness and vulnerability also have some transferential component. And although the parent side of the story, so to speak, is not theorized nearly as much in psychoanalytic writings as is the child side, it is easy to see that a fruitful analogy could be made between mentor and parent insofar as ambivalence is churned up by many similar internal conflicts over responsibility, control, obsolescence, adequacy, sacrifice, discipline, limit-setting, narcissistic gratification, and loss.

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Sociological Ambivalence

Ambivalence in mentorship comes from sociological sources as well. Indeed, it is part and parcel of the structure of the relationship itself. According to Merton (1976) in his incisive theoretical paper:

> The sociological understanding of ambivalence focuses on the ways in which ambivalence comes to be built into the structure of social statuses and roles. It directs us to examine the processes in the social structure that affect the probability of ambivalence turning up in particular kinds of role relations. And finally, it directs us to the social consequences of ambivalence for the workings of social structures...[T]he sociological inquiry into ambivalence does not replace the psychological inquiry, but instructively complements it (p. 5).

My first whiff of the sociological ambivalence in mentorship came during my initial contacts with prospective interviewees who seemed to question whether their relationships were "real" mentorships. Actually, no one I encountered at any point in the research was too sure of what a mentorship is "supposed" to look like, giving the impression that most individuals in such relationships are "winging it." Probably this is because from a structural viewpoint, mentorships are essentially *lawless*. Even though nowadays many mentoring relations are being legislated through programs--in the workplace, educational organizations, social service agencies, and volunteer associations--mentorship per se is not an

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institutionalized type of social relation. Parties to these relationships therefore have no clear road map for charting roles, boundaries, and expectations. There is no definitive "book" on the topic and no explicit contract.

Instead, there are probably dozens of conceptions in the mainstream and academic press, a very elastic image of mentoring in the common culture, and a glut of "consultant mentors"--mostly career and management gurus who invent and reinvent the "rules" of mentoring as time moves on and market demand for advice about mentoring beckons. Notwithstanding all of this hum, there is little consensus on the specific duties, obligations, and normative expectations that form the base of mentorship. Mentorships are something the culture can't quite pin down.

Relational Structure as a Source of Sociological Ambivalence

Viewed sociologically, the slipperiness is not surprising. That is because as a social relation, mentorship probably should be considered liminal[10]--as it falls between the boundaries of other social relations--struggling to claim a distinct identity of its own. Mentorship is betwixt and between other types of relationships. Its not quite a boss/employee relation or a friendship although it can have elements of both. Its not a parent/child,

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aunt/niece or older sibling/younger sibling relation although symbolically and behaviorally it may reflect aspects of all three. Its not exactly a teacher /student, master/disciple, or therapist/ patient relation, or a relation between clergy and congregant. But again, it may resemble and overlay each of these.

Just because the roles of mentorship are elusive and seem to slide through the cracks, however, does not mean that it does *not* have a structure. That is, mentorship is not a formless, chameleon-like entity. Nor in my view is it derivative. Aside from the fact that it rests on a range of very real and vibrant historical archetypes and traditions, mentorship does have a core structure with basic defining features (at least in the ideal sense).

For example, what it shares in common with all of the above listed social relations is that it is a two-person relationship and is hierarchical by virtue of rank or experience and age. We would do well here to recall Simmel's forceful argument about the significance of numbers and power in structuring social relations (1950b). Moreover, the ideal type mentorship also involves emotional attachment, reciprocal obligations, and mutual benefits and risks. Though the specific nature (contents) of these features are not formalized--that is, what they look like as they play out in

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mentorships is not preset nor clearly delineated in the normative sense--one could say that these dimensions of mentorship are structural facts and as such are unambiguous.

Ambiguity reenters the picture when we consider that *these structural facts contradict each other*--for example, in the commingling of mutuality and authority. In this sense one could reasonably argue that *mentorship makes a form out of liminality*. A structure, that is, evolves in a space which is characterized by ambiguity and contradiction.

Relational Character as a Source of Sociological Ambivalence

We see these antinomian tendencies also in the way that mentorship crosses the boundaries of many dualisms of social organization. It is a relation that is both and not quite fully either public and private, instrumental and expressive, affect-based and rationally motivated, particularistic and universal, voluntary and coercive, informal and obligation-filled, collaborative and hierarchical, reciprocal and self-interested, and about both work and love. In the mix, these clashing dimensions of mentorship impose ambiguous and contradictory demands and expectations--at times pulling the actors in different directions--and casting such relationships, therefore, as fundamentally ambivalent.

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Coasting along the margins of all of these dichotomies of social life would seem to allow mentors and protégées greater freedom to improvise but at the same time greater risk of misunderstanding, disappointment, and tension than social relations more distinctly bound by normative constraints and consequences. That is, the paradoxical structure and character giving rise to confusion also creates a space for invention and vitality: when nothing is written in stone, there is likely to be room for anxious chaos and playful improvisation.

Yet, there may be something about the freedom to become unglued in a mentorship--a freedom which comes from its lack of clear roles or norms--that gives rise to more intense forms of emotional attachment through such processes as idealization, loyalty, and generativity. Simmel (1950b) recognized this paradox but framed it differently. For him, what makes a relationship like mentorship intense--in terms of having the paradoxical qualities of being *both* fragile and tenacious--is that it is dyadic. The simple fact that parties in a dyad know that the relationship will dissolve if either party pulls out, Simmel postulated, heightens the sense of the relationship as dear: "it makes the dyad into a group that feels itself both endangered and irreplaceable" (p. 124).[11] While the risk of loss or

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abandonment can evoke dramatic longing and intense desire, it also leads to resentment and other kinds of ambivalent feeling when efforts to maintain the relationship take priority over relational satisfaction.

One could hypothesize that liminal relations like mentorship propel individuals to create structures, rules, and expectations to compensate for the lack of external guides and norms but as they do so they box themselves in with restraints of their own making. How much freedom and constraint the uncertain structure and character of mentorship produces is a question to keep in mind throughout this work.

Cultural and Historical Sources of Sociological Ambivalence

Beyond the ambivalence embedded in psychodynamic processes and the social structure of the relation, cultural and historical factors generate other layers of ambivalence in mentorship. That is, mentoring relationships do not unfold in a vacuum but are situated in a time and place, and are thus shaped by the conflicts and contradictions that characterize that history and culture. Contemporary cultural battles over values, for example, around such issues as authority versus relativism, tradition versus change, dependency versus self-sufficiency, patronage versus meritocracy, self-interest versus communal pursuits, and loyalty versus free agency are

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reflected and create tensions in mentorships.

For example, whether a protégée feels its shameful to be dependent (and virtuous to be self-sufficient) and thus tries to behave as if she already "knows it all" in her contacts with her mentor is probably partly a reflection of the extent to which she has internalized cultural taboos which equate dependency with weakness.

Similarly, the pulls a mentor may feel to keep professional or organizational traditions alive by passing them on to a protégée while at the same time trying to promote innovation and creative reform would also seem to reflect cultural ambivalence about preserving old ways versus encouraging new ones.

We can also see a type of ambivalence produced by macro-level shifts in the society--such as the transformation of the organization of work and careers--insofar as such changes produce conditions at odds with the aims of mentorship. It is critical, for example, to ask how mentors can carry out the function of inviting protégées into the fold of a profession and/or organization at a time in history when they themselves are grappling with "drift," career fragmentation, and job impermanence.[12] Hence, while the role structure of mentorship includes the normative expectation that mentors

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should help usher the next generation into a field, societal conditions may restrict the opportunity or complicate the process--and thus generate sociological ambivalence.[13]

Conspicuous Absence

This image of mentorship as steeped in ambivalence is not new. Almost any career biography of a public figure and many films and plays[14] feature stories about the passionate and stormy relationships between mentors and protégés. Recall, for instance, the recent public fallout between the writers V.S. Naipaul and his protégé Paul Theroux or the break-up of George Stephanopolous and Bill Clinton. A mixture of rapture and rockiness can also be seen in the creative mentorships of dancers George Balanchine and Suzanne Farrell, painters Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo,[15] and poets Ezra Pound and H. D. (Hilda Doolittle),[16] as well as in the intellectual mentorships of thinkers like Freud and Jung, and philosophers Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt,[17] to name a few. What all of these famous pairings have in common is that whatever other types of relationships they had--as mentors and protégées they all struggled to reckon with the unruly and inherently conflictual forces of love, learning, and power that fuel mentorship.

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Unfortunately, the academic literature has not taken this ambivalence seriously. (I shall develop a fuller discussion on this in Chapter III.) First, the vast majority of studies on mentorship are quantitative analyses of outcomes carried out by scholars and consultants in the business and management fields. Thus, little attention has been paid to examining the affective bonds and dynamics of mentorship in their own right. The few studies that have looked at mentorship process view conflict and ambivalence as a byproduct of mentorship, not as a constitutive factor.[18] That is, emotional conflict is seen as something that occurs when things go wrong in the relationship rather than embedded in its foundation and in the complicated emotional and interactional issues that these types of relationships inevitably tap. The uneasy feelings that mentorships stir up--the "negative side" of ambivalence--are regarded as exceptional instead of being a routine feature of the relationship, alongside the sunnier dispositions that mentorship can assume. Of course when such feelings are excessive or not well managed, they *can* be harmful and probably should be considered special cases. But under usual circumstances, ambivalence--consisting of positive and negative feelings towards the same object--is to be expected. My challenge will be to explore, discuss, illustrate, and most importantly

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hold on to the tension between the different sides of the ambivalence in mentorship.

Theoretical Options

The temptation to collapse the ambivalent tensions of mentorship, however, is great. One can choose to focus on the "positive" side of mentorship--exploring the satisfactions and benefits of the relationship for mentors and protégées professionally and personally--including an examination of the learning that takes place and life lessons acquired, the positive role modeling for the protégée, the sponsorship on behalf of the protégée, and the rewarding sense of purpose and value for the mentor. I refer to this as the hallmark version of mentorship because by concentrating on and celebrating the enriching aspects, it sugar coats and idealizes these relationships. Not surprisingly, accounts like this have proliferated in popular books such as Tuesdays With Morrie (Albom, 1997) which has been on the New York Times bestseller list for over two years at the time of this writing. The bias to tell the upbeat story of mentorship is especially prevalent in articles appearing in trade journals as well.[19] A good deal of the academic scholarship which attempts to record and analyze mentoring relationships looks either at these "benefits" of having them or the

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detriments to not having them. Scant attention has been paid to the *difficulties* or *complications* in having them.

On the other hand, one can choose to focus on the "negative" side of mentorship--exploring the "dark" aspects of these relationships--the "risks" or "dangers." Most writings that fall into this category are self-help books written by management or career experts which issue warnings about the troubles and pitfalls in mentorship.[20] Mainly, the few academic works that look at the negative aspects--specifically the sociological works--tend to take an overly strategic and rational view of mentorship, analyzing the processes of such relationships through either a Goffmanian or rational choice lens. That is, the assumption is that such relationships serve as political vehicles to professional or corporate advancement and as such, turn on the art of gamesmanship and manipulation. Put another way, the relationships are seen as instrumental and a cynicism about them pervades the analyses. Expressions of affection and loyalty are interpreted as forms of toadyism driven by utilitarian motives or fear, not as authentic emotional connections.[21]

It struck me upon reviewing the literature that what divides these two versions of mentorship is their approach to *authority*. Studies which

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emphasize the positive side of mentorship pretty much ignore or take for granted the authority basis of the relationship. This fact isn't *theorized* in these studies. Without underscoring that mentorship is founded on authority and that the two parties who come together in a developmental, educative, strategic, affection-filled relationship are *unequal* in power, strength, resources, and/or experience--ambivalence is relatively easy to overlook. This is because, as noted earlier, *authority gives mentorship its emotional kick.* The conflicts stirred up by authority around dependency, control, idealization, competition, loyalty, responsibility, mastery, etc. are absent in studies which fail to view authority as central to understanding what goes on in mentorship. While playing down authority means playing down certain complicated and powerful feelings, it doesn't, however, mean that such feelings don't exist.

Studies which emphasize the negative aspects of mentorship, on the other hand, take an overly simplistic view of authority. They tend to conflate authority with particular *styles* of authority--either authoritarianism, bureaucratic indifference, or corporate utilitarianism/strategism; viewing the power or exchange dimension of authority in mentorship as the whole story and regarding all interaction as flowing from the one-up/one-down or

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means-ends models of authority. Authority is thus cast in terms of domination, exploitation, obedience, submission or skin-deep calculations of deference, brokering, or patronage. Love, pleasure, and genuine human connectedness drop out of the picture. Mentors and protégés are thought to either manipulate one another, engage in surface acting to curry favor, or lock horns in struggles over control.

Bucking the theoretical tide, then, by choosing to investigate the *ambivalence* in mentorship means that authority itself must be reconceived. First, it must be placed front and center in the analysis. Authority needs to be explicitly recognized as a core feature of mentorship, fundamentally shaping the character and dynamics of these relationships. Second, the way we think about authority needs to change. We need a view of authority as an *emotionally-laden social relation*. Indeed, one of my aims in this dissertation is to "out" that emotional side of the story. As an authority relationship, mentorship doesn't only revolve around power, coercion, interest, market value, or the indifference associated with bureaucratic mandates and corporate fads.[22] So as I examine emotional conflict, strategic calculations, and disharmony in the relationships, I also am interested in the affinity, nurturance, generosity, etc.--the developmental

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aspects of the relationship. In her trenchant book, Compassionate Authority (1993), the political philosopher and feminist Kathleen Jones reminds us that authority comes from the word *augere* (to augment) and "connotes an activity of growth" (p. 21).

Such a view, of course, contrasts with most sociological models of authority. It counters Weber's theory of authority which focuses on types of legitimation as if legitimation adhered only to the position, credentials, or to the person in authority. What Weber did not fully account for is *why* people obey? He didn't explore what emotional needs might be met when a person submits to authority or for that matter wields authority. Why might individuals wish to follow or to be followed? What fantasies attract or compel individuals to conform to authority figures? What fantasies attract or compel individuals to exercise authority? What fears make us withdraw from or avoid authority--our own or that of others? In other words, Weber didn't account for authority from a relational or dynamic perspective nor did he deal with its affective dimension.

Complementing Weber's view, a psychoanalytic perspective concerns itself with the individual's affective needs for and ambivalent attitude towards authority. The mentor, for example, is not seen as someone who

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utilizes her authority merely because she is entitled to do so by virtue of her credential, age, experience, wisdom, or title. Rather, it is understood that she is also involved in an emotional relationship with the protégée and aims to fulfill wishes, ward off anxieties, and satisfy emotional needs through this relationship. At the same time, the protégée is not seen as someone who complies simply because he or she believes that the authority has a kind of abstract right to be in such a position. Rather, she complies to fulfill fantasies, to appease internalized authority figures, and to cope with emotional conflicts. From a psychoanalytic perspective, thus, legitimation has at least as much to do with what the protégée seeks, emotionally speaking, as with what the mentor might offer.

By framing authority in this way, I hope to avoid falling into either "side" of the ambivalence. Indeed, as I have been trying to stress, my interest is in developing a perspective on mentorship which can acknowledge both sides, and explore their dialectical nature. That is, it doesn't make sense to me, based on what I have learned from this investigation to approach either "side" as exceptional, but rather to look at the sides as part of one another. As we shall see idealization contains the seeds of and is undermined by disillusionment; loyalty contains the seeds of and is

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undermined by betrayal; generativity contains the seeds of and is undermined by fears of obsolescence and loss of creative control.

A final theoretical point has to do with the disciplinary pressure to collapse the tensions of mentorships. As I will argue in Chapter III, academic research on the topic is fragmented and as such has theoretically obscured the ambivalence in these relationships. Scholars tend to take a narrow slice of the topic and use the tools and lenses of their discipline to investigate. Educators look at the learning process in mentorship; developmentalists look at the life course issues and psychological growth; sociologists have mostly been concerned with power and professional socialization processes; and the most dominant stream of business and organizational scholars tend to look at the impact on job performance and career outcomes. While there is nothing particularly surprising about this fact, this fragmentation--an entrenched form of academic myopia--has created a blindspot, making it possible to ignore the contradictions and ambivalence that form the heart of mentorship.

Theoretical Framework

I utilize a blend of psychoanalytic and sociological perspectives to explore the ambivalence in mentorship. In combination, these perspectives

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provide theoretical tools and suppositions that are essential to explore the topic. Through an examination of three themes--idealization, loyalty, and generativity--this framework will allow me to describe, analyze, and explain the following core findings of this investigation: 1) Mentorship is susceptible to a high level of psychic ambivalence because as an emotionally-invested authority relationship, it has symbolic resonance with the parent-child relationship and thus [re]evokes emotional conflicts associated with that configuration. At the same time, psychic ambivalence is stirred up by mentorship's future orientation and the associated emotional aches and growing pains of adult development. Psychic ambivalence is also generated in mentorship by the inevitable conflicts that arise in forming an emotional bond. 2) Mentorship is susceptible to a high degree of sociological ambivalence stemming from a few sources: a) a social structure that is founded upon ambiguous role definitions and a liminal normative framework; b) conflicting cultural precepts and assumptions; and c) conflict between the aims of mentorship and the socially structured means to realizing those aims.

As Merton (1976) pointed out, although they are analytically separable and "operate on different planes of phenomenal reality," both the

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psychological and sociological types of ambivalence are intertwined empirically (p. 7). Thus while their origins differ they both register either consciously or unconsciously *within* the individual--that is, as part of the inner psychological life of the individual--as contradictory feelings and attitudes towards the other and towards the relationship itself. Put differently, the actor does not draw the distinction between the ambivalence coming from external, structural or historical sources and those stirred up by psychic conflict. She feels them both the same--as emotional tugs.

Idealization, Loyalty, Generativity

Three themes of central importance to analyzing how mentorships unfold emerged during this investigation: idealization, loyalty, and generativity. An examination of each theme based on findings from qualitative research with mentors and protégées will form the major portion of this work.

I view each theme as a primary mode of attachment or bonding in mentorship. That is, as dynamic processes, idealization, loyalty, and generativity are *ways of relating that form patterns of attachment*. While interrelated, each process helps mentors and protégées forge a distinctive type of link through fantasy, deed, interpersonal communication, feeling,

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ritual, expectation, and shared experience. Each process is critical both for relationship development and for the progression and effectiveness of the mentoring process itself. Idealization connects mentor and protégée through love, awe, admiration, and emulation. Loyalty connects mentor and protégée through tacit and explicit promises to stand by and protect the other and through the establishment and articulation of obligations. Generativity connects mentor and protégée through fantasies about and attempts to influence, make an imprint, and leave a legacy.

As modes of attachment in an authority-based relationship each process is also rife with ambivalence. Hence, while idealization, loyalty and generativity bring mentors and protégées into close, intimate alliances, they also give rise to emotional conflict and constraint. Moreover, it appears that each process taps its own brand of ambivalence. That is, a different cluster of psychodynamic tensions seems to be imported into mentorship by each process. Hence, each process leads to and can also undermine individual development and relationship continuity and satisfaction.

Idealization

Idealization is the process of aggrandizement; that is, (mis)perceiving the other as perfect, godlike, all-powerful, infallible, larger than life. It

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involves a kind of falling in love with the other, placing the other on a pedestal, and looking up to the other in awe and reverence. Through identification, the idealized other represents the hope that one can attain the admired qualities herself.

Idealization is central to the chemistry of mentorship as it inspires and motivates the protégée to open herself up to learning from the mentor. The attraction may, of course, be mutual: the mentor may idealize the protégée as well--seeing her, for example, as the "perfect daughter" who can do no wrong or as a rising star who is "going places," or "burning up the world." This kind of idealization plays a role in the mentor's feelings about generativity--if the mentor imagines greatness in the protégée's future, she can entertain the possibility that her name will be carried on well. Hence, idealization embodies ideals and hopes for both mentor and protégée.

While in the usual course of affairs, idealization flows from protégée to mentor, offering the former a vital sense of hope about her future--this process is also accompanied by difficult feelings such as envy, fear, competition, anxiety about dependence, rebelliousness, and disappointment. That the mentor's fall from grace is inevitable is key evidence of the intrinsic ambivalence in idealization. The protégée's tower of strength can't

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help but falter, because as she will come to realize, the exalted image is based on projection in the first place. Idealization gives rise to deidealization which gives rise to disillusionment. Moreover, fantasies of the mentor's perfection and greatness can also lead to inhibitions. The very ideals that the mentor represents can be paralyzing to the protégée's work efforts if idealization is excessive.

From the mentor's point of view, being the *object* of idealization has its drawbacks as well. It can generate self-doubt in the mentor about her expertise and competence, resentment over being cast as larger than life and thus misconstrued as struggle-free. Even though it can be taken as a form of high compliment and can boost the mentor's ego, the idealization can be experienced as burdensome as it projects unrealistic attributes onto her. The mentor may resent the feeling that she has to live up to another's grandiose expectations.

Loyalty

Loyalty provides the social glue in mentorship, impelling both mentor and protégée to want to aid, protect, and stick by the other. It is a process through which obligations and the duty to stand by the other foster relational continuity. That is, by definition, one function of loyalty is relational

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maintenance.[23] Sometimes, of course, relationships can outlast their function of satisfying partners because the grip of loyalty can be that strong.

Loyalty reflects at once a communal and a possessive impulse. Drawing lines of loyalty between the parties and thus creating a boundary around the pair signals commitment and declares a "we-ness" about the relationship as the direction of dyadic attention and affection becomes more pronounced. Mentor and protégée establish an understanding that they share something special that de facto leaves others out.

The bond formed by loyalty shows up in the nuts and bolts of interaction. Although usually unspoken, loyalty is expressed in gestures of reciprocal exchange concerning what each party does for the other, what they offer each other materially, symbolically and emotionally, and what each party comes to expect from the other in return. Each party comes to feel they have claims on the other for time, favors, plum work assignments, free labor, endorsements, protection, a sympathetic ear, the inside scoop, etc. Trust is built through the process of developing and sustaining loyalty.

At the same time there is an internal, psychological tension to loyalty which reveals its ambivalent nature. That is, the bargains struck between mentor and protégée--conscious and unconscious, spoken and unspoken--

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often reflect and generate fantasy-laden meanings and associated emotional conflicts (e.g., "*How far will she go to protect me? Does being loyal mean silencing dissent?*"). Mentors and protégées tend to feel deeply about their loyalties to each other even when they are not fully aware of this. Yet, standing by one's mentor or protégée is inherently constraining, as alternatives are rejected. That is, the true test of loyalty occurs when one is faced with the temptation to betray or abandon the other. Hence, in the ultimate sense, standing by the other entails choosing not to stand by someone or something else. This gives rise to an inherent, though not always conscious ambivalence about restrictions on freedom.

Aside from the ever present possibility of betrayal, the bond of loyalty can act to suppress voice, engender guilt, encourage excessive self-sacrifice and conformity, and foster a sense of tribalism between the pair in relation to colleagues and the organization or profession. Creating a closed system can pose strategic quandaries and cause professional and personal damage.

Finally, considering the authority structure of the relation, the bond of loyalty in mentorship reflects the inherent asymmetry in obligation. While mentor and protégée forge an implicit (and sometimes explicit) loyalty pact, the protégée, as subordinate, is beholden to mentor in a way which

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requires her to be inventive about how she pays her debt to her mentor and thus shows her loyalty. The mentor simply has to carry out mentoring functions (protect, teach, advocate, etc.) to show her loyalty. Usually (presumably), she has some access to resources with which to do so. The protégée, on the other hand, cannot pay back her mentor or engage in equal exchange. Hence, she tends to express loyalty symbolically (e.g., through gifts of emotional and material labor) and through ritual enactment.

Generativity

Almost literal in its capacity to bond, generativity is the process of making an imprint on another as a form of legacy. A type of influence, it involves passing on parts of the self to the other. This process is important to understand as it captures a large part of the motivation to mentor. Mentor wishes to give something of herself to a protégée in a way which extends her ideas, values, beliefs, and ways of being into the future. This serves as both an expression and reminder of the mentor's purpose and importance--a sense that what she knows and has accomplished can make a mark on the world.[24] Parts of her matter in ways that transcend her individual existence. Generativity is thus an avenue for immortalization--a way to "outlive the self" (Kotre, 1996).

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This mode of bonding--one which emphasizes the process of teaching and learning--is a defining feature of mentorship. Though underdeveloped in past research on the topic, generativity is a core function of mentorship as an agent of cultural reproduction and continuity. Succession--wherein there is a transfer of power and responsibility from mentor to protégée--is probably the most concrete outcome of generativity. A good deal of the process results in less tangible transfers--such as when traditions, knowledge, skills, and life philosophy are passed on. One woman said she got her "love of the city" from her mentor.

While mentor and protégée derive an enriching sense of communion from being linked in these personally, professionally, and culturally significant processes of influence, generativity has its down side. It can stifle creativity, encourage cloning, and limit innovation. There are risks of smothering protégées, that is, through overinfluence. The mentor may wrestle with how to modulate her influence, showing an ambivalence about her authority. She may feel conflicted about whether the protégée is a good recipient for what she might have to offer. She may feel daunted by the generative role overall, insecure about what she has that is worthy of being passed on. The mentor also has anxiety about the loss of control she will

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have over the object/s she passes on--surrendering it to its fate in the hands, heart and mind of her protégée who will, after all, use it in her own way.

In short, generativity leads to many kinds of ambivalent feelings and tensions in mentorship about identity, autonomy, authority, and boundaries--as the parties try to chart the nature and magnitude of mentor's imprint on protégée.

Aside from the fact that they are all key relational processes in mentorship, part of the reason for framing the dissertation around the three themes is that they each afford a picture of mentorship from a slightly different angle.

First, each theme has a different but relatively clear and prototypical subject-object orientation: the protégée idealizes the mentor, both mentors and protégées are loyal to each other, and mentors are generative toward protégées. In some cases, the roles may be reversed. As already mentioned, it is entirely possible that a bit of idealization could be directed from mentors to protégées. And of course it is reasonable to assume that the protégée will offer something to the mentor that has the feel of a generative object--that *she* makes some kind of impression on her mentor. Moreover, I certainly do not mean to suggest that these processes are present all the

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time in every relationship. But as they emerge, become salient, change, mute, or resurface they usually do so in the subject-object directions noted.

Findings from recent works in the sociology of emotions would support this claim.[25] This research suggests that a micropolitics of emotions operates in social relations whereby certain emotions are expected to flow upwards and others downward owing to the respective authority positions of interactional parties. The expression of feeling, it has been observed, can serve as a "place marker"--denoting and reinforcing the power differential in the relationship. Thus, as the protégée looks up to the mentor in an idealizing gaze, and the mentor dotes on the protégée as a protector and teacher, they enact and uphold the relationship hierarchy. And a reversal of the direction of such emotions would seem inappropriate or out of place. A fawning mentor, for example, although not unheard of, would in effect subordinate herself by that emotional stance in relation to a protégée.

Be that as it may, though mentors tend not to be the idealizers, they do play an important role in the protégée's construction of idealization fantasies and conflicts, and they do react to idealization, when it is apparent. Likewise, even though protégées are not in the position, generally speaking,

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to be generative toward mentors, they certainly figure into the mentor's construction of generativity fantasies and conflicts, and they certainly respond to their mentors' generativity efforts. The reason to clarify this is because although my explorations in the proceeding chapters approach idealization and generativity primarily from the point of view of the subject, I also examine the role and reactions that the object has to these processes. (The discussion of loyalty is approached from the point of view of both parties since it involves mutual, albeit asymmetrical, obligations.)

I also view each of the three themes as having a somewhat different temporal organization with respect to the fantasies and experiences that drive them. That is, while the dynamics of idealization, loyalty and generativity play out in the here and now of the mentorship--and are importantly affected by the everyday situations and interactions that the pairs face--each process also taps into, reflects, and is predominantly shaped by experiences in either the past or the present, or by projections into the future.

Of the three themes, idealization seems to have a stronger foothold in the past. That is because the process of projecting greatness, omniscience, and perfection onto another reflects wishes and fantasies stemming from a very early period in life. The whole pattern of idealization originates in

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infancy when parents appear as giants to children; and are regarded as embodiments of the hope that one will grow up to be as strong and wondrous as they are some day. Hence, when the protégée idealizes, the fantasies, fears, and anxieties from when she was small are recalled. Her images of and feelings about what it means to be strong, perfect, great, powerful are profoundly influenced by personal history.

In contrast, loyalty seems to be quite rooted in the present as a part of the everyday routines and crises faced by the parties in the mentorship. It is manifested in and reflects concerns about the nuts and bolts of exchange in the mentorship--who does what for who in the name of standing by the other. It often is enacted in ritualistic activity through which allegiance is expressed, boundaries are established and monitored, and the relationship is protected from external threat.

Lastly, one could argue that generativity ties to projections about the future. Again, that is not to say that this process doesn't live and breathe in the moment-to-moment life of the relationship. But what I am trying to convey here is the idea that the relational pulse of generativity is organized by the mentor's hopes, dreams, as well as her conflicts about posterity, the protégée's role in this design, and her own future.

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A final point is that each of these processes seems to revolve around a distinctive socio-emotional motif that reveal basic existential concerns: For idealization, is it about love and adequacy: *Am I, asks the protégée, good enough or lovable enough to be like you, oh wise mentor?* Loyalty is about obligation and reciprocity: *If I, asks both the protégée and the mentor, stand by you, what will you do for me?* Generativity is about posterity, life purpose and immortality: *Will I or my life, asks the mentor, matter down the pike?* While there may be other fundamental questions that form the back beat of a mentorship, I have selected these three because they seem to capture the basic rhythms.

How the Processes Unfold--Salient Factors

Before moving onto a discussion of methodology, I want the reader to understand how I situate these processes in mentorship. Based on the evidence found in this study, findings from previous research, and theory, it is my view that each theme probably operates in all mentorships to a greater or lesser extent. That is, idealization, loyalty, and generativity may well be generalizable processes in mentorship. This is my speculation based on what I have learned from this investigation. At the same time, both the data and theory suggest that the expression, content, tone, flow, etc. of each

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process varies from pair to pair. Each pair, in other words, has a distinctive idealization story, loyalty story, and generativity story linked to the particularities of biographical, interactional, and contextual factors. The dynamics, tone, character, flow of these processes--how they play out and what they look like in the mentorship history of any given pair--are shaped by multiple factors.

Individual factors which are salient include life and career stage, family relationships--past and present, prior mentorship experience; transference issues and conflicts emanating from early childhood relationships, personality style, attitudes towards authority, gender, etc. Important interactional factors include the exchanges, events, crises, and turning points that make up the narrative plot line for each pair. Organizational and/or professional factors matter also, such as the immediate work context in which the pair interact. Organizational hierarchy and opportunity structure, professional culture, collegial interface, succession trends, et al. may impact upon the microdynamics of each theme.

In terms of the larger landscape, cultural factors also seem to exert some effect on the dynamic processes of mentorship. As mentioned previously, values, norms, and discourses in the culture regarding work--

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such as debates over meritocracy versus patronage, competition versus cooperation--color what goes on in mentorships. Culturally imbued and gendered meanings and scripts regarding ambition, authority, dependence, autonomy, and mastery also affect how mentors and protégées take up and invest themselves in their roles and tasks.

Finally, historical factors must be considered. Changes in the economy and the work world affecting job stability, professional opportunity, and notions of occupational success certainly impact upon mentorship dynamics.

Outline of the Book

The next chapter on methodology covers the procedures for identifying and selecting research participants, rationale for studying mentor-protégé pairs, profile of participants, and distinctive features of the qualitative interview process. Special attention is paid to the unanticipated practical, intellectual, and ethical dilemmas and researcher ambivalence that arose in studying pairs. Chapter III deals with slippage in conceptualizing mentorship. It shows that mentorship is founded upon ambiguous terrain linguistically, semantically, normatively, historically, culturally, and academically and argues that in order to understand how emotional

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ambivalence is generated and plays out at the micro-level of particular mentor-protégé relationships, one needs to be aware of these larger (macro) sources of ambiguity. Chapters IV, V, and VI explore the dynamic processes of idealization, loyalty, and generativity, respectively, as they unfold in mentor-protégé relationships. Data are presented in the form of vignettes and case studies to illustrate various patterns that are identified. Emphasis is on the emotional ambivalence that permeates mentor-protégé relationships as a function of these processes. Each chapter also spends a fair amount of time defining these processes using psychoanalytic and sociological perspectives so that a full picture of the mixed motivations that undergird these processes can be rendered. Conclusions are set forth in the final chapter.

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ENDNOTES

1. There are scores of youth-adult programs nationally. Most have a human service focus. Many are similar to Big Brother/Big Sister idea of the past. "One-to-One"--an information clearinghouse for mentoring programs for youth nationally reported assets of 9.5 million in 1993.

2. See Sennett, 1998, for example.

3. See Hirschhorn, 1997.

4. For discussions of various types of emotional conflicts aroused by authority see Freud, 1959 (1921); Sennett, 1980; and Merton, Merton, and Barber, 1983.

5. See examples in Baum, 1992; Silver and Oglensky, 1996; Roper, 1994; and Thomas, 1989.

6. See Finkel and Arney, 1995; and Salzberger-Wittenberg, et. al., 1999.

7. This way of framing authority is taken from Sennett, 1980.

8. See Freud, 1963 (1912).

9. I am struck by the truism in the insight that *the more we love the more we hate*. One could think of it this way: the less we know a person, the more room there is to fantasize about them--in either positive or negative terms. So, for example, we can imagine that a blind date will be perfect and experience a rush of erotic feelings before we even meet the person. Alternatively, we tend to imagine that a person from a group we loathe or fear--say a murderer--will be frightening or monster-like. Once we meet and get to know the person, however, our more "pure" conceptions of them change. That is, as they become more human to us, we will see them as "less than perfect" or as "not as monsterly." Indeed, we are quite capable of developing deeper resentment against those we love and deeper affection for those we thought we hated. This is the paradox.

10. The term "liminality" was coined by Turner, 1969.

11. The dyad, according to Simmel (1950b), is distinguished by two factors. One is that it does not exist apart from the two parties who make

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it up. In contrast to groups of a larger size which can sustain a life apart from any particular member:

> The social structure [of the dyad] rests immediately on the one and on the other of the two, and the secession of either would destroy the whole. The dyad, therefore, does not attain the super-personal life which the individual feels to be independent of himself (p. 23).

For Simmel, this fact means that members of the dyad are ever conscious of its mortality:

> Both the lives of the individuals and that of the sociation are somehow colored by the imagination of their respective deaths...A dyad... depends on its two elements alone--in its death, though not in its life; For its life, it needs both. But for its death, only one. This fact is bound to influence the inner attitude of the individual toward the dyad, even though not always consciously and not always in the same way. It makes the dyad into a group that feels itself both endangered and irreplaceable (p. 124).

12. Sennett, 1998 draws attention to the loss of connection to a larger ideal (e.g., values of a profession or organization) that individuals experience in the post-industrial economy.

13. See Merton, 1976 for an explication of the various forms of sociological ambivalence, including the conflict between aims and the socially structured means to realizing those aims (p. 11).

14. Film and theatre have also dramatized mentorship ambivalence. Two classic films "All About Eve" and "My Fair Lady" and recent hit plays "Collected Stories" and "Art" depict the powerful mix of love, adoration, envy, and betrayal that plays out between mentors and protégés.

15. See Chadwick and de Courtivron, 1993.

16. See Simmons, 1994.

17. See Ettinger, 1995.

18. Two major works representing this trend are Kram, 1988 and Levinson, 1978.

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12. A positive spin is easily detected in articles with titles such as "Everyone Who Makes Its Has a Mentor" (Collins and Scott, 1978).

20. For example, there are mentoring titles like "Godfathers and Gossip" (by Harris, 1980) and "Five Ways to Leave Your Mentor" (by Wheatley and Hirsch, 1984).

21. Robert Jackall's Moral Mazes (1988) is a good illustration of the application of a strategic perspective to mentorship.

22. In a way that is similar to the case of mentorship as an object of sociological study, Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) note that the patron-client relation has historically been marginalized from the sociological literature because it falls outside of explanations of human relationships covered by macrosociological theories based on rational choice and bureaucratic frameworks.

> ..[the patron-client relation was viewed as] rather marginal in societies and were studied in the framework of the concepts, approaches and concerns which were predominant in these disciplines. There were usually treated as (sometimes negative) illustrations of the principles of organization of macrosocietal complexes, and they were above all seen as greatly differing or deviating from the 'corporate kinship' and territorial groups so strongly emphasized in anthropological literature and from universalistic-bureaucratic or market frameworks which were usually portrayed in sociology or in political science as epitomes of modernity and rational (p. 3).

23. See Simmel, 1950a.

24. See Erikson's (1950) delineation of generativity as developmental task in the latter part of life.

25. See, for instance, Clark, 1990; and Hochschild, 1983.

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CHAPTER II

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to carry out this investigation. Using a combination of life history and clinical approaches, interviews were conducted with over 50 individuals from a range of professional occupations who were involved in on-going mentorships at the time of the interviews. Special in-depth case studies were performed on seven female/female pairs selected from the larger group of interviewees. Based on this material, I analyzed key themes around which the ambivalent emotional dynamics of mentor-protégé relationships revolved and I use these themes as the framework for the report of findings. Before giving a fuller description of the research design process, data analysis approach, and special challenges posed in the course of my research, a brief profile of study participants will be offered. Table II-1 presents a summary of the interviews that were conducted for this study according to type (full pair, half pair, informant) and gender configuration of the mentorship.

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TABLE II-1

Interviews Conducted for Mentor-Protégé Study By Type and Gender Composition

Mentor/Protégé	Whole pairs	Half Pairs*	Other**
Female/ Female	12 (N=24)	5 (N=5)	-----
Male/ Female	2 (N=4)	7 (N=7)	-----
Female/ Male	1 (N=2)	-----	-----
Male/ Male	-----	2 (N=2)	-----
Totals			
Mentor/ Protégé	15 (N=30)	14 (N=14)	13 (N=13)

Total N=57 Study Participants

*This includes interviews with 11 protégés and 3 mentors. The gender composition for half pair interviews is as follows:

Of the five individuals involved female/female mentorships:
--2 females were protégées and 3 females were mentors
Of the seven individuals involved in male/female mentorships:
--all 7 were female protégées
Of the two individuals involved in male/male mentorship:
--both were male protégés

**Other interviews consisted of the following:

--a female with multiple protégés/students
--a group of females (N=8) who lunch together monthly for a mentoring--"YentaRing"
--a female informant who runs a mentoring program in law firms
--a female informant--setting up group mentor arrangement via Women's Bar Association
--a male protégé in the computer business (informal chat)
--a male protégé who crossed over from a career in the sciences to organizational consulting (informal chat)

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PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE

Since it was not self-evident who was in a mentoring relationship and who was not, I developed a preliminary questionnaire to assist in locating and selecting research participants. The questionnaire contains an 11-item index of mentoring functions constructed on the basis of the literature--particularly the landmark studies of mentoring by Kathy Kram (1988) and Daniel Levinson (1978). (See Appendix A for a detailed discussion on the development of the preliminary screening instrument and index.)

While *I* defined the parameters of this index and other survey items I thought would be important indicators of mentorship, part of my aim in utilizing the survey was to *discover* which baseline criteria--objective and subjective--could be used to distinguish mentorships from other types of less intensive career-enhancing relationships. In other words, though I suspected that mentoring relationships were qualitatively different from other kinds of advisory relationships, I was not settled at the start of this research on the specifics of what a mentoring relationship should look like--even in the ideal sense. As will be shown in the next chapter, previous research only added to the confusion. Thus, the questionnaire became part of my method for figuring out a sensible way to conceptualize mentorship as a distinctive

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social relation. (In the next chapter which delves into the broader question of the ambiguities in conceptualizing mentorship, I detail the view I adopted on what constitutes a mentorship and how I arrived at that view.)

Questionnaires were mailed to 1044 individuals in a variety of professional fields who were members of or employed by organizations cooperating with this study--the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE), the National Association of Women Artists (NAWA), the Stern Performing Arts Alliance, and a major daily New York newspaper. The response rate to the survey was 29 percent (N=291).[1]

Statistical analyses of responses to the screening questionnaire showed demographic characteristics of individuals involved in mentoring relationships, the prevalence and strength of mentoring functions in those relationships, and variation in the subjective definitions of mentoring. (See Appendix B for a synopsis of questionnaire findings.) These findings allowed me to distinguish patterns among the "truly mentored" (Riley and Wrench, 1985) from other types of career-enhancing relations. Among other uses, the information provided by the statistical analyses was integral to decisions about selecting participants for in-depth interviews.

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SELECTION OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Individuals whose responses to the questionnaire revealed that they were engaged in an on-going mentoring relationship were called and asked to participate in a two-part qualitative interview process. As discussed in Chapter I, given that my aim was to examine the complex emotional dynamics of mentorship, my preference was to interview individuals whose career enhancing relationships approximated the ideal-type mentorship.

A handful of variables were central to making this determination. One was that the relationships had to have been relatively *longstanding*--at least two years. The fact that a pair was involved in a long-term relationship suggested that the emotional bond was probably fairly intense and thus ambivalent. A second criteria was that there needed to be a *strong presence of mentoring activity* (e.g., those who scored "high" on the mentoring index) in the relationship. The fact that the pairs were multi-functioned--meaning that there was a diversity of mentoring activities being carried out--meant that there was a greater likelihood that some activities and aims of the relationship would be in conflict with others--producing its own brand of complications and ambivalence. The third criteria was to choose pairs that were *free-standing*--meaning that they were not matched

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together by any formal program nor were they accountable, as mentor and protégée, to report to anyone else about the goings-on in their relationships. That the mentorships emerged independently suggested that pairs were subject to fewer rules and guidelines than those involved in institutionalized or arranged forms of mentorship. The ambiguity about relational expectations and duties seemed likely to generate ambivalence. A fourth selection criteria was that the career-enhancing relationship had to be explicitly defined by one or both parties as a *mentorship*. One hypothesis I had going into the research which was supported by the survey findings was that those *naming* their other half a "mentor" or "protégé" were more likely to indicate a greater range and extent of mentoring functions in their alliances than those who identified their other half using different terms (e.g., "coach," "sponsor," "guide," "advisee," "student").

Finally, a few other variables about which data was solicited on the preliminary questionnaire were also taken into consideration in selecting individuals for interviews. These included gender, age differences between the parties, frequency of contact, formal role relationship, occupational factors, and race. Each of these were believed to be important factors likely to affect the character and course of a mentor-protégé relationship. (See

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Appendix C for a discussion about the extent to which and why each of these variables was taken into consideration in selecting interviewees.)

INTRODUCING THE "PAIRS RESEARCH DESIGN" TO PARTICIPANTS

Although they were not asked to make a commitment up front, participants were apprised during the initial contact that I might be interested in speaking to their "other half" (mentor or protégé) after the completion of our interviews. Confidentiality was assured. Unless a person related straightaway that she would *not* want me to contact the other person or expressed serious hesitation over this, I proceeded with the first round of interviews and hoped for the best. That is, in the end I could not control whether an interviewee would decide that she didn't want me to contact her other half. In most cases, permission was granted.

While this presented a thorny set of issues with respect to the research design, it turned out that my negotiations with interviewees about contacting their other half yielded some fascinating data in its own right. For the most part, these exchanges foreshadowed the high degree of ambivalence about mentorship that I came to discover as I conducted the interviews themselves.

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Research Ambivalence

At least one half of the interviewees expressed some concern that their own positive feelings about the relationship would not be mirrored back by their other half. This was clearly a touchy subject.

A couple of comments--typically spoken in a half-joking tone--hint at the anxiety and insecurity that mentors and protégés felt about how their other half would react to my request for an interview. During our discussion about whether I could call her mentor, a high powered stockbroker impishly proclaimed "Oh, she [my mentor] probably hates me!" Smirking and giggling, another woman said, "[An interview with my mentor] would be very interesting...He'll tell you something totally different than me."

Some expressed fear of shame and exposure directly. One man--a biochemist turned career management expert--who had been involved with his mentor for *almost thirty years* was nervous about having his mentor talk to me. He admitted that he didn't want to find out that his mentor did not regard him as glowingly as he regarded his mentor. I asked how he thought he would even find out what his mentor had said given that I would not report back to him. His reply was that he was sure that his mentor would tell him what went on the interview.

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Some were afraid that their other half would not even agree to the interview or would be bothered by the request. After describing a fairly tense and souring phase of his mentorship, Hugh--an architect at a cut throat firm--asked if *he* could be the one to request the interview with his mentor. When I followed up, Hugh reported that he *had* asked but that his mentor, "didn't understand the point of it [the research] or...chose not to understand it," a response which spoke volumes about the strain in the relationship.

My request to interview a person's other half also stirred up fantasies about the role that I and my research might play in a triangle with the mentorship dyad. For example, Paulina--a veteran actress in amateur theater--cast me as a prompter. She said she had high hopes that my call to her long lost protégée might be a first step at regenerating the relationship.

Another woman, a news reporter who remained suspicious and tense throughout our interview, revealed that she had agreed to participate in the study as a *gift* to her mentor. My original contact had been with her mentor. Because she didn't remember ever being asked for anything in return for his assistance, she used the interview as an indirect gesture of gratitude.

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Preliminary Considerations in Deciding to Study Pairs

Interviewing both parties in an on-going dyadic relationship is novel in social science research. Although a few studies of marital couples *have* included participation of both parties,[2] the vast majority of research on mentorship has dealt with only one party--either mentor or protégé.[3]

Moreover, these studies have usually been based on retrospective accounts of terminated relationships.[4] Making the decision to interview individuals in continuous relationships offered me the chance to explore mentorship in a way that was closer to lived experience.

Additionally, the choice to interview pairs all but necessitated that I pursue on-going relationships. That is, it probably would have been much more difficult to find individuals willing to participate in the research whose mentorships had terminated. It seemed to me that the odds were that even if one party agreed to be interviewed, the other might not because they were unavailable (e.g., in cases where the other party had moved away or fell too out of touch to care) or unwilling to participate (e.g., in cases where the mentorship had ended on a sour note).

Another factor that I considered as I was designing the research was that the choice to study pairs was likely to result in a self-selection bias

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towards relatively harmonious mentor-protégé relationships. That is, I did *not* expect individuals who were experiencing serious tension or conflict in their mentoring relationships to be eager to participate. I did, in fact, end up interviewing a few individuals who would not agree to let me contact their other half precisely because those relationships were in states of turmoil at the time of the interviews.

QUALITATIVE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The in-depth interviews were fairly extensive and intense--lasting about three hours over two seatings. The core focus of the interviews was on the evolution of the mentorship from its nascent stage to the present time and the influence of key factors on the emotional dynamics and type of attachment formed.

The interview format combined life history and clinical approaches. Since the research concerns the emotional character and dynamic processes of mentoring relationships over time, a modified version of the life history interview format was developed and used. As a "written account of a person's life based on spoken conversations and interviews" (Denzin, 1989, p. 41), the life history method "gives access to experiential and subjective aspects of one's life" (Connell, 1992).

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In this study, the "life" to be investigated and understood was that of the mentor-protégé relationship. While individual accounts were sought from mentors and protégés, the aim of the interview was to get a picture of the relation-ship's development or life--as something qualitatively different from and arguably larger than the discrete stories of individual actors. Nevertheless, since it is individuals who make up this relationship, care was taken to get details of each person's side of the story--their motives and feelings, their unique "take" on the relationship. In this way, the life histories of mentorships were seen as merging with the personal histories of the individuals who comprised them.

One final qualification is that the life history method was adapted in this study to hone in on issues of emotional significance to mentors and protégés. Hence, while descriptions were sought about the routines, crises, and turning point events over the course of the relationship's life, the inquiry was geared toward exploring the feelings and fantasies about these situations and the manner of expressing feelings or otherwise dealing with them.

Given that the data I sought was about emotions and because talk about feelings, especially difficult feelings raises anxieties, clinical

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approaches were also incorporated into the interview process. A clinical stance (e.g., use of a non-judgmental attitude, tuning into feeling tone, display of empathy and encouragement to further exploration) was assumed to help participants feel at ease in discussing personal feelings. Clinical techniques (e.g., projective questions) were also used to detect and probe latent themes in the participants' accounts. Such methods--which get at what people imagine and fantasize about alongside of what they "know" and expect--have been well tried in classic sociopsychoanalytic studies[5] as well as in contemporary studies of organizational relationships.[6] Indeed, as Galatzer-Levy and Cohler (1993) have suggested, the vital contribution of the clinical approach to the study of lives "is its focus on subjectivity, including the significance of wish and intent on shaping action" (p. 353).

Lastly, clinical skills were also used to formulate impressions of participants' relational styles based on notes recorded after each interview. Assuming that a person's general manner of relating (e.g., ways of speaking, handling difficult questions, body language, use of defensive strategies) is somewhat consistent across situations and is therefore likely to surface in the interview, these notes were used as additional clues for understanding the dynamics of the relationships *between* mentors and

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protégés. Hirschhorn (1988) astutely observed that what goes on during the interviewer-interviewee encounter may be a fertile source of data about what goes on between the interviewee (e.g., mentor) and other people in his or her life (e.g., protégé).

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Supplemental material for this study was drawn from a variety of sources. Historical documents, popular culture artifacts, and information about institutional mentoring programs were gathered in order to situate mentorship as a phenomena in the contemporary society with long ties to the past. References to mentorship in biography, film, theatre, and other literary sources are also used to amplify patterns revealed in the interviews and to offer perspective on aspects of the relationships that were more difficult to tap in the interviews. Stories from books and film offer a glimpse into the nuances of dynamics such as jealousy, expedience, competition, and anxieties about influence and dependency which were difficult to elicit from interview participants. They also provide examples of how mentorships end--something which by design--my research precluded me from exploring.

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DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

While analyses were performed on the entire body of material amassed for this study, different layers of data received different kinds of treatment and were subject to different levels of scrutiny. To fully explore the intricacies of the emotional life of mentor-protégée relationships, I decided it was best to select a sub-group of pairs for in-depth case analyses. This analytic strategy, I thought, would permit me to dissect and capture the unique qualities of a number of different pairs, while at the same time allowing me to identify patterns across those pairs. Data obtained from the rest of the interviews were to be used to illustrate trends found among the sub-group of pairs.

Before describing the steps involved in analyzing the pairs data, it is important to say a few words about the basis upon which this sub-group was selected and to offer a profile of these pairs.

Analyzing Pairs

Of the 15 mentor-protégé pairs interviewed, seven female/female pairs were selected for in-depth case analysis. Originally, I had intended to study pairs in all four gender combinations but decided to narrow the scope because of difficulties in gaining access to male research subjects.[7] As

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Table II-1 outlined, the major portion of my interviewees were women in female/female pairs. Table II-2 presents basic data on the pairs selected for intensive in-depth analysis.

Selection

From the pool of 12 female/female pairs, I eliminated five pairs for the following reasons: one was cross-racial, one consisted of a mother and daughter, and one pair's relationship had lasted for less than two years. Two additional pairs were eliminated because the age difference was problematic: in one, the protégée was older than the mentor and in the other the two parties were virtually the same age. Generally speaking, the rationale for excluding these pairs was to minimize the variation in the final sub-group. Partly based on the previous research, I assumed that the types of variation that lead me to exclude each pair were significant enough to have confounded the analyses. (See Appendix C for a detailed explanation about the relevance of each of the above variables in the selection process.)

Profile

The seven mentor-protégé pairs chosen for case study analysis were all in on-going relationships that had lasted anywhere between three to more

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TABLE II-2

Basic Characteristics of the Pairs included in Depth-Analysis

Pair	Age	Occupation	Education	Marital Status* /# Children	Length of Mentorship
Abigail (M)	52	Community/Civic	J.D.	M-2	5 years
Jacqueline (P)	33	Management	B.A.	S-0	
Paula (M)	34	Retail-Art	B.S.	M-0	5+ years
Trish (P)	28	Glass Gallery	B.S.	M-0	
Emma (M)	38	Choreographers/	M.A.	P-0	3 years
Mira (P)	29	Web Design	B.A.	S-0	
Claire (M)	48	College Teachers	Ph.D.	M-2	3 years
Alexandra (P)	34	Philosophy	Ph.D.	M-1	
Leila (M)	54	Archival Indexing	B.A.	C-0	5 years
Lenore (P)	41	/Management	B.A.	C-0	
Penny (M)	55	Advertising/	B.S.	W-1	5+ years
Meredith (P)	41	Cosmetics Firm	B.A.	S-0	
Lynn (M)	50	Publishing/	B.A.	M-1	5 years
Rozellen (P)	32	Pharmaceuticals	B.S.	M-1	

*Marital/Family codes: M=married; S=single; C=live-in companion; W=widow; P=partner (not live-in)

than five years. While all had enjoyed fairly intensive relationships at one point or another--at the time of the interview over half of the pairs were still close emotionally and the relationships were still going strong--involving regular and frequent contact. The rest were lighter, less intense, and tended to involve occasional contact.

All participants in this sub-group were pursuing careers in a range of occupational fields. A schematic classification of their occupations shows that: two pairs each were in business (Paula/Trish and Penny/Meredith) and publishing (Lynn/Rozellen and Leila/Lenore); one pair was in the arts (Emma/Mira), one was in education (Claire/Alexandra), and one pair was in civic affairs (Abigail/Jackie).

All the women were college educated and some had advanced degrees. All could be considered middle income: the average salary among protégées was approximately $46,000 per annum; for mentors it was about $87,000. A range of religious backgrounds were represented in this group including Jewish, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Unitarian. Four participants indicated no religious affiliation.

Most of the women in the sub-group were either married or had partners. One mentor was a widow and three protégées were single. Less

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than half had children ranging in age from newborn to 32 years old.

Although many had assumed importance far beyond the work sphere, all of the mentorships in this sub-group evolved on the basis of work or career issues. Moreover, all are freestanding in the sense that they emerged on their own. No formal institutional program played a role in matching these women in mentor-protégée pairs. At some point in time however, all seven pairs did have either a formal authority relationship (e.g., boss-employee) or some type of informal authority relation (e.g., senior colleague-junior colleague).

While a few of the relationships began at a point when protegees were embarking on their careers, all of the women were in some phase of early to mid-career at the time of the interviews. All of the mentors were in mid-career though some were in later phases of it than others. None of the research participants in this sub-group were close to retirement and none were just out of college.

Data Analysis Process

Analyzing transcript data from mentors and protégés was a multi-step process. First, I transcribed audiotapes from every interview conducted. Typically I did this as soon after the interview occurred as possible so as not to lose the flavor of the exchange. Hence as I transcribed, I tried in an

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uncensored way to record all thoughts I had about the process, questions about aspects of the narratives which were contradictory or otherwise puzzling, preliminary interpretations as to the meanings of various actions, reactions, events, etc., and clinical impressions regarding styles of relating and emotional tone during the interview.

After deciding to narrow the scope of the research and selecting the seven pairs, I picked one as a kind of test case for the in-depth analysis. In the course of analyzing this first pair (Paula/Trish) a coding scheme evolved which focused on emotional themes and dynamics in mentorship and the social and psychological factors affecting how those themes and dynamics played out. As I wrote the "life history" of this first pair, a framework for writing the histories of the other pairs also emerged. This framework entailed thinking about and then describing what goes on in the life of a mentorship in layers.

A first layer of analysis was to outline the histories of the mentor and the protégée up until the point when they met. One could call this the prehistory of the mentorship. These biographies of individuals include information about such things as family relation-ships, educational background, previous mentoring experiences, past jobs, career, etc.

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A second layer of analysis involved putting together chronologies of events which had bearing on the relationships once the parties did come into contact with each other. This was applicable to cases where the parties knew each other in their workplace before they developed the mentorship.

The next layer of analysis--the centerpiece of this study--entailed writing up the life history of each mentorship as it evolved over time. As this was written, I tried to keep in mind the differing standpoints of each party as well as my own view of the relationship. This included the actor's own accounts of the relationship--in the literal sense and at face value--that is, what they said about what occurred in the relationship. It also included my interpretations of what I thought they meant--that is, regarding some of the meanings which were implied but not fully articulated or elaborated. I tried to get inside of each actor's logic here, to empathize with their point of view, and to stay true to what I believed they were trying to communicate to me about the relationship.

Finally, the life history narratives were also contoured by my own "experience distant" interpretations of themes and patterns in the relationship using psychoanalytic and sociological lenses. As an observer, a third party, as someone who listened intently to different versions of a relationship, and

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as someone with a manifest interest in under-standing the broader picture of what makes mentorships tick emotionally, I--in my role as researcher--infused, created, and imposed my own layers of meaning to the analyses.

UNANTICIPATED CONSEQUENCES OF STUDYING PAIRS

Since the main purpose of the study has been to develop an understanding of the emotional dynamics and character of mentorship, it made sense to locate pairs in order to interview both parties about their experiences in and unique take on the relationship. Ideally, this would afford a more holistic view. As already noted, most studies of mentoring relationships have been based on surveys or interviews with only one of the parties. The result is that much more is known about how individuals perceive and are affected by these relationships--from the point of view of either mentor or protégé--than is known about the texture of such relationships as whole entities.

Hence, the decision to interview pairs stemmed from the assumption that accounts from both mentors and proteges would render greater understanding of important relationship processes. Although a longitudinal study might have been better suited to track such processes over time, for practical reasons, this was not an option.

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Confidentiality, Fragmentation, and Ethical Dilemmas

In spite of its promise, the decision to study pairs presented a series of methodological challenges and dilemmas in this investigation, a few of which have already been noted. Still, perhaps the most significant obstacles flowed from the promise of confidentiality.

Effects of Confidentiality During the Interview Process

In my discussions with interview participants, I guaranteed confidentiality on two levels. The first was that anything divulged to me by one party in an interview would not be shared with the other party, nor would my interview questions be leading. This meant that after interviewing the first party about the relationship history, I would not ask the second party any leading questions which would suggest knowledge of specific events in the relationship to the second party. For example, if I interviewed the mentor first and she shared a story about having weathered a falling out with the protégée--at any time past or present--I was not at liberty to bring up this particular episode during my interview with the protégée. Only if the protégée brought up that topic could I explore it, but even then I had to be careful to listen *innocently* to the protégée's account without showing any hint of puzzlement if the version strayed from that related to me by the

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mentor. I was free to ask each party if she believed the other would view the episode similarly, but I was not free to share what I had been told by the other with regard to the episode. Hence, it was difficult to address contradictions in any direct way. To my chagrin but not surprisingly, the more conflictual an event or dynamic was--as related by one party, the less able I felt--in an ethical sense--to bring it up as a topic to explore with the other party.

Occasionally, when it seemed reasonable, I did let a participant know that I knew about this or that event. Usually I did so as a response to an innocuous question like: "Did my mentor tell you anything about the fact that I got promoted last year?" In such a moment, where the question did not seem to be about an emotionally loaded event, I would affirm that I knew of the event. I tried to use my best judgment. But immediately I would try to redirect the interviewee by communicating that I was interested in *her* account of the event. That is, at all times my rule of thumb was to open the floor to hear the interviewee's own version or take on events and her feelings about the mentorship.

Interestingly, there seemed to be an interview norm assumed by most research participants that worked in my favor: *Don't ask the researcher*

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what the other party said. Although I might have expected a higher level of voyeurism ("*What did she say about me?*"), this norm tended to be honored. Consequently, I was not very often faced with the situation of having to "withhold" information from participants. One occasion when this did happen involved a female protégée who had an intense crush on her mentor--a man who was a longtime friend of her family. She made an urgent plea to me to reconnect with her after my interview with the mentor for a tell-all session--what he thought of her, whether her interest was reciprocated. Despite her insistent attempts to cast me as the matchmaker, the mentor never agreed to an interview.

As is well known, abstinence is the cornerstone of the psychoanalyst's stance in the clinical situation--at least in the classical model. I call attention to it here to simply point out one of the unexpected obstacles in social science research when trying to investigate dyadic relationships from both parties' points of view. Preserving confidentiality intrinsically limits the researcher's ability to gain a truly relational perspective. This is because the data and picture of the relationship history will be fragmented--accounts from both parties are bound to overlap in some places and diverge in others. Indeed, this is exactly what happened in my interviews.

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Fragmentation

I want to digress here for a moment to discuss two other forces which seemed to be at play in fragmenting the accounts of the lives of mentorships quite aside from the constraints posed by confidentiality. One relates to the selective and subjective nature of memory. That is, often mentors and protégés did not talk about the same events in the relationship because they didn't remember the relationships in the same way. Similar to the thesis that Jesse Bernard (1972) put forward in her famous essay "'His' and 'Her' Marriages," as each party reconstructs the history of a relationship, they do so through their own lens of memory and meaning. For this investigation, what this meant was that I gathered histories of relationships that one could patch together through a process of chronological sequencing and thematic layering but the accounts did not lend themselves to triangulation--or, the technique of assessing one person's version of events and exchanges against the other's. The net result was that I could rarely get a handle on the dynamic quality of interactions in specific situations.

Part of what makes memory even more elusive and jagged is that mentorship is not an official relationship and thus tends not to be acknowledged in the same way as, for example, a marriage or teacher-

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student relationship. Because there is ambiguity and ambivalence (as will be illustrated in the next chapter) about framing and naming a relationship a mentorship, attempts to chronicle the history of such relationships are not so straightforward. The husband and wife who understand that a research project deals with marriage will "get" what it means to focus on the relationship itself and they will probably know how to do this. For example, with little prompting they will know to recount important events and milestones (e.g., wedding, birth of children), crises that occurred, areas of harmony and discord, phases of the marital process, etc. In short, there is apt to be an ability to think historically about the relationship.

This is not necessarily the case for individuals involved in a mentor-protégé relationship. Parties do not tend to reflect on the mentorship as an object, nor do they have recognized marker events to help them do this. The liminality of the mentor-protégée relationship, I think, obscures its developmental course. For this reason, it was difficult to pin down histories of mentorship per se. Instead, the data I obtained tended to be accounts of what occurred within each individual's life over the course of and as a result of knowing the other party, blended in with some description of exchanges and situations they confronted together. The point to

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underscore is that because participants did not have a taken for granted or common frame of reference for thinking or talking about the course of the mentorship, the focus of their accounts varied significantly.

One solution to the problems of confidentiality and fragmentation might have been to interview the two parties simultaneously, giving everyone a chance to talk about and process the history of the mentorship together and to be able to question each other "in vivo" about contradictory accounts of events and relationships issues. An obvious drawback of this method, however, is that it could result in contrived consensuality and coherence in the accounts of the relationships.

Ethical Dilemmas

A second promise of confidentiality--a convention in all social science research--was that I would disguise the interviewees in the write-up so that no one in the public domain would know who they were. On its own, fulfilling this promise was unproblematic.

Yet, after spending well over a year coding and analyzing data from the seven mentor-protégée pairs selected for the in-depth case studies, I realized that I could not proceed with my original plan to present mentorship histories using the pair as the unit of analysis. While it was no trouble to

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disguise the interviewees from the public, it began to dawn on me that I would have great difficulty disguising them from themselves and one another. In other words, were I to present material which focused on the rich particularities and peculiarities of specific mentoring relationships, interview participants themselves would likely recognize "their story." Still, the fact that they would recognize themselves was not what concerned me. What concerned me was that I faced a legal risk that I might reveal something said to me by one party that she did not want revealed to the other party and *didn't believe she had given permission to reveal.* I was even more uneasy, however, over the ethical quandary this posed--that is, that my report might hurt or betray one or the other parties or the relationship overall. One mentor, who tipped me off to this dilemma, expressed concern that I not write anything which could hurt her protégée. She appeared to be nervous about some of her critical remarks and how they might be construed by the protégée.

