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A study of individual differences in idealization

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A STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN IDEALIZATION

by

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an exploratory study of idealization, a widely experienced psychological process with a broad range of adaptive and defensive aspects. By "idealization" I mean an overvaluation of the object, a regarding of him or her as ideal or perfect, or closer to perfection than is true in reality.

The idealized object usually carries great importance for the one who idealizes. In psychoanalytic terms, an inordinate amount of psychic energy is invested in the object, i.e., it is "hypercathected." Hence, idealization is far from casual. It carries importance and meaning for people, often with significant effects on their lives, and at the same time, by virtue of its inherent distance from reality, it is a process which is not readily available to conscious scrutiny. Indeed, idealization carries with it unconscious needs, wishes and meanings. However, while it is a psychological process involving an implicit distortion of reality and whose source is to a large degree unconscious, it is nevertheless generally experienced and expressed openly and bears with it a fair degree of social acceptance.

It is therefore surprising that until recently idealization was a subject which had received relatively little attention, either in the theoretical or the empirical literature. In A Glossary of Psychoanalytic Terms and Concepts (1968) published by the American Psychoanalytic Association, idealization is not even mentioned. Foremost among the exceptions to the lacuna in the theoretical literature are the contributions of Heinz Kohut, who has focused attention on idealization as a psychological process of crucial importance, and of Melanie Klein who sees idealization as important but whose work in this area has had less influence in the United States.

The existent literature indicates that there are individual differences in both the presence and degree of idealization as well as in its ramifications for psychological well-being. Of particular interest from a clinical viewpoint is the determination of when idealization is developmentally appropriate, contributing to adaptation, and when it becomes pathological, e.g., by decreasing

reality testing and interfering with object relationships. It is especially prevalent in adolescence and may have particular meaning in late adolescence and early adulthood; hence it's presence and adaptive/pathological significance is of particular interest in this age group.

In this dissertation I have taken several steps towards studying idealization empirically. One focus of this research is on the possibility of discovering individual differences in idealization in a college population (mainly late adolescents and young adults) by means of a group administered test. I hope that this may open the way for further studies, e.g., explorations of the uses and meanings of idealization for those individuals who show a marked tendency to idealize, or comparative studies between idealizers and those who show little or no tendency to idealize.

Such a comparative study, using in-depth interviews, forms another part of my research. By exploring idealization and related experiences in subjects' personal lives, I hope to generate new hypotheses for work in this area.

Research has been especially lacking in the processes during development which lead to the use of idealization as a characteristic aspect of personality functioning. It has been proposed by Kohut (1971) that loss of the idealized parent in childhood is related to a continuing need and search for idealized objects. Although there is a good deal of clinical evidence supporting this connection there have been no empirical studies on this subject. Further, studying the possibility of such a relationship may add to our understanding of the ramifications of divorce, currently such a common experience for children. Therefore, an initial attempt at discovering such a relationship forms another part of the study.

CHAPTER I:

REVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL LITERATURE

In this chapter I will present a necessarily limited review, in the context of an empirical study, of what I see as the most significant contributions that have been made to the understanding of idealization in the theoretical literature. Idealization has been seen as serving a broad spectrum of functions in psychic life from playing a central role in the development of the self to the establishment and preservation of object-relationships. Whether seen as a normative, adaptive process contributing in an essential way to psychic development or primarily from the perspective of defense, the literature points to idealization as a process which tends to be used in the service of restoring and maintaining psychic equilibrium. While outlining the various ways in which idealization has been viewed, the primary focus in this section will be to show the importance of idealization as a psychological process.

Idealization has generally been looked at as a defensive means of coping with ambivalence conflicts, as a sort of reaction formation against hostile, rivalrous feelings (Gedo, 1975). In this view, by idealizing the object--wiping out negative perceptions and replacing them with all positive ones--the individual wards off and denies dangerous and unacceptable feelings of hate and assuages guilt. It is interesting that there appears to be little literature discussing idealization from this perspective. For many it is still the primary way in which it is viewed. There are, however, a number of other approaches.

Freud's Contributions

It is Freud who laid the groundwork for some of the basic conceptualizations about idealization and its development, most importantly by placing idealization in the context of narcissism, but also by his formulation of the part it plays in the formation of psychic structure. Basically, he considers idealization a narcissistic phenomenon and indicates that the original experience of primary narcissism, characterized by a sense of power and perfection, is the

model and source for later idealizations. While his view is that in normal adults primary narcissism is latent and sublimated, he sees this original narcissism as fundamentally persisting, either as a longed-for experience or as a potentially revivable one--and idealization of external objects represents an avenue for its expression (1914).

Freud sees idealization as the vehicle by which some of the original narcissistic investment in the self is transfered to the object in the experience of object love--a maturational step taken in adolescence. He views idealization as not only involving a giving over of one's narcissistic investment to the other but at times also as representing an attempt to regain the original narcissistic experience. He writes that

> in many forms of love-choice . . . the object serves as a substitute for some unattained ego ideal of our own. We love it on account of the perfections which we have striven to reach for our own ego, and which we should now like to procure in this roundabout way as a means of satisfying our narcissism. (1922, p. 112-113)

He appears to view the idealization of the love object as normal and valuable but also as having the potential for pathological development. The transfer of narcissism via idealization involves "an impoverishment of the ego as regards libido in favour of the love-object" (1914, p. 88), an experience which might become so excessive that it could amount to a kind of "neurotic compulsion." This could involve the ego's surrendering itself to the object, diminishing self-esteem, with the narcissistic balance finding redress only if the individual were to be loved in return.

His ideas concerning the formation of the ego-ideal also provide a basis for later thoughts about the relationship between idealization and internalization. Since idealization leads into rather complex issues regarding the formation of psychic structure, rather than discussing it in great detail in this review I will try just to outline in simple fashion a few major things that have been written on this subject. In The Ego and the Id (1923) Freud discusses how as the normal resolution of the Oedipus complex, cathexes of the parents are abandoned and replaced by identifications which form the basis of the ego-ideal and superego. In the psychoanalytic literature the ego-ideal has been viewed as representing an image of the child's ideal self, that

which he would like to be, and has been seen as being based both on the parents' real and idealized qualities. It may be postulated that the child who has first given over a sense of narcissistic perfection to the parents now reinternalizes that as an image within himself which he aspires to fulfill. (The ego-ideal is also seen as including the protective and rewarding functions, which I would suggest, could be viewed as a reinternalization of the original narcissistic experience of all goodness and gratification residing in the self.) Of importance, the concept of a withdrawal of cathexes from objects leading then to the formation of psychic structure--in this case what may be seen as the reinternalization of an idealization in the process of the structuralization of internal ideals--is one we will see again in Kohut.

Kohut's Contributions

Heinz Kohut, in the context of a broad reworking of the psychoanalytic understanding of human development has, more than any other theorist, focused on idealization as representing a central psychological process. He considers idealization a process that is fundamentally adaptive, and views its healthy development as both essential to the formation of a cohesive, enlivened self as well as to the formation of psychic structure and the mature ideals by which we live. He has also made major contributions to an understanding of the ways in which idealization can become a pathological process. His approach may be seen to have as its starting point Freud's conceptualization of idealization as a narcissistic phenomenon. However, Kohut takes these ideas in new directions, viewing the development of narcissism as equal in importance to the development of object relations, and perhaps as more fundamental.

In his system, idealization, in the form of the "idealized parent imago," represents one of two major lines of narcissistic development, the other line being what he calls "the grandiose self." As does Freud, he sees idealization as arising out of the original narcissistic experience of the infant, an experience he describes as one of "bliss, power, perfection, and goodness" (1966, p. 246). He writes that when this original experience of perfection is inevitably disturbed--by maturational pressures and by tensions arising from necessarily imperfect

maternal responses--"the baby's psychic organization . . . attempts to deal with the disturbances by the building up of new systems of perfection" (1966, p. 246)--the "grandiose self" and the "idealized parent imago."

The "grandiose self" involves the grandiose and exhibitionistic aspects of the original narcissism which are kept within the self and which he feels must be allowed to develop--indeed must be confirmed by empathic mirroring and admiration-- in order that they not undergo repression and become unavailable to modification. More than this, he implies that their gradual healthy development and modification supplies sustenance and support for the emergent self. This is true also of the development of the "idealized parent imago."

The "idealized parent imago" begins to develop as the baby experiences vulnerability and helplessness, emerging when the "grandiose self" can no longer cope with the ongoing early disturbance of narcissistic equilibrium. It arises through the attempt to imbue the parental object with the original narcissistic perfection and power--and by participation in it to salvage part of the original narcissistic experience. (Kohut describes the two central mechanisms of grandiosity and idealization as "'I am perfect.' 'You are perfect, but I am part of you,'" 1971, p. 27. The parent functions here as a "self-object," by which he means an object which is experienced as part of the self and which provides support for the self.) In this way, idealization helps restore the narcissistic balance of the young child. Such a restitutive, adaptive use of idealization to shore up a vulnerable sense of self at a time of narcissistic disequilibrium is a conceptualization that has been used by Kohut as well as other theorists in discussions of adolescence which I will address later on.

The emergence of idealizing libido is seen as a maturational step forward both in the development of narcissism itself, presumably because of the libidinal investment in the object, but also in the development of object relations, since there is an amalgamation of aspects of true object love with the narcissistic cathexis of the object. After its emergence, idealization is conceptualized as undergoing a maturational process, leading presumably to more differentiated and developed forms, and in a very gradual way to deidealization of the object and towards the

formation of psychic structure.

He writes that initially, "Since all bliss and power now reside in the idealized object, the child feels empty and powerless when he is separated from it and he attempts, therefore, to maintain a continuous union with it" (1968, p. 88). Over time, the child is better able to maintain his narcissistic equilibrium when separated from the object, a process which occurs in part because the child easily identifies with aspects of the idealized imago, thus gradually taking them back within the self (1966, p. 247). As development proceeds, empathic, responsive parents allow age-appropriate idealizations to occur and allow the child to experience participation in their idealized image. Gradually these idealizations are transformed, becoming neutralized and inhibited in their aims, and contributing to the development of psychic structure.

This occurs by a process of "transmuting internalization" (which has as its basis Freud's ideas in Mourning and Melancholia, 1917, about the relationship between internalization and the withdrawal of object cathexes following object loss). The child experiences "optimal frustration," that is, unavoidable small disappointments in idealized aspects of the object which occur in the context of parental empathy. Those aspects are internalized as narcissistic libido, in manageable portions, is withdrawn from the object. During the pre-Oedipal period, such gradual deidealization and internalization contributes to the building up of the drive-controlling aspects of the ego, and a more massive but phase-appropriate deidealization during the Oedipal period leads to the formation of the ego-ideal and to the idealization of the superego as a whole. When development has been optimal, the ego-ideal (along with the goal structure of the ego which derives from the transformations of the grandiose self), becomes "the personality's best protection against narcissistic vulnerability and shame propensity" (1966, p. 254-255).

To this point I've focused on Kohut's theories concerning the adaptive, normal development of idealization whereby the child gradually comes to evaluate the parents more realistically and their idealized image is gradually relinquished. He has also made contributions of central importance to the understanding of circumstances in which there is a continuing need

for and dependence on external idealized objects.

In his view, traumatic disappointments in the idealized object (i.e., those that are severe and sudden or that don't occur at the appropriate phase), or a traumatic loss of the idealized object, can prevent the necessary formation of psychic structure. He postulates that such disappointments, or a major loss or absence of a parent, prevent the gradual withdrawal of idealization. This leads to a fixation on a fantasy of an idealized parent imago (which is either repressed or split off) and a continuing need for the external idealized figure to maintain narcissistic homeostatis. This may be the parent or various replacement objects. He describes the development of what can throughout life appear to be an intense object hunger but which is really a continuing search for and dependence on idealized figures. These figures function as a kind of replacement for missing segments of psychic structure and are needed to prevent depletion and fragmentation of the self. They are not true objects since they are not realistically perceived and emotional responses to them are not related to their true qualities. The relationship that he postulates between loss of idealized objects in childhood and continuing dependence on idealizations in adolescence and adulthood was an important contributor to my decision to empirically study this relationship.

Kohut considers the stream of narcissism which is expressed through idealization of the parent imago to be particularly vulnerable until the time of the formation and firming of an idealized nuclear superego. He describes various diffuse narcissistic problems and structural defects that can result when there are very early disturbances with the idealized parent. However, he stresses that continuing dependence on an external object of perfection is most likely to result from the effects of traumatic disappointments and losses that occur from the late preoedipal period through the beginning of latency. He postulates that, because of the inadequate idealization of the superego--including its rewarding and punishing functions and the inadequate formation of its guiding ideals--the individual will always be searching for approval and leadership from external idealized figures which he cannot find within himself. He suggests as well that traumatic disappointments in and losses of objects throughout latency

and adolescence, though to a lesser extent than in earlier periods, may seriously disturb the structuralization of the psyche (1971, p. 44), presumably interfering with the important formation and firming of ideals that should occur at these times. He doesn't make clear whether or not some continuing dependence on idealized figures might result from disturbances during these periods.

Such idealizations resulting from losses and disappointments, however, must be differentiated from idealizing feelings which Kohut believes are a healthy and necessary part of adult functioning. He asserts that the individual throughout life is in need of sustaining self-objects. These will be experienced "as available to him as sources of idealized strength and calmness" (1984, p. 52). While such self-objects are chosen on a mature basis and are admired for their realistic qualities,

> the selfobject experiences of all the preceding stages of [the individual's] life reverberate unconsciously. When we feel uplifted by our admiration for a great cultural ideal, for example, the old uplifting experience of being picked up by our strong and admired mother and having been allowed to merge with her greatness, calmness, and security may be said to form the unconscious undertones of the joy we are experiencing as adults. (1984, p. 50)

Kohut and those influenced by him view his theories as applicable to human development generally. However, much of his work is concerned with narcissistic personality disorders and involves a discussion of his innovative approach to the analysis of such patients, many of whom have had disturbed experiences of idealization in childhood. An essential aspect of his approach, which is based on his belief in the adaptive nature of optimally experienced idealizations, should be noted. He believes that when a patient has experienced problems involving early idealizations, the development of an idealizing transference to an empathic analyst may provide an important support for the self and, through its acceptance and gradual resolution, represent an essential step in the process of healing. The process by which this occurs is that the patient will inevitably experience disappointments in the analyst which the analyst clarifies and links to disappointing experiences with childhood objects. In this way, potentially traumatic repetitions become instead optimal frustrations, leading to transmuting

internalization of the lost aspect of the idealized object. This position, while still controversial, has gained a great deal of support in recent years. Although I will not review them here, in the 1980s a number of studies have addressed the subject of idealizing transferences in individual and group psychotherapy. As I will return to later, it has also provided a basis for other theorists who have addressed beneficial aspects of idealizations during adolescence.

Klein's Contributions

Melanie Klein is another major theorist who, from a very different perspective, accords idealization an important place in early development. Her focus is on the primacy of innate aggression and the anxiety associated with it. Whereas for Kohut, idealization optimally represents an adaptive process essential to the healthy formation of the self, she views idealization primarily as one of a group of omnipotent, primitive defenses arising in infancy in response to the infant's experience of a dangerous world. She sees it as characteristic of the very early relation to the good object and as related to the powerful and extreme emotions of the infant.

In her view, intense persecutory anxiety is experienced by the infant. It arises primarily as a result of the projection of powerful aggressive impulses and leads to the very early use of splitting mechanisms. Idealization is intimately linked to these splitting processes as the infant turns the early good object (the gratifying breast) into an ideal one and keeps it far apart from the persecuting, bad object (the frustrating breast) as a protection against the latter; in the process the infant achieves a relative sense of security. Introjective and projective processes develop around these splits and affect the infant's experience of him/herself and of internal and external objects. As an indication of the important place Klein accords idealization, she writes that, "In these ways at a very early stage persecutory anxiety and its corollary, idealization, fundamentally influence object relations" (1975, p. 49).

During the early period when these processes are at their height, during what she calls the "paranoid-schizoid" position, the developing ego is also split and fragmented. It is during the

ensuing "depressive position," when the young child gradually brings together the good and bad aspects of the object, that these processes diminish. Splitting gives way to integration (with concomitant integration of the ego), the capacity to face internal and external reality increases, and objects become less frightening and less idealized.

Her position is that the need for idealization is never fully given up and to the degree that it persists in adulthood it continues to provide reassurance against persecutory anxieties and serves to diminish excessive envy. It may also be a way of coping with an inability to love and to securely possess a good internal object. She believes that when idealization is characteristic of object relations in adulthood, there is less mental stability and that relationships are precarious and unstable. Idealizations (and identifications based on them) tend to be indiscriminately established. They also tend to break down, as the once idealized object is devalued because of disappointment in it, or it comes to be experienced as dangerous due to the projection of destructive impulses and envy.

Klein's conceptualizations of idealization and its relationship to aggression and splitting have influenced Otto Kernberg (1975). Since his focus is on the role that idealization plays in severe psychopathology, particularly in borderline conditions and pathological narcissism, I will not review his work here but simply make note of his extensive attention to idealization as a typical defense in these disorders.

Klein, Kohut, and Freud are in many ways addressing similar phenomena. They all place the origin of idealization in very early experience, Freud and Kohut squarely setting it in a narcissistic context. Klein's emphasis on the connection with omnipotence addresses the same area of early experience, though with more emphasis on drives. Both Kohut and Klein see idealization of the object as reassuring and as an attempt to cope with early experiences of profound anxiety. Both relate a feeling of worthlessness and a lack of inner aliveness to an excessive dependence on an unassimilated idealized parent imago. Finally, both believe that idealizations may continue past a developmentally appropriate time frame when there has been a less than optimal experience with early objects. The determinants of this are viewed quite

differently, however, with Kohut emphasizing unempathic and unresponsive mothering and Klein an excessive strength of destructive impulses and envy leading to deep splitting of the object.

Other Theoretical Contributions

Other psychoanalytic theorists have made important, if less seminal, contributions. Edith Jacobson, for instance, writes about the early development of the idealization of parents, asserting that the child's original need to glorify and aggrandize the image of the parent arises out of "aggressive-narcissistic demands" (1964, p. 109). Somewhat similarly to Kohut she sees the young child as experiencing the idealization of its own self by participating in the glorified parental image, thereby gaining security and increased self-esteem. Like Klein, she sees aggression as playing an important part as well in the unfolding of idealizations. However, her emphasis is on the role idealization plays in protecting infantile object relations. In her view, the normal hostile devaluation of love objects during the anal-sadistic period is the primary incentive for the increased idealization of these objects by way of a reactive strengthening of libidinal strivings. As aggressive and sexual impulses towards parents are aroused during the oedipal period, a further strengthening of the image of the love object as admired, valuable, and omnipotent helps the child to master such dangerous impulses and to cope with ambivalence conflicts. During all this, since boundaries between self and object are not yet firm, increased idealization not only protects the image of the parent from dangerous impulses and devaluation but protects the self from narcissistic injury. As the child matures, so do his idealizations, developing into what she calls "true idealizations;" these are more advanced and reality oriented, more related to ethical and moral values and less to issues of power and gratification.

Differences in the way idealization is conceptualized in part reflect the fact that it may serve different functions in different circumstances. Lachmann and Stolorow illustrate this in a 1976 paper in which they present two cases involving different types of pathology. In both,

idealization is understood in the context of narcissism and narcissistic needs. The differences they address are related to degree of separation-individuation reached by an individual and the role that aggression plays in his or her psychic make-up.

One patient, a young woman, is presented as a case of developmental arrest involving a failure of separation and internalization; her problems are seen as similar to those Kohut describes. She has no sense of being able to become like the persons she admires; rather, there is a dependence on them to maintain her self-esteem and self-cohesion which fluctuates according to how they behave towards her. Such patients are seen as developmentally unable to perceive and affirm the real qualities of the self and objects; rather, they need idealized others as self-objects who can substitute for missing self-regulating psychic structure.

The other case involves a young man who does not show the same structural deficiencies and whose idealizations are related to object-instinctual conflicts. Unlike the first patient, he seeks to become like his idealized objects by way of imitation. In both types of patient there has been narcissistic injury; however, these patients are developmentally more advanced and better able to regulate self-esteem. Though they are capable of perceiving the real qualities of objects, these are defensively denied. Idealizations are used to isolate the self from the conflictually-experienced objects and to ward off rage and envy towards them.

Roy Schafer, in his 1967 paper, "Ideals, Ego Ideal, and Ideal Self," proposes that the formation of ideal images and the search for their fulfillment in reality is both inherent in human thought and potentially very adaptive. He writes:

> Inherent in human thought is a tendency to create ideal images . . . to search the environment for their counterparts, and to perceive and assess the environment (and the self) in terms of its correspondence to these ideal images. In this conception, <u>every wish creates an ideal</u>. . . . This ideal includes an ideal self and an ideal object, or, alternatively, a self and object in an ideal wish-fulfilling relationship. Our understanding of object relations should include recognition of the ideal that exists alongside the experienced, especially because the ideal intensifies the relation to reality and partly determines what is experienced. (p. 160-161)

While other theorists besides Schafer, including Kohut and Jacobson, indicate that ideal representations of others change and mature over time, forming the basis for our ideals and

aspirations, his discussion of the development of ideal objects represents a particularly cogent contribution. He suggests that ideal objects are created appropriate to the child's stage of development and that he needs "to encounter live people who complete and confirm his inventions" (p. 163). Indeed, "optimal individual development depends on the real world's continuously sustaining the normally developing positive ideal selves and ideal objects" (p. 169) by recognizing and welcoming these creations and providing opportunities for their realization or discovery. This begins with the adequate parent, who, he says, is an ideal object, omniscient and omnipotent, not simply one to whom the child ascribes perfection.

Over time the ideal forms created by the child will be modified; reality testing and appropriate, tolerable disillusionments will temper them but they will also be open to "inspired elaboration and articulation" (1967, p. 169). If, however, "the sustenance for ideals is not provided, if meaningful interactions in this realm are precluded, the ideal selves and ideal objects tend to be stunted in development, drive dominated, and highly vulnerable to taking on pathologically idealized and depreciated forms" (p. 169). This conceptualization complements Kohut's contributions concerning the need for an empathic response to the child's idealizing needs, and the distortions that can result when such an empathic environment is not provided.

I find Schafer's ideas helpful in clarifying the differences between a normal wish for ideal objects and the development of "idealizations" as such. As he points out, an ideal representation is one that is "conceivable" while an idealized representation is "a distortion of what is actual" (p. 151). As he writes:

> An idealized representation states an ideal and falsely implies that the ideal has been attained. It is one thing to aspire toward perfection, beauty, or excellence, and quite another to believe, contrary to fact or general agreement, that one has fulfilled this aspiration. An ideal is partly defined by the tension between it and actuality; idealization attempts to eliminate this tension by unrealistic thinking. (p. 151)

He points out that since our ideal imagos are originally formed in early childhood, they have a magical, awesome quality. Thus they can never be completely realized in reality, and continue to provide a source of dissatisfaction and yearning. Under unfavorable circumstances, this helps foster idealizations and depreciations.

Kremen and Kremen (1971) also address the motives for idealization, using romantic love as its prototype. Their emphasis is on idealization as arising out of the need to cope with the insecurities and deficiencies of reality. Their central point appears to be that illusion is necessary, that through the illusion that things are more valuable and perfect than they truly are, human beings manage to live in an otherwise unbearable reality. Among a number of subsidiary motivations for idealization that they put forward are discontent with the self and a need for "cognitive simplification" of an otherwise too complex and confusing reality.

There is remarkably little non-psychoanalytic, theoretical literature on idealization. It appears to have been generally overlooked as a phenomenon of importance in both the personality and the developmental literature. The latter is particularly surprising given the developmental importance assigned to idealization by both Kohut and Klein.

Idealization in Adolescence

Idealization is widely seen as playing a particularly prominent and important role in adolescence. Given that this study focuses on idealization which continues into late adolescence and young adulthood, its function in the adolescent process as a whole is important to understand. Several writers, notably Russian (1975), Chused (1987) and Wolf, Gedo, and Terman (1972) have focused on the idealizations of adolescence, and others, including Blos (1967), Jacobson (1964), Dashef (1984) and Ritvo (1971) have addressed them somewhat more incidentally. Adolescent idealizations have been seen as serving a number of different functions including defense and, as both Chused and Jacobson note, for gratifications related to libidinal and aggressive drives. In certain cases they may be maladaptive and indicative of ongoing pathology. As Russian indicates however, broadly viewed, adolescent idealizations appear to represent attempts to cope with the various developmental crises of this period. Of importance, these writers are in agreement that idealizations during adolescence often serve in the interests of adaptation and developmental progression.

An Adaptive Process at a Time of Disequilibrium

The literature focuses on adolescent idealizations as arising in a period when, under the sway of greatly intensified maturational pressures, the young person must undergo the necessary process of separation from parents and from parental influence. At the same time the adolescent must find the way towards new object relationships and towards developing an individual identity as he or she moves into the adult arena. These writers emphasize the difficulties involved in the disengagement from the very sources of prior narcissistic sustenance, of internal and external guidance and ego support, at a time when the adolescent is facing a period of massive internal change and major new tasks to which he or she may feel quite inadequate. As normative deidealization and related disidentification with parents occurs as part of the necessary emotional separation process (Dashef, 1984), the adolescent is left in a state of narcissistic disequilibrium and vulnerability. There is a loss of the omnipotent caretaking object just at the point of intensified need. All of these writers in one way or another view these issues as central in motivating the adolescent to seek new objects to idealize. Broadly, they see such idealizations as helping the adolescent in various ways to bridge the gap between childhood and adulthood by providing reassurance, direction, and stabilization for the self on the way to higher levels of adaptation and adult independence.

Referring to Kohut's conceptualization of the source of early idealizations, Russian (1975) notes that it is not surprising that at a time of significant disturbance in narcissistic balance, the adolescent returns to such early methods of seeking support for the self and of reestablishing narcissistic equilibrium. In adolescence, the parent to a large extent ceases to function as an idealized self-object which can help maintain narcissistic balance and cohesion of the self and, as Wolf, Gedo, and Terman (1972) discuss, the adolescent seeks new idealized self-objects to function in this way. It is also not surprising that, with the normative increase in narcissism in early adolescence as libidinal cathexes are withdrawn from parents and reinvested in the self (Ritvo, 1971), the adolescent would turn to idealization, a process viewed by Freud and Kohut

as rooted in narcissism, to both express his narcissistic tensions and to cope with his vulnerability.

Blos (1967) supports this general view. He calls the process of loosening of infantile object ties and psychic restructuring on the way to moving into adulthood "the second individuation process of adolescence." He sees the loss of the internal object as bringing about "a general instability, a sense of insufficiency, and of estrangement" (p. 182). In the midst of this, and on the way to the internalizations that will eventually allow the maintenance of his own narcissistic balance, the adolescent turns to idealizations of famous figures--mainly from show business and the sports world. This is reminiscent of the idealization of parents in childhood whose "glorified images constituted an indispensable regulator of the child's narcissistic balance" (p. 174).

Idealizations in his view represent regressions, the reexperience of early ego states, but regressions which play an essential part in the adolescent individuation process. He writes that "It cannot be emphasized enough that what, initially, in this process serves a defensive or restitutive function turns, normally, into an adaptive one and contributes decisively to the uniqueness of a given personality" (1967, p. 173). On the way to disengagement from internal objects, the shared idealizations of adolescence, while regressive, allow the young person to participate empathically in a collective experience, giving him the reassurance of a kind of family experience away from parents and at the same time promoting progressive movement. He writes, "Regression under these auspices seeks not simply to re-establish the past but to reach the new, the future, via the detour along familiar pathways" (p. 184). When genuine new object relationships are established, these collective idealizations are rapidly given up.

Dashef (1984) points out that just as deidealization and disidentification are connected with emotional separation processes, idealization, along with identification, is associated with emotional attachment processes. Hence, idealization may be seen as an important aspect of the formation of new relationships to peers and others. (Such ideas bear a relationship to Freud's views on the part idealization plays in object love.) Ritvo (1971) also sees idealizations as

forming the basis for new attachments to peers and adults. Although he says that such idealizations, as projections of the adolescent's own narcissism, are in early adolescence quickly formed and quickly broken, nevertheless he views them as the basis for new identifications and as providing the way back from a libidinal cathexis of the self to that of the object. It's generally agreed that objects eventually come to be viewed more realistically and at the conclusion of the adolescent process true object relationships are established.

Russian (1975), in a related vein, notes that idealization may be seen as a particularly fortuitous way for the adolescent to cope with developmental crises in that it represents "an attempt to deal with impulses in an object-related context" (p. 225). She describes idealization as a non-threatening way for the adolescent to become object-related and to bind sexualized libido. Admired objects are often adored in silence so that the adolescent may have his or her fantasies without being held accountable. Further, by seeing the object as perfect and hence invulnerable it is protected from the adolescent's poorly controlled aggressive drives. Such ideas bear a resemblance to the formulations of Melanie Klein who would add that the adolescent is also thereby protected from persecutory anxiety. Her thoughts regarding the intensity of drives, though not cited by any of these authors, surely would be useful in understanding the rapid idealization/devaluation cycles of early adolescence noted by Ritvo.

There is an emphasis in the literature on the need in adolescence to develop new internalized ideals, commitments and goals as an important part of finding an individual identity and of firming the self. Kohut (1971) speaks of "a decisive final step in late adolescence" in the "buttressing of the psychic apparatus, especially in the area of the establishment of reliable ideals" (p. 43). A number of writers, including Jacobson (1964) and Blos (1967), indicate that along the way to new internalizations and reintegrations, there are regressions and a partial dissolution of psychic structure, including the ego-ideal of childhood, which is necessary to make way for the development of new, more mature and individually meaningful ideals. As there is disillusionment, deidealization and disidentification with aspects of the parental imagos, new identifications with idealized figures provide new sources for the restructuring of the ego-

ideal. (In this regard it is useful to remember Kohut's point that idealizations are easily taken back within the self by way of identification.)

Wolf, Gedo, and Terman (1972) discuss just this transformation in a paper in which, somewhat similarly to Blos, they speak about ways in which intense peer relationships involving substitutive idealizations shared by the group help to maintain narcissistic equilibrium and self-cohesion as childhood parental imagos are deidealized. Using memories of such experiences by colleagues, they focus on idealizations which are formed on the basis of a need to overcome specific disappointments in the parental self-object. As an example, they note the fantasy life Freud shared with an intimate friend which centered on a work by Cervantes. On the basis of an idealizing identification with Cervantes and with his wish "for a perfection which implied mastery over archaic grandiosities and empty idealizations" (p. 259)--a wish shared by Freud who had become disillusioned with a once idealized father--these authors believe he rebuilt his ego-ideal and developed a commitment throughout his life to "a morality of reality" (p. 260) based on Cervantic ideals.

Russian (1975), writing about ways in which idealization of new omnipotent replacement objects can help stabilize narcissistic equilibrium, sees the adolescent as turning to such figures as role models for developing new goals and ideals. She writes,

> The object idealized is admired for its skills (ego accomplishments) and values (superego standards), and represents to the adolescent a desirable identification to achieve (ego-ideal). Thus an idealization reflects an attempt on the part of the adolescent to reintegrate his psychic apparatus along lines prescribed by the idealized object. (p. 222)

She notes that ego intactness is supported as the adolescent models himself after the ego skills of the object. Further, the idealized object provides an idealized standard by which the adolescent may measure and control his own behavior.

Even when idealizations are formed on a very regressed basis they can be useful in the process of internal change. Jacobson (1964) talks about how the adolescent is helped in his struggle to reconcile the oppositions between id and superego goals by repersonifying and reprojecting these goals onto figures outside the family. She writes, "Pure and saintly, or

seductive and ruthless men or women may thus alternately be admired and emulated or despised and hated, because they represent the adolescent's own sexual temptations and ambitions, or the virtue, humility, and chastity he seeks" (p. 178). Further, in the adolescent's struggle to remodel the ego-ideal and superego, primitive phallic-narcissistic strivings are revived and are represented by idealizations of figures embodying these strivings. The young person's "heroes and heroines," she says, "may catch his eye because of their physical strength or attractiveness, or because of their sexual successes or their social glamour, wealth, ruthless career, and prominence in the fields of sport or art . . . or even of crime" (p. 179). Although the formation of "pseudo ideals" based on such idealizations may, along the way have unfortunate consequences for the adolescent, she believes that these processes also contribute to gradual and important modifications of psychic structure.

Indications of Possible Disturbance

While adolescent idealizations of new objects are seen by these writers as characteristic of this developmental period and, as Chused writes, grow out of a "developmentally determined longing for an ideal object" (1987, p. 845), there are indications in the literature that idealizations can be problematic and indicative of disturbed development. Kohut certainly has indicated that a continuing search into adolescence for an idealized object, especially one whose support and approval are necessary to maintain self-esteem, is an indication of some disturbance in the development of the self. While the writers reviewed in this section tend to see idealization as more phase-appropriate and indicative of temporary narcissistic instability, it is important to keep in mind that idealizations in adolescence may be sought with more urgency by young people who are experiencing greater vulnerability and that such idealizations may well be indicative of some psychological difficulty.

Russian (1975), though basically emphasizing the adaptive potential of adolescent idealizations, feels that because idealization necessarily involves overvaluation and hence distortion, it is not a benign process. She is concerned with ways in which idealizations can be

problematic for the adolescent, noting that objects are chosen to idealize for various dynamic reasons, and that the nature of the idealizations she has seen in clinical work with adolescents indicate that they are symptomatic of "uncomfortable life adjustments" (p. 211). As an example of problematic idealizations, she points to the negativistic young person who idealizes exactly that which is in opposition to the model the parents present. Hence she suggests that it is important to evaluate the nature of the adolescent's idealizations in each case, especially to see whether they help the adolescent to master developmental tasks or lead to continuing dependence.

It may be particularly important to think about these issues in relation to late adolescence and young adulthood. Though few writers focus on idealization in this period, the literature seems to suggest that as adolescent issues are resolved, the intense idealizations typical of adolescence proper tend to be gradually relinquished. The time frame for such resolution is not generally clarified and of course it may take longer for some young people than for others to master certain developmental tasks. However, it seems possible that idealizations which continue unabated into this developmental period may indicate difficulties which need attention. This may be particularly so because there is general agreement that late adolescence and young adulthood is a period when, should there be significant unresolved emotional issues, young people may experience special vulnerability, a vulnerability which Dashef (1984) relates to intensified separation issues.

Regarding problematic idealizations, Dashef (1984) speaks of continuing idealization of parents into late adolescence and early adulthood, along with nonfunctional identifications with them, as occurring in situations where the parents are ambivalently experienced. Such idealizations seem to occur where parents are themselves troubled and have been experienced as disappointing. He sees these idealizations as a psychological mechanism which maintains the affective attachment to the childhood object and prevents self-differentiation, resulting in a kind of arrested development.

On the other hand, idealizations during late adolescence and young adulthood may take a salutary form, helping in the work of transition and growth. Dashef points out that as stresses concerning separation issues increase and there is active deidealization of parents, "In this reevaluation process and at this time of social experimentation, teachers, older friends, and work associates often serve as idealized 'transitional parents,' available also to support self-esteem, while the emotional work of psychological separation from earlier caretakers proceeds" (1984, p. 246). Sometimes, this kind of experience is not possible for young people without professional help.

Chused (1987), in discussing idealizations occurring in the analyses of late adolescent and young adult patients (ages 18-25), sees idealization of the analyst as providing the young person with a necessary experience of mentorship that they have been unable to have independently. All of her patients experienced in common an inability to move on into adulthood; specifically, they had difficulty "making commitments." Idealizations would develop in which she was perceived as a self-assured, almost omniscient figure, an "omnipotent caretaker," who would serve as a mentor--a figure who would have the "right answers," who could help in making life decisions, guiding and counseling the adolescent in place of the now deidealized, once omnipotent parent. With the help of the analyst as idealized mentor, these adolescents were able to revive and rework crises with which they had recently struggled. Whereas normally, she says, adolescents find people in their lives such as teachers or older siblings to serve as a mentor, these adolescents had, because of unresolved early conflicts, been unable to tolerate such a relationship earlier and needed to experience it in analysis. Her view is that transient identifications with the idealized analyst were used as a "necessary" intermediate step in helping them move on to adulthood, reminiscent in some ways, she says, of the rapprochement-phase of separation-individuation. I would think that if young people with this kind of difficulty are not able to find appropriate help, it is likely that they might continue to need idealized others without being able to form the kinds of beneficial relationships she describes.

CHAPTER II:
REVIEW OF THE EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Empirical studies of idealization have usually assessed the degree to which a particular individual--someone known by the subject--is idealized. My research, although it includes interviews exploring idealization of specific others, focuses more broadly on assessing a general disposition to idealize. While some studies have done this, almost all have been oriented to subjects defined as psychiatrically disturbed. With subjects not so defined (which I'll call the "general population") there has been only one study which assesses idealization as a general tendency in individuals--The Authoritarian Personality (1956). It does this, however, with a particular focus on idealization as an aspect of authoritarian submission.

In order to provide a context for my study, I will first review the research in the general population and then in psychiatric populations. In the selection of studies reviewed below my emphasis will be on the instruments and approaches used to assess idealization rather than on providing an overview of findings in the areas presented. Finally, I will present several clinical and empirical studies linking idealization and loss.

The Authoritarian Personality: The "F" Scale

After the second world war when there was a great deal of concern about the phenomenon of fascism and interest in learning about its sources, a major research study of this subject was carried out by investigators from various branches of psychology and the social sciences. One of the results of this effort was the research volume, The Authoritarian Personality (1956) by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford. In reviewing the approach to idealization in this research, it is important to make clear that idealization was studied here not as a phenomenon in itself, as in my study, but rather in the context of a study of the sources of fascism. In particular, as noted above, idealization was studied as an aspect of "authoritarian submission," defined as a "submissive, uncritical attitude toward idealized moral authorities of

the ingroup" (p. 228), which was viewed as one of a number of central psychological characteristics dynamically related to the development of prejudice and antidemocratic attitudes. In this context, a measure of idealization was developed as part of the "F" Scale.

The "F Scale," a now well-known opinion-attitude scale indirectly measuring prejudice and antidemocratic trends, consists of statements related to a number of psychological variables which are rated by subjects. Degree of agreement with certain of these statements constitutes a measure of individual differences in idealization as an aspect of authoritarianism. Describing the development of the "F Scale," the authors write that results from previous related scales

> strongly suggested that underlying several of the prejudiced responses was a general disposition to glorify, to be subservient to and remain uncritical toward authoritative figures of the ingroup and to take an attitude of punishing outgroup figures in the name of some moral authority. (1956, p. 228)

The first part of the statement refers to "authoritarian submission" and the second part to its corollary, "authoritarian aggression," both of which are included in the scale.

For the variable "authoritarian submission," a series of eight statements was formulated with a focus on discovering "an exaggerated, all-out, emotional need to submit" (1956, p. 231). The content of half of these statements is clearly aimed at evoking idealization, generally in the form of strong feelings of respect and admiration for omnipotent authority figures. As it turned out, most of these items were also among those best able to discriminate between subjects scoring in the highest and lowest quartile of the total F Scale, that is, subjects highest and lowest on prejudice and related antidemocratic attitudes (called by the authors "highs" and "lows." "Highs" scored high on these items and the reverse was true of the "lows.") The items which discriminated best--and this will give some feeling for the scale--were: "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn;" "He is indeed contemptible who does not feel an undying love, gratitude, and respect for his parents;" and "Every person should have a deep faith in some supernatural force higher than himself to which he gives total allegiance and whose decisions he does not question" (p. 231).

There is no evidence that the occurrence of idealization itself necessarily implies a tendency

towards fascistic thinking or behavior. Nevertheless, the thrust of these statements, so highly correlated with other aspects of antidemocratic tendencies, is certainly not at odds with what Kohut has written about the need to depend on or merge with an ideal, omnipotent object. In an extreme form, alloyed with aggression, idealization does have this potential. As Kohut (1972) writes,

> Human aggression is most dangerous when it is attached to the two great absolutarian psychological constellations: the grandiose self and the archaic omnipotent object [otherwise called the "idealized parent imago"]. And the most gruesome human destructiveness is encountered not in the form of wild, regressive, and primitive behavior, but in the form of orderly and organized activities in which the perpetrators' destructiveness is alloyed with absolutarian convictions about their greatness and with their devotion to archaic omnipotent figures. (p. 378)

The test I developed for my study is quite different from the "F Scale." It focuses entirely on emotional responses to people and does not assess related attitudes. Authoritarian submission may constitute one aspect of idealization. However, it is unlikely that the items in this subscale are measuring the same phenomenon as my test, although there may well be some overlap. This measure does represent a meaningful approach to the measurement of idealization in this particular context.

Other Studies in the General Population:

Idealization of Specific Figures

Other research in the general population has typically assessed idealization of someone close to the subject, generally a spouse or parent, often in relation to some other phenomenon.

Studies of Idealization in Dating Relationships and Marriage

Until about ten years ago, most research on idealization focused on couples. There are differing views on the role and impact of idealization in romantic love and marriage and somewhat conflicting findings about the degree to which people idealize at different stages of relationships. An interest in these issues led to a number of studies. Those who are interested in finding out why marriages don't work are concerned that excessive idealization before

marriage might lead to subsequent painful disillusionment and dissolution of the marriage, and that during marriage it might lead to problems by interfering with communication and empathy. Some sense of the conflicting findings will be apparent below.