Since the original thrust of my research design was to be able to carry out analyses of *pairs*--that is, to document and analyze the emotional themes and dynamics that run through the life histories of mentorships--I tried to find a way to balance the confidentiality constraints with the aims of the

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study. Open to all kinds of strategies of "playing" with the relationship histories: I wrote to colleagues engaged in organizational research for advice; considered creating "composite" cases; brainstormed about ways to fictionalize events and dramas in the relationships; tried to dilute details that *I* thought carried an emotional charge; thought about contacting interviewees to offer them the chance to re-view and expunge sensitive parts of their interview transcripts; and contemplated writing a dissertation which would be placed on restricted circulation.

In the end, I felt I had to reject all of these options and rethink my strategy to focus on the pair as the unit of analysis. Short of having a much larger sample of pairs for analysis which itself would have had a masking effect, it became clear to me that it was next to impossible to alter details of the relationships so as to render them unrecognizable to the parties without seriously undermining the purpose of the study. I didn't want to lose the heart of the study which was is the focus on the *ambivalence*--including the negatively charged emotional issues--in these relationships.

While I am hopeful that in the future--after interviewing more mentorship pairs--I will be able to pursue an investigation which uses the pair as the unit of analysis, this study will examine thematic processes in

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mentorship primarily *through the lens of the individual*. The idealization chapter focuses predominantly on protégées. The generativity chapter concentrates on mentors. The chapter on loyalty moves back and forth between mentors and protégées.

I do try to straddle the analytic framework, however, by offering *case illustrations* of pairs. That is to say, although I do not analyze data from the point of view of mentorship pairs, I offer case examples and vignettes which include relationship material from both parties.

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ENDNOTES

1. The preliminary screening questionnaire was mailed to a total of 1044 people affiliated with three organizations--106 were New York City area members of the National Association of Women Artists (NAWA) whose names and addresses appeared in a published directory of members which I purchased from the organization. The largest mailing was to 532 New York City members of the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE). With the cooperation of the organization, I was able to procure mailing labels for a segment of their membership in the local area. This organization also gave me permission to state that they were cooperating with the study in a cover letter that accompanied the mailing. A third mailing was to 300 reporters and photographers on staff at a major daily New York newspaper (from here on referred to as NEWS). The union provided mailing labels for these employees. A final mailing went to 106 individuals on the roster of an New York City based organization called the Stern Performing Arts Alliance.

Of the 1044 questionnaires mailed, 51 were returned unusable (35 were sent to wrong addresses; 15 potential respondents wrote notes indicating that they declined to participate). Out of the 993 remaining potential respondents, 291 completed and returned questionnaires (29 percent). The majority came from NAFE (N=185; 64 percent), followed by NEWS (N=51; 18 percent), Stern (N=29; 10 percent), and NAWA (N=21; 7 percent).

2. For example, see Hertz, 1995.

3. Kram, 1988.

4. See Levinson, 1978; and Roper, 1994.

5. See Fromm & Maccoby, 1970; Adorno, et. al., 1950; Maccoby, 1976.

6. See Hirschhorn, 1988; and Baum, 1990.

7. Organizations that were willing to cooperate by facilitating the administration of my preliminary questionnaire tended to have explicit commitments to women's professional advancement. I contacted a number of professional organizations and associations that had traditionally been dominated by men (e.g., American Management Association) to participate

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in this study but found little interest. Though my attempts to locate cooperating organizations were neither systematic nor large-scale, I was left wondering whether professional women's organizations view mentorship as a higher priority than organizations without an explicit mission to advance women. This would not be surprising if it were true since "getting a leg up" has long been taken for granted in the careers of many professional men.

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CHAPTER III

THE AMBIGUOUS TERRAIN OF MENTORSHIP

In 1978, an article appeared in a popular magazine entitled "Everyone Who Makes It Has A Mentor" (Collins and Scott, 1978). It discussed the importance of having someone in your corner to be a coach, confidante and sponsor who would be a link to important networks and help you gain visibility in your field--someone to give you a leg up in your career. Over 1,000 dissertations have been written since the late 1970's on mentoring and a slew of articles both in mainstream and scholarly publications.[1] Panels at the conferences of major professional associations have been organized on the topic; indeed whole conferences such as the one sponsored by CUNY Graduate Center entitled "Everyone Needs A Mentor"--have been devoted to it.[2] Internet listings on the topic also flourish--during February 2001, the Infoseek search engine listed 12,701 web pages containing the word "mentorship," more than tripling the number of entries in three years.[3]

Mentoring *programs* abound as well. Probably first introduced in the United States during the 1980's, these programs run the gamut from the highly institutionalized to the informal, from the corporate realm to the world of the arts and human services,[4] and from classic one-to-one models

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to newer varieties.[5] I have heard of a group mentoring set-up at "afternoon teas" (Morrison and Foerrester law firm), "mentworking"--a cross between mentoring and networking, two-tiered models--including mentor/protégé and "sibling" pairs (Weil, Gotshall law firm), mentoring circles (e.g., NYNEX company) and quads (e.g., Dow Jones), cyberspace mentorships (e.g., iMentor.com), and (heaven help us) even a "yenta-ring" variant of mentorship for a shmoozing group of (mostly) Jewish professional women who lunch and dish once a month.[6]

There are mentor matchmaking services (e.g., "Find-A-Mentor"),[7] pen-pal outfits (e.g., LAMPPOST --"Learners and Mentoring by Mail"),[8] and not surprisingly, a litany of internet sites, like "The Odyssey" a newsletter promoting the idea of mentoring as a civic duty. Advertisements have appeared in newspapers listing "Mentor" as an official job title.[9]

Mentoring has been transformed into a virtual industry. A growing sector of management consultants have set up shop to sell mentoring "kits" and other products (e.g., videos, pamphlets) replete with checklist-driven formulas for accessing and sustaining effective mentorships.[10] Businesses are using mentor in their tradenames (e.g., "Research Mentors"); some reclaiming an early meaning of the word, using it to title *publications* which

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provide advice (e.g., "The Money Mentor," "Pocket Mentor: How to Get Every Promotion You Want From Now On!," "The Sabbatical Mentor: A Practical Guide to Successful Sabbaticals").[11]

The commodification has extended to self-help and New Age peddlers.[12] With a do-it-yourself folksiness, books like "The Mentor" (Carew, 1999) promise to fill in the mentorship "void" left by the "downsized, restructured business world."[13] The "Sounds True Catalogue" (1997) lists an inspirational tape, "The Art of Mentoring" in which the listener is encouraged to use:

> [I]nnate spiritual intelligence to see the world and everyone in it as a potential mentor..Artists of encouragement are all around you--if you only know where to look..Winner of the 1997 Athena Award for mentoring excellence..Two cassettes, $18.95

The longing and pressure to find just the right mentor--unleashed by the frenzy over the topic--is perhaps epitomized by the following newspaper advertisements:

> Artist/Poet: With various projects seeking AGENT/MENTOR. Call Henry ASAP at 916-896-4332 *New York Press*, 1997

or this ad, imagined by the writer, David Lazar:

> Looking for Mr. Goodmentor:...Single White Man ISO Mentor, 40-60, tall, non-smoking, into Garcia Marquez, Don Delillo, New Historicism, constructive criticism, monogamy. *The Ohio Review*, 1995, p. 26

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Mentorship has even infiltrated the lexicon of love relationships as a type of relation offered or sought by individuals placing personal ads:

> Position Male Partner, blah, blah, blah! Experienced (mensch, 50-60, divorced, widowed). Responsibilities dining, biking, theatre. Talk, talk. Talk! Possible advancement. *Will mentor*. Box 223 *The Nation*, 1/27/97
>
> Multi-faceted Male; wealthy, erudite, randy, global interests, single again; seeks petite, sweet, VGL, ultra-femme for kaleidoscopic relationship. Classy, happy, artistic, all pluses. *Mentoring o.k.* Note, photo to Box 23, Ft. Worth TX
> *New York Review of Books*, 2/6/97

No doubt, some would swear that the final word on the quest for a mentor came during prime time--as the wildly popular television comedy, *Seinfeld*, devoted a full episode to the theme.[14]

The increasingly widespread attention paid to mentorship over the past 20 years--very little of which has come from the field of sociology it should be added--has lead to producing a very elastic definition of this term. Mentoring has become a catch-all word to describe all kinds of acts of giving advice and support, it has obviously become linked to many types of work-related, educational, public service, and commercial enterprises, et. al.--and it has become a fad culturally.

Because of its pliancy, this study has no choice but to begin with the thorny question--what is a mentor? What is the best way to conceptualize

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this social role and its counterpart, protégée? How is mentor defined in the literature? What meanings does it have in the culture? How do you know one when you see one?

What's In a Name?

Semantics

Let's begin by examining the semantic slack in the everyday use of the term mentor. For one thing, different people use different words to describe virtually the same thing. Hence, one person's mentor may be another's "sponsor" or "patron."[15] Some of the names are occupation specific. Lawyers, for example, use the word "rabbi" to denote mentor.[16] Thus, to ask if one has or is a mentor does not ensure an accurate response. As will be shown later, the scholarly literature offers little help in clearing up the ambiguities that arise from the terminological variation.

There is also a kind of reverse problem with the term which is that different people using the same word can mean different things. I may use the word mentor to describe someone who is teaching me the ropes at my new job, while someone else may use it to characterize a person who inspires them creatively. In the common vernacular, people regard a wide array of figures in their lives as mentors including: admired teachers and

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bosses, sports coaches, literary heros, parents, strategic advisors, spiritual guides, respected public figures and so on. Mentor has become a buzzword, applied in a sort of generic way and without much thought to almost anyone who even loosely fits the concept. While I will be addressing this issue in more depth in a later section, it is important to note here that the relaxed usage of the term seems to be based on a misnomer. That is, the word mentor--a noun--has been transfigured into a verb; thus it would appear that anyone who mentors may be deemed a mentor.[17]

Norms

Having noted the leaning toward overuse, it might seem contradictory to suggest that there is an opposite tendency to underuse the term mentor. Yet anyone who takes the question of attribution seriously is apt to become very confused about what this term means and when it is appropriate to use it. The normative definition is blurry. I find that when I ask if one regards an influential person in her life as a mentor, the response is often tentative or qualified. Some hesitate to say whether they have a mentor or are themselves mentors because they are uncertain about what criteria should be used to make such an attribution. Indeed, when asked about their involvement in mentoring relationships, a number of people interviewed for

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this study squirmed and replied, "it depends on what you *mean* by mentor." Its not that they were unfamiliar with the word. They simply did not understand how it *should* be used, as if groping for fixed criteria and wanting me to take the lead in setting the parameters of meaning. I suspect that this is similar to the dilemma of trying to distinguish someone as a best friend. That is, just as people look for cues from the culture to tell them whether their idea of a best friend coheres with a common view, they do the same with mentor despite the fact that a good deal of mentorship, as the writer David Lazar (1994) put it, "is in the eyes of the beholden."

Abstracts versus Particulars

One way to understand this seeming contradiction--the claim that the term mentor is both bandied about and shied away from--is to think about the difference in asking about mentors in the abstract versus the particular. On the preliminary survey sent to individuals working in diverse fields, I asked the question, "Please write your definition of a 'mentor.'" Almost everyone who responded to the survey (N=291) wrote down a response to the question. It didn't strike me as remarkable that most of the responses were fairly similar--that is, respondents tended to identify one or more from a whole menu of mentoring functions like coaching, guidance, support,

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advice, advocacy and couched these in either or both professional and personal contexts. What did stand out is that the license and consensus in defining mentor seemed to apply only to the abstract inquiry. That is, when asked about *specific* relationships, the same respondents were far more reserved and discriminating. Indeed, only about half of those who claimed to be receiving assistance (consistent with their own definitions of mentoring) viewed their helper as a mentor.[18]

The point I am trying to make is that in common parlance and perhaps at first blush, people tend to be lax about how they think about and use the term mentor. But when they stop to think reflectively about its applicability to particular relationships, they often become more discerning, at times even ambivalent. Why would this be? Beyond the semantic and normative ambiguities--why else would people be timid about or averse to using the term? Why would a protégée, for example, describe herself to me as being "receptive to learning *in that particular way*" but then quickly add, "*I still hate calling it* (the relationship with her mentor) *'mentoring'*?" And why would the director of a conference on mentoring for executive women say that the term "scares people off?"[19]

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Emotional Baggage

In a poignant recollection of exchanges he had with his own mentor Anna Freud, Robert Coles (1993) calls attention to what I think of as the socio-emotional baggage that the terms mentor and protégée carry. During one conversation in the 1970's, as the word mentoring began to catch on like wildfire in academic journals, Coles tried to draw Miss Freud into a discussion about mentoring--trying to get past what he sensed in her was a prickly reluctance to engage in the topic:

> ..."Its a word that is used all the time now, but when I was in college, teaching children in a Boston neighborhood as a volunteer, we never thought of ourselves as mentors or as doing mentoring."
>
> She replied, "Right there you are bringing up something: what does it mean when a word like that becomes part of the consciousness of young volunteers? A mentor traditionally was a revered figure, a trusted and wise adviser, counselor, teacher, a source of guidance and inspiration. That is a lot to ask of a young person! It's a lot to ask of *anyone!*"
>
> "Are you suggesting that the word becomes a burden?"
>
> "No, not necessarily--but I do think that words have meaning not only in the ordinary sense but in the psychological sense. If I am called a mentor, and if others are asked to think of me as a mentor, and if I think of myself as a mentor, then people like you and me, whose business it is to take notice of what the mind does under various circumstances, should--well, do just that!"

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> I didn't know how to pursue the matter further at that time. I frankly hadn't thought of the word "mentor" as a term that would provoke a special variety of expectations (and perhaps, subsequently, disappointments) in those who are mentored. I had regarded the word from the social and cultural angle rather than the psychological one (pp. 96-97).

Even when people grasp what is meant by the term mentor or perhaps *especially* when they understand this, some are reluctant to make the attribution for emotional reasons. After all, the act of naming can be a complicated affair. Naming can be an emotionally charged event in the sense that it announces something about the identity of the relationship that may be called into question by the other party. *What if*, frets the junior colleague, *my boss who I so highly regard doesn't think of herself as my mentor? What if she doesn't think of us as having such a special relationship?* Or conversely, *suppose*, the senior colleague wonders, *my subordinate who I advise and have come to rely upon myself--does not feel I am important enough to be thought of as a mentor? Perhaps by thinking of myself as a mentor, I am inflating how much influence I have over her.* The issue of reciprocality or lack of it in the naming process can stir up great anxiety. One risk is the embarrassment of overstating the level of intimacy, commitment, and influence in a relationship by using a terminology that may be unrequited.

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This dynamic is searingly dramatized in the well-received play called "Art" (Reza, 1996) in which three middle-aged men--longtime friends--spend an evening together arguing over the fact that one of them, Serge, has spent an enormous sum of money on an all-white (blank) painting. Misapprehensions about the nature of the friendships are painfully revealed as Marc--the one most unnerved by his friend's new love and appreciation for cutting edge art--confesses what he had always assumed to be the core understanding upon which the friendship was based...a mentorship. Warding off humiliation with counter-jabs, Marc is nevertheless caught with his self-aggrandizing pants down, as he learns from Serge that this was not a mutual perspective (pp. 51-53).

Marc: In my time, you'd never have bought that picture.

Serge: What's that supposed to mean, "in your time?"

Marc: The time you made a distinction between me and other people, when you judged things by my standards.

Serge: Was there such a time?

Marc: That's just cruel. And petty.

Serge: No, I assure you, I'm staggered.

Marc: And if Yvan hadn't turned into such a sponge, he'd back me up.

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Yvan: Go on, that's right, I've told you, it's water off a duck's back.

Marc: There was a time you were proud to be my friend...You congratulated yourself on my peculiarity, on my taste for standing apart. You enjoyed exhibiting me untamed to your circle, you, whose life was so normal. I was your alibi. But..eventually...that sort of affection dries up..Belatedly, you claim your independence.

Serge: "Belatedly" is nice.

Marc: But I detest your independence. Its violence. You've abandoned me. I've been betrayed. As far as I'm concerned, you're a traitor.

Silence

Serge: (*to Yvan*) ...If I understand correctly, he was my mentor!... (emphasis added)

Yvan doesn't respond. Marc stares at him contemptuously. Slight pause.

...And if I loved you as my mentor...what was the nature of your feelings?

Marc: You can guess.

Serge: Yes, yes, but I want to hear you say it.

Marc: I enjoyed your admiration. I was flattered. I was always grateful to you for thinking of me as a man apart. I even thought being a man apart was a somehow superior condition, until one day you pointed out to me that it wasn't.

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Serge: This is very alarming.

Marc: It's the truth.

Serge: What a disaster...!

Marc: Yes, what a disaster!

Serge: What a disaster!

Marc: Especially for me...Whereas you've found a new family. Your penchant for idolatry has unearthed new objects of worship. The Artist!... *Deconstruction!*

(They continue the terse talk--further demonstrating the gulf in their views of the friendship.)

Serge: I had no idea whatsoever--really, its come as a complete surprise--the extent to which I was under your influence and in your control.

Marc: Not in my control, as it turns out...

The Push-Pull of Naming: Case Examples

Nearly all of the pairs in this study had anticipation about naming the relationship a mentorship. Like Marc, for some the hesitation came from the fear of exposure and the risk of finding out that the strong feelings about the role partner were not mutual. Still, as the following case illustrations reveal, the terms of mentoring carry a range of emotionally loaded associations and meanings--burdensome as well as in some cases, hopeful.

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Penny (mentor) and Meredith (protégée)

In discussing the interview process for this study, Meredith, a forty-something woman in the field of advertising revealed her take on her mentor's discomfort with casting herself *as a mentor*:

> Meredith: Penny was almost embarrassed when she said she was going to have an interview about mentoring. (giggles)
>
> Bonnie: Did you talk about it?
>
> Meredith: ...A little. I think she really enjoyed it. I mean she talked about it.
>
> Bonnie: But you sensed some kind of reticence or--
>
> Meredith: ...Well, despite her very substantial ego--I think part of her private being has to do with being shy. And..*I think that she was a little embarrassed that she even thought of herself as a mentor--that she was doing an interview about our relationship.* It doesn't embarrass me at all. I freely acknowledge--

Although she left the thought dangling, my sense of what Meredith meant here is that Penny didn't want to crow about her influence. This was in keeping with a Midwestern modesty she had grown up with--and it was a quality I experienced firsthand in my interview with Penny. If Meredith was reading Penny correctly, naming herself mentor probably went against the grain of Penny's personality because it implied an air of self-importance.

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Given her reserve it was not surprising that she and Meredith had not, *according to Penny*, "really talked about it (the mentorship) or used those words" (mentor or protégée).

Claire (mentor) and Alexandra (protégée)

Alexandra, an eager junior faculty member at a small midwestern college, saw in Claire a similar resistance to identifying herself as mentor though not because of personal modesty. From Alex's point of view, Claire's ambivalence came from deeply held anti-authoritarian beliefs which made her anxious at the mere suggestion that she could wield influence over others.

> Alex: ...[Claire's] first reaction was "*are we in a mentor-mentee relationship*?"
>
> Bonnie: What did you think when she said that?
>
> Alex: ...(chuckles) I was like, "Come on, Claire--hullo?"...I think this is probably one of the reasons why she's an attractive person...She does not know her own power...or charisma, you know?...I think that when she feels her power over people, she feels mainly that those people shouldn't allow her to be so powerful. I think she would be perturbed if she thought she was as powerful over me as she is... because she doesn't want that.

When I spoke to Claire, I found that Alex was not too far off the mark--though she had the wrong reasoning. Claire agreed that she *was*

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uncomfortable with the power asymmetry that goes along with mentorship but her bigger concern related to questions of obligation and dependence. She seemed to fear that by naming a relationship a mentorship--or acting in any way which would amplify the significance of the relationship--the protégée might take this as a license to maintain a lifetime connection to a mentor *as a protégée*--an idea which made her extremely uneasy. She didn't want this kind of dependence or emotional burden. Put differently, she was less concerned about getting a high from the power than she was afraid of getting trapped by obligation.

Indeed the very first thing that Claire announced to me at our interview was that she would never want to be in a mentorship that lasted forever--wherein, for example, a protegee would continue to send the mentor samples of her work for the rest of her career. She said, "I would start to feel oppressed...I've got new people coming along."

Emmie (mentor) and Mira (protégée)

The pull to distance oneself from emotional obligations also surfaced in Emmie's discussion about the terms she uses to identify her relation with her choreography "intern," Mira. It seems that in her relation to Mira, the term mentor was palatable only if the counterpart term was *not protégée*. In

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Emmie's eyes, the "mentor/protégée" combination implied a configuration of "creepy" emotional dynamics which "mentor/intern" (her term) did not.

Emmie: In my field [choreography/performing arts] you certainly think of that sort of creepy--like the sort of ballet teacher who never had a career and has a protégé and lives vicariously through the achievement of the talented youngster and all that sort of creepy stuff.

Bonnie: Did you have a word that you used to describe [the relationship]? Did you...say that this was some kind of mentoring situation or apprentice situation or kind of an internship?

Emmie: Yeah, I called it sort of like an internship. I think that's the term--...Yeah, often I'll say she's my assistant, you know. Which is sort of a familiar enough term or intern. *I don't really call myself her mentor, actually.* Specifically to use that terminology. *And certainly would never call her my protégée* (laughs)

Bonnie: Talk about that.

Emmie: Well because protégée to me implies an artistic thing, specifically. It means...formed in one's own image. And I just have no interest or intention in that...Creepy, you know?

Bonnie: Can I ask you what's so creepy about that?

Emmie: (thinks) To me the word protégée implies a degree of investment on the part of the older person that is not healthy--that their sense of self-esteem and achievement and ego gratification is bound up in the achievement of the younger person

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in some way that is not good for the younger person and not healthy for the older person. There's some overstep-ping of boundaries of personhood that seems very wrapped up in what that word means to me. I'm very hesitant to believe that sort of relationship does good for either person. It can do temporary good for the older person in that if they're really miserable in their own life, then they can feel better if they've got this protégée that they can vicariously live through. But its not really addressing the problem in the older person's life by doing that because there's still some fundamental emptiness in the older person's life if that's the only way they can get gratification.

Bonnie: And you see the idea of the protégée as being--that's entailed in that idea.

Emmie: Well, in the protégée idea. Not necessarily-- I mean for me, the word mentor doesn't imply that necessarily. Although it does more than say, using the word 'intern' or 'assistant.' Like those seem clean. Mentor seems in between and protégée as a word--I don't know what the younger person's word should be for mentor nor do I know what the older person's name should be for protégée. But those words fall to that other place which seems very dangerous and potentially destructive for both people.

While some individuals are put off by the socio-emotional weight of the terms mentor and protégée, others try to capitalize on the seductive power of these words. For instance, two mentors from this study claimed that a short time after hiring new employees, they began to talk about their

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alliances with the new hires as mentorships. One (Lynn) explicitly told her weeks old assistant (Rozellen) that "she would be her mentor;" the other (Paula) referred to a recently arrived but obviously up-and-coming employee (Trish) as "my little protégée." In both cases, the supervisors appeared to have been hoping to attract promising subordinates to work closely with them--flirtatiously using the carrot of special recognition implied in the terminological choice of the words mentor and protégée.

Lynn (mentor) and Rozellen (protégée)

With an attitude of unapologetic self-interest, Lynn spoke about the strategic mentoring plan she set out to put in place at her firm, Simon & Simon, a top ten pharmaceutical company in the international markets. With her eye on the "office upstairs," and obvious pride that she took in her ability to influence people to "buy in" to her plan, Lynn felt confident about being able to get Rozellen on board.

> Lynn: When I took the job here (at Simon & Simon)--even before I started, I knew that I wanted to have that kind of relationship in this environment. Because the nature of what I had to accomplish here it required that kind of a relationship...for two reasons. First of all because the department that I was creating here needed to be *my* vision and I felt that if somebody was early enough in their career...I could have a greater influence over keeping the direction of my vision, the way I

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wanted it if I had somebody who was buying in directly with me. And if they were early enough in their career--I'd have almost a clean slate. As opposed to a seasoned experienced person who I would have to keep pulling in on the ideas that I wanted to do--in terms of going forward. And then second of all I knew that in this role there might be the opportunity to really grow in my own career and I felt that *one of the things I needed to learn how to do was mentor someone*. That was very important because if I was going to be promoted to a high mid-level management position...

Bonnie: Why is that?

Lynn: At the upper levels I find that the best managers have already dotted a network with people who grew up under them. Therefore when they get promoted they have strong bridges ...strong people to carry on in succession. They're promotable because they have people who have 80 percent of their ability and knowledge of a particular area to leave behind ...I (went about finding a protégée) in an organized kind of way. It was intentional. It didn't just happen with me as a mentor...I think that started out being kind of "this is somebody I think can really do it," to "All right, I'm gonna take this person's career in hand and work with her"..*I purposefully identified someone* (Rozellen) *and said, "its time I did this."*

For the protégée, Rozellen, however, *calling* the relationship a mentorship--a naming by fiat--did not make it one. Although she was delighted for the chance to work closely with the chief boss in the

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department, it took her some time before *she* felt it fitting to view Lynn as a mentor. And when she did so, she openly acknowledged this, using it not only as an opportunity to express her gratitude, but as the *form of its expression*. In this sense, calling Lynn a mentor was an emotional gift--not unlike the sentiment expressed by the daughter-in-law who takes the step to call her husband's mother, "mom:"

> Bonnie: Did you think of her in terms of being a mentor...? Would you have called her that? Would that have been a word you would use?
>
> Roze: ...Ah--? *She* used it early on. So our relationship has always been-- we have said it is a mentor relationship. And shortly after I started working for her she started to say, "I'm kind of mentoring you."...She had just explained something to me and I think I said something back like, "You've taught me so much as a mentor." And I didn't mean it in any...like --trying to kiss butt or anything. She goes..."Oh you've just given me goosebumps,"...like she felt "so moooved by that." (*Roze purses her lips to make a cow face as she elongates the word, 'move' as if to suggest a note of sarcasm in response to Lynn's sentimentality.*) And...I guess like from that--evolved this relationship.

Cultural ideals

Cultural ideals and proscriptions also play a role in the naming process. As depicted at the beginning of this chapter, some aspects of

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culture treat mentorship as a fad making it vogue to engage in casual talk about "my mentor this" or "my mentor that." Analogous to the talk about gurus in the 1970's, having a mentor or perhaps more accurately, *being able to say that one has a mentor* serves as a kind of status symbol. And we can infer from examples like that of Lynn above that there are plenty of incentives in the corporate culture to "get" a mentor or protégée--even when such contacts may be fleeting or superficial.[20]

Other aspects of contemporary culture, however, dissuade the parties from using the terms and fuel the ambivalence about naming. In a society which valorizes independence, rugged individualism, and the idea of being "self-made" while equating the need or desire for help with inferiority, acknowledging that one has a mentor can be difficult. Despite the fact that absolute self-sufficiency is an illusory goal, people are encouraged to say they thrived and succeeded on their own merits. Moreover, they feel compelled to say that their work is original--that is, that they were not influenced by others in developing and executing their ideas. This self-made ethos is an outgrowth of the mythical vision of immaculate conception that Bloom (1973) elucidated in The Anxiety of Influence. The culture rewards an image of creativity and discovery as solitary acts of divine inspiration

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(e.g., the genius or prodigy) not as social processes evolving out of history or tradition. Seen from this vantage point, acknowledging that one has a mentor can thus translate into a statement about inadequacy.

With her radar turned on for possible slights, one protégée captures the subtle way that using the terms of mentorship can belittle:

> Alex: We are in a mentor-mentee relationship I think predominantly because I don't think Claire (mentor) really thinks of me as a developed scholar yet.

Men probably run a greater risk of shame by admitting their participation in mentorships than women do because of the societal tendency to view dependence as antithetical to masculine ideals--especially in work contexts where, as some have argued, gendered organizational ideologies flourish.[21] A study of lawyers by Epstein, et. al. (1995) identified this very pattern. The authors report that:

> A strong belief in individual achievement...reflects a conviction held by a number of the male partners--that they "made it" on their own in the firm without mentoring assistance. With a more nuanced look at the data, we found that a number of male partners did, in fact, report that they had enjoyed close and long-standing relationships with men senior to them in firms, and that *they actually served as mentors even though they didn't identify the process*. (italics added) Guidance and career planning was often woven into the fabric of these alliances in subtle ways..." (p. 356).

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Framing by naming

Naming can also be viewed as a statement of commitment to perceiving the relationship in a particular cast--as opposed to having it remain in a nominal limbo. It is not uncommon for instance, for mentorships to grow out of boss-employee relationships, yet there is no rulebook for deciding at what point a relation moves from a garden variety boss-employee relationship into a mentorship. The parties might recognize the existence of a special connection but not feel clear about what language to use to describe this quality. A useful analogy might be the dating couple who wrestle with whether to think about and refer to one another as "lovers," "friends," "significant others," or "partners" and when to make shifts in attribution from one to another. Nevertheless and however arbitrary, each naming creates a frame for the relation and as such it becomes part of the discursive construction of the relation--reflecting and shaping how partners orient themselves towards each other. While it articulates a more explicit outline for the relationship--transforming a dyad into a primary group[22] and thus creating a sense of "*we-ness*"--it also saddles the parties with a matrix of expectations, obligations, and responsibilities, and an infusion of conscious and unconscious psychic

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fantasies, desires, wishes, and anxieties.

Leila (mentor) takes note of how it was that she came to put a frame around her relationship with Lenore (protégée)--instilling a sense of "we-ness"--partly through naming it a mentorship:

> Leila: ...[Worldwide, Inc.] took away from me what I had been used to having...which was somebody that I could go to with a...situation that I was really grappling with and really wanted someone to bounce off--and I used Lenore for a lot of that too...in terms of "How are *we* gonna handle this?" You know, it was always '*we*'...

In some ways similar to a mother who turns to her child for companionship after losing a spouse, Leila's pursuit of contact with Lenore *as a mentorship* was filled with longing to have someone to talk to, to pair with, so as to reduce her professional loneliness at work.

This overlay of socio-emotional anticipation--with all of its hopes and dreads--of course, was the central point Anna Freud was making to Coles (1993) about mentorship and is one of the key themes I hope to distill in this study.

Outing

Beyond the psychological pressures it can place on the dyad, it should not be forgotten that naming may end up being a public event and have

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public consequences insofar as it calls attention to or merely confirms something about the identity and character of the relationship to others. Thus, using the terms mentor and protégée within organizational or professional contexts carries emotional and political risks. Some people may try to play down the relationship--one maneuver of which might be to distance themselves from identifying the relation as a mentorship--to avoid becoming the object of office gossip, rumors, or jealousy. Going public about a mentorship can invite the perception of favoritism. Of course, even without using the words mentor or protégée, the dyadic pairing is often detectable and may become the object of envy, speculation, and projection anyway.

The other half

What to call the other party in the mentorship is, generally speaking, a matter of little debate, though for some etymological wardens, it has given rise to consternation.[23] Traditionally, the counterpart to mentor has been *protégé*, coming from the French verb, *protéger*, to protect. This is the term I have adopted for the study even though other newly invented terms have become commonplace substitutes. The most popular one is "mentee," and I have on occasion seen "mentoree." Results from my survey confirm these terminological preferences.[24]

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It does not seem necessary to delve too deeply into the ambiguities presented by the term protégé because for one thing, proxy terms have long been recognized as acceptable substitutes.[25] Mentor has been paired historically, for example, with apprentice, disciple, and acolyte. But more importantly, protégé has become a rather rarified term. Though as I have pointed out earlier there are exceptions, for the most part the term protégé doesn't carry either the semantic muddle or the emotional charge that mentor does. Neither does it have the cultural currency. Except for an investigation as to why it has been fading in the everyday lexicon--a subject for another study, perhaps--the terminological issues surrounding the word protégé do not seem to warrant further analysis here.[26]

Coda

Thus far I have tried to map out the ambiguous terrain of the ordinary use of the terms of mentorship in order to make the case that from the very words they are built upon, these relationships are on shifting ground. Their foundations are mired in a host of semantic and cultural contradictions which partly produce and partly reflect the ambivalent socio-emotional dynamics of naming a mentorship a mentorship. Still, there is more to the story here than naming. It is also likely that the ways that people ascribe meaning to the roles of mentor and protégée not only reflect the words used but also the

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residues of earlier and contemporary popular imagos of mentor in the culture.

Literary Roots and Historical Variations

In the following section, I present a genealogy of mentorship drawn from literary references and historical archetypes. I do so in order to make the case that each variation--reflecting critical differences in the central functions and emotional character of mentorship--represents an important thread in the richly complex tapestry of what we think of today as mentorship. This includes depictions of mentorship as a relation of learning, power, favors, succession, socialization, adult development, grooming, discipline, community responsibility, occupational stratification, and cultural reproduction. Figure III-1 offers an overview of the dominant features of the mentor role as they apply to several precursors from the past.

Mentor as loyal advisor and teacher

Though it goes back to ancient times, there is no universal agreement on what is meant by the term mentor. In Homer's Greek classic, The Odyssey, Mentor was the wise, faithful teacher and counselor of Telemachus, son of Odysseus, King of Ithaca (1965). Before setting off for the Trojan Wars, Odysseus instructed Mentor to stay in Ithaca and take full charge of the royal household. A special duty was to raise Telemachus so

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FIGURE III-1

History and Literary Mentor Roles

Primary Mentor Role	Literary/Historical Roots
Grooming	Mentor as guidebook on social refinement and cultural capital
Succession	Mentor, the guide in The Odyssey Shan Jang
Protection/favors	Patron/Client relation godfather crime family relations
Exposure/Visiblity **Sponsorship**	Patron/Client relation Master/apprentice (guilds)
Technical training	Master/apprentice (guilds) Master/disciple (spiritual, artistic, intellectual)
Life passage support/ community blessing	Mentor/protege (The Odyssey) Uncle/nephew relation
Community control/ brotherhood building	Master-apprentice (guilds) Uncle-nephew relation

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that he would be prepared to succeed his father and ascend to the throne. Mentor thus served as father figure, role model, and trusted advisor, among other things, to Telemachus in order that in time he become a fine ruler. His name became proverbial for loyal advisor.[27]

According to the literature professor, Thomas Simmons (1994), "though a minor character overall, Mentor performs an essential duty in The Odyssey by encouraging and arranging Telemachus' voyage in search of his father. This journey, which pays homage to the father as it honors the son...is a quest for identity and adulthood..." What is not so well known is that Mentor appears in the epic poem as *Athena*, the goddess who sprang from Zeus's head. One interpretation is that Mentor is enhanced by cohabitating with Athena as she represents *anima* or the feminine principle--a force of eros, nurturance, concern for selfhood, and risk-taking.

This, Simmons suggests, counterbalances Mentor's patriarchal pledge which stresses abstract values, preservation of power, and devotion to paternal tradition. In other words, it is as Athena that Mentor is able to counsel Telemachus to brave the voyage, respect his own instincts, and "loosen the ties that bind [him] to obedient and somewhat passive sonship at the same time she strengthens his ties to a vigorous future" (p. 5). I offer

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this perhaps unfamiliar interpretation of Mentor as one who embodies the best of both gender worlds to anticipate the sharp contrast with all the other historically prominent imagos of mentor and the mentoring relation which involve only men.

Mentor as guide to grooming and social refinement

Aside from the literary figure, the oldest published reference to the term mentor appeared in the mid-19th century. In 1855, a book called The Young Lady's Mentor: A Guide to the Formation of Character was issued (author anonymous) and thirty years later (1884) another similar guide was published--this one for males, The Mentor: A Little Book for the Guidance of Such Men and Boys as Would Appear to Advantage in the Society of Persons of the Better Sort.[28] Both books use "mentor" as a synonym for guidebook on grooming, manners, and character refinement. A quick scan of the table of contents shows chapters in the male's primer such as "In Public--How to carry an umbrella or cane" and "At the Dinner Table--How to enter the drawing room." In the female's book are chapters like "Ennui, and the Desire to Be Fashionable," "Temper," and "Selfishness and Unselfishness." All offer advice and self-training techniques to prepare readers to enter elite society. Emphasis is on learning emotional restraint

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and conversation rules: the women's book, however, stresses morality and character building, while the men's stresses manners and gesture. Precursors of publications from the self-help industry that would proliferate a century later, these "mentors" or etiquette books were evidently written to offer young working class men and women the kind of cultural capital that wealthier peers received from family or finishing school.

> In this world it is only like that seeks like...Those who have nothing in common, whose culture and breeding are unlike, whose thoughts are on different things, never seek the society of one another. What points of sympathy are there between the town gallant and the country spark, between the city belle and the dairymaid? If one would be received in the better social circles, one's culture must be of the kind found there, and, above all, one's manners must be marked by the observance of those usages that are to refined social commerce what the oil is to the engine" (The Mentor, 1884, Prefatory note).

The modern version of this class-based grooming is dramatized cinematically in G.B. Shaw's "Pymalion," (1916) and the later update "My Fair Lady" (1956). Experimenting with social engineering, Henry Higgins, the English professor mentor offers a makeover to Eliza Doolittle, a poor, sassy, Cockney lass. She receives lessons in elocution in the King's English, learns how to tote a parasol, sit like a lady, dance the formal dances, and respond with proper deference gestures. Most important, she learns tact. Money and wealth may help the poor but they do not, these

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films suggest, define status. It was Max Weber (1946a) who pointed out the importance of distinguishing between class and status--improving one's status via education and cultural assets could improve one's life chances and perhaps one's class position.

Mentor imagos

Depictions of mentor also retain vestiges of other historically important social roles such as master-apprentice, patron-client, master-disciple/acolyte, and in some cultures, the rites of passage relationship between uncle/nephew. In other words, other types of social relations which have existed in the past provide a backdrop for how we imagine the mentoring relation today. The relation is embodied with a rich, though, as we are beginning to see, a sometimes dizzying complexity--as it picks up emotional tones and associations from each historical archetype--reflecting power, love, loyalty, generativity, though often a mix of these dynamics.

Mentor as master for the guild. With emphasis on technical training, work discipline, and commercial regulation, a version of mentorship appears during medieval times--the apprentice system associated with the guilds. In this arrangement, children as young as ten or twelve were apprenticed to elder craftsmen and the training could extend for as long as a dozen years.

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As guardian, the master provided a bed, food, and sometimes a small salary.[29] Reflective of the cultural mores of the time, the master's protection was not in the form of love, but discipline. Apprentices were legally entitled to decent treatment as long as they were industrious and obedient, although masters often retained the right to beat reluctant novices.[30] Once completing the training, the apprentice became a journeyman hoping to someday achieve master status by producing an officially sanctioned *masterpiece*.

Beyond the master-apprentice dyad, the apprenticeship system served a gatekeeping function as it was designed to protect certain groups--the *brotherhood*--by excluding outsiders. Since many guilds were religious fraternities in addition to being craft associations, members of marginalized religious groups were frequently the ones kept out. This version of mentorship was thus as important politically as it was vocationally. Although the guilds were abolished several hundred years ago, residues of their exclusionary practices continue to operate--as barriers to access for racial minorities and women--in the apprentice system of many contemporary trade unions.[31]

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Uncle as transitional guide for boys as they enter manhood. It seems likely that mentor picks up some of its familial resonance from the special role that uncles have been observed to play in primitive cultures in relation to nephews who are at the cusp of manhood. As personal guide, the uncle is called upon to usher the young man through ceremonial *rites of passage*.[32] In its broad outline, this relation parallels the one between Telemachus and Mentor in The Odyssey. The emphasis is on helping youth make the developmental transition to adulthood by learning from the elders to accept the responsibilities involved, facing challenges, and receiving community acknowledgement of one's status as adult (*men*)[33]; the dominant sentiment is respect for tradition, discipline, and group pride and honor.[34]

Mentor as patron of fealty. The coercive side of mentor has traces of the patron landowner or other powerholder in local communities.[35] Networked extensively to other influential figures, well-positioned with access to resources (e.g., employment, loans, arable land, contracts, bail, licenses, scarce commodities, medicines, scholarships, raw materials and equipment, symbolic credit ("a good name"), shelter, marriage partners), and prepared to act as an intermediary when protection is needed or red tape needs cutting, the patron grants a wide variety of favors to clients.[36] As

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he does so, he spins a web of obligation and debt which brings him material return (e.g., domestic service, agricultural labor, tariffs), political support (e.g., votes, campaign aid), and many forms of socio-emotional gratuity from clients (e.g., deference, allegiance, submissiveness, obedience, public shame and humiliation). Located at the interstices of an instrumental orientation associated with the exchange relation and the moral/ sentimental mooring of interpersonal bonds, Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) stress the paradoxical features of the patron-client relation which characterize mentorship as well.[37]

Ancient succession traditions. As the concept of mentoring has grown in popularity over the past 25 years, newfound claims have been made regarding the origins of the term. Carruthers (1993) points out that such dyads can be found in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Moses and Joshua; Elijah and Elisha). "It is the source of the *term* 'mentor' which lies in Homeric times, not the relationship," he contends (p. 10). This is the central tenet of one book The Tao of Mentoring (Huang and Lynch, 1995) which traces the birth of mentorship to an ancient eastern tradition in the succession procedures of three Chinese sage kings Yao, Shun and Yu between 2333 and 2177 B.C. The authors write:

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> The passing of the throne by the sovereign to a virtuous and competent successor was known in early democratic Chinese history as Shan Jang. Literally, it means "the enlightened stepping aside to create room in the center for the next deserving person to step in and take charge" (p. xi).

This description suggests a version of mentorship in which succession is not viewed as solely a practical matter nor something to be handled expediently but rather a deliberate, graceful, educative process.

Second cousins. It is also worth noting a few other kindred traditions that form a part of the mosaic of images in a mentorship genealogy. These include certain types of *Bund* alliances in found in the military,[38] godfather relationships in crime families,[39] deputy-boss relationships found in political circles,[40] as well as religious or quasi-religious dyads between spiritual master and disciple.[41] Mentorship representations even transcend the flesh--among, for example, Native Americans, in the form of spiritual guidance by supernatural forces.[42] And although very under-researched, there is also a tradition of sexual mentorship among gay men.[43]

Inasmuch as mentorship may have its roots in any or all of these relatively well-defined literary and historical models which it should be underscored are almost exclusively male, it remains a pliable and often vague concept. As it has gained currency in recent years, the term has

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taken on an even greater range of meanings and applications--further expanding its versatility and ambiguity. This stretch is clearly evidenced in contemporary academic writings and research.

Conceptual Conundrums

While the terms of mentorship are elusive in the common culture and have picked up a hybrid of meanings and imagos historically, the scholarship on mentorship has only added to the jumble.

A few have observed that there is an *assumption of consensus* in the literature about how mentorship, mentoring, and mentor are used and what these terms mean when in fact such a consensus is lacking.[44] It is my view that this lack of agreement reflects and exacerbates the confusion in conceptualizing mentorship--some of which is unnecessary (e.g., due to sloppy research design and disciplinary habitus) and some of which is inevitable (e.g., due to substantive ambiguities embedded in the concept of mentorship itself) but has not been examined. Part of my aim in this section is to try to weed through the conceptual clutter to arrive at a working definition of mentorship which can hold the integrity and vitality of its ambiguities rather than be dissolved by them.

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Undisciplined Terms

Even a cursory glance at sociological literature on the subject--sparse as it is--shows variation in the terms used to denote the mentoring relationship. Jackall's (1988) trenchant analysis of corporate managers' quests at jockeying for advancement uses "patron-client," while a series of older studies on professionals[45] and a few investigations on women's career mobility in various fields have used "sponsor."[46] Merton (1976) sticks to the classic terms "mentor-apprentice" in his ground-breaking exegesis on sociological ambivalence. A couple of journal articles by sociologists do use mentor-protégé.[47]

In part, the terminological variability probably reflects the historical moment. As "mentor" has become more fashionable in the mainstream culture, it has filtered into the scholarship.[48] We see this, for example, in the work of Cynthia Fuchs Epstein (1995) who has more recently adopted the term mentoring to replace sponsorship. Moreover, the different choices of terms also reflects something about what each author sees as the primary pulse of the mentoring relationship. As with the cultural-historical references, each choice of terms carries a particular valence, a cluster of functions, and a socio-emotional tenor. Hence one could easily argue, for

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example, that sociologists who use patron and sponsor are most focused on power relations, career advancement, and gatekeeping systems, while those who use mentor focus more on professional socialization and learning functions.

Still, beyond the question of terminology, the *meaning* or basic definition of mentoring has fluctuated considerably--particularly in survey research carried out by management and organizational scholars. Even though some have argued that there is core agreement in the definition with "differences lying at the periphery" (Carruthers, 1993. p. 11), others--myself included--believe that it is only "at a superficial level that everybody 'knows' what mentoring is" (Wrightsman, 1981, p. 3). Different researchers clearly use the term in quite distinctive ways. And these differences--far from weighing in as minor semantic quibbles or methodological annoyances--do matter; they affect and raise questions about the validity of everything from the formulation of research questions and design to analyses and interpretations of findings.

A few examples should make the dilemmas plain. While some surveys--like my own--have devised indexes to ascertain the prevalence and types of mentoring activity among respondents,[49] other survey designs are less systematic in measuring mentorship. For instance, I have seen a

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number of surveys that offer an overly broad definition of mentoring and then ask respondents if they have one or consider themselves to be one.[50] This is probably less problematic than surveys which simply ask whether respondents have a mentor or are themselves mentors without offering any definition or criteria, or without offering them any opportunity to clarify what *they* mean by the term.[51] In light of the normative slipperiness and psychological baggage connected with the term mentor--factors which as already shown can overly relax *or* emotionally load the subjective criteria a person may use in making such an attribution--the latter methodological approach seems especially suspect. Moreover, its also important to bear in mind that findings from studies which either leave the concept undefined or provide idiosyncratic definitions cannot reliably be compared. For good reason, such inconsistency has lead to on-going debates about the nature, prevalence, and efficacy of mentoring among scholars in the field.[52]

Form and/or Content

Among academics who do spell out their definitions, there are important variations in *how the concept is used*. One axis of this variation pertains to *form*: that is, whether to use the classic approach to *mentorship* as a distinct type of social relation versus using what I call the pluralistic

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approach to *mentoring* defined by the types of functions carried out in the context of a (loosely defined) relation. These two approaches which are reflected in the literature and summarized in Figure III-2 warrant discussion.

The *classic* mentor is envisioned as an older, more experienced person who helps a younger person learn to navigate in the adult world and world of work.[53] A first attribute then is that the relationship is hierarchical by rank, experience, or expertise, and age. That is, it is viewed as an *authority relation*. Mentor can be an immediate supervisor, a former boss, or someone within an organization but outside of the direct line of authority. Alternately, the mentor may be someone outside of an organization--a veteran professional in the same field as the protégée. This would be more prevalent, for instance, in freelance occupations such as among writers and artists.

Another feature is that the classic mentorship is initiated and sustained on an *informal* basis--it is not institutionalized, nor does it have official status in the sense that no formal role responsibilities are attached to it. Mentor and protégée may strike up the relationship while working together on a project, they may be introduced by colleagues or friends, or may meet within the context of professional associations and networks.

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FIGURE III-2

CLASSIC AND PLURALISTIC APPROACHES TO MENTORSHIP

	Classic Approach	Pluralistic Approach
Theoretical Emphasis	**FORM** **Ideal Type**	**CONTENT** **Empirical Reality**
Conceptual Outline	*Mentorship* is defined as a distinctive social relation	*Mentoring* is defined as a series of functions and activities
Dimensions	**Mentorship relation** • **authority-based** • **informal** • **offers a range of life development functions** • **exclusive** • **emotionally intense** • **bound by reciprocal obligations, mutual gratifications, and risks and benefits** • **longstanding**	**Mentoring functions** **CAREER** **sponsorship** **exposure-and-visibility** **coaching** **protection** **challenging assignments** **PSYCHOSOCIAL** **role modeling** **acceptance/confirmation** **friendship** **counseling** **emotional bond** **aspirational influence**

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The mentorship can grow out of and overlay the superordinate-subordinate relation as well.

The classic relationship can grow to be quite *emotionally intense and intimate*. Some describe it as a form of a love relationship (Levinson, 1978, p. 253) and note its *erotic* quality.[54] Accounts show that there is a *consciousness*--sometimes articulated, sometimes not--about being in a mentor-protégé relationship and about *reciprocal obligations*, *mutual gratifications*, and *risks and benefits* that such a relationship may carry with it for both parties. While classic mentorships usually take *time* to develop and can last up to a lifetime,[55] breakups along the way are thought to be emotionally loaded and often acrimonious.[56]

At this juncture, the most important thing to stress is that in the classic view, mentoring is seen as a *particular type of social relation*[57] which can and should be differentiated from other similar types of relationships that provide vocational and developmental support.[58] Shapiro, Haseltine, and Rowe (1978) argued for this distinction in an early theoretical piece. They conceived of the mentor-protégée dyad at one end of a continuum of relationships that make up the "patron system." Peer pal, guide, sponsor, and mentor were distinguished from each other along

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dimensions of relationship hierarchy and level of emotional involvement. They write,

> Within the patron system, the mentor-protégé dyad is a special kind of relationship. It is intense and usually charged with emotion and has a basically parental dynamic ...[It is] restrictive, comes with strings attached, and in the final analysis, can result in the greatest boost towards success (p. 56).

Daniel Levinson, who some might call the mentor of a generation of mentoring scholars, implicitly agrees with this distinction. His book, The Seasons of a Man's Life (1978) was one of the first to profile the classic mentoring situation and to describe its impact upon men's lives. Despite grappling for words to capture the essence of the mentor-protégé relationship, Levinson clearly saw it as having unique properties,

> No word currently in use is adequate to convey the nature of the relationship we have in mind here. Words such as "counselor" and "guru" suggest the more subtle meanings, but they have other connotations that would be misleading. The term mentor is generally used in a much narrower sense to mean teacher, advisor or sponsor. As we use the term, it means all these things and more (p. 97).

Hence, classic mentorships are understood to contain elements of other types of advisory and support relationships--but their gestalt, so to speak, is seen as qualitatively different from and greater than the sum total of those parts.

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This proposition--that *mentorship assumes a form that is different from and greater than the sum total of its parts*--is crucial. It stands in marked contrast to a second way of conceptualizing mentorship--one which is more fluid and *pluralistic*--sensitive to *content*. In this view, mentoring is seen as an umbrella concept under which a range of relationships offering career help can be classified.

Kathy Kram's (1988) core work on mentorship was especially important in building and promoting this understanding. Rather than viewing the mentor-protégée relationship as a specific type of social relation, Kram defined mentoring in terms of "developmental functions" which may be present in varying degrees in different types of support relationships at work.

According to Kram's scheme, there are two general types of mentoring functions: career and psychosocial. Career functions such as sponsorship, coaching, and exposure-and-visibility are those which affect the individual's relation-ship to the organization and/or field. They comprise the instrumental aspects of mentoring. Psychosocial functions include role modeling, counseling, and friendship and concern the realm of personal needs, relationships and emotional growth. Psychosocial functions make up

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the expressive aspect of mentoring which is aimed at "enhancing a person's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role" (p. 40).

In the pluralistic definition, mentoring occurs when any of these functions are carried out. Those of higher rank or experience as well as peers can be mentors. Mentors (and protégées) are thus defined not by *who they are* (e.g., as a function of status and role) but by *what they do*. For Kram, the substance of the relationship is at issue, not the form,

> To assess whether a particular relationship is a mentoring relationship or not is not as worthwhile a task as to assess which career and psychosocial functions are evident. Some relationships provide the full range of functions (and therefore approximate the "classic" mentoring relationship), while many others provide only a subset of the possibilities (p. 43).

For Kram, then, as for the vast majority of researchers to follow, mentoring has been applied as a broad construct to dyads where few or many of the ingredients of classic mentoring are present. Neither hierarchy, emotional attachment, longevity, freedom from institutional accountability, nor recognition of reciprocal obligations and mutual gratifications specific to the mentorship are required to be involved in mentoring.

While Kram's content-oriented conceptualization seems attuned to and arguably mirrors the widespread (though I would argue indiscriminate) use

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of the term mentoring in the common culture referred to earlier, it runs the risk of obscuring the essence of the relationship. That is, in my view, it takes something of a Chinese-menu approach to mentorship--where for example, the dinner (mentorship) could be seen to consist of selecting choices from Column A (career functions) and Column B (psychosocial functions) without highlighting the essential ingredients of the main course (the mentorship's relational structure and character): the spices, the foodstuffs, methods of preparation, and traditions associated with the dining experience--the things that are *invariably central* to making Chinese food, Chinese food. Surely one could not dispute that mentoring consists of some part advisement, guidance, friendship, role modeling, et. al.--*but these do not in themselves constitute mentorship*, as Kram suggests. Missing, I think, is an appreciation for the recipe that outlines the structure of the relationship, the seasoning of the attachment and commitments that develop, and a respect for the multiple levels of history that shape and give meaning to the quality and character of the relationship that emerges--including the individual biographies of parties involved, the broader cultural scene and attitudes about authority, the traditions of mentorship associated with different organizations and fields of work, and so on.

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Another simpler analogy gets to the heart of my critique: just as friendship consists of more than friendly and generous behavior and motherhood involves more than acts of mothering and nurturance, *mentorship needs to be seen as more than an enactment of mentoring functions*. Otherwise, as noted earlier, just as the noun mentor has been permitted to collapse into the verb, so it is that the form of mentorship--at least theoretically--may be swallowed in its contents.

Promising more perhaps than they could deliver, a few scholars have tried to bridge the two conceptions. Honing in on the gap between the classic model--which could be viewed as an *ideal type* and the pluralistic model--which could be viewed as more closely resembling the *empirical reality* of the variability of mentoring situations, some authors have proposed that we think of mentorships in terms of subtypes differentiated according to the level and kinds of involvement that mentors have with protégées.[59]

This brings us to the second axis of variation in how scholars have conceptualized mentoring which relates to the *content* of the relation: that is, whether to think about *what goes on* in mentorship in terms of *career* assistance, *personal* guidance or both types of help.

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Distinguishing relationships that are longstanding, address a range of personal and professional needs, and in which there is an emotional bond from relationships which are time-limited, pragmatic, and are primarily confined to career assistance--are typologies of "primary and secondary mentors," "mentors and quasi-mentors," "life and career mentors," and "major and minor mentors."[60] It is easy to see from this list of typologies that one of the consequences of conceptualizing mentorship through the pluralistic lens is that it has allowed the relation to be partitioned into career and psychosocial functions while in the classic model, care and career have always been intertwined. Carruthers (1993) sums up my own frustration over this situation when he writes:

> Some writers regret that the title 'mentor' is used in a generic sense to include helpers with a professional interest only together with those who have the more classical professional and personal interest (p. 11).

Disciplinary Habitus[61]

As a final foray into the literature--at least insofar as conceptual issues are concerned--it is important to point out the broad range of perspectives on mentorship. Not surprisingly, most are aligned with the intellectual domains of inquiry of the disparate disciplines they represent. What is interesting, however, is just how fertile mentorship is as a topic for

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intellectual fragmentation. That is, rather than attempting to bring together and examine the multiple and contradictory strands of mentorship, scholars from most fields use a narrow lens to focus their investigation and in so doing manage to sidestep the ambiguities. Figure III-3 outlines the disciplinary differences.

Thomas Scheff (1997) coined the phrase "disciplinary habitus" to describe the taken-for-granted and invisible set conventions, beliefs, and attitudes which members of disciplines share and which, in my view, has given rise to the myopia we see in the scholarship on mentorship. Tidier research is made possible by disciplinary habitus but tends to leave the more complex and interesting questions about mentorship unaddressed and even obscured.

Organization and management scholars' utilitarian view of mentorship as a strategic alliance. One large segment of mentorship literature comes from organizational and management scholars. The predominant interest concerns who gains access to mentorships,[62] how they do so,[63] and what are the career-related outcomes of such alliances.[64] From this framing of research questions, it follows that mentorship and its consequences are narrowly defined in instrumental terms, asking only about *what the*

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FIGURE III-3

DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC FOCUS ON MENTORSHIP

Discipline	Substantive Emphasis on Mentorship as a:
• **Organizational & Management studies**	--strategic, utilitarian alliance based on exchange process
• **Sociology**	--system of occupational stratification based on political process --mechanism for professional socialization linking individuals to occupational conventions through a social learning process
• **Developmentalist**	--vehicle for promoting adult development based on cognitive, emotional and social learning processes
• **Psychoanalysis**	--reflection of inner life and conflictual residues of childhood experience based on conscious and unconscious emotional processes
• **Social Work & Public Service**	--form of community service and voluntarism based on a communitarian ethic

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relationship is for as opposed to wondering about *its value in and of itself.* Implicitly, most of this literature relies on models of adult and career development, with a mix of rational choice and organizational theory. Above all else, mentorships are typically viewed in this literature as *strategic, utilitarian alliances* based on *exchange process.*

Sociologists' view of mentorship as a political alliance and gatekeeping system. As mentioned earlier, sociological studies have been scant. Those that *have* looked at mentorship have tended to examine its political functions and consequences.[65] Several classic sociological studies have highlighted the ways in which mentoring relationships are part of the informal structures of power in organizations and professions which serve as gatekeepers and stratify what is allegedly a meritocratic system.

For example, in the 1940's, Oswald Hall (1948) found that physicians in a community organized themselves into a series of homogeneous concentric circles--an inner elite, a "friendly" less powerful outer circle loosely tied to physicians of high status and power, and isolated loners. Those who were taken under the wing of a sponsor enjoyed the social credit extended to them because of their affiliation with the sponsor, were directed to prestigious training and research opportunities, and were groomed to

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become members of the inner elite. Career advancement was understood to hinge upon getting into the right clique via a sponsor. Other early studies that examined the insider/outsider politics of sponsorship systems were of soldiers,[66] lawyers,[67] academic scientists[68] and studio musicians.[69]

Beginning in the 1970's, a new crop of research added feminist concerns to this tradition. Not only were mentor-protégé relationships seen as political alliances that kept certain segments of men out of the reaches of power; they were also understood to be deeply gendered alliances. Important studies of women's career advancement in law,[70] medicine,[71] engineering[72] and corporate management[73] have called attention to the specific disadvantages that sponsor systems pose for women in the professions, as well as in other non-traditional spheres of employment for women such as trucking.[74] The emphasis in all of the above studies is on *occupational stratification* through *informal political process*.

Sociologists' view of mentorship's role in adult socialization. While no sociologists have examined the inner workings of mentorship--its emotional complexity and social psychological structure--a handful have paid some attention to dyadic processes with respect to anticipatory socialization and the formation of occupational dreams.[75] Mentorship is also featured

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in studies of professional socialization by Merton, et al. (1957) and Light (1980) on medical and psychiatric training, respectively--as a process of inculcating interns with the norms, values, and ritual codes of these professions.[76] The emphasis here is on linking individuals to *traditions* and *culture* through a *learning process*.

Developmentalists view of mentorship as a vehicle for promoting adult development. A vital yet limited series of studies by scholars from various fields apply a developmental perspective to mentorship.[77] I would place the works of Kathy Kram, an organizational development and management scholar (1988) and Daniel Levinson, an adult development scholar (1978) in this category. Essentially, this perspective examines mentorship in terms of its contribution to the shaping and consolidation of adult identities, adaptation, and generativity--as it helps individuals make the transition into adulthood, thrive in their careers and family pursuits, and find meaning in their lives. A good deal of this work is rooted in adult development theories put forth by Erikson (1950). A few more recent works exploring the special significance of mentorship within the context of female development[78] rely on Gilligan (1982), et al. This cluster of scholars focuses on the *learning* and *human development* functions of mentorship. There is also slight focus

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on *generativity* in this genre of research, but mainly with respect to the meaningfulness of intergenerational links for individuals, not to its importance for culture.

Psychoanalytic views of mentorship as linked to inner life and childhood experience. Scholars of various psychoanalytic stripes have also written on mentorship. Generally speaking, they raise questions about how childhood experiences, family relationships and gender shape relational orientations and attitudes towards authority and may form a subtext of mentor-protégé narratives.[79] Emphasis is on mentorship as a stimulus for reexperiencing and working through narcissistic *fantasy*, oedipal *conflict*, anxieties about *authority*, *influence*, and *creativity*.

Social work and public service scholars approach to mentorship as a form of community service. These studies explore the multiplicity of ways in which mentorship is or could be implemented particularly within disadvantaged communities. There is an activist agenda stressing communitarianism and social reform in this literature.[80] From this vantage point, altruism in mentorship is viewed as counter to market ideologies and rational choice theories; *voluntarism* and *community responsibility* provide the lens for investigation.

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Perspectives overlooked. Except for discussions of mentoring in the developmental psychology on *generativity*[81] and allusions to the topic in anthropological studies, one perspective which has been neglected is a view of mentorship as a *cultural and historical form*. That is, through processes of intergenerational transmission, individuals in their mentoring connections with others are linked to historical and cultural narratives that transcend individual existence.[82]

A Working Conception of Mentorship

Through the analyses of terminology, literary and historical antecedents, and conceptual and disciplinary approaches, I hope I have convinced the reader that any attempt to define mentorship must ultimately return to ground zero--that is, to the inescapable fact that the ideal type mentorship is an intrinsically ambiguous relationship embedded with contradiction and tension. Thus, any attempt to simplify, smooth over, or subdivide the topic will likely result in misconception.

If, for example, the relation is seen as predominantly motivated by instrumental or political interest (e.g., patron/client), one will not be able to understand how thick ties of loyalty based on love or duty or generative aspiration indelibly affect what goes on in the relation. On the other hand,

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if utilitarian aims fall out of the picture, one will get a very naive, milquetoast version of what drives mentors and protégées in this relation.

If, theoretically speaking, the relation is framed by its contents--that is, as a grab bag of mentoring functions without regard to its form--that is, as an authority relationship, one will gloss over the powerful emotional conflicts and transferences that are aroused in these relations. If, on the other hand, one is overly focused on the formal aspects of mentorship--for example, the power asymmetry and its affective fallout, one risks losing contact with the empirical variability of these relationships; a grounded sense of how the formal attributes actually play out in real live relationships.

If, in thinking about functions, the relation is seen primarily as a vehicle for individual development, one will obscure the significance of mentorship for cultural and historical continuity. If, on the other hand, the emphasis is on the macro-level functions of mentorship--for example, as an agent of professional socialization, gatekeeping or community control, one misses the profound impact these relations have on the shaping the course of a person's life.

In each case, then, narrowing the frame or segregating the issues not only ignores *some aspect* of mentorship; it misses its *fundamental pulse*.

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The lifeblood of mentorship is its paradoxical structure and ambivalent character. Again, its what occurs at the crosshairs of authority and love.

This brings me to my own conceptualization of mentorship. As stated in the introduction, I view mentorship first and foremost as an *emotionally-bonded, intrinsically ambivalent authority relation whose primary functions are developmental*. This encapsulates the classic and pluralistic conceptions by recognizing that mentorship is a distinct type of social relation with a range of contents that can vary. Emphasis is on development in the broadest sense--including growth made possible by mentorship at the individual, social, organizational, professional, cultural and historical levels. What leads to development for the individual versus for the organization, however, or for that matter, what leads to development for the mentor versus the protégée are aims that can easily clash. Contradictory interests as to *who is served* by mentorship are contained within my conceptualization.

By development I do not mean progress in moral terms but rather progress defined from a variety of standpoints often in tension with one another--whether it implies reaching strategic ambitions, cultivating self-esteem, learning new skills, toppling political foes, acquiring confidence,

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making a lifetime friend, passing on traditions, etc. This expansive definition of development leaves room for the multiplicity of motivations and aims contained in mentorship: instrumental, expressive, personal, professional, political, educational, cultural, etc. The contradictory tensions of *what is accomplished* by mentorship are thus captured in this view as well.

When relations are frontloaded with ambiguity--when roles, norms, expectations, responsibilities, obligations, aims, interests, and functions are liminal--there is room to play,[83] negotiate, invent, to create a frame around the relation that is tailored to the pair. Yet the freedom to experiment also makes people anxious and generates its own brand of sociological ambivalence. How, for example, do mentor and protégée square their roles as collaborators on joint projects when mentor has authority and but also perhaps the pursestrings? No matter how intimate they become, how does the protégée know how much difficult personal information to divulge without risking loss of esteem in the eyes of the mentor--the very person who may be in a position to judge or recommend the protégée for opportunities?