Pollis (1969), in a study of dating relationships, used a measure of idealization which consisted of personality characteristics (e.g., "considerate," "self-confident," "emotional maturity," "sexual attractiveness") which were rated on a 5-point scale measuring frequency with which a dating partner showed each characteristic; the points were "always," "very often," often," "occasionally," and "rarely." As a way of obtaining a standard for scoring, ratings were taken both from the individual whose dating relationship was being studied and from two best friends who knew the dating partner. Idealization was measured by computing the numerical difference in the ratings between the individual being studied and each of his/her friends; on the assumption that the friends' ratings would be more objective, ratings above those of a friend were ranked positively and those below, negatively. The findings were that with increasing and more serious romantic involvement before the commitment to marriage, there was actually a decreasing tendency to idealize and an increasing ability to view the partner realistically, especially among men.

Hall and Taylor (1976) also used a list of personality trait adjectives in a study measuring idealization of a spouse. They chose adjectives from Anderson's (1968) list which had been pre-rated for favorability, randomly selecting ten adjectives each from the most, middle, and least-favorable hundred adjectives on that list. Subjects rated each adjective, on the extent to which it described the person indicated, on a Likert scale ranging from +3 ("definitely describes the person") to 0 ("sometimes describes the person, sometimes not") to -3 ("definitely does not describe the person"). Viewing Pollis' use of friends' ratings to reflect a more "objective" judgment as having doubtful validity, they decided to use at least two comparison images and two approaches as follows: on the one hand they held the perceiver constant by obtaining three comparison ratings by him/her--of spouse, of self, and of a friend; on the other hand they held the perceived person constant by obtaining two independent images

of him/her--perceiver's rating of spouse and spouse's self-rating. Idealization of spouse in relation to the comparison persons would be indicated by his or her being seen as having the most positive and the fewest negative qualities. They found strong evidence that married people idealize their spouses. Evaluations of spouse in relation to comparison persons were generally markedly more favorable and within each couple, each partner viewed their spouse more favorably than self.

Citrin (1982) also used items from Anderson's list to measure idealization and suggests that this method may have problems. In his study of the relationship between differentiation of the self and interspousal perception, one hypothesis was that the more highly differentiated a couple was, the less frequently would they idealize each other. Results were actually in the direction opposite to the hypothesis. The more highly differentiated the individual was found to be on his measure, the more frequently did he/she idealize the spouse. The author suggests that the adjective list may actually have been measuring "liking" rather than idealization. He notes that Anderson, in compiling his list of adjectives, deliberately eliminated extreme words which may be the very types of words used by idealizing individuals to describe their spouses; hence, the resulting measure may not be able to distinguish between idealized perceptions and merely positive ones. I think that this is an important point and is a potential problem in a number of studies since positive perceptions are often assumed to indicate idealization. In my view, an indication of idealization might carry more weight if there were some ascription of extreme positive qualities to a figure or an indication that the figure is all one could wish for.

In another part of their study, Hall and Taylor (1976) pinpoint a mechanism by which idealized images are maintained--a mechanism "founded in a pattern of defensive causal attributions such that people credit their spouses with responsibility for good behaviors and downplay their spouse's bad behaviors by attributing them to circumstantial factors" (1976, p. 760). The method used was a questionnaire which consisted of statements describing three socially desirable behaviors (e.g., "paying a compliment to someone,") and three socially undesirable behaviors (e.g. "having a heated argument with someone") committed by one of

four persons: an acquaintance, a friend, the self, and the spouse. Each statement was to be paired with each of the four persons; for each statement the subject's task was to rank on a scale the extent to which the person's behavior was situationally or dispositionally caused (caused by the situation he found himself in or by personal characteristics). The scale ranged from point "1" (situational cause) to "11" (dispositional cause). A general tendency was found to see the personal qualities of people close to oneself (including the self) as responsible for good behaviors and situational factors as responsible for bad behaviors, with the pattern strongest for the spouse.

The authors found that idealization of the spouse occurred regardless of how long the couple had been married, and they see their findings as consistent with the view of marriage proposed by Berger and Kellner (1964). As Hall and Taylor write,

> Their belief that marriage involves a validation and reaffirmation of a joint construction of reality suggests that the continued high evaluation of the other is critical, not only for the survival of the marriage, but for the continuance of one's world view as well. Thus, they would predict that idealization should continue at a high level in marriage. By enhancing the other's value through idealization, the spouse can continue to be a source of positive reinforcement for beliefs, attitudes, and values. (1976, p. 759)

The authors further point out that "idealization may serve a benevolent function in acting as a buffer against irritation and minor conflict, and it clearly functions to maintain the reinforcing value of continued support from one's spouse" (p. 760). They do, however, caution that unrealistically high expectations and perceptions can also lead to disappointment and conflict and that idealization can prevent people from seeing and working out problems in a realistic manner.

Lavin (1987) also studied causal attributions in married couples, extending the research to evaluations of behavior experienced in the present. Couples first evaluated written vignettes of hypothethical marital conflict, next discussed them together, and then watched videotaped replays of their discussion. Following this their task was to give intensity ratings and causal attributions for their own and their spouse's positive, neutral, and negative discussion

behavior. Their findings from this study were consistent with those of Hall and Taylor--that there is "attributional idealization" (p. 78) in marriage.

Studying a large number of married couples, Hansen (1978), used measures similar to those of Hall and Taylor--both a measure of marital idealization and a measure of idealized attributional style--and also found that people continue to idealize their partners in marriage. Further, in another aspect of his study, he found that idealization is actually positively correlated with marital adjustment.

In a study of the effect of complementarity of needs and value consensus on the mate selection process, Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) used a questionnaire measure whereby subjects who were "seriously attached" rated their partners on a number of personality characteristics; among these were negative characteristics such as "irritable," "stubborn," and "easily excited," which were scored for number and intensity. It was found that long-term couples had much higher (more negative) scores than short-term couples, and that there was a greater tendency for the latter's scores to become more negative when measured again a half year later. Although the rating scale had been intended as a measure of "negative person perception," the results were taken as an indication of the presence or absence of idealization. The authors see their results as consistent with the idea that there is a period of idealization and perceptual distortion in relationships which may over time lead to "reality shock" and some disillusionment. They suggest that when idealizations are destroyed couples can relate on a more realistic basis.

The "Leary Interpersonal Checklist," or "ICL," is an instrument used to measure interpersonal behavior. It has been used to assess idealization both in a study of marital satisfaction (Lazarus, 1983) and in studies of the dynamics of mate selection (Karp, Jackson, & Lester, 1970; Davis, 1983). It's made up of 128 items describing interpersonal behavior which represent 16 interpersonal variables; items describe mild to extreme intensities of each variable. A subject's perceptions of him or herself or of any given stimulus person are determined by having the subject check those items which are felt to apply. The variables are

arranged in a circular profile and are opposed in such a way that lines through the circle represent a continuum; subjects' scores on several continua are located by the number of items checked. The verticle axis represents a domination-submission dimension of behavior and the horizontal, a love-hate dimension. As an example, with the "Self-Effacing-Masochistic" variables (which are paired and presumably part of the domination-submission dimension), the "Self-Effacing" variable is represented by the descriptive items "able to criticize self;" "apologetic, easily embarrassed, lacks self-confidence;" "self-punishing, shy, timid;" and "always ashamed of self" with the first item being the mild form of this variable and the last, the extreme form. On the other side of the circle are the opposed variable pairs, "Managerial-Autocratic" with their representative items (for the "Autocratic" variable, the mild item is "well thought of" and the extreme, "expects everyone to admire him"). While the mild forms of most variables might seem the most "ideal," this instrument is not used to measure idealization by how close an identified person comes to some absolute "ideal" score. Rather, it appears that summary profiles of a subject's perceptions of various people are obtained and compared, taking into account the subject's own notion of an "ideal."

As the emphasis here is on measurement, I'll present only Davis' (1983) study as an example of research using this measure. This study was based on an object relations theory of mate selection, which proposes that "an individual seeks out a mate who will provide emotional interaction facilitating resolution of a conflict with an early object (parent) in a collusive reciprocal process" (p. 3). Idealization, which is identified as the original emotion used to cover over the anger towards frustrating objects, is seen as a core dynamic in this process. (For a brief summary of previous contributions to an object relations view of idealization in mate selection and marriage, see Davis, p. 61.) This study was an extension to dyadic interactions of earlier work done by Karp et al. (1970) who, measuring the perceptions of only one person, found strong support for the hypothesis that in mate selection, people seek someone who possesses the personality traits which they feel they lack and wish they possessed.

Davis (1983), in testing this hypothesis with 32 engaged couples, had subjects respond to the descriptive items on the ICL with "Yes" or "No" as to whether each applied to an identified person. Each person in a couple responded to the ICL with perceptions of the following: self, ideal self, mother, father, and fiance. Since he was seeking to measure "dynamic" aspects of mate selection, the unit of analysis, rather than the individual, was based on the interaction of perceptions of both respondents in a couple. The ICL makes use of "discrepancy scores," a difference between two points on the circle, calculated by using a specific equation. As I understand it, a low discrepancy score indicates that the perceptions of two people are similar to each other to a greater degree than chance, and the higher the score, the greater the difference between these perceptions. Idealization in this study was measured by the difference between two sets of discrepancy scores: 1) the ideal self score and the fiance score, and 2) the other's self score and the self's dissimilar parent score (i.e., the parent least like the self). As the rationale is somewhat complex, I'll quote the author's explanation:

> The concept [of idealization] incorporates both the notion of containing our impulse to destroy by idealizing the other, and elevating the other for traits perceived as lacking in the self. Skynner (1976) believes this desire to merge with the other because of what is missing in the self is plagued with envy which must be coped with by increased dosages of idealization.
>
> Hence, one's ideal self will have a low discrepancy with the perception of the fiance. What the self wants to be, the ideal, is like the self's perception of the fiance. However, the other's view of his/her actual self will have a high discrepancy with these perceptions and will instead have low discrepancy with the dissimilar parent who is less idealized (Mollouk,1982). This implies the ideal self and view of fiance are similar, but the other's view of his/her self is different, not idealized, and is similar to the self's view of the less idealized dissimilar parent. (p. 76) [Abbreviations used by the author to characterize the self and others have been omitted.]

The author states that the concept of idealization in the object relations theory of marital selection would predict that the distance between the scores for ideal self and fiance would be equal to the distance between the scores for other's self and dissimilar parent. As it turned out, results were that these means were significantly different and indeed, none of the findings supported the theory.

Two other approaches used in studies of couples which I'll note briefly are the following: Burgess and Wallin (1968) measured the extent of idealization in couples, using as a measure

the number of changes wished for in the partner, finding a slight tendency to idealize the partner both before and after marriage. Also, as reported by Hansen (1978), Blood and Wolf (1960), in a study of married couples, "found that wives report having fewer arguments with their husbands than the 'average family'" (p. 10).

Finally, in a study of over 1,000 widows, touching on idealization both in marriage and in grieving processes, Lopata (1981) used two self-administered scales to assess idealization of the deceased husband. The first, which she calls "The "Sanctification Scale," makes use of a semantic differential technique. Before describing her study, I will describe this technique based on a presentation by another investigator, Counter (1981), whose study I will describe later in the chapter.

As Counter (1981) notes, the semantic differential is a technique which was developed by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957) and which is said to have the benefit that it can be adapted for use with different research problems. She points out that this technique was "designed to measure both the quality and intensity of meaning that subjects attribute to concepts, as well as the similarities and differences in meaning between concepts" (p. 93). It involves the use of bipolar pairs of adjectives with an undefined rating scale between each pair. Direction along the polar axes is said to determine the quality of meaning, and extremeness along the axes, the intensity of meaning. While Osgood and associates used polar adjectives from a word stimulus list and from Roget's Thesaurus, she notes that scales were expected to vary with the purposes of the research. Of interest, she points out that in Osgood et al.'s research they found that an "evaluative factor," e.g. a factor relating to goodness/badness, was always the first factor, accounting for from about half to three-quarters of the variance related to judgments of meaning; further, that "the validity and reliability of . . . evaluative factor scores as indicators of the quality and intensity of judgments concerning goodness/badness" (p. 112) was reasonably established by them in previous studies. Such a technique, because it includes an extremeness dimension related to goodness/badness seems well designed to assess idealization--as well as devaluation--of particular figures.

Lopata's (1981) Sanctification Scale consists of seven statements about the late husband: good-bad, useful-useless, honest-dishonest, superior-inferior, kind-cruel, friendly-unfriendly, and warm-cold. In pretests these statements had been found to be the most differentiating although they tended to elicit positive extremes. Subjects rated their husbands on a seven-point scale with "1" the most positive point and "7" the most negative for any pair of adjectives. A second scale consists of seven very positive statements about life with the husband, each tending to become more emphatic, ranging from "Husband an unusually good man" to "Husband had no irritating habits," to which subjects expressed levels of agreement. Approximately three-quarters of the sample responded to most semantic differential pairs with a rating of "1," the most positive extreme rating, only balking slightly at rating the husband "superior." Although results of the second scale showed that life with the husband was somewhat less idealized than he was himself, and there were differences related to age, education, and race of the subject, the author concluded that "most of the . . . widows in this study tended to idealize their late husbands and even some aspects of life with them to the point of sanctification" (p. 444). Among the functions of such idealizations, the author suggests that by "purifying" the memory of the husband, unhappy memories may be washed out, it may be easier for the widow to go on with an independent life without having to think about ways in which the husband might criticize or be resentful, and self-esteem may be raised at a time of grief and depression by the feeling that an ideal man had married her and loved her. I would add that in this way she may also maintain an internal experience of being supported and loved as well as cope with anger at being abandoned.

An Array of Other Studies

Carmines (1981) assessed idealization of the President among junior high school students. His concern was to evaluate the hypothesis that adolescents showed less presidential idealization as a result of Watergate. He used a questionnaire method developed by R. Hess and D. Easton (1960), in which the student rated the President in comparison with "most

men." The ratings were along various dimensions including how hard he works, his honesty, his liking for people, and his knowledge. For example, for "View of the President as a person," the multiple choice responses were, "Best in the world;" "A good person;" or "Not a good person" (p. 489). The author notes that in previous studies done in the 1950s and 1960s, young children and adolescents held extremely positive views of the the President. However, comparing data he collected in 1971 with 1959 data collected by Hess and Easton using the same measure, he found greatly reduced idealization, especially among black adolescents. He concludes that a more negative view of the President had begun to emerge even before Watergate.

Idealization has also been studied in terms of transference phenomena in psychotherapy. Yau (1979) looked at idealization-dependency attitudes in the transference, examining these attitudes in relation to the patient's perception of the therapeutic relationship as well as to symptom reduction. The instrument he used to measure idealization-dependency attitudes was called the "repertory grid technique," a type of sorting test which may be flexibly adapted to different situations. This technique provided an indirect means of comparing the patient's construct of "ideal dependable parent" with that of "is like my therapist" by comparing these two key constructs with a number of others which were thought to have relevance for the therapeutic relationship e.g. "sympathetic," "I trust," "best sexual partner," "selfish," and "I dislike." People in the patient's life were also included in the grid though not in the final scoring. Scoring involved each of the two key constructs being matched with every other construct and then their scores being compared. Because of its indirect nature, it was surmised that this test might tap both conscious and unconscious processes. A moderately positive relationship between idealization-dependency attitudes and perception of the therapeutic relationship was found. However, symptomatology did not seem to be reduced as a result of viewing the therapist as an ideal dependable parent.

A study which, while still focused on individuals, assessed idealization across a broad spectrum of potentially idealizable figures was carried out by Farquhar (1983). Basing her

approach on Kohut's conceptualizations of mirroring (encouraging, admiring, supportive) and idealized self-objects, she was interested in studying the mirroring and idealized influences on women in graduate school for non-traditional professions (medicine, law, and engineering). As part of this research, she developed "Influencer Charts," tables which allowed subjects to rate various figures along the two dimensions of mirroring and idealization, as well as indicate amount of contact with each figure. Both ratings were made on Likert-type scales ranging from -10 to +10, with a 0 neutral point and defined end-points. For "idealized influence," the end-points were "is an inspiration to you; an ideal; somone to look up to, identify with; a good example of someone you would like to be like" and "opposite of your ideal; a good example of someone you definitely do not want to be like" (p.89)--scale definitions which include identification as an integral part of idealization.

What makes this measure more general than most others is that a considerable number of figures ("influencers") were presented: these included parents, siblings, other relatives, friends, teachers, professionals in subject's (or related) field, fictional (e.g., book or movie) characters, and publicly well-known figures. Male and female figures in each category were presented separately. Another interesting aspect of this study was that "Influencer Charts" were presented for several developmentally distinctive life periods, from preschool to graduate school, which were to be filled out on the basis of subjects' memories, so that changes over time could be assessed. For the earliest periods some categories of figures were omitted, and for later periods other categories--counselor/advisor, therapist, husband, children--were added. Hence, over time, it was possible to assess degree of idealization of a range of different figures.

Among the findings in the Farquhar (1983) study were that the amount of idealized influence by parents, greatest in the elementary school years, decreased over time as one would expect. Idealized self-objects continued to be present throughout the time period studied though there was change in the categories of people who provided this function most, and the overall amount of mirroring as contrasted with idealized influence became greater. Female

friends were an important source of idealization as well as mirroring. Public figures, the category that overlaps with my own, were of relatively minor importance to these women, although such a figure was sometimes of importance to an individual woman.

This instrument, because of the range of figures it presents is closer than many others to a general measure of idealization. For this reason, I'll comment in a fairly detailed manner on its benefits and drawbacks in terms of my own goal. First, though it could potentially be adapted for such use, this instrument does not aim at discovering individual differences in a general tendency to idealize but is more concerned with the types of figures that are idealized and how this changes over time. Though it's clearly advantageous to assess idealization of people that are known to subjects and are important to them, as this measure does, there are also possible problems here. For instance, for figures close to the individual, such as parents or siblings, asking for a rating of whether or not they represent "an ideal" could elicit feelings of how one "should" rate them. Further, when figures are close there tend to be rather complex feelings, difficult to assess by one rating point. I think that although the closeness and personal meaningfulness of figures is lost, this problem is avoided with the test developed for the current study which uses a different type of figure.

Another drawback is the large number of categories and the nature of the task; subjects have to bring to mind, one after the other, many different people and access their feelings about each one--and this has to be done repeatedly for the same people for different periods of time. This may have the potential for becoming too cognitive and possibly tedious a task, distant from immediate experience, a problem which I hope is avoided in the current study. Finally, this measure has a slant towards identificatory feelings and positive, constructive influence of the idealized figure on the subject. Though this is an important area to measure, less differentiated, less constructive types of idealization would be much less likely to be tapped.

A study relating to idealization of parents was done by Counter (1981) who made use of a semantic differential technique to measure the "goodness/badness" of maternal object representations. Within an object relations framework, including the work of Melanie Klein,

she studied the relationship between first time pregnant women's sense of themselves as mothers and their identifications with representations of their own mothers along a dimension of goodness/badness. She proposed that with pregnancy, anxieties arise that lead to a regression to earlier levels of development, that this includes an attempt to rework the woman's infantile maternal identifications, and that as part of this regression, infantile mechanisms such as splitting, omnipotent denial and idealization come into play. She further proposed that over the course of pregnancy these mechanisms, including idealization, would be ameliorated, and that a maturing of self and maternal representations would occur along with an increase in differentiation.

Counter (1981) used the semantic differential technique to measure several concepts, including "self as mother" and "my own mother," along dimensions both of goodness/badness as well as similarity/dissimilarity. (I've already described this technique, based on Counter's presentation, in my review of Lopata, 1981.) In her scales she used adjective pairs from Osgood's original list, e.g., "good-bad," optimistic-pessimistic," and also pairs relevant to her own aims, "terms used throughout psychoanalytic literature to describe attributes, both positive and negative, of real and phantasied self and maternal objects" (p. 112), e.g. "accepting-rejecting" and "nourishing-poisonous" (p. 113). Evidence of idealized self and object representations was operationalized as scores on the extreme positive end of the goodness/badness dimension, and for persecutory self and object representations, scores on the extreme negative end. Maturity and wholeness of representations was operationalized as scores that were not at either extreme.

As she had hypothesized, a positive relationship was found, along the dimension of goodness/badness, between the women's sense of themselves as mothers and their representations of their own mothers. Further, from bipolar scales the results were atypically unipolar, ranging from moderately good/bad to extremely good, with an absence of ratings of extreme badness. She suggests this this indicates that the pregnant women in the sample were indeed using mechanisms of splitting, omnipotent denial and idealization. Change over the

course of pregnancy in degree of identification or extremity of self and object representations, however, was not found.

In another study of parental idealization, O'Neil and Reiss (1984) studied adults' perceptions of their mothers, with a focus on whether or not such perceptions changed as a function of age. It was hypothesized that with greater maturity, mothers might be viewed in an increasingly less idealized and more realistic manner. They developed an instrument called the "Parent Perception Inventory" to measure individuation, idealization, and competency of the mother. It consists of 20 items for each of these constructs with 5-point rating scales indicating agreement/disagreement. Idealization is measured indirectly, in a manner similar to that used by Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) by presenting common negative qualities to be rated (e.g., "My mother is difficult to get along with") with the assumption that the greater the reluctance to endorse these negative statements, the greater was the idealization. No age-related trends of significance for idealization were found.

I'll briefly mention several additional studies to indicate some of the other issues with which idealization has been associated in previous research in the general population. These studies used questionnaire and scale techniques, designed for the specific purpose of the research involved, to assess idealization of particular individuals: McAuley (1987) studied adoptees' fantasies about their birth parents, seeking to determine whether the individual's current and childhood fantasy type was devalued, idealized, or both, in relation to other variables such as the explanation for the adoption that had been given. Adams (1987), in a study of the relationship between perceptions of parents and self-esteem in father-daughter incest victims, addressed how favorably incest subjects viewed their fathers and mothers. As a final example, Reade (1980), in research on ambivalence, studied early childhood memories, developing a system to rate the affect associated with the image of the parent.

Interview Studies

Studies addressing idealization of particular figures, and types of figures, again in relation to other phenomena, have also been carried out using interview techniques. Among these are studies in The Authoritarian Personality (1956) which provide some interesting findings regarding family relationships and idealization. Other studies particularly relevant to my own investigations are in the field of attachment research. I will present these in Chapter VI in conjunction with a discussion of interview observations from my research.

Prince-Embury and Deutchman (1981) used a semi-structured in-depth interview to look at idealization of parents as part of a study of the "identity status" of women activists in favor of and opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment. This study is also of interest because it addressed idealization in the context of another issue which yielded information about internalized ideals. "Identity status" is a concept elaborated by Marcia, 1966, and based on Erikson's formulations. The authors contrasted "Achievement" and "Foreclosure" identity statuses. Idealization of one or both parents represented one of several indications of Foreclosure status. (This position was based on findings reported in a study by Josselson, 1973). "Achievement status" was defined as "those who have seriously considered ideological alternatives and have made a commitment on their own terms." "Foreclosure status" was defined as "those who have made commitments in the absence of crisis largely holding on to childhood or parentally derived choices" (p. 310). Interview questions focused on politics, sex-role, and religion, and were oriented to eliciting information about individuation from parents, idealization of parents or parent figures, and relative modulation in thinking.

The authors found that pro-ERA women were more likely to operate out of Achievement status and anti-ERA women out of Foreclosure status, with the latter showing significantly more idealizing comments about parents. All anti-ERA women gave some indication of idealization of fathers. They also showed greater adherence to attitudes of parents and were more absolute and extreme in their thinking. Idealization was notably lacking in Pro-ERA

women although several showed appreciation for qualities of their parents. The authors found a good deal of fear in the anti-ERA women suggestive of a lack of differentiation and anxiety about moving out of the unequal feminine role they had assimilated from parents, whereas pro-ERA women had been able to make firm commitments on their own terms. It makes sense, in light of Kohut's theories, that an ability to view one's parents realistically and appreciatively would be associated with greater individuation and independent ideals and that continuing idealization of parents would be associated with anxiety about moving away from parental norms.

The in-depth interviews in The Authoritarian Personality (1956) yielded a very similar finding. These interviews were conducted with subjects scoring in the high and low quartile (called respectively "highs" and "lows") on the "Ethnocentrism Scale," a scale highly correlated with the "F Scale" and also measuring prejudice and antidemocratic attitudes. These interviews were basically oriented to exploring the social and psychological development of subjects in relation to their social and political beliefs. Interviewers had a broad latitude in either asking pre-set questions or asking only the most general of these questions and then following leads provided by subjects. This allowed for a good deal of exploration. A broad range of topics was covered, e.g., vocation, schooling, and politics, and there was an attempt to explore psychological areas such as subjects' emotional and cognitive approach to life, their relationships, hopes, goals and values. Idealization itself was not a major area of focus. However, a great deal of attention was paid in a "clinical" section to family experiences, and here there were findings of relevance to idealization and especially to the relationship between childhood experiences with parents and the development of idealizing attitudes.

What the interviews revealed was that there were major differences between the way "highs" and "lows" experienced their parents and described their childhood backgrounds. "Highs" tended to idealize their parents--just as they did other authority figures--but they appeared to have little feeling or genuine affection for them and talked about them in conventional sounding generalities. Further, after first speaking about parents with great

admiration, they then tended to express criticism of them but denied doing so. Of importance, it was found that they tended to have "quasi-persecutory" feelings of victimization by parents, were fearful of and submissive to them, and gave indications of repressed hostility and of fantasies of revenge. They described their childhood homes as rigidly and arbitrarily disciplinarian and what affection there was was seen as having been conditional on behaving in an approved manner.

In marked contrast to the "highs," interviews with "lows" showed them to be better able to objectively appraise their parents and to see them as individuals. Rather than being fearfully submissive to parents they were able to evaluate and criticize them on the basis of a sense of equality and they tended to show genuine positive feelings towards them. In terms of childhood experience, there was more support and unconditional affection and a greater sense of basic security.

In Chapter V, it will become evident that these characteristics were also typical of a core group of low idealizers that I interviewed. The high idealizers I interviewed were also similar in some ways to their subjects who scored high on authoritarian attitudes; however, my subjects did not have the same alienation and fearfulness--or evidence of the same degree of authoritarianism in families. It is important to note that the subjects in The Authoritarian Personality were contrasted along lines unrelated to the current research. Nevertheless, the finding of a relationship between idealization and the nature of family experiences is similar to patterns I myself observed.

Other findings provide a link to the observations of Prince-Embury and Deutchman (1981) which reveal that subjects who idealized parents also showed less of an ability to develop independent ideals. In The Authoritarian Personality (1956) it was found that "lows" as a group held internalized standards and showed an independence based on principle whereas "highs" tended to show a rigid conformity to parental and group values. Further, the authors found that a certain degree of ego weakness was associated with authoritarianism. They write,

> Weakness in the ego is expressed in the inability to build up a consistent and enduring set of moral values within the personality; and it is this state of affairs, apparently, that makes it necessary for the individual to seek some organizing and coordinating agency outside of himself. (1956, p. 234)

This accords well with Kohut's model as the external agencies to which the authors are referring are idealized parents and authority figures.

Umbarger (1969) provides another example of research which addressed idealization through an interview technique. This was a study of father-present black and white adolescent boys in terms of the impact of identifications and idealized models on vocational plans. An assumption of the study was that idealization indicates some degree of identification. Among the concerns were whether the childhood models (usually the father) of black adolescent boys continue to serve them in adolescence, or whether they, more than white youths, need to draw new idealized models from alternate sources, possibly outside their reference group, to serve as figures for identification.

The interview developed for this study included inquiries into idealized models used for identification and explored various aspects of such experiences. Questions attempted to elicit information about figures the adolescent had known as well as the heroes of his fantasy life, figures from past or present that he had ever heard about. The focus was on people the subject "would like to be like." Not all subjects talked about figures who could be differentiated along "reality"/"fantasy" lines. For analysis, models were assigned to a "Proximal" or "Distal" category depending on how central a place they held in the subject's life.

Among the findings were that whites chose almost entirely white models (both Proximal and Distal) while blacks chose models from both races. The extent to which the father was appropriately engaged in helping his son with career plans and supportive when he had troubles in his life had an impact on type of model chosen; e.g., when the fathers of black adolescents were experienced as unsupportive and relatively unhelpful, these adolescents tended to choose white Distal models. As in the study of women and the ERA, the interview approach permitted exploration of a number of complex issues; for example, supportiveness and helpfulness of father in relation to whether idealized models were described in ways

suggesting a magical, wish fulfilling relationship or one where there was already some felt identification and the model represented what the subject felt he could actually become. An association was found between having a "good" father and the latter style of using the model (1969, p. 74). This was true more for black than for white youths.

Assessment Efforts in Psychiatric Patient Populations: General Measures

A number of empirical studies have been done assessing the presence of idealization in psychiatric patient populations. In these studies the focus has been more on idealization as a general tendency than on the idealization of particular individuals. All of this research addresses idealization as representative of pathology, including the evaluation of the use of idealization as a primitive defense.

A study of adolescents done by Lapan and Patton (1986) is somewhat relevant to the aim of the current study, focusing on idealization as an aspect of the personality. Basing their work on Kohut's ideas, these authors developed two forced-choice, self-report scales, one using items assessing grandiosity and the other, idealization. Their aim differed from mine, however, in that their emphasis was clearly on measuring idealization as an aspect of narcissism in adolescents and on developing a measure which could be useful in assessing the "vulnerability of the adolescent's sense of self" (p. 136). Further, since the focus of their study was a large group of psychiatric inpatients (whom they compared with a control group of high school students), their interest was in assessing the more serious forms of narcissistic weakness. Hence, in the development of their idealization scale, they used items related to more problematic idealizations indicative of weakness in the idealizing part of the self, emphasizing such things as "conformity to others in order to feel good about oneself, fear of separation from admired others, and the wish for admired others to recognize oneself" (p. 138).

In the process of scale construction, following factor analyses, the idealization scale evolved into an eight item measure called "Peer-Group Dependence" involving aspects of idealization. This measure, along with one called "Pseudoautonomy" that evolved out of the grandiosity scale, were found to predict membership in the hospitalized or nonhospitalized populations, and a low correlation between the two scales was taken to support Kohut's ideas that weakness in the self tends to be found more in one or the other domain rather than in both.

In the "Peer-Group Dependence Scale," subjects' task was to choose between pairs of statements describing how they felt "most of the time," with one statement expressive of weakness in the idealizing line of development and a contrasting statement designed to be neutral. Representative examples of final items were: "I feel good about myself when I please friends that I look up to" vs. "I can still feel good about myself if important friends get angry with me;" "Others' thoughts about me can easily become my thoughts about myself" vs. "Others' thoughts about me can't easily become my thoughts about myself;" and "I seem to attach myself to stronger people" vs. "Some people look to me for help" (1986, p. 140).

While some items do appear to more or less directly tap idealization of other people, others focus more on issues of low self-esteem, lack of goal directedness, and most of all, dependence on friends. Therefore, while this scale appears to provide a useful measure of problems associated with the idealizing aspects of narcissism in adolescence, it doesn't represent a pure measure of idealization of others. It does seem that this approach might be applied to developing such a measure. A possible problem with this and other self-report measures, however, is the question of whether subjects can take a sufficient observing distance from themselves.

A prior study by Robbins and Patton (1985) was similar to the one described above in that Kohut's conceptualizations of grandiosity and idealization were used as a basis for the development of self-report measures. While this research was not oriented to a patient population, the focus was on career development and on possible difficulties with goal directedness and guiding ideals; following various analyses, the idealization scale evolved into

a 10-item scale called "Goal Instability," none of the items of which pertained to idealization of objects.

Lapan and Patton (1986) point out that prior to their study there had been a number of previous efforts to measure narcissism. These include the "Narcissistic Personality Inventory" or "NPI" (constructed by Raskin and Hall, 1979) and the "Narcissistic Personality Disorder" scale or "NPD" (developed by Ashby, Lee, and Duke, 1979, from the MMPI). Lapan and Patton note that on these tests grandiosity as an aspect of narcissism was well represented but idealization was not. Aside from the study they presented and that of Robbins and Patton (1985), they cite only one other study which, again on the basis of Kohut's ideas, does address the idealizing line of narcissistic development. This is Patton, Connor, and Scott (1982).

This study involved measures of counseling outcome in terms of self-cohesion and included a scale called "Admiration of Others" which was targeted more directly at assessing idealization itself. It was one of three scales developed for the idealizing line of the self. (The two other scales involved commitment to goals, and differentiation vs. dependence and merger.) The "Admiration of Others" scale was defined as "The capacity of the self to show a healthy regard for those who merit it. The expression of regard ranges from infantile idealization to admiration of the realistic qualities of others" (Patton et al., 1982, p. 274). The attempt was to develop 8-point interval rating scales that were anchored with examples at each point and that expressed a continuum of severity regarding self-cohesion. Examples of anchors for the "Admiration of Others" scale were, at the point of greatest discohesion, "Seems addicted to following charismatic leaders," at about midpoint, "Difficulty admiring others without envy," and at the point of greatest cohesion of the self, "Is comfortable in giving praise where it's due" (p. 277). In terms of assessing degree of idealization, the eight points appear to offer a nice gradation of increasing intensity and distance from reality.

However, such statements could obviously not be used for a self-report measure. Indeed, this is an important distinction between the manner of use of this scale and the other measures

I've described as well as the one I have developed. In this study, trained observers listened to audiotapes of 50-minute counseling sessions (one for each client) and then rated the client for level of severity on each scale. With the "Admiration of Others" scale then, an observer makes a decision about another individual, a counseling client, on the basis of clinical judgment and then uses the scale as a way to assign a level of idealization that he has already assessed. As it turned out, of ten scales that were developed for this study, lack of acceptable interrater agreement in initial ranking of the anchors was found only with this scale, and the authors concluded that it was doubtful that the scale should be used at all.

Bond, Gardner, Christian, and Sigal (1983), concerned about the issue of clinicians' subjective judgments in previous studies, in their elegant study of defense mechanisms developed a self-administered questionnaire that taps possible conscious derivatives of 24 defenses, including primitive idealization. The questionnaire is composed of 81 statements designed to reflect behavior indicative of characteristic ways of coping with conscious or unconscious conflict. The subject's task is to indicate degree of agreement/disagreement with each statement on a 9-point scale. Examples of statements are: (for reaction formation) "If someone mugged me and stole my money, I'd rather he be helped than punished" and (for splitting) "There's no such thing as finding a little good in everyone. If you're bad, you're all bad." For primitive idealization the example given was: "I always feel that someone I know is like a guardian angel" (p. 334). This use of degree of agreement with such statements in order to tap underlying psychological processes, including idealization, is similar to the "F Scale" from The Authoritarian Personality.

The questionnaire designed by Bond et al. (1983), while it constitutes a promising approach, doesn't actually include a measure of idealization. The authors write of the measure, "It would be impossible to conclude anything about isolated defense mechanisms, but we hoped that we could approximate the measure of groups of defense mechanisms that we call defense style" (p. 334). Using factor analysis, they found four factors which represent theoretically and clinically meaningful clusters of defenses, ranking them from least to most

mature and adaptive (defense styles 1 and 4 respectively) when compared with measures of ego strength and ego development. Scores for individual subjects on the various defense styles were determined in this manner: if a subject's score was 0.5 s.d. above the mean on any factor, he was considered to use the corresponding defense style. Primitive idealization, along with splitting and omnipotence with devaluation formed defense style 2, which they termed the "image-distorting" defenses.

The authors have some compelling conceptualizations about a continuum of maturity and adaptation of defense style. They write that the correlations with tests of ego strength and development indicate that "in developmental terms there is a progression from the maladaptive action patterns" (style 1: withdrawal, acting out, regression, inhibition, passive aggression, and projection), "through the image-distorting defenses" (style 2 which included primitive idealization), "to the self-sacrificing defenses" (style 3: reaction formation and pseudoaltruism), "and finally to the adaptive defenses" (style 4: humor, suppression, and sublimation) "along the line of constructive dealing with the vicissitudes of life" (Bond et al., 1983, p. 338). Nicely placing idealization and related defenses within this continuum, they also write,

> The least mature people have behavior problems. The image-distorting group have problems in realistically viewing themselves and others and so have relationship problems. The self-sacrificing group have more stable relationships but cannot fulfill their creative potential. The adaptive group of defenses reflect less of a preoccupation with relationships and allow more creative expression of one's inner self. Thus, the shift is from preoccupation with control of raw impulses, to preoccupation with all-important others, to creative expression of one's self. (p. 338)

The questionnaire was tested with both psychiatric patients and non-patients, and it was found that patients tended more to use the less mature defenses (styles 1, 2, and 3) whereas nonpatients tended more to use higher level defenses (style 4). The authors, however, also indicate of defense style 2 that

> This style could interfere with object relations but not necessarily with achievement and accomplishment. These defenses could be invoked in the service of constructive adaptation in situations of stress by persons who do not use them habitually, e.g., one way of dealing with a severe physical illness may be to trust in the omnipotence of the physician. (Bond et al., 1983, p. 337)

As I discussed in a previous section, the use of idealization in the service of constructive adaption seems to occur with many young people undergoing the stresses of adolescence.

As the authors state, their questionnaire provides "a frame" to which other items measuring the same or new defenses could be added. Hence, it does seem possible that a measure of idealization itself could be developed on the basis of this instrument. However, although the type of statements which appear to be used here, expressive of feelings and attitudes, might avoid some problems of self-report, subjects still must maintain some observing distance from their own experience. I think this is a problem which may be bypassed by the method I will present.

Idealization has also been assessed using the Rorschach Test. On the basis of Kernberg's theoretical formulations regarding higher and lower-level constellations of defenses, Lerner and Lerner (1980) developed a scoring manual for the Rorschach Test (called the "Rorschach Defense Scale") to assess the more primitive level of defenses considered to be associated with borderline personality organization. These include primitive idealization as well as splitting bolstered by denial, primitive devaluation, and projective identification. In a validation and reliability study using this scale, Lerner and Lerner (1982) write, "In keeping with Kernberg's (1975, 1976) notion that these primitive defenses organize as well as reflect the internalized object world, the scoring system is essentially based on systematic appraisals of the human figure response" (p. 85). They point out that the structure and content of this response had previously been shown to be associated with object relations. Idealization is assessed on a scale of high versus low order. This assessment involves qualities of the response such as a "humanness" dimension (lost at the lowest level), distortion of the human form (low to mid-level), distancing in time or space (always absent at the highest level), and whether statements are simply positive (highest level) or blatantly and excessively so (this varied through the scale).

Two studies were done comparing groups of borderline patients with both neurotic and schizophrenic patients. Overall the studies showed that borderline patients shared an

identifiable group of defenses which were different from those of both neurotic and schizophrenic patients. In terms of the "Rorschach Defense Scale" as an instrument, satisfactory interrater reliabilities were obtained for most categories, including idealization, and the studies showed the scale was a valid way to identify the constellation of defenses Kernberg associated with borderline pathology. However, results for idealization were not nearly as clear as for the other defenses.

Contrary to expectations, idealization not only didn't statistically differentiate between the borderline and neurotic groups but at all levels it occurred more frequently in neurotics. In comparisons of borderlines with schizophrenics, only low-level idealization differentiated between groups, with borderlines showing more use of this defense. Of interest, when low-level idealization and devaluation occurred in the records of neurotics, it was modulated by high-level denial; borderlines appeared unable to regulate blatant idealization and devaluation in this way.

A measure which shows promise in terms of assessing idealization in a general sense is a modified TAT test, "The Formative Self-Objects Test," developed by Kriegman (1980) on the basis of Hoey's (1973) projected self-concept scale but extensively modified. Using Kohut's self psychology as a model, Kriegman sees the relationship of members of fanatic cults to their guru/leaders as representative of the need in individuals with narcissistic personalities to merge with an idealized object to try to repair a defective self experience. Though he didn't use a patient population in his study, this investigator was interested in narcissistic disturbance. A group of male cult members, one of male art models, and one of male college students (the first two representing narcissistic problems of an idealizing and of an exhibitionistic nature respectively, and the third, a comparison group) were studied using a number of objective and projective tests among which was "The Formative Self-Objects Test."

The test is meant to address both the grandiose and idealizing poles of narcissistic development, and to measure "Distortions-Dependence on formative self-objects--perceptual distortions of admired others; pathology in the past experience and/or the current perception of

'idealizing' and 'mirroring' relationships with significant 'self-objects'" (Kriegman, 1980, p. 43). It consists of seven TAT cards, three from the original set and four designed for the study; some are meant to tap the grandiose/exhibitionistic dimension of narcissism, some the idealizing dimension, and some both. The cards meant to tap idealization present situations which it seems clear could evoke such experiences. Of the standard set they include 7BM (Older Man and Younger Man), and drawn for the study are 1) a young boy on a bicycle with a man running alongside and holding the bicycle, 2) a rock concert with the focus on the singer and one person in the audience, and 3) an Indian chief toward whom the tribe is looking--the last two pictures are meant to tap both dimensions of narcissism. Given the nature of the material, in scoring the tests it was possible to address not only the existence but the nature of idealizing experiences--in terms of pathology, whether the object was worshipped or thought to have magical powers and conversely, whether the object was devalued and seen as powerless; in terms of health, whether the relationship was reality oriented and the object seen as providing wisdom and guidance.