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I hope to show that in spite of the contradictions, parties to these relationships do want these attachments as they grope to define and negotiate them and as they project their fantasies and anxieties onto one another. They wish to make the connections to advance careers, nurture personal growth, and preserve a sense of societal continuity. At the same time, these relationships are played out against a backdrop of changing times, uncertain career futures, cultural debates about authority, and competing societal ideals.

I interpret the tenacity of mentorship connections in the face of such instability and ambiguity as a sign of the desire and need for good authority on the one hand--illustrated in the stories of the protégées--and on the other hand, the desire and need to be a good influence and feel oneself to be contributing to the culture as evidenced in the stories of mentors.

The next three chapters examine how the emotional bonds and binds of mentorship unfold through the dynamic processes of idealization, loyalty, and generativity.

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ENDNOTES

1. As of January, 2000, ERIC index of scholarly educational research contained 2969 entries on the subject of mentors.

2. For example, in 1996 the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) organized a panel entitled "A Celebration of Feminist Mentorship." CUNY's City College organized a conference in 1994 called "Mentoring in the Urban University." CUNY Graduate Center sponsored a conference in 1998 called "Everyone Needs A Mentor."

3. On January 8, 1998, the count for web pages with the word "mentorship" was 3,638. On January 10, 2000, I looked up the following terms on the metasearch engine "Googles" (which contains an unknown factor of duplication): "mentor" (121,000); "mentoring" (66,900); "mentorship" (18,600); "protégé" (28,800). I repeated the search on Googles on February 12, 2001 and the number of web pages has skyrocketed in one year on the topic: "mentor" (1,040,000); "mentoring" (559,000); "mentorship" (58,300); "protégé" (165,000).

4. Although I did not systematically track these programs, several examples are described below illustrate the *range* of mentoring efforts and show how widespread and catch-all the concept of mentorship has become:

Arts-oriented mentoring programs include a public education project of the New York Philharmonic called "Mentors and Protégés" showcasing mentor musicians and their student protégés at a local bookstore. The aim is to offer the public an inside look at how a professional musician develops. New York Women in Film offers an "Intern/Mentor Program" which matches women who are recent film school graduates with mentors in similar fields in exchange for a 6 month commitment of volunteer clerical work. Another effort called the Women Artist Mentoring Programme provides an opportunity for emerging artists to learn about artistic practice and business aspects of work, in a 1:1 mentoring situation with senior artists.

There are numerous examples of *business-oriented mentoring programs* offering a broad spectrum of approaches. Some have been set up in response to/to cash in on changes in the work world which make finding suitable mentors a more difficult process. One such program, WOMEN Unlimited, Inc. (Women's Organization for Mentoring, Education, and

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Networking), refers to itself as an "external mentor;" companies pay $3,000 to send junior employees to the year-long course on leadership and management training, and receive counseling from senior-level mentor managers. It tries to capitalize on a market of protégés created by the effects of downsizing which have left fewer senior level people to mentor junior colleagues, and economic uncertainty which has created greater internal competition. Unlike mentors in one's own organization, the external mentor is prepared to help a person change jobs--an important resource in a time of massive job dislocation and career flexibility.

A couple of other business mentoring programs are worth noting. One--the Clairol Mentor Program--is launched with an essay writing contest which culminates in a cash prize and match between young women and mentors in a range of arts, business, and professional fields. Essays are 100-word statement about the value of a good mentor in one's life and career success. Another program sponsored through the International Women's Forum Leadership Foundation, selects a dozen fellows each year--women with "exceptional potential" to be paired with eminent women professionals in diverse fields for personal guidance and coaching.

A few *law firms* have taken the lead to create mentoring programs. Weil, Gotshall, & Manges has a two-tiered program: partners are selected as mentors, and senior associates are assigned as "siblings" to incoming associates. Note, of course the family reference. Another firm, Morrison & Foerrester uses a group mentoring model through their Committee on Women Associates, and female partners have developed a Women's Resource Handbook.

Educational institutions have also made mentorship a focal point of activity. This includes programs in schools between youth and adults, mentoring assignments between new entries and veteran teachers, and initiatives to examine mentorship as it plays out in the graduate student/faculty advisor relationship.

Many of these programs boast of their successes by citing the number of mentor matches they have formed. A pension division of CIGNA Corporation prides itself on having made 140 pairs (as of August 1993), and it has published a "Guide for Mentors" which it has distributed to its ten divisions describing successful relationships, and offering tips to avoid relational pitfalls.

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5. Aside from one-to-one mentoring arrangements, a series of offshoots have emerged. The new forms tend to either expand upon or rework mentorship as a concept. Most new forms are said to reflect the changing realities and conditions of professional work. Group mentoring in general (e.g., circles, quads) responds to the undersupply of individuals who are willing to mentor. In some cases, group mentor is self-consciously chosen as a design in order to foster more peer collaboration and less reliance on the mentor leader.

The "siblings" program--in which senior associates are paired with junior ones--is used at one law firm to cope with the fact that few partners are available to be full-fledged mentors. Other forms such as mentworking and "yenta-ring" conceived as a cross between mentoring and networking--promote the idea of making connections with a wide array of individuals, recognizing the transience in postindustrial work.

Some of the new forms were designed specifically by women or with women in mind as a target group. In some cases, breaking out of the one-to-one model comes from a conscious rejection of the classic version of mentorship as male, masculinist, patriarchal in favor of a group model which, based on a Gilliganesque logic, is claimed to bring out the natural cooperative spirit among women.

6. I met this group of nine women for one of their monthly lunches at a restaurant on the Upper East Side of New York City on November 8, 1996. The line, "**We don't do mentoring, we do yenta-ring**" came from one very funny, bubbly woman who tended to take up the comedienne role in the group.

And this woman seemed to be very right in her off-the-cuff naming of this gathering, a yenta-ring. Thinking about what that Yiddish word means--it has to do with being in another person's business, match-making, being a nosy-body--all of these could be seen as a type of mentoring--perhaps with a decidedly New York Jewish flair. But it pastes together a bit of the old style and the new style--the old having to do with traditional women's concerns (looks, diet, hair, make-up, love life, kids, illness) and being talked about in a familiar, everything out on the table, excited way; and the new style having to do with being career women who could talk about investing, having power, launching major projects; responding to market demand; and who could live independently within good or apart from not so good marriages.

Relative to my definition of mentorship, it would be a stretch to call

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this luncheon a mentoring event--it was more like shmooze/gossip circle, where women did business chatting in the cracks of conversation. Besides spending some time going around and introducing ourselves and our work, there was no pressure per se to talk business.

The insight I had from the experience is that it reminded me that when I interview people about their mentor relationships, I am getting a story about the relationship. This is entirely different that seeing the relationship. While I probe for insights about process--it still doesn't come to life as it does when one can observe the process. Watching this women's group made me see how fluid offering assistance can be--how enveloped in ordinary conversation it is. For example, the few bits of specific advice stood out to me--but they were usually offered as spontaneous suggestions--not bracketed as 'help'. Moreover, the support and good time and company seemed to be an end in itself. Pleasure in the act of being together and catching up was the primary purpose of the gathering though some mentoring did take place.

7. "Find-A-Mentor" matches mentors to teachers and classrooms for assistance on specific topics (Internet listing 1997).

8. Started by a woman from Utah who was committed to the idea of mentoring and reducing social isolation, LAMPPOST was a pen-pal mentoring service that "successfully matched 40 pairs," according to their literature.

9. For example, The New York Times ran an ad "Mentor--Inner City Adolescent program needs candidate to work within system to deliver empowerment curriculum. College Graduate" (1997).

10. On the internet, I came across a web site called "The Mentoring Group--Worldwide Mentoring Services" which contained a 'Description of Mentoring Products.' Offerings included "The Mentoring Videos Package"..."for orienting mentors and mentees on 14 critical skills...$225 each" and "The Mentoring Program Design Package...$50" and "Skills for Successful Mentoring: Core Competencies for Outstanding Mentors and Mentees...14-page booklet for developing mentors and mentees. Includes self-scoring personal assessment of 14 skills."

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11. See Susan J. Powers. 1995. Pocket Mentor: How to Get every Promotion You Want From Now On! Colorado Springs, Co.: Change Publications; and Zahorski, Kenneth. 1994. The Sabbatical Mentor: A Practical Guide to Successful Sabbaticals. Anker Publishing Company, Inc.

12. Mentorship has also been incorporated as a concept to help commodify religious and spiritual goods. One internet advertisement for a book written by a nun entitled Praying with Passionate Women: Mystics, Martyrs, and Mentors portrays inspirational women such as Hildegard of Bingen and Dorothy Day, instructing the reader how to be "wise, loving, faith-filled disciples." Here mentors are positioned as equal in status to tragic and spiritual heroines. Framing mentor as part-guru is a strategy appropriated by the New Age community as well.

13. Books such as "The Mentor" by Jack Carew advertise that they respond to the "downsized, restructured business world, [where] it's hard to find a mentor. Now veteran businessman and best selling author...fills this void with an indispensable resource, a "virtual mentor" for promising young professionals."

A series of similar find-a-mentor-in-a-book manuals for faculty members new to academia were reviewed in The Nation (9/14/94, "Tenure is the Light"). "Today's budding professionals like their counterparts have to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Ergo, the commodification of mentoring. In the yup-eat-yup world of the late 1980s and early 1990s, these books fill a need for the kind of young professional who, in the words of one contributor to the book, "wanted more than just an academic job; I wanted a job that would give me a shot at the big time."

14. The Seinfeld episode called "The Fatigues" (viewed at the American Museum of the Moving Image, New York City--"show #140"), aired in October, 1996.

15. Other similar terms for *mentor* referred to in scholarly and popular usage include: office uncle, godfather, master, guardian angel, padrone, don, stage mother, svengali. Discussed later, *protégés* are also referred to by other names: mentee, mentoree, disciple, apprentice, client, acolyte, novice, student, rising star, comer, water walker, docent, intern, golden boy, initiate, teacher's pet.

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16. See Epstein, C. F., et al. 1995 for a discussion of the role of lawyer rabbi's in professional grooming and advancement.

17. Professor Joseph Bauer of Notre Dame Law School notes that use of the word "mentee" calls attention to this misreading of mentor as a verb in a pointed letter to the Editor of The New York Times (9/14/95): "William Safire (column, Sept 11) makes an etymological gaffe when he uses the term, "mentee" as the apparent reciprocal of a mentor. Unlike a vendor, who vends something to a vendee, a mentor "ments" nothing. Why? Because it is not a noun derived from a verb. Rather, Mentor was a Greek who was entrusted by Odysseus with the education of his son Telemachus." In his book on the ethic of service, Robert Coles (1993) also alludes to the misusage and his exasperation with it, referring to "the mentored--and I have even heard, Lord spare us, of "mentees" (p. 95).

18. A crosstabulation analysis of survey respondents (N=291) shows that out of 138 individuals who claimed to be receiving career help, only half (N=69) indicated that they regard their helper as a mentor. Correlation analysis also shows that those who listed their helper as a mentor received a greater range and amount of assistance from that person than those who identified their helper using other terms such as "advisor" or "coach." See Appendix B for summary of survey findings.

19. This was a verbatim phrase I recorded as I attended the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE) annual conference in 1995 on the theme "Building Bridges: How to Build a Powerful Network. How to Find A Mentor. How to Be One."

20. The naming gap may be best explained by what a psychologist colleague, Madeleine Paige, referred to when she pointed out the distinction between the "making contacts" versus "making contact." The former--a popular activity in the eighties as a way to get ahead professionally--was conceived as a relatively risk free, superficial strategy. It is about collecting people in the model of loose ties (Granovetter, 1973) and has a counting quality. That is, the numbers of people one has in her network is what counts. In contrast, the latter idea--"making contact"--though never particularly popular in management circles, implies a genuine emotional involvement, and for this reason comes with higher stakes and generates more ambivalence.

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21. See Ramsay and Parker, 1992; and Acker, 1991.

22. Charles Horton Cooley (1909) developed the sociological concept of primary group. "By primary groups I mean those characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation." "It is a 'we'; it involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which 'we' is a natural expression. One lives in the feeling of the whole and finds the chief aims of his will in that feeling." "The most important spheres of this intimate association and cooperation--though by no means the only ones--are the family, the play group of children, and the neighborhood or community of elders....The only essential thing being a certain intimacy and fusion of personalities." Social Organization (New York, 1909), pp. 23-26.

23. However, see Endnote 17 regarding the letter to The New York Times editor about the grammatical problems with the newfangled terms for mentorship.

24. Based on a crosstabulation analysis of survey respondents (N=291), out of 179 individuals who indicated that they were providing career assistance, only 18 percent (N=33) indicated that they regard the person they help as a protégé, while 40 percent (N=71) viewed this person as a mentee. (Note: multiple responses were permitted--17 respondents checked both items--protégée and mentee.)

25. See Endnote 15 for a list of the common substitute terms for protégé.

26. Perhaps the use of the term *protégé* has dwindled because of the emotionally charged, negative connotations it carries in its association with notions of dependence and exclusivity. If one considers that the literal French translation of protégé refers to a person who is "being protected," this suggests an image of an innocent and vulnerable individual--qualities that the culture does not sanction in adults especially in the realm of work and professional life where self-confidence, savvy, and independence are highly valued. If the protégée needs protection, this slates the mentor as one who hovers over his charge in order to insulate her from harm. This imago of the mentor as overbearing parent verges on infantilization and is not something the culture savors either.

Another factor which may have decreased the use of the term protégé is the historical heritage of mentorship. Traditionally mentorships have been construed as youth-adult relationships (as in The Odyssey). Perhaps the new language--that of using "mentor-mentee" for example--evolved as a way to distinguish the newer variety of

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mentorships *between* adults from the older youth-adult model.

27. See Carruthers, 1993, pp. 9-24 for an additional discussion of Mentor's incarnation as Athena in The Odyssey.

28. There was one earlier source published in 1798 called The Female Mentor but the text was unavailable for examination. Based on the similarity between this title and the one for young women published fifty years later my guess is that this book was also a primer on etiquette.

It appears that later publications continued to use mentor as a generic form of guidebook but the content expanded. No longer did mentor pertain only to books about acquiring social and personal skills. It came to be associated with pamphlets and handbooks of all types--some provided technical information, some provided organizational updates (e.g., company newsletters), while some used mentor to denote a venue for creative inspiration (e.g., the poetry periodical called North American Mentor).

29. See Tausky, 1984.

30. See Renard, 1918.

31. See Rothman, 1987, pp. 137-145.

32. See van Gennep, 1908.

33. In this sense, we could think of fraternities and religion as performing a collective mentoring function through transitional rites such as hazing and Bar Mitzvah. These rites invite the novice into a brotherhood and serve as marker events for distinguishing the "men from the boys." Also, one can see attempts to popularize a new age version of this in Iron John (1990) in which Robert Bly argues for a return to a reverence for the authority of elders. Rites of passage traditions are envisioned as a way to help young men bond with and absorb wisdom from older men. Also see Ted Bowman's "The Father-Son Project" (1993) for a description of an application of Bly's ideas via an inter-generational retreat for grandfathers, fathers, and sons.

34. See the French sociologist, van Gennep (1908); Westen, 1985; and a discussion of puberty rites in Benedict, 1934.

35. See Hall, 1976.

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36. See Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984. In Chapter 4 on "The basic characteristics and variety of patron-client relations," Eisenstadt and Roniger offer multiple examples of such relations in a dozen or so countries (including an Umbrian community in Italy; in the Cairene quarters of Egypt; the Sunni are of Beruit, Lebanon; among the Cyrenaican bedouins; Thailand; Malaysia; India; the Yungas region of Bolivia; Brasil, and the U.S.) Mainly patrons are men of influence in a community--those who own land, factories, hold quasi-political office, lend money, have intricate networks of resources and contacts, etc.--who can do favors for peasants, local residents, laborers, etc. and extract socio-emotional, material, and political gratuity and in some cases, labor (p. 47).

37. Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) distill contradictions in the core structure of the patron-client relation:

> ...[T]he exchange that is effected in patron-client relations usually takes place on several levels; that it creates several paradoxical contradictions which constitute one of the major features of the patron-client nexus--the most important among which are, first, a rather peculiar combination of inequality and asymmetry in power with seeming mutual solidarity expressed in terms of personal identity and interpersonal sentiments and obligations; second, a combination of potential coercion and exploitation with voluntary relations and mutual obligations...(p. 49).

Further, the authors point something else out about the paucity of literature in sociology on patron-client relations until the late 1950s--a fact worth keeping in mind. Essentially they argue that because the general view of such relations was that they are anti-bureaucratic and do not conform to market values, patron-client relations were marginalized as a topic in sociology. Such an explanation may help to understand the relative neglect of mentorship as well. Some of the literature in the 1940's and early 1950's viewed the patron-client relation as

> ..rather marginal in societies and were studied in the framework of the concepts, approaches and concerns which were predominant in these disciplines. They were usually treated as (sometimes negative) illustrations of the principles of organization of macrosocietal complexes, and they were above all seen as greatly differing or deviating from the 'corporate kinship' and territorial groups so strongly emphasized in anthropological literature and from universalistic-bureaucratic or market frameworks which were usually

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> portrayed in sociology or in political science as epitomes of modernity and rational (p. 3).

38. While a *Bund* differs from a mentorship, both share the quality of being intensely personal attachments in public milieus and also, the leader/member paradigm contains the paternalistic thread that is also associated with mentorship.

Shils (1975a) writes in "Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties" that according to Professor Hermann Schmalenbach in an essay written in the 1920s "Die soziologische Kategorie des Bundes" (in *Die dioskuren*, vol. 1):

> When primordial elements (e.g. blood ties, common residence) were isolated from the original concept of Gemeinschaft, the residue was a *Bund*, for which such terms as cofraternity, brotherhood, league, band, gang, are all poor translations but each of which brings to the fore the element of intense mutual attachment, independent of primordial ties (p. 114).

Shils goes on in the same essay to develop an argument that the integrative functions of social bonds persist in modern society, despite predictions of disintegration as suggested by the concept of Gesellschaft. One example he offers is military organizations where human attachments appear to override devotion to political ideologies and ethical beliefs.

In another essay appearing in the same collection, "Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II," Shils and Janowitz (1975c) present research findings and extensively explore this question of social attachments in the military regimes of the Wehrmacht during World War II. One section--which, deleting the references to the military, could be substituted as an outline for the qualifications for the classic mentorship--describes the relationships between the German officers and soldiers:

> An exceptionally talented regular army officer, bred in the German military tradition, once tried to summarize to his interrogator what made the German army "work": political indoctrination and "pep talks" were "all rot"; whether the men would follow him depended upon the personality of the officer. The leader must be a man who possesses military skill; then his men will know that he is protecting them. He must be a model to his men; he must be all-powerful, and still benevolent, authority.
>
> He must look after his men's needs, and be able to do all the men's duties better than they themselves in training and under combat

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> conditions. The men must also be sure that their officer is duly considerate of their lives; they must know that he does not squander his human resources, that the losses of life which occur under his command will be minimal and justified.
>
> ...Officers were warned against senseless and unnecessary insults directed against their men. Special orders were issued and particular attention was paid in the training of officers to fatherly and considerate behavior in relations with their men; the combination of sternness and benevolence was strongly counseled. Numerous small indications of affection such as congratulations on birthdays and on anniversaries, and father modes of address, e.g., "*kinder,*" were recommended as helping to build the proper relations between officers and men (pp. 363-364).

39. The fusion of coercive power, loyalty, love, and favors characterize the mafia godfather relation. Again, the context is a *brotherhood*. See also Boissevain's Friends of Friends: Networks, Manipulators, and Coalitions (1974) for a discussion and succinct definitions of *patrons* and *social brokers* as part of conceptualizing types of "social entrepreneurs" (pp. 147-148).

Boissevain suggests that we can think about the American *mafioso* as depicted for example, in The Godfather, as a perfect illustration of *criminal brokers*. "The social broker places people in touch with each other either directly or indirectly for profit. He bridges gaps in communication between persons, groups, structures and even cultures" (p. 148).

A significant feature of this aspect of mentorship--which parallels the sponsorship and exposure/visibility functions--is its exchange basis--that is, a focus on instrumentality and calculation of debt and favors. Influence is intertwined with power and coercion rather than generativity, teaching, and cultural-psychological transmission.

One contemporary crime movie, "Clockers" (1995) by Spike Lee (screenplay and book by Richard Price) features a mentor-protégé relationship between Strike, a late-teen and Rodney, his mentor and surrogate father figure, king of a posse of drug dealers. Many core elements of mentorship are in the story: Under threat, Strike is asked to undergo a rite of passage which is to murder a traitor dealer who stole from Rodney. This request comes so that Strike can prove his manhood and devotion to his mentor--a custom which Rodney remembers in a flashback montage from his own initiation. Although he is already in the posse, Strike wishes to be the golden boy--the one to command the most love from a man

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who he eventually understands will do nothing but exploit.

40. Political and military subordinates are sometimes referred to as protégés--often in a sinister tone. For example, the henchmen of the former dictator of Yugoslavia, Milosevic were often referred to as "protégés" (e.g., The New York Times, 4/6/99).

41. See, for example, Weber's writings on the charismatic circle of prophet and apostles (1964 [1922]). This master/disciple relation is also found in intellectual cabals. For example, see Dire Mastery: Discipleship from Freud to Lacan by Francois Roustang (1976) for a study of the intense svengali-like relationships psychoanalytic founders had with their "savage hordes" of followers.

Also see Greenberg, Karen. 1987. "The mentor within: The German refugee scholars of the Nazi period and their American context." UDD Yale U. This dissertation examines the American reception of refugee scholars who fled Hitler and arrive in the US to enter into a mentor-disciple relationship with educators who encouraged them to flee Nazi Germany.

42. For a discussion of mentor as a supernatural guide, see Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture (1934). Among the North American Indians, for example:

> ...[S]upernatural power was obtained in a dream or vision. Success in life, according to their beliefs, was due to personal contact with the supernatural. Each man's vision gave him power for his lifetime...Whatever he saw, an animal or a star, a plant or a supernatural being, adopted him as a personal *protégé* [itals added], and he could call upon him in need. He had duties to perform for his *visionary patron*, gifts to give him and obligations of all kinds. In return the spirit gave him the specific powers he promised him in his vision...
>
> [In the plateaus of British Columbia]...the climax of the magic training for boys was the acquisition of a *guardian spirit* who by its gifts dictated the lifetime profession of the young man. He became a warrior, a shaman, a hunter, or a gambler according to the supernatural visitant. Girls also received guardian spirits representing their domestic duties (p. 47).

43. For example, see Quinn, 2000.

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44. See Carruthers, 1993; and Riley and Wrench, 1985.

45. See Hall, 1948; Smigel, 1964; and Faulkner, 1971.

46. See discussions of sponsorship in the following professional contexts: In corporations: Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Men and Women of the Corporation (1977); in law: Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Woman's Place (1970); in medicine: Judith Lorber, Women Physicians: Careers, Status and Power (1984).

47. See Auster, 1984; and Blackburn, et. al., 1981.

48. See Speizer (1981) for a discussion of various "elusive" terms, including a cousin of mentor and sponsor which seems to have preceded both--at least with respect to its popularity in the culture and academic literature--and that is "role model."

49. See Riley and Wrench, 1985; and Burke, McKeen, and Catherine McKenna, 1993.

50. See Mobley, Jaret, Marsh, & Lim, 1994; Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1993; and Ragins and Cotton, 1991.

51. See Olian, Carroll, and Giannantonio, 1993; and Scandura, 1992.

52. For example, see Riley and Wrench, 1985.

53. This conception is taken from Levinson, et al., 1978.

54. See Simmons, 1994. Bringing together Jessica Benjamin's ideas on intersubjectivity and Carl Jung's ideas about eros (the anima archetype), Simmons contends that love, the feminine creative principle infuses good mentoring; it is what occurs at the meeting of two thinking, mutually engaged subjects.

55. See Jeruchim and Shapiro, 1992.

56. Carruthers, 1993.

57. Galatzer-Levy and Cohler, 1993 note that: "...the concept of social role links person and society through a shared understanding of reciprocal rights, obligations and rewards that result from acting toward others in

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particular ways" (p.228).

58. See Auster, 1984; and Riley and Wrench, 1985.

59. Another way to frame what I am posing as parallel dichotomies--classic/pluralistic and ideal type/reality--is to use Simmel's distillation of *form and content*. Basing his writings on Simmel, Wolff points out, "It is 'form' understood as that element which, among the elements relevant to a particular inquiry as well as to the general viewpoint of sociology, is relatively stable--as against 'content' which, with the same specifications, is relatively variable" (p. xxxix). See Wolff, 1950 for pertinent essays by Simmel such as "The Field of Sociology." Also see Weingartner, 1959.

60. See Phillips-Jones, 1982 for a discussion of the literature on these various typologies of mentorship.

61. See Scheff's (1997) discussion on "disciplinary habitus" in Emotions, the social bond and human reality: part/whole analysis. He writes,

> In every society there is an "attitude of everyday life," a life world which most of its members assume, indeed, take for granted, most of the time. This world goes without saying to the point that it is invisible under most conditions. Elias and Bordieu referred to it when they spoke of *habitus*, our second nature, the mass of conventions, beliefs and attitudes which each member of a society shares with every other member. The habitus is not the whole culture, but that part which is so taken for granted as to be virtually invisible to its members...Oddly enough, social and behavioral scientists also share most of the habitus, most of the time....Indeed, most of us share a double set of conventions, not only those of our society but also those of our discipline or subdiscipline...The great majority of researchers in all disciplines in the human sciences are entrapped within this double set of conventions...(pp. 219-220).

Essentially his argument is that the assumptions, insights, perspectives, methodologies of disciplines have become routinized, and what is taken for granted is this fact; so the neglect and ignorance of other perspectives is itself ignored. And like the commonsense thinking of everyday life, disciplinary habitus is virtually invisible.

62. See Scandura and Ragins, 1993; also see Fagenson, 1989.

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63. Ragins and Cotton, 1991.

64. See Dreher and Ash, 1990; also see Whitely, Dougherty, and Dreher, 1991; and Scandura, 1992; Bahniuk, Dobos and Hill, 1990.

65. A prime example is Jackall, 1988.

66. See Janowitz, 1960.

67. See Smigel, 1964.

68. See Crane, 1965.

69. See Faulkner, 1971.

70. See Epstein, 1983.

71. See Lorber, 1984.

72. See McElwee & Robinson, 1992.

73. See Kanter, 1977.

74. See Lembright & Reimer, 1982.

75. See, for example, Handel (date unknown).

76. For a more recent study on psychiatric mentorship, see Robert Coles, The Call of Stories (1989).

77. See Galatzer-Levy and Cohler, 1993; Osherson, 1986; Fishel, 1985; and Valliant, 1977.

78. See for instance, Jeruchim and Shapiro, 1992.

79. See Baum, 1990 and 1992. Also see Bloom, 1973; Simmons, 1994; and Chadwick and De Courtivron, 1993.

80. See Coles, 1993; and Brown, 1995.

81. See Kotre, 1996.

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82. Sennett, 1999 takes up a discussion about society's neglect of this function as a result of flexible capitalism.

83. See Winnicott, 1971 for a unique, psychoanalytic conception of the importance of *play*.

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> Charisma is to Weber what the sacred is to Durkheim: a special uncanny power, the polar opposite of the profane...The charismatic leader is for the follower an externally narcissistic object who can give to the person what earlier objects can no longer provide: security, meaning, direction, and immortality.
>
> Drew Westen, *Self and Society*, 1985

CHAPTER IV

IDEALIZATION

"When we idealize others," writes Ruthellen Josselson (1996), "we locate in them qualities that we wish to own for ourselves...our longing is toward possession of that which is outside of ourselves that appears far grander than what we know ourselves to be" (p. 127). In this process we come to view one another in ways that make it possible to imagine closing the gap between what is and what could be. Possibility is the oxygen of idealization. As a mode of attachment, idealization bridges the space between individuals by creating an inner link of human connection.

Perfection, Power, and Magic

In mentorship, idealization is a crucial relational process because it allows each party to look towards the other in admiration and hope. What makes it relational is the association between the self and the idealized other; the potency of idealization lies in the ways the self imagines being greater,

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enhanced, more perfect, or powerful through a link to the idealized other. Often mentors and protégées use the word "chemistry" to label the mix of attraction, excitement, identification, and goodness of fit that are at the base of idealization. This loving, marveling stance--reported to be most intense in the earlier phase of the relationship[1]--is an emotionally bonding experience and provides a powerful lubricant for the processes of learning, maturation, and influence--core functions of mentorship.[2]

Glowing

For the protégée, the idealized mentor embodies the image of perfection and the possibility that one may attain that perfection herself. What it means to be perfect, of course, is very subjective and varies widely. But in the case of mentorship, ideas about perfection usually touch on professional and personal qualities. Perfection can be perceived, for example, in the mentor's talents at carrying out the work, knowledge of the field, skill mastery, ability to handle organizational relationships and colleagues, success at balancing work and family, etc. Perfection may be read into the mentor's personal attributes as well: her interpersonal style, mental faculties, personality, integrity, ethics, values, confidence, life wisdom, physical appearance, etc. Hear the lauding from three protégées:

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Maureen: I adored her and wanted to be just like her...I also did have a little hero worship because she was just so smart and quick and effervescent and energetic and took such control! ...Working with her was divine.

Sherry: (giggling) She looked really cool and hip...She wore a black leather jacket and it was like my first San Francisco experience in quite a while. And I was this little Iowan... I felt "she's so hip!" (spoken in a pining teen idol voice as if to make fun of her own obvious crush)...[*My* clothes were] kind of dorky. So I was like, "I don't know if I can work with you cause I just don't think I'd be cool enough!"

Andrea: She knows everything!...from mathematical equations to Greek philosophy and she remembers *everything* she learned...She has a phenomenal memory.

Sometimes idealization is based on a projection backwards in time such as when a protégée envisions some aspect of perfection or greatness in the mentor's life in the past. For one protégée in this study, for example, images of her mentor as a courageous and committed activist during the sixties anti-war and feminist movements elevated the mentor onto a pedestal and deified her in the protégée's mind. Bordering in tone between tongue-in-cheek irony and milquetoast earnestness, another described her mentor as "just shy of godliness."

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Not surprisingly, the fact that mentor and protégée are in an authority relation both feeds and amplifies the emotional hierarchy that unfolds in idealization. Not only does it arouse transference reactions--in which childhood wishes and conflicts around perfect parents are stimulated though inevitably disappointed[3]--it also adds another layer of emotional reaction to the mix. Put simply, the same perfect qualities that give rise to hope may also inspire fear--a healthy fear, according to some writers who describe this blend of trepidation and challenge as comprising the socio-emotional character of good authority.[4] Bowled over by her mentor, one protégée said:

> Lenore: I found her extremely imposing at first...very formidable. I *still* find her very formidable, actually. That aspect hasn't changed...but my reaction to it has...[In the first year of our relationship] I think she called me a couple of times to set up meetings and I'd hear this deep gravelly voice on the other end of the phone and I'd almost jump and put the receiver down!

The same panic is part of what drove this protégée to take risks:

> Lenore: "Intimidating," "intense," "high voltage," are words that I've heard people use to describe her...
>
> Bonnie: But there are different reads on all of these terms. They could be sources of idealization--of looking up to somebody--or they could be powerfully frightening.

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Lenore: I think they have both effects, actually. [When I worked on my first project with her] I was sort of exhilarated and also felt very exposed and very put on the spot and very vulnerable at the same time. And it was definitely giving sparks off. It was really helpful in terms of my being creative and challenged and stretched to come up with answers. And that was great. But I just had this feeling that the stakes were tremendously high for either coming up with the wrong answer or not having thought through something enough. In fact I learned to react much more quickly than I had before or at least to react verbally. I would have an initial reaction but I would filter it through any number of layers of qualms and qualifications before anything would ever come out of my mouth. And in working with Leila, I've become much more willing to volunteer something, even if it isn't the right answer. Even though sometimes I get really sat on for it.

Sennett (1980) offers the example of the consummate orchestra conductor who pushes musicians to go the extra mile, never flinches at making harsh demands, and aims for excellence--not proficiency. "Assurance, superior judgment, the capacity to inspire fear... these are the qualities of authority" (pp. 17-18). Hence, often a protégée will admit that she adores her mentor while also feeling daunted, even terrified by the mentor's example and expectations. I heard some version of the phrase "I feared and revered my mentor" from almost every protégée I interviewed.

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What is the fear about? In this sense, it comes from the wish to please. Idealization stirs up wishes to be *good for* the mentor (proving one is worthy of mentor's notice and affection) and *as good as* the mentor (striving to be like the mentor). The associated fear--a form of nervous excitement--serves as a stimulus to try hard, apply oneself, prove oneself, gain approval, and experience affirmation.

Radiating

Idealization revolves around power as well. The protégée may view the mentor as "larger than life" (Missirian, 1982)--a towering figure who can make things happen, set agendas, marshal resources, impose her will, mingle with other influential people, etc.--and she may feel thrilled and empowered herself by being associated to that power.

Indeed, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, in her classic book Men and Women of the Corporation (1977) coined the phrase "reflected power" to describe something of what I am getting at here. While the psychoanalytic perspective understands the empowering feelings of being associated to those in power as fantasy-based (e.g., stemming from wishes to merge with the omnipotent parent) or as a defense mechanism (e.g., identification with the aggressor), Kanter recognizes some reality basis to this process. In her

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view, the protégée may in effect if not in fact absorb some of the mentor's power--*in the eyes of others*, that is--and is accorded greater esteem by colleagues and superiors because of that association. Protégées receive social credit by being associated with powerful, higher ranking company managers or executives--as they come to be viewed as extensions of these figures. The advantages are symbolic such as in boosting the protégée's reputation as well as material--through the career opportunities that the vicarious power can yield. Kanter writes:

> Sponsors provide an important signal to other people, a form of "*reflected power*," indicating to others that the person in question has the backing of an influential person, that the sponsor's resources are somewhere behind the individual. Much of the power of relatively junior people comes not from their own resources but from the "credit" extended to them because there appears to be a more powerful set of resources in the distance (p. 182).

Thus, the psychic reward of idealization--the feeling or *subjective experience* that one is more powerful when associated with a powerful mentor--is complemented by a socio-political reward--the attribution of enhanced power accorded by others. Of course, these levels of experience interact. When the protégée feels more powerful, she is more apt to appear so to others. In turn, others treat her as if she had more power, which then gives her more power. In other words, she gains power not only from the

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mere fact of being associated to power (Kanter's theory), but also because that very association inflates her self-feeling. She exudes confidence, vitality, and potency (e.g., "walking on a cloud") as she imagines herself as more of a "big deal" because she is associated with a powerful mentor.[5]

Wonderworking

A third strand of idealization deals with a view of the mentor as magical--as if graced with extraordinary, even superhuman gifts. There are a few aspects to this. One is that the protégée may be inspired by the belief that the mentor possesses some ultimate truth or kernel of essential wisdom which gives her opinions the weight of gospel. It is not uncommon for protégées to speak of "hanging onto every word" of a mentor, hearing suggestions as commands or exhortations, dissecting feedback for shades of hidden meaning, and feeling compelled to justify their own decisions meticulously in light of the mentor's advice--all out of regard for the mentor as a kind of seer:

> Linda: I'm not sure I know anybody who's smarter than Roxanne. And so being around her when she talks is gratifying in and of itself. I think I would have liked to sit at her feet, you know what I mean?
>
> Dana: Marta is just one unbelievably smart cookie. She sees beyond any kind of sham. She's just-- she's brilliant. She's very frightening that way.

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One protégée had the association to Merlin, the prophet, when she thought of her mentor:

> Donna: I think of Dave as a wizard...He's very in tune with people, very in touch with the human condition, and a very wise person. I'm just this kid with moss behind my ears...He really was like a wizard-type.

In nearly identical words, two protégées allude to the sway of their mentor's sagely opinions on their decisions:

> Tama: When Judith says something, I listen to it really hard and I only disagree with it if I can come up with enough intellectual justification...So, for example, it was really hard for me to decide not to take an unpaid leave even though I know financially we could never afford it. But [because Judith suggested it] I still had to kind of go through my justifications really carefully and make sure that I was thinking about it *the right way*.

> Lenore: I guess because Leila gives me some kind of friendly advice or a nudge in a certain direction, I tend to take it much more seriously than I would if it was advice given to me by either someone my own age or someone that wasn't in this position...Its weightier. And usually I have a stronger reaction to it whether its one way or the other. If I'm not going to abide by it, I usually try to justify that. Where with somebody else I might just say "Okay.." and not exactly dismiss it but not feel bound to react to it in some way.

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Referring to the weight of her influence, one mentor seemed to relish the thought of playing a god-like role with her protégée--even more perhaps than she was aware of--as revealed in her slip in speech:

> Lynn: It plays out in a very simple way...You make your vision very well *divined* [pause]..*defined*. And you choose people that can accept it. If they can accept it, then their personality on top of it won't affect it. If they can't accept it, then they can never buy into it.

Although mentors are usually unaware of the prophetic force of their words and actions, one mentor sensed that her protégée saw her as holding the key to a kind of secret knowledge which, if divulged, could instantly and magically make *her* wise too:

> Claire: I think Alex feels like there's something I know that she would like to know...*some secret*, you know, *some something*. But the fact is that its kind of experiential. You can't impart it because you learn from experience.

Noting that the *something* that the mentor possesses comes from experience and not from a mysterious secret leads to a second point about idealizing the mentor as a magical figure. This has to do with a belief that the mentor has attained her ideal qualities because she is *endowed* with them. Protégées describe their mentors as *innately* exceptional, for example, in having "amazing intuition;" or "an uncanny ability to prioritize

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tasks;" that she is "godly" in her vast knowledge of the field; or has the "patience of a saint." Hence, viewing the mentor as superhuman provides the protégée with a hypothesis--although usually a not so conscious one, and one that is in the form of an idealized explanation--about how the mentor came to be as wondrous, perfect, and powerful as she appears to be: that is, she came by this effortlessly. Through this lens, it appears that the mentor has not had to work hard to mature and accomplish and that her process of development has been struggle-free. She is regarded as perfect and powerful because she's been blessed. As we will see, while such an idealization fantasy can have magnetic pull--drawing the protégée to the mentor in the hope of being anointed by her imprint and good grace--it can also impede the developmental process.

Reversing

Although I mainly deal in this chapter with the protégée's idealization of the mentor, it should be noted that the mentor may also idealize the protégée--seeing in her an image of the "perfect daughter;" perhaps, a younger version of herself or someone she would have liked to have been like. The idealized protégée may seem to hold the promise of fulfilling the mentor's own unrealized dreams, and in this sense can serve as a rueful

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reminder of what might have been. About her protégée, one mentor commented:

> Abigail: One thing I admire about her is that she's [developing a career] one step at a time and being pretty thoughtful about each step. Its always that she's building something...I mean I think she's *so* unlike me in a way...When I look at Jackie, I think, "if I could have just been like that."

At the same time, the idealized protégée embodies the possibility that the mentor's knowledge, values, worldview, etc. will be carried on into the future. For the mentor, idealization of the protégée tends to be bound up with generativity wishes discussed in Chapter VI.

Theoretical Issues

I want to pause here to take up the question of *why we idealize* and begin to explore why this dynamic crops up with such consistency and vigor in mentorship.

It seems to me that sociologists are hard pressed when it comes to trying to explain the dynamics of idealization, especially with respect to its significance for authority relationships. The sociology of emotion perspective would probably argue that idealization is a deference emotion--best understood as an affect that when expressed serves as a "place marker" (Clark, 1990), or a way to "accord status" (Kemper, 1978)--at once

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announcing and reaffirming the hierarchy in the relation. The protégée gazes up to the mentor in adoration because she believes she is supposed to and this act reinforces the power difference.

This explanation certainly seems plausible, yet limited. What rings true, I think, is that idealization does have the effect of validating the power differential. The protégée probably is more beholden to and at the mercy of her mentor in the throes of an impassioned spell of idealization than she is before or after such feelings subside. Still, where I part with this theory is that in a sense it really doesn't provide for the possibility that the feelings that constitute idealization could be *authentic*. It regards them instead as social constructions prompted by normative cues. The protégée, it is understood, idealizes because she believes she *should*--as part of a sociological dance of power rituals between role partners--not because she actually does admire and revere the mentor.

To me, this is an untenable position not only because it understates agency but mainly because it denies the complex psychologies of individuals who in the process of internalization do not absorb the "shoulds" of society lock, stock, and barrel[6] but rather filter those shoulds through a complicated layering of conscious and unconscious affectively-laden meanings from

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personal, familial, and cultural experience, past and present.[7] Hence, even if one accepts that she should praise or stand in awe of her mentor, this sense of needing to conform to social convention is likely to be tinted by her feelings and attitudes about authority which are themselves shaped by her own history of experiences. In other words, the social expectations are not swallowed whole.

Another sociological approach--rational choice theory--has a similar tendency to oversimplify the nature of human motivation, and thus also has trouble explaining the core and often untidy psychological issues involved in idealization. Rational choice theorists would probably see idealization as a strategic form of posturing. Overt expressions of admiration or kowtowing would be read as conscious and rational behavior aimed at helping the protégée win the mentor's favor. In the lexicon of rational choice, idealization might be called "brownnosing." Any potential humiliation incurred in acts of idealization would be viewed as the cost against which the benefits of the mentor's assistance are measured.

Again, there is something very resonant and plausible in the argument that idealization has utility. Interview data from mentors and protégées confirm that one layer of motivation propelling the relationship overall *is*

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strategic: each party wishes to improve some aspect of her professional and/or personal life by engaging with the other. The protégée wishes to use the mentor's assistance to advance professionally and personally; the mentor wishes to use her involvement with the protégée for her own professional and emotional edification. This to me seems a banal point. Of course the parties "use" one another to further their own development and aspirations.

What rational choice theory does not leave room for is the affective dimension of the relationship that is not simply willed and manipulated on command to serve instrumental ends. Just because a protégée decides that it is in her interest to try to butter up the mentor by showering her with compliments doesn't preclude the possibility that she also holds the mentor in great esteem, idolizes her, has transferences to her, and imagines herself linked to the mentor's grandeur. These levels of motivation are clearly intertwined.

Obviously, situations arise when strategic interest conflicts with emotional needs and wishes--for example, when a protégée decides it would be smarter to continue to stroke the ego of her mentor than to give voice to dissatisfactions. Interest also, no doubt, mediates *expression* of idealization--that is, decisions about how much of one's adoring feelings to show are

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probably weighed out strategically. One might restrain herself from being too obsequious towards her mentor, for example, to avoid creating the impression that she is a pushover, lacks self-esteem, or somehow can not hold her own professionally. In other words, the protégée may realize she needs to "manage her heart" (Hochschild, 1983). Because the material stakes are higher, careful navigation of the strategic and emotional is especially important for protégées whose mentors are also bosses. The perceived risks of losing one's job or of spoiling one's chances at advancement factor into how one decides to present herself.

Sometimes the contradictions between the emotional and strategic surface *between* the parties. As we will see in a case study, one protégée's idealization took the form of a mad crush on her mentor which lead her to relocate to another city to work side by side with this woman. In the meantime, delighting from the ego boost, the mentor continued to encourage her protégée's love fest until after the move when the latter's productivity began to slip. At that point, the relative weight of the mentor's strategic interest over her affective tie to the protégée was revealed: she threatened to fire the protégée.

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Notwithstanding the insights these sociological perspectives provide in thinking about the role of normative and cost-benefit assessments on human motivation, they do not explain the dynamics of idealization that are "beyond the range of consciousness and calculation" and "escape personal reflection altogether" (Smelser, 1998), nor do they purport to do so. Even Weber (1946b), who among sociologists probably came closest to asking the kinds of questions that would help us understand the underlying dynamics of idealization, retreated from a full analysis in his writings on charismatic authority. He asks:

> When and why do men obey? Upon what inner justifications and upon what external means does this domination rest?... There is the authority of the extraordinary and *personal gift of grace* (charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership...Men do not obey [the charismatic leader] by virtue of tradition or statute, but *because they believe in him*...(my emphasis) (pp. 78-79).

While Weber (1946c) astutely observes that we are drawn to follow individuals who charm with magnetic personalities and that we come to "believe" in these figures as authorities, he doesn't ask *why we believe*.

> The legitimacy of their rule rests on the belief in and the devotion to the extraordinary, which is valued because it goes beyond the normal human qualities, and which was originally valued as supernatural. The legitimacy of charismatic rule thus rests upon the belief in magical powers, revelations and hero

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worship (pp. 295-296).

Although *belief* in the leader's magical powers is a cornerstone of Weber's theory of legitimacy, he locates the "proof" of special powers within the leader himself rather than broach the question of why followers might *desire or have a need to believe* in the authority figure. What fantasies animate the desire to follow a (so-called) magical leader? And what are the psychodynamic implications of creating and negotiating such an illusion? Applied to the case of mentorship, what role does the protégée play in constructing the magic that the mentor is thought to possess? This is where a psychoanalytic theory of idealization is vital.

Psychoanalytic theories of various stripes and persuasions offer explanations about the fantasies, emotional strivings, and transference reactions that give rise to and result from seeing another as perfect, magical, and omnipotent. These theories help explain why such feelings can be so intense and persist even when they are by all conventional standards, inappropriate or strategically unwise--or what might be called "irrational." Why, for example, do some individuals get caught up in a torrent of idealization with mentors who are distant, withholding, uninterested, highly narcissistic, etc.?

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Psychoanalytic approaches, even more importantly for purposes of this research, provide various ways of thinking about the *ambivalence* that seems to be intrinsic to the process of idealization. That is, it is not simply that the protégée is in awe of the mentor and wishes to be like her. As will be discussed, the idealization itself stirs up opposing and conflicting feelings of envy, inferiority, dependency, resentment, and competition which have consequences in terms of the relationship and the effectiveness of the mentoring process itself. Psychoanalytic perspectives can help sociologists understand why these opposing emotions are generated, as well as how they unfold.

The Ego Ideal

Psychoanalysis has its most robust conception of idealization in the notion of the *ego ideal*, written about most extensively by the French psychoanalyst Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel (1985). According to the theory of the ego ideal, a person projects onto parents first, and then onto other authority figures later on, an ideal conception of the self, or the ego ideal.[8] The ego ideal is believed to originate during early infancy at the dawning recognition of human limitation and dependence. Psychically, it serves as a representation of hope for return to "lost paradise"--a wondrous state of complete love and power.[9]

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In an eloquent introduction to Chasseguet-Smirgel's (1985) book, Christopher Lasch wrote:

> The infant's growing understanding of its helpless, dependent position in the world shatters the illusion of perfect fusion with the mother and with the surrounding environment. It is this discovery between the self and the not-self that opens the infant's eyes to its dependence on external sources of care and nourishment. The original experience of a contentment based at once on the illusion of absolute self-sufficiency and on the illusion of blissful union with the world gives way to a painful sense of inferiority. The memory of aboriginal contentment and grandiosity lives on, however, in the form of an ideal conception of selfhood, the ego ideal, on which the developing ego seeks to pattern itself. Often misunderstood simply as a role model based on internalized images of parents and other authorities, the ego ideal...originates in the earliest experiences and embodies the 'fundamental human desire to return to the maternal womb.' Idealized parental introjects later serve as further reminders of lost perfection. 'Human evolution' as a whole, according to Chasseguet-Smirgel, grows out of 'nostalgia for a lost paradise'; all of us are always à la recherche du temps perdu (p. x).

Thus, according to the theory of the ego ideal, relationships with authority figures such as mentors--onto whom one may transfer parental imagos--rekindle the prospect that one may regain a lost state of perfection--that in which one was her own ideal. As a way to flesh out Weber's conception of charismatic authority, then, this theory suggests that the reason individuals *believe* in seemingly magical authority figures stems from the illusion we hold dear for some type of redemption or transcendence.

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Weber might have been very pleased with this formulation given his quest for enchantment.

Applied to mentorship, the mentor serves as a beacon of hope that the protégée can attain her own sense of mastery and edge towards her own ideal. Chasseguet-Smirgel refers to this aspect of the ego ideal's function as a "maturation drive" (p. 44).

The ego ideal for Mira, as projected onto her mentor Emmie, is described as something "solid:"

> Mira: I was wowed because...I just expected it to be kind of a working relationship. I guess maybe I never really had a true mentor. I don't even know exactly what that means. But it was so special...I just feel that its inspiration. Its being able to have some sort of solid thing that you can hope to attain or something.
>
> Bonnie: What is that thing? Is it something that she represents?

Mira gushes as she goes on to describe that something:

> Mira: To me she represents being able to be-- well, first and foremost, a happy, centered, great person, you know?...I mean she's created a life for herself that she's proud of and happy with. And I don't see that very often. Its really a rarity. And I think that's definitely the most important thing that I'd like. I don't have that now but that's what I'm hoping to attain...On some very core level she has created something that means something to her and

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> to the people around her. She's done remarkable things especially in her techno-dance work...She's in the San Francisco Chronicle--Marshall Lyons writes about her! And she's managed to get out there and touch people that maybe wouldn't be affected by techno-dance normally...The friends and contacts she has are phenomenal..So definitely the most important thing--because I don't what kind of dance creations exactly I'm gonna turn out to do but...*the most important thing is to see what she's created, how she's created her life and to know that its possible to create your life in a way that you can feel good about and be proud of.*

Bonnie: She represents some set of possibilities?

Mira: Yes, definitely, definitely.

Bonnie: And that's very valuable?

Mira: Extremely...its like a light. No matter what's going on... its like this glowing ball of bright possibilities.

While Mira says that her mentor provides her with something "solid," she goes on to describe it paradoxically, as a "glowing ball of bright possibilities." Her mentor, that is, offers her solid light--a buoyant source of energy and hope that has the feel of something substantial and anchoring. This captures beautifully the guiding yet ethereal quality of the ego ideal.

The significance of the ego ideal for the process of teaching and learning has been observed by scholars interested in understanding the

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emotional dynamics of pedagogy--certainly relevant to mentorship. Compelling works by Finkel and Arney (1995) and Salzberger-Wittenberg et. al. (1999) highlight the importance of the ego ideal in propelling the student's endeavor to learn. Finkel and Arney write:

> Trust gives students the courage to take risks, but their efforts need an *aim* (my italics)...Pedagogy must have an embodied *direction* (my italics) to it. This sense of direction will not only help students decide which risks are worth taking, but will make the entire venture of taking risks seem worthwhile. A student will pursue many specific aims in the course of his education, but he needs to feel a more general sense of direction to motivate the entire educational project. The student needs to sense that he is on a path of development that leads somewhere. What will provide this direction? The most ready source of direction is what modern psychology calls the *ego ideal* (my italics). The pupil gains a sense of direction by identifying with a more mature human being, someone he not only admires and looks up to, but someone he can hope to be like. The intimate, personal bond between the student and his teacher provides the needed sense of continuity between the unfulfilled state of the student and the longed-for "developed" state of the teacher (pp. 34-35).

Fantasy

It is crucial to point out that while serving as a mode of attachment between mentor and protégée--infusing the relation with eros, and fostering the processes of learning and development--idealization should be seen as a form of "regression in the service of the ego." That is, the process calls up infantile wishes and fantasies in which the self undergoes a temporary loss

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of ego functioning. Judgment, for instance, is off kilter since idealization entails projection and distortion. According to Freud (1914), idealization is "a process that concerns the object; by it that object without any alteration in its nature, is aggrandized and exalted in the subject's mind."

By definition, then, idealization hinges on fantasy. That is to say, no one, of course, is perfect or ideal in the true sense but the idealized figure is viewed "as if" she were. Indeed, one could say of idealization that it concerns the ways that individuals aggrandize others in fantasy, and how such internal images shape feeling, attitude, and action. Josselson (1996) said it well:

> Idealization comprises a savoring of others in which we review and replay them in fantasy, imagining the self linked to them and to their perfection (p. 128).

One should keep in mind that the fantasies that animate idealization are not static or fixed. Their content is fluid and changeable, and the role they play in organizing and coloring the protégée's perception of the mentor can intensify and weaken. Moreover, idealization per se does not necessarily find direct expression nor is it always observable. Praise, fawning, compliments, compulsive obedience or acquiescence, solicitations for approval, and outward signs of the desire to please are some behaviors

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which *could* communicate an idealizing attitude. But as will be discussed, such behaviors could also mask strategic intentions or even hostile feelings. Usually, idealizing fantasies cast a tone or climate in the emotional attitude and general way that the protégée relates to the mentor. In other words, the communication of idealization tends to be diffuse--expressed more subtly in tone and spirit than in concrete behaviors. By soaking up the mentor's suggestions, advice, teaching, for example, the protégée hints at her idealization.

A good illustration: One protégée, Alexandra--a junior professor of philosophy--spoke of a time when she visited her mentor, Claire's home for a dinner party and took it upon herself to tour her mentor's bookshelves--to get a feel for all her mentor had read. Staggered by the scope of her mentor's knowledge, (assuming she had read every book), the protégée fantasized (mostly ruminated) about how she could catch up to her mentor, intellectually. This is a kind of easily overlooked enactment that points to idealization.

Reality

Although the process of idealization blossoms in fantasy, some people are obviously more idealizable than others. That is to say, the fantasy

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constructions are usually based on some actual attributes of the other.[10] Certainly the amount of power and prestige that the mentor possesses is an important factor. Moreover, the mentor's charisma also embellishes the process.[11]

This splicing in idealization of "real" features and exaggerated or aggrandized ones was especially apparent in the mentorship between two dancers and choreographers, Emmie, the mentor and Mira, the protégée. Shortly after they started their informal internship arrangement, Emmie's creative efforts of nearly twenty years began to pay off. As if bursting onto the scene, Emmie began to come into her own as an artist of stature and notoriety. Her dance troupe began receiving great notices in important publications, she was being offered commissions to choreograph works for more well-known and established dancers, and she was invited to sit on panels and socialize with other eminent figures in the dance world. This backdrop of celebrity played a crucial role in Mira's impressions of Emmie during the first year of their mentorship. Her idealization of her mentor as a brilliant, astoundingly gifted artist was tied to images of Emmie as a luminary and in the know, and as someone that fellow artists and the public had fawned over. Added to this, Emmie was magnanimous about sharing

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the spotlight of fame with those she loved. Mira felt honored to be included in this inner circle.

Fusing

Another form of "regression" in idealization is that self-other boundaries become more permeable as unconscious wishes and fantasies of merger (with the idealized object) are stirred up, as if the other's perfection or magical essence could rub off on the self or through some kind of fusion, one could bask in the glow of the other. Baum (1992) writes, "If [the] protégée is merged with a powerful, caring mentor, the relationship itself seems to move the protégée to the mentor's high position" (p. 230). As a corollary to generativity which we will see later revolves around the mentor's wish to extend herself into the future through the protégée, idealization reflects the protégée's wish to "enlarge the self with the substance of the other" (Josselson, 1996, p. 128). Hence, both processes involve elaboration of the self through the other.

Psychologically speaking, the types of regression described are functional insofar as they prime the protégée to take in what the mentor has to offer. Wishes for and illusions of a sublime union arising from idealization are necessary for "good enough" mentoring, to borrow

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Winnicott's (1971) phrase. Enthralled, the protégée is able to surrender to her mentor's influence.

Surrendering

Envisioning this kind of surrender, one can see immediately that idealization can also lead to some very destructive consequences and ineluctably raises a whole host of conflicts, internal and interpersonal. The dynamics of possibility that give idealization its breath can also choke development. For example, aiming to please or gain approval from the perfect mentor, the enthrallment may lead to such things as over-dependency, sycophancy, ingratiation, slavish conformity, "good-girl" syndromes, self-negation, etc. (Some of these dynamics, as we will see in the next chapter, arise when loyalty grows out of idealization.)

Even when they are apparently disruptive or self-defeating patterns, such positions may hold neurotic gratifications for the protégée depending on her psychological make-up and biography. For example, through transference, the protégée may attempt to rework trauma or compensate for lacks in her early relationships with parents by relating to the mentor in an overly submissive, compliant, or needy fashion. This was a particularly charged dynamic in one pair of college professors in this study. The

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protégée, Alexandra, tended over the years of her relationship to her mentor, Claire, to be clingy and masochistic--mesmerized by Claire who she viewed as "the best thing since sliced bread" and longing for and trying anything to gain approval. Alex was somewhat aware herself that her good girl compliance and intense adoration was a pattern in her life. She'd played it out, albeit ambivalently, with other authority figures in the past. As an authority figure, the mentor acts as an unwitting catalyst for such transference reactions.[12]

Exploiting

Naturally, the mentor's behavior figures into the equation here as well. Excessive idealization of the sort expressed in desperate efforts to please may be encouraged by mentors who are inclined to exploit it. Depending on the mentor's own proclivities--stemming from her own history and personality--and factoring in pressures from work, the mentor may take advantage of the protégée's enthrallment. This can take a variety of forms including offloading one's work onto the protégée, soliciting constant praise, adopting the protégée's ideas without offering proper credit, making vague career promises to induce loyalty. The mentor may also rebuff the idealization or experience it as a burden. This will be discussed later in the chapter.

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One should note that such "exploitation" is not necessarily sinister. The mentor, as we will see in the case study of Paula and Trish, may also find pleasure in the emotional attachment that emanates from her protégée's idealization. Her flirtation, that is, may be motivated by both expressive and instrumental aims. Moreover, organizational and professional pressures (e.g., productivity quotas, understaffing) can also contour how the mentor will treat the idealization--particularly if she is the direct supervisor of the protégée. The corporate culture provides her with a source of legitimacy for acts of emotional engineering (e.g., "I'd have to be crazy *not* to take advantage of her crush on me...After all, we're running a business here and the bottom line is the bottom line.").

Arguably, professional and organizational cultures can promote such milking. It is not uncommon, according to Robert Jackall's scorching account of patron-client relations in Moral Mazes (1988), for mentors to court protégées solely for strategic advantage with the aim of maximizing their own position. Although this behavior may be more dramatic among top leaders such as C.E.O.'s--some of whom have become famous for inviting adulation and then dumping their followers--the basic ethos, Jackall suggests, trickles down as a legitimate system of manipulation dotting the

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moral landscape of corporate life. Thus, protégées are implicated as well. As noted earlier, protégées may also believe it is in their interest to "act the part" of sycophant or lavish praise on the mentor to gain advantage or minimize disfavor. One pair in my study--Lynn and Rozellen--came closer than the others to exemplifying this instrumental orientation. (A case study on this pair will be presented in the next chapter on loyalty.)

As an aside, if we are to be careful in our conceptualization, when the protégée "puts on an act" of idealization--say, by flattering the mentor without meaning it--this perhaps should not be thought of as idealization but rather as a superficial ploy. Likewise when the protégée pays deference dues through a display of idealizing behaviors, this also does not quite fit the definition of idealization but is rather an expression of one's willingness to conform to socially prescribed norms and roles regarding power relations. Idealization, conceptually speaking--in a technical sense--is characterized by *emotional attachment*, not surface gestures, be they strategic or normative. Hence, we should probably not label the strategic or normative conceptions as "idealization."

The temptation to suckle on the protégée's adulation can be quite seductive for the mentor. The following excerpt from the Pulitzer prize

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winning play "Collected Stories" (Margulies, 1998) captures how primal this craving can be. Ruth Steiner, emeritus English professor of aspiring writers confesses to her protégée:

> The first day of every class I ever taught--thirty-two years, thirty-two first days--I'd scan the faces and try to predict who out there would one day dazzle me. Who would thrill and astonish me?...I'd want them like a vampire wants fresh blood. I'd want to fill them up with what I know, these beautiful, hungry empty vessels...

Shadowing

In tandem with the anxious search for approval, idealization can also stir up feelings of inadequacy in the protégée and result in work inhibitions. That is, the protégée may feel she is in the shadow of her perfect mentor--weak, inferior, unskilled, and lacking by comparison--as opposed to enjoying the inspiration and vicarious lift that can come through idealization as described earlier. According to Salzberger-Wittenberg, et al., aspects of the idealization are thus:

> ...bound up with comparisons between the self and the other. Such comparison may lead to rivalry and can easily involve notions of superiority and inferiority (p. 30).

Efforts to please someone who seems impossible to please--because one cannot fathom measuring up to the other's perfect standards, the protégée may wind up sabotaging her own work efforts, or feel crippled by anxiety

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and self-recrimination.

Mirroring

Whether in a shadow or the glow of her mentor, the idea that the protégée reflects *something* of her mentor can itself become binding. One protégée, Lenore, described an entrapping dance that she and her mentor, Leila, had engaged in for some years--she idealized her seemingly super-competent mentor, yet felt unseen as a separate person. As her mentor's "right hand," she allowed herself to lose her distinct identity and expressed anguish during our interview as she was coming to believe that her mentor saw her primarily as a reflection--a narcissistic appendage--not as a distinct person in her own right. Their story will be elaborated later in this chapter.

Depending

The binding quality of idealization is also seen in dependency. As the protégée elevates the mentor in her mind and attitude, she not only expresses her desire to become like her mentor; she also indicates something about her reliance on her. Idealization thus magnifies positions of dependence and control, psychodynamics which are intrinsically intertwined.[13] The protégée acknowledges that she *needs* the mentor and thus makes herself more vulnerable. Though she is already vulnerable by fact of her subordinacy in

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the authority relation, the idealization process plays a role in charging the dynamic of dependency at an emotional level. As the protégée gains a sense of being able to lean on another for growth, she risks exposure and shame as she opens herself up to idealizing the mentor. One protégée's narrative (as we will see in the chapter on loyalty) reflecting a "without you I'm nothing" theme illustrates the extreme lengths to which dependency can go. In this case, the protégée (Rozellen) felt extremely indebted to her mentor (Lynn)--puffing up her mentor's contribution to her career to such a degree that she disavowed the significance of her own talents and resources in her development.

Having

Envy and resentment tend to follow right behind idealization as well. "There is no admiration," according to Salzberger-Wittenberg, "without some degree of envy" (p. 29). Again, the idealized figure seems to (and does to some extent) possess something that the subject covets but does not herself have. To repeat Josselson's phrase, "when we idealize others we locate in them qualities that we wish to own for ourselves." Such a yearning can easily translate into a hostile attitude towards the other. Why does the mentor have such an easy time performing the work? Why does

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she get all the glory and the credit? How come *she* gets to hobnob with all the important people in the field? Freud, it will be recalled, noted the origin of this type of ambivalence in the oedipal scene wherein the child both identifies with and wishes to kill one parent so as to claim the exclusive affection of the other. In the case of mentorship, this would translate to the protégée's desire to claim some aspect of the professional or organizational bounty for herself.[14]

Taking

If envy and resentment follow behind idealization, guilt follows just behind envy and resentment. This guilt comes not only from competitive wishes to have what the mentor has but also from fantasies about surpassing the mentor. In theory, such a scenario replicates the classical oedipal drama in which the child's desire to topple and replace the parent is held in check by the development of a conscience or superego, the base of which is guilt. But it is important to point out here and will become more relevant as we look at the case studies, that the notion of surpassing the mentor is a complicated affair for the protégées in this study. This is partly related to work-world changes which make the idea of succeeding a mentor practically irrelevant.

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Giving Up or Catching Up

Protégées who view their mentors as magical are especially vulnerable to conflicts about competition and ambition. This is because if the mentor's ideal qualities are believed to have been divined or somehow effortlessly achieved, the protégée can easily end up feeling inferior: mal-equipped, lacking the right stuff--defeated from the starting gate, so to speak. This is logical from the point of view of the unconscious. Although she wishes to identify with her mentor, the protégée may find it difficult because the mentor's wondrous qualities seem unattainable--utterly out of reach. The mentor, that is, appears to be in a different league (e.g., superhuman, "born with a silver spoon"). Rather than offering hope of identifying with someone whose example could be emulated--the idealization has the reverse effect here. It disheartens and gives rise to passivity --a "give up" response--and sometimes deskilling and depression.