The test had good inter-rater reliability and was able to differentiate between groups. Though it had been hypothesized that the measure would show that pathology in relation to formative self-objects would be greater in both cultists and models, the results were that the cult members scored significantly higher than both the other groups. Together with human movement scores on the Rorschach, these results were taken to indicate that cultists showed a greater disturbance in interpersonal relationships than the other groups and that these disturbances were at least partially based on relationships to formative self-objects. The author notes that it was uncertain just how to interpret the test, and writes, "It is unclear if this measure is sensitive specifically to formative self-object pathology or if the nature of the measure--TAT stories about people--simply is responsive to generally problematic object relations" (Kriegman, 1980, p. 152).

This test results in a single score for each subject, including both poles of possible narcissistic disturbance; hence, it doesn't constitute a measure of idealization per se. If cards

tapping idealization could be scored separately (and perhaps other cards could be created to tap a greater range of idealizing experiences), it might potentially represent a useful means of assessing this phenomenon on an individual basis.

Childhood Loss and Idealization

Kohut has identified an important relationship between loss of--or severe disappointment in--the idealized parent in childhood, and the formation of ongoing idealizations, either of the parent or of substitute objects. Support for the existence of a relationship between disappointment and idealization is provided by the interview studies in The Authoritarian Personality (1956) where it was shown that subjects with unsupportive, punitive backgrounds idealized both their parents and ingroup authority figures whereas subjects from secure, supportive homes did not. As I will discuss in Chapter VI, the attachment literature also provides strong evidence for a relationship between unsatisfactory experiences with parents and idealization. In this section I will present a number of studies which provide specific evidence that idealization tends to occur in circumstances of parental loss in childhood.

Several studies of children who have been subject to loss or prolonged separation from a parent have shown that such children often idealize the lost or absent parent. These studies have generally involved children whose fathers rather than mothers were absent. This is not suprising given the norm in most cultures that mothers are the primary caregivers, but it is also related to the fact that some studies (Freud & Burlingham, 1939-1945; Bach, 1946) have involved separations due to war.

Freud and Burlingham (1939-1945), write about very young children (generally under the age of five) who were separated from parents and cared for in their Hampstead Nurseries during World War II. These children were usually visited by their mothers from once every two weeks to several times a week; sometimes separations were a good deal longer or visits were not possible at all. A large number of fathers were away at war, visiting infrequently,

and many children experienced the death of a father, some losing both parents. While children reacted with comparative indifference to separations from fathers, this was not true in the case of a father's death to which they reacted strongly and with various forms of denial. Further, the deceased father gradually was idealized and became in fantasy the one who brings everything good. Other than a period of "overvaluation" of both parents that lasted for about three months after the initial separation, the authors described ongoing idealization only of the deceased father. Their view appeared to be that other people were there to take over the mother's, but not the father's, role and further, that emotions about him were connected to admiration for his greater strength and power and a wish to identify with that.

Also during World War II, Bach (1946) carried out a classic study of the father fantasies of father-absent children between the ages of six and ten, comparing a group of children whose fathers were away serving in the armed forces with a matched group whose fathers were at home. Using a projective doll play technique in which children were asked to make up a story or play using doll family figures and a play house, the study found that the father fantasies created by the father-absent children were significantly more idealized than those created by controls. Specifically, these fathers were seen as sharing more mutual enjoyment with the family, as giving and receiving more affection, as exerting less authority, and as showing much less hostility than the fathers of controls. Indeed, controls elaborated many more fantasies about aggression from and towards father. In terms of the genesis of such differences, the author suggests that deprivation of security and affection from the father might contribute to the wish-fulfilling fantasies of father-absent children and also that in the absence of real conflictual experiences with father, there is less stimulation of aggression.

Using an adaptation of Bach's doll play technique, Michaels (1981) also studied father fantasies of father-absent children; however absence here was due to divorce, permanent separation or abandonment before the child was three years old. The children she studied were between the ages of five and six and were from white, black and hispanic families. Again the finding was that in general, absent fathers (here irrespective of ethnicity) were idealized in

fantasy. They were seen as overwhelmingly "good" (defined as ". . . affectionate, heroic, sexual, and elated mood actions and interactions with the father doll," p. 6), and much less often as "bad" (". . . aggressive, authoritarian, withdrawing, sad, or depressed mood actions or interactions with the father doll," p. 6). They also tended to be viewed as if from the perspective of a younger child--as nurturing, inviting and trusted.

Neubauer (1960), in a paper regarding disturbances in the oedipal development of children deprived of a parent (either through death or separation) presents a case history and cites ten other cases in the clinical literature of such deprivation during, but generally beginning before, the oedipal period. Again, in all but one instance the absent parent was a father. Of these cases he writes, "Fantasy objects, immensely idealized or endowed with terribly sadistic attributes, replacing an absent parent are nearly ubiquitous; their frequent occurrence in dynamically very different situations underlines their significance in the development of object relations" (p. 293). As he shows, these relations appear to be generally disturbed. In addition, he reports that Fenichel made the generalization that it is when the opposite sexed parent dies that, because of oedipal longings, fantasy idealization of the lost parent occurs. However, Neubauer says that his data show that an absent parent of the opposite or same sex may be idealized and that this depends on a variety of factors, including developmental demands in relation to the time the loss occurs and the relationship with the remaining parent.

Denial of loss and fantasies of reunion involving idealization of the lost parent have been found to be quite common both in the case of death of the parent and in separation due to divorce. Wolfenstein views the child and adolescent as unable to mourn a parent who has died and sees such loss as often involving pathological consequences, especially in the area of object relations. She writes,

> There is a strong need to perpetuate a positive image of the lost parent, what Freud (1926) calls the hypercathexis of the lost object, as if thereby to preserve it from loss. What occurs is a decomposition of the ambivalence toward the lost parent, with the negative sector being diverted toward the surviving parent and others in the child's environment. Often the bereaved child angrily wards off those who would help him. (1969, p. 432-433)

And again, "As the lost parent is idealized, the surviving parent is devalued" (1966, p. 112). (Neubauer, on the other hand, writing of the absence of a parent due either to separation or death, is of the opinion that aggression against both the remaining and absent parent is repressed.) Of importance concerning the ongoing consequences of parental death, Wolfenstein reports that with adult patients who lost a parent during childhood or adolescence it has been found that the inability to decathect the lost parent and to accept the reality of the loss continues (1966, p. 94).

In divorce, idealization of the lost parent, even among children who maintain contact with the non-custodial parent, has been found by Lohr, Chethik, Press, and Solyom (1981). They see such idealization as always being a part of persistent reconciliation fantasies involving the continuation of ties between the parents as well as with the self. They report that such reconciliation fantasies appear to be common in children of divorce although they don't always have the same tenacity as in the patient population they described.

There are situations involving extreme deprivations where idealization of parents has been shown to occur. In a clinical study at the Tavistock Clinic in London of children severely deprived of parental care who were currently living in children's homes or foster care, Boston (1980) describes a picture of children who tended to have fantasies of destructive and abandoning parents. On the other hand, they may also have conflicting fantasies, which are highly defended, of intensely idealized parental figures. Rapid swings between idealization on the one hand and disillusionment and hostility on the other sometimes occurred. She points out that the splitting involved, with hostile images sometimes projected onto the therapist or others, could have negative consequences for the continuation of therapy and for adjustment in the residential setting.

Finally, I'll cite a clinical paper which provides support for Kohut's assertion that not only loss but severe lack of empathy by parents can cause ongoing idealization of the disappointing parent. In his paper entitled "Relinquishing Idealizations and False Memories of the Unempathic Parent," Moses (1989) writes,

> With many patients the clinician is continually impressed by the tenacity of their attachment to blatantly abusive and malevolent parents. As we inquire into this puzzling contradiction, we begin to uncover a secret wish, a blind faith, that the parent is redeemable, changeable, and "potentially an ideal" parent. (p. 63)

He also notes how serious failures of empathy result in distortions of the child's self-image and the use of various defenses, especially identification with the aggressor, denial, and dissociation "to preserve the representation of a special relationship with a loving, attentive, ideal parent" (p. 64).

Statement of Purpose

The literature review indicates that idealization is a psychological process with wide-ranging significance. Its continued use into late adolescence and early adulthood may be indicative of an ongoing attempt to cope with unresolved psychological problems some of which may stem from childhood experiences of loss. A review of empirical studies reveals that there has been relatively little attention to idealization as a characteristic aspect of personality functioning and to the underlying causes of its development. Most research which has addressed idealization in this general sense has been carried out using psychiatric populations and with an orientation to pathology. Often studies have focused on related aspects of the personality rather than on idealization itself. This points to a need for a measure of individual differences in idealization as a first step in studying this process.

Thus, one aim of this research was to see whether it is possible to design a group-administered test capable of assessing individual differences in the presence and degree of a tendency to idealize other people. Since idealization is a deeply rooted emotional process, I wanted to avoid a cognitively oriented approach and to try to tap idealization directly, at an emotional level. Although idealization is an intrapsychic process, it is aroused in response to other people. Therefore, I decided to elicit idealizing experiences by using photographs of people as stimuli. Since it wasn't possible to use people personally known and meaningful to each subject, I decided to use well-known figures likely to arouse idealizing emotions in many

people. A rating scale was designed to reflect idealization, worded in such a way that each subject could give his or her personal meaning to the ratings. My hypothesis was that individual differences in the presence and degree of idealization exist, and that an analysis of subjects' ratings of the stimulus figures would assess these differences.

The choice of this type of test, eliciting reactions to photographs, was based on the presumption that this might rather quickly engage deeper affects which would be less readily accessible by other means; for example if written questions were used, as in many previous studies, there might be a greater likelihood of the intellect overriding the immediacy of emotional response. Further, I believe that the use of figures that are available for idealization in the culture but not personally known may elicit a general tendency to idealize, and may do so in individuals who might not reveal such a tendency if questioned about people in their own lives. This is precisely because it may be the fact of not having had sufficiently ideal figures in one's life (Schafer 1967), or as Kohut (1971) proposes, of having had traumatic disappointments in them, that has led to an ongoing need to idealize.

Because an idealizing tendency may be especially important to recognize and understand in late adolescence and young adulthood, I thought it particularly appropriate to test college students, most of whom fall in this age group.

The empirical literature points to a relationship between childhood loss--especially separation from or permanent loss of a parent--and idealization of the lost parent. It is clear that this is not an invariant reaction to such loss. The question is, under circumstances where such loss occurs and the parent is not idealized, what happens to the wish one can assume exists, even in repressed or split off form, for a perfect caretaking other who would never disappoint and never abandon. The clinical and empirical literature I've presented has dealt only with the issue of idealization of the lost parent him or herself. However, Kohut (1971) proposes that an ongoing search for an idealized other, not necessarily the parent, will often follow loss in childhood. In order to test this proposal, I included a brief written questionnaire requesting information likely to pertain to childhood loss; of most interest was evidence of separation from

or outright loss of a parent. My hypothesis was that where there is evidence of loss in childhood, it is likely that there will be a greater degree of idealization than when the family has remained intact.

As a subsidiary feature of the study, I also included in the questionnaire requests for demographic data to be statistically analyzed for any possible correlations with presence and degree of idealization.

Finally, I conducted follow-up interviews with a selected subsample of subjects from the original subject pool, half who appear to show a marked tendency to idealize and half who do not. (In order not to approach idealization as an all-or-nothing characteristic, those who appear to show a marked tendency will be referred to as "Highs" and those who do not show idealization on the test will be referred to as "Lows.") Interview studies have already shown the possibility of gaining important information related to individual experiences of idealization, e.g., Prince-Embury and Deutchman (1981) and the studies in The Authoritarian Personality (1956). Other than The Authoritarian Personality there has been no research that I know of exploring differences between people who show a marked tendency to idealize others and those who do not. The interviews in this study focus on subjects' experiences of idealization with people in their own lives, and explore various possible "clinical" differences between Highs and Lows. To narrow the focus, I decided to only interview women. No specific hypotheses were formed for this part of the study.

CHAPTER III: METHODS

Subjects and Setting

Subjects for the group administered tests were 98 students from City College of the City University of New York, enrolled in psychology classes. Five different classes were tested in college classrooms during regular class hours. The test material of four of the students could not be used because of too much missing data. The remaining 94 subjects, the "test sample," will be described in Chapter IV. From the test sample, 11 women students were interviewed. The interviews took place in offices at City College which provided a quiet setting. This "interview sample" will be described in Chapter V.

Materials

1. The Idealization Test, described below. For original form of test instructions and rating scale, see Appendix A. For final form, see Appendix B.
2. Familiarity/Interest Ratings. See Appendix C.
3. Personal Information Questionnaire. See Appendix D.
4. Individual Interview. See Appendix E.
5. Consent Form for Group Tests. See Appendix F for original form and Appendix G for final form.
6. Consent Form for Individual Interviews. See Appendix H.

Group Administered Tests

The Idealization Test

The Idealization Test consists of 24 photographs of celebrities with a five point rating scale aimed at assessing idealization of each figure. The photographs, with each celebrity's name printed underneath, are assembled in a booklet, one to a page. Beneath the rating scale which accompanies each photo is the question, "What about the person makes you feel this way?"

The Photographs of Celebrities

The photographs are mainly head and shoulder, frontal or three-quarter shots, and many of the figures are smiling. Otherwise, they have fairly "neutral" or somewhat serious expressions.

The 24 photographs are of currently well-known figures in entertainment, sports, and a more general group (royalty, newscasters, and a civil rights figure). There is evidence in the literature (Blos, 1967; Burstein & Bertenthal, 1986) and from everyday experience, that people in the subjects' age group, and beyond, tend to idealize figures from entertainment and sports. Figures from the more general group were included as being potentially of interest and idealizable for everyone, including students who are not oriented to the first two categories. The figures chosen have all been seen frequently in the mass media and are probably well known by many college students as well as by the general population. The stimulus figures are all adult, about half male and half female, from different age groups, and have some ethnic diversity. I deemed this last factor important because of the large minority population at City College.

I didn't consider the particular figures used to be significant--I thought of them as simply representing 24 opportunities to elicit idealization. However, an important consideration was that the figures should be "idealizable," that is, because of their fame, talents, accomplishments or personal characteristics (e.g., strength, beauty, poise) they should be likely to elicit admiration, at least among some people. On the other hand, I felt they should not be figures who are so widely admired and/or liked--for example, Bill Cosby or Martin Luther King--that individual differences in idealization would be obliterated.

A further consideration was to choose figures who are not known primarily for their ideas or ideals or for particular works that they have created but rather for themselves and their talents. My reasoning was that, since the purpose of the study is to assess idealization of people, I wanted to avoid the complication of tapping feelings concerning meaningful material

related to depersonified values and ideals rather than to idealization of the person. It is difficult to choose figures which are entirely "neutral" in this sense. Coretta Scott King, for instance, is something of an exception. However, this approach holds true for the great majority of the celebrities used in the test.

The particular selections were made informally mainly on the basis of my own awareness of celebrities currently or recently in the public eye (the test was designed and administered in 1987) and through informal discussions with young people of about college age. These discussions helped select, from the three categories, an initial group of about 75 celebrities who were known and of interest among these young people. After this a pre-test was done with five female City College students who were asked to indicate familiarity with each of these celebrities. The final 24 stimulus figures received at least 60% recognition among these students, and generally from 80% to 100% recognition. The only exception was the actor, Lou Gossett, who was added after the pretest in order to include another male celebrity from a minority group. See Figure 1 for a list of the celebrities used in the Idealization Test.

The Rating Scale

The wording of the rating scale has undergone a change since its inception. The first group of 20 students was tested with a rating scale where point (1) was labeled "Perfect, ideal, without any important flaws," and point (5) was labeled "Not at all perfect or ideal. Has flaws." If the subject's reaction was somewhere in between these two extremes, he/she was to indicate this by circling numbers (2), (3), or (4). This scale was changed because in post-test discussion with some students I found that a few of them disliked committing themselves to the notion that someone was "perfect," although they might rate a stimulus figure a "1" if that point were labeled in a less extreme way. Hence, the final form of the test, administered to all other subjects, has scale points labeled as follows: (1) "Is everything I want a person to be," (2) "In many ways is what I want a person to be," (3) "In some ways is what I want a person to be & in other ways is not," (4) "Is very little of what I want a person to be," and (5) "Is not at all

Figure 1: Stimulus Figures Used in the Idealization Test

(in the order in which they were presented reading down the list starting at the left):

Diana Ross	Julio Iglesias	Ella Fitzgerald
John Lennon	Evelyn Ashford	Mary Lou Retton
Coretta Scott King	Eddie Murphy	Sugar Ray Leonard
Walter Cronkite	Jane Fonda	Keith Hernandez
Whitney Houston	Bruce Lee	Dorothy Hamill
Prince Charles	Michael Jackson	Lou Gossett Jr.
Muhammad Ali	Princess Diana	Barbara Walters
Chris Evert Lloyd	Joe Namath	Sylvester Stallone

what I want a person to be." If subjects have no opinion, they are asked to check an appropriately labeled box.

Clearly, "1," the extreme positive rating, indicates idealization of any given celebrity; while all rating points are meaningful, this is the rating of most interest. Idealization implies some attribution of perfection to the object, that he or she is "everything" the subject could wish for in a person. Even though the word "perfect" was removed, the new wording of the scale implies near perfection and the absence of faults or flaws. Labeled either way, I believe the "1" rating taps the totalistic, extreme quality of idealization.

The Instruction Sheet

The first page of the Idealization Test booklet introduces the test and instructs the subject on the use of the rating scale. The wording on the introductory page is meant to elicit emotional rather than thought out responses. To avoid labeling, which might inhibit the expression of idealizing feelings, the introduction does not use the word "idealization" but rather speaks of "admiration" and of people who come close to an "ideal."

Familiarity/Interest Ratings

Two follow-up rating scales, administered right after the Idealization Test, were designed to discover the subjects' familiarity with and interest in each stimulus figure. Subjects are asked to check either "Very," "Somewhat," or "Not at all" both for "How Familiar" and for "How Interested" they are in each celebrity. These ratings were included primarily to provide a check on the reasonableness and non-randomness of subjects' responses (e.g., a pattern of idealization of a figure along with no familiarity or interest would reveal indiscriminacy). Such analysis can also yield information about general patterns of relationship between familiarity, interest, and the various ratings.

Personal Information Questionnaire

The last item administered in the group setting is a brief written questionnaire. It requests basic demographic information and inquires into other areas of possible interest such as occupational goal and religion. To give some bare sense of the family, ages of family members and number of siblings is requested as well as how religious the family was when the subject was a child.

In addition, there are questions designed to yield some very general information related to issues of loss: whether the parents have always been married or are separated, with whom did the subject live as he/she grew up, and if the subject lived apart from one or both parents, how much contact did he/she have with them, and with whom does the subject live now. If anyone close to the subject has died, he/she is asked to indicate relation, age at death, year and cause of death.

Death of a parent in childhood is clearly a traumatic loss of major proportions. I think it can also be assumed that, even where there is ongoing contact with the non-custodial parent, some sense of loss, disappointment and insecurity is always attendant on the break-up of the parents' marriage and one parent moving out of the home. Thus I hoped that responses to these questions might suggest whether an individual has had a relatively secure childhood and adolescence or whether loss and attendant insecurity have figured prominently in his or her life.

Given some concern in recent years that children whose parents both work may have a less secure experience than those with a parent--generally the mother--who remains home with the children, the subject was asked whether the mother had worked, and if so, how old the subject was at the time and for how long did she work.

Individual Interviews

The Individual Interview, which consists of two sections, explores possible differences relating to idealization between "Highs" and "Lows." The first section, focused on the student's goals, is designed to get acquainted and to establish a relaxed and open atmosphere,

and the second inquires about people whom the subject admires in her personal life. Many of the questions are oriented to areas of experience, such as self-esteem, identifications, attachment, and ideals that the literature indicates may be relevant to experiences of idealization.

Part one of the interview is meant to yield some picture of the subject's aspirations and goals and how realistic they are as well as something about what she values in life. The questions are designed to elicit a picture of how well the subject feels she is doing in her life generally and in terms of her goals. Some information about the subject's family and life situation is gathered informally during the interview to provide a context for her responses to particular questions.

Part two of the interview inquires about admired figures in the subject's life and how she views them. Of primary interest is the presence and degree of idealization, how extreme is the appraisal of the admired figures' positive qualities and how much reality can the subject bring to bear on her representation of these figures. Questions address whether these figures have any faults or flaws, whether the subject has any negative feelings about them or has experienced disappointments in them. Inquiries are also made about whether there exist figures who were once admired and then devalued.

Questions also touch on other aspects of these relationships with a view to enhancing the understanding of possible idealizations. I hoped that some sense about identification with, and degree of separation from, admired figures might be elicited through questions regarding what the student feels she has in common with them and how she is different, how she may hope to become more like them, and how influenced she has been by them. I hoped that some sense about attachment and dependency might be gained by inquiries into how it feels to be with these admired people and how it is to be apart from them. Finally, since the presence and degree of continuing idealization of parents at this age is significant, subjects are asked how much they admire their parents and how close they come to some sense of a personal ideal.

This was intended to be an in-depth interview. It is semi-structured, uniform in the sense of having certain core questions which are asked of each interviewee, but flexible enough to allow

each subject to spontaneously discuss and elaborate on issues of importance to her and for me to explore leads that appear significant. I hoped that in this way the interviews would be comparable as well as individually oriented, with enough scope to discover idealizations if they exist, to explore the nature of these idealizations, and to get some sense of the person as well.

Procedures

Group Tests

The presenter made some introductory remarks and, to put the class at ease, initiated a brief discussion of any previous research experiences students may have had. The study was intended to be interesting and possibly even entertaining, and hence more likely to engage immediate emotional responses, so I wanted there to be a relaxed atmosphere. The presenter read the covering page of explanation and instructions of the Idealization Test and the class was urged to ask any questions they might have. When each student finished with the Idealization Test, he/she was given a second booklet with the Familiarity/Interest Ratings and the Personal Information Questionnaire. Numbers rather than names were used to identify subjects' booklets in order to maintain confidentiality. Length of time for the study was 30 to 40 minutes.

Interviews

On the basis of responses to the Idealization Test, 11 women students were selected for the follow-up interviews, six identified as "Highs" and five as "Lows." They were drawn from the first two classes of students to whom the Idealization Test was administered. "Highs" were selected on the following basis: subjects who gave three or more ratings of "1" supported by a high proportion of "2"s and/or "3"s. My reasoning was that the willingness to give at least several "1"s, a score indicating that the stimulus figure meets some criteria of perfection, is a strong indication that the subject is someone who tends to idealize others, especially if she also gave a number of other ratings in the middle to high range--likely to represent a tendency to see

other figures in a positive light. A few "4"s and even "5"s did not eliminate a subject from selection as a "High" since a certain amount of devaluation is the counterpart of idealization and since many subjects may simply dislike a particular figure. "Lows" were selected on the following basis: subjects whose ratings tended to be in the middle of the range--"2"s, "3"s, or "4"s--with no "1"s and few "5"s. By eliminating ratings at the extreme positive end of the scale, and reducing them at the extreme negative end, I hoped that subjects would be selected who had modulated responses with no marked tendency to idealize or devalue.

Students had been informed during the group administrations that a few of them would be asked to participate in a follow-up study. I telephoned a number of women students who met the above criteria and asked them to participate in this part of the study. I told them they would be interviewed about goals and other things they considered to be of importance in their lives as well as about experiences with people whom they admired. I did not introduce the concept of idealization. My aim was to interview at least 10 women, half in each group, and 11 women agreed to be interviewed. I conducted the interviews myself and was blind as to each student's designation. The interviews took approximately two to two and a half hours and were tape recorded for later transcription. Each student was paid $20 for her participation.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

In this chapter I will present the results from the Idealization Test itself and in relation to the Familiarity/Interest ratings and selected information from the Personal Information Questionnaire.

General Sample Characteristics

The test sample consists of 94 students, 56 female and 38 male. Subjects ranged in age from 17 to 46 with 82% of the sample age 25 or younger. Mean age was 22.41 with a standard deviation of 5.65. Hence, most subjects were young adults and late adolescents.

The most striking aspects of the sample, fairly typical of City College, were the large number of students from minority groups, primarily black and Hispanic, and the fact that half the sample (47 students) had been born outside the U.S. Further, approximately half of non-U.S. born students had moved to this country after the age of 14. In describing groups, ethnicity and race have been combined.

Students ages (with Ns in parentheses) were as follows: 17-19 (29), 20-25 (48), 26-28 (5), 30-34 (6) and 40-46 (4). The largest ethnic/racial group was black, with 37 subjects; 12 of these students were born in the U.S., 15 in the English speaking Caribbean (mostly Jamaica and Trinidad), five in Haiti, and three in other countries. The next largest group was Hispanic, with 29 subjects; 16 were born in the U.S., seven in Central or South America, and four in the Caribbean. There were 13 white subjects, 9 born in the U.S. and three in Europe, and ten Asian, two born in the U.S. and seven in Asia (mostly Hong Kong). There was one Bengali and one Afghan student. Forty-two students listed their family religion as Catholic, 21 as Protestant of various denominations, one as both, three as Greek Orthodox, three as Jewish and one as Moslem. Eighty students were single, 10 were married, and three were divorced or separated. Ten subjects had one or more children. Fifty-nine lived with one or both parents, six with other relatives, ten with a spouse or fiance, and four alone. Most students were in

their first (33) or second (30) years in college, 19 were in their third year and 10 in their fourth year or beyond. Occupational goals were as follows: medicine (15); engineering (13); nursing (8); teaching (9); psychology (7); architecture (7); business (5); computer science (4); arts (3); law (2); and 6 miscellaneous. (For most variables there were some subjects who did not answer.)

Approach to Analysis of the Data

My basic concern was to consider whether the Idealization Test is capable of assessing individual differences in the use of idealization. In designing the test, I assumed that the particular celebrities used as stimulus figures are relatively unimportant. Accordingly, it should be possible to address the ratings each subject gave, to develop summary scores for idealization, and to compare subjects' scores with one another, irrespective of anything to do with particular stimulus figures. First I will present some general findings regarding these figures.

The Stimulus Figures

As shown in Table 1, the 24 stimulus figures varied substantially in the degree to which they evoked idealization. It is important, however, that they all evoked a range of responses and that no figure was universally admired within this sample. It is also noteworthy that they were all capable of evoking idealization in at least one subject. (The number of "1"s each figure was given is included in Table 1. AIS, included in the table, is described below.)

Scoring

In this section, possible scoring methods are outlined, including the Average Idealization Score (AIS) which was finally adopted as the measure used for most analyses. Each rating of a stimulus figure has equal weight with every other.

Table 1: Stimulus Figures Ranked in Descending Order of Idealization by AIS

Stimulus Figure	Mean AIS	Standard Deviation	Number of "1"s	Number of Ratings
Coretta Scott King	2.240	1.00	11	50
Ella Fitzgerald	2.256	0.95	7	43
Evelyn Ashford	2.444	0.89	4	45
Whitney Houston	2.699	1.24	17	83
Lou Gossett Jr.	2.702	1.03	5	57
Keith Hernandez	2.746	1.14	7	55
Mary Lou Retton	2.750	1.17	8	64
Jane Fonda	2.903	1.04	3	72
Sugar Ray Leonard	2.908	1.18	7	65
Eddie Murphy	2.919	1.21	10	86
Dorothy Hamill	2.929	1.13	4	42
Chris Evert Lloyd	2.936	1.07	1	47
Bruce Lee	2.969	1.26	8	65
Walter Cronkite	3.022	1.06	1	45
Barbara Walters	3.056	1.10	3	72
Julio Iglesias	3.057	1.31	9	70
Joe Namath	3.196	0.91	1	46
John Lennon	3.224	1.08	2	67
Diana Ross	3.274	1.10	3	84
Princess Diana	3.339	1.15	2	65
Sylvester Stallone	3.375	1.21	3	80
Muhammad Ali	3.386	1.24	7	83
Michael Jackson	3.711	1.20	4	90
Prince Charles	3.824	1.02	2	68

Focusing on the Extreme Positive Score

One method of scoring that was considered focuses only on how often subjects give the rating of most relevance to idealization, "1." I think it can be argued that three or more "1"s out of 24 possibilities indicates a clear tendency to idealize. More "1"s could be taken as evidence of even greater idealization. One might even say that the willingness to rate any celebrity a "1" indicates the subject experiences some idealization in that the celebrity is thereby defined as being "everything" the subject wants a person to be.

If a subject gives many "2"s as well as one or two "1"s, this may bolster the evidence for idealization in that other celebrities appear to be seen with "a rosy glow," as it were; if they are not "everything," they are nevertheless "in many ways" what the subject wants them to be. On the other hand, because this score is not extreme, it can be taken to indicate a positive rather than an idealized view.

In terms of the whole range of scores given, a subject may theoretically have scores more on the idealizing or more on the non-idealizing end of the spectrum, or both, and still show idealization. As long as there are "1"s, especially several of them, I think one has to assume this, given the way the rating scale is identified. (On the negative end of the spectrum, giving "5"s may imply devaluation or merely a marked negative evaluation--which could be seen as the extreme of non-idealization. The test was not designed to assess devaluation, and "5" ratings, "Not at all what I want a person to be," may or may not indicate its use. They may, for instance, simply reflect a set of ideals which does not include the figures so rated. Additionally, we know that idealization may exist alongside devaluation, the two inherent in the concept of splitting.)

Taking Into Account Number of Pictures Rated

The number of pictures rated ranged from a low of four (one subject) to a high of 24 (12 subjects, also the mode for the distribution). The mean for the distribution was 16.43. Fifty subjects (almost 50%) rated 17 or more pictures but 24 subjects (over 25%) rated only half or

fewer. Fortunately, the fact that most subjects didn't rate all the pictures, and that some subjects rated only a few, did not affect the usefulness of the ratings they did give. Evidence for this is the fact that there was no correlation between number of pictures rated and AIS (Pearson r=.01.) However, the large number of missing values provided good reason to use an idealization score which took into account the number of pictures rated.

Proportion of "1"s

Proportion of "1"s was used selectively in some analyses. Its advantages are that it focuses on the score most relevant to idealization while taking into account the weight that each such rating has out of the total number of pictures rated. (Proportion of "1"s and "2"s might also be considered, the "2"s supporting the "1"s as discussed above. The problem with such a combined score is that "2"s would have equal weight with "1"s.) While the decision was made to use the AIS, discussed below, as the basic score for most analytic purposes, the proportion of "1"s method must be considered as an alternative method of scoring this type of test. This method, which focuses on "1"s regardless of the spread of other ratings, will be compared with the AIS later on in relation to loss, a variable expected to vary with degree of idealization.

The Average Idealization Score or "AIS" and How It Reflects the Spread of Ratings

Despite the advantages of methods focusing on extreme scores, I made the decision to use what I call the "average idealization score," or "AIS," a weighted average for each subject, for most analyses and comparisons. This method takes into account proportions of each rating given, and appears to fairly accurately identify the subjects who idealize.

To calculate the AIS for a subject, the number of celebrities given each rating is multiplied by the rating; these numbers are then summed and divided by the total number of pictures rated by that subject. For example, a highly idealizing subject gave a rating of "1" to nine celebrities, "2" to seven celebrities, "3" to four celebrities, "4" to two celebrities, and "5" to no celebrities, checking "no opinion" for two others. The AIS for this subject was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(1 \times 9) + (2 \times 7) + (3 \times 4) + (4 \times 2)}{22} = 1.95$$

This is a very low score, reflecting the high degree of idealization. Generally, subjects who gave several "1"s had scores in the 2.00 to 3.00 range.

Moderate subjects, those who tended to give more ratings in the middle range, generally had scores between 3.00 and 4.00. Clearly non-idealizing subjects who focused many scores on the negative end of the spectrum tended to have scores well into the 4.00 to 5.00 range. As can be seen, more ratings at the lower (more idealizing) end of the rating scale tend to result in lower average idealization scores, while more ratings in the middle range result in somewhat higher scores. Scores become even higher the more that ratings towards the negative end of the scale are given.

One problem with this method is that by averaging the ratings, evidence of idealization is sometimes obliterated. For example, one subject who gave ratings at both ends of the spectrum came out with the rather high score of 3.70. While her score does accurately reflect that she tends to give moderate to devaluing ratings, the fact that she idealized three celebrities is lost in the final average score. However, another subject who gave both extreme positive and negative ratings came out with the more typically lower score of 2.67. Scores under 3.00 tended to fairly accurately identify idealizers in this sense: they reflected well the fact that subjects gave "1"s or a great many "2"s, or both, even while giving some higher scores. This is probably because the overall distribution of scores revealed that, although subjects did at times give scores at both the idealizing and devaluing ends of the spectrum, the preponderance of extreme scores tended to be at one end or the other, with the AIS accurately reflecting this. Further, subjects who gave a number of "1"s also tended to give quite a few "2"s, which are at least in the direction of an idealizing tendency. This bolstered the "1"s by yielding low average idealization scores. When "1"s have been given, a loss of information about this, as with the subject who obtained a score of 3.70, was very rare. (Indeed, of subjects who gave a number

of ratings at both extreme poles, this is the only subject for whom information about idealization was lost.)

Although the AIS is fairly accurate overall, other specific information is sometimes lost. In terms of identifying idealizers, scores may be erroneously low as well as high. A good many subjects who gave a lot of "2"s but no "1"s had an AIS that was below 3.00. (There were actually 15 subjects who fell into this category.) If we think of "1" as representing the extreme rating necessary to identify idealization, these subjects were not as clearly idealizers as those who gave "1"s. In favor of the accuracy of the AIS for these subjects, on the other hand, it can be argued that the fact of giving so many "2"s is indeed in an idealizing direction. Further, in looking at these subjects' statements, I found that they tended to be as idealizing as those of subjects with low AISs who gave "1"s.

There were strong negative correlations between one end of the scale and the other (proportion of "1"s and "2"s added together correlated with proportion of "4"s and "5"s: r=-.72). Most subjects didn't give scores at both extremes. This finding is an important one. It indicates that this is a unitary rather than a bimodal scale. Thus, for most subjects, the AIS, which takes into account the entire spectrum, can accurately reflect their behavior in terms of idealization.

The AIS is well correlated with other measures of idealization. This is highest with proportion of "1"s and "2"s added together (Pearson r=-.88) because this measure takes into account two out of five points on the spectrum of ratings and AIS uses all ratings given by each subject. Correlations with single rating points were also fairly high (with "1"s: r=-.50; with proportion of "1"s: r=-.56). Appropriately, these correlations are negative because as AIS becomes higher, these other scores are lower. On the other hand, correlation of AIS with proportion of "4"s and "5"s added together was strongly positive (r=.92).

In balance, I believe the way to look at the AIS is this: It is a score that, overall takes into account the full range of ratings given by subjects, and fairly accurately reflects the weight of scores in different sections of the scale. It deals with problems of test taking behavior such as

a tendency to favor extremes of a scale. On the other hand, it is a somewhat rougher measure than number or proportion of "1"s in terms of accurately identifying idealization. It is therefore especially useful as a summary score for looking at and comparing groups of subjects. Proportion of "1"s, as I will show, can also be used in this way. In looking at individuals, the specific array of ratings, and especially the "1"s, might be of more interest. Finally, given the advantages of all three types of score, it would be possible, for specific purposes, to use combinations of them.

Old Form Versus New Form

Before I discuss the data, it should be noted that tests were done to see whether the change in wording of the rating scale led to any differences in the amount of idealization students showed. A Mann-Whitney U test was run contrasting the number of "1"s given with the original and final forms of the test. Although students were slightly more willing to give "1"s with the final form of the test, no significant difference between the forms was found. Thus the use of the word "perfect" with the first form did not significantly affect students' willingness to give "1"s. Likewise, no significant difference was found with AIS. Thus, there was justification for combining the class of students given the first form of the test (N=20) with the other four classes given the final form (N=74) and to analyze the results as a single body of data.

Descriptions of the Data

In this section I will describe the findings from the Idealization Test with a focus on "1"s, the rating point of most interest.

Distribution of Rating Points

"1"s

It is useful to look at a distribution of "1"s over the whole sample (see Table 2). Of importance, of all 94 subjects, 52, well over half the sample, never gave a rating of "1." I would have to assume that, at least in response to the stimuli in this test, these subjects are non-idealizers. In terms of AIS, the mean for these subjects falls well above 3.00, the AIS score I've identified as generally indicating the upper limit for idealization.

Looking at the distribution, there is clearly a big drop in mean AIS between subjects who give no "1"s and those who give one or two "1"s. (The mean for one or two "1"s, though the latter is unexpectedly higher, are nevertheless quite close.) The breakdown shows that for all groupings of subjects giving one or more "1"s, the mean AIS is below 3.00, supporting the use of 3.00 as a cut-off for identifying idealizers by AIS. The next biggest drop is to those who give three "1"s, underscoring the point that here is where idealization becomes even more clear, with a greater overall shift towards the lower end of the spectrum of ratings. The mean for four "1"s is virtually the same. The average for those giving five or more "1"s drops again, but not as dramatically as from two "1"s to three. The mean AIS for these subjects is, however, very low at 2.35.

Forty-two subjects in all gave idealized ratings, ranging from 4% to 42% of their total ratings. Only nine subjects, or 9.6% of the sample, gave five or more "1"s. Although different criteria may be used to determine degree of idealization (the number is higher if proportion of "1"s is used), I think it can be said that these nine subjects show marked idealization. Another 9.6% of the sample (nine subjects who gave three to four "1"s) I believe show a clear tendency to idealize, and 24 subjects, 25.6% of the sample, show at least some idealization.

Table 2: Number of "1"s

# of "1"s	Frequency	Percent of Sample	Mean AIS
0	52	55.3	3.39
1	15	16.0	2.73
2	9	9.6	2.84
3	5	5.3	2.44
4	4	4.3	2.47
5-9	9	9.6	2.35

Use of Other Rating Points Compared to "1"s

Subjects were more willing to give each of the other ratings than they were to give "1"s. Of all rating points, they felt freest to give ratings of "2" and "3." (Only 10 subjects gave no "2"s and only four gave no "3"s. Forty-five percent of the sample gave both five or more "2"s and five or more "3"s.) Towards the higher (least idealizing) end of the scale, subjects again became somewhat reluctant to give ratings, although not nearly as reluctant as to give "1"s. (Fourteen subjects gave no "4"s and only about 24% gave five or more. Thirty-seven subjects gave no "5"s and only 20% gave five or more.) Although there were quite a few "5" avoiders, some subjects did give more "5"s than "1"s. In other words, they used this extreme negative end of the scale to describe their feelings about the stimulus figures more than they used the other extreme idealizing end.

Having described these aspects of the distribution of other rating scale points, I'd like to emphasize this: I believe the selectiveness subjects used in giving "1"s, relative to the greater willingness to give other ratings, is evidence of the meaningfulness of this particular scale point.

Proportions of Extreme Ratings--An Overview of the Sample

Because idealization implies a totalistic, extreme way of viewing another person, and the most negative ratings on my scale--whether indicative of devaluation or simply negative evaluations--implies another extreme, I thought it useful to view the distribution of, and relationship between, the extreme scores in the whole sample. To do this, I've used proportions of "1"s and "5"s because they take into account number of pictures actually rated. (See Table 3, "Proportions of '1's Against Proportion of '5's Annotated for Intactness of Home.") The table has been broken down in most cases into approximately equal numbers of subjects in rows and columns, taking into account appropriate breaking points in the distributions of proportions of "1"s and "5"s. A picture of the entire subject pool becomes available in this way, including numbers of subjects who fall at different points in the matrix of

Table 3: Proportions of "1"s Against Proportion of "5"s Annotated for Intactness of Home

% of "1"s	% of "5"s										Total Mean AIS & Ns
	0	4-5	6-9	10-11	13-16	18-24	25-27	28-33	35-41	44-100	
0	2.88	2.91	3.18	3.50	3.23	3.19	3.49	3.78	3.88	4.51	3.39
	18 (4)	3	1	2	5 (2)	2	5 (1)	4 (1)	6 (1)	6	52 (9)
4-6	2.70	2.67	2.78								2.73
	2	1 (1)	2								5 (1)
7	2.21					3.21	3.47				2.97
	1 (1)					1 (1)	1 (1)				3 (3)
8	2.56		2.75								2.65
	2 (1)		2 (1)								4 (2)
9		2.82				2.82		3.70			3.11
		1 (1)				1		1 (1)			3 (2)
10-11	2.74	2.84		3.00		2.85					2.86
	1 (1)	1		1 (1)		1					4 (2)
13-16	2.54										2.54
	6 (2)										6 (2)
19-26	2.15			2.85	2.58						2.46
	3 (2)			2 (2)	1						6 (4)
29-33	2.08	2.00	2.79	2.30				2.96			2.37
	2 (1)	1	1 (1)	1				1			6 (2)
36-42	2.06			2.21		2.68	2.63				2.33
	2 (2)			1 (1)		1	1				5 (3)
Total Mean AIS & Ns	2.63	2.72	2.84	2.89	3.12	2.99	3.36	3.63	3.88	4.51	3.04
	37(14)	7 (2)	6 (2)	7 (4)	6 (2)	6 (1)	7 (2)	6 (2)	6 (1)	6	94 (30)

Note: Each cell contains mean AIS, number of subjects and, in parentheses, number of subjects from broken homes.

extreme scores along with their mean AIS. The relationship between intactness of the home and the distribution of extreme scores will be discussed in another section.