There may also be a transferential component or neurotic rewards for the protégée in elaborating this fantasy about her mentor and judging herself on the basis of it. Clearly, it links to the oedipal dilemma: that is, in the protégée's mind, the mentor has something that she believes she can never have for herself. She may thus use the magical mentor fantasy as a defense

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against making contact with her own competitive feelings, ambitions, resentments, and anxieties and doubts about responsibility--evoked by the mentorship--but rooted in childhood. That is, unconsciously, it may be easier for her to take herself out of the race by ascribing superhuman characteristics to her mentor which she is sure she could never acquire for herself, rather than face her own aggressive wishes and impulses. This rationalization lets her off the ambition hook, so to speak, by explaining why the mentor can have adult goodies while it seems that she cannot. The net result is that the protégée remains tentative about trying to get what the mentor has, or removes herself from the endeavor completely. This motif is illustrated dramatically in the case of the mentorship between Leila and Lenore.

Alternatively, some protégées may relate to the fantasy by trying to "catch up" to their seemingly magical mentors--anyway they can, tout de suite. Placing emphasis on the perception that what the mentor does looks effortless, the protégée may try to acquire what the mentor has as if the *process of development itself* was magical. As if to say, "what my mentor has is marvelous and with a wave of the wand, I shall have that too," the protégée may in a metaphorical sense try to become an adult without having

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to grow up. Tapping primitive (presymbolic) psychological wishes, this occurs through imitation, rather than identification. In Chasseguet-Smirgel's (1985) words:

> It is imitation when the child holds the newspaper *like* his father. It is identification when the child learns to read. Imitation means trying to *be* the envied parent and not necessarily to *become* it. This is the domain of magical achievements (p. 111).
>
> In the definitions of imitation against identification, there is always the idea of magically being able not to *become* big, but to *be* big immediately, thus bypassing the process of maturation (p. 114).

Interview data reveal that the protégée may make superficial attempts to build her knowledge or develop the skill or competency that her mentor displays--looking for short-cuts and trying to skip steps--as if she believes that no work, adversity, risk, or struggle should be required in development. Claire, the philosophy professor referred to earlier, drove home this point as she puzzled over her protégée's dilettantish attempt to acquire a depth of perspective that took her years to cultivate:

> Bonnie: I've been finding it really interesting to talk to mentors--who as part of the process of being put on a pedestal and admired--find that one of the issues that's frustrating is the idea that somehow--its magic...that what you do and how you do it comes easy.

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Claire: ...(very animated) Yes! yes! yes! Oh yes, I know exactly what you mean...That's *so* true. Its sort of like if she asks me, "Well, what's the one book I can read to understand what it took you twenty years to understand?" (laughing raucously) and then I think (gasps) "Uh oh!" And then I find out she's *read* the fucking book! That's why I said, "Well read it again."

In professional socialization terms, this "catch up" response would reflect attempts to bypass the process of training and socialization while still aiming to become a professional. Cultural ideals fuel the flight from the pains of learning. That is, there is a general lack of credence given in our society to the *process* of development. Instead, the message conveyed is that a person is supposed to arrive at adulthood fully formed and to know what he or she wants to do and how to go about doing it without ambivalence or the need for further mastery. The idealized mentor, from the point of view of a protégée who holds this fantasy--may thus becomes an object of imitation. The protégée makes only a facile or "magical identification" with her.[15] However seductive, the quest for magical relief from all struggle, as Salzberger-Wittenberg, et al. point out, will ultimately lead to disappointment and retard development.

> Teachers, like others in helping professions...easily become objects of infantile hopes; someone who will magically cure pain, take away frustration, helplessness, despair, and instead provide happiness and the fulfillment of all desires. We must expect that a person who holds on to the belief that such wishes

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> should and *can* be met will easily feel disappointed, may soon turn away from us in anger, blame us for being totally unhelpful and seek out someone who appears more likely to with his wishes. What is so dangerous in this attitude, and our tendency to fit with it, is that it is *anti-development*, for as long as there is a persistent belief that the individual does not have to struggle with some frustration and mental pain he is not likely to discover any latent strengths. Most of us do not attempt to stretch our mental muscles unless we have to (p. 28).

As stated earlier, the mentor's behavior plays an important role in the construction of idealization fantasies--but particularly in the creation of the fantasy--or more precisely, the *myth* of magical mentor. This is because structural features of mentorship expressed in the mentor's everyday demeanor and activity unwittingly foster the magical mentor myth. The fact is that the mentor *does* have more experience and expertise than the protégée and usually *has* mastered some aspect of her work and life roles, or at least has greater command of these than the protégée does. Hence, she may *appear* to sail through her performance on the job; indeed she *may* sail through parts of it. The fiction that this seemingly effortless performance creates, however, is that the mentor does not and has not ever had to struggle--like all other mortals--to hone her craft, compete with colleagues, develop a professional identity, etc. Her toil is hidden and partly past. For this reason, how competent the mentor appears day to day in carrying out

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her work and life roles--how much doubt, vulnerability, error, etc. she shows matters. Such images, we will see in the case of Leila and Lenore, can diffuse or feed the myth of the mentor's magic.

Just to summarize before moving on: For the protégée, idealization implies an encounter with her own sense of lesser knowledge, maturity, skill, etc., relative to the perfect, powerful, magical mentor. The various types of ambivalent responses outlined above are to that encounter with lack. The protégée may feel motivated, hopeful, inspired, and challenged by the idealized mentor to strive, grow, and achieve. The protégée may feel dependent, vulnerable, and exposed to shame--fearing exploitation, infantilization, and humiliation by the idealized mentor. The protégée may feel overshadowed by the glare of the idealized mentor--facing conflicts about loss of self and identity. The protégée may feel embattled by envy, resentment and guilt--anxious about wishes to usurp what the idealized mentor has. The protégée may feel defeated and inadequate--crushed by the thought that she can never possess the magic that she believes is her mentor's quintessence. The protégée may feel catapulted *to be* her mentor rather than *to become like* her, mythically believing that based on her mentor's example, development must be a snap. Idealization of the mentor,

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thus, creates a deeply conflictual set of dynamics which the parties must navigate through the course of their relationship.

Ambivalence

I want to underline at this point that the *ambivalence* that attends idealization is not necessarily (or even usually) consciously experienced. At its libidinal peak, idealizing feelings can have the quality of sweeping someone off of their feet. It should not be too surprising, therefore, that one might become defensive about her starry-eyed view of the mentor and try to safeguard the illusion. The image of the mentor as perfect, magical, and all-powerful makes her a potential savior. Indeed, one fantasy identified by Baum (1992) as a pattern in mentorship narratives is that protégées imagine that under their mentor's watch, they will be protected from the aggressive demands of organizational and professional life. In Baum's words, idealization helps protégées:

> ...defend against the dangers of organizational life and to transform the organization into a place where work and advancement are safe.. Libidinal caring replaces the vision of an organization in which aggression (expressed in competition and embodied in hierarchical distinctions) rules...Thinking of an organization in these terms trans-forms it from an economic enterprise into a family, where appeals to trust and loyalty supplant concerns about fairness of the division of labor and profit (p. 227).

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Alluding here to the desire to attain the ego ideal--where life is a breeze--such a fantasy provides a powerful incentive to hold onto the attributions of perfection that go along with idealization. One is not likely, that is, to welcome feelings such as competitiveness which could threaten or spoil the fantasy.

Defending

In fact, it is not unusual for the "negative" or conflictual sides of the idealization to go unmentioned altogether. Defenses such as splitting, denial, or projection may keep such feelings hidden or masked.[16] According to Smelser (1998):

> Because ambivalence is such a *powerful, persistent, unresolvable, volatile, generalizable*, and *anxiety-provoking* feature of the human condition, people defend against experiencing it in many ways. Those mechanisms of defense...include: reversing one side of the ambivalent feeling, usually by turning the negative side into a positive feeling ("love thine enemy"); repressing one side and rigidifying the other side into a reaction-formation, for example, in the idealization of a parent; displacing or substituting a remote object or symbol for the real object; projecting, for example, resolving one's own ambivalent feelings toward a loved one who has died by blaming evil spirits; splitting or transferring the positive side of the ambivalence into an unqualified love of one person or object, and the negative side into an unqualified hatred of another (p. 6).

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Hence, as already mentioned, idealization itself can be defensive by perceiving the other as "all good," one can split off and deny her own "bad" feelings.[17] One protégée, for example, appeared to be very invested in the idealized image she painted of her mentor as a stoic heroine, dramatizing the personal tragedies in her mentor's life repeatedly. My hunch was that the protégée fixed on these epic stories of her mentor's courage as a way to avoid discussing (and experiencing) anger over a number of troubling relationship issues that she merely hinted at during our interview. Because the interview situation had its own overlay of "bias towards the positive" (see methodology chapter) it is difficult to know, however, whether such a finding was defensive or due to a bias effect.

Interpreting

Whatever the case, I think it *is* possible and indeed vital to "read" these conflictual feelings into the subjects' accounts. Latent meanings revealing resentment or guilt, for example, can be inferred from descriptions of symptomatic actions, discrepancies between words, deeds, and affect, clinical observations, and seemingly incidental comments (e.g., slips, patterns of speech and associations). It is also, of course, possible to speculate about the unacknowledged conflicts on the basis of psychoanalytic

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theory. In order to lift out the ambivalence for analysis, I engage in both modes of interpretation.

Although it may appear that I am making only a methodological point, the main reason to clarify the often unconscious nature of the ambivalence is to further distill the process of idealization. I have thus far suggested that idealization in mentorship reflects a combination of intensely adoring projections linking the self-to-other; but also negative or painful feelings about the fact that it is the other, not the self who possesses the admired qualities. Other cuts of ambivalence are evoked by idealization as well. These relate to processes of deidealization.

Deidealization

An antidote to idealization, deidealization involves an undoing of the aggrandizing fantasies and projections and the development of a more realistic appraisal of the mentor. The mentor is "reduced" to human scale. Her *flaws* and *limitations* become more prominent in the protégée's thinking and emotional attitude toward her. Adoration is replaced by reservation, skepticism, disappointment, and sometimes disparagement, denigration, and rejection. Under optimal conditions, deidealization will lead to an appreciation of the mentor's humanity--"warts and all" and will help the

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protégée tolerate imperfection in herself, and come to some acceptance that growth can be challenging and at times painful for everyone.

Deidealization typically unfolds in tandem with the protégée's efforts to separate from the mentor and develop a more autonomous professional identity. Crises also lead to deidealization such as when the mentor engages in behavior that exposes the myth of her perfection, magic, or power. Two types of deidealization processes were evident in the study.

Differentiating

A first type of deidealization stems from the impulse to *differentiate* one's identity and starts almost immediately alongside of the emergence of idealization. That is, it seems to run as a parallel or counter process. Even when idealization is very strong, the protégée usually doesn't idealize *everything* about her mentor. To express her separateness and her primordial desire and capacity to distinguish herself and her agency, the protégée finds some faults in her mentor.

Recounting their idealized views, the protégées interviewed tended to split hairs. There were many instances in which protégées qualified their praise of mentors by criticizing some aspect of the very quality they were elevating. Often this had an air of nitpicking as if to suggest that the

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function had less to do with the substance of the criticism than with the act of asserting oneself as distinct and able, even under the weight of tremendous admiration, to retain an independent center of gravity (e.g., to resist the idealizing urge to fuse, surrender, etc.).

Meredith, for example, all but swooned as she spoke about her mentor, Penny's wizardry as an editor. In the same breath, however, she added that because Penny makes decisions so quickly, she is often blunt in her style and dismissive in her manner of relating to employees--qualities which Meredith does not hope to emulate. The theme reflected here: "my mentor is brilliant at her job but merciless in her style" was, in fact, echoed by several protégées. Another protégée expressed it this way: "I hope to be a kinder, gentler version of [my mentor]." Beyond sowing the seeds of differentiation (e.g., "I don't want to be like *her* if I get promoted to manager"), this particular view illustrates an ambivalence that women protégées tended to experience regarding the authority styles of women mentors. The point to stress here is that as one idealizes, one also begins particularize, screen for disliked qualities, and thus, declare difference.

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Disillusioning

A second type of deidealization emerges from *disillusionment* or loss of belief in the mentor's greatness and all that such a belief has come to represent to the protégée. It involves taking the mentor off of the pedestal by recognizing her fallibility and limitations. Because the mentor will inevitably fail to live up to the aggrandized expectations, this process also involves disappointment and loss.[18] The protégée has to face painful truths that whatever her idealizing fantasy, the mentor is not her ticket to an existential "Easy Street:" as she comes to recognize that her mentor struggles and is as flawed and imperfect as the next person, she realizes--as per the fantasy of recapturing the ego ideal--that salvation or return to lost paradise is not an option. Thus, her mentor's *fall from grace* is her own as well.

The disillusionment usually evolves over time in relation to the protégée's process of separating from the mentor. She will *need* the mentor less as she masters the work, establishes herself within the organization and among colleagues, and becomes more rooted in her professional identity and life roles. As she becomes more independent and acquires a more grounded understanding of work and life, aspects of her mentor's alleged greatness will become demystified, and the idealization will weaken.

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Separation also occurs, in part, as the protégée comes to be able to make more realistic assessments of her mentor. In the prototypical sequence, the protégée will have an opportunity to test her inflated perceptions of the mentor against reality as the mentorship progresses. She may have the chance to observe the mentor in a variety of work contexts and to gauge her own views in light of new information. One protégée, Phillis--an emerging painter of note in San Francisco--notes the startling difference between her earlier, somewhat exaggerated image of her mentor, Audrey, and her current view:

> Phillis: Its funny because...I thought that Audrey was *the* most well connected person in the world...Now that I'm working in the Haight, I realize that there are thousands of people who are much more well connected than she is or would ever be. It was an awakening for me to realize that. Even though every time I think she's not that well connected--something will spring up and I'll go "There--she *is* pretty well connected," but maybe not as well connected as I originally thought.

As this passage suggests, the protégée will encounter situations in which her mentor's actual stature--relative to the profession at large, for example, as well as her imperfections and vulnerabilities come into focus. The protégée's fantasies and convictions about the mentor's ideal qualities will be challenged and transformed.

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Growing Pains

Bear in mind that deidealization is no different from idealization in the sense that it too is laced with ambivalence. As a process marked by separation and autonomous growth, deidealization certainly has a liberatory side, but it also takes an emotional toll. On the one hand, the protégée can delight in the strides she has made in beginning to carve out a professional identity (differentiation) and enjoy her expanded freedom and capacity to more objectively evaluate her mentor, career, organization, field of work, life course, etc. Moreover, the awareness that her mentor is not perfect may come as a great relief. This can help the protégée to relax in the knowledge that she is, after all, equal as a human being--the mentor is not a member of some higher level species or exclusive club.

Interestingly, an illustration of this latter point came from a mentor, Paula, who experienced her own sense of relief as it became apparent that her protégée's idealization had faded. Some years earlier, glass ceiling barriers and vicious battles with executives lead Paula to resign from the fine arts company in which she and her protégée, Trish, had worked. Ultimately, Paula left the art world altogether. As it happened, these changes were a terrific blow to Trish. She felt lost in the company for a

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while after Paula left and she didn't quite know what to make of or how to think about Paula's defection from the field. But the two did manage to stay connected. Three years later--after they stopped working together at the gallery, Paula described the way that Trish continues to cast hope against disappointment in order to buffer the impact of the blow:

> Paula: She's still disappointed. Like last weekend she was like, "Do you know that you could call anybody in the art business and they'd take you back in a second? You could do whatever you want." And I was like "You know Trish, I appreciate you thinking those wonderful things of me but I know that that's not true. You know I've been out of it [the field] for too long and no, I couldn't walk into it where I left it.." And I was like "Thank you for saying that --that makes me feel really good but I don't think that's the case." And in fact I know its not the case. And I know that she's really disappointed that I'm not in it and I'm trying to make her understand that I've had enough of it.

At the same time, there seems to be a silver lining to the disappointment--as least as far as Paula is concerned--in that it has to some degree (though obviously, by no means completely) forced Trish to *see her mentor more clearly*--that is, to idealize less, and to thus seek her approval less:

> Paula: I grew to like Trish a lot more in the last year because I felt she was more at ease with me. Like she didn't have to worry about everything she said and me judging her...She has taken me off that

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pedestal a little bit and she doesn't act and treat me like I'm something superhuman. She treats me more like a person now.

Bonnie: Do you think there are some real limits about being in a position where you're idealized?

Paula: Absolutely...I've seen it myself with people that I've idealized in my life. You don't tend to always be yourself around them because you're afraid of...how they're gonna judge you...[Trish] wasn't herself around me a lot of the time. Like she spent a lot of time trying to impress me. And she has some very impressive qualities. But she spent so much time doing that, that like I was just like "Oh, please, you know? Its not necessary."

Though it may end up easing tensions in the relationship--by lifting expectations on the mentor and quelling the intense need to please in the protégée--deidealization is likely to stir up painful feelings as well. One can't get around the fact that--even if only in fantasy--deidealization involves a depreciation of the mentor. Protégées may thus feel guilty for breaking away from their mentors as they become more discriminating in how they regard the mentor's advice, behavior, character, etc. Autonomy of judgment may be experienced as a form of sedition or betrayal. In fantasy, the protégée may also worry about damaging the mentor as she deidealizes--as if the mental act of cutting the mentor down to size involves destruction of something the other actually possesses. This can lead to anxieties about

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retaliation and persecution for the protégée.[19] Finally, the need to hold onto the illusions of the mentor's perfection or magical qualities can be so profound and become so ritualized as part of the dynamic in the relationship that the protégée may find the disillusionment--especially a sudden one--very disorganizing.

Context

Context obviously matters to idealization-deidealization processes. The professional and organizational situation as well as the official role relationship between mentor and protégée will determine how much and the kinds of exposure that the parties have to each other. Mentors and protégées who interact in face-to-face contact regularly have access to a greater range of information about each other than those whose contact is primarily by phone and/or occurs less frequently. Observing the mentor interact with colleagues, family, and friends at work or in social settings, and having the chance to observe the mentor handle diverse work demands (e.g., meeting deadlines, responding to organizational crises, giving performances or presentations, carrying out routines, offering supervision) adds dimension to idealizing and deidealizing processes. The amount and type of contact will shape the content and intensity of idealization fantasies

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and the opportunities for testing those fantasies against reality. Generally speaking, the more mentor and protégée come to know about each other, the less they idealize.

For instance, Meredith--referred to a moment ago--grew to be all too aware of the chronic frictions between her mentor, Penny and the "Shrews"--a cadre of women executives at their company so named because they were thought, derisively, to behave like wild avenging women who needed taming. Penny's rage was palpable to Meredith in the aftermath of each run-in she had with the women in charge. After many years of struggling unsuccessfully to move into upper management herself, Penny could barely tolerate dealing with the younger upstarts who she felt leapfrogged their way to the top of the company. Constant exposure to Penny's foul moods following meetings with these bosses transformed Meredith's perceptions of her. As stated above, Meredith had idealized Penny during the early phase of their mentorship primarily for her sweeping knowledge of their business. Indeed, Meredith became a kind of sponge for learning, dazzled by her mentor's intelligence and precision as an editor. But as she gradually saw the explosiveness of Penny's rage at the company and its management, her idealization weakened.

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Beyond the souring effect of her mentor's acrimony, another factor contributing to deidealization in this case had to do with the fact that Meredith began catching up to Penny--by gaining her own stature in the company. As this occurred, she began having more contact with the "Shrews" herself and as a result of this broadened exposure she began to realize that Penny was not simply a sitting victim but that, in fact, she had invited some of the negative attention upon herself. She learned that while Penny's image had loomed large to *her*, this estimation was not shared by others. New viewpoints from an array of colleagues and executives forced Meredith to rethink Penny's version about why her career had been stunted at middle management, challenged her long held image of Penny as unjustly overlooked by company officials, and strained the credulity of her idealized beliefs. It is probably more accurate to say that the *scope* of Meredith's idealization narrowed as these events unfolded; she no longer thought so highly of Penny's professional accomplishments, but she did continue to gloat over aspects of her mentor's personal life.

Mentorships in which the parties do *not* have regular in-person contact leave more room for fantasizing. In the absence of confirming or disconfirming information--the space of the unknown seems to fuel the protégée's propensity to idealize.

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One protégée, for example, who over five years never got to meet her mentor's husband or son--held onto a glorified picture of her mentor's family life. This was a situation in which the mentor set a strict boundary to keep her personal life separate from work. By contrast, another protégée who wound up becoming a roommate of her mentor, got to see the contradiction between her image of her mentor as "living the good life" and the reality--by witnessing firsthand the bouts of depression and painful social isolation that her mentor went through.

Idealizing-deidealizing processes also seem to be contoured by the presence of other colleagues on the scene against whom the protégée sizes up her own mentor. This includes mentors of friends, potential "available" mentors who are newcomers into the organization, former mentors, etc. The protégée has a tendency to measure her mentor against these other would-be mentors as a kind of mental exercise or flirtation. Sometimes this has the effect of affirming the protégée's good fortune (ala "My mentor is better than *her* mentor"). More often, the comparisons end up feeding disillusionment. Appraising her mentor in light of others who are relatively unknown and can thus easily become new targets for idealization, the protégée is drawn to consider the trade-offs in working with her mentor as

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opposed to others.

Institutional change also affects idealization-deidealization processes. Among other post-industrial shifts, for example, technology upgrades are especially significant. Where new electronic and computerized machinery is brought into organizations--sometimes calling for production or system overhauls--mentors and protégées can instantly find themselves in an odd situation with respect to their authority positions. Mentors will not necessarily know more than their protégées. In fact, because protégées are younger and more recently trained, they sometimes have a more cutting edge skill base than their mentors. The leveling or reversal of expertise can alter the authority dynamics in mentorship. Opportunities to observe the mentor as a learner and neophyte can undo idealized images of the mentor as one who knows it all or can magically--without sweat--assimilate new skill. These adjustments in the perception and reality of what the mentor knows and has to offer the protégée obviously have implications for the process of generativity as well, discussed in Chapter VI.

In one case, the mentor intentionally set out to adopt a new technology in her work as a way to even things out between she and her protégée. Emmie felt strongly that she didn't want Mira to continue to

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idolize her as some kind of technical guru so she asked Mira to collaborate with her on creating a website from scratch. Emmie had no previous experience doing this and felt that if they pursued the learning process together, Mira would have the chance to see that Emmie could be "stupid" too. Ultimately, this was Emmie's strategy to play down what to her had become an uncomfortable sense of hierarchy in the relationship.

Flow

Why does the idealization wear off and does it wear off completely? These are complex empirical and theoretical questions because they presuppose a body of literature which views idealization as a "stage" in a mentorship. Most studies which posit a phase-model of mentorship claim that idealization occurs at the beginning of the relationship and gives way in later stages to processes of deidealization (e.g., Kram, 1980).[20] My research suggests, however, that there both is and is not something phasic about idealization in mentorship.

If looking at the overall arc of a mentorship, one can see that idealization does tend to grip at the beginning of the relationship and either fades as time goes on or stops suddenly in reaction to a crisis or disillusioning event.

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Yet things are not always as tidy as the framework would suggest. When we examine mentorship narratives closely, it becomes clear that there is more nuance to the process. For one thing we can see that idealization does not always arise immediately. Two pairs in this study, Leila and Lenore, and Penny and Meredith, for example, illustrate this point as they revealed that an initial phase of their relationship was rocky and unfriendly--that is to say, *not* characterized by great love, respect, or adulation.

As will be elaborated in a case study later in this chapter, although Leila seemed to be an imposing, almost imperious figure when she arrived at Worldwide, Inc. to take over the directorship of the archival department, Lenore, a freelance employee at the time was frightened and suspicious of her new boss. A year passed and many departmental events took place before Lenore's perceptions of Leila transformed from terror and distrust to reverence. Although she continued to feel intimidated by Leila and still does at times even after five years of knowing her--this feeling no longer comes from doubt, but instead from awe. The point to emphasize is that idealization did not mark the first phase of the relationship; a certain chemistry and basic trust had to be established as a precondition for the idealization.

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Likewise, the path of idealization for Meredith and Penny had a similar trajectory. The two women had known each other for several years at Cameo & Son Publishers. Meredith even worked in a temporary position under Penny for a year. But during this pre-mentorship phase, Meredith did not especially like Penny--she felt a lot of tension and timidity in Penny's presence. The idealization came later--it grew once the two women began working together as boss and employee.

My point in briefly outlining the lead up to idealization here is twofold. On the one hand, it is to begin to counter the claim that mentorship dynamics operate in fairly well delineated phases. Granted, as stated above, my research confirms that in the most general sense, idealization does tend to occur towards the beginning of the relationship. But there are important variations. Based on the two illustrations offered one could speculate that idealization is part of what marks the beginning of the *mentorship* per se; and this can sometimes follow a period in which the two individuals know each other but do not have any particular affinity for one another.

It is also evident from this research that idealization does not occur as a discrete phase unto itself--resolvable once and for all at the onset of deidealization. Noted above, there appears to be a dual process of building

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up illusions about the mentor and taking them down going on simultaneously right from the start. That is to say, the idealization is never total or static; it always operates in dynamic tension with the subject's assertions of agency (expressed in deidealization). By definition, these declarations of independence dilute idealization which is after all, at the core, an expression of the desire to merge.

Finally, it also seems to be the case that idealization is not something that completely wears off with time. Fantasizing that one's mentor is perfect or all-powerful in this or that way seems to perpetuate for some protégées throughout the entire course of the relationship. The content of the fantasies can shift over time, but the general trend of maintaining the emotional hierarchy of the relationship exists through the persistence of some amount of idealization.

Paula and Trish, as we will see in a moment, demonstrate the latter trend poignantly. After seven years of relating to each other in the mentorship, and some amount of catching up or leveling of expertise and status that each has in their field, Trish continues to hold onto certain behaviors which are vestiges of her idealizing stance towards Paula--that date back to the beginning of their relationship.

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Mentors' Ambivalence

Mentors tend to experience complex and conflictual feelings in reaction to idealization. On one hand there may be ego gratifications in being perceived as expert and supercompetent at what they do--so much so that it looks like magic--that toil doesn't show, thus creating the illusion that there is no toil. Mentors may enjoy the feeling that their efforts have paid off in the sense that they can cruise through aspects of work, or, at least, appear to do so; like the prima-ballerina who has mastered so much self-discipline that she can hold her plié without a wobble or like the magician who performs feats without offering a hint that there is *technique* behind the illusions. Being perceived as wondrous can be heady stuff. For some mentors, it is probably proudly taken as a sign that they have mastered their professional chops and can show off to the world an effortless proficiency and self-sufficiency.

Cultural inducements

Of course, the ego strokes are reinforced by the value placed in our culture on perfectionism--characterized by a relentless push towards self-improvement and quest to surpass human limits--to strive towards a state of flawlessness, as if this was possible; to achieve the perfect "10." This goes

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along with a focus on achieving even-linear-smooth productions--that is, without fits and starts. As a culture, we do not like to acknowledge the messier parts of *the process of mastery and accomplishment*. We much prefer to think of our cultural icons as born with their talents or divinely inspired (e.g., Olympic athletes, eminent writers, prodigy musicians). And, of course, people do vary in their talents and aptitudes; some *are* born geniuses or with extraordinary prowess. Still, the vast majority must take our raw talent and work it--transform it into its ultimate, possibly even near-perfect expression. But there is always work involved and with that some mix of risk, error, struggle, and accomplishment. Be that as it may, the mentor may feel that one of the pay-offs of her years of learning and practice is her ability to create the appearance that there is "no sweat" involved in carrying out her work. She may even "forget" the toil which gave rise to her own mastery--repressing memory of the difficulties--the large and small failures that inevitably occur in the learning process--recalling only the successes, savoring only moments of achievement.

Rejecting

For some, there is embarrassment and discomfort over the idealization stemming from emotional insecurity or philosophical skepticism about

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authority and conflicts about one's entitlement to authority. Some mentors, in other words, find it difficult to embrace a view of themselves as authorities--because they do feel sure of their right to have the authority or because something about the idea of authority rubs them the wrong way philosophically. For these mentors, anxieties about both their wishes and fears of being revered, looked up to, emulated, etc. are stirred up, as are qualms about whether they (or anyone for that matter) deserve such veneration.

Opposing

Other mentors react to the idealization with admonishment and disdain. They claim they do not want the adulation because they don't like the hierarchy--and don't wish to be cast as prophetic, as if from "on high." One mentor felt she had lost respect for her protégée because of this. She felt the idealization--expressed mainly through efforts to extract approval from her--diminished the protégée's self-respect in her eyes. Her protégée was on to this--partly, anyway:

> Sarah: Probably one of the reasons why Andrea is such an attractive person is that she does not know her own power or charisma. If she did, she'd have a big head. And she doesn't...I think she both does and she doesn't [get that she has as much influence over me as she does]. She doesn't want to, really.

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Bonnie: That's got to be a heady experience though, right?

Sarah: ...Yeah. I think that when she feels her power over people, she feels mainly that those people shouldn't allow her to be so powerful. She would be perturbed if she thought she was as powerful over me as she is. She doesn't want that.

Shortchanged

A few mentors felt a sense of being pigeonholed by the idealization, frustrated that this process builds in a denial of the mentor's struggle to accomplish and grow. One mentor felt caught in a dilemma--she didn't want to be idealized if it meant that the protégée minimized how hard she worked at her job. She felt that the protégée had an overblown conception of her because she didn't see her fret over the work. This created ambivalence in the mentor who wanted to be appreciated for her hard work, years of sweat equity and dues paying, yet she also wanted to enjoy the fruits of her labor--including the fact that she *could* cruise through aspects of work.

Dehumanized

A few mentors were pained by the idealization because it was built on a pretense that they rose above the emotional stir of ordinary life. That is, inside of the idealization is a denial of the self. This occurs through the

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construction of flat (uncomplicated) images of the mentor as ideal.

Although she admitted to moments of "gratification," Claire found her protégée's idealization "disturbing"--off the mark in terms of who she is as a person, erasing the fact that she has a private self which has suffered though much inner turmoil and insecurity and doesn't feel as "together" as is implied by her protégée's idealizations:

> Claire: Sure, I have my public self but I have my inner demons too, you know? I'm not always happy. I can sit in the bottom of my closet and cry for an afternoon, you know? And I think, "Geez, boy are you wrong." (laughs) "You wanna be like me? Boy are *you* wrong."

Burdening

Another response deals with the burden of living up to the protégée's grandiose expectations of the mentor as infallible.[21] Knowing her feet are made of clay, Claire waits for the other shoe to drop:

> Claire: [The trap of idealization is that] you hold people to impossible standards and then hate them when they don't meet the impossible standards.

Some worried about being found out as impostors and had concerns about exposing versus concealing their flaws.

Despite the fact that several of the mentors claimed they were uncomfortable with the idealization, they nevertheless felt drawn to their

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protégées and the eros of the powerful dynamic. In other words, notwithstanding their protests on the matter during our interviews, mentors got caught up as objects in their protégée's idealizing stance. No one was reported to have overtly objected to the adulation nor resisted it in any active way. And why should they? Idealization constitutes a feeding. Although mentors protested, some were able to admit (albeit sheepishly) that they enjoyed the headiness of the experience.

Often, however, mentors are relatively unaware of the idealization, or they may suspect its operation but cannot pinpoint when it occurs or how it manifests. As stated earlier, idealization is usually communicated in a general tone and attitude of relatedness--for example, through an eagerness on the protégée's part to learn, listen, heed advice, comply with directions, etc. But such behaviors are easily interpreted as signs of cooperativeness, openness to learning, and of having an overall positive outlook. In other words, the mentor understands the sanguine engagement as a good reflection on the protégée, not necessarily as a response to her. It is rare for a mentor to know about the content of her protégée's idealizing fantasies or the degree of the aggrandizement.

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Disavowing

One mentor had trouble recognizing the idealization, not because it was so well hidden by her protégée but because the mentor tended to be self-effacing in general which made even thinking about idealization reflectively--as a considered possibility--very difficult. She out and out dismissed the attribution; turning the tables ultimately to talk in an aggrandizing way about her *protégée*--all as a way to avoid the discussion about the importance and power of her presence in her protégée's life.

A number of mentors in the study who had an inkling about the idealization--verbalized discomfort about the dynamic.

What shall we make of the varying responses to the idealization from mentors? One interpretation is that their ambivalence has resonance with parental concerns. They desire to be the object of admiration--and find themselves seduced by projected images of themselves as wondrous; but at the same time, have anxieties about desires to control, ethics, doubts about their own adequacy, etc. Another layer of reaction is rooted in the biographical details of the mentor's lives: that is, they bring their own transferences and emotional meanings to the situation of this intimate relationship; the mentor's sense of entitlement to authority--her own or anyone else's--for

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example, is key to how she will respond to the idealization.

Case Studies

Thus far I have sketched the textured emotional character of idealization in mentorship as a mode of attachment elaborated in fantasy that gives rise to a host of ambivalent feelings--some of which, I have suggested, foster relationship growth and satisfaction and the effectiveness of the mentoring process itself, and some which rupture these processes.

In this section, I will offer two case studies selected because they each illustrate different dimensions of the dynamics of idealization. Indeed, all idealization "stories" differ as will be the case for loyalty and generativity. That is to say, how these emotional dynamics play out in mentorship is a highly idiosyncratic process. Each pair and the individuals who comprise it bring to the relationship personal history which profoundly colors and animates the idealization process in mentorship. Other factors including personality, gender, career aspirations, career history, career and life stage, occupation or profession, organizational context, and cultural and socio-historical factors more broadly also have some bearing on how the dynamics of idealization unfold and affect the quality and outcome of the relationship for any particular mentorship pair.

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Having said that, I have tried to make the argument in this chapter that there are certain outlines to idealization fantasies and dynamics that constitute patterns. Accepting that it is an inevitable process in mentorship, idealization appears to traverse (at least) two distinct courses. One is that it leads the protégée to striving, growth, learning, maturation and development (a *constructive* course). The other is that it frustrates and leads the protégée to stagnation and even professional and personal sabotage (a *destructive* or *regressive* course).

The first case study of Paula and Trish illustrates the positive outcome; the second regarding Leila and Lenore illustrates the negative outcome. I want to emphasize here, however, that although I distinguish these two illustrations as the "positive" and "negative" ones, I do so for heuristic reasons. As I emphatically set forth in the introduction, my aim is to be able to hold the *ambivalence* manifested in mentorships. I hope to show, therefore, that although the consequences of the idealization for Trish were mostly positive, there were negative, thwarting aspects to the idealization. Likewise for the case of Leila and Lenore: although I highlight the "negative" side of the idealization, I also try to show that Lenore benefitted on many levels from her idealization of Leila. In other

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words, although I am distinguishing the illustrations by the predominant shading of the idealization--neither story was black or white.

As a final caveat, the reader should know that the case illustrations do not depict full relationship histories. Instead, I have pared down the analyses to examine specific phases and events that highlight specific functions, transformations, interactive issues, and consequences of the idealization dynamics.

Paula and Trish (Art Glass Gallery--Sales and Management)

With a mix of fear and awe, Trish began to idolize Paula even before she met her. Not unlike her peers, Trish saw Paula as a powerhouse at her job as lead manager over the Northwest region of Darlington--a company in the business of collecting and selling fine glass. Paula had a reputation of being very demanding, even tyrannical in her orders and expectations but amazingly gifted at her game. In Trish's words, Paula could "sell anything to anybody." She commanded great respect among company employees while inspiring fear to live up to her standards. Paula knew that her subordinates were frightened of her. This seemed to please her:

> Paula: They knew that I was really successful in the company and that my stores were doing really well and that this was the area to be in...Seattle...We were going through a very bad economy but the

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> business was still good and [they knew] that I was the first person ever to be promoted to regional manager in the company. They also knew that I was tough and that I had a bitchy side to me and that if I liked you, you'd be great. And if I didn't like you, you had to watch every single step that you made...Part of them were very fearful of me and part idolized me. I would say that that was probably a really good combination of attributes.

Trish was new blood, fresh out of college, hungry to prove herself in the world of work. She took the job--though it was outside of her field--almost as a fluke. It wasn't easy to get a job in her college major, English literature, at a level which would provide challenge. In the late 1980's, the market was flooded with young people wanting to work in publishing. As she scanned the newspaper ads, she found the job at Darlington.

With the vivacious energy of a new hire, Trish hit the ground running. At age 22, she learned the business faster (according to Paula) than almost anyone with any history at Darlington had ever seen before. She was a go-getter whose naivete about company politics allowed her to be brazenly unselfconscious about leapfrogging--bypassing her immediate supervisor--to ask executives to clarify company policies. After just two weeks on the job, she thought nothing of picking up the phone to call top managers to inquire about ambiguities in procedure. A gutsy move, this put

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Trish in direct and frequent touch with Paula whose hands-on, manically obsessive style of management (self-described) lead her to make numerous daily phone calls to every one of the dozen stores in her region across the Pacific Northwest. Paula was stationed in Seattle near Darlington's flagship site; Trish's store was in a suburb of Sacramento.

Lending credence to the fantasy basis of idealization, Trish formed a fast and feverish attachment to Paula, sight unseen. Paula began to feel excited about Trish as well early on. She'd already heard stories about Trish from a co-executive who visited the Sacramento site and witnessed her "star" potential in action.

There was no dispute that Trish showed great promise. Her sales figures were phenomenal, and she was sharp as a tack--catching onto everything about her new job and the company objectives rapidly and enthusiastically. As one might recall a first date (a good one, that is), Paula vividly described the anticipation in the air the first time she and Trish met in person. This was at a dinner organized to celebrate the opening of a show of Chihuly glass sculptures at the Sacramento store:

> Paula: I just remember Trish placed herself across from me at the table and she was just like a little puppy dog...She couldn't wait to meet me--that's the only reason I went to this stupid dinner was because

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> Marshall [the co-executive] was like "You've gotta meet Trish, you've gotta meet Trish." And I was like, "All right, I'll go." She sat across from me. She wanted to share entrees, she wanted to split dessert! She was like "Paula, what are you having for dinner?" It was hysterical--like I laughed--I thought it was adorable.

A few weeks after the opening, Trish got a phone call from Paula "out of the blue."

> Trish: ...[Paula] was telling me how on her way to work, she had this brainstorm about me--that she wanted me to be her "little protégée" and (smiling)...I was gonna be her "little star." That's what she said--her quote was "my little star." And would I be "interested in coming up to Seattle?"

Trish was elated by the offer. She was doing very well with selling fine glass. In a short time she had become--like Paula had in *her* first weeks with the company--the top salesperson in her region. This was the best recognition she could get for applying herself so fully to the job.

Trish didn't exactly understand what it would mean to relocate to Seattle, however, and what would be entailed in becoming Paula's "little protégée."

While Paula's choice of words in asking Trish to become her "little protégée" and "little star" had an affectionate quality, it also probably served to increase the short distance in age between the two--at 30, Paula was only

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eight years older than Trish--young for a boss and mentor. My guess is that Paula used the diminutive, "little" symbolically, to assert an authority boundary that she may have felt was precarious, given her own relative youth. It is also possible to read the diminution as a way to lighten the seriousness of the mentorship offer, by couching it in a coquettish manner. This too would make sense, given that Paula couldn't be certain about how things would work out if Trish moved to Seattle.

No details of the move were discussed up front. Trish didn't know, for example, whether it meant that she would be promoted to a manager position or even be placed on management track. She certainly didn't have a picture of what kind of relationship she would have with Paula--how closely they would be working together and what career plans Paula might have in mind for her down the road. None of that ultimately mattered, though. Trish evidently had thrilling fantasies about working alongside Paula and she felt honored by the offer. Indeed, at that point, she stopped looking for editorial jobs--something she had continued to do on her days off from Darlington; she even turned down an interview at a prestigious academic publishing firm. Her mind was made up to follow Paula to Seattle.

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Trish didn't yet really know Paula as a person either. Up to this point, she had observed her only in the role of boss and as a driven and impatient one at that. Still, as a flip side to idealization--even Paula's "flaws" were aggrandized: Trish said that she and colleagues playfully referred to Paula as the "wicked witch of the west" owing to her habit of breezing into the stores unannounced on surveillance missions.

Still, many aspects of Paula's life and career accomplishments dazzled Trish during the first phase of their relationship, giving rise to an alter-caricature of her as the "Queen Bee." Paula was obviously passionate about her work, successful at making a lot of money, and no one argued that she was smart as a whip. There was glamour to her lifestyle which included a lot of travel and being in demand by important people. But probably most captivating to Trish was the unusually strong interest that Paula had taken in *her*.

And as it would happen, Paula--a bubbly buxom woman with a mane of dark curly hair who wore hip designer glasses--looked and sounded a lot like *Trish*, no doubt adding to the sense that she was someone Trish could imagine being like. I myself was halted by the physical resemblance between mentor and protégée--which lead me to wonder whether on an

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unconscious level, Trish imagined that she and Paula were *already* merged and that she was already enjoying some feeling of having absorbed some of Paula's exalted qualities. In the thick of such fusion fantasies, Trish was enticed by the image of being plucked up into Paula's galaxy:

> Trish: I felt so special because Paula was such a celebrity to me. For her to say that I was gonna be her little star--that just meant the world to me.

Within a couple of months, Paula firmed up the relocation offer. Trish excitedly accepted it and leaving behind a fiance and other family members in Sacramento moved up to Seattle.

The reason I have gone into such detail regarding the beginning months of this pair's relationship is to offer a flavor of the mounting build-up of idealization fantasies and the powerful effect that those fantasies had on Trish's decisions and actions during a first phase of the mentorship. Her early images of Paula as an ultra-competent businesswoman coupled with the special attention paid to *her* by this larger-than-life figure had magnetic force, compelling Trish to make the move to Seattle. Little else aside from the idealization of Paula adequately explains the move. There was no promise of a promotion, no raise in salary, and only the vaguest sense about what the new job responsibilities would entail. At the same time, making

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the move had its costs: it meant that Trish had to leave her fiance behind creating a commuter relationship for a few years. Clearly, Paula had become an object of tremendous emotional attraction to Trish and this was key in prompting the move.

This is not to suggest that the decision was irrational nor contrary to Trish's interest. Trish understood probably accurately that if she wanted to advance at all in the company, a good connection with Paula was fundamental. I simply want to call attention to the potency of the emotional tug that can come from idealization fantasies, shaping decisions and courses of action--particularly for new hires wishing to find an anchor in an organization.

One may wonder what part Paula played in this dynamic. Interestingly, Paula was the one who talked about Trish as a "puppy dog" at their initial meeting. My own association to the canine reference was of a protégée licking her mentor with the kind of salivating and romping glee seen in dogs greeting their beloved masters. That is, Paula was not at all oblivious to Trish's unabashed fawning. Yet, I don't think she knew at the time how daunted and frightened Trish was also.

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Paula was partly flattered by the attention--regarding it sweetly, like a worldly older sister might react to her adoring little sister. It was evidently a heady experience for her to have a groupie in Trish. And she liked Trish right away--seeing in her aspects of herself when she first started out in the work world. Be that as it may, its also evident from both accounts that Paula's hopes about Trish at the time were largely colored by strategic interests: the promise she saw in forming an alliance with Trish had to do with building the company and enhancing her own professional aims and influence within it. Paula was well aware of Trish's profitability to Darlington and she made no bones about it. Emphasizing the pressure the company was under to hire good staff for the new galleries she said, "we were just looking for anybody we could promote...as long as they could provide us with sales and a drive." Thus, Trish's idealization was as professionally useful to Paula as it was emotionally nourishing. Part of Trish knew that then,

> Trish: I don't think it was out of the goodness of her heart initially that she brought me up to Seattle. I think that what it was, was that she saw that this was a young person who had no experience who was doing very well. And she knew that my fiance and I were thinking about maybe moving east eventually...She didn't want me to move out of her region so she made this glamorous offer to

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> me to move up to Seattle which I did...I think it was more out of selfish reasons--she didn't want to lose her top producer.

Only years later (and possibly not until our interview) did Trish begin to face her disappointment in Paula for taking advantage of her ("playing on her emotions") in those first months. She alludes to the fact that she didn't understand until late in her tenure at Darlington that strategic interests are almost always at play in organizational relationships, no matter what the emotional bond:

> Trish: In retrospect, Paula wasn't good to me. I was transferring for this company from state to state. I had to pay for my move. Darlington didn't compensate me or give me any time off to do any of this. It was crazy but I was so naive. I didn't think to negotiate for any of this.

Interestingly, Paula made a telling slip when she spoke in the interview about whether she thought she could meet Trish's expectations once she moved to Seattle,

> Paula: I knew that I'd be able to meet her expectations because for her to just be with me, working with me would have fulfilled *her* end of the bargain--*my* end of the bargain to her.

The mix up of pronouns suggests that there was confusion for Paula about who was doing what for who. My sense is that contrary to her own

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words, Paula had not thought through the implications of Trish's idealization of her, nor did she have much insight about the role she played in encouraging and perhaps unconsciously exploiting the enthrallment she had helped to cultivate. This is not to suggest that Paula was devoid of feelings for Trish. What I am trying to underline is that Paula didn't understand *how* seductive her offer was to Trish--because of the intensity of the idealization--nor *how* important in Trish's mind she had become. In other words, she might have thought it was "puppy love" but apparently it had developed into a mad dog crush.

Trish had an inkling about this, however. To some extent she began to understand how much she'd invested in her aggrandized fantasies about Paula after she arrived in Seattle and things began to fall apart. For one thing, despite her hopes, she wasn't placed in the same gallery as Paula. Then, probably a reaction to the stress of the move, her sales figures plummeted during her first months at the new gallery. Paula showed little sympathy and after a series of minor incidents, threatened to fire her. Trish was completely devastated.

Trish's sales figures did rebound. Still, over the next several months she steered clear of Paula and the disapprobation she had felt so strongly

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from her after the move. Angry, hurt, and feeling betrayed, Trish took Paula off of the pedestal, at least partially. Disgusted with Paula and needing an outlet to express her disappointment, Trish chimed right into the gossip sessions among co-workers at the gallery about "how much they hated Paula."

This may be a good point to underscore how demonizing persons in authority--a certain form of deidealization--is in some distinctive ways, the mirror image of idealizing them. Both stances generate emotional heat for the protégée. That is, the love associated with idealization and the hate associated with demonization *both* serve as the basis for connections that are invested with fantasies. Hate grows out of and gives rise to anxiety-provoking fantasies about being hurt, judged, disapproved of, criticized, or humiliated by the authority figure and guilt about one's own aggressive wishes to retaliate.[22] Love stems from and stirs up fantasies about a merger or becoming like (e.g., as strong as, as competent as, as powerful as, as knowledgeable as) the authority figure, and securing her approval and recognition.

Both stances, however, can be defensive. That is, they each split the authority figure (or mentor, in this case) into one half of a more complex

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whole--one side sees only the "good," the other sees only the "bad." Each protects the subject from facing the disappointment that comes with recognition of the split off part. That is, in contrast to a true process of deidealization--involving differentiation or disillusionment and thus some degree of separation and acceptance of reality and its limits--demonization shores up dependence and preserves illusions.

Sennett (1980) does an eloquent job of elucidating this point. He describes demonization as a "defensive negation" of authority. By this he means that like the idealized object, the demonic authority figure remains fixed in the center--defining the terms of comparison. "That other mentor isn't like Paula." Depending on the tone of voice, these words could plausibly be heard from either an idealizer or a demonizer. The point is that a hateful, rebellious stance does not signal emotional freedom from the authority figure. Indeed, it signals the reverse.

Interestingly, Trish did not split off one side in lieu of the other. As noted, she alternated back and forth in her narrative from describing Paula as the "wicked witch," "Queen Bee," and "just great and fabulous." The point I am trying to make is that the swings represent exaggerations. At this beginning phase of the relationship, there was little grey in the picture for

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Trish--no graduated reality in her appraisals of Paula. In her view, her mentor alternated from being either all good or all bad.

Paradoxically, events surrounding the demonization ("We hate Paula") sessions lead to a rapproachment between Trish and Paula. Blowing things way out of proportion for self-serving ends, Trish's store supervisor told Paula that ugly remarks had been circulating about her and pointed the finger at Trish for leading the smear campaign. Wizened to the cut-throat climate at Darlington, Paula sensed ulterior motives. In her eyes, Trish, who by this point had reestablished herself as the top producer in the company, had become a sitting duck:

> Paula: [The supervisor] was like one of the people who was really...negating any good Trish did and who was really bad mouthing her behind her back and who was really trying to put her through the ringer. Trish couldn't see that. And Trish, to this day, can't see it....The girl did everything in her power to try and get Trish fired--everything.

The fact that Trish's own manager snitched on her and that she had *trusted* this manager so guilelessly touched a chord in Paula. She identified with her protégée. As we will see in the chapter on generativity, Paula shared the same struggle she saw in her protégée--that is, how to be more savvy in her workplace relationships. And as she moved in to coach Trish

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about how to do so, the two reconnected. As things turned out, both parties identified this event as a turning point in the relationship--resetting it on smoother course--a course that had become, at least for Trish, emotionally turbulent and destabilizing.

In the aftermath of this incident, the change of heart (and coincidental shifts in personnel at Darlington) softened Paula to follow through on her original promise: to invite Trish to work alongside of her on a day to day basis. This ushered in a year-long period of enormous learning for Trish about glass, sculpture, and craft history as well as critical exposure to the business and management side of gallery work.

Both Paula and Trish glossed over this next year of the mentorship during the interviews. It was my sense that this was not because it was unimportant, but rather because the process was relatively harmonious and the mentorship efforts were satisfying and effective. A great deal of teaching, role modeling, counseling, and sponsorship activities occurred during this period. A friendship formed too and the relationship crossed into their personal lives.

Trish claimed she found it easy to trust Paula again--a trait she said was historical--that is, giving people second chances. Strands of her initial

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idealization were revived as well, but the images were tempered (though only slightly) by the not so distant disappointments. Still, despite the trouble it sometimes got her into, it was more in Trish's nature to trust than to be wary or self-protective. Hence, as the two got to know each other better outside of work, Trish's idealization imagery extended to Paula's personal life--her marriage, choice to delay childbearing, management of relationships with extended family members, etc.

Trish did gradually come to have a more variegated perspective on Paula--as she spent more time in her company, watched how she operated professionally, and developed more autonomy--both in a broad sense career-wise, as well as in terms of her status at Darlington. Time, exposure, and growing independence coaxed along a deidealization. A major source of disillusionment, however, was when Paula quit her job at Darlington (as referred to earlier)--only a year after she and Trish began working together at the Seattle gallery. And a few years later, Paula left the field completely. Not only did such changes rupture some of the beneficial aspects of the idealization (e.g., Trish could no longer easily identify with Paula because on some level she perceived her mentor as abandoning the field and *her*). But these changes also complicated the terms of loyalty between the pair and

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narrowed the sphere of Paula's generative influence on Trish.

Developmental and Anti-Developmental Effects of Idealization

An examination of the dynamics of idealization between Paula and Trish offers an interesting contrast to the next illustration of the mentorship between Leila and Lenore. Accepting that all mentorship narratives are unique, in terms of this analysis--the cases differ in two respects. One difference is that for Paula and Trish, the idealization dynamics were *mostly constructive* whereas this was not the case for Leila and Lenore. The other difference--intertwined with the first--has to do with the role that transference plays in the idealization process: for Paula and Trish it was relatively non-interfering whereas for Leila and Lenore it was more prominent and in my view, problematic.

Idealization is constructive to the extent that it coheres around fantasies and feelings which promote development--that is, those which generate positive identifications with the mentor and the sense that one *can* acquire some of what the mentor has; those which foster the desire and motivation to learn, master new skills, expand knowledge, accept new risks and challenges, and mature professionally and personally; and those which enhance the capacity to use the mentor as a model, inspiration, and

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developmental springboard. While ambivalence is likely to be rife throughout this process, what's important is that the protégée work it through--that is, not allow the negative feelings such as envy, resentment, or guilt to paralyze work efforts, generate inferiority complexes, spoil the goodness of the mentoring relation and its benefits, etc. The process of reconciling and coming to tolerate ambivalence itself constitutes a developmental achievement in mentorship.[23]

On balance, the relationship history between Trish and Paula shows that the idealization served the mentoring process and created a powerful, although at times volatile basis for the connection between these two women. Perhaps the most conspicuous function, the idealization drew Trish to follow Paula to Seattle--that is, to take the risk of moving to a new city for a work opportunity.

One may wonder how I could arrive at an assessment that the idealization was a good thing given the crisis that occurred after Trish fled to Seattle and learned that the eros that was driving her was not driving her mentor. Didn't the idealization, you might ask, serve to humiliate Trish in this situation? My view on this is slightly mixed. On the one hand, I think that the idealization did drive Trish to make a major life decision

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impulsively--she was seduced by the power of her fantasies and feelings which were quite clearly courted by Paula. I believe this was somewhat humiliating (and not constructive). Paula's threats to fire Trish shortly after her relocation reflected little patience or compassion whatever one might say about the legitimacy of her strategic interest. Still, I do not believe that Trish--in the end of this episode--was made to be a fool. I think the situation lead her to re-view her feelings and wishes concerning Paula once she saw that Paula had more strategic intentions. And, although painful, this process of review constituted a crucial piece of learning for her. It was a seedling for a long line of lessons to sprout in the mentorship about how to navigate the emotional versus strategic factors in work-related relationships. The dynamics within the mentorship became a microcosm for the issues that Trish (and Paula) confronted in work life in general.

Moreover, Trish was able to regroup after the crisis which suggests that she wasn't neurotically invested in her idealized view of Paula. What I mean by this is that Trish's transference to Paula did not seem to bear the weight of significant emotional conflict. As described, the idealization dynamics did not sound like they had the quality of a traumatic re-enactment or an attempt to compensate for lacks in early relationships with authority

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figures such as parents. One can infer this from a few facts: Trish didn't cling to her idealized beliefs in the face of disappointment; she apparently didn't interpret her mentor's withdrawal as an indictment about her self-worth; she didn't allow the let down to deter her in her work performance; and she didn't renounce her tie to Paula completely. In other words, Trish did not seem to be encumbered by a need to idealize as a way to replay or resolve emotional difficulties from the past.

Indeed, by all accounts, Trish was able to adjust and to tone down the idealization--e.g., by sublimating it in an understandable phase of demonization. Indeed, the vicissitudes of her idealization (e.g., the "demonizing" phase, the ambivalent feelings about trusting the mentor once she left the company, the deidealization of the mentor once she left the field) all seem to me to have been part of a process of critical learning for Trish. That is, she did seem to have a growing ability to integrate new bits of information about Paula which filled out a more complex image of her mentor over time. Although I had little specific data about Trish's family background, my sense is that this was a case in which the transference was, of course, present but in a relatively healthy way. No doubt it was a part of what enabled Trish to trust the good intentions of other people, and thus

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to be able to give Paula and her idealization of her a seasoned second chance.

Unfortunately, the idealization dynamics between Lenore and her mentor Leila were not so constructive nor were the transference issues so cooperative. As the illustration will show, the protégée's idealization of the mentor in this case was a mixed blessing. At some points during the mentorship, and with respect to certain aspects of professional and personal life, it had the effect of encouraging the protégée to strive and grow. Still, in the total picture of the relationship, the process and character of the idealization left the protégée feeling depleted, chronically frustrated, unseen, and terribly inadequate. I will try to show that this sense of lack, and the anger it roused about earlier conflicts with her father, ultimately lead the protégée to spiral downward in her work performance as a symbolic form of protest.

Leila and Lenore (Private Archives--Administrators)

I want to begin this next case illustration with the protégée and mentor's own words about their relationship.

The Protégée:

Lenore: Working for her and knowing her has really helped me in some ways. I've become much more

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> organized...Now its second nature to me to try to prioritize whereas before I'd just say, "Oh my god, I've got this, this, and this. Now what do I do next?" Its been very good for me. But I still haven't learned all that there is to learn from this working relationship...
>
> ...I mean, its so frustrating for me that I still miss the boat on the implications of things and things get behind or things don't get done properly because I can't in my head prospectively sort them out. It drives me insane every time this happens. I get so angry at myself and so frustrated and just so despairing of ever really being able to become this person to fulfill my perceptions of Leila's expectations.

The Mentor

> Leila: I felt she was very talented and very bright. And she has, in effect, become my right-hand person. But there have been problems that are now coming to the forefront with that...I think I may have overestimated her capabilities. And I promoted her and we worked very closely together and spent-- I spend--its not past tense--*a lot* of time with her. She got very heavily involved with the first CD-ROM project and well, she dropped the ball in a major way on that project.

As if describing the various speeds on an old phonograph, Lenore--a petite, smartly dressed, 39 year old woman with short fluffy hair--painted herself as 33 rpm to her mentor, Leila's 78 rpm. After a couple of years of working exclusively for Leila as her special assistant at Worldwide, Inc.--

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an internationally known firm in the business of collecting and authenticating archival materials--Lenore still feels she lags in her job performance. Her doubt about this and a host of other issues was palpable during our interview. Leila--a dapper, mannish looking 48 year old woman with fiery eyes and a husky smoker's voice--is sharper, crisper, faster, and according to Lenore, infinitely superior at sorting and juggling the voluminous amount of archival tasks they were carrying out together.

As much as Lenore has tried to stay on top of her increasingly complex and high visibility job responsibilities, she related to me that she feels she is missing something--perhaps a talent or style of working that Leila seems to possess. There's no end to her intellectual interest in the work but she can't seem to get as wrapped up in its execution. By the time of our interviews--four years into the mentorship--Lenore had grown somewhat disaffected with her career path at Worldwide, increasingly ambivalent about her relationship to her mentor, and left to wonder if she had ever truly been cut out for the management position offered to her by Leila two years prior.

None of this seemed easy for either Lenore or Leila as they had become extremely close friends over the years. Leila also was dissatisfied--

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or rather anguish was the clearer emotion. She had invested a lot in her professional and personal relationship with Lenore and couldn't fathom what had gone wrong. But plainly something was amiss.

Leila was thrilled to bring on Lenore as her assistant. There was a ton of work to be done. Leila had originally been hired by Worldwide--actually a year *after* Lenore came to the company--to oversee the transformation of the department's production process from a hard copy documentation system to electronic media. The company's vast collection of leaf-bound documents were slated to be converted into multi-media volumes of CD-ROMs. For the better part of her first year on the job, Leila immersed herself in learning about the existing production schemes, archival products, and employee utilization structures to prepare her to launch the technology overhaul. The first step, however, involved a painful and turbulent phase of retrenchment in which one third of her department's thirty-six employees were laid off.

According to Leila, there was never any question that Lenore would be spared in the lay-offs. Leila had her eye on Lenore as someone she might like to groom. Though not her direct supervisor at the time, she had seen Lenore's work on a few special assignments--each of which entailed

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thinking more broadly about company issues, conceptualizing change, and grasping the logic of resource management and planning. The projects were smaller and less momentous than the system overhaul, but Leila felt Lenore did a splendid job in carrying them out and showed promise. Compared to her colleagues whose narrow nine to five job orientation gave them just enough energy to complete their tasks and nothing more, Lenore stood "head and shoulders" above the group.

Besides being impressed with Lenore's professional potential, Leila longed for a confidante. Used to a collegial work environment, Worldwide was barren. Leila had no peers at the Vice President level who were involved in the functional work of the company; the other Vice Presidents were all on the business side. And the president, according to Leila, was "a difficult boss who would rather beat you up than help you"--and thus not a simpatico individual with whom she could share ideas or air concerns:

> Leila: So [Worldwide] took away from me what I had been used to having...which was somebody that I could go to with a situation that I was grappling with and really wanted someone to bounce off of...I used Lenore for a lot of that...in terms of "How are we gonna handle this?" It was always "*we*." I mean, "Here's the situation. Okay, how can we approach it?...What about this? What about that?"

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The fact that Leila sought out Lenore for collegial exchange set off waves of erotic and idealizing feelings in Lenore:

> Lenore: She'd get a phone call about something else in the office when I'm there and put the phone down and talk to me about what that was for a little while and to see what *I* think about it. To me that was really a quantum shift. Because it wasn't necessarily a given that just because I had a legitimate reason to be in someone's office for any length of time that they would share with me whatever other input they were receiving.
>
> Bonnie: You relate that as if that came as a surprise.
>
> Lenore: It did. I mean, I was blown away. I was like, "Why is this woman telling *me* this?" Boy it was really surprising ...I was aware that I was being hand-picked. And I was aware that I was really stretched and challenged and engaged by the work I was doing...But beyond that it was very surprising... I didn't really take it a bit for granted that I would be noticed.

This special treatment and feeling of being *chosen* extended for Lenore into an evolving personal relationship with Leila outside of work. Lenore recalled the first time Leila took her to dinner to celebrate the end of one of her projects:

> Lenore: [The conversation] was personal to some extent. She drew me out about some of my experiences. She *wanted* to know more about my background...I remember telling her some stuff about my father. My relationship with my father

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> hasn't been easy at all...We're not speaking at this point and we haven't for several years. And she said, "I can really relate to that--I have a similar situation with my brother." Which was again very surprising to me because I had been used to thinking of myself in a very negative light for having this negatively charged relation-ship with my father. So I remember that evening extremely clearly because I thought at that point that something really was shifting. I remember feeling very excited afterward. I've always found Leila to be extremely charismatic. And somewhat intimidating too. But I really began to feel just very excited about knowing this woman.

Some months later, Lenore remembered feeling wooed by Leila's affections again--this time, "sweeping her off of her feet." By this point, however, a part of her felt cautious about how to read her mentor's warm gestures; she had begun to perceive in Leila a penchant for overstatement:

> Lenore: Her mother had died in the summer of 1997. And I remember that as being fairly defining because I went to her house one time after work. She was sitting shiva. I deliberately went on a night when my colleagues weren't going. I wanted to go as a friend and I wanted it to be plain that that was why I was going. And I remember her introducing me to the people who were there as "one of my best friends." Or "someone who was becoming one of my best friends." Which made a very strong impression on me because that was only a couple of months after this dinner that we'd gone out to together. And before the promotion. Before anything.

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(sighs) I think in her mind, I *was* one of her closest friends or somebody she wanted to nurture a friendship with.

Bonnie: Did you have concerns about that?

Lenore: (pause) I think I wouldn't really call it concerns. I'm not sure what I felt. Probably to a certain extent just swept off my feet. Because I had such a lot of liking and an incredible respect for her.

The excitement stirred up by the series of affectionate exchanges with Leila signaled to Lenore that something had shifted in their relationship--or in her words, a "quantum leap" had occurred. My interpretation is that what "leaped" was Lenore's sense of importance in relation to Leila, a woman she had built up in her mind as a towering and daunting figure. It was thrilling to her to feel an emotional connection evolving with a person she perceived to be out of her league. The fact that Lenore was "surprised" and "blown away" by Leila's interest in her opinions, her life, and her friendship reflects in part how aggrandized her image of Leila had become and subtly reveals how small or invisible she must have felt in relation to such an inflated figure. Yet, there is something in being noticed and accepted by a person perceived to be of stature that evokes a sense of being important oneself--and this no doubt is partly where the thrill and eros came in.

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The reason to explicate this section--let's call it the courting phase of the relationship--is because it laid a foundation for developing an emotional bond that was quite seductive for Lenore as it tapped into strong transference wishes carried over from her relation to her father. Somehow, Leila represented the *possibility* that Lenore might get the affirmation that was missing in her relationship with her father. Lenore craved Leila's approval. Still, neither woman seemed to understand this at the time but Leila's overtures landed, I think, right in the heart of an old father-daughter conflict; the mentorship became a stage for dramatizing it again. I'll examine the problems that arose as a result of the protégée's transference reaction shortly.

Once the promotion occurred and as they proceeded to collaborate on the technology conversion--checking in with each other "up to sixteen times a day"--Lenore was able to observe Leila's work habits up close. But instead of having that serve as an opportunity for her to witness the normal struggles and frustrations her mentor might have had in executing the work, the exposure reinforced an image that Lenore had already been forming of Leila as superhuman. Lenore grew to be more mesmerized by Leila's technical, conceptual, and managerial gifts as the two spent more time together.

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Lenore: One of the things that really was make or break about the entire project is that Leila has phenomenal abilities to learn quickly...[She] sees the idea of something and applies the awareness next time it comes-- She learns faster than anybody I've ever seen...

Leila understood [work processes] tremendously quickly and really got hold of the essence of things. Some of the things that I really marvel at most is that...with all of this sort of information, all of these floods of questions, she just has what seems to me an uncanny ability to prioritize. She really sees what's very important to resolve now and what can wait until down the road. And just kind of sort everything out and organize it and break it out stage by stage.

Although for a time, Lenore was suspicious about Leila's breakneck speed at work--worrying that her mentor couldn't have been doing as thorough a job as she could in meticulously reviewing documents, she came to see that Leila was simply amazingly efficient at integrating information, making assessments, and plowing through the process of authentication. Her mentor, it seemed, had a razor-sharp organizational mind, could spot and correct errors instantly, and was not distracted by minor textual inconsistencies. In time, watching Leila in action became an awesome event for Lenore--she seemed other-worldly to her. And for a while, this aspect of the idealization served as an encouragement to Lenore to strive to become like her mentor:

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Lenore: She has incredible initiative...vitality, warmth and drive ...and just a prodigiously quick, creative kind of thought process...She didn't have to digest it like a cow chews her cud for a half an hour for it to be worth anything... [Whereas I used to see this negatively] I see that much differently now--I really see that that's an incredible asset. She can think of things in very practical terms. She doesn't get bogged down by detail or lost in abstractions when trying to think about how to proceed.

Seeing that in action definitely inspired me to try to emulate that or at least hone my own thinking so that the issues that arise in my job--I can bring to bear something like that kind of approach.

The motivating function of the idealization began to unravel, however, as Lenore and Leila confronted a major work crisis. Relieved that she had someone she could trust to share the enormous workload, Leila happily delegated to Lenore complete oversight for one phase of the electronic conversion project. For a couple of months, things seemed to be going along just fine. Then, while Lenore was out of the office on vacation for a few days, Leila came to discover that the project was weeks behind schedule--so much so that even with an all-out rescue effort, Leila worried that *she* might lose her job. She was furious with Lenore and confronted her immediately upon her return from the vacation.

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Lenore couldn't really provide Leila with a sensible explanation as to why she hadn't stayed on top of the project. She claimed that she took the word of the employees she supervised at face value that they were keeping up with their assigned tasks but she never actually checked the work itself. This appalled Leila. She found it almost unbelievable that Lenore wouldn't have instinctively known to check up on the work herself. Unfortunately, Lenore wasn't able to explain this kind of lapse any better when some eight months later--only a few weeks before our interview--almost exactly the same crisis repeated itself.

Both episodes prompted rounds of meetings between the two women and attempts to rectify the situation. Although she dreaded doing it, Leila got involved in micromanaging Lenore's projects--instituting timetables for completion of smaller tasks and on-going meetings to monitor the progress. Leila found herself lashing out at Lenore as she grew increasingly frustrated by her protégée's forgetfulness, lack of focus, and tendency to turn in incomplete work late. Guilty at her displays of anger, Leila would at other times try to be more sympathetic--attempting to understand her protégée's "problem." According to both women's accounts, Lenore would cower during these rows, chew her fingernails, and try to hold onto self-esteem.

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In quite different ways, both Leila and Lenore spent a good deal of time during my interviews with them trying to figure out why Lenore was having so much difficulty managing her projects. Verging on exasperation, both were deeply troubled and puzzled by the obvious decline in her functioning on the job.

Leila very much wanted to believe that Lenore was capable but that some psychological difficulty was blocking her.

Leila: I don't believe that these are things she cannot do. I believe there's a reason and I don't know what they are.

Bonnie: Do you think she does?

Leila: I'm not sure. I think what's ensued somewhat is that on her end...she's become nervous about *not* pleasing, you know? There may be some of that sort of pleasing a mother or pleasing a person in authority that, in fact, she's doing things poorly that she used to do very well.

Bonnie: You think the anxiety is tripping her up?

Leila: Yes. And as a matter of fact just a little while before you came we were talking about that and I was saying to her that I thought that well,--the anxiety I can't totally help her with that other than trying to assure her she's not gonna lose her job, and she's not gonna lose my friendship or any of that. But also trying to say to her, "If you want, we can look at what are you doing and how are you doing it."

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Leila also conceded that Lenore couldn't really appreciate what goes into executive level work because she made it look *too easy*--probably feeding Lenore's idealization of her as a kind of a magical being.

Leila knew she paid a price for the admiration she received from Lenore. Although it took her almost a year to realize it, she understood that Lenore's overblown picture of her lead to a series of misimpressions about how she worked and what went into sustaining her accomplishments at work. It dawned on her that Lenore wasn't seeing the obstacles that she confronted in working. They were hidden from view.

Leila had a good deal of insight, I think, about how this partial and idealized view of her--a freeze frame image of her at a point in her career when she was probably peaking in her competence--could lead Lenore to a "give up" response. The following passage captures the poignancy of the dilemma she found herself in with respect to Lenore's idealization. It is worth quoting at length:

> Leila: [I was] a little uncomfortable [with Lenore's admiration]--I'm not terribly good with compliments. I thought she may have been, what can I say?--overblowing--because she was seeing it from a distance in a sense...
>
> ...I think she saw me as somebody she wanted to emulate to a certain degree...She said this to me--

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she "marveled at my ability to handle so many things at one time and yet be able to control and organize and keep everything going."

I think that maybe what she wasn't seeing was all of the anguish that I go through. I'm a very positive person outwardly and outwardly I show strength. But I'm not, I mean it takes a lot of work and a lot of effort. *I mean it looks easy but it isn't that easy.* And I always felt that she was seeing the surface--and wasn't seeing what's behind that and all that goes into it. That maybe the end result of seeing--"Well, here's the schedule and here's a plan and here's all that--" it looked like it was so easy to put together. But it wasn't so easy to put together. And I felt that maybe she wasn't recognizing that. I mean this was not just--

Bonnie: Magic?

Leila: Magic, right. Although it had seemed to be magic. And although certain things-- Yes, you could sit in a meeting and I could say, "What about this idea?" You know, something popped into my head but of course its coming from experience. Years of experience. I've been in the business for 30 years, practically. It is 30 years (smiles at the realization), So yeah--just by virtue of experience I'm going to probably be able to come up with more ideas. But then the doing--there's still a lot that's involved. Maybe it looked too simple? I don't know. *Maybe I make it look too simple because you only see the end result.* You don't see all that went behind it. And I think part of getting her involved in --"How are we gonna do this?" was to start seeing what goes behind it in order to get to this point where there's this beautiful schedule and there's a plan for the project.

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Leila doesn't want the adulation from Lenore if it means that the hard work that went into developing herself in her career is obliterated. She knows where she comes from. There is no magic. Further, she understands that the distorted image of her may be intimidating, causing Lenore to become so anxious about not measuring up that her work performance suffers.

Leila's words also reveal the double edge sword for mentors in general when they are viewed as magicians: Does the mentor want the work to look like it took a lot of effort? Does she want the protégée to know her tricks, her shortcuts? Does she want to expose the protégée to the messiness behind the polished surface? If she decides she does want the protégée to understand the pains of growth, how does she model this when she has already passed that phase? These questions touch on concerns about generativity, modes of influence, and the narcissistic investment mentors bring to these processes.

For her own part, Lenore wasn't sure what she believed or felt about her work troubles--ambivalent about whether to accept sole responsibility for them or blame part of them on difficulties in her mentorship with Leila.

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Lenore: (sighs) I have thought about it a lot and I've gone back and forth about it. And there's some things where I say, "Okay, if I hadn't had 60,000 other things to do, if I'd really taken the time to step back and try to assess what was most important to get done, and what needed to be thought through, and just because it wasn't immediately visible on my plate, you know, it was an issue out there--if I'd really taken that time and applied my intelligence, I could have got there." But I go back and forth about the same issues. Sometimes I think, damn it, there was no way. And I think on some levels I feel about her (Leila) in general that her expectations are very high and sometimes unrealistically high of people and how they're going to behave and how they ought to behave. And yet she's so robust--and she's such a realist on some levels.

In some ways, Lenore felt she simply wasn't cut out for a managerial role--that she lacked the mindset for planning, sorting, managing, focusing. In this sense, she felt that Leila had misread her skills and abilities. Although she was flattered by the way that Leila pumped her up insisting that she could become an ace manager, Lenore began to think that this was a projection on Leila's part. That is, she began to question whether Leila was really seeing *her* or whether Leila was so invested in having her be like her, that she failed to see Lenore as a separate person. Indeed, she referred to her function for Leila as a mirror--believing that she reflected back to Leila an image of herself. This created enormous frustration as on some

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level, both parties were aware that the "cloning" approach to mentorship (described further in Chapter VI) couldn't work:

> Lenore: I've really internalized such a lot of this. And I think I may have internalized way more than there ever was out there....Leila kept saying to me, "You can go into my job or the equivalent of my job-" and one of the things she said to me was, "I hope you do--if that's what you want to do. Go into a job like mine. And have someone like you there, working with you. And then you'll know." I think what she was trying to say was "then you'll know what you really *do* bring to the table. Because you have a similar sense of it yourself."
>
> Bonnie: You think she wants you to be her?
>
> Lenore: I think she feels a very strong identification with me. And she says that. I just feel sometimes like whatever I am is actually not anything. And what she thinks she is seeing--it really is a mirror reflection. Its like what she's bringing to it is what she's getting back from it.
>
> ...I mean she obviously doesn't see it like that...And its not that I only ever feel that way about it. But I do a lot. Especially in the wake of bad things happening or the right things not happening, or whatever.

One can hear that another part of Lenore wanted to trust her mentor's positive evaluations of her and had a vague sense that Leila was right about her abilities. Lenore wanted to believe that she could master the art of management as Leila had.

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Leila had an inkling that Lenore was caught in a transference with her and that the blunders at work were a way for Lenore to act out some kind of inner conflict. As if accepting her transference role, Leila notes the feeling of having a parental urge to get to the bottom of Lenore's problem in order to help her get past her own obstacles:

> Leila: I'm also angry that she's not living up to what I still believe are her capabilities. ...And that's a parental kind of feeling too because I strongly believe she has all of the brain power to do it.

From the above comment, one could hypothesize that Leila experienced a similar frustration and disappointment that Lenore believed her father felt in relation to her. In psychoanalytic thinking this is called projective identification. An intersubjective process, this occurs when the subject projects an attribute onto an object--usually a painful feeling that the subject wishes to evacuate from the self. The object incorporates the attribute as if it were a part of her own repertoire of responses. In this case, it is possible that Lenore projected the disapproval she felt from her father onto Leila, who accepted it and eventually expressed it as she watched Lenore's work decline. In this sense, the projective process involved something like a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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A central theme running throughout Lenore's interviews was her longing to live up to her perception of Leila's expectations of her. She urgently wanted her mentor's approval. Though tentative about it, Lenore had the insight that the relationship dynamics with Leila partly served to repair or compensate for something she missed with her father:

Lenore: In some ways, Leila has some personality traits that are very like certain personality traits of my father's. And I can see that it would be something that I might be trying to work out--to have a non-poisonous figure in my life that would bear some resemblance...As a way of coming to terms with some of the hurt--

Bonnie: With your father?

Lenore: Yeah. I mean, I sort of understand that on an abstract level and intellectually. And because I see some resemblances between Leila and my father...I think, okay, there's probably something to this. But its not something that I really viscerally connect with a lot.

Bonnie: And in your responses also?

Lenore: Constant quests for approval that I feel either unentitled to or will never be unconditional...That I definitely feel is in common. But I think with Leila there may be something staring me in the face that I'm not [looking at] ...Leila genuinely values me much more than I think that she ought to or than the value that I represent to her in my own mind. And I'm not seeing this. This is what she says over and over again.

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Lenore seems to be saying that it is possibly her own emotionally freighted wariness--stemming from her relationship with her father--that makes it difficult for her to see how accepting Leila actually is of her. If this is true, it may support the hypothesis that Lenore sabotages that acceptance (e.g., by flubbing up at work) because she has become accustomed to never being able to satisfy her father. So, in other words, its like she says, "Look how bad I am. Do you still love me?" From her father she expects a "No." From Leila, she expects a "No" as well which may explain why she doesn't seem to be able to handle her mentor's attempts to hang in there and work with her. In her psyche, she expects to disappoint.

Transferences are not grafted onto present day relationships as whole, coherent, schemes of relating from the past, however. Instead they tend to reflect aspects or parts of early family relationships which are fluid, and shift in relation to current realities and objects.[24] So, for example, while the idealizing desire to please Leila and anxieties about failure and eliciting disapproval from her seemed to have re-evoked Lenore's conflicts with her father, other aspects of her relation to her mentor fell outside of that matrix or template of conflictual relating. From what I could gather, Leila both

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was and was not like Lenore's father: she did have a controlling streak and a bold authoritative presence; but she was also quite nurturing and accepting of Lenore, willing to bend over backwards and give her the benefit of the doubt.

One can see the rub between the transference image of Lenore's father and Leila as a real other person in Lenore's reactions to Leila. She must believe that like her father, Leila will disapprove or be critical of her; so when Leila shows a more accepting attitude, Lenore can't square this in the transference. It doesn't compute. And so to make sense of it Lenore creates a distorting story about it: Leila must be overestimating her, or Leila doesn't seem to be able to see her clearly or accurately. Its as if she's saying that she is bad and unworthy and incompetent just as her father had said, and the fact that Leila sees something different is really a misperception on Leila's part. Further, to really show her how wrong she is in her high estimation of her, Lenore sabotages her own work. That way she gets to repeat the trauma she experienced with her father. She tests and then invites the censure to re-enact the old familiar story.

I have tried to show in the illustration and interpretation that idealization can be destructive to the extent that it coheres around fantasies

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and feelings which disrupt development--that is, those which generate faulty or defensive identifications with the mentor, offering the protégée either little hope or distorted ideas about what it would take to acquire some of what the mentor has; those which engender resistance (passive or aggressive) with respect to the endeavor to learn, master new skills, expand knowledge, and mature professionally and personally; and those which limit the protégée's capacity to use the mentor as a model, inspiration, and developmental springboard.

Though speculative, it is my view that the transference issues saddled this mentorship with emotional baggage from the past which ended up crippling the protégée and causing agonizing rifts between she and her mentor. The transference dynamics in the case of Leila and Lenore seemed to bring a much more disrupting effect to the idealization than that which was shown in the case of Paula and Trish.

Conclusions

I have argued in this chapter that idealization is a critical relational process in mentorship--its potency lies in the ways the self (protégée) imagines becoming greater, enhanced, more perfect, or powerful through a link to the idealized other (mentor). Understanding the psychoanalytic

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concept of the ego ideal helps us understand the early roots and power of idealization in mentorship. Projected as the ego ideal--the mentor serves as a beacon of hope that the protégée can attain her own sense of mastery and edge towards her own ideal.

The same idealization that can motivate the protégée to work hard, take risks, accept challenges, and strive productively for the mentor's approval, however, can lead to debilitating consequences. Many factors--reality oriented and transference related, interpersonal and professional--determine whether and in what situations idealization will stimulate excitement of becoming like one's mentor or produce feelings of smallness and inferiority. Even when the idealization, on balance, seems to be motivating, it is not uncommon to see its down side. Indeed, five of the seven protégées acknowledged that at some point during their relationships, they felt inadequate when they compared themselves to mentors. This occurred because they'd built up their mentors in their minds as icons whose qualities could never be emulated or matched. Instead of identifying with the mentors ("I am like you or I can be like you"), idealization lead to periods of disidentification ("I can never be like you because you are so great").

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But idealization in mentorship has a fluidity that I have tried to capture. It is never pure, but ambivalent. Protégées almost invariably deidealize their mentors through processes of differentiation and disillusionment from the start of the relationship. Surrender is never complete. Moreover, as the relationship progresses, idealization fantasies and myths are tested against reality--and the protégée's aggrandizement tends to fade, giving way to a more variegated image and capacity to appreciate the mentor as fallible but human. Context is crucial on this point as the amount of contact between mentor and protégée--as a function of their professional tie and official role relationship--mediates how much and what kinds of opportunities the protégée has to assess the mentor more realistically.

Finally, the mentor's ambivalence about the idealization is key. None of the mentors in this study seemed to have objected to the idealization in any direct way--yet all expressed that they were conflicted about it. This suggests that there are some narcissistic gratifications for the mentors which probably promote the idealization, while at the same time there are resistance to the projections, experienced privately. At the core of this resistance, data revealed, is a pervasive ambivalence about authority.

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ENDNOTES

1. See Kram, 1988; Levinson, 1978; Baum, 1992.

2. See Salzberger-Wittenberg, et al., 1999.

3. See Freud, 1963 (1912).

4. See Sennett, 1980; Gabriel, 1995; Lasswell, 1948; and Baum, 1992.

5. This discussion hints at a critique of role theory--the basis of Kanter's explanation of reflected power. The problem with the theory is that it is disembodied. It doesn't take into account the fact that the actor inhabits the role in a particular way; and how that role is inhabited, animated, presented, emotionally engaged makes a difference. In the case of the argument I am making, it makes a difference that the protégée probably feels more powerful under the wing of her mentor and that *feeling*, I am arguing, translates to a sense of confidence and poise which when expressed itself invites the perception by others that the protégée is powerful.

6. See Wrong, 1961; and Parsons, 1958.

7. See Chodorow, 1999.

8. Although the ego ideal is sometimes conceptualized as equivalent to the superego, it has evolved into a conceptualization which emphasizes hope, promise, aspiration--the ideal self to live up to. Thus it leaves the punitive, admonishing aspects of conscience, morality, and taboo to superego [oedipal] functions.

9. In most contemporary psychoanalytic writings, this phase--which is thought to occur in the first months of life--is referred to as primary narcissism. Benjamin (1992) depicts the omnipotence that the infant is thought to experience prior to the awareness of separateness as "the [infant's] insistence on being one (everyone is identical to me) and all alone (there is nothing outside of me that I do not control)" (p. 49). This is considered to be a manifestation of the infant's primary narcissism.

10. See Person, 1995.

11. See Weber, 1946d.

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12. See Kets de Vries, 1991.

13. One could argue that idealization both feeds and indulges dependency but also defends against it. That is, the protégée's reverent stance makes her see the mentor in a way which magnifies her "one down" position. At the same time, the protégée imagining herself as basking in the mentor's glow and building her hope about acquiring her own strengths *masks* her dependence. She feels less helpless under the wing/watch of the mentor. (At least she has a wing to be under.) The illusion (and partly the reality) is that she is empowered vicariously by her mentor. Also, the fantasy that she and the mentor are merged eliminates the position of dependency--because there is no subject and object; protégée and mentor are one.

14. See Baum, 1992.

15. This fantasy construction is at a more primitive level than one in which the mentor is taken as the ego ideal--where the tension between the mentor as a symbol and the mentor as a desired object to merge with is sustained. In the attempt to catch up--through magical identification--the protégée collapses that tension. That is, the "wish to be" rather than "become like" the mentor reveals a developmental fault in symbolization. The protégée perceives the mentor not as an "as if" ego ideal, but as the ego ideal itself. In other words, in the mental life of a protégée who is operating on the basis of a magical identification, there is no interpretive space: objects are perceived as things in themselves; not "read" nor understood to have meaning in any symbolic sense. See Klein, 1986 (1930).

16. Some psychoanalytic writers have emphasized the defensive use of idealization. That is to say, using idealization as a way to avoid anxiety or other unwanted affects. This was the crux of Melanie Klein's (1986 [1946]) formulation of "splitting"--a defense mechanism in which "bad" feelings are believed to be evacuated from consciousness, allowing only "good" affects to be felt or mentalized. Klein's theory is that splitting is a primitive defense mechanism stemming from infancy when the baby, in order to protect an image of the mother as all-good, disavows her hateful feelings towards the mother. (In Kleinian nomenclature, the mother, at this point in the baby's life is the same thing as "the breast" and splitting takes the form of distinguishing between the "good breast" and "bad breast.") This is necessary, according to Klein, to insure psychic survival--the experience of

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hate by the baby is bound up with what are felt to be life threatening persecutory fantasies. In other words, the experience of hate for the baby is equal in her mind to killing the mother; the baby phantasizes a retaliation. In this earliest position of life, known as the paranoid-schizoid position, Klein postulates that the baby cannot hold the threads of love and hate towards the same object in one moment; she must split them in order to preserve the goodness of the good. The result is a layer of something like defensive idealization--one which leaves a trace throughout life--in which the subject avoids the pain of the disappointment of the other's shortcomings, and the pain of the disappointment of not being able to control the other by a defensive refusal to recognize those limitations. There is a manic quality about such a refusal and to the extent that it is assumed in adulthood, it is understood to reflect earlier difficulties in working through the paranoid-schizoid position to something Klein called the "depressive position." This represents the ability to tolerate love and hate for the other; its precondition is a kind of mourning over the loss of illusion of perfection and control.

17. See Klein, 1937; and Klein, 1986 (1946).

18. See Craib, 1994.

19. See Klein, 1986 (1946).

20. Idealization has been identified as occurring in the beginning phase of a mentorship (Kram, Levinson, et al). Kram, for example, describes an "initiation phase," lasting during the first six to 12 months of the relationship, as a time of positive interaction and mutual attraction between mentor and protege, and when positive expectations begin to be met with confirming experiences. For the protege, the dominant fantasy of the mentor is that he or she embodies an object of positive identification--representing someone the protege would like to be like. There are also fantasies of getting support and respect from the admired mentor. For mentor, the dominant fantasy "involves someone who can become an object for the transmission of values and perspectives on the world" (Kram, 1988, pp. 51-52). In these descriptions, Kram's observations accord to some extent with my own.

21. See Galatzer-Levy and Cohler, 1993.

22. See Klein, 1937; and Freud, 1959 (1921).

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23. See Baum, 1992.

24. See Chodorow, 1999 for an excellent and expansive conception of transference.

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> To seek and accept help requires an acknowledgement of indebtedness quite different from an assertion of rights. For each of us, the threshold at which we abandon the pretense of self-sufficiency will vary.
>
> V. Merton, R.K. Merton, E. Barber

> Its a love-hate relationship. I'd say this one is more love than hate. But there were times where I really was angry with her. Things that she would make me have to do to save face. Yet, she would go out of her way to make sure that I had every opportunity possible that the company could offer me...Other people who started at the same time I did and did not have managers who cared as much as Lynn, sort of stagnated or left or got nothing. And Lynn made sure that everything--every opportunity was made available to me.
>
> Rozellen, a protégée

> (Were you comfortable with that kind of devotion from Roze?) Yeah--more than comfortable. I *needed* to have that. It was *my vision*. I didn't want that violated. My vision was very simply this had to be a *can do* operation...People would come to us and say, "Can you?" And the answer was "Yes." And then we had to come back in our organization and find a way to do it...I didn't want Roze or my other managers going out there and saying, "Well, you know, this is kind of short notice," or "I'm not sure."...I didn't want any of that. So there had to be my vision in it.
>
> Lynn, a mentor

CHAPTER V

LOYALTY

I begin this chapter with a short story that spoke volumes to me about the power of loyalty in mentorship. It also illustrated the value of utilizing a clinical approach to fieldwork. The story concerns the relationship between Lynn (mentor) and Rozellen (protégée)--the two women referred to above who worked together for nearly seven years in the publishing arm of

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Simon & Simon, a major pharmaceutical company in Baltimore. Or seen from a different angle, the story concerns my *interview* of a protégée and the light shed on the dynamics of loyalty in a mentorship as enacted in the interview process itself.

Moments before finishing my interview with Rozellen it occurred to me that one of the reasons I'd felt tension during the two hours we sat around her kitchen table talking was that our conversation might have been experienced by her as breaching the loyalty she felt towards her mentor, Lynn. Even though Roze had been away from Simon & Simon for a while--since taking maternity leave over a year earlier--she was visibly uncomfortable with some of my questions, particularly ones which probed at her disappointments, grievances, and critical judgments of Lynn. She squirmed and fidgeted as we spoke. Many times during the interview, she seemed to come right up to the line of saying something negative about Lynn and then back off, silence herself, bite her tongue, or rationalize--"oh that's just her."

I wondered: Did Roze feel that by talking to me about Lynn she was breaking a trust or acting in a disloyal way? Did the interview itself feel like a test of her loyalty to her mentor? How much could she reveal about

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the difficulties she'd experienced in her relationship with Lynn? How could she be frank with me and not cross the line--divulging something, for example, which could make her seem ungrateful to her mentor? How would she handle her guilt if as a result of being given permission to speak her mind, she unleashed anger about her mentor or expressed dissatisfaction about subjects that may have previously felt taboo to acknowledge?

During much of the interview, Roze repeatedly referred to the debt of gratitude she felt toward Lynn for giving her a once in a lifetime career break.

> Bonnie: Emotionally what do you think has been the glue in your relationship?
>
> Roze: I don't know...I enormously respect Lynn and feel just eternally grateful to her for giving me the opportunities that she has and I always will. She created a career for me. I was sort of floundering and I was doing things I didn't like. And she saw something in me--maybe I didn't even see in myself. She kind of molded me, nurtured me, and I'm very, very fond of her. And over the years I've learned to overlook the faults that used to drive me crazy. And to realize, everyone has character flaws...

It was as if Roze made a pledge to herself never to bad mouth Lynn to other people as part payment for her debt of "eternal gratitude:"

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Bonnie: You couldn't be critical about her to other people?

Roze: Never, never. I think it was very rare-- maybe at home if its my husband. I would come home and tear my hair out sometimes. Because Lynn would push me over the edge or drive me crazy that day.

...But she [Lynn] *knew* what she was doing because she got everything out of me that she needed to get that department running...When I left, people would call me and say, "Lynn doesn't know about this, this, and this." And she didn't, because I took care of everything. She didn't have to know about the nitty gritty operation because I was there. (Roze pauses, looks at the tape recorder and adds anxiously) *Confessing everything on tape--I'm getting nervous.*

Bonnie: Are you uncomfortable?

Roze: Well, yeah. Its funny verbalizing these things I would think but never really talked about--

Bonnie: Or reflected on them?

Roze: Don't play the tape for her?

Bonnie: I won't play the tape for her. I mean they're complex relationships.

Roze: Very.

As we closed the interview, I reflected upon the dilemma of the research interview aloud--realizing the difficult spot I'd put Roze in. I was not there to make nice. As the sociologist I was there to learn the "real"

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story, not the gussied up, hallmark card version of mentorship. The very "dirt" I was digging for was the messy part of her feelings about the mentorship which Roze was torn about revealing because of her loyalty pact to Lynn.

> Bonnie: It just occurred to me what must be so difficult about this interview...if part of the central theme in your relationship is loyalty and the difficulty in criticizing Lynn to other people-- well, I'm digging for the dirt...
>
> Roze: Yeah, there were things that Lynn..that I really just could not believe...And you know, stepping back from a situation and looking at it and I'd just be horrified ...I know things she's done that I (rolls her eyes, face contorts as if pent up with secrets)--but you know, *that's who she is* (a resigned tone) *and I stand by her*. Sorry.

In these final comments, Roze gave her strongest hint that I was correct in my reading of her quandary. She tiptoed around admitting that there were in fact gripes that she had about Lynn and the mentorship, yet in the end she rationalized the bad feelings--"that's who she is" and as if caught in a transgression, she quickly reverted to a state of vigilant loyalty--"and I stand by her." In this exchange Roze demonstrated that she was still in the grip of loyalty to her mentor--and that it was both a bond and a bind. She and I shared a metaphorical wink as she let on that she knew that *I*

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knew I had gotten a sanitized version of the story. And perhaps in the same vein of her tendency to feel guilty about disappointing others, particularly authority figures--a pattern revealed throughout her account of the mentorship--Roze apologized to *me*--the "expert" researcher.

Telling Tales Out of School

I became acutely aware of the ambivalent nature of loyalty in mentorship after this interview with Rozellen. To stand by one's mentor or protégée sometimes means that one is constrained to speak. One may feel a duty to protect and avoid engaging in public criticism of the other. Or like Rozellen, one may feel pulled between wanting to voice true feelings and grievances yet at the same time frightened or guilty about doing so. Moreover, the sense of indebtedness for all of the good that has come from the relationship can be so deep that like Roze, one can become bound by the obligation that loyalty lays down.

Most times, mentors offer their gift of assistance *freely*--that is, when it is not part of a formal program--and protégées make choices about how they will make use of that assistance. Despite the seemingly voluntary nature of the exchange, however, and the fact that the parties rarely form any explicit agreement on the terms of exchange, there is usually an

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assumption of quid pro quo. That is, there is usually some way that the protégée is expected to show her appreciation and give something back in return. Loyalty, in its many forms of expression conveys this gratuity. Indeed, for protégées it is indispensable as a currency of exchange.

Still, loyalty is not a one-way street. Mentors clearly develop loyalty towards their protégées too. But, as we will see, the conditions of loyalty differ for mentors because they are not obligated to protégées in the same way as protégées are obligated to them. The fact that there is asymmetry in the dynamics of loyalty between mentors and protégées even while there is an expectation of reciprocity was clearly evidenced throughout this investigation.

One final observation from the case of Rozellen and Lynn concerns the idea that mentorship parallels the parental relationship. The parent-child analogy, however, breaks down when it comes to looking at loyalty because mentoring is *not* perceived as a selfless act. Unlike parenting which is predicated--at least in the ideal type--on the aim of unconditional love, mentorship is partly built on the condition of exchange. Here is one mentor's take on this:

> Leila: Its a two-way street...absolutely...I don't believe that mentoring is a one-way street, totally. I

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> wouldn't think anyone would feel that way...I don't think you can get involved in a mentoring situation if you aren't getting something back from the person who is the protégée... Because why would you mentor someone that you didn't, wasn't--unless you're really trying to be a parental figure (chuckles), I would guess.

Another mentor, Margot, was just as straightforward in her unsentimental view of mentorship as based on a *"I'll scratch your back if you'll scratch mine"* ethos:

> Margot: One of the things I learned [from my own mentor 15 years ago] was that nobody just nurtures you. They want something in return. There's got to be reciprocity. People nurture you for a reason because they want to also be promoted and they wanna look good and they wanna have a team that's a star team, and if you're going to do that for them, its going to make them look good. And the more responsibility they get, the more you can have. So its a mutual responsibility...
>
> ...There has to be a mutual need. There is no human being on earth that just gives and expects nothing in return. You have to be almost a saint to say, "I'm gonna do this and I'm gonna keep on just doing it and doing it..." and all you get back is the pride of knowing you did it? It doesn't work. Gotta be something. There has to be something reciprocal.

Although there may be *fantasies* to the contrary--as the chapter on idealization reveals--no one truly expects unconditional love from a mentor.

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Roze realizes she must censor herself. She knows there are boundaries she cannot cross without consequence. She can be deserted by her mentor. Her career may suffer as a result of a falling out with her mentor. Even her mentor's loyalty towards *her* does not mean she has a pass and that all behaviors will be tolerated. Roze understands that she must continue to please her mentor to stay in her good graces. Part of the protégée's emotional work in the relationship is to figure out how to do this. Loyalty often plays a significant role.

Almost every writer who has taken up the question of what makes mentorships tick notes the significance of loyalty though few explore what this is about. My research shows that it is extremely important to look at this closely primarily because the findings are so contradictory. Loyalty both serves and undermines mentorship and its aims.

Dimensions of Loyalty

According to Webster's Dictionary, loyalty means "the binding of a person to something to which he is loyal." *Loyal* has a number of variations in definition--"unswerving allegiance: as faithful in allegiance to one's lawful sovereign or government; or faithful to a private person to whom fidelity is due; or faithful to a cause, ideal or custom." Loyalty "*implies a*

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faithfulness that is steadfast in affection or allegiance in the face of any temptation to renounce, desert, or betray." Faithfulness figures as a key synonym defined as "firm in adherence to promises by which a tie was contracted."

Social emotion

The Webster's definitions are deficient, I think, by only hinting at the emotional character of loyalty. While it clearly draws on feelings of love, admiration, trust, and fear, however, loyalty is not exactly an individual emotion. It can't be understood as being a property of a person as say, grief can. It doesn't make sense to say one is loyal to oneself, for example. Rather, people are loyal to each other. Hence, loyalty should be seen as a *social emotion* (Sennett, 1980). Like idealization, loyalty is best understood as a relational attitude or stance--a position one develops towards another--which is both an outgrowth of and part of what constitutes the emotional bond between the parties. The tie forged by loyalty does not materialize out of thin air, however; it comes from having experienced part of life together. Shared history is key.[1] At the same time, the bond of loyalty is dynamic as it unfolds and changes over time.

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Gripping

As a mode of attachment, loyalty weaves a web of reciprocal obligation. It is simultaneously an expression of care and an imposition of debt. As such it is intrinsically relational, implying an object and a dynamic relation with the object. *If I pledge my loyalty to my mentor, can I count on having her support in offering me the best assignments or recommending me for a promotion? If I remain loyal to my protégée by sparing her from company lay-offs, can I expect her to pitch in to carry out some of my tedious labor intensive, time-consuming tasks--without a whimper?* The anticipation of reciprocity which lays the foundation of loyalty is captured well by legal scholar George Fletcher (1993) when he writes that "loyalty gets its grip in relationships with others" (p. 14). The elusive but ineluctable dualism of loyalty as both a bond and a bind crystallizes in the image of it as something that *grips*.

While idealization expresses the protégée's wish to be like her mentor and leads to emulation and a vital sense of hope about attaining ideals, loyalty acts as the glue in the relationship, impelling both parties to want to stick by, aid, and protect one another. One can think of loyalty as a sealing agent. It functions to hold the relationship together.

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Demarcating

Part of what gives loyalty its holding power is that it articulates a boundary around the pair. It signals commitment and declares that the parties feel a sense of "we-ness" as dyadic attention and affection become more pronounced. This is because loyalty flirts with exclusivity. Mentor and protégée share something special that leaves others out.

Excluding

In fact, in order to create this "community of two," loyalty requires a third term. That is to say, developing the sense of we-ness depends on the existence of outsiders--those who are de facto excluded from the "we." "Stand by me" would be a meaningless phrase unless it contained the implicit understanding that one will not abandon the other in order to side with someone or something else. In the strictest sense, pledging allegiance to one person entails foreclosing the option of pledging allegiance to another. *If I pledge my loyalty to you this means I will vouch for you, protect you, hold your confidences, and cover for you during difficult or controversial moments. I won't walk away from you during crisis, undermine your efforts, nor spoil your reputation. My good will towards you can be trusted.* Notice that in all of these expressions, loyalty is

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conveyed by promising not to desert the other or take up an opposing principle. The point to underscore is that the pair defines itself *as a pair* against or in light of something outside of itself. As we will see, this is critical because mentors and protégées do not operate in a vacuum but interact with a world of colleagues and organizational actors--any of whom can play a role as a "third term" in amplifying the dynamics of loyalty for the pair.

Favoring

Of course, the dynamics of exclusion in a professional or organizational context have consequences. Simply stated, loyalty breeds favoritism; by gearing her loyalty towards a special employee or colleague, the mentor engages in favoritism. This is inevitable, Fletcher (1993) points out, because even in a world in which moral impartiality rules, the ideal of equal treatment cannot be realized. I agree with his view that such ideals live outside of embodied human relationships; that is, they exist in the realm of abstract universals while loyalty lives in the world of personal attachments to particular others. He notes, we would save our own children first, not those of a neighbor. This has profound implications for the parties in the mentorship dyad and their interactions with other professional actors.

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Ethics or goals of equal treatment aimed at democratizing the work world are undermined by and are at odds with the dyadic devotion featured in mentorship.

Sacrificing

If loyalty requires some kind of opposing or outside force--a third term against which the pair defines its "we-ness"--this also implies sacrifice. One forfeits options in the name of standing by the other. Thus, loyalty involves renunciation, abstinence, and restraint. When loyalty is tested, someone or something--for example, a principle, a person, a part of the self, or a belief--will have to be rejected to prove (enact) one's loyalty towards the other. Webster's definition points to this sacrificial quality--and is worth restating--that loyalty: "implies a faithfulness that is steadfast in affection or allegiance in the face of any temptation to renounce, desert, or betray." The fullness of loyalty, it could be argued, can be measured by the extent to which temptations to betray are resisted.

Claims-making

One could go as far as to say that there is something proprietary about the loyalty in mentorship--especially in relationships that last for years. The process of coming to see oneself and the other as belonging to and having

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a stake in the "we" paves the way for the elaboration and imposition of expectations and obligations. Mentor and protégée come to feel they are entitled to make claims on each other for time, favors, plum work assignments, free labor, endorsements, sympathy, ego boosting, protection, a listening ear, the inside scoop, emotional succor, etc.

Reciprocating

Thus, perhaps more like its role in friendship than parenting, loyalty is not unconditional in mentorship as it rests upon an assumption of reciprocity. While the protégée is *supposed* to be the beneficiary of the relationship--this is mentorship's raison d'etre--the mentor also looks for and finds rewards and satisfactions. This is critical: *both* mentor and protégée come to feel entitled to make claims on each other. Loyalty is perceived as a two-way street based on exchange. Both parties stand to gain something from the involvement and thus have a stake in its outcome.

Asymmetrical exchanging

It should be stressed that because mentorship is an authority relationship, the dynamics and expression of loyalty are asymmetrical and reciprocality does not mean equality or sameness of exchange. By definition, mentor and protégée are not equally beholden to each other; the

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protégée owes the mentor more and in a different way than the mentor owes the protégée. The fact that mentorship entails mutual obligation does not equalize the relation or level the authority. Indeed, exercising influence on behalf of her protégée is the standard way for the mentor to express loyalty. Because of her authority, the mentor has the resources and capacity to protect, sponsor, and offer unique opportunities and thus demonstrate loyalty to her protégée in ways that the protégée cannot do back for her in return. The protégée's loyalty cannot be divorced from the fact that she is beholden to the mentor. The protégée feels more obliged to be loyal than the mentor does. The protégée *owes* the loyalty, and as I've stated earlier, it can take on the quality of currency. It is one thing she *can* offer back to her mentor in return for her mentor's special attention and assistance. As I will show later in the chapter, sometimes this very fact winds up paradoxically giving the protégée power. The mentor's loyalty, on the other hand, begins in a more voluntary and conscious way--it is an outgrowth of care, self-interest, respect, etc. Still, as the relationship progresses, the mentor's loyalty also becomes entangled with emotional obligation.

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Breaching

Indeed the strength and nature of the emotional pressures of loyalty are brought into bold relief when breaches occur. Betrayals or other minor signs of disloyalty bare the depth and intensity of otherwise taken-for-granted expectations. Probably the most conspicuous and dramatic illustrations of loyalty in mentorship come in accounts which detail its demise. This theme has been in the news frequently in the last years, with tell-all examples of mentorships marred by betrayal (e.g., Green and Nader, Lewinsky and Tripp). In these cases, breaches in loyalty played out for all to see as once beloved mentors were publicly renounced by disillusioned protégés--a spectacle which seems to capture the public imagination. Perhaps this is because ruptures in loyalty reveal a familiar though painful truth about the delicacy and aggression of close relationships.[2] After all, the development of intense loyalties (embodied by trust) paves the way for humiliation, emotionally wrenching departures, back stabbing revenge, and disgracing exposés--any of which is likely to cause irreparable harm to relationships.

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Ambivalence

While loyalty creates a sturdy cocoon of trust and enhances the conditions for creative and at times impassioned collaboration, it also curbs freedom. As already stated, the grip of loyalty serves as a basis for an emotional bond but this very bond acts as a bind. In the hold of loyalty, parties are less free to walk away or turn their backs on commitments. Loyalty thus connects and constrains. Moreover, while the web of obligations and commitments spun by loyalty can offer a sense of safety--e.g., where parties can count on each other's aid during controversy--this very dynamic runs the risk of suppressing voice. Parties feel less free to speak their minds--especially to criticize the other or express dissenting opinions when they depend on that other for protection and support.

As it generates good will and creates a reliable outline for parties in the relationship, loyalty also forecloses options apart from the dyadic system and gives rise to dilemmas about extra-dyadic (d)alliances. Mentors and protégées may feel torn about strengthening relationships with other colleagues who could potentially lure them away from the dyadic huddle.

For example, one protégée spoke about how mixed she felt as she caught herself flirting with the idea of building a *new* alliance with the

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woman who came into her agency to eventually replace her mentor boss. Even fantasizing about some of the ways that the new boss might be preferable to the mentor set off treason anxiety:

> Jackie: I felt guilty when I thought to myself, "Wow, Lucinda's [the replacement] even better than Abigail." [the mentor] I was worried about Abigail being hurt. I was worried about Lucinda feeling, "Oh my god, Abigail and Jackie are so close." I was worried about Abigail feeling hurt when I got close to Lucinda. I don't know how exactly it expressed itself but I was aware of that and trying to be careful not to hurt Abigail's feelings.

As it builds a community of two by delineating and constantly reaffirming the dyadic boundary and cementing identificatory ties--a process which as already stated entails exclusion of other parties--this aspect of loyalty runs the risk of closing the system. This can provoke jealousy and gossip among colleagues. In extreme cases, the parties may become insulated from important input from other people, ideas can become stale, and the pair may cultivate delusional and paranoid thinking.

By generating "we-ness," the loyalty can also have the effect of submerging "me-ness." That is, there can be a loss of individual identity as the pair defines itself and comes to be perceived by others as a couple. One woman named Hallie, spoke about a relationship in which she and her

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mentor, Joanne, were viewed as "frick and frack"--an inseparable duo--perceived to a large extent accurately as sticking together on all work-related decisions. "There were people," she said, "that thought that Joanne and Hallie was one word and that was not good. I didn't like that." This was a disheartening episode in this woman's career, as she felt it was nearly impossible to extricate herself from the "we."

Even the reciprocal aspect of loyalty which generates good will and trust in the relationship as parties become more comfortable in making claims on one another has a down side. Animosity can be stirred up by asymmetrical obligations and the claims imbalance. Protégées may grow bitter, for example, as they are assigned menial tasks ("shit work") or are expected to carry the weight of operations work while mentors--asserting their privilege--take the credit or as occurred in this example, simply take off:

> Roze: Lynn would leave at 3:00 on Friday-- sneak out, you know? Then there would be a problem and I would get a call and then I would stay late out of guilt. I felt badly that staff was staying late. I was spending my Friday nights at work when I didn't have to. I was resentful that Lynn was home with her family and I wasn't. We should take turns and rotate that responsibility. She sort of said, "I finished that part of my career." I understand that now. At the time I didn't.

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As it entails sacrifice, loyalty escalates and reinforces the sense of enriching commitment that parties feel towards each other. Yet, the same sacrifice can lead to hostility when it is felt to be excessive, unreciprocated, or to have too high a cost emotionally, professionally, or ethically.

These double edged aspects of loyalty evoke a range of emotional reaction from positive feelings of pride and love to stressful feelings of fear, guilt, disappointment, and bitterness. The ambivalent nature of loyalty has vital benefits even as it exacts a price.

How do bonds of loyalty emerge and operate in mentorship? What functions do they serve? What leads to pledges of "unswerving allegiance" in mentorship? What are the risks? Through what processes is loyalty expressed in mentorship? Under what conditions does it become problematic? What is the price of loyalty? What is gained from it? What are its politics? What is the significance of *authority* in how loyalty plays out?

Theoretical Issues

Let me begin by saying up front that this is one of the more difficult topics to write about in mentorship. Part of the reason is that loyalty is a slippery topic conceptually. Little has been written sociologically or psychoanalytically on this subject. Most of what I have found is written by

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legal scholars,[3] political theorists (e.g., Shklar, 1993)[4], and economists[5] who tend to be interested in macro-level issues of loyalty to the state and societal institutions (e.g., law, corporations). Simmel, of course, wrote about the dynamics of interpersonal loyalty under its other name *faithfulness* (1950a), and touched on the subject in an essay on secrets (1950c). Other essays by Simmel about social forms which give rise to, intensify, and disrupt social bonds (e.g., writings on the dyad and triad), also allude to loyalty (1950b).

Psychoanalytic considerations

Psychoanalysts have not explored loyalty per se but imply it in other themes. For example, as part of Freud's writings on superego development, loyalty could be viewed as playing a pivotal role in the resolution of oedipal complex wherein the child comes to internalize and honor the laws and rules of the society--as represented by the parents--in the face of temptations to betray. The oedipal dilemma, it could be argued, is the inaugural test of a child's capacity for loyalty. How does the child square the triangle? Will the child renounce his incestuous desires towards the mother and murderous impulses towards the father in order to preserve allegiance to both parents? In a sense, the successful resolution of this dilemma requires that the child

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drop out of the competition altogether or redefine it. He must come to accept that in the family constellation, there is no real competition: his turn (to *have* someone) will come later in life. Such a scenario suggests that to keep peace, loyalty's demand for sacrifice starts in early life.

Of course, it is also important to mention that in the oedipal scenario, loyalty isn't only mustered from the child's desire to continue to receive love from both parents; it also springs from *fear*--of reprisal (e.g., castration anxiety) and abandonment. Here we can see the psychodynamic roots of the ambivalence that is embedded in loyalty.

Loyalty is also hinted at in explorations of the herd instinct--as that which compels individuals to feel a visceral and fierce attachment to others in "*their*" group. This is part of the tribal feeling that evolves in family life.

Naturally, the child's *dependence* on parents intensifies the dynamics of loyalty. The child is not free to renounce or turn on her parents; in reality there usually *is* no option but to stand by one's parents. This probably partly explains why abused children continue to be rabidly protective of their parents. Internalizing the prohibition to turn against one's parents lays the groundwork for later responses towards authority figures. Psychoanalytically speaking, children have some understanding that loyalty

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toward the parents in the form of obedience, conformity and tribal-like attachment is essential, lest they lose everything. The young child is utterly dependent on the parent for life-sustaining supplies of love, protection, nourishment and shelter. Hence, the risk of disloyalty is the loss of everything. The child knows that the parent can withhold or bestow supplies--this *power* places the child at the mercy of the parent--irrespective of the parent's actual qualities as a parent.

The application to mentorship--accepting that we carry vestiges of early childhood feelings of helplessness and vulnerability with us throughout life--is that on some level the protégée feels compelled to honor and be loyal to the mentor because some part of her feels she is in a position of surrender to an authority figure who has the strength and power to offer and deprive her of life resources (e.g., job security, livelihood, teaching, affirmation, professional capital).

Organizational views

A handful of scholars have examined loyalty with respect to organizational affiliation.[6] Using a market analysis, Hirschman (1970) regarded loyalty as a virtue in institutional life as it mutes our preference for exit over voice. Rather than walking away from unsatisfying relationships

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or work arrangements, loyalty helps us to stay put to try to work things out. In this sense, "loyalty is the beginning of political life, a life in which interactions with others [*as opposed to flight from them*--my note] become the primary means of solving problems" (Fletcher, 1993).

But since Hirschman wrote his book thirty years ago, a lot has changed in the work world. With all of the turbulence of post-industrial society, many have observed that loyalty ties have weakened. And with that, the mere idea that loyalty to the organization as something to be valued has lost currency. During a time in which downsizing has become routine, exit--more often that not--is a fate rather than a calculated choice. Within such a climate of insecurity it is difficult to conceive of the virtue of loyalty. Loyalty to the organization can seem nostalgic and quaint (and downright dysfunctional).

Sennett (1998) devotes almost an entire book The Corrosion of Character to lamenting the loss of organizational loyalty that he observes to be a byproduct of a chaotic, all bets off world of flexible capitalism. The loss--which translates into a disconnection from a sense of place and continuity at work--has led to what Sennett describes as a melancholic state of personal "drift." The portrait is bleak--loyalty to a workplace gives

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people a sense of belonging, historically speaking--without which their life narratives wobble and gasp for meaning.

What does this have to do with mentorship? As we will see, the contemporary ties between mentors and protégées are of course set against the backdrop of organizational flux, technological overhaul, and generalized workplace insecurity. The meanings, expressions, and psychodynamics of loyalty between mentor and protégée cannot help but reflect this historical turbulence while in some measure they also calm and compensate for it.

One way of coping with organizational and career contingency, for instance, is for mentor and protégée to close ranks; that is, direct most of their loyalty toward each other rather than to the organization or to the increasingly amorphous idea of a career. Howell Baum, an urban planner and organizational analyst points out that in this sense mentorship is intrinsically seditious (1992). Loyalty between mentors and protégées can supplant loyalty to the organization. As the pair direct their allegiances toward one another they articulate a boundary around themselves--creating a community of two; an *"us."* And, of course, where there's an *us*, there is always a *them*. The "*them*" is comprised of colleagues, organizational leaders, the company or field as a whole, and all of the shifts and trends in

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the organization or profession. In the current scene these trends include overloads of work, massive transformations in production equipment, down-sizing and transience of staff, and intense demand for rapid assimilation of new information and skills. Many of these organizational and macro-level contingencies become characters in the stories of loyalty between mentors and protégées. As the function of the work world as a container or social envelope dissolves, mentors and protégées turn to and sometimes cling to each other for mooring. These ties can and do outlast organizational and occupational affiliations.

Bonnie: How do you figure what makes you so loyal? How did that come about?

Meredith: ...Well for one thing--I love Penny. I mean she's very close to me and she's my boss. I respect her. My loyalty is to her rather than to an organization because an organization--doesn't have feelings. I've seen them fire--I don't place any faith in the organization as a whole. I place it in certain key people who have either gained my respect or that I feel are fair or who genuinely care about the people that work in a company rather than profits.

Bonnie: How do you know she cares about you?

Meredith: Oh, she shows it in every way...First of all, the greatest sign of respect is to remember what somebody tells you.. (giggles) She remembers everything I say. Sometimes she'll say, "You told me that!" She remembers the smallest details...

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Considering how difficult it would be to remember "small details" in a family like the one Meredith grew up in--as one of eleven children--the protégée finds it very meaningful to feel she is fully heard by her mentor; this forms the basis of love and loyalty toward a mentor, but not the organization.

Social psychological perspectives

While psychoanalysis offers insights about the deep-seated resonance between loyalty and oedipal fears of abandonment and dependency on the one hand and the fierceness of group protectiveness on the other, and organizational scholars offer insights about the social functions of institutional loyalty, a social psychological view can offer perspective on loyalty at the situational level--that is, why, in particular situations, people are loyal. A social psychological model can help us understand what motivates people to be loyal in specific relationships.

I am proposing a social-psychological model of loyalty motivations which draws from a scheme of "multiple selves" by Helena Flam (1993). It also draws from the insights of psychoanalytic and rational choice models of loyalty.

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Developed as heuristic devices, Flam argues that individuals are made up of three selves--the "rational self," the "normative self" and the "'pure' emotional self." I adapt this to the case of loyalty in mentorship which I believe is heavily influenced and motivated by interests coming from all three selves.

Indeed, there appear to be three strands of motivation that give rise to loyalty in mentor relationships: affective, normative, and strategic. (See Figure V-1) That is, mentors and protégées develop a sense that they wish to or should stand by each other and act upon this based on a mixture of emotional motivations, value and normative considerations, and rational, self-interested, instrumental calculations. Though I am discussing each strand separately, it is important to view these three types of motivation as intertwined and impacting upon each other. The emotional, normative, and strategic motivations could be seen as three pulses that circulate through, often collide, while all the time giving character, shape, and tone to the expression of loyalty in mentorship.

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FIGURE V-1

LOYALTY MOTIVATIONS IN MENTORSHIP			
Affective		**Normative**	**Strategic**
Positively-oriented loyalty which arises out of emotional dynamics associated with: - gratitude - love - idealization - respect - trust - protectiveness - generative urge	Negatively-oriented loyalty which arises out of emotional dynamics associated with: - masochism - fear of loss - guilt - denial - coercion - excessive narcissism	loyalty which arises out of moral and value considerations associated with: - the socially proper & "right" stance or attitude to assume toward another	loyalty which arises out of rational calculations associated with self-interest regarding: -professional aims /career -political concerns -labor needs -organizational position

Emotion-based loyalty can be either positively or negatively oriented. On the positive side are emotions such as gratitude, love, idealization, desire for connection, respect, trust, and protectiveness--leading to voluntary loyalty. The person develops loyalty because she wishes to; she freely offers to stand by her mentor or protégée because she has a basic good feeling about her role partner and believes the loyalty will enhance the satisfaction and rewards of the relationship. There is nothing exacted or coerced about the loyalty.

On the negative side are emotions which give rise to compulsive loyalty such as fear, anxiety, and guilt. One experiences loyalty as a "must"

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because she is afraid, for example, of the material or symbolic consequences of disloyalty. The fears that compel one to be loyal can, of course, be reality-based (e.g., threats of job or income loss) and/or fantasy-inspired (e.g., imagined loss of love from a mentor for minor transgressions). Compulsive loyalty may also be driven by neurotic overinvestment in the other person. This is illustrated by the protégée who becomes masochistically slavish or fervently allied with a mentor even in the face of mistreatment or rejection. In this context, loyalty may well serve as an unconscious defense mechanism against more painful affects and threats. Slavish devotion, for instance, may be used by the protégée as a defense against a desire to control the mentor. Assuming a zealous posture on the other hand, may be used to mask aggressive and hateful feelings. I call this type of affect-based loyalty negative because it is enacted as a kind of false compliance. One invokes loyalty to protect the self from internal and external pressures, not because the loyalty expresses a genuine, freely tendered commitment to the other.

Framed slightly differently, one could think of the positively oriented affect-based loyalty as stemming from and leading to greater closeness, emotional connection, and fluid mutuality in relationships, while viewing

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negatively oriented affect-based loyalty as stemming from and leading to emotional distance, mechanical exchange, and vigilant self-conscious interaction.

Loyalty is also generated by strategic considerations. Unlike the emotional component, however, it doesn't make sense to break these into positive or negative concerns. Strategic issues which lead to loyalty are all are positive in the sense that they aspire toward utilitarian goals aimed at maximizing self-interest and minimizing cost. The strategic calculation to be loyal is a conscious activity, and its expression comes in the form of *surface acting* (Hochschild, 1983). In other words, it involves emotional labor based on rational assessment of choices reflecting professional and career goals, political concerns, and organizational ambitions rather than emotional needs, wishes, fantasies, and anxieties. It is the part of the self that is motivated by how one believes she *must appear* in the situation to make the right impression; that is, the impression which is most likely to yield the desired response.

Finally, loyalty is motivated by normative and moral concerns. One is loyal because it is the expected and socially proper response. For instance, loyalty is considered an appropriate attitude for showing deference

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towards an authority figure. In this respect, loyalty is thought of as the *right* way to be, the *right* thing to do, or the *right* principle to uphold. It is not necessarily linked to positive feelings--e.g., one can strongly dislike a military sergeant or subordinate and still vow not to betray them. For that matter, normative loyalty is not necessarily linked to any feeling at all. Rather it is dispassionate, operating on a moral grid, not an emotional one. Nor is it linked to utility --one who makes a principled decision to be loyal to someone else is not looking to maximize self-interest. The underlying standard for normative loyalty links to ideals about duty, morality, and character. This is the aspect of loyalty that is socially expected--as the right and proper thing.

Just to reiterate, none of these types of motivation operate without influence from the other. Loyalty is often based upon a blend of these motivations even though they can be contradictory--reflecting and producing ambivalence. Clearly, when it comes to something like loyalty, the *right thing to do* is not always the same as the *strategic thing to do*, nor are these always in sync with what one *feels inclined to do* emotionally speaking. Still, by examining the affective, strategic and normative motivations, one can see where the paradoxes of loyalty arise and how these are expressed,

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negotiated, and resolved by mentors and protégées. Typically, as the following account shows, loyalty rides a fine line between being an enriching and a constraining mode of bonding.

The following narrative incisively shows the emotional tensions that can arise when all three strands of loyalty motivation are at play.

Roze: I don't know that [my mentor] ever really wanted me to see her on a pedestal--I don't think that was her intention. I think she wanted me to respect her and that's where loyalty comes in. I think she needed that and she obviously saw something in me. She felt she could get that from me. And she did. Its sort of the foundation of our relationship.

Bonnie: You keep emphasizing your loyalty.

Roze: Yeah, I know.

Bonnie: Is that some feature of your life?

Roze: Yeah. I just demand loyalty from people around me. Loyalty is an odd word. Like when someone tells you something in confidence, I respect that. If Lynn would come to me in confidence, I totally respected that and demand that from others around me.

Bonnie: Its mostly holding on to information?

Roze: Information..and confidences both personal and professionally. But...I felt a sense of obligation. I owed Lynn because she gave me this break. You don't turn your back on that. You have-- I don't know-- a code of honor. I sound like I'm in

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the Mafia or something. I feel that way in my personal life as well. It worked for both of us I think.

Bonnie: And you couldn't be critical about her to other people?

Roze: Never at work. To subordinates, certainly not. And colleagues. Occasionally a peer that had worked there for a good chunk of time and was also a direct report to Lynn-- she and I would commiserate once in a while-- like, "Can you believe what she said in that meeting today?" kind of thing. But never beyond that. We never conspired to do anything. The other woman wanted to but I couldn't bring myself to do anything.

Bonnie: Why?..Is it because it would make you feel too guilty or-

Roze: Guilt's a good thing, yeah. I was worried about my own career. Lynn's pretty powerful and manipulative...and she knows how to push people's buttons. And I definitely saw her in action. She could really get people do to what she wanted. And I certainly didn't want to be on her bad side for that reason. I think she's very powerful that way.

Roze's account splices together a range of reasons to be loyal in mentorship. She believes she owes Lynn the loyalty based on a mixture of heartfelt appreciation and respect on the one hand, and as a matter of principle (e.g., "a code of honor") on the other hand. She also senses that

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her mentor expects the loyalty. In fact, she feels her mentor demands it. And it may be recalled from the opening passage that led off this chapter that she is right. Lynn makes no bones about her demand for loyalty. At the same time, Roze is afraid her mentor will retaliate or make her life miserable if she is disloyal, calculating that it is in her best interest career-wise to maintain her allegiance, in spite of the luring opportunities to betray. Guilt also seems to play a minor role in keeping her from revealing dissatisfaction about her mentor. The loyalty dilemma for Roze comes from the tension between the obligations and strategic good sense to remain loyal and emotional pulls to break away and voice dissent. For the most part, as discussed at the beginning of the chapter, Roze resolved this conflict by accepting her ambivalence. She doesn't appear to feel torn because she has made peace with the fact that her mentor is flawed.

Ritual: The Expression of Loyalty in Mentorship

Expressing loyalty in mentorship often takes the form of enactments or *rituals*. Sennett (1980) characterized ritual as "an emotional unity achieved through drama." This is a fitting description of what goes on as mentors and protégées act out the terms of their allegiance towards each other. Many gestures and interactions are symbolic--the emotional meanings

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and effects of the actions go beyond whatever utility can be gleaned from the surface behavior. The actions are meant to be interpreted as signs of care, reliability, protectiveness, and as confirmations of commitment to the communal or "we" aspect of the mentorship.

Legal scholar, George Fletcher, makes a useful distinction between minimum and maximum loyalty by highlighting the role of ritual (1993). He describes minimum loyalty as that which is satisfied by the condition of non-betrayal. Maximum loyalty, however, requires more than the avoidance of betrayal. It taps into a profoundly emotional dimension--expressed in rituals of attachment and devotion. He writes:

> [L]oyalty induces deep emotional attachments. The minimal condition of nonbetrayal slides readily into devotion, and the devotion comes to be demanded as a requirement of the relationship. Avoiding adultery is not enough for the loving spouse. Abstaining from treason hardly suffices for the patriotic citizen. And rejecting idolatry hardly constitutes the religious life. Yet what does one do to express the enthusiastic dimension of loyalty? What is the level of activity, beyond the minimal state of nonbetrayal, that will make one a loyal spouse, a patriotic citizen, a faithful believer, [*a trusted mentor or protégée*]?
>
> There are many ways of showing devotion...We make sacrifices of our time and other resources to establish our commitments to others. Yet sometimes we deepen our bonds not by actually doing something of substance but by *engaging in rituals that demonstrate our fidelity...My claim is that ritual plays a key part in the unfolding of committed loyalties. The*

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> *ritual, varying from incidental acts of gift giving to settled forms of religious worship, demonstrate the depth of the loyal bond* (pp. 61-62).

Thus, minimum loyalty for the mentor might entail carrying out mentoring functions in an earnest but perfunctory manner. For example, while a mentor might not speak disparagingly of a protégée during a company controversy, she also might not risk her own skin to actively protect the protégée. Maximum loyalty, on the other hand, entails going above and beyond the call of duty--for example, when a mentor vigorously defends or "goes to the mat" for the protégée or offers the protégée opportunities to work on high visibility assignments which--whatever the outcome--will reflect back on her and affect her reputation. The devotional dimension of loyalty is expressed here through rituals involving personal risk, sacrifice, and staking out boundaries around the mentorship alliance (e.g., by "taking sides").

Numerous examples from interviews with mentors and protégées richly illustrate the way devotional or maximum loyalty is dramatized through ritual. One protégée, for example, emphasized the fact that her mentor came to her rescue when administrators threatened to move her into a windowless cubicle:

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Meredith: At one point when they were rearranging the office, they were gonna put me in a cubicle. Something that would have enraged me to the point where I might have quit...And [my mentor] *absolutely refused to let them do that.*

While the example may seem trivial, most who have worked in organizations can testify as to how loaded the subject of office space is and how features like location, size, and view (e.g., including the presence or absence of windows) tend to be read as markers of organizational status and can become sites of collegial battle.

Another protégée appreciated the fact that her mentor insisted that she be invited to important meetings with company executives. This signaled the mentor's firm level of commitment to the mentorship alliance while it articulated to others the identity of the two as a pair:

Roze: She wouldn't just take me [to meetings with upper management], but she would make sure they invited me. She would say, "Make sure Roze is invited to that." She always let people know that she valued me enough that I should be in the meeting to hear the information firsthand--that I may have some important input. She was very good about that.

In several cases, mentors fought hard to spare protégées from layoffs. One mentor literally had to choose between her protégée and another longtime colleague and friend when her agency downsized.

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It was also not uncommon for mentors to monitor relations between the protégée and other key figures in the organization --to distance the protégée from collegial crossfire. Aware of the tenuous dynamics between her protégée and the organization's Trustee Committee, Abigail felt obliged to monitor the situation between Jackie and the Committee members--a form of devotional loyalty:

> Abigail: Jackie would call to say, "Tell me what to do." And so I'd tell her what to do... The truth is I think she also trusted that I really had her interests at heart. Whenever she crossed somebody on the Committee, what I wanted was for that to be okay. I never wanted to get into a position where there was more than one or two people mad at her. Because then her life could get to be really miserable...

Another mentor became incensed when a rival of her protégée--a woman who was trying to curry favor with the mentor herself--carried on in a way which was meant to put down the protégée. The mentor's intervention--a dramatically understated expression of her allegiance--was meant to show the rival where she drew the line in the sand:

> Emmie: When Laramie [the rival] first met Mira, she was so snotty to her. I just couldn't believe it and Mira couldn't believe it. She would just order her around... completely obnoxious. Oh, she needed to make some tape dubs and I said, "Well, call Mira--my assistant." And Mira was in here (points

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to the media room) looking at the television. And this woman walked in, took the channel changer right out of her hand and changed the station. It was sort of like that Mira was a non-person. And I mean, it was bad..

Bonnie: So what happened?