In terms of the whole sample, there are several striking things evident from the table. One has to do with the avoidance (or non-use) by the majority of subjects of one or the other extreme: Most subjects, 71 in all, can be found along the top or the left-hand side of the table. The top row represents over half the sample, the 52 subjects who gave no "1"s. The left-hand column represents over a third of the sample, the 37 subjects who gave no "5"s. This means that the overwhelming majority of subjects completely avoided either idealizing ratings, or negative ratings, or both. (As noted before, more were willing to give negative than idealizing ratings.) Further, while 42% was the highest proportion of "1"s given, the highest proportion of "5"s was 100%. Note also that quite a few subjects (12) concentrated their ratings at the extreme high end of the spectrum, giving from 35% to100% "5"s.

The upper left hand corner of the matrix represents the core group of moderates, 18 subjects who gave no ratings at either extreme. Graphically, the lower left-hand corner represents subjects who showed a great deal of idealization and little negativity, and the right side of the upper row, most of the heavy negative raters. Note that some subjects did give both idealizing and negative ratings, but only a few are both heavily idealizing and heavily negative. To the left of the vertical line are 57 subjects who gave no more than 11% of "5"s, indicating again that, although "5"s are more easily given than "1"s, the majority of subjects did not give many negative ratings. Most heavy idealizers fall to this side of the line.

Subjects' Explanatory Statements

As a check on the ratings subjects gave, they were asked to explain the way they rated each photograph. I made an overall assessment as to how idealizing, moderate, or negative their statements seemed to be, taken as a whole. I also created nine possible categories for type of statement and the mean AIS was calculated for each. (See Table 4.) Although I was cognizant

Table 4: Subjects' Explanatory Statements by Mean AIS

Category of Statement	N	Mean AIS	Stand. Dev.
Heavy idealizing	0	-	-
Heavy idealizing + negative	2	2.39	.26
Idealizing	10	2.33	.32
Idealizing + negative	9	3.17	.59
Moderate leaning twds. idealizing	13	2.59	.24
Moderate	29	2.98	.39
Moderate leaning twds. negative	10	3.49	.52
Moderate leaning both ways	9	2.94	.52
Negative	8	4.25	.53

of the ratings subjects actually gave, I tried to make these assessments independently of these ratings.

I'll give a couple of examples of subjects' statements to try to show how I made assessments. A subject (#21) classified as "Idealizing + negative" gave several idealizing statements of this nature: "I think this lady is the ultimate. She's beautiful." "I love this man so much. He's beautiful." She also gave quite a few devaluing statements of which this one was typical: "She's sickening. I could care less if she dropped dead." As with most subjects, other statements were more moderate, or less totalistic ("She's got style. She's okay," and "I think he had a fine influence on society. His message was okay"). However, the extreme nature of her idealizing and devaluing statements and the fact that there were several of each led me to categorize her statements overall as "Idealizing + negative." A subject (#39) classified as "Moderate" gave statements such as this: "I've never seen or heard any downside. Seems reasonably tasteful." "Very appealing, but I only know her as a product, not a personality." "Occasionally funny. Little redeeming social value."

In making assessments, I tried to take into account how extreme the statements sounded, whether superlatives like "very," "extremely" or "wonderful" were used, and also considered the preponderance of type of statement in the whole set. For instance, if a subjects' statements were generally but not entirely moderate, I classified them as "Moderate, leaning towards idealizing" or "Moderate, leaning towards negative" as appropriate. Just to make a note of it, no subject's statements, taken as a whole, appeared to fall into a heavy idealizing category.

In general, and of necessity, these were rather rough classifications. In some cases I assessed an individual's statements as being different from their overall ratings, e.g., as moderate where their ratings showed them to be idealizing. Looking at the table, however, it can be seen that generally the coding appeared to be in good accord with mean AIS. The largest group of subjects (N=29) was placed, by statement, in the moderate category. The mean AIS for this category was almost exactly on the mean for all 94 subjects (3.04); further, "3" is the point in the center of the rating scale--the most moderate rating. Statements which

were generally moderate, but some of which had an idealizing quality, and statements which were generally moderate, but some of which had a negative quality, fell about half a point on either side of this mean. The idealizing category had the lowest (most idealizing) mean. Heavy idealizing + negative had the next lowest. (This makes sense since the idealizing is heavy and should therefore have more influence on the AIS.) The negative category had the highest mean AIS. The two other categories, idealizing + negative and moderate leaning both ways were quite close to the overall mean, closer than any other categories except the moderate group which was almost right on it. This also makes sense because if statements go in opposite directions, those directions, as reflected in the AIS, will cancel each other out.

I believe the fact that the groups of statements were in such good accord with mean AIS is of some importance. The significance is that the statements, which tended to give clear indications of idealization or lack of it, can be seen as supporting the meaningfulness of the ratings given.

Familiarity and Interest Ratings

The Familiarity and Interest ratings can be used to provide a check on the idealization ratings. Below, I will discuss Familiarity/Interest in relation to three ratings points, "1"s, "2"s, and "5"s. (See Table 5.)

Subjects' responses on Familiarity and Interest were found to be in good accord with all of these rating points. Of most importance, they were in good accord with "1" ratings, providing evidence of the non-randomness of using the extreme positive score. As might be expected, for the overwhelming number of "1" ratings, subjects indicated they were "very" familiar with and interested in the celebrity so rated. For much smaller numbers of "1" ratings they were only "somewhat" familiar with and/or interested in the figure. It may be a bit more understandable for a subject to idealize a celebrity and be only "somewhat" familiar than to idealize and be "somewhat" interested. However, interest, as defined for subjects in the instructions, implies some active expression of interest, e.g., reading about the celebrity, and

Table 5: Relationships Between "1," "2," "5" or No Opinion" ("0") Ratings and Familiarity/Interest Ratings

No. of		Familiarity			Interest		
Responses	Rating	Very	Somewhat	Not at All	Very	Somewhat	Not at All
88	1	X			X		
18	1	X				X	
0	1	X					X
7	1		X		X		
10	1		X			X	
0	1		X				X
0	1			X	X		
0	1			X		X	
0	1			X			X
150	2	X			X		
106	2	X				X	
11	2	X					X
34	2		X		X		
106	2		X			X	
15	2		X				X
0	2			X	X		
3	2			X		X	
8	2			X			X
9	5	X			X		
18	5	X				X	
96	5	X					X
0	5		X		X		
14	5		X			X	
60	5		X				X
0	5			X	X		
2	5			X		X	
31	5			X			X
1	0	X			X		
29	0	X				X	
60	0	X					X
2	0		X		X		
89	0		X			X	
186	0		X				X
2	0			X	X		
38	0			X		X	
297	0			X			X

idealization does not necessarily imply such an active interest; indeed, idealization may even prosper in the absence of knowing too much about someone. What is particularly important about the findings is that there were no "1" ratings where subjects indicated they were either "not at all" familiar with or interested in the figure so rated, a pattern which would have been highly questionable.

"Two" ratings were also in generally good accord with Familiarity/Interest. For the largest number of these ratings, as with the "1"s (though not as overwhelming a proportion as with the "1"s) subjects indicated they were "very" familiar with and interested in the celebrity so rated. As might be expected, for a greater proportion of these ratings than for the "1"s, subjects were only "somewhat" familiar with and/or interested in the celebrity. There were a few seemingly anomalous patterns with the "2"s, particularly 11 responses of "very" familiar, 15 responses of "somewhat" familiar, and 8 responses of "not at all" familiar, paired with "not at all" interested. These responses were quite scattered--there were no more than one or two for a subject. In scanning the comments made for these photos, it appears that subjects generally did know something about the figure (even where they indicated they didn't) and gave some coherent reason for giving a "2." The expressed lack of interest may simply mean that, again, they would not show an active interest such as reading about or talking about the celebrity. It is important, however, in terms of the power and meaningfulness of the extreme positive rating point, that there were no responses at all like this--of "not at all" interested--for the "1"s.

For the "5" ratings, anomalies may be somewhat more difficult to identify. There were only nine responses where subjects indicated they were "very" familiar with and interested in the celebrity so rated. While even these few might at first seem incongruous for "5"s, I believe they actually are not--figures about whom an individual has very negative feelings might conceivably still be of great interest to him/her. Except for these nine, there were no other "5" ratings where subjects indicated they were also "very" interested in the figure. Thus, the patterns for "5"s were very different from those for "1"s and "2"s. Most "5" ratings were given to figures about whom subjects indicated they were "very" familiar but "not at all"

interested. The next most frequent "5" patterns were "somewhat" familiar paired with "not at all" interested and then "not at all" either familiar or interested. In other words, dislike or devaluation of a celebrity tended to be accompanied by a lot of familiarity, but even more so by the indication of a complete lack of interest, a pattern which makes eminent sense.

Those "5" ratings accompanied by no familiarity, of which there were 33, do seem somewhat incongruous. However, fully a third of these were given by one subject who, by her comments, actually appeared to be quite familiar with these figures; there is a possibility that by checking "not at all" familiar she was further expressing her dislike. This was true as well for another subject who gave three such responses. A third who gave five such responses seemed to be responding emotionally to the photographs despite not knowing the figures. Otherwise, "5"s accompanied by lack of familiarity were very scattered (no more than two for any other subject).

Familiarity/Interest ratings are also useful in understanding the large number of missing ratings, shown as "0" in Table 5. These "0"s, almost all "no opinions" (only nine were no answers), were also not given randomly but appear to be related to lack of interest and/or familiarity. Only 1 "0" response was paired with "very" familiar and interested, and only four others with "very" interested and lesser degrees of familiarity. The great majority of "0" responses (about 76%) were paired with "not at all" interested (with various degrees of familiarity), and the next largest group (about 48%) was paired with "not at all" familiar (with various degrees of interest). It makes a good deal of sense that subjects would tend to have no opinion about figures with whom they have no familiarity, and perhaps even more so about those in whom they have no interest. (If you're not interested, why bother rating them.) It makes sense too that the largest single pattern was "not at all" familiar and "not at all" interested.

Testing the Relationship Between Loss and Idealization

On the basis of an analysis of the questionnaire responses, I decided to define childhood loss as loss of a parent through break-up of a marriage or through death. To test the relationship between loss of a parent and idealization, subjects whose questionnaire responses indicated such a loss (N=30) were contrasted with those who came from intact families (N=64). Twenty-three of the 30, by their report, had parents who were divorced or separated (at least one, possibly two of these lived in foster homes). For three subjects a broken home was inferred from the fact that they had lived with their mothers when they were growing up, and did not mention a father, and for a fourth, age 18 and U.S. born, because she reported that she now lived with her mother. Three other subjects, who were from intact homes, reported that a father had died when they were age 10 or younger. Of the 27 subjects from divorced or separated families, eight also reported the death of one or both parents (for five, the death occurred after the subject was 17 and for three others, their age at the time of death was not reported). Since most of these subjects lost a parent through dissolution of the parents' marriage, I will call this variable "Intactness of the Home" and refer to "intact" versus "broken" homes, even though the latter category includes three cases where the home was "broken" by death.

Three other subjects also reported the death of one or both parents (making 14 subjects in all who lost a parent through death). They came from intact homes and lost a parent in late adolescence or later (ages 17, 18 and 24). I felt that in the absence of a loss either by death or dissolution of a marriage prior to age 17, it was appropriate to exclude these three subjects from the 30 who experienced a childhood loss of a parent.

The 30 subjects from broken homes were contrasted with the 64 from intact homes in several ways. Results of all tests showed that, as hypothesized, there was indeed significantly more idealization shown by subjects who had experienced loss of a parent than by those who had not. In a t test using the AIS, findings were that the group from broken homes (mean AIS 2.80, s.d. 0.56) was significantly more idealizing than the group from intact families (mean

AIS 3.16, s.d. 0.67), at the <.05 level (actually p.<.013, just missing a higher significance level). In a series of Mann-Whitney U-Tests using all possible idealization measures based on the Idealization Test, significance levels were even higher (See Table 6.)

These Mann-Whitney U-Tests also provide a means of comparing idealization measures. The significance level for AIS was p.<.01, but was higher for both number and proportion of "1"s at p.<.001. Thus, the highest significance level is yielded by measures based on the rating point most relevant to idealization.

When proportion of "2"s was added to proportion of "1"s, there was still a significant difference in the same direction, though only at the <.05 level. As noted before, "2"s may conceivably, though not necessarily, be seen as leaning in the direction of an idealizing tendency. Here, however, even more than with the AIS, their inclusion weakens the finding. This indicates that again the difference between the two groups resides most in the willingness to give the extreme score and also that this matters more than the use of the next most positive score. Why the significance level for proportion of "1"s + "2"s is weaker than for AIS is not clear.

When a measure of negative response was included, proportion of "4"s + "5"s, the finding was that subjects from broken homes were less inclined to give ratings at the negative end of the scale than those from intact homes, with a trend toward significance. (With proportion of "5"s, the finding was in the same direction but just missed being a trend, p.<.108.)

In summary, there was a very strong finding that subjects who had lost a parent from their childhood home idealized more, and an indication as well that they gave fewer negative ratings, than subjects from intact homes.

Other Possible Measures Related to Loss

Differences in idealization having to do with degree of contact with the parent (in cases of separation and divorce) would have been interesting to explore. However, since the majority of subjects reported having little contact with the absent parent, the best that could be done was

Table 6: Intact Versus Broken Homes

in Relation to Idealization

Idealization Measures	Zu [1]
Average Idealization Score	2.60 **
Number of "1"s	2.94 ***
Proportion of "1"s	3.21 ***
Proportion of "1"s + "2"s	2.00 *
Measure of Negative Response	
Proportion of "4"s +"5"s	1.75 ~

[1] Mann-Whitney U-Tests corrected for tied ranks and expressed as normal deviates.

~ p.<.10 (trend), * p.<.05, ** p.<.01, *** p.<.001, two-tailed.

to contrast subjects who reported their parents were always married with subjects who reported having little or no contact (N=22). A t test using the AIS yielded almost exactly the same results as the t test contrasting all subjects from intact and broken homes: subjects from broken homes with little contact were significantly more idealizing than those from intact homes at the <.05 level of significance.

No significant difference was found between subjects whose mothers had worked (N=50) and those whose mothers had not (N=36). This is not surprising because, when both parents work during childhood, it is nevertheless quite possible for a child to have a secure environment if adequate caretakers are available and if the mother reliably returns at the end of each day. Subjects whose mothers had worked when they were very young (from birth through their fourth year, N=26) were also contrasted with those whose mothers had started working when they were somewhat older (five through ten years old, N=18). Again no significant difference was found.

Proportion of "1"s Against Proportion of "5"s in Relation to Intactness of the Home

Table 3 provides a graphic overview of extreme scores for the whole sample as well as a means of exploring the relationship between such extreme scores and loss. This enables a more detailed view of the basis for the significant findings regarding the relationship between intactness of the home and idealization. (Ns of subjects from broken homes are indicated by parentheses.)

The most important points revealed by this table are the following: Subjects who lost a parent (about a third of the entire sample) are found disproportionately in the lower left (heavy idealizing, low negative) section of the table. There are nine such subjects out of 13 who gave 19% or more "1"s, and all of these are found to the left of the vertical line, meaning they gave 11% or fewer "5"s. They are also found disproportionately in the left column of the table, among subjects who gave no "5"s (though not in the upper left-hand box which I've distinguished as the core group of "moderates")--almost half of the subjects from broken

homes fall in this column, and they are found more towards the bottom, as idealization becomes heavier. It is of interest also that they are not found among the subjects who gave high proportions of their scores at both extreme poles. While a few subjects from broken homes are among the core moderates, and five others showed devaluation but no idealization, they are clearly under-represented among negative raters--note especially that of the 12 subjects who are very heavy negative raters in terms of proportion of their ratings, only one is from a broken home.

Selected Variables in Relation to Idealization

Although most subjects were between 18 and 25, overall there was a wide range of ages represented in the test sample. The literature on adolescence and early adulthood suggests that younger subjects might idealize more than subjects from their mid-twenties into their forties. However, no relationship between age and average idealization score (Pearson r=.05) was found in this sample. Consideration had been given to limiting the sample to subjects of college age; however, on the basis of the finding made here, no subjects were excluded from the analyses on the basis of age. Nevertheless, because of the sample size and the small number of older subjects, nothing can be said about whether or not such a relationship actually exists.

Male and female subjects were contrasted and no significant difference was found in mean AIS. Given that half the sample was born outside the U.S. a contrast was run between these subjects and those born here to rule out the possibility that cultural differences might affect idealization as measured by this test. No significant difference was found. Contrasts were also run for U.S. versus non-U.S. born within the black group and also within the Hispanic group. No significant difference was found in either group.

The following contrasts were also run, on an exploratory basis, to see if these variables bore any relationship to idealization: 1) Subjects who lived at home (N=59) were contrasted with those who lived away from their parents (N=19). 2) The data on occupational goal

offered the possibility of contrasting two broad categories--students who wanted to enter "helping" professions, broadly defined (e.g. medicine, teaching, psychology, N=42) and those who planned to enter other professions (e.g., architecture, business, N=37). 3) For the question of how religious a subject considered him/herself to be, students who classified themselves as "strongly" or "moderately" religious (N=52) were contrasted with those who said they were "minimally" or "not at all" religious (N=39). No significant differences were found.

Ethnic/Racial and Gender Differences in Response to the Idealization Test

The Idealization Test was intended as a technique to study individual differences in idealization. Differences related to racial/ethnic group were not expected. Nevertheless, given that the 94 subjects fell into four rather distinct such groups, t tests contrasting these groups with each other were run to rule out the possibility of such differences. Unexpectedly, significant differences between certain of the groups were found.

As can be seen from Table 7, the mean AIS for the white group was significantly lower than for the Asian group, and the mean AIS for the black group was significantly lower than for the Hispanic or Asian groups. Comparing the means for the four groups, it can be seen that the black group has the lowest (most idealizing) mean AIS, 2.82. The white mean is only slightly higher than that. The Asian group has the highest (least idealizing) mean of the four, and the Hispanic group has the next highest. This accounts for the fact that these two groups are significantly different from the lowest (most idealizing) group, the blacks, and that the Asian group is still significantly lower than the white group. (Note that these significance levels are weak except for the difference between the black and Asian groups.) The black group, which was both the largest ethnic/racial group in the sample and had the lowest (most idealizing) score was also contrasted with all other groups combined; it was significantly lower, at the $p.<.01$ significance level.

Table 7: Contrasts of Ethnic/Racial Groups

	Mean AIS	s.d.	N	Mean AIS	s.d.	N	t
White vs. Black	2.94	.56	13	2.82	.67	37	.58
White vs. Hispanic	"	"	"	3.20	.63	29	1.24
White vs. Asian	"	"	"	3.50	.66	10	2.18 *
Black vs. Hispanic	2.82	.67	37	3.20	.63	29	2.32 *
Black vs. Asian	"	"	"	3.50	.66	10	2.85 **
Hispanic vs. Asian	3.20	.63	29	"	"	"	1.29
Blacks vs. W/H/A	2.82	.67	37	3.19	.64	52	2.65 **

* p.<.05, ** p.<.01, two-tailed

Having made these findings, it was clearly important to look at characteristics of the stimulus figures that might be related to them, especially ethnicity/race. Let me reiterate that the approach taken in this study was simply that individual differences in idealization should be discoverable by offering subjects an array of idealizable figures to respond to. I didn't consider characteristics of the stimulus figures to be central. In particular, although it is evident that issues such as identification are related to idealization, I considered ethnic/racial identification to be less important than individual differences. It did seem obvious that the stimulus figures should be roughly divided between men and women, that there should be older as well as younger figures, and that, especially because City College has a large proportion of black and other minority students, there should be some ethnic/racial diversity. However, while some effort was made to provide idealizable figures from the major ethnic/racial groups at City, there was no systematic effort to proportionalize the number of figures from each group. As it turned out, the sample of figures was divided about evenly between black and white figures (10 and 11 respectively); there were two Hispanics and one Asian.

Statistical tests were carried out in order to rule out any differential effects on AIS by the variables of age, sex, or ethnicity/race, either of subjects or of stimulus figures. Older and younger celebrities were contrasted and no significant difference was found in AISs. As noted earlier, there was also no relationship between age of subjects and idealization score. Initial tests did reveal, however, that there were differences in AIS related to gender as well as to ethnicity/race when these characteristics of both subjects and celebrities were contrasted and compared. (Although no overall difference in mean AIS was found between female and male subjects, males and females did appear to differ in the way they responded to gender as well as to ethnicity/race of celebrities.)