Emmie: It changed...I didn't have a talk with Laramie. I just behaved respectfully towards Mira so that it was clear that its not--even though Mira's working for me--that doesn't mean we treat her like shit. I mean, "Hullo? you know, this is not acceptable." And then Laramie watched how my other friends interacted [with Mira] and it became clear. Oh, and now Mira's "cool" and she's calling Mira all the time! Its really funny how its shifted--

Bonnie: Is she now somewhat deferent to Mira--is that what you're implying?

Emmie: I would say. To some degree. You know, its like Mira's on the inside in some way. And in fact compared to Laramie, she is. (laughing) Its quite true.

Even though she quit from their company--a decision that already felt something like a betrayal to her protégée--Paula went the extra mile, according to Trish, to write a letter for her which would remain in the company file. In this way, she extended her loyalty via her sponsorship of the protégée for years to come:

Trish: Yep, Paula wrote me a review before she left Darlington--before she gave notice that she was

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> gonna be leaving. She wanted to make sure that it was on my record. She wrote me this incredible review.

Another trend was for mentors to shield protégées from trouble when work suffered or when relations got strained--even if it was the protégée's fault. This pattern has a strong flavor of normative loyalty to it in the sense that as managers, mentors felt responsible for their protégée's actions--as employees. This was based on a belief that *they* should take the heat for work-related crises and insulate protégées from job jeopardy.

> Leila: I will never pass the buck--never ever do that. You don't blame people who work for you because *you're* supposed to be monitoring their performance. And if you're not, then you're not doing your job. So, I was never gonna lay [my protégée] out to dry...*I* should have been demanding closer monitoring by demanding "let me see" on a weekly basis. I felt I had dropped the ball myself there.

The following is a case where the mentor did not go out of her way to defend the protégée. In this situation, the protégée requested that the mentor fire an employee who was antagonizing colleagues and sabotaging work. This was very important to the protégée because her direct subordinates were the unfortunate target of the employee's games. Though in retrospect she was able to be sympathetic towards the mentor, the

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protégée viewed the mentor as having "wimped out" when she refused to fire the employee. This constituted a breach of loyalty in their relationship and led to a decline in trust:

> Jackie: I don't know if she would say this consciously--she just was not up for the heat she would take for it. Abigail was too tired. She was getting ready to leave office but she wasn't ready to have a battle like this, this late in her tenure.
>
> [From then on] there was a certain reserve in our relationship because almost for the first time there would have been something that we couldn't talk about...I knew that I couldn't vent [about this situation to her]...So there was a kind of "okay, close that door down."

Despite her disappointment in her mentor's failure to come through for her but testimony, perhaps, to the ambivalent nature of loyalty, Jackie threw her mentor a party when she left the post:

> Jackie: There was a party for her that everybody was at and I basically organized and she knew it. Everybody knew we were close and everything.

Each of the above examples contains devotional and ritualistic elements of loyalty. One party (in most cases described above I have focused on mentors) risks or sacrifices something or sticks her neck out to protect, endorse, or gain access to opportunities for the other. We also see the role of third parties in defining the boundaries of the mentorship

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alliance--that is, in most of the examples, the mentor has some type of interaction with others on behalf of the protégée and thus calls attention to and reinforces dyadic allegiance.

Although these loyalty enactments strengthened and enhanced mentorship commitments, it is crucial to note that they also generated ambivalence. That is, in each case the loyalty ritual expressed care while imposing a debt or constraint. The debt may have been experienced immediately or as a result of a series of loyalty enactments--sometime down the pike.

Though Meredith was grateful to her mentor for insisting she get an office with a window, she also eventually got a promotion which triggered guilt about surpassing her mentor. While Lynn orchestrated good exposure opportunities for Roze with company executives, Roze felt obligated to take the fall for decisions her mentor made which adversely affected employees. While Abigail was dedicated to protecting Jackie from collegial politics, Jackie felt indebted to her in a way which made thoughts of forming a new alliance with Abigail's replacement very difficult to entertain. While Paula's "glowing" letter for Trish helped to sustain a bond which outlived her tenure at their workplace, the loyalty created problems for Trish with the company

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president who was happy to see Paula leave. While Leila took the upstanding position never to rat on employees like her protégée, she suffered personally and gambled professionally by staying committed to Lenore in the face of the latter's debilitating work performance. Each act of loyalty has the potential for enhancing trust and solidifying allegiances; but has a cost.

My research revealed two broad *patterns* in the way that the ambivalent ties of loyalty in mentorship are constituted and expressed. Both can be thought of as ritualistic as they dramatize mentorship devotion and attachment. The first involves performing acts of material, symbolic, and emotional labor. Willingness to work hard for the other demonstrates as it dramatizes accountability and responsibility. Sacrifice and deference are central dynamics.

The second pattern involves making boundary declarations. This entails demonstrating that the pair possesses something distinctive. Engaging in activities which call attention to and strengthen the boundary around the pair establishes as it dramatizes fidelity and exclusivity. The central dynamic in this trend is the exclusion of others. Both sets of activities produce the glue that holds mentors and protégées, albeit ambivalently, in bonds of loyalty.

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Before explaining and illustrating the two patterns of loyalty expression, it is important to remind the reader that the asymmetrical exchange that is built into the structure and character of mentorship also plays out in the expression of loyalty. While an assumption of reciprocity operates, the protégée is beholden in a way which requires her to be inventive about how she will pay her debt to her mentor. At the very least, the mentor simply must carry out mentoring functions (e.g., protect, teach, advocate, sponsor) and presumably she has access to the personal, professional, and organizational resources with which to do so (e.g., clout, talent, power, skill, networks, funding). Her steadfast willingness to share these resources--in the name of looking out for the protégée's welfare--affirms that the protégée is special and is a sign of the mentor's loyalty.

What the protégée has to offer back to her mentor is not as clearly scripted. She can't easily repay or engage in equal exchange with her mentor--she does not have the professional capital to do so. Hence, she has little choice but to express loyalty symbolically--for example, through gifts of material and emotional labor and other forms of ritual enactment.

Labor

This involves showing devotion through one's work. The work can

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be either material or emotional. It can involve carrying out concrete or emotional tasks. Typically it is the protégée whose labor becomes ritualistic in the sense that this is what she *can* offer in return for the mentor's provision of mentoring. It expresses loyalty, deference, and gratitude in one fell swoop.

At the same time, the *quality of engagement* that the protégée shows in performing this labor matters: it reveals the full breadth of her loyalty. The more invested and enthusiastic she is in carrying out this work, the less she complains, the more hidden the compact of exchange, the more she demonstrates loyalty. An upbeat attitude toward carrying out the work, as this mentor points out, goes a long way:

> Emmie: [My protégée] came over the other day and I had to empty the garbage and I said you know, "Mira, I've just been noticing how much you must have emptied the garbage in the last year and a half because I can hardly remember emptying the garbage like the whole time you lived here and the garbage fills up so unbelievably quickly in this house! I just can't even believe it." And she sort of looked at me (smiling) and rolled her eyes...It was like an acknowledgement of the fact that she had done really boring shit work without a peep. Without a peep. She never complained, you know? And so, there's that kind of acknowledgment that I can be just so obsessed and so out of it and she knows that that's how I am...

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Hence, the protégée who whines, calls attention to her own efforts, or makes plain her end of the bargain is probably thought of as slightly less loyal. Ambivalence about carrying out the work itself can be read as a sign of disloyalty.

Material Labor

The protégée's level of engagement in acts of concrete labor is animated by and serves as a barometer of her loyalty to the mentor. The protégée who assiduously joins into the mentor's work projects becomes loyal to the mentor as they devote themselves to their work or cause. As the work becomes redefined as "our work," the boundary around the pair and ensuing dyadic allegiance becomes enunciated.

Long stretches of time in the relationship can revolve around cycles of joint work. This becomes part of the pair's shared history, as mentioned earlier, from which loyalty grows. Several reminisced about especially grueling phases of work as if making it through these times--toiling hard and going the extra mile for the mentor--earned them a badge of honor.

With a few exceptions, mentors in this study routinely depended upon protégées to perform a range of work duties--some menial, some detail-oriented, some operational and carrying a high level of responsibility. The

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following examples offer a flavor of the diverse forms of labor: one woman walked dogs and did domestic errands so that her mentor could devote her time to her artistic endeavors; another volunteered for the assignments that entailed travel, thus freeing her mentor to stay at home to care for her children; and one protégée was asked by her mentor to share the "thinking demands" of overseeing a technological overhaul in their department's production system. Whatever the nature of the work, the protégée's competence, efficiency, accountability, conscientiousness, pride and sanguine disposition about it tended to be read--to varying degrees--as signs of loyalty to the mentor.

One could regard the work required by the mentor or taken on at the protégée's own initiative as simply "part of the job." What's important to bear in mind, however, is that loyalty emanates not from the performance of the work task per se, but from the commitment that one brings to the work activity--referred to above as the quality of engagement. The loyal protégée approaches the work, in part, with a sense of mission and a loftier goal. She does the work *for* the mentor, *for* the advancement of their projects, and *for* her own good standing with the mentor. One mentor remembered her zestful protégée saying:

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Lynn: *I will do the best job in the whole world for you*- that's exactly how she put it and I knew she would.I could just feel it.

In the following passage, the protégée describes her diligence at helping her mentor get things done even when it meant covering for the mentor's embarrassing lapses and forgoing the credit for the work. By her account, the mentor felt entitled to rely on her this way as if offering herself as a "safety net" was an implicit part of their exchange agreement:

Bonnie: Were you kind of or in fact Lynn's right-hand person?

Roze: Yeah, absolutely. She could give me anything and I would do it (pause)...If people needed something from Lynn, they would come to me to get it because they knew that I could provide the goods ...Sometimes Lynn was difficult to reach. She wasn't a fastidious answerer of the telephone or the e-mail. She kind of let things slide sometimes and I was there. I was the safety net. I made sure things happened. And she came to count on that. And she knew that I would always be able to do that bad project that she let go of, that she didn't wanna deal with. Or something was happening in her home life and she couldn't deal with it or whatever. She'd come to me at the last minute--at the 11th hour, and she was like, "This has to get done." And there wasn't any apology attached to it. Like "I screwed up. I didn't do this." It was, "It has to get done." And she knew I'd do it. And I *would* do it for her. Cause we had that kind of relationship where I would give it back to her and she'd present it as her own. And I'm sure a

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> lot of people knew that I did it but that was okay. She was-- that was the relationship we had.

In some cases, one's willingness to work hard for the other reaches beyond conventional expectation. Several protégées had fantasies of remaining tied to their mentors' professional agenda for many years into the future. One woman dreamed of someday opening a gallery with her mentor. Another envisioned herself serving as campaign manager and staff aide if her mentor were to pursue her political aspirations to run for office:

> Jackie: [My mentor] said, "Maybe its time to run a campaign..." And I said, "I would really support you and I'd really work for you." And she said, "Yeah, I think I have the people who could really--" you know-- I forget exactly what she said. Not "make it work," but she said, "I think there are people that I could really rely on..."
>
> ...That was when I was working for her. Several years ago. So I was thinking ..."I'd follow you to that and I'd be your chief of staff."

Obviously, doing the work provides crucial training opportunities for the protégée. It is integral to how she develops and masters her skills and professional confidence. Put differently, embracing the work delegated by the mentor not only affords the protégée a chance to show her dedication to the mentor; depending on the task, it also affords her opportunities to develop skill and professional competence.

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Yet, as the protégée grows and acquires new skills, she usually wants more responsibility. This can have the effect of moving the protégée out of the operations arena into conceptual and planning work--"big picture" involvement--work which is far less important to the mentor on a day to day basis than operations oversight. Hence, the dilemma. The protégée may become less valuable to the mentor as she hones her work skill and capacity. In this respect, the mentor probably gets the most out of the protégée's loyalty at some midpoint during the relationship when the protégée is still learning what is entailed in carrying out the mentor's job--that is, before she is ready to move onto tasks which move her away from hands-on, front line management. I raise this issue here to suggest that there is probably a life cycle to using work performance as a way to demonstrate loyalty. Once the protégée can no longer be as materially useful to the mentor, loyalty is likely to lose some of its vigor and a certain intensity of the emotional bond that is cultivated around the loyalty may weaken.

Finally, it is worth noting that in one mentorship in which the protégée did not "*work for*" the mentor there was an absence of ritualistic labor. Although as a full professor, Claire was a senior colleague to Alex, she had no supervisory or managerial connection to her. Nor did she invite

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Alex to work on academic papers with her or to help her organize conferences. As would be predicted by my argument, the protégée was somewhat at a loss about how to show her mentor how grateful and committed she was to her. Without the stage props of joint projects and opportunities to labor for the mentor in any demonstrable way, the protégée had less gear to work with to dramatize her loyalty.

Emotional Labor

Another devotional ritual in mentorship is the performance of emotional labor. It is not uncommon for the protégée to act out various caretaking roles and to manage emotionally delicate situations as a way to express loyalty to the mentor. In the overt sense, mentors do this for protégées by counseling, guiding, encouraging, and protecting them. Cheerleader comes to mind as an image that mentors are expected to play to prove that they stand by protégées. When the chips are down, one hopes that the mentor--the loyal one in any event--not only will not abandon the protégée but will prop her up and reinstill confidence.

Usually taken up as informal roles and thus often unacknowledged or overlooked by the mentor, protégées engage in their own brand of ego boosting and mollification activities, performing emotional duties which

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yield personal and professional rewards and protections for the mentor. Two interrelated caretaking roles demonstrating loyalty were identified among the pairs. I refer to them loosely as the "buffer" and "dutiful wife" roles.

The "Buffer": When the protégée plays the role of the "buffer," she acts as an intermediary between the mentor and other individuals. By padding her mentor from the demands of the outside world, she tries to spare the mentor from undue stress. The protégée's willingness to become inscripted into this role is testament of her loyalty to the mentor. Buffering is a form of protection. Protection--the act of keeping someone or something out of harm's way--is an expression of loyalty.

One type of buffering occurs when the protégée functions as a gatekeeper by screening contacts *for* the mentor. By inserting herself as the go-between or what's known in bureaucracy-speak as "running interference," the protégée responds to requests by colleagues and other organizational or professional contacts and thus protects her mentor from having to deal with unnecessary details and distractions. One protégée, for example, talked about how she "deflected stress" for her mentor as she fielded questions and dealt with problems that cropped up between line

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employees so as not to bother the mentor with picayune crises. She saw it as part of her duty to shield her mentor from mundane matters.

Other protégées spoke of colleagues who came to them first to let off steam before approaching the mentor to discuss troubles. In this situation, the protégée allows herself to be used as a sounding board by unhappy colleagues. In the process, she performs an emotional service by filtering out organizational toxins before they reach the mentor's attention. Or, as Elliot Jaques (1974) put it in a famous paper in which he discussed the role of the captain's assistant or second in command--the protégée makes herself available to "take the shit." Usually not a written part of the job, protégées may allow themselves to be used this way to show that out of loyalty, they are willing to bear a burden for the mentor.

A flip side of the buffer role gets enacted when instead of insulating the mentor from the demands of others, the protégée shields others from the mentor--ultimately to the mentor's advantage. In this situation, the protégée serves as the mentor's proxy for individuals who do not wish to deal directly with the mentor. This typically occurs when the mentor is perceived as intimidating, difficult to deal with, or otherwise unapproachable, while the protégée is seen as the amiable and more accessible partner in the duo. It

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wasn't unusual for protégées to see themselves in this way either--in the words of one, "I'm a kinder, gentler version of [my mentor]." Hence, colleagues and subordinates may feel out the protégée before they approach the mentor with a controversial request, for example. Or they may ask the protégée to relay a message rather than confront and possibly annoy the mentor face to face.

A few protégées talked about the gruff manner of their mentors as a reason for encouraging colleagues, clients, and other professional actors to come to them first to try out ideas. Although by doing so they minimized distractions to their mentors, the overriding concern was to minimize the exposure others had to the less gracious sides of the mentors' personalities. While the expression of loyalty here is more circuitous, the protégée performs this mediation function to protect the mentor from causing or furthering damage to her own reputation.

> Lenore: ...If manager A wants to get something to Leila and she's not sure how it'll go over, she'll bounce it off me first. If Manager Y wants Leila to assent to something, he will come to me and try it on and work with me to formulate this...

Colleagues put in calls to Meredith when they were upset at how Penny treated them. Meredith claimed it was a "big part of her job" to

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counsel co-workers--to allow them to air frustrations. Yet she would "never" tell Penny about these conversations:

> Meredith: Penny frequently says in comparing the two of us--she refers to her inability to be compromising. Her way of approaching things can be sharp & hurtful to people. Many times people at the agency would call me and say, "I can't deal with the way Penny talks to me. I can't-- I mean, I don't know what to do.'
>
> Bonnie: Are you seen as kind of mediator?
>
> Meredith: ...Ah! That's a very big part of my job.
>
> Bonnie: Kind of unacknowledged?
>
> Meredith: ...Unacknowledged-- I would never, (laughs) never tell Penny that that conversation took place. Because she would be very unhappy...

Later in the interview, Meredith picked up on this theme again, this time emphasizing her role as an interpreter of her mentor's moods. Sometimes she could sooth employees by explaining why Penny had behaved in a shrill way, eliciting sympathy for her mentor:

> Meredith: Sometimes people have come to me and asked me what's wrong with Penny or what's going on with her right now?...
>
> Bonnie: How do you feel about being in that position?
>
> Meredith: ...Really uncomfortable because I don't want to-- My alliance is 100% with Penny. That's where

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my loyalty is. My loyalty is not even as thoroughly with the company--its to Penny. So when they ask me questions like that, if I think there's something going on with her that I can soften the situation or the possible criticism that she might be subject to--I wanna share it with them. But on the other hand, because I know what a private person she is, I hesitate to give away a confidence. And I wouldn't want her to think I was talking about her. Because in all companies, gossip is rife. But she knows I'm not a gossip so I guess she would know that.

Bonnie: So what do you do?

Meredith: ...I say that I think its really amazing that she's doing as well as she is and that we all need to be patient if she seems a little sharp right now. She's gone through a lot. Or I say something like, "Well you know Penny is very blunt. She says what she thinks and that can be very valuable because you know exactly where she's coming from."

Bonnie: Are they sometimes looking for you to go to her and..make nice?

Meredith: ...Yeah. Maybe sometimes.

Bonnie: And what happens in that circumstance?

Meredith: ...I do it if I think I can or if it will be helpful or if I can diffuse situations in which there's tension.

Bonnie: That gives you a certain kind of influence?

Meredith: ...In that sense, yes. Yes, it does.

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Similarly, Roze found herself gravitating to the role of mediator but unlike the dynamics in the examples above where the protégée gets to play the "good guy" in the pair--Roze allowed herself to play "the heavy." She did this partly to preserve an idealized image of Lynn as a benevolent leader and to maintain her mentor's credibility among employees.

Roze: I think it became clear to people over time if they wanted something, it was easier to come directly to me than to go to Lynn...Some people found that she perhaps overestimated how quickly things could get done or how cheaply things could get done. And people started to come to me and say, "Is that true? Can you really produce this report in this amount of time?"

Bonnie: What was your position about that?

Roze: I respected Lynn and I always followed through on what she said even if I disagreed with her. There were times when I was horrified at some of things that she asked for. I felt that it put me in a really tough spot. Once I started having to tell a staff they were gonna have to work late on a Friday night to get something done because Lynn promised it without checking to see if we could do it first was very embarrassing and difficult for me. But I had this sense of obligation to her because she did give me the break by giving me the chance to be Operations Manager. And she always came through on a personal level for me. When she said she was gonna get me a promotion, she did. When she said she was gonna get me a raise, she did. So I felt this need to be- respectful? Be loyal? Loyal. I felt a sense of loyalty to her. I still do.

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Part of what we hear in Roze's account is that not only could she be trusted to mobilize her department to complete an impossibly high volume of work under very tight deadlines--she was also willing to perform an emotional service for her mentor. That is, she was willing to hide the fact that it was Lynn who had loaded employees with unrealistic work demands by taking the heat for this herself.

In contrast to other mentors who found it difficult to acknowledge the protégée's emotional labor or were oblivious to it *as labor*, Lynn was quite self-conscious about the utility of Roze's interception and welcomed it. The fact that Roze was willing to accept the brunt of the employee's gripes was extremely useful to Lynn as she perceived herself to be "too soft." Indeed, "good cop--bad cop" was the expression *she* used to describe the splitting she wanted to see enacted in order to increase employee productivity.

The "Dutiful Wife": In this role, the protégée acts in stereotypical "wifely" ways. That is, the behaviors are similar to types of emotional labor identified in feminist literature as serving husbands' emotional needs and which are thought of as constituting an implicit exchange contract in modern marriage. "Feeding egos and tending wounds" (Bartky, 1990) are behaviors through which devotion is expressed in both marriage and mentorship.

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One trend casts the protégée (or wife) as a good listener and repository for the mentor's troublesome feelings: the protégée acts as a sounding board or confidante. Her reliably sympathetic stance allows for the release of the mentor's emotional tensions. This can also be seen as a form of buffering in the sense that the mentor can bounce concerns off of the protégée and the latter serves as a kind of cushion between the mentor and the world apart from the mentorship. The mentor can safely reveal concerns to a trusted protégée, express frustration, denounce the organization, question directives from superordinates and depend on the protégée to listen and help contain such feelings and frustrations. Bartky uses the image of the "safety valve" to denote the wife's service in subduing the husband's ostensibly explosive energy.

Bonnie: What do you think she gets from knowing you?

Lenore: An ear. A really discreet ear. Somebody that is really trying to be constructive at all costs...

Many mentors in this research relied upon protégées as confidantes--particularly to discuss issues they felt they had no one else with whom to talk. This was particularly true for pairs in high pressured corporate settings undergoing major organizational or technological transformation. Not only did mentors experience high levels of stress because of company

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change but many felt a deep sense of professional loneliness.

As noted in the chapter on idealization, Leila (mentor) was quite open, for example, about the desolation she felt working for a Vice President and President who were unfriendly and disconnected from daily operations. She needed someone to talk to regularly about all the consequential decisions being floated at Worldwide and to help her weigh out her directorial options. She spoke in our interview of how much she missed past jobs where she felt an esprit de corp among colleagues who shared her interest in high quality archival work. In this latest job, she found that the bottom line business mentality of the chief executive officer which focused more on profit than product alienated and isolated her from any collegial contact. She particularly missed the on-going dialogue and vibrant rhythm of creative exchange that she'd had with her boss at her last job.

With her antennae up in search of a good listener, Leila came quickly to rely on Lenore to fill in the collegial void. Lenore accepted the role and as noted above, became "an ear." At first Lenore felt "chosen" and honored to be privy to the private thoughts of a woman she revered. And she regarded her own silence and the space she gave over to her mentor to

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speak freely--to vent anxiety and doubt, fume over office politics, entrust her with distressing company secrets--as a way to give something back to her mentor, as well as a way to stand by her. Putting up with her mentor's need to unload on her was a way to stay put and staying put, as discussed earlier, is one of the chief accomplishments of loyalty.

> Lenore: [Leila] had a need for someone in the workplace to relate to on a personal level...When I started working so hard--somewhere between 60 and 80 hours there was more of the time being taken up with work...There was an insane amount of work and incredible stress attendant to it. So I think the friendship (with Leila) arose out of circumstance, for sure.
>
> Bonnie: And from the way you describe it, she wanted an ally of sorts.
>
> Lenore: Yes, she did. She definitely did. I'm sure she really wanted somebody whose loyalty could not be questioned.

To her dismay, Lenore slid further into the role of listener as time went on. Sometimes Leila told her things which compromised her position with respect to her co-workers--forcing her to split her loyalties. And she began to feel depleted by the role. By sticking to her mentor--never once registering a complaint about all of the strain involved in the listening--she began to feel invisible. Being loyal in this way began to exact too big a

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price: she began to feel that her own identity was being squelched in the bargain. She allowed herself to be used as an ear for her mentor's worries but as time went on, wondered if that's all her mentor saw of her. This is the down side of the ambivalence generated by loyalty.

Another devotional aspect of the "wifely" role involves the protégée's cultivation and use of emotional radar to help divert attention away from the mentor's quirks or irrationalities. Indeed, protégées in this study seemed extremely attuned to nuances of their mentors' personalities. They learn to read them astutely--their likes, dislikes, hot buttons, mood swings, pet peeves, etc. Sensitized by this knowledge, protégées work around these things--for example, by avoiding touchy subjects, ignoring eccentricities, rationalizing capricious behaviors, or by flat out denying the mentor's weaknesses or vulnerabilities.

Part of this attunement can be used to cover up for the mentor. In one case, the protégée used her insights to protect her mentor from owning up to her own frailties. What came through during my interview with Meredith (protégée) is that she spent an enormous amount of energy during her relationship with Penny (mentor) dancing around the knowledge that Penny actually leaned on *her*. This was an unspoken truth of their

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relationship, partly facilitated by the fact that Meredith was willing to play herself as a "ditzy," "marshmallowy" protégée in counterpart to an image of Penny as the "stoic," "tough as nails" mentor.

These roles--arguably gendered--and the way they masked the dynamics of dependency were set in place early in the relationship when Penny was moved in to manage a new department at Cameo Inc. and found herself for the first time in a position of having to learn the ropes from a subordinate. Meredith had been with the packaging department for two years when Penny came onto the floor. Though she taught Penny the ins and outs of the department, she got a "vibe" from Penny never to acknowledge the role reversal.

Indeed, the secret of Penny's dependence on Meredith lasted throughout the relationship. It found its most poignant expression, perhaps, following the tragic murder of Penny's husband during which time she sought out her protégée for daily support (e.g., constant conversation about grief, legal issues, loss). Meredith was happy to have the chance to give something back and to "hang in there" for Penny. No mention was ever made, however, of the switch in roles. Penny counted on Meredith to help her through this rough period--and Meredith did so, yet at the same time

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Meredith's other caretaking role--the one I am highlighting here--was to cover up the fact that Penny had a vulnerable side. To portray herself as a tried and true protégée and friend to her mentor, Meredith believed she needed to collude with Penny in the fiction about her mentor's ironclad self-sufficiency.

Penny didn't raise this as an issue, not surprisingly. But she did spend some time poking fun at Meredith during our interview, oddly amused as she spoke about the difficulty she felt Meredith had with being assertive--almost caricaturing her protégée as daffy, naive, a pushover. I suspected that by painting such a lightweight image of her protégée to me, Penny was trying to uphold an image of herself as the matured and composed one in the pair.

Sometimes the "dutiful wife" role functions to amplify the specialness of the relationship. That is, a secondary gain can come to the protégée who demonstrates her devotion in this way. By putting up with the mentor's shortcomings and irritating habits, she draws attention to her own valor. She earns a badge for her perceptiveness and deftness at handling her mentor's difficult moments. One protégée tried to assuage her colleagues, "Oh don't worry about Natalie--she storms like that all the time." With

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muted pride, another claimed, "I know Mara's hot buttons and I can sense when to put on the kid gloves with her...I've had to develop a thick skin to be able to tolerate her bad temper and disorganization." Like the martyred wife who gains brownie points for patience and understanding--the protégée gains devotional credit by being able to say that only *she* knows how to handle the mentor. Creating and reinforcing exclusive boundaries like this is both a way of developing and manifesting loyalty.

One consequence of expressing loyalty through these forms of emotional labor, paradoxically, is that they offer the protégée a measure of control and influence. The protégée filters what is presented to the mentor and may be viewed as a hub point between colleagues and the mentor. She holds secrets, counsels others about how to most effectively approach the mentor, provides relief and support to her mentor under stress, and has honed an emotional understanding about how to relate to and manage the space around her mentor. The master-slave dialectic is revealed in this show of loyalty as the mentor's dependence on the protégée comes to light. Often, however, this dynamic remains obscured.

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Boundary Declarations

Apart from acts of material and emotional labor, mentors and protégées also express loyalty by declaring boundaries. That is, certain kinds of interactions help to create and maintain the sense of "we-ness" between mentors and protégées; that primary group sensibility both reflects and reaffirms the ties of loyalty.

Boundary declarations entail activity in which the pair is distinguished in relation to others. By differentiating the pair and accentuating the identity of the mentor and protégée *as a pair*, commitments between the parties are symbolically reinforced. The accentuation, it should be noted, need not have a public dimension--that is, while declaring boundaries sometimes involves making a public pronouncement about the bonds between mentor and protégée, often it is only the mentor and protégée who are aware of the activity through which boundaries are articulated.

For example, while cutting a third party out of a conversation acts out a dyadic boundary overtly, other mechanisms of exclusion are more subtle--such as what occurs when secrets are shared or when a third party becomes the object of ridicule. In neither of these cases is it very important where outsiders are stationed in a spatial sense or for that matter whether they are

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actually involved in any interaction with the dyadic pair. What's important is that the outsider is used symbolically as a kind of foil against which the parties--through various interpersonal and intersubjective processes--construct, test, and affirm their commitments to each other.

I will discuss two patterns identified among mentors and protégées through which boundaries are declared. One is by sharing secrets. The other is through a process I am calling "three to tango." Both trends, as mentioned earlier, dramatize as they establish exclusivity and allegiance.

Secrets

Bonnie: You're saying that she knew she could count on you fairly early on?

Roze: Yes, yes.

Bonnie: What is it about you that she was picking up on--what do you think?

Roze: Well, the loyalty--that's number one.

Bonnie: But how would she know that?

Roze: I think she tested me over time. I think she would tell me things in confidence and see if they came back to her.

Bonnie: Did she tell you not to share them with anybody else?

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Roze: No, because I knew. I'm smart. I know what is being told in confidence. One signal we always had was when she had something to tell me in confidence, she wouldn't say, "this is confidential." She'd say "close the door." And when I'd get up and close the door, I knew--it was like an unspoken rule--this doesn't leave this office. And I never broke that.

As a form of ritual enactment, sharing secrets simultaneously solidifies and tests dyadic boundaries and loyalty. Secrets tie mentors and protégées into a commitment of restraint. That is, the parties agree to withhold the content of the secret from others. Keeping the secret confirms allegiance, but it does so as Simmel (1950c) astutely observed, only because the chance to expose it and thus to betray the other are resisted:

> The secret..is full of the consciousness that it *can* be betrayed; that one holds the power of surprises, turns of fate, joy, destruction--if only, perhaps of self-destruction. For this reason, the secret is surrounded by the possibility and temptation of betrayal...The secret puts a barrier between men but, at the same time, it creates the tempting challenge to break through it, by gossip or confession (pp. 333-334).

The word secret comes from the French root *secernere* which means to separate, distinguish, or set apart. Drawing a boundary around who gets to know the secret and who doesn't gives the secret an inflated value because by necessitating that others are excluded from knowing the secret, the information seems all the more dear. Simmel writes:

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> ...[T]he strongly emphasized exclusion of all outsiders makes for a correspondingly strong feeling of possession. For many individuals, ***property does not fully gain its significance with mere ownership, but only with the consciousness that others must do without it.*** The basis for this...is the impressionability of our feelings through ***differences***...Since others are excluded from the possession--particularly when it is very valuable--the converse suggests itself...that what is denied to many must have special value (p. 332).

Secrets were a vehicle for the expression of loyalty in all pairs in this study. Sometimes is was a mentor, other times it was a protégée who first shared the secret. Not all secrets were as sensitive as others. Some confidences carried higher stakes than others. Most secrets of weight related to organizational crisis. As alluded to previously, in two cases, mentors felt compelled to share the news of company layoffs with protégées long before employees were notified that they would be receiving pink slips.

One mentor had the wrenching task of having to execute *two* rounds of layoffs over the time she worked with her protégée. Both times the fact that she gave advance warning of the layoffs was of small comfort to the protégée in that she learned that at least *she* would not be fired. At the same time, the protégée felt saddled with unwanted information. The information was oppressive. Keeping it a secret made her feel she was betraying co-workers, some of whom were scheduled to be laid off. The

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secret pit her colleague friends against her mentor in a test of loyalty.

Bonnie: Did she ask you to hold secrets for her?

Lenore: Well, yes--about the first downsizings. I knew who was gonna go and I was neither allowed to share the knowledge, obviously with the people who'd be affected nor to let on that I knew...

Bonnie: Were you ambivalent about holding that secret?

Lenore: Actually--my God, at that point I was *really* ambivalent about it. I was very conflicted. I felt very, very, very guilty toward the people who weren't going to have jobs anymore...

Sadly, the second round of layoffs at Worldwide occurred between my first and second interview with Lenore. So when we met for the second interview the ordeal was fresh and the anxiety about holding the secret was most palpable:

Lenore: A third of our department just lost their jobs. Its been a really traumatic week at work...I've had a lot of difficulty coming to terms with it even though I knew it was in the offing...Obviously, everybody around me--my colleagues who I have really close relationships with--some of them aren't there anymore . And its really just been a big huge adjustment for everybody. And a really sad and kind of bitter one at the same time....

...We were a department of 25. We're now a department of 15.

Bonnie: Wow.. Was this a shock to you?

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Lenore: It was...I felt the impact as a great shock because...just the emotions that were stirred up by it. In point of fact-- it was something that Leila had told me about but no one else. And she told me not so much because it was a function of my job to know as because it was really impossible for her to carry it around by herself. So I had kind of been repressing the knowledge...We were talking about it to a certain extent, privately, before any of this was announced. It was announced to the other managers besides myself--on Tuesday afternoon. And then on Wednesday morning, all of the people who were losing their jobs were told so collectively. And immediately afterwards, the rest of the department was told.

She told me [over a month ago]...She had known about it for a couple of weeks before that-- all through the winter holidays.

...I hope and trust that having someone on the scene in the workplace to share the knowledge with did make it somewhat easier for her. It was very strange because one of things that absolutely, obviously, I can't say anywhere at work is that I was privy to this knowledge beforehand. It would put her in a lot of jeopardy. Obviously my colleagues wouldn't regard me the same way either.

In other situations, the secrets were more benign. One pair, for instance, tried to keep *the fact of their mentorship* a secret. That is, the mentor was extremely cautious in her dealings with the protégée so that other employees wouldn't become jealous. She was nervous about how the intensity of her affection and attention towards the protégée would be

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interpreted by others in the department. Primarily, however, she wanted to avoid a situation she'd experienced when she was being mentored several years prior: she didn't want to be seen as inseparable from her protégée nor did she want her protégée to be perceived as inseparable from her. Hence, many of their sometimes ten times a day meetings took on the aura of a clandestine affair. They met behind closed doors, and to insure that there would be no charge of favoritism, the mentor never lunched or socialized with her protégée outside of work.

Bonnie: So [the specialness of the relationship] wasn't apparent to other people? Do you think it was apparent to *Roze* that there was something unique going on here?

Lynn: Oh yeah. We would talk about it that way. I would say, "Look, you understand that *this* is different. This is special. This means something more to me."

Bonnie: For example, what would you be pointing out that was special and different?

Lynn: I would let her know that within the context of an average relationship, this is how I would handle it and that I'm giving her *more information* because I want her to understand the process not just the result. And that she had to understand that this was because of the context of our relationship. Our relationship was more intense than most boss and subordinate relationships. And she did understand that.

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Bonnie: How would she take that?

Lynn: She would appreciate it--that's why it continued. She was grateful, all right? I let her know that I was giving her more information than I usually would. Or when something was happening in the group--it was *she* I would select to share with it first so that she could have the input. Because I felt that her and my thinking on something was the total picture. I didn't need my other two managers to give me the total picture necessarily. Al-though the next step was, "Okay now we'll meet"--the four of us. They were unaware that I had already met with her. She was very good at never indicating that and never going beyond the information that she knew was right for that context. Al-though between us there was that "*there's more to this and we both know it.*"

But its not exclusive to her. In terms of time, I did not pay more attention to her. It was the depth. When I have a relationship with a manager who reports to me, they're in here as many times a day as she is. The door is as open to them. *Its just that she took more out.* You can offer the same thing to three people. The one that gets the most out of it is the one that wants the most out of it.

Despite her denials, and looking at the situation through Simmel's eyes, one can surmise that the more Lynn tried to hide the mentorship alliance, the more "secret" it became, and the more "dear" or precious it must have seemed to others in the department. Even if she did not hold *more* meetings with other managers, loyalty's grip is something that can

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almost be smelled--recall my earlier note that it is embodied in engagement; that is, in enthusiasm, eagerness, and in riveting emotional attention. Indeed, in Roze's opinion, *this* secret was no secret at all:

> Roze: It was *clear* that Lynn and I were more than just manager and subordinate. You could just sense that about people. I think people knew that. I think that people were--is *jealous* the right word?- that I had that close relationship with her? I'm sure that people were upset that Lynn gave me opportunities that they didn't get from their managers. She was protective of me and some managers were not protective of their staff...

In another case, the secret had to do with emotional difficulties. Due to unusual circumstances which brought mentor and protégée into close living quarters for months at a time, both parties saw aspects of one another that were very dissonant from the poised professional facade and public image they each typically projected. The mentor became more aware of the protégée's proneness to depression, while the protégée became more aware of the mentor's moodiness and downturns into despair. These were very private and often painful parts of the mentor and protégée's personalities. And neither were particularly happy about being "found out." Yet, knowing about each other's emotional troubles in light of the fact that few others knew about this provided a glue. At turns compassionate and judgmental

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about the struggles each other faced in coping with her inner demons, both mentor and protégée were bound by a secret about common suffering.

Three to Tango

> There are always three parties, A, B, and C, in a matrix of loyalty. A can be loyal to B only if there is a third party C...who stands as a potential competitor to B, the object of loyalty. The competitor is always lurking in the wings, rejected for the time being, but always tempting, always seductive. The foundational element in loyalty is the fact not present--the counterfactual conditional statement that if the competitor appears and beckons, the loyal will refuse to follow (Fletcher, 1993, p. 8).

To begin this explanation of how mentorship loyalty is conveyed through the process I label "three to tango," it is useful, I think, to first consider Fletcher's view. At its core, there is a *one against two* game in his analysis of loyalty. That is, a third party is positioned as a ubiquitous threat to the dyad--an interloper, temptress, or seducer who stands to lure one party away from the other. To Fletcher, in fact, resisting the seduction is part and parcel of demonstrating loyalty. I myself have made this point many times so far: for instance, it is central to the dynamic of secrets that the loyal remain tight lipped in the face of the desire to confess (to third parties). Of course that, among other things, is precisely what it means to be loyal.

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But when we think about other expressions of loyalty, we can immediately see that Fletcher's conception of the role of the third party is too narrow. In the case of acting out the buffer role, for example, the third party threatens not to tear the dyad asunder through seduction, but to hassle or hurt one member. The resulting dynamic is that the pair's loyalty is reinforced not because temptation to betray or stray has been resisted but because one party has helped to keep another nuisance free or out of harm's way. Thus, while third parties can upset commitments between the mentor and protégée, my data suggests that the triangular dynamics are more complicated than this. Third parties can serve the loyalty ends of the dyad in other ways too.

To use Fletcher's language, C does not only have to play the role of the seducer or competitor to serve the loyalty ends of A and B. As we see in the example of the buffer role, C can play the role of the annoying or needy subordinate, intimidated colleague, menacing boss, demanding client, etc. In these configurations, C is someone who needs to be placated (lest he or she disturb the mentor) and the loyal party (the protégée) engages in the placating to enact that loyalty.

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Nevertheless, the main point I wish to make is that rather than pose as a threat or irritant to the pair (Simmel, 1950d), A and B can *use* C to shore up their loyalty. That is, mentors and protégées *use* third parties--sometimes consciously and overtly but more often unconsciously and collusively in ways which catapult the intensity of the dyadic loyalty. Psychologically speaking, the dyad can *get* something from the third party--its own emotional heat can be turned on or up as it relates to the third party.

For example, engaging in gossip about a disliked or envied colleague can draw the mentor and protégée into a closer alliance as their common disdain can get their dyadic juices flowing--the emotions of jealousy, enmity, and outrage are known to incite passion and unite people against others.

While other individuals are constantly being drawn into the boundary defining process, the process is subtle and rarely detected or named. Sometimes the use of a third party--be it a proximal colleague, a distant CEO or professional leader--will do something to amplify, reinforce, or strengthen the sense of we-ness in the mentorship. What I mean by *use* of a third party, however, is crucial: often the third party does not *do* anything per se to the dyad but rather serves as a target or repository of the dyad's projections.

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The pair may be cognizant of its use of the third party or oblivious to it. Mentors and protégées may know that something happens to their relationship, that is, because of or in spite of the third party. Or this may be unexpressed. The third party may be someone in the present context or situation or someone from the past whose influence permeates the relationship through transference.[7] The third may play an explicit and acknowledged role or may be a figment of the parties' projections (e.g., "straw men"). The third can have a literal effect or a symbolic one.

Hence, I use the phrase "three to tango" to evoke an image of this dynamic wherein a third party is conscripted into a dance with the mentorship dyad in ways which *strengthen* the boundary around the pair. This flips Fletcher's concept on its head in a sense: it becomes a *two against one* game--the two target a third party for exclusion in an attempt to dramatize and certify dyadic allegiance.

How does this work? Primarily this is accomplished through scapegoating, projection, gossip, or finding a common enemy. The main boundary declaring mechanism involves transmuting the third party into an "other"--someone or something perceived as different and typically *lesser* than the pair. In the process of taking down a third party, the pair affirms

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its sense of good fortune or superiority and takes pride in the tenacity of its bond. There may be also be a congratulatory quality to the boundary declaration.

For example, C--a colleague in the same organizational department may be cast as an object of mutual dislike. Hence, A and B can distance themselves from C, or declare themselves to be superior to C. As they do so, they cement their bonds of identification and loyalty. They share something together (e.g., they are smarter, morally superior, on a faster track) from which C is excluded. The shared quality gives mentor and protégée the sense that they are "in" with one another.

A loyalty boundary was more firmly etched, for example, as Trish and Paula began to verbalize their common disregard of another manager, Andrea--a woman they derided for "bad morals." Trish lamented, "we both thought it was disgusting that this woman Andrea was cheating on her husband." Painting themselves as more virtuous than their unscrupulous colleague, Trish remembered her relationship with Paula intensifying as they had more tête a têtes:

> Trish: Andrea was walking around like she was the Queen Bee--when she wasn't. *Paula* was the Queen Bee. Frankly, Andrea was sleeping with clients. And she was cheating on her husband.

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> That bothered both of us. And as we realized that neither one of us could stand her and that we had little respect for her, Paula and Andrea's relationship deteriorated--Interestingly, Paula and my relationship began to develop from there on...

Similarly, in another case, dyadic boundaries were declared and loyalty began to emerge as mentor and protégée acknowledged their mutual contempt for a colleague. This was a pair--two faculty members at a small liberal arts college in the Midwest--who'd had trouble making a good connection with each other at the start of their relationship; the third party unwittingly served as a catalyst to turn this around. The mentor, Claire, was a senior colleague--a tenured professor, and the protégée, Alexandra, was a newly hired junior faculty member. Kim, the third party, was another professor; all three were in the same department.

Part of what's compelling in this case is that the antipathy toward the third party--and all of the ways that this feeling was milked and acted out by the pair--formed the heart of the what Fletcher refers to as the "shared history" that lays the foundation of loyalty. That is, the series of interactions and struggles between Claire and Alex *about the third party* gave them the chance to wrestle through something together. In a similar vein, Fletcher reminds us of Aristotle's maxim--that friends must "eat salt" together.

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Alex felt she had been courted into her new junior faculty position at the college by Claire who had been on the search committee but once she actually arrived on campus, she found Claire distant and cool. Claire admitted that she took a few steps back from her initial engagement with Alex. Though she'd offered intensive hand holding to Alex through the interview process, she wanted to be prudent about how she proceeded in her relationship with her new colleague.

She liked Alex well enough yet from the start she could tell that they were very different sorts. They were in different life and career stages, and their substantive intellectual interests overlapped only superficially. Their politics and backgrounds were vastly different in ways that were crucial to Claire in terms of how she picked her allies. But just as important were the emotional signals. Claire was worried that Alex would gobble her up if she made herself too available to befriend her at the beginning.

Alex let her guard down very quickly, and let Claire know about how anxious she was about moving to the new town and establishing a new life. Claire didn't want to be rejecting, but she also wanted to set a boundary. She offered Alex a listening ear and left it at that. Alex had evidently been expecting or hoping for much more in the way of initiative towards a

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friendship on Claire's part; she was fairly devastated when she saw that Claire wasn't about to be her new chum on campus.

> Alex: I had the impression that this was a real kind of strong community and that people did a lot of stuff together..But when I first got here, I thought that it wasn't like that. It really was a shocker. I was very unhappy here at first.
>
> Bonnie: Did you feel kind of abandoned by Claire?
>
> Alex: Totally abandoned by her. I still don't know what was going on. But later I interpreted [it as having to do with] another woman, Kim, who directs the Philosophy program at the college--a pretty hateful creature. I didn't know that, of course, when I first came. Kim colonized me when I first got here. She wanted to have dinner all the time, she wanted to do this, she wanted to do that. I was always with her--
>
> Bonnie: What did she want from you?
>
> Alex: She wanted me to be her best buddy. She was very isolated and lonely. She'd taken the job and just started in January. She already had alienated a fair number of people including Claire, pretty substantively.
>
> But I didn't know the politics. I walked into a very hairy political situation. I had no clue.

Although in some ways she was immediately put off by Kim, Alex admitted that she'd succumbed to Kim's "colonization" of her because *she* was lonely and felt abandoned by Claire. But, with a classic oedipal flavor,

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it also happened that Kim was Claire's nemesis.

> Claire: Alex was here for six or seven months before we ever had a conversation about Kim. I had my own feelings about Kim that were quite negative. But its not wise to share those especially with junior people ...But you gotta feel like she'll figure it out...When Alex came--I didn't know if she was gonna be discreet or not. But given my experience, I had to err on the side of "Do not talk to her about the fact that this woman is a horrible bitch" because before you know it, six people could know what you think about this woman. And that would be real bad. So. no, I didn't-- I tried to be available. I figured, ahh- she'll come. I knew that at some point, Alex was gonna figure out that Kim tries to dump work on everyone else and is *bad news*.

This was the chief reason, then, that Claire kept Alex at arm's length. She didn't trust Kim personally nor did she respect her as a faculty member. She wanted to warn Alex about Kim's habit of trying to off load work to other faculty members but decided it was better to wait to see if Alex came to her to discuss Kim. She didn't feel she knew Alex well enough to give her the low down on Kim and she wasn't sure she could trust Alex, especially if it turned out that her own contempt for Kim was let out of the bag. Newcastle was a small college and when one made a life there, certain dissatisfactions had to be tolerated. Alex sensed Claire's ambivalence about opening up to her about Kim:

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Alex: Claire took me out to lunch the second week of classes. I think she wanted to kind of let me in on the fact that Kim wasn't okay. But she didn't trust me and so she kept it very close to the vest. So I got taken out to lunch in this very conspiratorial way and then wasn't told anything.That made me even more confused.

Claire's hunch was right--that at some point Alex would finally get fed up with Kim and see the light on her own--probably at the point at which *she* had been exploited by her. Then they would talk.

Alex: Kim is the kind of person who'd tell a student that...she "had no integrity" and that she "didn't know how her friends thought of her" and that she "was entirely thoughtless and irresponsible and selfish" because she got a paper in late...You know, she's just- she's a mean person in a lot of ways. Just mean. She treats people in a way that I wouldn't treat my dog.

...I think the break in my relationship with Kim and my break in my relationship with Claire was when I called Claire and said, "What am I gonna do about this woman?" She'd just talked to the secretary in a way that was so amazingly demeaning that I couldn't bear it. I couldn't stand it. She had the office next to mine and she would kind of lean on my door and treat me...as if I agreed with how she was handling it. And she would treat this woman with so much disrespect it was really...

Bonnie: So it was like you were guilty by association?

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Alex: Yeah- I mean I just...I got allied with her and I - you know - didn't realize what was happening....

Bonnie: Was she trying to pull you away from Claire and-

Alex: Yes. She kind of talked trash to me about Claire...

Bonnie: What a way to come into a job!

Alex: ...God it was horrible.

After the first semester, Alex began to seek out advice from Claire about how to handle Kim:

Bonnie: Did you and Claire have discussions about how specifically to handle Kim?

Alex: Yeah, we had very specific discussions.

Bonnie: What would she have told you?

Alex: Claire's the one who told me that Kim didn't have as much control over me as I thought. She would say, "Just ignore her." Actually I would call Claire if there was some kind of shit that Kim was trying to pull on me. And I'm the junior member of the Philosophy Program. Kim would really try to get me to do a lot of her work. And in fact, she did get me to do a lot of her work..I mean this fourth class I'm teaching, for example, should not have been mine to teach. It should have been Kim's. So I would call Claire for that directly...

Amused by the recollection--almost, it seemed, by the deliciousness of the memory of conspiracy--Claire chuckled as she recalled the times

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Alexandra fled to her office to "bitch" about Kim:

> Claire: She didn't wanna do it in *her* office. She would come in here to escape sometimes ...Just get away, you know? And my office is kind of like a little kid clubhouse... tucked away here in the woods.

Remembering it as a turning point in the mentorship--a time in which she was finally able to profess her loyalty to her mentor, Alex described a daring exchange she had with Claire in which the full breadth of their mutual aversion to Kim was revealed.

Chock with symbolic meaning, Alex showed Claire a letter she'd written in opposition to Kim's tenure. Writing the letter reflected something gutsy about herself which she felt Claire was finally able to recognize--that she had a good heart, was worthy of liking, and wasn't all bad just because they didn't share the same politics. Alex could prove to Claire in this bold act that she had the mettle to speak out for injustice (e.g., protest Kim's tenure). She had the uneasy feeling, however, that mutual dislike of Kim became their point of intimacy.

The whole scene has the ring of a hazing ritual. The protégée proved herself to her mentor by taking a risk--by carrying out a deed which involved courage. By boycotting Kim's tenure, Alex declared her loyalty to Claire:

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Alex: I think that she decided at that point that at least I might have a good heart...I showed her my letter for Kim and I asked her for help. I said, "This is what I think I'm gonna send. Do you think this is smart?

...I laid my cards on the table. This is what I think. It was kind of my first political act...

Bonnie: Was it a favorable letter or--

Alex: No. Not a favorable letter, no...

Bonnie: What was her advice?

Alex: Claire is not at all supportive of Kim. In fact to some degree I felt like Claire and I have gotten closer together over our condemnation of Kim--which troubles me sometimes because I don't think that's a great basis for-- but its not obviously everything that goes on. I just decided I didn't wanna think about Kim anymore--one way or the other.

From that time forward, the drama that evolved in relation to the third party became something like a joint cause--something for Claire and Alex to rally their relationship around. It became a point of reference--a clear marker for the pair to establish that they were on the same side--a relational base that had been precarious until they danced the three to tango.

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Conclusions

This chapter has argued that loyalty is fundamental to mentorship as it provides the social glue that holds mentor and protégée together under an umbrella of explicit and implicit commitments and obligations. It is a crucial ingredient in coming to define and recognize the dyad *as a pair* as it establishes and helps to maintain a sense of we-ness or community between the mentor and protégée. By its very nature, then, loyalty breeds favoritism as its "two-ness" turns on exclusivity and exclusion.

A strong case is also made that mentorship loyalty is intrinsically ambivalent partly because it entails sacrifice (e.g., something must be forfeited, suppressed, or resisted in the name of sticking by the other), partly because it carries risks (e.g., betrayal and desertion), and partly because mentors and protégées are not on equal footing in the relationship. The fact that protégées are beholden to mentors means that the expression of loyalty is assymetrical. While they owe more, protégées *have* less to offer--in the conventional sense, that is. This study shows that protégées compensate for this inequality by enacting loyalty toward mentors symbolically--through emotional caretaking and deferential acts of material labor. While most regard this as part of the implicit contract and are often

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sanguine about the ritualized performances of loyalty, tensions in this area are likely to arise as protégées mature in their organizational and professional identities. Loyalty will be peppered with resentment if protégées are not given the space to grow out of the assistant role or service orientation towards mentors.

Even with these potential hot spots, it is not uncommon to find protégées who are more loyal towards mentors than they are to their organization. Perhaps this is a sign of the times. Rather than being seditious, this seems like a rational response to post-industrial job flux. 'Tis better to hold on to one's mentor than become too attached to the job or company.

While loyalty binds mentors and protégées in a cocoon of allegiance that can at times become too confining for its own good, generativity is a process that involves imagining what sticks to the partners after they separate. The next chapter explores the question of what is passed on in mentorship, how this occurs, and the ambivalent wishes and fears that are stirred up by the anxieties of influence.

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ENDNOTES

1. See Fletcher, 1993.

2. At the same time it could be argued that the public is rooting for accounts of mentorships which manage to sustain loyalty. Consider, for example, the fact that Tuesdays With Morrie--a book written as a tribute to a mentor--has been on the New York Times Bestseller List for 177 weeks (as of 3/11/01). In this book, Mitch Albom, 1997, describes his evolving relationship and contacts with his former college professor who was dying of a terminal illness.

3. For example, see Fletcher, 1993.

4. For example, see Shklar, 1993.

5. For example, see Hirschman, 1970.

6. See Hirschman, 1970; Baum, 1990; Sennett, 1998; Jackall, 1988; and Flam, 1993.

7. See Freud, 1963 (1912); Fishel, 1985; and Osherson, 1986.

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> As an experienced teacher, I recognize that there is an inevitable, even desirable element of eros, flirtation, seduction in the learning process. At the same time, I think it should be kept within the bounds of metaphor...I am made uncomfortable by professors who...encourage a dependency, in the guise of offering limitless counseling, or who become so dependent on youth's tender buds to perk up their own desiccated juices, that their annual rejuvenation takes on a vampirish tinge.
>
> Phillip Lopate, *"Terror of Mentors"*

> Influence is simply a transference of personality, a mode of giving away what is most precious to one's self, and its exercise takes away something from his master.
>
> Oscar Wilde, *The Portrait of Mr. W.H.*

> To acknowledge as well as oppose...determination by a discourse is a critical form of gratitude--to kiss as well as bite the hand that feeds you. Perhaps this is a way of satisfying the need to be located in history, in tradition, without feeling that you have simply been enlisted in it: to accept that you have not created yourself without being deprived of creativity.
>
> Jessica Benjamin, *Like Subjects, Love Objects*

> I don't want to achieve immortality through my works. I want to achieve immortality by not dying.
>
> Woody Allen

CHAPTER VI

GENERATIVITY

In this chapter I examine the character and dynamics of generativity in mentorship. This is the process of making an imprint on another as a form of legacy. A type of influence, generativity involves passing on parts

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of the self to the other. It is crucial to understand this process as it captures a large part of the motivation to mentor. The mentor wishes to give something of herself to a protégée in a way which extends her ideas, values, beliefs, and ways of being into the future. This can serve as both an expression and reminder of the mentor's purpose and potency--a sense that what she knows and has accomplished can make a mark on the world. By being generative the mentor can acquire the feeling that parts of her matter in ways that transcend her individual existence. Moreover, "dotting their networks with people who grew up under them," to use the phrase of one participant in this study--mentors also use generativity to pave the way for succession--their own as well as their protégées'.

Passing something on to the new generation is also satisfying for the protégée who gets to chew on some of the mentor's world and the fruits of her experience and talents. On one level, generativity is a form of feeding. Still, while the process can be deeply nourishing, accounts from mentor-protégée pairs suggest that it can also be disappointing, conflict laden, and even depleting. Ambivalence is intrinsic to and produced by generativity.

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Dimensions of Generativity

Let me begin by offering a layered conception of generativity--one which attempts to synthesize ideas of several authors. Similar to idealization and loyalty, I view generativity as a mode of attachment in that it is a way of connecting one person to another. But different from idealization in which the attachment reflects and is animated by images from the past--particularly fantasies that stem from early childhood views of parental omnipotence, and in contrast to loyalty which finds its relational pulse in the contemporary everyday life of the relationship, the bond of generativity is oriented toward the future. The mentor projects parts of her life and the traditions and ideals she stands for into the future through interactions with a protégée who internalizes these parts and may some day pass them onto others. The point to emphasize about this intergenerational transmission, however, is not simply that generativity provides a bridge through time but that the links between the past and future are grounded in specific human attachments and processes like generativity by which such relationships are maintained and rendered meaningful.

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Ambivalent internalization

I must stress that when I say that the protégée internalizes what the mentor passes on, it is important to remember that internalization is not the same thing as conformity. Dennis Wrong called attention to this sociological fallacy in his famous paper "The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Sociology" forty years ago (1961). Although generativity could inch towards cloning--turning professional socialization into something of a total institution--my argument assumes and evidence shows that there are always elements of agency and psychic ambivalence that mediate the process.

The protégée selectively identifies with, is grateful for, and tries to adopt what the mentor offers, but for various psychological and social reasons she will also distance herself from and try to negate the mentor's influence. In other words, she does not swallow whole what the mentor offers. What she takes in gets metabolized--filtered through conscious and unconscious meanings gleaned from her own life, situational context, and the culture. For instance, she may reject the mentor's influence because of societal pressures to be self-made or original. She may try to deny the influence because she is ashamed of dependency longings that are stirred up by the learning process or because she wants to avoid experiencing the

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aggression that is provoked by her envy of what the mentor possesses and she still lacks. She may simply be attempting to break free of her mentor's influence out of a developmental push for autonomy and individuality--that is, to distinguish herself as a person on her own course. Moreover, the fact that the mentor and protégée are two distinct individuals will inevitably lead to differences in how the generative material is donned. That is, when the protégée tries on the mentor's values, they will to some degree look different on her than on her mentor. Hence, internalization needs to be understood as a process by which the stuff of generativity is transformed.

Ambivalent transmission

The mentor has her own share of ambivalence around generativity. Though it gives the mentor an enriching sense of personal and professional satisfaction and can offer instrumental rewards such as increased political clout, generativity also entails loss. In the act of sharing knowledge, skill, life philosophies, values, etc., the mentor gives up a piece of herself. In a sense, she surrenders her convictions and most intensely held ideas by making them available for internalization and thus interpretation and transformation by someone else. She loses control, that is, over her "precious substance and objects" (Kotre, 1996). The hope, of course, is that

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the protégée will elaborate and enrich whatever it is that she takes from her mentor. But there is also the risk that the protégée will "twist and distort" the mentor's teachings (Kotre, 1995) or reframe them in a way that misrepresents her.

Competition

On some level, the mentor is also aware that the protegee could become a competitor--using her own riches against her--for example, by succeeding her or in some other way trying to surpass her career-wise or in terms of personal fulfillment. Hence, the sense of loss may be experienced as a threat, a theft, or a betrayal. The mentor treads a delicate course by offering the protégée the gifts of her experience and knowledge yet she runs the risk of undermining herself by preparing the protégée to replace her. Reacting to the ambivalence generated by this situation, some mentors scale back or sabotage generative efforts. A celebrated but dark example of this has been labeled the "Salieri phenomenon" (Lorber, 1984). Based on the story of the Court composer who--acting as a musical gatekeeper kept the genius of Mozart from being publicly recognized--the Salieri phenomenon refers to a subversion of generativity whereby the mentor prevents the outstanding work of a protégée from receiving just acclaim.

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Even in the most benign of circumstances, the sense of loss is experienced as bittersweet as the protégée's promise is an indelible reminder of the mentor's professional obsolescence and mortality.

One friend's story highlighted the threat of being upstaged by a protégée and the hostility churned up by this possibility. The friend, a struggling poet gaining some attention in local circles recalled a number of conversations she'd had with her mentor--a more well-known poet--in which she mentioned that she'd run into and chatted with a man who was a very famous poet. Each time, as if startled by the image of a "pisher" (that is, a Yiddish term for a young upstart) getting too big for her britches--and repeatedly "forgetting" the connection between the protégée and the big deal poet--the mentor would sarcastically exclaim, "Oh, *you* know *him*?

Adequacy and responsibility

Aside from ambivalence over loss there are also mixed feelings about the responsibility of generativity. However primordial the desire to pass on the fruits of one's experience, this activity is also burdensome and anxiety-provoking in the sense that it forces the mentor to reckon with the reality of her own limitations and imperfections.[1] Whether consciously reflected upon or not, generativity taps questions about adequacy and competence. The

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mentor may feel or fear that she does not measure up to her own image of authority or the ideal she believes is held by her protégée.

I had to struggle, why shouldn't you?

Finally, generativity may provoke mixed feelings in mentors as they recall and vicariously relive the struggles they faced in the course of their own professional development. While they may wish to share their skills and talents, mentors may also resent the process particularly if they perceive protégées as acquiring insight, skills, and poise too easily. The mentor feels pulled to give and withhold at the same time--alternately valuing and questioning the difficulties and soul searching she experienced while advancing her career. This conflict is most acute when protégées seek professional spoon-feeding--trying to extract magic formulas from mentors to bypass the pains and struggles of learning. This can dampen enthusiasm about generativity quickly.

Generative Influence

In addition to being a mode of attachment, albeit an ambivalent one, generativity should also be viewed as a distinct kind of influence--one which whether or not the mentor intends for it leaves an *imprint* on the protégée and whether or not the protégée acknowledges it, has the signature of the

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mentor. This is an elaboration of Harold Bloom's critical insight in The Anxiety of Influence (1973), a book in which the urge to be original is explored in the context of unconscious appropriation between poets and their predecessors. Bloom convincingly and elegantly argues that no matter how much we might strive to create something wholly original, something that comes from a pure solitary creative impulse, we can't escape influence from teachers and forbearers. In a way, this is to say that we can't exist outside of culture.

Although it is suffused with authority dynamics, generativity does not, however, in my definition include bureaucratic influence. Training the protégée because it is mandated as part of one's job as supervisor is not itself an example of generativity. To be generative, the act must be animated by personal motivation. In his landmark book on the topic, Outliving the Self: How We Live On in Future Generations (1996), the psychologist John Kotre captures the essence of this personal interest when he defines generativity as "a desire to invest one's substance in forms of life and work that will outlive the self" (p. 10). An act becomes generative he writes, "only when it is imbued with the sense of extending oneself into the apprentice or attaching oneself to a lasting art" (p. 13).

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Moreover, generative influence does not necessarily unfold as a conscious process or pre-set plan on the part of the mentor. Sometimes the mentor is unaware of her wish to influence, defends against it, or doesn't quite grasp how much impact she has on the protégée. Sometimes, as alluded to above and as we will see in case illustrations later in the chapter, the mentor struggles with the boundaries of generative influence, anxious about loss or inflation of control.

Virtue and vice

A third general comment to make about generativity is that it can be either a virtue or a vice. One shouldn't idealize it as a sentimental version of the gift relationship characterized by utilitarian or egoistic innocence.[2] Just as generativity can lead to professional and personal development for a protégée, and make positive contributions to the continuity of culture, it can also be overly self-serving for the mentor and exploitative of the protégée. When the protégée is used primarily as a vehicle for immortalizing the mentor's achievements or teachings, generativity can stunt rather than promote individual growth and cultural enrichment. As will be discussed, the mentor's motivation and degree of narcissism is key here.

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It has also been pointed out that not everything deserves to be passed on; some may take solace in the fact that a harmful trend is *not transmitted.* "This ends here," says the mentor who acting as an "intergenerational buffer" (Kotre, 1995) decides to stop a pattern that has caused suffering (e.g., hazing rituals).

Generativity and Culture

A final and critical dimension of generativity to highlight is its role in culture. As has already been noted, generativity is not only an affair between the mentor and protégée; it is also a process of embedding humans in culture and history. There is an implicit admittance into the life world which has been a base to the mentor. When the mentor hands down part of what she knows to be valuable from her own background and life, she invites the protégée into the fold of tradition. She welcomes the protégée to take a place in the realm of history--the history of her field and/or the organization in which they both work, as well as the value system they have come to share. But just as importantly, the mentor invites the protégée to become part of the world of contemporary adulthood narratives--for example, by sharing the joys and struggles of being professional women or working mothers. In this moment, the protégée's life narrative can be

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woven into a tapestry of lives and meanings--past and future--as a form of symbolic expression and experience. Of this sense of embeddedness, Ruthellen Josselson (1996) poignantly writes, "here is a connection with humanity beyond mutuality...[Here] we take our place among the generations" (p. 185).[3]

Beyond the function of locating the individual in history, generativity serves the culture as well by paying homage to it and attempting to preserve aspects of it. While this may appear to be conservative, it is my belief that critical engagement with culture is only possible by grappling with it, and generativity can certainly leave space for this too. Kotre (1996) argues for this cultural promise:

> ...In the realm of culture, [generativity] is expressed in the creation of new symbols that augment a community's store-house, in the renovation of existing symbols to endure their relevance for future generations, and in the conservation of symbols in precisely the form in which they already exist (p. 14).

Ambivalent cultural context

Paradoxically, while generativity can serve the culture, culture can undermine generativity. That is, a number of cultural values work against the values implied in generativity--fostering sociological ambivalence. The high premium placed on individualism and self-sufficiency in American

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society, for example, runs counter to the integrative mechanism of generativity which is to create connections between individuals so that a social process of learning and carrying forth experience can take place. Generativity's vitality comes from its celebration of the idea that a rich life emerges from social processes of human exchange. This image challenges the American archetype of the "self-made man" and the modern idea that we have "bounded selves" that are beyond influence and interdependence. Moreover, possessiveness of knowledge (e.g., "that was *my* idea"), priority and originality (e.g., "I had that idea *first*"), and competition (e.g., "I know *more* than you do")--three dominant values rooted in individualism--can unravel the thread of generativity which emphasizes the pleasure in sharing and the communal process of creation.

Cultural tensions around valuing tradition versus change and innovation also translate to ambivalence about generativity. The distinctive love in American culture for a "fresh start," "clean slate," and cutting edge ideas--all press for a kind of erasure of history that is bedrock to generativity. These layers of tension coming from the culture need to be kept in mind when thinking about the expression of generativity in mentorship.

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Generative Objects (***What*** **is passed on?)**

If generativity entails "kissing and biting the hand that feeds," to use Jessica Benjamin's (1995) tart phrase, Kotre has done so by reworking and expanding the conception of generativity put forth by his intellectual mentor, Erik Erikson. Instead of seeing it as a developmental response to midlife crisis, Kotre argues that generativity is an urge that seeks expression throughout the life cycle in four different forms: biological, parental, technical, and cultural. I am mainly interested in the latter two types which are most applicable to mentorship.[4] (See Figure VI-1)

The mentor is technically generative when she passes on her skill, knowledge, craft or technique. The mentor who is culturally generative goes beyond teaching in the technical sense--she offers lessons on the meaning and values that set the stage for the skills and knowledge, offering ideas about how that knowledge fits into the larger social world, how it enriches a life, what it contributes to culture. Hence, technical generativity concerns *how to do* and *what to know*. It is about information and practice. Cultural generativity, on the other hand, concerns the question of significance--*what it means*. It is about insight and integration.

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FIGURE VI-1

TYPES AND OBJECTS OF MENTORSHIP GENERATIVITY

Types	Objects
Technical generativity --concerns how to do things (skills) and what to know (concrete knowledge)	Practical-utilitarian objects information, skill, technique technique, craft (the mechanics) and facts
Cultural generativity --concerns what things mean (significance) and how to be (one's place in the world)	Cultural-historical objects insight, traditions, values meanings (the total picture picture/gestalt)
	Cultural-psychological objects identity, character, purpose (via interaction and example)
Cultural and Technical --concerns the nuts and bolts of advancement and ascend-ance as well as the meaning and deportment attached to the role of successor	Political-succession objects position or status

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The two types often overlap. When a mentor discusses with her protégée how to navigate organizational politics by giving advice about which colleagues she needs to avoid, flatter, mollycoddle, confront, etc.--she is not only offering practical information about how to finesse collegial encounters with particular individuals, she is also offering an interpretive sketch of the organizational or professional culture--something which will deepen the protégée's understanding of their field or company.

Still, calling attention to the distinction between technical and cultural generativity has heuristic value and can fruitfully advance the scholarship in mentorship which has for the most part neglected its cultural dimension. Much of the previous literature has understood the teaching function of mentorship rather narrowly and concretely in the technical and strategic sense. For example, "coaching" or offering the protégée opportunities to work on "challenging assignments"--two core functions in Kathy Kram's scheme (1988)--relate to learning the ropes of a job and new work skills. She links neither function, however, to culture beyond the world of the organization. Generative objects are thus viewed as ahistorical--registering only at the level of individual identity and personal careers on the one hand and organizational goals on the other. For Kram and many others who

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followed in her footsteps, what gets passed on in mentorship is not construed as matter of cultural import.

Levinson (1978) on the other hand, did appreciate the cultural significance of generativity in a way, I think, that even Kotre neglects. That is, for Levinson, the generativity in mentorship concerns *how to be*. What is passed on are ideas about how one can live a satisfying life as an adult--something more related to existential questions of identity, character, and purpose in the world than any particular professional or personal pursuit. The emphasis is on helping the protégée envision *what kind of person* she could become. One protégée, for instance, felt she carried her mentor's legacy by becoming "much more New York" as a result of working and socializing together. What rubbed off on her had to do with fitting in to the art world by evolving an urban sensibility of which her mentor was an exquisite example. Hence, the mentor is generative insofar as she makes herself available as a model--someone whose life offers a possible template for the protégée to think about and try on for size, as part of a process of imagining and crystallizing in her mind her own future and identity.

One might ask how such a conception demonstrates an appreciation for the role of culture in generativity. The answer, at least in my reading

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of Levinson, is that identity and questions about *how to be* are not viewed solely as aspects of personal life but steeped in cultural meaning as well. That is, while helping the protégée figure out *how to be*, the mentor's influence conveys *ideas about life* that reflect values, ethics and standards regarding things like success, femaleness, pleasure, ambition, a job well done, good authority, accomplishment, etc. Thus, *how to be*, while deeply individual and existential, is also ineluctably a cultural matter set in history.

Listen to one mentor's account about the influence of her mentor many years prior on how to be as an artist--a generative gift that she has since been trying to pass on to her protégées:

> Emmie: In retrospect, what it feels like was most important--if I think of the person I was at 20 or 25--was the emotional support for sustaining failure, for telling me that its okay to be bad at this. Its part of your job to be bad at this! You're *succeeding* if you feel like you're being bad at this. This allowed me to have the confidence to sit with my sense of inadequacy--to know that its normal...In fact, I can say that 25 years later--starting a piece, I feel incompetent and non-functional and like I don't know what I'm doing. The only difference is that now I'm comfortable with that feeling...its sustainable..It doesn't make me terrified and anxious even though it still doesn't feel very good.

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Emmie relates here that her mentor's lessons were soothing and indelible--they reassured her years ago and still today that cultural ideals about being expert at one's work fail to contain the messier parts of the creative process. As the mentor conveys the importance of adopting a more patient attitude toward oneself--encouraging the protégée to accept feelings of inadequacy as a normal part of the process of creativity--she is also making a declaration about and imprint upon culture by helping her protégée resist unrealistic and ultimately inhibiting images of creative success.

One protégée stated plainly that she took the lead from her mentor regarding *how to be*. In this case, she saw the high value and room for deep friendship in her mentor's life, was moved by this, and embraced it as a goal of her own:

> Jackie: As much as I see her--warts and all-I'm still noticing things about how [my mentor] lives her life--again, less the professional stuff, but how she lives her life. And thinking, "Oh, I wanna be that way." I'll give you an example. She has two apartments that they own in the building they live in. One is the one they live in--they're both tiny--and the other is this extra apartment that they have for visitors. Because they *really* want people to visit them. And I really like that. I mean there is just this kind of welcoming and having friends stay for a week and have their own space but be able to come down and visit with Abigail and Stan that I really like.

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> ...I stopped by recently when she was doing her holiday cards and they were doing like 150 cards and I thought, she does keep in touch with people. And I wanna have a life where I have space for people. And they stay. Its not just like, I go out to dinner with someone. There's more--its like saying "you're really part of our lives and you're welcome in our house."

One final generative object that warrants a fuller discussion--something I shall develop later in this chapter--relates to the literal and political act of handing something down--that is, the act of *succession*. Sometimes the object transferred by the mentor is her position in the organization and/or the professional field. As the mentor steps down (or up) from her official position, she may have groomed the protégée to assume the role she vacates. Even when there is no official position, the mentor may try to pass on her status as the expert in this or that field of art, commerce, or knowledge. Symbolically, she passes the torch to the protégée--as a representative of the next generation to assume the mantle of authority, privilege, and responsibility.

Motives & Modes (*Who* does it serve? *How* is it passed on?)

One cannot fully appreciate the process of generativity without having a way to think about *motivation*, the role of *control and agency*, and the *vision of reproduction* in the process. After all, as mentioned already, the

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question of who profits from generativity is not an open and shut matter nor is the question regarding how, in the course of making the imprint, authority is articulated. That is, it is not simply that the mentor decides what she will teach or pass on and then pastes it onto a passive receptacle of a protégée, tabula rasa. Different possibilities arise as to how the generative influence will be imagined and negotiated by both parties.

Let us first look at the question of who benefits. In my view, there are three choices. Generativity can be organized for the mentor's benefit--that is, for ego enhancement or for the instrumental aim of career leverage; for the protégée's benefit--that is, for her individual development and sense of place in the world; or for the good of the culture--that is, for the sustenance of important symbols, values, lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, canons, etc. One could characterize these types of motives as narcissistic, altruistic, and communal.

Kotre (1996) refers to what I am calling the narcissistic motive as the "agentic" mode--that which is focused on the mentor's needs and where "generative objects [are] narcissistically possessed, cannibalized, or erected as monuments to the self" (p. 17). Examples include training protégées to perform *exactly as I do* or drawing attention to a style of organizational

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management which *I* introduced to the company or a particular contribution which *I* made to the field. Opposite to the agentic mode, Kotre identified one other mode of generativity as "communal"--that which "represents the participation of the individual in a mutual, interpersonal reality or in some larger organism...Life-interest is transferred to the generative object. The object is loved for itself" (p. 17).

In a book analyzing the dynamics of influence between poets and lovers, Thomas Simmons (1994) offered another useful paradigm. He saw the motivation for generativity as oriented toward either preserving *tradition* or enhancing *personhood*--that is, to what degree a mentor's energy is focused upon propagating a cultural object (e.g., a literary canon) versus nurturing the creative potential of a person. My three part scheme which deals with the benefits to the mentor, the protégée, and cultural objects--tries to combine Simmon's focus on generative objects and Kotre's focus on the motivations or strivings that organize generative efforts.

It is important to point out that generativity motivated by narcissism is not inherently "bad" and that the less self-focused modes of generativity are inherently "good." Probably, as Kotre argues, this is true at the extremes. But generativity often reflects a combination of selfish and

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selfless motives. Exposing the protégée to her managerial philosophy not only equips the protégée with valuable information and strategy and moves toward extending the value of certain well regarded managerial principles into the future. It is also a way to immortalize the mentor's design of a particular organizational culture. Narcissistic, altruistic, and communal motives are all present and linked.

On the other hand, motivations may lean in one direction or another. One protégée, for example, drew a comparison between the generative motives of a parent and mentor which split narcissistic and altruistic orientations decisively:

> Mira: I don't know if I wanna be a choreographer or dancer or performer..But with Emmie [mentor] there's not an expectation or maybe that assumption that I'll even stay in the field. So in a way its easier, in a way its harder. Like with my stepmother--she just thinks I'm great and that my dance pieces are "obviously going to be great." (chuckles) I *know* she values what I write. I guess I'm not positive about that with Emmie...The thing with Emmie is that I don't feel like she is dependent at all on the outcome of what I do. I think she would love it if I performed....But its not like who she is or what she is is really dependent on what I do... If I perform, is that gonna make her happy--like she's a different or better person? No. Whereas I think my stepmother needs these things to approve of herself.

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An interesting thing to note about this account is that the protégée isn't sure which is better--to be the object of intense expectation for a parent who offers unqualified praise and cheerleading in the direction of a specific goal versus to be the object of little expectation for a mentor whose lack of narcissistic investment leaves the protégée feeling less directed. As we will see later in the chapter, this mentor's seemingly more altruistic approach--one in which the protégée's freedom to develop is entirely hers to define--is not absent of narcissistic motives. Indeed, this mentor's attempt to give the protégée a lot of space came as much or perhaps more from her own anxieties about authority as from any emancipatory yearnings expressed by the protégée.

This brings us back to the topic of authority. Answering the question about whether the mentor is self- or other-focused in her generative pursuits connects to but does not directly address the question of how *authority* is expressed in this process. One cannot, after all, be generative without having something to pass on; one must be fertile to be generative. And if one defines authority as having the capacity to share strength, to hand some resource down--then generativity must imply authority. *Someone with greater wisdom and faculty knows something that I don't know and can*

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share that with me to enrich my life and leave a legacy to the culture. The question then becomes not only in which direction or to what end the mentor's generative energies are directed but *how* the mentor takes up her authority in making an imprint upon the protégée. How comfortable is the mentor as an authority? How do her rational and non-rational feelings about authority color her approach to and goals of teaching the protégée?

I envision several alternatives here that relate to the extent to which generativity is (or appears to be) designed for *cloning*, creating a *path*, a *transitional space*, a *passage*, or a *barren wilderness*. (See Figure VI-2) One could think of these different images on a continuum of control versus agency set against a metaphor of fertility and birth.

One end of this continuum--cloning--would place the mentor in total control, obliterating the self or subjectivity of the protégée. "*You can be me*," says the mentor whose impulse it is to reproduce herself exactly. To clone is to collapse two people into one. This is an infertile state because birth involves new life--the baby is an other--not the same as the self. Discussed earlier as a wrinkle in the process of idealization, one protégée had the feeling that her mentor tried to make her a clone:

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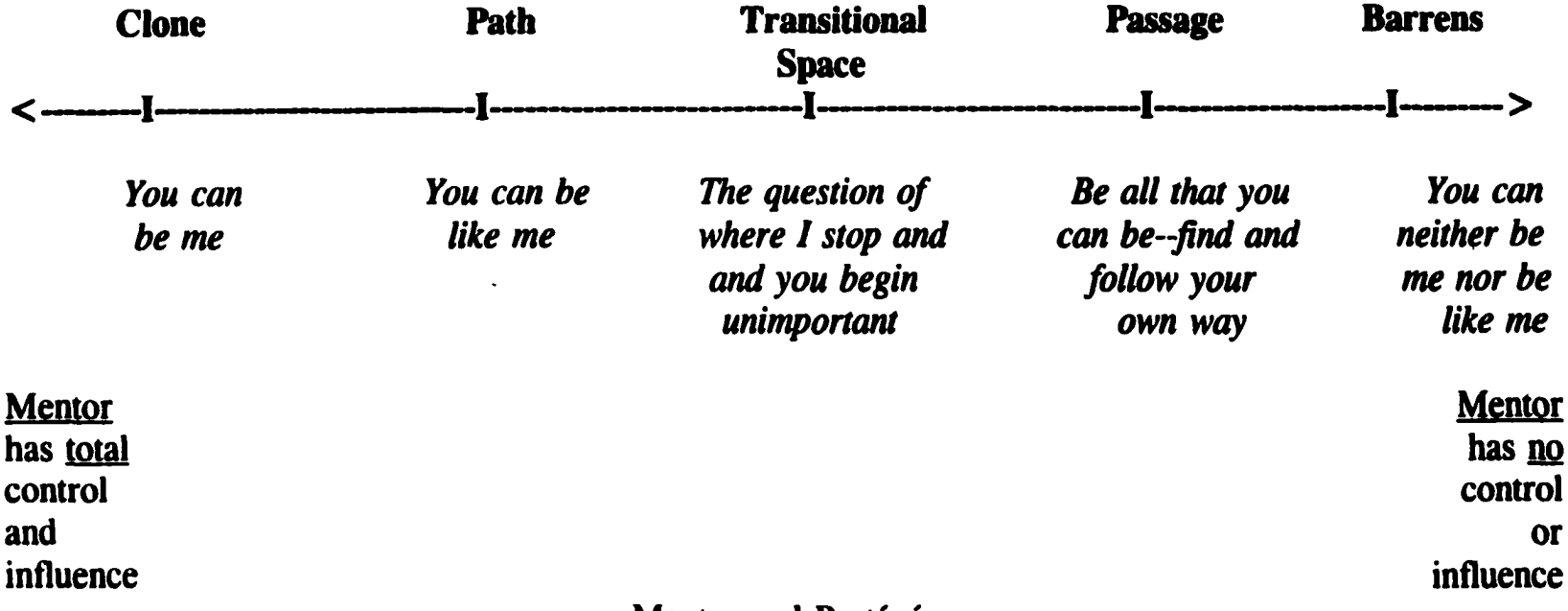
FIGURE VI-2

A CONTINUUM OF MENTORSHIP APPROACHES TO GENERATIVITY



Lenore: But [my mentor] can't really put herself into my head. I mean to her it might be obvious that A, B or C entails D...so she wouldn't even stop to think about whether *I* might respond like that. I mean she has a very strong sense that we see things exactly the same way, that we're sort of "kindred spirits"--that's how she expressed it to me once.

I once told her that I thought that when she looked at me, all she saw was a reflection of herself. And that's why there's this discordance between her expectations and what I'm actually able to do...I feel like--I'm really exaggerating it--but almost like this mirror. There's nothing behind it, you know, just a pane of glass. That when she looks at me--she thinks she's seeing me but what she's seeing is her own strengths and her own abilities and accomplishments.

The mentor in this case had her own share of exasperation as she began to understand what the protégée apparently had been trying to convey for some time. Using our interview time largely as a means to talk about her disappointment, this mentor admitted that she'd "always viewed her [protégée] as [her] likely successor." She seemed crushed as she came to accept that the protégée could not be her replica.

The other end of the continuum--creating a barren wilderness--places the protégée's agency in the forefront and obliterates the authority of the mentor. The outcome is the flip side of cloning. That is, again, no new life is created. But this time it is because no seed or gestational support is

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provided. "*You can neither be me nor be like me*," says the mentor who cannot or is unwilling to express her generative potential. For some reason, she cannot bear to be a part of reproduction. She withdraws from making the generative contact seeming to believe (in fantasy) in the possibility of immaculate conception. It is as if she believes that the protégée requires no help from the outside to procreate. In this sense, there is no mentoring. Perhaps we could view this mode of anti-generativity as a form of birth control--the mentor wants to have the sex (e.g., do the mechanics of mentoring) but refuses to reproduce (e.g., to leave or make something lasting with the protégée).

Between these two extremes--to create a path, transitional space, or a passage all suggest slightly different forms of generative fertility and vary along dimensions of control and agency. They are distinguished, however, from the two extreme ends of the continuum by having an interactional element. That is, two parties are engaged in a give and take process. In each approach, the outcome is some kind of new life; something grows that did not exist before and it is a product of both the mentor and protégée.

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Creating a path

In creating a path, the mentor maintains some control over the process and outcome but less so than in (the theoretical act of) cloning. The mentor in this scenario believes that aspects of her life and/or work are worth preserving and she invites--sometimes insists--that the protégée adopt these things. "*You can be like me*," says the mentor who creates a path. Looking for someone to "buy into [her] ideas"--one mentor set out to find a protégée--a person at the start of her career--who was "her own person" on the one hand, but would be malleable enough to accept her ideas and "vision."

> Lynn: If the person was early enough in her career, I'd almost have a clean slate as opposed to a seasoned, experienced person who I would have to keep pulling in on the ideas that would help us move forward.

And the strategy seemed to have worked, to hear her protégée tell it:

> Rozellen: Lynn became a huge force in my life. She steered my career and my personal life. Not in any bossy way. Not in a take charge way. But like she helped me to make decisions. I always walked out of her office feeling like I made a decision. She just offered advice. But thinking back--I'm thinking--well, most of those decisions...she wanted me to make. So she *steered* me that way!

The mentor who creates a path, tries to set an example in her conduct, tells stories about her past, uses the models of teaching to which she was

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exposed, and has no qualms about being directive in her advice based on her own experience. She believes strongly that her protégée can benefit from going through the same kinds of experiences that she went through.

> Alex: I don't think emotionally [my mentor] set about entirely consciously to make me A or B. There are points at which she does. Like she *does* want me to finish this manuscript and that's conscious. She tries to kind of manipulate me into thinking that its really important. And she thinks she's gonna have to because she thinks--because its for *me*--that I won't do it.
>
> ...Sometimes she'll come out with things (laughs) like that I'm "uptight," that I "don't think about myself enough." She'll just say that directly. And so when she thinks that she's manipulating me in my best interest, she'll do whatever she can (flashes an amused look). And that's conscious...

Here is a case in which the primary generative gift from the mentor was to encourage the protégée to become less self-sacrificing. The protégée acknowledges that she has let a period of time go by without publishing her work, overwhelmed by the demands of family and reluctant to place her own career in the limelight to finish her writing--even temporarily. The idea that women should pay attention to their own needs and interests was a conviction the mentor had developed as she grew up and uncomfortably watched her mother subordinate her needs to the father. Not to repeat her

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mother's mistakes, this mentor was almost vigilant not to let her own personhood get lost in marriage and family.

> Claire: One thing that I've thought of from pretty early on..and my family always teases me about being mean to men. I mean, I've been married three different times. And it was my choice to end those other two marriages...Generally my family has thought of me as somebody who's you know, a "bitch"--to the men she's with. And I agree. That's probably true to some degree. But I very consciously thought that I did not wanna have the kind of relationships my mother had with men. That I just didn't wanna have... this, "Whatever makes you happy, honey--if you're interested in it, I'm interested in it; if you say we live here, we live here." You know--the sort of perpetual sense of gratitude to men--absolutely not. (sighs and laughs)...
>
> Bonnie: So you escaped it.
>
> Claire: ...Oh yeah. I probably went too far in the other direction but that's a different issue...That's something I would not [do]-- that sort of sacrifice for the guy--.. You know, my mother put two men through school. As soon as she finished--her marriage with my dad, she married a much younger man and put him through dental school after putting my father through law school!...So where does she end up?...She's a broke high school teacher. Trying to retire and wondering if she's gonna have enough money to live.

Given the vagaries of her own life path, one could say that Claire was on a generative mission with Alex--that is, to help her protégée chart a new,

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less self-depriving juggle of life's priorities. She was "hellbent" on seeing to it that new generations of women did not defer to the men in their lives--a trend she felt she spotted early in her relationship with Alex.

In the extreme, the mentor who creates a path offers the protégée a pre-graphed route of how to be, love, and work in the world. Her intellectual, ideological, professional and existential DNA are encoded in her generative efforts. The path may have markers, signs, direction, detours, etc.; the important thing to keep in mind is that the path is laid out by and follows the mentor's own life course.

I want to point out that while in the extreme, creating a path can become a carbon copy model of generativity, in less extreme forms it does not necessarily lead to a clone-like outcome. That is, I may follow the same steps that my mentor has taken to rise in the company or field and I may adopt my mentor's approach to dealing with work and organizational issues. *But* when *I* do so, my enactment of these steps is apt to look very different on me than on my mentor. In other words, to follow in my mentor's footsteps does not mean I become my mentor, nor does it mean that my mentor wishes me to be exactly like her. Instead, my mentor may offer a path like one offers a map--one may arrive at a similar destination but she

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has not lost her personhood in the process of getting there. Indeed, there is nothing which stops a protégée from emerging in her full individual potential at a similar destination. Agency is not necessarily lost in this process. Offering a path can simply involve allowing oneself, one's interests, and one's life steps to serve as an outline or guide for the protégée. Guide does not equal guru, however: following in someone's well-traveled path does not mean one becomes a vapid or mindless disciple.

Creating a passage

In creating a passage, the mentor makes a space available for the protégée to discover her own path and to create something completely new. The emphasis is on the uniqueness of the individual and the provision of support and resources necessary to nurture the flowering of the individual's potential and choices. "*Be all that you can be--find and follow your own way*" says the mentor who stays out of the way but tries to ensure that the conditions for *natural* growth are possible (e.g., maximum exposure to a range of ideas, beliefs, alternative skills, and non-judgmental support). This naturalistic approach--where the teacher's role is limited to supervising the environment for learning--mirrors the model of pedagogy set forth in Rousseau's classic book, Emile (1964).

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Emmie illustrates this approach well. Beyond the provision of equipment, studio space, a circuit of colleagues with whom to network, and general cheerleading, she finds herself "clueless" about how to teach art and philosophically ambivalent about whether that should even be a goal with a protégée:

> Emmie: I'm very hesitant to be very forthcoming about "well, you should do this or you should do that," because I have no interest in channeling her or anyone else to write dance pieces like *my* dance pieces. I mean, I choreograph my way and that's my problem. It doesn't really have anything to do with what anybody else wants to do. Obviously if someone came to me and said, "I wanna learn how to do this or that movement cause I think its really cool," of course, I'd be happy to show them how I do it. But that's not what Mira's [the protégée] coming to me to do. And so its just a mystery for me. I just don't have a clue what exactly I'm supposed to do. And in some ways--I sort of have this philosophical stance that its not my job. Its no one's job to tell anybody else how to choreograph. Whenever that's done, its either trivial or intrusive--one or the other, you know?...I don't know that that's really true...(laughs impishly)
>
> ...When she brings me a piece for feedback, I try to tell her what I'm seeing, tell her how I'm understanding her piece, and let her decide on the basis of her knowledge of me and my proclivities, whether she wants to change her piece or not.
>
> ...I would like Mira to develop a clear idea of what she herself wants to do. And to whatever

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> degree I can help with that, I'd be delighted to do so. I sort of feel like its up to her. That is, I don't have any real clear ideas about what I can initiate to help her with that. Its more that she has to initiate what she wants to do in her own life.

At the extreme, offering a passage can lean toward barrenness and is associated with structurelessness. No form exists as a model. Growth is expected to take place in the relative absence of influence as in a kind of void in which the protégée may be offered the basic resources to survive and grow but receives a hands-off, "Do as you please, don't ask me for direction" abdication of mentoring authority and influence.

Cultural ambivalences about authority

As a backdrop to these approaches to generativity, one might see the shadows of repudiated images of authority that have taken hold in American society since the post-fifties era. Although biographical details and situational factors are probably more decisive for explaining why any particular mentor might retreat from generative authority, it is important to bear in mind the impact of such cultural currents.

On the one hand are the 1960's and post-sixties radicals and feminists who reject authority for its potential to tilt toward authoritarianism and oppose hierarchy for its potential to tilt toward inequality. In this view,

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freedom comes from dismantling authority and hierarchy and their institutional bases of oppressive thought and practice in capitalism and patriarchy. When pushed to its limits, however, there is no room in this line of thinking for a conception of nonauthoritarian authority nor is there room to think about hierarchy as an expression of difference, not necessarily domination.

There is a raw quality to Claire's articulation of this position--a politically informed conviction that, as we will see later, frames and justifies her ambivalence about authority in relation to her protégée, Alex:

> Claire: ...As soon as I say that you're the boss, I have to hate ya--cause you're the boss. (laughing) That's just the way it is.
>
> ...Its a terrible thing to do, to have your sense of yourself be dependent on authority. I think that's a terrible thing to do--and its odd--especially when radicals do it. And they do. I mean radical students do it all the time. Because on the one hand we know...its the *system*-- hello? You know, this is it. So, now we know that the scum rises, so what does it really mean when you say, "Am I okay?" You're asking this power structure to tell you, "you're okay?"--this power structure that is horrid, terrible!...If you wanna be respected by the likes of William Clinton? Please! I'd rather not be. In general, I find that a very dangerous stance...
>
> Bonnie: That kind of idealizing?

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Claire: Yeah--sort of emotionally idealize the very thing that you know, *you know* to be corrupt.

On the other hand are postmodern thinkers--the most radical of which reject the philosophical premise of authority altogether as epistemologically unsound. Truth doesn't exist, they argue, thus, authority is groundless or tentative and illusory at best. Everyone is her own author, we all live inside of language; hence, the idea that anyone could know something of value to pass on to enhance another's life is thought to be capricious and regarded with suspicion.

Listen again to Emmie, as she describes the anxiety of influence as she sees it--an anxiety that is laced with a queasy mistrust of authority--particularly in creative endeavors:

Emmie: ....When you have a teaching job, you are an expert. And people come to you. And they say, "So what are the goods?" And you have to then articulate your vision in some reasonably concrete, reasonably consistent, reasonably articulate way which freezes it and prevents you from growing as an artist--or that's my belief. Or that's my fear.

Bonnie: It gets too set in stone?

Emmie: Its too easy if you've got people at your knees trying to learn, trying to master your goods, to think you've got goods. Well, the minute you think have goods, they aren't goods anymore.

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> ...In fact, my best teacher taught choreography the only way I think it can be taught which was instead of saying, "this is good, this is not good--do it this way," he would simply watch and tell you what he was seeing. Which meant that it was about him. And given what I knew of him, I could either choose to change things or do things differently or not--it was completely my choice on the basis of my sense of what his preoccupations, skills, attitudes and beliefs were. And in that way, I actually was able to learn way more from him than from anybody else.
>
> He wasn't presuming to say anything about the piece. He was presuming to say what he was watching in the piece. And he's an expert on that. And there's no questioning that--and its true. But that is over here (motions with one arm) and the piece is over here (motions with the other arm), and I'm over here and there's a relation between three. But its not like he's trying to say, "this is what the piece is and this is what you should do."

As these brief passages suggest, these two positions--fairly dominant in American culture over the past fifty years in opposition to conservative views that esteem traditional forms of authority and hierarchy as good (functional) for society and its members--do filter into what individuals think and feel about authority in mentorships. They shape the discourses in the accounts and pattern the ways of talking about and justifying attitudes about authority among mentors and protégées.

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Working in a transitional space

Somewhere between the image of creating a path or a passage probably lies an ideal. Here, the line between what results from the mentor's input and what gives rise to the protégée's output is blurred. In this domain of generativity, the mentor and protégée accept ambiguity in the boundaries of influence. This is an intersubjective realm of experience that the British psychoanalyst, D.W. Winnicott (1971), called "transitional space"--an intermediate zone between "what is objectively perceived and what is subjectively conceived of" (p. 11). In this space, the distinction between what comes from "inside" the person and what comes from "outside" cannot be determined and indeed the question is thought to be moot to ask. An example is the appreciation of art or religion the experience of which is neither fully created nor discovered. Hence, engagement with cultural objects is viewed as taking place at the boundary of reality and illusion.

By working in a transitional space, the mentor recognizes her authority and the protégée's agency in the same moment. To be generative in this mode means to co-create something new in a way that makes it as impossible to answer as it is irrelevant to ask about who deserves credit for the production.

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Lucienne, a painter, related many examples of her mentor, Francois' reactions to her drawings--the very specific ways in which he would offer suggestions about changing the size of the brush, dimensions of the paper, refining lines. He had a light touch in his feedback--merely suggesting things to her which she then would go back and try. Often they were ideas that she had been thinking of on her own. As if on the tip of her tongue, Francois would articulate them for her. Lucienne would integrate the suggestion--eventually--but in her own way. They would be incorporated as her innovations. She said she would find that sometimes it wasn't clear what was his idea and what was her idea. "Often my feeling about the few things he says is that they gel and crystallize things I'm already thinking about and so that afterwards, I can't remember what was his idea and what was mine."[5]

Thus, the mentor who conceives of her generative position as an opportunity to create and work in a transitional space with her protégée neither wishes to clone herself nor to divest herself of the authority of knowing or having something to pass on. She neither aggrandizes nor negates her own experience and knowledge. In this sense, neither blind obedience, conformity or indoctrination on the one hand, nor anarchy,

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structurelessness or abnegation of authority on the other, are subscribed to or celebrated.

It is important to note that mentorships often involve various modes of generative authority. I do not mean to suggest that these are static positions that are assumed by a mentor and protégée for all time or that they pertain to all instances of generativity in the course of any given relationship. Clearly, for example, there are situations that almost demand a mode of teaching in which a specific skill can be cloned, so to speak. Consider, for instance, training a protégée in a newly invented surgical technique. The mentor in this case would almost certainly require that the protégée learns her exact protocol. At the same time, other generative concerns--such as influencing the protégée's sense of what it means to be a doctor, or how to regard the values of the profession--would likely afford more leeway to the mentor in terms of her generative approach. Moreover, things change over time in a mentorship, so while at an early point in the relationship a mentor may be more inclined to advise the protégée to follow in her footsteps by taking a series of prerouted steps toward professional growth, at a later point the mentor might decide to stand back a bit and encourage the protégée to discover the best avenue to her own development.

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Generative Enactments

How then does generativity play out in actual mentoring relationships and how is the ambivalence stirred up by generativity manifested? What factors shape these processes? What paves the way to "success" in generativity or to a successful transfer? What are the obstacles? When is generativity more likely to be dominated by narcissistic motivations as opposed to altruistic or communal interests? What goes into selecting the objects of generativity--that is, how does a mentor decide what to pass on to the protégée? In what situations is the mentor likely to pursue generative efforts which are technical and what gives rise to cultural generativity? How does a mentor come to be more authority-laden in her approach to generativity versus hands-off?

In beginning to address these questions, it is important to reiterate that generativity can be a very subtle process. While it can have concrete manifestations--such as training a protégée in a specific skill or giving practical advice about personal or professional aspirations--generative influence tends to be more elusive. What exactly the mentor wishes to impart, how she goes about doing so, and how and what the protégée takes in from the process are not usually mapped out in advance nor do they

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always leave an observable imprint.

> Mira: Anybody who comes in contact with [my mentor] will be changed because...gosh, I don't how to say all this stuff without sounding really corny. She's just really unique! I mean she's like fresh air. Like just meeting her is like, I don't know--like a first spring or something. Just something fresh.

Often generative acts--typically those which impact upon the sense of *how to be*, sculpting one's sense of character, identity, or values--are like gossamer threads woven into the fabric of routine interactions between mentors and protégées--unheralded but shimmering with an afterglow. It is not uncommon for protégées to talk about something ineffable that happened to them as a result of knowing their mentor--some indescribable way in which their lives were lifted by the mentorship experience. And it is also not uncommon for both parties to not know when the influence took hold and what acts lead to the imprint.

Be that as it may, patterns do emerge regarding variables that inform and direct the expression of generativity. Indeed, findings from this study show that a mentor's approach to generativity very much depends upon three key concerns: the extent to which she *identifies* with her protégée, the nature of her feelings and fantasies about *authority* and her role as an authority figure, and questions about *what is available to be passed on.*

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Ideally, to spark and sustain generative efforts, the mentor needs to be able to see the protégée as someone who can walk in her shoes or follow in her footsteps. As well, she needs to feel confident in the fact that she has something valuable to pass on and comfortable about her entitlement to do so. Further, she must have a stake in the culture and objects must be available from it for her to have something to pass on. The reality, as mentoring narratives from my study show, is that all of these issues are complicated and rife with ambivalence which can sometimes thwart the generative process.

First, the extent to which the mentor can identify with her protégée is a thorny issue. Usually, by virtue of the fact that the pair has somehow constituted itself as a mentorship, there is some resonance between the parties and the mentor can trust that some valued part of her legacy will be carried on well by the protégée. But identifications can themselves be built on fragile or faulty foundations such as those based on projections or distorted appraisals of the other and can wind up misguiding generative efforts.

Second, the mentor's feelings and views about authority are also subject to tremendous ambivalence. As noted earlier, the thought of making

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an imprint on another person can tap primitive anxieties, wishes, and fears about power, responsibility, adequacy, exposure, (e.g., the "impostor syndrome"), grandiosity, etc. Under the weight of conflicted feelings, the mentor may exploit, resist, or flee from generativity altogether or she may overreach or compress the scope of her generative efforts. Moreover, as discussed earlier, tensions in the culture about various models of authority add to the ambivalence that mentors feel while providing legitimacy to their reservations about the generative role.

Finally, generativity is profoundly impacted by the extent to which the mentor is enfranchised and thus invested in creating a legacy. "First you need a sense of belonging to a culture in order to feel responsible to pass it on," wrote Ronald Manheimer (1995, p. 15) in a critical essay on the limits of generativity. Uncertain job futures and generalized flux in the post-industrial work world are destabilizing forces which produce ambivalence about generativity. How can mentors be expected to pass on bits professional or organizational culture when their own attachments are precarious and weak? Gender issues also figure into the generativity equation. That is, how can *women mentors*, in particular, hope to pass on bits of professional or organizational culture when they haven't necessarily

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been welcomed into those cultures and in many work contexts are still considered outsiders?

Beyond the issue of enfranchisement is the brute question of what is available to be passed on. Is succession a viable option? What happens when opportunities for mentors to pass on positions to protégées dry up? What happens when the technology of work changes so radically that protégées surpass mentors in skill and knowledge? The following section examines each of these factors and their impact upon generativity in actual mentoring relationships.

Ambivalent Identifications

Identification is an essential building block for generativity. There must be resonance, that is, between a mentor's experiences, interests, and values and those of her protégée. The image of passing something onto to a person who can be trusted to make something good of it in the future--links to this basic sense of identification--seeing oneself as like the other. The fact that mentors care about what happens to the generative object suggests that it is not "freely" offered. There is always an element of self-interest in the generativity process. With (at least) a healthy dose of narcissism, therefore, mentors will ask themselves, *Do I feel she (the*

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protégée) is like me? Could she be like me? Does she come from a similar place that I do? Does she remind me of myself or anyone I admired when I was younger? Will she reflect well on me in the years ahead? A mentor who cannot answer yes to any of these questions because she does not feel a sense of similitude in relation to the protégée--or cannot imagine the possibility of ever feeling this way tends to be conflicted about assuming the generative role and as a result, her efforts are constricted.

It should be understood that I mean identification here in both the sociological and psychoanalytic senses. In sociological parlance, identification relates to finding something in common with another person typically defined on the basis of social background. For example, it refers to the way that one is thought to identify with members of her same social group--be it defined by class, religion, gender, sexuality, marital or family status, ethnicity, educational background, et. al. Or it can refer to the way that one feels a connection to others who share her beliefs, world view, attitudes, hobbies, or life philosophies. The common ground is already there and is identifiable. Sociologists sometimes use the term *homosocial* to denote the tendency for individuals to identify and associate with others from the same group--however loosely defined. In the words of Judith

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Lorber (1979), "like trusts like."

In the psychoanalytical sense, however, identification assumes more complex shading. In this view, identification is not always a conscious process nor is it necessarily based on qualities that are obvious, immediate, or reality-based. A mentor may feel a strong emotional attraction to a protégée but have only a vague sense of why that is. Her investment in the protégée's welfare may go beyond the norm for reasons that elude her. Such pulls typically stem from identification based on a mixture of real attributes and experiences as well as fantasies, transference reactions, and qualities projected onto the protégée. These deeper psychological sources of identification animate and organize generative efforts, breathing a distinct sense of urgency and intensity into the process.

There is much opportunity in mentorship for identification to develop. Identifications are neither absolute, total, nor static. They are ambivalent, partial, and change over time. Just as the mentor and protégée come into the relationship with common backgrounds and proclivities that would predispose them to identify with the other, each party is also affected by the other and by the situations they go through together as the mentorship evolves. Events or changes that alter perceptions or feelings about the

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likeness, appeal, sense of camaraderie, mutuality, or common understandings of the other will have an impact upon identification which in turn will affect generativity.

For instance, Lynn, a mother of two grown children, expanded the focus her generative efforts--talking more intimately about herself and the dilemmas she faced as a working mother--after her protégée announced she was pregnant with her first child. Beyond her desire to leave a professional imprint, her protégée's pregnancy and start of family life opened up a whole new venue of generative influence for the mentor.

As the relationship progresses and the protégée grows more familiar with a field or company and its norms and values, the mentor--depending upon her own attitudes about the company--may come to view the protégée as becoming more like her or as someone whose capabilities to carry on her good name become more evident. Conversely, as time goes on, the mentor may identify less with her protégée. Fantasies about likeness and resonance are subject to testing against real situations and events as the mentorship progresses. Hence, while contoured by biography, identification is a fluid, interactional process--not a foreordained *thing*.

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Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that the degree of identification tends to be stronger with respect to certain qualities than with others. For example, while most mentors in the study felt simpatico with protégées' struggles to forge careers as professional women, they didn't necessarily identify with the specifics of their protégées' career dreams. Abigail, for one, was very attuned to and sympathetic about Jackie's uncertainties about how to forge a satisfying professional life as a woman in politics. She found the dilemmas reminiscent of her own and felt challenged and equipped to help Jackie navigate the general course:

> Abigail: When I was in Maine and was involved in politics, I was something of a public figure...I was articulate, I was smart, I was out there, you know? And I'm also warm and friendly and pretty easy to be with. So its not hard for me to see why [various young women] would just think that anything they could do to help my campaign would be wonderful. Its kind of always been, I think, in my life--young women that I have nurtured...I've taken that seriously because as I said, I have this thing about young men in politics and how they've always got other people taking care of them, watching out for them, setting them up, whatever. I think girls deserve that too, you know? So I've taken pretty seriously my responsibility to be there for young women.

Abigail clearly saw Jackie as one of the young women she wished to raise in politics. Yet, given her own effusive, spontaneous, activist

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inclinations and seat of the pants style, she admitted that although it gained her protégée great respect, she could not identify with the latter's heady, methodical, intellectual, and theoretical bent towards their common work as civic leaders.

> Abigail: I really admire Jackie a lot. I think she's really smart and committed to political substance. I mean she's got a very clear political philosophy and perspective that governs where she puts her energy and all.
>
> I always thought I don't really deserve the name "radical" because that kind of assumes you got a philosophical under-pinning and all I had was an emotional response...But it was not rational in anyway or educated...I just had this nose for injustice and wouldn't tolerate it...And so folks I work with would see something they didn't like and they'd bring it to me and say, "You know, something oughta be done about this," and then the next thing you know, I'd be on it--railing at this rule or that policy ...I wasn't an intellectual. Not at all.
>
> ...I feel like Jackie's really grounded with a political philosophy. She under-stands it and she knows what she believes and why she believes it. And she can bring that perspective to an analysis of it. Just the broadest range of things come to her. I never thought that I'm very good at that.

One could say that almost by nature, mentor and protégée were attracted to different spheres or agendas of the political field. Consequently,

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while confident that she could offer general career encouragement to her protégée and regale about her own fight to carve out a place for women in politics, Abigail didn't feel she had much to offer regarding Jackie's choices about the substantive areas of work she would pursue. In this regard, she confessed, "I don't think I've made any major contributions to Jackie's development...I don't know that I have anything to contribute."

Of course, the protégée also needs to identify with the mentor in order to accept the generative offering--imagining that she is already partly like her mentor and that she can become more like her in the future. As discussed in the chapter on idealization, the identificatory connection affects the protégée's ability to internalize what the mentor offers. This is a particularly charged issue during the early phase of mentorship when the protégée's idealization and desires for approval tend to be strongest:

> Lynn: At first [my protégée] *tried to be me*. And that was unacceptable. I told her that what was frustrating her about her work was that "there's nothing of Roze in this...where's Roze?" I'd say, "this is a wonderful proposal but you didn't put anything of yourself in there. That was designed to please me." That would be impossible for her to carry out.

At the same time, protégées are less inclined to accept generative influence on issues in which they disidentify with the mentor. One protégée

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who disapproved of her mentor's support of open marriage, for example, was uncomfortable even having conversations with the mentor about her more traditional love life.

(Mis)identifications

Identification makes possible the desire for generativity, yet it can be filled with fantasies and projections which can lead to unrealistic expectations and disappointments for both parties. The following case illustrations address two sources of ambivalence expressed in generativity efforts that stem from faulty identifications.

One comes from overidentification--that is, when the mentor sees the protégée as so much like herself that judgment about what the protégée needs and can accept in the way of generative influence becomes clouded. Mentors who overidentify with protégées tend to want to "fix" aspects of their protégées that they find unacceptable in themselves. They also risk collapsing likeness with sameness thus pushing generativity in the direction of cloning. *Since my protégée is like me, I assume she can do or is interested in X, Y, and Z because I can relate to these things.* It is easy to see how one could slip into forgetting the subjectivity of the other person when identification and fantasies of narcissistic gratification around that are

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strong. At the same time, this can lead to enormous frustration and misdirected anger at protégées when attempts to fix or replicate oneself don't take.

The other source of ambivalence comes from the constraining effects on generativity from underidentification--when the mentor sees the other as too little like herself to be entrusted with caring for generative objects. The mentor who underidentifies with her protégée distances herself from generative efforts because she fears losing control over her "precious substance." This can lead to a generativity stalemate and provoke a fair amount of guilt for the mentor.

My view is that both types of identification difficulties reflect narcissistic conflicts emerging from generative efforts. That is, mentors become distressed as they confuse what is for them and what is for the protégée in the course of generative expression. Ultimately, the efficacy of the imprinting process is impaired.

(I should stress that the following illustration cases by no means represent the only types of complications that can arise from identification. How identification can strengthen or undermine generative efforts is highly idiosyncratic in terms of how it plays out in particular mentorships.)

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You can't help but be like me. Mentioned earlier in terms of its effect on idealization dynamics between mentor and protégée, the story that Paula told me during our interview was one which emphasized the trouble that Trish constantly cooked up for herself. Paradoxically, it was a kind of trouble that drew Paula into an alliance with her protégée--it clearly made her care about Trish--and at the same time it was something that beleaguered her throughout their mentorship. It was a kind of trouble she felt utterly unable to "break Trish out of" despite repeated attempts and the application of all of her best generativity strategies and impulses. Yet at the root of her frustration, Trish's trouble was something she admitted to struggling with herself. In seeing unacceptable aspects of herself in Trish, Paula experienced both identification and repudiation.

The basic problem, according to Paula, was that Trish was continually hurting herself professionally by opening up to colleagues, gossiping, and assuming she could confide in them. Such behavior was dangerous at a place like Darlington--an expanding enterprise, hungry to promote top producers and heavily invested in fostering competition. It was doubly dangerous for Trish who had been a leader among the sales force almost from the moment she arrived at the company. Trish was the one to beat--everyone knew it.

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But while Trish apparently did not understand the politics of envy in her organization, Paula did. Paula believed she understood the subtext of this situation viscerally--that is, she knew that Trish could get eaten alive--that she was like a poodle in a ring of pit bulls. The reason that Paula understood this was that she too had faced this dilemma. Paula spoke of times when she opened up too much to colleagues, exposed her vulnerabilities, and got bitten.

> Paula: We were the same type of person and because of that we butted heads a lot...I saw her do a lot of things that I would have done. I saw her interactions with her peers. I was doing the same thing she was doing. I was trusting my peers and they were turning and stabbing me in the back. And so, I could get angry at her for doing it but I couldn't resolve it in my own relationships...There were so many times I would tell this person that I promoted things that happened between our boss and myself and she'd turn around and say something to him [the boss] and he'd call me and freak out. The same things would happen with Trish! She'd tell somebody something and it would get back to me and I would call her and freak out...So we were doing the same thing--we were just on totally different levels...I don't know whether I realized it consciously--I'm sure I realized it subconsciously...I had so much experience in the work force. I mean this was my fourth job. This was her first job. So I had been beaten up a few times...I was making the same mistakes she was making.

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This passage reveals, I think, part of what made these issues so hot for Paula: she wanted things to be different for Trish. Partly, this was to mask her own sense of helplessness when faced with the same situation. If she couldn't save herself from the treachery of colleagues, perhaps, at least she could spare Trish from the same fate.

As Paula told me about this, the tone in her voice had an urgency that made her seem exasperated with Trish over this issue, still, even though it was two years since they had worked together at Darlington. The political immaturity--expressed in a combination of effervescent chatter and impetuous gossip--was a piece of Trish that Paula could never finally control or tame. She repeatedly warned Trish not to trust the other employees. This became a mantra. She tried to get her protégée to harden. But Trish continued to talk and trust. Ergo, almost everything that Trish told colleagues got twisted into stories that wound up reflecting poorly on her. The gossip often got back to Paula and sometimes to Mitch, the company president.

Paula did not seem to grasp that despite her best intentions, her overidentification got in the way of her attempts to be generative. She got so hooked into trying to rid her protégée of this one problem that she missed

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opportunities to be influential in other areas. She also did not seem to understand that she undermined her generative effectiveness by modeling the very behavior she was trying to erase in her protégée. The fact that Paula allowed herself to become entangled in workplace gossip and to communicate in ways that pit some colleagues against each other made it difficult for Trish to absorb the seriousness of her generative lesson. "Do as I do."

You couldn't be (like) me. When mentors strain to identify with protégées--and cannot envision them as potentially good bearers of their generative gifts--that is, as unable to make something good of their influence, they are reluctant to make the investment. Some downscale generative efforts. Others carefully circum-scribe them. One way this occurs, for example, is by narrowing the scope of generativity to technical or concrete matters, while steering clear of the more risky business of cultural generativity which entails influence on deeper, necessarily more ambiguous questions of meaning, value, and identity.

This type of generative contraction was painfully evident in the mentorship of college professors, Claire and Alex. The fact that Claire did not see eye to eye with Alex made it very difficult for her to imagine that

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her protégée could carry her seed into the future fruitfully. The painful aspect was that Alex really wanted to have a chance at it. As Claire saw it, however, there was a basic divide between she and her protégée that was not worth bridging.

Claire spent a good deal of time during our interview talking about all kinds of differences she believed she and Alex had. For one thing there was the age and generational difference. She was a half generation older than her protégée and referred to the distinctive eras they grew up in as producing understandings of the world that set them apart.

> Claire: We're really of a different generation actually. Because kids who grew up in the 1950's and early 60's are way different than those who grew up in the '70's. Different life.
>
> ...I sort of like perpetually have this vision of Alex as somebody wet behind the ears. Its like, "Oh my god, she's so young! How could she not know that?"...

Late in the interview, Claire hints at the deeper truth--that its probably not the age difference that matters:

> ...If we were the same age and at the same stage in life, we might not be friends at all. I mean, I don't think we'd dislike each other. But we're pretty different.

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I sensed that Claire was casting about during our interview for a way to explain why she lacked generative desire in relation to her protégée, Alex. It was as if she knew--even if somewhat inchoately--that generativity was expected in mentorship yet she had tremendous resistance to filling this role with this particular protégée. And she seemed uncomfortable about that.

The crux of her conflict was that she worried that because she and Alex held divergent intellectual and political perspectives--her generative energies would be wasted. Claire was a staunch, some might call orthodox Freudian, while Alex was part of the new vanguard of Lacanians:

> Claire: Alex said to me once she doesn't really understand Freudian thinking very well. So she said, "You really have to tell me about your experience with the classical psychoanalytic scene"--which I never was associated with because that was a generation earlier! There was no way I was gonna go through that with her. No way. I know she wouldn't understand it...I don't wanna do it just for somebody who kind of admires me intellectually. I don't wanna do it for that...
>
> When Alex asked me about my life story--how I came to be a Freudian ...I remember exactly where I was when she asked me... We were in the park walking our dogs and I remember we were about four blocks from home and I said, "Oh we don't have time now," and I remember thinking, "Hope she never raises this again because I don't

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> wanna tell her." I don't wanna have to tell her, "Look I'm not gonna talk about that," cause then its just gonna make it all the more mysterious--right? There was no way to say "no" without sort of evoking a further idealization.
>
> Sometimes I feel bad because I thought at first I should offer to read [Alex's] manuscript...and help her work through it. And then when it came right down to it--I thought, Jesus, that's gonna be so much work. And I know already what I'm going to say. I'm gonna lead her towards...a Freudian perspective of this...and she's not gonna go in that direction anyway. She wouldn't get it. She's not gonna get it.

Intellectual kinship was crucial to Claire. She classified allies and non-allies on the basis of their intellectual perspective:

> Claire: Frankly when I meet a new person its hard for me--if I'm really gonna get to know them, I have to feel out their world view. Its as if I really don't know who they are unless I can place them socially historically, and intellectually..
>
> ...There are people who share my perspective--I don't have to explain anything to them. They already know. I can make little jokes to them and they're not gonna take offense. They get the joke. And I can really trust their intellectual judgment. I can't do that with Alex. And so I care for her deeply but I find the relationship more limiting than satisfying, I would say.
>
> She can say to me, "What should I assign?" I can't really say that to her. I could! But to tell you the truth, I wouldn't trust her advice. (laughs)

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> ...Though she's nice. And if she weren't nice, if I didn't think, "Oh this is somebody who deserves a good turn" I never would have done it.

The message, though stinging, came through to Alex loud and clear:

> Alex: I don't think that she's gonna build bridges with people who aren't places she wants to go...I'm not sure...where I fit into that...Well, I think that she thinks of me as a well meaning, good-hearted person...a wanna-be Freudian. And that's better than a lot of other people at Newcastle. I'm kind of green behind the ears. Its true enough. You know, Claire instantly kind of figures people out. And puts them in a catalogue, in a file.

Claire recalled only one time when she had more than a few minute conversation with Alex about her intellectual work. Alex, however, sought Claire out several times to talk about course design issues (e.g., putting together syllabi). Even these conversations were strained by their differences. Giving a flavor of the kind of tension in their exchanges as a result of their basic intellectual gap, Claire described a encounter in which Alex came to her for advice about what books to use in a course. Claire told me that when *she* teaches the same course, she focuses on classical psychoanalysis--"I'm a Freudian, you know?" she said. But since Alex has been assigned to teach the course, she added ruefully, "there's none of that now."

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Claire: I could say..."Ferenzci wrote some interesting things about identification and mourning--you might wanna do that. Its sort of easy to understand, it makes students think twice about this and that.." But to some degree its just not gonna register. We don't speak the same language or think the same way. So there's no reason for me to try to win her over. I will not try to win her over.

Claire believed that Alex wanted to be invited to a study group on Freud she was leading on campus and was disappointed when Claire didn't invite her.

Claire: I think she was kind of concerned because I've been doing this Freudian study group and I think she kind of wanted me to invite her. I just didn't do it. I didn't want to. In any case--she never told me that she was disappointed but I think she was ..And she'd ask me, "What should I read about the history of Freudian thought?"...And I said, "Oh you could read, "Civilization and Its Discontents" or "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality." And she said to me, "Oh I've read them." I thought, "Oh my god!" I said, "Well you gotta read them again!" It didn't register! (laughing) Its true ...It didn't take! It didn't grab her!

Aghast at their differences, it is quite obvious that Claire didn't want to mix intellectually with Alex and that she was unable to trust that their basic intellectual stances could merge, mix, or season each other. It seems she didn't want her own ideas sullied by someone who might not "get it" or even worse, get it and do something corrupt with it.

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Claire: ...You say to somebody. "Look at it this way." It doesn't take. And (snaps her fingers) the next day, they forgot it. Or you hear them repeating it but they don't get it. And I don't like that.

Claire's overcautious stance seems to be embedded with a wish for control--"if upon hearing my ideas, you don't want to take them in the same direction that I do, then what's the point of telling you about the ideas in the first place?" In a sense, Claire shuts down this whole arena of generative influence because she can't control the outcome of the process. She can't control how the other will hear or transform the ideas. Claire seems afraid that Alex's elaboration of her generative object will spoil its original intent.

One last piece to Claire's generative resistance worth mentioning has to do with what she believes Alex's motivation is for wanting this type of influence--for gnawing at Claire to pass on this piece of herself. In Claire's view, Alex doesn't really want to learn about Freud but asks for this in order to win Claire's approval of her. This drives Claire nuts. That is, if she felt that Alex was truly interested in Freud--for Freud--she would probably welcome the opportunity to share this part of her world. But since it appears to her that Alex wants the engagement as a way to ingratiate herself, Claire wants none of it.

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Claire: She's always looking for another task-- another way to be good. So then she was gonna be good intellectually. She said to me, "Oh you should tell me some time about your intellectual history." I said, "Well, its a long story. I don't know if you really wanna know it."

[I wanted to say] "Its not necessary for you to know this. You don't have to be a Freudian to be a good person. And you can't be a Freudian just out of fashion. You know, its out of fashion for Christ sake. And if it doesn't burn in you, it ain't gonna work."...

Bonnie: You remember having this chat with her? Or you're just thinking about it--

Claire: No, I'm thinking about it. But I did have a talk with her once when she said, "Oh I'm a Lacanian. But I really want to study and become a Freudian." And I said, "Lacanians are fine. Its okay. You're a good person the way you are." You know. "you don't have to--

Bonnie: be you?

Claire: Yeah! "You don't have to be me."

Bonnie: Somehow there was something not quite authentic in why she wanted to know?

Claire: Yeah, yeah...just curiosity or wanting to sort of place it-- like, "Okay, now I understand another *ism*."

In the final analysis, I think that Claire was choosy about what kind of person she wanted to share her deepest ideas with because she cared so

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much about passing on a tradition she had grown to love. Thus, her ambivalence was probably just as much due to the lack of identification she felt with Alex as it was rooted in her passionate and very serious commitment to an intellectual tradition.

Ambivalence about Authority

Alluded to several times already in this chapter, most mentors in this study had mixed feelings about their role as authority figures which threatened to undermine the generativity process. Several talked about feeling burdened by the responsibility, while others shied away from taking credit for making an imprint upon protégées. Some doubted whether they had much to contribute to their protégée's growth; and some felt fraudulent in claiming expertise. Balking at images of themselves as potent authority figures seemed to help mentors maintain a sense of balance in their attempts to influence protégées--it braced them from becoming too grandiose or exploitative out of generative zeal. Be that as it may, all mentors expressed in one way or another some desire to influence their protégées and did so.

Part of the ambivalence, as noted earlier, reflects ideological and philosophical debates in the culture. That is, some of the conflicts mentors had in taking up the generative role linked to left-leaning or postmodern anxieties about the legitimacy of authority.

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Trends in the economy and social structure are also unsettling to the mentor's authority in ways that interfere with generativity. For instance, as mentioned in Chapter IV, computer retooling of workplace technology tends to place mentors and protégées on more equal footing regarding technical skills. Inevitably, as computer technology replaces old ways of working, mentors and protégées both find themselves in the position of learner. Both come to depend upon each other--sometimes the mentor is in an even more dependent position, as the protégée, more recently trained, may be better versed in the new technology. This encroaches on the image of the mentor as the "older and wiser" one who passes down traditions, routines, and techniques of doing work.

Three cases in this study illustrate this pattern. In each, the mentor and protégée were confronted with the task of having to scrap the old technology upon which their departments had run for many years and implement brand new systems--highly computerized ones of which they knew virtually nothing about. This set the mentors up as learners from scratch in a side by side position with protégées who became right hand assistants in the process. While there were relational benefits to leveling the authority (e.g., the protégée could view the mentor as "more human"), the

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massive technology changes left mentors in a somewhat more vulnerable position in terms of generativity. Protégées could surpass their mentors in this domain. Moreover, old ways of doing business dated the mentors' know-how, calling into question the relevance of their authority.

Cultural and social structural explanations only go so far, however. There are substantial emotional layers to the ambivalence about authority as well--rooted in one's personal life experiences in the past and present--and these profoundly impact upon all facets of the generative process.

For example, much earlier in the chapter I noted that Claire had a leftist allergy to authority. However, one would miss other angles of her ambivalence if this were taken as the whole explanation for Claire's resistance to generativity. Indeed, evidence presented in the preceding section shows that another barrier to generativity came from the difficulty she had in identifying intellectually with her protégée. Yet, it wasn't the intellectual divide per se that impeded generativity--it was that Claire felt responsible as a custodian of her generative objects not to let them fall into what she perceived to be bad hands.

I took the fact that Claire spent so much time during our interview mulling over her reluctance to teach Alex about Freud and share her

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intellectual biography reflective of guilt she seemed to feel about withholding something from her protégée and disappointment that--at least intellectually--this mentorship wasn't a satisfying outlet for her generative expression. In other words, I took her rumination as a sign of acute ambivalence about how to act responsibly as an authority figure--e.g., whether it was more important to shield her precious substance or risk sharing it with someone who might not use in a way that she saw fit.

Finally the reader may recall that Claire did not totally abstain from generativity. She *did* want to influence Alex and tried very hard to do so around prioritizing professional, personal, and family demands and pursuits. One may also recall that transference images seemed to be inspiring this strand of her generativity--as Claire tried to prevent Alex from engaging in the kind of self-sacrifice that she observed and was rankled by in her mother's life.

The point I'm getting at here is that the cause for a mentor's ambivalent feelings and reservations about embracing the authority role--as it is entailed in generativity--is multidetermined. Beliefs and feelings about authority--the need for it, the legitimacy, value, and dangers of it, whether one has it, whether one should be subject to it can be conscious--shaped by

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philosophy, ideology, religion, culture, and history. But also they can be less conscious, emotionally fueled, relate to transference, and be linked to meanings concerning strength, power, control, expertise, dependency, inexperience, vulnerability, etc.

Regardless, whether one feels entitled to assume authority in the service of generative influence depends on whether she *feels* and actually *has* something--resources, strength, wisdom, power, etc.--to convey or pass on. The following section explores these issues.

Ambivalence about Enfranchisement

Perhaps at the heart of the matter of generativity are questions about whether and to what extent mentors have a stake in passing something on to future generations. This partially depends upon whether they feel a personal connection or claim to ideas, traditions, canons, values, skills, ways of being, et. al, and/or cultivate an allegiance to institutions, organizations, or professional fields. The investment in passing something on, however, is only half of the generativity equation. The other half has to do with what is available in the work culture to be passed on. This section examines these two issues and the ambivalence provoked by them.

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A Sense of Place

Career satisfaction and success is critical to the investment and responsibility a mentor needs to feel to meaningfully pass something from her work life on to a protégée. That is, the extent to which the mentor has accomplished her own career goals affects her sense of *place* in the organization or field in which she works. And this sense of belonging, of fitting in, of feeling oneself to be a member of an organization or field, in turn, fuels the mentor's desire and sense of duty to be generative. When she is pleased with how her own career has turned out, proud of her professional identity and/or organizational affiliation, and eager to extend the goodness of her experience to others, she is more apt to experience generativity urges unambivalently.[6] That is, she will feel open and hopeful about welcoming the protégée into the fold if things have gone well for her because she feels herself to be a part of that fold. She may also view it as "giving something back" to the organization or profession when she invites the protégée to become a part of these communities.

The mentor's attitudes about the company or field may even be somewhat idealized if she has done well. She may forget the bad or hard times if she feels grateful about her ascendance or other kind of professional

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accomplishment. But such success and the resulting sense of affinity to the field or organization may pressure her to toe the party line. That is, the fact that she feels a kinship to her work may evoke a sense of obligation to uncritically defend or become overly protective of the traditions, mission, and accomplishments of the company or field. Through her tenure, she can become conscripted as an emissary of her field or organization. And that sense of duty (a form of over-enfranchisement) can seriously impede generativity efforts as we saw in the case of Claire and Alex.

At the same time, the mentor may be motivated by strategic interests and normative concern. The veteran mentor who has done well and is seasoned in the politics and culture of a particular profession or company may find it a career advantage or proper to speak well of the profession, spread the word of its contribution, and instill in a new generation of employees the company's or profession's traditions, values, etc.

In addition to having an effect on whether the mentor feels embedded in her organization or profession and thus compelled toward generativity, career history also colors *what* the mentor will have to offer. How much and what kind of knowledge, skill, and insight the mentor believes she has to pass on, what she perceives to be her strengths as a professional and, of

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course, the actual amount and type of power she has (e.g., by virtue of her position, ascendance, access to networks, and privileged resources), are defined by her career background. Mentors whose careers have gone well tend to feel more potent and perceive themselves as having more to offer in the way of generative objects. This aligns with the fact that they usually *are* more well connected and powerful than mentors whose careers have plateaued, for example.

Mentors who are not satisfied with their careers tend to feel conflicted about whether they have the capacity for or wish to encourage protégées to achieve what they have been unable to achieve. This is illustrated in the Salieri phenomenon described earlier. As can be imagined, generativity is especially difficult for the mentor who has not come to terms with thwarted career ambitions. The question of whether the mentor feels she is emotionally prepared to make the investment on behalf of someone else's career and of course, whether she has the material power or clout to make a difference--are to some degree dependent on how the mentor has fared in her own career.

Penny's frustrations about the paralysis in her career at Cameo Inc. were poignantly reflected in her ambivalent stance toward helping Meredith

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with her career. Singing her mentor's praises, Meredith credited Penny for teaching her the field of catalogue advertising and writing copy--"everything she knows" in this area came from her mentor. As a cultural object imbued with traditions, an aesthetic vocabulary, and ways of working and doing business with clients, teaching the nuts and bolts of advertising was at the heart of Penny's generative project.

Yet, Penny's passion for the work had waned several years earlier when it became clear that her career at Cameo was at a standstill and there was no hope of advancing into upper management. Her current focus was on simply preserving her job as she watched her younger colleagues and protégée surpass her in the company. Hence, while Penny taught Meredith the trade, her approach was somewhat perfunctory and bureaucratically motivated. Her attitude about the field and the organization had soured. As discussed earlier, this souring of events and attitude dissolved Meredith's idealized view of her mentor.

To Penny, the idea of abandoning a career to take up something unconventional--such as buying a van to travel and live in--was very appealing. She fantasized about this and told a story, enviously, of old friends she knew who had taken this turn. Although she did manage to

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encourage her protégée to pursue an opportunity for advancement presented to her by the company, Penny also sent mixed signals. To her, the idea that Meredith had periodically considered leaving her job was perfectly understandable. Penny did not perceive that staying at Cameo, Inc. or even in the field of advertising was important. Until Meredith finally decided to accept the promotion at Cameo, she had strong leanings to leave the company to become a nursery school teacher. Penny did not dissuade her.

While a mentor's career history and present job situation mediate her generative striving and the content of her efforts, it also affects how the protégée takes in what the mentor offers. As discussed in the chapter on idealization, the protégée often comes to be an astute observer of the mentor's career situation and may learn through the course of their relationship and from colleagues about her background. Information about what the mentor has accomplished in her career, about her reputation in the field or organization and her future prospects can affect the protégée's reception to her generativity. In other words, the protégée tries to *place* the mentor as well, assessing how and where her mentor fits into the scheme of the organization or profession.

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For instance, if the mentor is viewed as a powerful and ambitious player and this resonates with the protégée's aspirations, the protégée may gobble up what the mentor offers. There needs to be a nexus between what the mentor has to teach and offer and what the protégée is ready and open to receive. Alternatively, if the protégée sees that her mentor has not advanced in the organization or has otherwise gotten stuck professionally, she may be more cautious about accepting her mentor's influence and opinions of the organization especially if she views them, for example, as jaded, cynical, or self-serving.

This was evident in Trish's case after Paula quit her job at their company. When the president, Mitch, told Paula he'd never promote a woman to be Vice President--a position Paula had expected and probably deserved--Paula stormed out of the office and resigned. She continued to counsel Trish from a distance, however, warning and prodding her protégée to leave the Darlington Company as well. Trish was torn about how to take the advice, however, wondering about her mentor's motives:

> Trish: I flip-flopped from thinking she meant it as big sisterly advice to thinking she was very bitter with Darlington and Mitch when she left...So I don't know if it was [for] selfish reasons that she wanted me to leave or concern for me or maybe a combination.

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Of course, in the concrete sense, a mentor's career moves can literally alter the protégée's life chances within a company or field. For instance, if the mentor leaves the company as Paula did, or plateaus in middle management as Penny did, or rises to public renown as was the case with Emmie, the protégée may rise or fall on her mentor's coattails.

Hence, the mentor's perceptions of her generative capacity (e.g., what she *believes* she could offer), her generative desire (e.g., what she *would like* to offer); and the generative reality (e.g., what she *could offer* owing to the political and cultural capital she has in the field and how this translates to generative resources)--these things are all shaped by her own career biography--past and present--aspirations and results.

Work world detachment

So far I have examined career success as a basis for enfranchisement and generative drive. But how enfranchised mentors are in their careers and what is available from their work lives to be passed on are questions that clearly go beyond an individual's personal career story. Historical, economic, cultural, and social structural factors also play a decisive role in shaping the contexts in which professional connections and legacies either flourish or fade.

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For mentorship and the dynamics of generativity, work world transformations are enormously important. Due to mergers, downsizing, reorganization schemes, and globalization, individuals have become more vulnerable to career dislocation (e.g., layoffs, reassignment, pressures to adjust to new company cultures). Professions are being reconfigured to meet bottom line demands and gain competitive edge in the marketplace. One implication for mentorship is that learning to manage change and expendability has become more important than elaborating or reproducing tradition.

That professional commitments were loose and career paths unpredictable for participants in this study was thus not surprising. Very few mentors had longevity at their jobs; for most, the current job was one of several held over a career. Consider mentors like Abigail, for instance, whose career history has been dotted by civic positions contingent on soft money; or Leila who--prior to landing her executive position at the archival firm at age 48--made numerous horizontal career moves at different companies; or Emmie, whose freelance "day job" enabled her to pursue relatively low paying choreographic endeavors.

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Given such transitory ties to organizations and specific jobs, it is easy to understand why mentors would feel neither the desire nor obligation to groom protégées to carry on institutional traditions. When work life doesn't function as a cultural envelope--tying individuals to history and to a larger sense of purpose--attachments become fleeting and aspects of generativity become irrelevant. Sadly, mounting evidence suggests that many individuals do not feel connected to their work life and are provided with little to pass on to heirs.[7]

Added to the instability in the work world, gender almost certainly affects enfranchisement and generativity as well. One could reasonably argue that women are disadvantaged when it comes to enfranchisement because of their historical exclusion from professional life--especially from the higher reaches of power.[8] New to power themselves and perhaps not terribly welcomed into their organizational or professional positions, women mentors may experience themselves more like guests in their organizations or fields than men do. Even while they ascend, they may feel like visitors. Studies confirm that informal structures like "old boy networks" reinforce this marginalization.[9] Consequently, women mentors probably do not have a strong enough foothold in career positions and futures or a strong enough

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sense of place in their organizations to welcome younger colleagues into the fold. The fact that most mentors in this study were tentative about organizational and professional affiliations and thus, seemingly reticent to engage in generative acts that promoted an identification with and investment in these fields or companies may reflect this outsider status.

Succession

In the classical image, the mentor grooms his protégé to be his successor. Influence is geared toward preparing the protégé to fill his shoes, to take over his position when he retires, perhaps even to ease into that position as the mentor scales back his career. The process has a mix of sentimental and political motivations. The mentor wants to induct the protégé into the work world which has become very meaningful to him, and to offer his protégé opportunities to step into (his version of) the good life. At the same time he wants to ensure his legacy is carried forward. After he is gone, the mentor still hopes to wield power through the protégé and through the assertion of his ideas and ways of thinking as channeled through the protégé.

To repeat again, times have changed. Instability, uncertainty, and rapid change in the work world have lead to a redefinition of the meaning

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of a career--where a job for life is no longer the norm and advancement is no longer the outcome of a fairly predictable sequence of vertical moves. Even when they stay in the same company over time, individuals are far more likely to make horizontal moves in their jobs, transfer to other departments, and experience job redefinition than they are to advance in a linear progression. Thus, mentors may assist in preparing protégées for future advancement but this is not the same thing as preparing them for *their* jobs in a company or even their positions of stature in a field. Indeed, *their* positions are not secure either. In this post-industrial era, the idea of succession is quaint.

Even mentors who flirted with the idea of succession did so within a context of uncertainty. For example, neither Leila nor Lynn felt sure that major organizational redesign at their companies--always a looming possibility--wouldn't eliminate their own chances at advancement, muting their fantasies of promotion and protégée succession.

Accepting that mentors--like most individuals--are finding it difficult to anchor themselves in their work lives in ways which could sustain the generative impulse, and owing to the fact that, realistically, they usually can't groom protégées to assume *their* positions, what then do mentors

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groom their protégées for? What can protégées inherit from mentors during this turbulent period? These are critical questions, indeed, as they hint at the profound effect of societal change on social roles and the microdynamics of human relationships.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have tried to underscore the importance of looking at generativity in mentorship as a dynamic and ambivalent process. Mentors clearly want to influence their protégées and to pass something on to them in a way that is invested with personal and professional energy. And while internalization is always partial, protégées are usually hungry to take in what mentors have to offer. Yet handing something down means letting go of that thing. Even with the best of matches between mentor and protégée, this loss of control itself can create enormous anxiety and consternation.

As the cases revealed, however, the process *is* very much dependent on the match between the mentor and protégée. Identification is a linchpin of generativity--assuming the mentor does have something to hand down, that is--and psychologically speaking, mentors need to feel they can envision something good becoming of what they hand down in order to trust the generativity process and engage in it generously. But mentors need to be

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wary of overidentification--making sure to sort out what protégées might benefit from developmentally and/or strategically from their own needs and struggles.

The fact that mentors have mixed feelings and agendas about generativity should not come as a surprise. As this chapter reveals, mentors experience doubt and sometimes dread the thought of embracing the role of authority figure. Some of this is rooted in emotional conflict about one's entitlement to power and the associated responsibilities. But I am also convinced that some of it is reality-based; that is, the ambivalence about authority is partly a reaction to the fact that professions and organizations are not supplying mentors with the *stuff* to pass on. The vacuum of values and traditions created by post-industrial transience and instability leaves mentors little of cultural import to hand down. But rather than undermining this central function of mentorship, it poses new challenges for redefining generativity in this relationship.

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ENDNOTES

1. See Osherson, 1986.

2. See Mauss, 1967.

3. See also, Manheimer, 1995; and Kotre, 1995.

4. While the technical and cultural forms of generativity are most relevant to mentorship, the other forms--biological and parental--also play a role. Whether or not a mentor has children of her own, for example, seems to affect the level of engagement and fantasies the mentor has about the mentorship; the protégée may serve as a proxy child and the generative urge may reflect biological or parental concerns.

5. This is a clear expression of Winnicott's concept of transitional space--defined as a mode of intersubjective relating where two people--originally mother and infant--relate in such a way that creations are not made by one or the other--but between two people. Winnicott locates this in a phase of development where the infant is differentiating what's inside from what's outside--but where the question of what's my creation from what was already there in the first place is irrelevant. The mother puts the desired toy in front of the infant who appropriates the toy as his or hers--it appears as his subjective creation in the process of appropriating it. It is the mother's job not to ask whose creation it is--it is her job to create the climate where such a question is irrelevant--so that baby can experience the cultural objects of the world as available for subjective appropriation/creation. This, by the way, is a theory of the mechanism which links the social and cultural world to the individual--it is an elaboration and modification of the theories of internalization.

6. See Baum, 1990.

7. See Sennett, 1998.

8. See Epstein, et al, 1995.

9. For example, see Epstein, et al, 1995.

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> Authority is not a command but a connection, a making of the present meaningful through memory...One might say that authority is a creative remembering of the past in the present; it is a remembering of our beginnings that nonetheless enables events in the present to become unique. It reminds us of the others who preceded our existence, without whose actions we would not be; it has the humbling effect of reminding us that we did not give birth to ourselves.
>
> *Kathleen Jones, 1993*

> That which makes us most alive and connected also renders us most fragile and vulnerable.
>
> *Jessica Benjamin, 1995*

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

I'd like to start to end this dissertation with a few caveats that seem important to set down straightaway. The first is that I hope that my good words about mentorship have not been read as a pollyannish account of a relationship which for many is fraught with conflict and disappointment. I came to this work with a basic belief that mentorship--and other authority relationships related to work in adult life--can be enormously satisfying and productive professionally and personally. At the same time, through the course of this research I became even more aware of the emotional and political snags in the relationship. It may appear therefore that when I do not venerate mentorship, I take a grim view of it. But this is not the case either. What I have tried to do is find a way--using psychoanalytic and

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sociological perspectives--to examine and discuss these relationships realistically, warts and all.

Sustaining Paradox and Ambivalence

Instead of looking to see how pairs resolve mentorship tensions and difficulties, therefore, I have tried to look at how they negotiate them. I mean *negotiate* here the same way that a gymnast is said to negotiate steps on a balance beam; she maneuvers in a space in which gravity is always pulling in one direction or another yet she resists the pull to stay on the beam. Likewise for mentorship--the ambiguous structure and ambivalent dynamics of the relationship constitute a multitude of fine lines and tipping points that mentors and protégées traverse as the relationship progresses. My interest has been to follow the various ways that they straddle and ride out these fine lines as well as the conditions under which they tip over.

Indeed, mentorship is a very special form of human attachment in great part due to its contradictory structure and ambivalent character. It is a relationship filled with paradox--found at the intersection of authority and love, two emotionally loaded avenues for bonding as reflected in the cases presented. Add to that a backdrop of macro-level change in the realms of work and culture which are at odds with the basic functions and values of

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mentorship. Taken together these elements give mentorship its vibrancy as well as its sense of being on the edge. That is, mentorship's paradoxes are critical--rather than overwhelm or take away from the connection that the parties in these alliances develop--the ambiguities, uncertainty, and liminality of the relationship keep it fresh. There is nothing rote or dead in mentorship.

Central Findings of the Research

As I have shown, idealization, loyalty, and generativity are three bedrock dynamics in long term ideal-type mentorships. How they play out depends very much upon the two people in the relationship--their backgrounds, personal and work experiences, careers and ambitions, personalities, etc. Professional context and situational factors, particularly those related to organizational events, also matter greatly to the unfolding of these dynamics. But ambivalence is built into the very fabric of these three processes and so their functions for mentorship--as modes of bonding and lubricants for learning and development--contain positive, growth producing elements and negative, regressive ones. Leading toward intimacy while tapping deep-seated wishes and anxieties--idealization, loyalty, and generativity all pave the way for effective mentoring practice, yet also get in the way of such practice and limit the benefits of these relationships.

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The case studies and illustrations show that idealization inspires protégées to view their mentors as beacons of *hope*--hope of becoming like them some day and hope for attaining their own dreams. Whether one views her mentor as perfect, all-powerful or magical, the fantasies upon which grand images of mentors are based do have a function--they form the basis of a connection that promotes striving, risk-taking, hard work, faith in the future and opens the protégée up to learn. The danger--as we have seen--is that the distortions can lead to unrealistic expectations of the mentor and debilitating feelings of self-depreciation and hostility for the protégée. It is also clear that although at some level mentors enjoy the adulation, they have their own share of mixed feelings about and reactions to idealization. For everyone but the most narcissistic mentors, being adored as an all-mighty figure definitely has its down side.

There is ample evidence as well that loyalty is also critical to mentorship--it provides the glue impelling both mentor and protégée to want to aid and stick by the other. Mentors and protégées will go to great lengths to stand by each other and demonstrate their allegiance to seeing the relationship last and thrive. Perhaps it is a paradox then that the bond formed by loyalty surfaces--not only when tested in extreme situations--in

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fact this rarely occurs, but more typically in the nuts and bolts of everyday interaction. Loyalty is expressed, that is, in rather ordinary gestures of reciprocal exchange--how each party scratches the other's back in the routine course of work. The authority and power difference in the relationship comes through most vividly in these gestures: while mentors have resources and power to take direct action on behalf of protégées, protégées cannot do the same for their mentors. Consequently, their loyalty is expressed symbolically--albeit ambivalently--through ritual enactment. Two types of ritual were identified: acts of material and emotional labor and behaviors that enunciated a boundary around the mentorship pair. These kinds of activities--aimed at demonstrating devotion and attachment--always run the risk of suppressing dissent, constricting the free flow of ideas and relationships by creating a cocoon around the pair, provoking jealousy and suspicion among colleagues, and generating resentment about credit inequities and claims imbalances.

Finally, this research delineates the process of generativity. As we have seen, for the mentor, this is manifested in the desire to pass on parts of the self to another so as to make an imprint as a form of legacy. Even when not entirely conscious, generativity urges drive mentors' efforts to

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teach, influence, and set an example for protégées. Be that as it may, one would expect and interview accounts confirm that protégées are selective about what they take in from mentors--there is a filtering process by which protégées internalize what the mentor offers. Mentors are also choosy in a corollary way--as the agent of generative transmission, they show proneness to ambivalence regarding issues such as loss of control over generative objects, anxieties about being misrepresented by the protégée, competitive feelings stemming from fears about being surpassed or rendered obsolete, and doubts about adequacy and competence. Mentors disclosed deep insecurities and conflicts about whether they have anything valuable to offer protégées and what will happen to their teaching or gift after they offer it. Unarticulated and perhaps unconscious were concerns, I think, about how this process could level their advantage over the protégée.

This close look at the three emotionally charged dynamics affirms that the central paradox of mentorship--as stated in the introduction--is that the intimacy that makes personal and professional growth possible can be its own undoing. Hopes and expectations that grow out of the close and trusting feelings are bound to be met with disappointment as they clash with the realities of the instrumental and political motivations of the relationship,

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the aggressive, competitive, deadline oriented, productivity-driven forces of organizations and professional life, and the tremendous turbulence in our postindustrial economy.

On the bright side of disappointment

But this should not be discouraging news. I simply want to call attention to the fact that individuals who find themselves in mentorships or hope to form one need to appreciate their complexity to prepare themselves to manage the contradictions and conflicts such relationships generate. In the end, the fact is that mentorship like most close relationships has an element of ruthlessness to it. Individuals use each other in the relationship for self-centered reasons. This doesn't necessarily undercut the emotional intimacy--but it can and often does lead to painful moments and sometimes prolonged phases of distrust, envy, resentment, disillusionment, and grief. The protégée realizes that the mentor can't and won't deliver a work life on Easy Street--forever standing by and protecting her protégée, and generously passing along all the gems of her personal wisdom and professional capital. The mentor realizes that the protégée can't and won't always admire or accept her influence, and that the protégée will move on (if she has done a good job) and leave her behind.

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In this regard, when things go well, one could say that mentorship's contribution is that each party comes to appreciate that we can't be all things to all people. Ian Craib's (1994) book, The Importance of Disappointment heralds this theme as a corrective to late modern society's proclivity toward cheerful optimism, belief in perfectly attuned and responsive partnerships, and quick-fix solutions to all that is painful. The thought that everything will be better and can be made to be better is an illusion, Craib argues, as it denies our very real human vulnerabilities and limitations.

It is my view, therefore, that beyond the tangible career advances and professional growth that can come from mentor-ship, the process of working through difficult feelings, making peace with the imperfections of the other person, coming to terms with the limits of one's control, and grasping what functions mentorship can and cannot serve is its own benefit. That is to say, the growth process as the relationship evolves and each party's maturation as a result of staying the course to work things out is itself an important mentorship function with its own developmental value. In this sense, mentorship is no different from any other significant life relationship.

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Absolutism

In the extreme, all three strands of mentorship intimacy can become quite toxic, nevertheless. Absolute idealization, loyalty, and generativity collapse the space between the self and the other making recognition and true selfhood impossible. There must be a space for "difference" in the relational process of mentorship otherwise the qualities worth idealizing, maintaining loyalty for, and generating for posterity become moot as the other--psychically speaking--is regarded as an extension of oneself. There needs to be a space, that is, to see that the other is truly other for the mentor's qualities to be acquired. Another way to put this is that if the protégée is expected to or tries to swallow the mentor whole, she reduces the chance of actually becoming like the mentor because her subjectivity is lost. Such a process does not register as development but as a kind of death to the self.

And so there is a moment in idealization, loyalty, and generativity when the most fruitful qualities of admiration, devotion, and generosity in mentorship can be deformed--through a loss of recognition of the separateness and subjectivity of the other--into neurotic or exploitive constraints that can quash self and communal development.

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Impassioned authority

Besides wanting to examine the ambivalent and contradictory dynamics of these relationships, I was also interested in arguing for theoretical redress with respect to conceptualizing authority. I came to this research with the frustration that important stories about the emotional character of authority relationships like mentorship, particularly the erotic or love side of these relationships, had been submerged in political and academic discourses and ideologies of the past fifty years. That is, authority has not been valued as a means for development, a type of bond which nurtures the process of cultural reproduction and elaboration, or a potentially pleasurable social relation itself. Instead a dark shadow has been cast on authority relationships--by fifties organizational scholars as bureaucratic and empty; by sixties radicals as authoritarian and oppressive; by corporate pundits of the seventies and eighties as strategic and manipulative, and by the recent crop of postmodern philosophers as quixotic and illusory.

Other cultural forces have conspired to make authority a dirty word as well. Admitting the need for caring counsel and responsible direction--a way of acknowledging dependence, for example, continues to be viewed as taboo in a culture like ours which prizes self-sufficiency and meritocracy.

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Thus, the desire for good authority has been surrounded by shame. There has also been an overblown fear of authority--coming from exaggerated thinking that submission equals exploitation. All of this negativity is based on misconceptions of the authority figure as intrinsically evil and freedom-depriving and the subject of authority as passive, duped, or weak. To frame my agenda for this research, I therefore end as I began--underlining my interest in reclaiming the creatively erotic forces in mentorship as a developmental relation that sits at the crossroads of authority and love.

Mentorship Sprawls

Mentorship fever rages. It is even more of a hot topic now than when I started this project in the mid 1990's. Since that time, there's been a staggering increase in the number of mentoring programs instituted by organizations in the private and public sectors, a seemingly never-ending stream of newfangled versions of mentoring, and an intensification of attempts to market mentorship in all of its various and sundry applications. It seems that everyone is doing it or at least trying to do it.

Aside from formal one to one mentoring programs, a series of offshoots have emerged. Some new forms expand upon or rework mentorship as a concept. Many of the new types of mentorship are said to

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reflect the changing times and conditions of postindustrial work. Mentoring circles and quads, for example, respond to the undersupply of individuals who are willing to mentor. Some companies have purposefully designed a group approach to mentoring to foster peer collaboration and diffuse authority dynamics. A "siblings" program at a law firm in which senior associates are paired with junior ones is used to compensate for the fact that few partners are available to become full-fledged mentors. "Mentworking" has been introduced as a hybrid between mentoring and networking in order to respond to the need to be connected to a wide array of people given the unstable economy and job flux.

A few of the new forms have been designed specifically by women or with women in mind as participants. In some cases, breaking out of the one to one model has been based on a conscious rejection of the classic version of mentorship as patriarchal in favor of a group model which encourages a cooperative feminist espirit de corps.

Part of mentorship's heightened appeal may touch on fin de siecle yearnings. We tend to look back as we look forward at the turn of a century. In this regard, it is possible that we've become nostalgic about revaluing tradition by promoting intergenerational links and restoring respect

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for the wisdom of elders. In its basic outline, mentorship embodies and brings these images to life. Perhaps in the realm of the social unconscious, we are trying to find our way back to structures and relationships that can soothe anxieties and confer order on the chaos of postindustrialism.

Beyond Gemeinshaft and Gesellshaft

Many, in fact, have observed that modernity brought with it a loss of community and connectedness between individuals. As care has been replaced by consumerism, we've experienced what Lasch (1979) and others have noted to be a shift from concern for others to concern for the self and things, and a move away from attention to means to an obsession with ends. In sociological shorthand, this has been referred to as a transformation in society from gemeinshaft to gesellshaft. Postmodern thinkers take this bleak view of individualism and commodification one step further--suggesting that concern itself has become facile. Switching identities, deconstructing and reconstructing narratives as ways of talking about ourselves superficially have brought us into an era where the very idea of meaning is in question.

The latter point touches on Richard Sennett's central concern in The Corrosion of Character. Yet he blames flexible capitalism, specifically, for the sense of social alienation. In this evolving postindustrial system, he

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argues, individuals are deprived from having a semblance of stability, coherence, and meaningfulness in their work lives. People become piece workers in an economy in which organizations cannot promise long term loyalty or commitment to employees. Some observe that boundaryless careers--where individuals are no longer linked to organizations or jobs for life but shuttle from one job to the next--erode the social anchoring function of work and organizations. The net result is that individuals are adrift--delinked from their location in culture and history. There is loss of a sense of larger purpose to which people can subscribe and with that, Sennett laments, a loss of historical narrative. Such atomism makes it difficult to frame experience and understand one's life story as connected to history--not isolated from the macro world of culture, the economy, politics, and other social structures.

As a flourishing social relation, mentorship challenges these trends even while it has also had to adapt to them. Concern for others and meaning are alive and well in this relationship. And it is not just within the family or private sphere where scholars of modernism would have predicted. Mentoring relationships--as we have seen--bridge the public and private domains--at its best, offering an emotionally enriched learning experience, political access, material resources, developmental guidance, and connection

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to a legacy from which to continue to build and live out a fulfilling work and personal life.

Organizations and professions also gain a tremendous amount from these alliances as senior colleagues help junior colleagues adapt, progress, and contribute to their companies and fields, however transitory these affiliations turn out to be. Moreover, because they can outlive institutional attachments, mentorships serve the world of work more broadly as they help ease the stresses of job uncertainty and stabilize individuals in professional ties--badly needed to keep them linked to the public sphere and to matters apart from individual existence and everyday life.

The emotionally complicated processes that drive mentorship very much need to be seen in the context of these large scale changes in the work world. To know that people feel unstable and insecure in their jobs and professional futures may help explain why the attachments in mentorship become so fierce and important. It may be that we cling to mentorship for mooring during precarious times. It may also be the case that since jobs and careers are transitory, individuals in mentorship draw in closer--feeling the threat of separation as a reminder of the need to make the most of the relationship while it lasts.

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I hope that my study challenges the notion that modernism has put an end to community and altruism and the notion that in the postmodern culture meaning has become meaningless and identity is up for grabs. One could argue that a topic like mentoring can hardly be expected to tackle such big debates but this research suggests otherwise. Mentoring can be seen, I think, as a microcosm of the permeability of boundaries between the public and private, altruism and self-interest, and sentimentalism and instrumentality. The fact that individuals are making strong connections in mentorships even though they are ambiguously defined and thus involve greater risk can be viewed as evidence that the fragmented structures of our postmodern world do not estrange or frighten people away from trying to cultivate meaningful attachments.

In the book, When Strangers Cooperate (1995), David Brown points out that despite individualism and market ideology, we manage to engage ourselves in vital social relations to do for ourselves what economic and government structures do not address. Mentor-protégée pairings--at least of the free-standing ilk described in this study--are a crystal clear example of this phenomena.

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Grooming for what?

Even if they help cushion individuals from the traumas of postindustrial change, mentorships do register the impact of these transformations. What mentors pass on to protégées, as I have discussed, is deeply affected by organizational transience and professional discontinuity. Cultural generativity--geared toward inviting the next generation into the fold of a company or field's traditions--is especially inhibited. The instability that characterizes work life forces the mentorship endeavor to shift its focus away from growth in a specific company or field to a focus on how to manage change and adopt an attitude about work and life in more fluid, open-ended terms. Helping a protégée to feel at home in a firm or line of work is less important and in many cases irrelevant, in other words, than helping a protégée establish a home in her professional identity. In the current scene, identity has become a hub for mentorship development. Generalizable skills, knowledge, and social and personal capital which adhere to the person and are thus portable from one work situation to another are also critical.

Some evidence from this study suggests, in fact, that mentors tend to zero in on professional and adult identity development as objects of cultural

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generativity. To a large degree, the purpose of grooming--among the subset of mentors and protégées in this research--was to help protégées strengthen their identities as women professionals and adults--to be able to handle issues such as how to juggle work and personal lives and cultivate confidence in self-presentation as women in the work world.

Whereas for men, grooming has historically assumed the political and strategic goal of helping the protégé to compete, succeed, or otherwise get ahead (Roper, 1994), the agenda for generativity among women--at least insofar as this data suggested--had a different flavor. Fostering the development of the adult female self as a means to professional and personal satisfaction and growth seemed to underlie the mentors' efforts. Protégées were encouraged to identify with mentors as female role models as opposed to identifying with companies to produce company (wo)men.

Jeruchim and Shapiro's (1992) findings on women and mentoring confirm this trend. But they argue that mentorship for women is not just about professional identity but also about gender identity. Emphasis is not only on how to be a *good manager*, but also how to be a *good woman manager* as well as a *good woman*. "Women want someone to teach them how to live their lives," they write, "not just how to advance in their

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careers" (p. xx). This expansive conception of generativity was borne out in my data.

What is not clear is the degree to which the emphasis on identity focused generativity occurs as a fall back to make up for the fact that career-oriented efforts--aimed toward succession, for instance--are more problematic due to the uncertain state of job futures, and to what degree this identity focus stems from special gender concerns for women. Both factors would seem to play important roles. Further research is needed to clarify this and other ways in which gender shapes mentorship process.

Don't put all of your eggs in one mentor basket

In addition to refocusing the content of what the mentor passes on to the protégée, organizational transience has brought to light one of the risks of developing a traditional exclusive mentorship. I mentioned "mentworking" earlier as an alternative to the classic one to one model of mentorship. This initiative reflects a consciousness that there is too much instability in the job market to rely on an exclusive relationship with a long term mentor. Still reeling from the fallout, one man told me a story about getting burned by doing this. George worked in computer services at a large law firm. His boss, a man he considered his mentor, left the company

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shortly before I met him. George had grown very close to his manager who seemed to insure advancement, succession, and other professional opportunities. Once the manager left the company, however, George experienced a radical shift in the perspective of his job future at the company. He realized he had been sheltered from thinking about his role in the organization apart from his mentor. Further, because he had felt safely nurtured under the wing of the mentor-manager, he did not cultivate other ties or opportunities which he desperately needed once the mentor left. In other words, even though the mentorship was very satisfying and promising, it lulled him into a complacency that is dangerous in the contemporary corporate climate. At the time of our conversation, George seemed angry about having set himself up this way, as though the mentorship was a mirage which left him feeling mislead and abandoned.

Be that as it may, I am not convinced that networking or having several less intensive mentoring alliances can or should replace the more classical version of mentorship. Although networking, as Granovetter's research (1973) convinces, is crucial to gain access to a diversity of opportunities, weak ties cannot be relied upon for the quality and intensity of assistance that significant mentorships offer. The investment of the

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contacts lacks the kind of emotional mettle that is present in mentorship--at least in optimal cases--to bend over backwards to generate learning opportunities, go the extra step to protect, and to have the desire to make an indelible impression on another person. Still, one shouldn't be too cavalier about relying upon one person to shepherd them through a career. Probably having a combination of a strong mentorship plus a diversified network of professional contacts is the smartest strategy to cover one's bases.

Democratizing Mentorship--An Oxymoron

At face value, the proliferation of workplace programs that assign individuals to mentoring relationships is to be commended. Who could argue against trying to promote adult relationships which offer opportunities for learning, loving, and empowerment? Few could. Yet, there is a contradiction which must be reckoned with and that is that mentorship is inherently conservative and elitist. Historically, its function has been to groom "chosen" sons to fill the father's shoes, perpetuate his legacy, and preserve the homogeneity of various professions and occupations. Indeed, "mentorships are *not* democratic," write Shapiro, Haseltine, and Rowe (1978). Hence, the current pressures to remedy discriminatory practices and

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equalize opportunity through the institution of mentoring programs subverts the traditional function of mentorship as it tries to universalize a phenomena which is, by definition, particularistic. If everyone gets a "leg up," then no one really does.

Moreover, trying to establish relationships from the universalistic premise that all persons or employees are entitled to and should be offered a chance to work with a mentor--will inevitably clash with the dynamics of loyalty that constitute mentorship. As Fletcher (1993) notes, loyalty grows from particular attachments that are intrinsically partial. Another way to put this is that "the heart wants what the heart wants," to quote a sad but brilliant film director of the twentieth century. So even though loyalty clearly conflicts with the virtue of impartial morality--an ethic which speaks to the good of the society as a whole and all members within it--the bias that loyalty generates is nevertheless an emotional reality that won't simply go away because its unfair. Fletcher writes:

> The ideal mode of behavior would be to treat the children of others exactly as one treats one's own children, the mothers of others as one treats one's own mother. This would be the utopia of impartial, egalitarian morality, a world in which the emotions of attachment never interfere with the virtue of evenhanded treatment (p. 12).

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> [Loyalty, however,] is pitched to humans as they are; [impartial morality], to the spiritual aspirations of humans as they might be (p. 172).

Fletcher elucidates in these passages the bare bones of the debate about mentorship for all. Yes, it is right to pursue this policy. But is it realistic to think that loyalty between role partners can be legislated? Probably not. Loyalties do arise, as identifications do, on the basis of shared history and/or common cause. Perhaps what needs to happen in the work world is something akin to programs which aim to create more successful racial integration within school systems. Place the children, or in this case employees, in situations in which they must "eat salt" together. Structure the workplace so that project teams reflect racial and gender diversity. Give people the opportunity to allow a sense of common cause to develop, and nurture this so a shared history can evolve through work. This will encourage loyalty to develop organically--and relationships such as mentorship which revolve around loyalty will begin to cross the traditional categories of homosocial identification.

Beyond this, additional research is needed to understand what differences there are between arranged mentorships which start with a premise of entitlement and universal access and free-standing mentorships

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which start with the premise of privilege and selectivity. Are the former rationalized through being "managed" by outside agents (e.g., human resource personnel)? If loyalty and allegiance can't be legislated, what holds together the emotional bonds in arranged relationships? These are very important questions indeed.

Methodological Truths

As this project comes to a close, it is important to revisit the methodological problems I had in carrying out this research in order to raise a few questions about fieldwork and the nature of social scientific investigation that I could not have articulated in quite this way when I began the research.

Although novel and promising, the pairs research design in this study was problematic in a variety of ways discussed in Chapter II. This includes difficulties in gaining access to pairs, self-selection bias, the need to tiptoe around topics during interviews so as not to reveal information given to me by one party about the other, and the resulting fragmentation of life history accounts which posed obstacles to triangulating the data for analysis. The thorniest issues by far had to do with confidentiality in the presentation of this report--that is, how to preserve the anonymity of research subjects without compromising the integrity of the study.

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Because I felt constrained in presenting material from cases--walking a tightrope between offering enough data from pairs to illustrate aspects of their ambivalent dynamics yet not offering so much so as to risk revealing the identities of research subjects--I had a tricky time in this dissertation conveying the relational process of mentorship pairs. While aiming for a middle-ground solution, my decision to focus on thematic emotional processes as the unit of analysis and use the case material from pairs to illustrate these processes had the unfortunate effect, I believe, of making the analyses rather static. There was little sense of flow in my descriptions of how specific mentorships played out--making it difficult to grasp how the evolution of the relationship itself affected the idealization, loyalty, and generativity processes and outcomes. In the words of Ruthellen Josselson, I fell short of "evok[ing] the feel of two people being together...to articulate the "atmosphere" of an ongoing relationship" (p. 26). Josselson's distinction between relational moments versus relational environments is pertinent.

> Relationships must be characterized by their thematic background as well as their more visible dramatic moments. Connections between people have rhythms beyond their content. These ways of being together are the hardest to verbalize, because they involve emotional tone and mutual interpersonal adaptation. It is not so much the "what" of the interaction as the process that forms its core (p. 26).

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I tended to focus on "relational moments" instead of the "relational environment" of particular mentorships. It is thus a fair critique of this work to say that I offered snapshots of human activity instead of the moving picture.

More broad reaching in its implications, the confidentiality dilemmas draw attention to other unsettling concerns as well. That is, this project raises serious questions about what researchers "do" to research subjects in the course of their study. It became clear to me over time that, just as in the case of mentorship, there is a certain kind of ruthlessness intrinsic to social scientific enterprise as well. On some level, we want to devour our subjects. Perhaps, ironically, the vampirish tinge that according to Phillip Lopate, characterizes mentorship also has applicability to researchers. We want to use our subjects, to find something in their words which we can craft into academic prose and so author a discovery. Of course, feminist criticism of social science methodology view this as a form of exploitation and call our attention to the need to care about subjects, be fair to them, do no harm. This reminds me of the book by Janet Malcolm, The Journalist and the Murderer which exposes the shamelessness of the writer who seduces the subject of his story with intimate friendship only to betray and

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abandon this person after getting the juicy insider details. Malcolm exquisitely describes the suffering this causes for all parties, yet presents it as a highly ambiguous morality tale.

I don't have an answer for this problem as it plays out in social science research. For one thing, I am not sure that making research a democracy where all parties can participate in constructing interpretations and/or sign off on the final write up is a good thing. Yet, I am also not comfortable with the potential for emotional, legal, and ethical damage from research which oversteps a boundary, however that is to be defined. I do think these issues which touch on age-old questions about authorship, truth, and responsibility in gathering and handling data are fundamental to our work and deserve continued debate.

Final words

What does it say to us then, that despite the basic ambiguity and ambivalence in the mentoring relation, people seek out and manage to stay put in such relationships some times over long periods of time? This is an oddity.

One might predict that the ambiguity would create too much confusion between parties, or give rise to too much emotional tension or cognitive

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dissonance, or that somehow people would regard these relationships as fleeting and move in and out of them casually. Or that the ambiguity would lead to a low stakes orientation about the relationship. That is, because the norms and roles of mentorship are so nebulous, individuals might not feel social pressure to stay in them, work on them, try to nurture and develop them, or hope to benefit by them in more than superficial ways.

Early in the dissertation I allude to the possibility that because of the freedom to define the terms of mentorship and the fact that commitments and obligations are not clearly scripted, individuals may find themselves, paradoxically, compelled to pursue and maintain mentorship attachments. I am now convinced that this is true. In my view, the fact that mentorship is not conventionalized--that parties are relatively free to make of it what they want--gives it a vitality lacking in formal or more precisely scripted social relationships. The freedom to walk away from a mentorship, to dissolve the alliance paradoxically seem to keep parties interested, creative, and curious about what next they can accomplish together.

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CHAPTER VIII

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A
RATIONALE--PRELIMINARY SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

The choice to utilize a questionnaire for locating and selecting research participants was made for two reasons. One was practical. Administering a questionnaire to a large group of people either through the mail or organizational distribution seemed like an efficient way to reach a population of working people--some of whom were likely to fit my sample criteria. The main motivation to use a questionnaire, however, dealt with prob-lems of identifying mentors and proteges that were likely to arise due to the lack of consensus over what constitutes a mentor-protege relationship and where such a relationship does or should fall within the larger scheme of advisory and support relationships.

Rather than try to settle these dilemmas up front, I decided to structure the questionnaire partly with the aim of clarifying some of these issues. A first step was to broaden the scope of the inquiry. I used the generic concept "career-enhancing relationships" to frame the questionnaire so as to capture the range of types of special career help that people are giving and receiving and to be able to see how that correlates with respondents' subjective attributions and definitions of mentoring. The logic was fairly simple: the respondent was asked 1) to indicate whether he/she receives and/or provides special career help, 2) to identify what kind of help and in what doses, and 3) to relate what term/s describe his/her relation with the person giving or receiving the help. This sequence makes it possible to distinguish the question of whether a respondent is actually giving or receiving mentoring from what he or she calls that relationship and, as a result, to be able to select individuals for the study on the basis of either or both objective and subjective mentoring criteria. Individuals who met both types of criteria would, however, be the first to be selected.

The following describes and discusses choices that were made in the process of constructing the preliminary screening questionnaire for this study. They relate to the decisions about how to deal with the case of multiple mentors and about the formulation of items included on the mentoring index. (The questionnaire itself and a table of mentoring functions and corresponding questionnaire statements follow for reference.)

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Multiple mentors?

After indicating that they are involved in one or more career enhancing relationships within their organization and/or field, respondents are asked to answer a series of questions regarding the nature and amount of the support provided and characteristics of the provider. Respondents who are involved in more than one such relationship are instructed to keep in mind the one person with whom they feel they have the most significant relationship as they answer these next questions.

The decision to narrow responses to one relationship reflected my assumption, which was informed by the literature, that mentor-protege relationships are likely to stand apart from and be regarded as most important compared to other kinds of supportive relationships at work (i.e., Shapiro, Haseltine, & Rowe, 1978). Hence, the chances seemed good that respondents who were receiving help from more than one person would proceed to answer the questions on the basis of the one that they regarded as mentor--that is, if they were to consider any person that assists them, a mentor. Moreover, even though it was possible, even likely, that people would have multiple "weak ties" to others who provide some form of career assistance (Granovetter, 1973), the focus of my study is on the more intensive ties of dyadic mentorships. I made this decision also, therefore, to weed out more superficial ties from the deeper and more comprehensive ones.

It should be pointed out, however, that the questionnaire does not proceed with the same logic when asking about relationships with proteges. Put simply, it seemed reasonable to assume that a greater demand exists for mentors than for proteges. That is, mentors would be more likely to have multiple proteges and thus find it difficult to narrow their responses to one person. Respondents providing career assis-tance to more than one person were therefore given the option of answering survey questions on the basis of one relationship deemed to be most significant OR on a general basis.

Index of mentoring functions

Respondents are asked to use a 3-point scale (ranging from "not at all" to "somewhat" to "very much") to rate the extent to which key

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components of mentoring are present in their own relationships. To develop this 11-item index of mentoring functions, several key articles and books dealing with mentoring were reviewed. These include Kram (1985), Levinson (1978), Phillips-Jones (1982), Kanter (1977) and Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992). As the most comprehensive and inclusive, Kram's (1985) classification scheme of mentoring provided the basic framework.

As previously discussed, according to Kram's model (1985) there are two general types of mentoring functions. Those which deal with career enhancement and those which deal with psychosocial development. Of the 11 statements included in the index of mentoring functions, 9 were written to tap the career and psychosocial functions articulated by Kram. These include five career functions: sponsorship, exposure/ visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments, and four psychosocial functions: role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship.

While enormously useful for operationalizing mentoring in concrete (mainly behavioral) terms, Kram's model limits the view of mentoring functions to discrete roles and activities. Hence, it misses a few of the more diffuse and global aspects of mentoring. Two statements were added to the index, there-fore, to give more emphasis to these aspects. One relates to mentor's influence on shaping and helping to bring to fruition the protege's aspirations. Levinson (1978) wrote about this in referring to mentor's role in facilitating the realization of "The (protege's) Dream" (p. 91). The other statement inquires directly about the formation of an emotional bond--a component of mentoring which nearly every author who writes on the subject views as fundamental to such relationships.

Before describing each mentoring function and the statement that was formulated to measure it, one final note is needed about the index as a whole. The index appears two times in the questionnaire. Respondents encounter it first after (and only if) they have indicated that someone is providing special career help to them. They are instructed to indicate via the statements in the mentoring index what kind of help that person provides. Respondents encounter the index a second time after (and only if) they have indicated that <u>they</u> are providing special career help to someone else. In both places where the index appears the statements are virtually the same, albeit reversing the subject and object. So the first time the statements deal with

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what is being provided to the respondent; the second time they deal with what is being provided by the respondent. The point that needs to be brought out here is that the statements reflect mentoring functions only for the mentee or protege (or however the respondent refers to this person). They do not reflect mentoring functions for the mentor. Even though it is clear that mentors derive many things from the relationship and that the involvement with proteges provides career enhancement and personal satisfac-tions for them as well (e.g., sense of generativity, recog-nition from colleagues for spotting good talent), it made more sense to operationalize mentoring in terms of the functions for the mentee. As with other support relationships, the benefits for the mentors tend to be latent. What the mentor gets is not the point. The expressed, manifest functions are supposed to be for the mentee. Hence, they are articulated this way on the questionnaire.

Mentoring Functions and Corresponding Statements

Sponsorship. Sponsorship, according to Kram (1985), is the most frequently observed career function in mentoring relation-ships. The senior person acts as a sponsor when utilizing his or her own position of influence within an organization or field to provide backing to and generate power for the junior person. The assumption here is that the junior person's actual opportunities as well as his or her stature within the organization or field are enhanced by association with the sponsor. Kanter (1977) sees the latter dynamic as one of "reflected power." That is, social credit is extended to the protege "because there appears to be a more powerful set of resources in the distance." The protege gains recognition from important people in his or her field or organiza-tion by being connected to an influential figure and de facto having his or her stamp of approval. In concrete terms, sponsorship activities would also include nominating the junior person for promotions, fellowships, and desirable/highly competitive positions or projects, writing recommendation letters and opening up informal channels to get things done or as Kanter put it, to "bypass the hierarchy." The preliminary questionnaire contains the statement:

- Used his or her own clout and resources to help build your reputation and career (i.e., helped you cut through red tape, recommended you for preferred positions or assignments),

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to assess the extent to which sponsorship is featured in the respondents' mentoring relationships. This statement gets at the core of sponsorship--in that it is focused on the degree to which mentor uses his or her own power, status and social networks within an organization or field to bolster the same things for the protege. Examples of specific types of actions were added to clarify that while protege's reputation can be built up by merely being associated with mentor, sponsorship also requires that mentor's behaviors demonstrate support.

Exposure and visibility. A second component of mentoring--one which Kram refers to as the exposure and visibility function--involves "assigning responsibilities that allow a junior person to develop relationships with key figures in the organization (or field) who may judge his or her potential for further advancement" (1985:42). The basic idea is that mentors can be instrumental in positioning proteges so that their competence and performance will stand out to those higher up in the hierarchy. In Jackall's words, "a patron [mentor] provides his client [protege] with opportunities to get visibility, to showcase his abilities, to step out of the crowd at the middle levels, to make connections with others of higher status" (1988:61). Moreover, this function is double-sided in that it "not only makes an individual visible to others who may influence his or her organizational fate, it also exposes the individual to future opportunities" (Kram, p. 24). Hence, using their own networks of information, mentors can help proteges gain access to insider information about jobs, fellowships, conferences and select social functions.

The item on the preliminary questionnaire aimed at capturing the exposure-and-visibility function asks respondents to indicate the extent to which their mentors:

- Helped you establish connections with key people and network in your organization and/or field.

This formulation emphasizes a mentor's role in linking the junior person to the centers of influence and information within the organization. Levinson's (1978) depiction of mentors as hosts overlaps here. Like the host who ushers guests into the party, introduces them to each other, and kindles conversation, the mentor serves as host to the protege when he or she opens

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up his or her circle of influential friends, colleagues, and cache of resources (like the private stock of liquor at the party) and orchestrates initial contacts. This type of exposure to the occupational and social world of the organization and or/field is key to expanding career possibilities for the protege.

Coaching. This is the aspect of mentoring related specifically to learning the ropes. In Kram's words, "this career function enhances the junior person's knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the [organizational and occupational] world. Much like the athletic coach, the senior colleague suggests specific strategies for accomplishing work objectives, for achieving recognition, and for achieving career aspirations" (p. 25). Aspects of teaching (Kanter, 1977; Levinson, 1978), guidance (Levinson, 1978), and advising (Phillips-Jones, 1982) converge in this component. As coach, the mentor may advise about the players in the field (i.e., share information about who is powerful, who to avoid, and how to approach others), the rules of the game (i.e., offer insights regarding political processes and about protocols such as what behavior is tolerated and what is taboo), about how to improve one's game (i.e., make suggestions about courses to take, trying out different approaches), and about the sport itself (i.e., how to accomplish tasks with greater proficiency and skill).

The statement in the preliminary questionnaire which is to be an indicator of the coaching function asks about the extent to which the mentor has:

- Given you advice on how to navigate in your organization or field. (i.e., offered tips on how to deal with different people in the organization and/or field, acquainted you with the customs and values of the organization and/or field, counseled you on career goals.)

This addresses the overall gist of coaching--which is to offer advice to someone less knowledgeable about how to get around (a field) based on one's own wisdom and experience. Examples are provided for additional clarification of the specific areas in which the counsel may be offered.

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(Although coaching may involve counseling, in this framework coaching and counseling are seen as analytically distinct functions. Any counseling rendered under the rubric of coaching would pertain explicitly to protege's job, organization, and career. Counseling on personal matters, which is considered to be a psychosocial function of mentoring, will be discussed shortly.)

Protection. This function, in Kram's view, "shields the junior person from untimely or potentially damaging contact with other senior officials" (p. 26). This can include buffering the protege from undeserved criticism as well as taking blame for his or her actual mistakes. Mentor's protection may extend in other directions as well. Apart from getting involved in particular incidents involving senior officials, he or she may intervene in situations that protege might be ill-equipped to handle--come to the rescue, so to speak. During organizational shake-ups, he or she might also engage in various maneuvers to safeguard protege's good standing. The statement covering this function in the preliminary questionnaire closely parallels Kram's:

- Protected you from difficult or potentially damaging situations (i.e., watched out so that more powerful people in your organization and/or field did not harm you, "gone to bat" for you in controversial situations")

This was formulated to be general enough so that the protecting function could be construed as protection from potentially harmful people as well as from damaging situations. Again, examples were added to offer respondents clues as to types of activities that could be considered protective. The phrase "gone to bat" was used because it is how people often express the idea that a more senior person has backed them up or vouched for them in situations where their credibility was called into question. It has an emotional resonance which seems to get at the crux of this function.

Challenging assignments. Mentoring relationships may provide important learning opportunities for proteges. Although in Kram's model the emphasis is on the immediate work of an organizational unit, this function can be broadened to include any task or project which increases the protege's knowledge and/or skill, nudges him or her to take risks, and

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expands his or her mastery of the work. For example, the mentor may ask for assistance in setting up a conference and this task may only be peripherally relevant to the protege's everyday responsibilities. This function is expressed simply in the statement which appears on the preliminary survey.

- Provided you with challenging assignments.

Role modeling. There is widespread agreement in the literature that role modeling is a nearly ubiquitous feature of mentoring relationships. According to Kram, the importance of this psychosocial function is that the mentor's attitudes, values, and behavior provide a model for the protege to identify with and emulate. The protege "finds in the senior person a particular image of who he can become" (p. 30). Levinson (1978) discusses this function in terms of seeing the mentor as an "exemplar." That is, his or her own virtues, achievements, and way of living may come to be admired and respected by the protege and serve as an example to follow. Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992) add that while mentor may set an example of professional identity, he or she may also provide a model of gender identity. That is, protege observes in mentor not only what it means to be a good manager, a good doctor, a good lawyer, a good writer, etc. but also what it means to be a good woman manager, a good women doctor, a good women lawyer and so forth. Emphasizing the elements of admiration, identification, and hope in this function, the statement on the preliminary questionnaire reads:

- Provided an image of someone you would like to be like.

Acceptance and confirmation. This function deals with the basic tone that the mentoring relationship assumes. When an attitude of positive regard is conveyed, both mentor and protege, derive a sense of self (p. 32). The mentor's support and encouragement enable the protege to develop confidence in his or her emerging competence and to experiment with new ways of relating in the work world. This includes being able to disagree with mentor and to tolerate conflict. Ultimately, Kram points out, such a capacity makes it possible for the protege to differentiate (to stake out his or her own positions on issues and forge his or her own organizational

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identity) and still be connected to mentor. The statement on the preliminary questionnaire reflects this link between support and growth:

- Helped you take risks and grow in your career by communicating acceptance and encouragement.

This general formulation allows respondents to make a subjective determination about the extent to which the mentoring relationship felt affirming and promoted risk-taking and growth.

Counseling. Counseling is the dimension of mentoring that gives credence to the fact that the protege has a personal life and emotional anxieties that can "interfere with a positive sense of self within the organization" (Kram, p. 33) and can be disruptive to work performance and career decisions. Mentor may act as counselor and confidante, making it safe for protege to discuss personal concerns and offering insights and feedback which may bring relief and help guide the protege towards a solution. The statement which represents this function on the questionnaire:

- Given you space to talk over personal concerns and doubts that affected your work and offered support and feedback to help resolve them.

was written to tap the dialectical nature of counseling. It asks about the extent to which there is a climate of open communication in the relationship, which is both an outgrowth of and what makes it possible for protege to become show vulnerability and talk about issues that get in the way of the work.

Friendship. This aspect of mentoring is characterized by sociability that results in mutual liking and enjoyable informal exchanges about work and outside-of-work experiences. Becoming friends apart from the work allows the protege to feel more like a peer with a more senior adult. Anticipatory socialization (Merton, 1957) is partly accomplished in the friendship function as the protege begins to feel accepted in the company of adult/professional peers. The questionnaire statement:

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- Socialized with you outside of work (i.e., joined you for drinks, dinner or lunch, invited you to informal gatherings, introduced you to family or friends),

is broadly formulated to suggest that there are a variety of ways in which mentor and protege may socialize with one another apart from the work situation.

Aspirational influence. As mentioned earlier, this component deals with the more diffuse type of influence that the mentoring relationship has on the protege's aspirations and his or her vision of the possibilities for the future. Levinson (1978) sees this as mentor's "transitional function" and describes it as involving the creation of a space where protege can explore emerging aspects of his or her professional self, rely on the integrity of the mentoring relationship to "hold" the various pieces during the discovery process (e.g. to tolerate the chaos in the process of professional self-definition) and to trust in the mentor to offer unintrusive guidance. This is how mentor's influence works in the ideal situation, according to Levinson. The statement which inquires about this function on the questionnaire:

- Helped you shape and realize your professional aspirations,

is written in very general terms primarily to get at whether respondent's ideals and hopes about his or her career have been imprinted by the mentoring relationship.

Emotional attachment. The last function in the mentoring index is about emotional attachment. Respondents will be asked to indicate the extent to which mentor has:

- Formed an emotional bond with you.

Most of the literature suggests that an emotional involvement is a distinguishing feature of the mentor-protege relationship. The statement was included therefore as a way of asking directly about the level of emotional connection.

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INDEX OF MENTORING FUNCTIONS

Function	Statement on Questionnaire
Sponsorship:	Used his or her own clout and resources to help build your reputation and career (i.e., helped you cut through red tape, recommended you for preferred positions or assignments).
Exposure & Visibility	Helped you establish connections with key people and network in your organization and/or field.
Coaching:	Given you advice on how to navigate in your organization or field. (i.e., offered tips on how to deal with different people in the organization and/or field, acquainted you with customs & values of the organization and/or field, counseled you on career goals).
Protection:	Protected you from difficult or potentially damaging situations (i.e., watched out so that more powerful people in your organization and/or field did not harm you, "gone to bat" for you in controversial situations").
Challenging Assignments:	Provided you with challenging assignments.
Role Modeling:	Provided an image of someone you would like to be like.
Acceptance & Confirmation:	Helped you take risks and grow in your career by communicating acceptance and encouragement.
Counseling:	Given you space to talk over personal concerns and doubts that affected your work and offered support and feedback to help resolve them.
Friendship:	Socialized with you outside of work (i.e., joined you for drinks, dinner or lunch, invited you to informal gatherings, introduced you to family or friends).
Aspirational Influence:	Helped you shape and realize your professional aspirations.
Emotional Attachment:	Formed an emotional bond with you.

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APPENDIX B
SYNOPSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

Response Rates

A preliminary screening questionnaire was mailed to a total of 1044 people affiliated with three organizations--106 were New York City area members of the National Association of Women Artists (NAWA) whose names and addresses appeared in a published directory of members which I purchased from the organization. The largest mailing was to 532 New York City members of the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE). With the cooperation of the organization, I was able to procure mailing labels for a segment[1] of their membership in the local area. This organization also gave me permission to state that they were cooperating with the study in a cover letter that accompanied the mailing. A third mailing was to 300 reporters and photographers on staff at a major daily New York newspaper (from here on referred to as NEWS). The union provided mailing labels for these employees.[2] A final mailing went to 106 individuals on the roster of an New York City based organization called the Stern Performing Arts Alliance.

Of the 1044 questionnaires mailed, 51 were returned unusable (35 were sent to wrong addresses; 15 potential respondents wrote notes indicating that they declined to participate). Out of the 993 remaining potential respondents, 291 completed and returned questionnaires (29 percent). The majority came from NAFE (N=185; 64 percent), followed

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[1] I chose to get mailing labels from NAFE for members who were white, college educated or holding advanced degrees, and in a variety of occupational categories, excluding secretarial.

[2] An initial attempt to distribute the questionnaires, in-house at the newspaper site failed. Although members of the administrative staff were willing to cooperate with the study and to facilitate the in-house distribution, they were not able to carry out the agreed upon strategy to publicize the survey. As a result, only 3 questionnaires were returned from this effort. I pursued contacts in the union after this first attempt.

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by NEWS (N=51; 18 percent), Stern (N=29; 10 percent), and NAWA (N=21; 7 percent).

Personal and Employment Characteristics

Data from 291 questionnaires were analyzed. The total number of female respondents was 256 (88 percent) and the number of male respondents was 35 (12 percent). The great majority of female respondents were from NAFE (80 percent, N=185); all the males were from NEWS.

With few exceptions, the sample was made up of whites only. (Five percent of the sample (N=14) were non-white; 2 were of Asian descent, 3 were Hispanic, 6 were African American, 3 were in an "Other" category.)

Thirty-four percent of respondents were between the ages of 31-40 (N=100), 30 percent were between 41-50 (N=87). Twenty-three percent were over 50 years of age (N=68) and 12 percent were under 30 (N=36). The mean age was 41.

Two-thirds of respondents (66 percent) were employed by their organizations from one through eight years (N=169), while 20 percent were employed from nine through 16 years (N=52). Thirty-six respondents had been with their organizations for 17 years or more (14 percent). The mean length of time employed in an organization was 8 years; the mode was 1 year, and the median was 5 years.

Nearly one-third of respondents work in a corporation setting (N=84, 29 percent). The next largest group are self-employed (N=67; 23 percent). Twenty-one percent work in news, magazines or publishing organizations (N=61). Twelve percent work in small businesses (N=36). The rest of the respondents (N=42, 14 percent) work in a range of types of organizations (hospitals N=2; universities N=5; government N=3; non-profit agencies N=10; social services N=2; law firms N=3; schools N=5; or multiple settings N=5) or were either retired (N=4) or not employed (N=3).

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"Career Help:" Mentoring Assistance

Just over one-half of the respondents are currently receiving special career help (N=147; 51 percent). Twenty-one percent receive such help from someone in their field (outside of their organization); 19 percent receive it from someone in their organization; and 11 percent receive help from people both within their organization and field.

Among those who were getting career help, most were getting it from someone of their same race (N=120; 86 percent). Nineteen respondents were getting help from someone of a different race. The career helpers of just over half of the respondents were the same gender (N=72; 51 percent); 68 respondents were being helped by someone of the other gender (49 percent).

The average length of time that respondents were involved with others who were giving them career help was from 2-3 years. Twenty-eight percent (N=39) were involved with career-helpers for more than 5 years.

The average age of the career helper was between 46-50 years. The mode and median were between 41-45 years. Twenty-nine percent were getting help from someone under 40; 29 percent were getting help from someone over 50.

In most cases, the helper(s) was not a boss or supervisor. Still, 35 percent (N=48) did receive the help from a boss or supervisor; for 4 percent of the respondents (N=6), the helper was a former boss or supervisor.

Linguistic Attribution

Respondents were asked to indicate which terms (roles) characterize their helper in relation to them. The greatest numbers considered their helper to be an advisor (N=79; 57 percent); a friend (N=76; 55 percent), and/or a mentor (N=69; 50 percent). The following lists the percentages of other attributions: advocate (N=37; 34 percent); senior colleague (N=46; 33 percent); role model (N=42; 30 percent); guide (N=36; 26 percent); teacher (N=31; 22 percent); coach (N=21; 19 percent); counselor

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(N=23; 17 percent); protector (N=19; 14 percent); sponsor (N=11; 11 percent); parental surrogate (N=3; 2 percent). A number of respondents (N=20) wrote in other terms they use to refer to their helper--among the more unusual and intriguing were lover, father, and family physician.

Giving and Getting Career Assistance

More respondents are giving career help than getting it. Sixty-five percent (N=189) said they are helping people with their careers. Among these 28 percent were offering such help to people within their organizations. In 21 percent of the cases, help is being offered to people in the respondent's field. Eighteen percent of respondents are helping people both within their organizations and in their fields.

Respondents were asked to indicate which terms (roles) they consider to fit the person they help. The largest number considered the person they help to be a friend (N=103, 58 percent). This was followed by junior colleague (N=84, 47 percent); mentee (N=71, 40 percent); advisee (N=38, 21 percent); student (N=37, 21 percent); protégé (N=33; 18 percent); and client (N=8, 4 percent). Eighteen people wrote in other terms (roles)--including colleague and associate. It is striking that respondents are much more willing to use the term mentee than protégé.

(Detailed profiles of personal characteristics, employment information, and relationship trends are available from the author. Because respondents were able to indicate that they provided career help to multiple numbers of individuals, analyses are more complicated.

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APPENDIX C
CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Gender. Although my initial intention was to study pairs in all four gender combinations, I decided to narrow the scope of my investigation as I continually encountered difficulties gaining access to research subjects--especially men. For reasons that may or may not have been idiosyncratic, I found that in cases of cross-gender pairs, women tended to be more open to be interviewed than their male counterparts.

Length of time in the relationship. Given that the aim of the research was to understand the mentor-protege dynamics over time, its seemed important to target pairs who had as much history as possible. Evidence suggests that mentorships typically last from 2-3 years upwards to 8-10 years (Levinson, 1978; Burke, McKeen & McKenna, 1991). For selection purposes I considered pairs who had been involved with each other for at least two years. This seemed like a reasonable length of time for a mentor and protege to have developed a joint past to reflect upon.

Age. Attempts were made to select mentors and proteges whose age difference was roughly a half-generation apart (8-15 years difference). The reason for doing so was to minimize the extent to which an age difference led to *peerlike* relationship dynamics--a situation which would be more likely to occur if mentor and protégé were too close in age, or to dynamics analogous to a *parent-child* relationship--a situation more likely to arise when parties are a generation apart in age.

Frequency and nature of contact. Mentors and proteges who had more frequent in-person contact, all other things being equal, were chosen over those who saw each other less. This criteria was based on the assumption that the more face to face contact, the greater the degree of involvement in the relationship (for good and/or bad). Studies confirm that frequency of communication is positively correlated to levels of mentoring functions (Burke, McKeen, & McKenna, 1993).

Formal role relationship. This variable deals with whether the mentor-protégé relationship was grafted onto a boss/employee relationship

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or was divorced from any formal authority relationship. Although I had originally proposed to control for this variable, other factors became more important in the selection process, and consequently limited my ability to control for this factor.

Occupational factors. Due to diversity among prospective interviewees, I was not able to control for occupation, job title, type of organization, size of organization, or length of time employed by the organization as I had originally proposed. I hypothesized that these factors would be significant--particularly to the question of whether a person was self-employed and thus had a free-standing mentor-protégé relationship versus whether the person was employed by and carried on a mentor-protégé relationship within an organization. Because career path and benchmarks of success would probably vary between those in freelance work versus those working for an organization, I thought the need for and role of mentoring would also be likely to differ. The fact that I was not able to control for these variables did not prevent me from being aware of their possible impact on the mentorships.

Race. By design, this study was confined to whites only. I made the decision to limit the study racially, because race has been shown to have a decisive influence on the development and efficacy of mentoring relationships and in my view, warrants an exclusive focus. Studies suggest that cross-race relationships are fraught with difficulties that are not present in same-race relationships (Thomas, 1993). This is not surprising, given that identification and trust--which have been depicted as two key ingredients in developing mentor-protégé alliances--are thwarted from developing in cross-race relationships due to racial stereotyping and historical patterns of disidentification between people of different races (Thomas, 1989). Moreover, although no studies to date have compared same-race mentor-protégé relationships, for example between blacks and between whites, I suspect that race would matter greatly in this configuration as well. Structural inequalities in employment would probably affect such things as the need for mentoring, access to it, extent of mentor power, and all of these would be likely to impact upon the dynamics of the relationship itself.

I did end up interviewing one cross-race pair in which the mentor was a white woman raised in England and her protégée was Haitian American.

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The mentor had been the survey respondent; on her questionnaire she did not indicate the race of her protégée. Because all of the other criteria concerning the mentorship seemed propitious, I decided to call the mentor for an interview. It wasn't until I was half finished with the first interview that I discovered that her protégée was non-white. I decided to pursue the interviews with both parties because they had very interesting relationship and emotional bond. As suggested by the previous studies, race was a central issue.

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CHAPTER IX

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