In testing ethnicity/race, only black and white stimulus figures were used. (Because it is clear that in using only black and white celebrities the variable is race, I'll refer to "race" of celebrity and "ethnicity/race" of subjects in discussing these analyses.) The rationale for using

only black and white stimulus figures was 1) there were so few Hispanic and Asian figures, and 2) that initial Mann-Whitney U tests revealed no significant differences between ethnic/racial groups of subjects on AIS for the one Asian (Lee) and two Hispanic celebrities (Hernandez and Iglesias). Hence, these figures were removed before proceeding to analyze the data for ethnicity/race and gender by means of repeated measures analyses of variance. These ANOVAs yielded several findings which have to be taken into account in considering the usefulness of the test as constituted with a given population. (See Table 8 for results of the ANOVAs and Tables 9 and 10 for the two-way statistics.)

Looking at both race and sex of celebrity by sex of subject for the whole sample of 94 subjects, a highly significant main effect of sex of celebrity was found, $p.<.001$, as well as a highly significant interaction between sex of subject and sex of celebrity, $p.<.001$. Female celebrities had a much lower (more idealized) rating than male celebrities for the sample as a whole. However, female subjects gave female celebrities an even lower and more disparate rating from male celebrities than did male subjects, and it is this latter finding that accounts for the interaction. (Other test results supporting this assertion will be discussed below.)

There was also a weakly significant main effect of race of celebrity for the whole sample, $p.<.05$, with lower (more idealized) ratings for black than for white celebrities. There was no interaction between race of celebrity and sex of subject for the sample as a whole.

In order to look at ethnicity/race of subjects in relation to race of celebrities, it was necessary to run separate ANOVAs for the four ethnic/racial groups. By doing this it was also possible to look at the effect of sex of celebrity and subject within each ethnic/racial group. In discussing the most noteworthy findings from these ANOVAs, it should be kept in mind that the four groups had rather different Ns as follows: blacks=37; Hispanics=29; whites=13; Asians=10. Hence, while findings in the smaller groups were not significant, this may have been due to small sample size, and the relative direction of the scores in each group is still worth looking at. Where interactions were found in any ANOVAs, post hoc tests to distinguish which means were significantly different were also carried out; any noteworthy

Table 8: Analyses of Variance--Relationships Between Subjects and Celebrities on Variables of Sex and Ethnicity/Race

Main Effects:

Subjects by Ethnicity/Race (N)	F: Sex of Celebrity	F: Race of Celebrity
Whole Sample (94)	40.996 ***	5.826 *
Black Subjects (37)	15.668 ***	8.167 **
Hispanic Subjects (29)	8.525 **	0.985 n.s.
White Subjects (13)	3.501 ~	3.038 n.s.
Asian Subjects (10)	17.077 **	0.006 n.s.
All Except Black Subjects (57)	23.148 ***	0.962 n.s.
Subjects by Sex (N)		
Females (56)	56.332 ***	8.008 **
Males (38)	4.110 *	0.768 n.s.

Two-Way Interactions:

Subjects by Ethnicity/Race (N)	F: Sex of Subject X Sex of Celebrity	F: Sex of Subject X Race of Celebrity
Whole Sample (94)	11.612 ***	0.866 n.s.
Black Subjects (37)	5.124 *	0.900 n.s.
Hispanic Subjects (29)	3.164 ~	0.325 n.s.
White Subjects (13)	1.015 n.s.	4.580 ~
Asian Subjects (10)	0.203 n.s.	3.900 ~
All Except Black Subjects (57)	5.590 *	3.431 ~

~ trend, *p.<.05, **p.<.01, ***p.<.001

Table 9: Two-Way Statistics (Mean AIS) for Analyses of Variance--
Relationships Between Subjects and Celebrities on Variables of Sex and Ethnicity/Race

	Female Subjects	Male Subjects	Total
Whole Sample:			
Sex of Celebrities			
Males	3.375	3.202	3.288
Females	2.720	3.002	2.861
Total	3.047	3.102	3.075
Race of Celebrities			
Black	2.944	3.056	3.000
White	3.151	3.148	3.149
Total	3.047	3.102	3.075
Black Subjects:			
Sex of Celebrities			
Males	3.240	2.886	3.063
Females	2.495	2.683	2.589
Total	2.868	2.784	2.826
Race of Celebrities			
Black	2.761	2.572	2.666
White	2.975	2.997	2.986
Total	2.868	2.784	2.826
Hispanic Subjects:			
Sex of Celebrities			
Males	3.387	3.552	3.470
Females	2.813	3.413	3.113
Total	3.100	3.483	3.291
Race of Celebrities			
Black	3.079	3.406	3.243
White	3.121	3.559	3.340
Total	3.100	3.483	3.291

Table 9 Continued

	Female Subjects	Male Subjects	Total
White Subjects:			
Sex of Celebrities			
Males	3.133	3.159	3.146
Females	2.475	2.962	2.719
Total	2.804	3.061	2.932
Race of Celebrities			
Black	2.491	3.093	2.792
White	3.116	3.029	3.073
Total	2.804	3.061	2.932
Asian Subjects:			
Sex of Celebrities			
Males	4.065	3.403	3.734
Females	3.503	2.951	3.227
Total	3.784	3.177	3.481
Race of Celebrities			
Black	3.648	3.324	3.486
White	3.920	3.030	3.475
Total	3.784	3.177	3.481
All Except Black Subjects:			
Sex of Celebrities			
Males	3.484	3.348	3.416
Females	2.901	3.149	3.025
Total	3.192	3.248	3.220
Race of Celebrities			
Black	3.091	3.279	3.185
White	3.293	3.217	3.255
Total	3.192	3.248	3.220

Table 10: Two-Way Statistics (Mean AIS) for Analyses of Variance--
Relationships Between All Subjects by Sex, and Sex and Race of Celebrities

	Male Celebrities	Female Celebrities	Total
All Female Subjects:			
Race of Celebrities			
Black	3.293	2.594	2.944
White	3.457	2.845	3.151
Total	3.375	2.720	3.047
All Male Subjects:			
Race of Celebrities			
Black	3.163	2.949	3.056
White	3.241	3.054	3.148
Total	3.202	3.002	3.102

results from these will also be discussed below.

Results from the separate ANOVAs revealed that in all but the Asian group, black celebrities were given more idealized ratings than white celebrities: by .28 of a point among whites, .09 of a point among Hispanics, and by .32 of a point among blacks, the only group in which a significant main effect of race was found, $p.<.01$. While the difference in ratings between black and white celebrities was greatest among black students, ($F=8.167$ vs. $F=5.826$ for the whole sample) it was fairly large in the white group as well and the lack of significance here may have been due to small sample size. (For the white group there was a trend towards an interaction between race of celebrity and sex of subject, with female subjects giving much lower scores to black celebrities than to whites, and with male subjects showing a small difference in the opposite direction.)

From this it may be said that while identification probably played a role in the ratings of the black students, the fact that other groups also gave blacks more idealized ratings indicates that 1) the black stimulus figures may have been more idealizable in general, and 2) identification was not the only basis on which idealized ratings were given. However, since in an ANOVA excluding black subjects, no main effect of race was found, and a significant result for separate ethnic/racial groups was only found with blacks, it does appear that black students contributed a good deal to the effect of race found in the whole sample.

Female subjects also contributed to this overall effect of race. In an ANOVA run with female subjects only, race of celebrity was also significant, $p.<.01$, with black celebrities rated lower than whites, an effect stronger than for the sample as a whole. In an ANOVA run with men only, no effect of race was found. This can be accounted for by the fact that in all ethnic/racial groups, females rated blacks lower than whites, while in the Asian and Hispanic groups, males rated white celebrities lower.

In the separate ANOVAs it was further revealed that in <u>all</u> ethnic groups female celebrities were given more idealized ratings than male celebrities. Except for the white group where a trend was found, for all other groups this was a significant effect, with the black group

showing the highest significance level: blacks p.<.001, Hispanics p.<.01, Asians p.<.01. In the "All except black subjects" ANOVA, the same effect was found, p.<.001.

In all groups, both female and male subjects gave lower ratings for female celebrities than for male celebrities. Of the separate groups, a significant interaction between sex of celebrity and sex of subject was only found in the black group, p.<.05. However, the "All except black subjects" ANOVA also showed a sex of celebrity, sex of subject interaction, p.<.05.

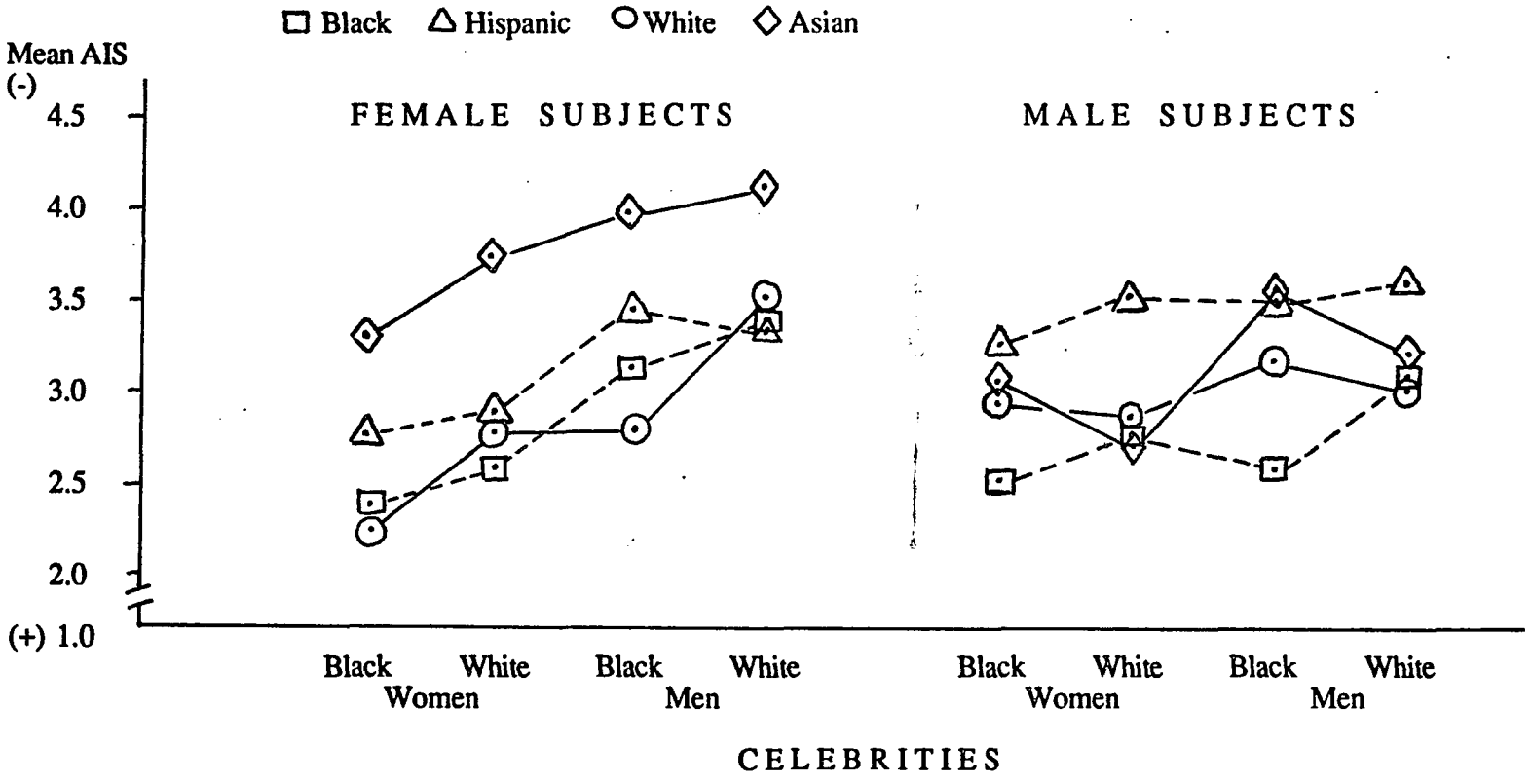
Post hoc tests to distinguish which differences between means accounted for any interactions were run on 1) the whole sample, 2) on the black group, and 3) on "All except black subjects." Of most importance, all showed a significant difference between female and male celebrities for female subjects, p.<.001 Scheffe, but no significant difference for male subjects. Hence, the interaction was always caused by this difference in female subjects.

Further evidence is found in the separate ANOVAs run on female and male subjects. For female subjects, sex of celebrity was highly significant, p.<.001, with female celebrities rated very much lower than males. While this is the same probability as for the whole sample, here F=56.332 whereas for the whole sample F=40.996; hence, with female raters there was a bigger effect of sex of celebrities than for the sample as a whole. For male subjects, although female celebrities were also rated significantly lower than males, the effect was rather weak, p.<.05. This is reflected in the lack of significance for men in the post hocs discussed above.

From these results it appears clear that the gender of the celebrities mattered a lot more to the women in my sample than to the men, and that they idealized the female figures much more than they did the male figures. It may be that they identified with the female celebrities whereas men were less influenced by identification. However, the fact that men also idealized female celebrities more than male celebrities, though this is a weak effect, indicates that 1) the female stimulus figures may have been more idealizable, and 2) again, as with the racial effects found above, identification was not the only basis on which idealized ratings were given.

The differences between female and male subjects, and within gender, between different ethnic/racial groups, in relation to gender and race of stimulus figures are displayed in Figure 2

Figure 2: Ethnicity/Race and Gender of Subjects in Relation to Race and Gender of Celebrities



The findings represented by this graph are self-evident and need little comment. I will note only that certain findings described above can be seen: 1) That generally, among female subjects, female celebrities are idealized more than male celebrities, and secondarily, black celebrities are idealized more than white celebrities. 2) Among male subjects, the overall patterns, though in the same direction are less clear and pronounced, particularly for race where the pattern of preference for black celebrities does not hold for Asian and white subjects. 3) Within each ethnic/racial group of female subjects, black women were the most idealized group.

To clarify the findings that female celebrities were preferred overall and that black celebrities were also, consider Table 1. From this table it can be seen that by mean AIS, the four celebrities who received the lowest scores, all under 2.70, are both female and black (King, Fitzgerald, Ashford, and Houston, starting with most idealized). Further, of the celebrities receiving the nine next lowest scores, all under 3.00, four are white women (Retton, Fonda, Hamill and Lloyd) and three are black men (Gossett, Leonard and Murphy), contributing to the preference for females and for blacks, but more to the former category. Two of these figures, Hernandez and Lee, a Hispanic and an Asian man respectively, were not used in the analyses. At the other end of the spectrum, all four figures receiving the highest scores are men.

Relative Importance of Ethnicity/Race of Subjects Versus Loss

I have noted that the group of black students had the lowest (most idealizing) mean AIS and that subjects who had lost a parent had a significantly lower mean AIS than those from intact homes. (Table 11 summarizes these findings.) To determine the relative importance of ethnicity/race and loss, various contrasts of these two variables were made (Tables 12, 13, and 14). Because it is important to use a single scoring method, the ensuing discussion will focus on findings made using mean AIS. Where necessary, however, a crucial contrast was also made using number and proportion of "1"s.

First, despite the overall finding of significance when all subjects in the intact versus broken

Table 11:

Significant Findings Regarding Ethnicity/Race and Loss

Group Contrast	X AIS	s.d.	N	X AIS	s.d.	N	t
Black vs. Hispanic	2.82	.67	37	3.20	.63	29	2.32 *
Black vs. Asian	"	"	"	3.50	.66	10	2.85 **
Black vs. W/H/A	"	"	"	3.19	.64	52	2.65 **
Intact vs. Broken Home --							
Whole Sample	3.16	.67	64	2.80	.56	30	2.54 *

* p.<.05, ** p.<.01, two-tailed.

home conditions were contrasted, it can be seen from Table 12 that when the different ethnic/racial groupings are viewed individually, it is only in the black group that the difference between the conditions approaches significance. (In the white group, Ns were too small to warrant a contrast.)

Looking at Table 12, another noteworthy finding, one which must be taken into account in analyzing the relative importance of ethnicity/race and intactness of the home, comes to light. This is that a higher percentage of subjects in the black group than in any other came from broken homes. Indeed, almost half the black group had an absent or deceased parent compared to less than a quarter of the other groups combined. Further, the total number of black students from broken homes was almost twice that of all other groups taken together. As can be seen in Table 13, a Chi Square test showed that the proportion of blacks from broken homes was significantly greater than other ethnic/racial groups combined at the $p.<.01$ level of significance.

Now, given that 1) the subjects in the black group were both more idealizing on the Idealization Test and 2) that more of them came from broken homes, one way to address the issue of relative importance of ethnicity/race versus loss was to contrast blacks and all other groups combined under the intact and broken home conditions. (Table 14.) It seemed particularly important to see 1) whether the black group remained more idealizing when only subjects from intact homes were contrasted, and 2) whether subjects from broken homes remained more idealizing than those from intact homes when only whites, Hispanics and Asians were contrasted.

As can be seen from Table 14, in terms of point (1) above, reading the table vertically, blacks from intact homes were still more idealizing than the other groups; however, the difference was no longer significant. Regarding point (2), reading the table horizontally, subjects from broken homes were still more idealizing than those from intact homes; however, again the difference was no longer significant. Given that the differences between means continue in the same direction for both ethnicity/race and for intactness of the home, indicating

Table 12:

Intactness of the Home by Ethnicity/Race of Subject

	Intact Home			Broken Home				
Ethnic/Racial Group	X AIS	s.d.	N	X AIS	s.d.	N	t	
White	3.00	-	10	2.76	-	3	.....	
Black	3.01	0.76	19	2.63	0.50	18	1.79	~
Hispanic	3.22	0.63	22	3.12	0.69	7	0.35	n.s.
Asian	3.50	-	10	-	-	0	.....	

~ trend, two-tailed

Table 13:

Chi Square Test of N's of Ethnic/Racial Groups

in Relation to Intactness of Home

Ethnic/Racial Group	Intact Home	Broken Home	
Black	N=19	N=18	N=52
White/Hispanic/Asian	N=42	N=10	N=37
	N=61	N=28	Total N=89

X^2 =7.37 **

** p.<.01, two-tailed

Table 14:

Intactness of Home by Black Group Versus All Other Groups Combined

	Intact Home			Broken Home			
Ethnic/Racial Group	X AIS	s.d.	N	X AIS	s.d.	N	t
Black	3.01	0.76	19	2.63	0.50	18	1.79 ~
White/Hispanic/Asian	3.23	0.65	42	3.02	0.59	10	0.97 n.s.
	t=1.19 n.s.			t=1.85 ~			

~ trend

that both effects may be operating independently, why has significance been lost? The answer has several aspects having to do with a decrease in the magnitude of the difference between means and a decrease in sample size. To understand this better, we have to look again at Table 14.

It should be noted that neither of the non-significant contrasts just described include the upper right hand corner of the matrix--blacks from broken homes--the group that has the lowest mean AIS out of the four in this table. When this group is included, in a contrast with blacks from intact homes (reading the table horizontally), it is shown to be more idealizing, this time with a trend towards significance. (This finding is important because it provides further evidence, within an ethnic/racial group, for the relationship between broken homes and idealization.) And when the same group is included in a vertical contrast, with all others from broken homes, it is again lower with a trend towards significance. Having made these contrasts, it becomes clear that it is this group, the 18 black subjects from broken homes in the matrix that is adding enough weight, as it were, to the t tests for them to approach significance.

It is evident that, whereas significant results were obtained when all subjects were included in each comparison (as in Table 11), significance was lost when contrasts were run within any fraction of these comparison groups (as in Table 14). Hence, a major problem was that given the number of variables that were influencing the results, there weren't enough subjects to hope to achieve significance when the overall sample was broken down into parts for further analysis.

Another aspect of the loss of significance has to do with a decrease in the difference between means in the target contrasts in Table 14: 1) isolating the effect of belonging to the black group by excluding subjects from broken homes and 2) isolating the effect of coming from a broken home by excluding blacks. These differences in means, though in the same direction, and though the magnitude isn't all that different, are nevertheless smaller compared to the significant differences between means in Table 11 in the contrasts of blacks with other groups and in the contrast between intact vs. broken homes.

The decrease in the differences between means in these target contrasts, meant to determine the relative importance of ethnicity/race and intactness of home, is due directly to the fact that the black subjects from broken homes were excluded from both contrasts in Table 14. Hence, the finding that there is a very large group of black students from broken homes in my sample confounds the results considerably. Their presence makes it difficult to say for sure, using mean AIS, whether lack of intactness of the home results in greater idealization, although the results are certainly highly suggestive of this. Further, it makes it difficult to know whether blacks were responding to the Idealization Test with lower scores than other groups more because of some reason associated with their ethnicity/race (confounded further by the differential effect of the black celebrities on the different groups), or more because they had less secure family backgrounds.

Fortunately, even with the presence of such a large black group from broken homes it is still possible to demonstrate the relationship between the loss of a parent and idealization. This is because using other scoring methods, number and proportion of "1"s, methods which are arguably more specifically focused on idealization, it can be shown that there is still a significant difference between subjects from intact and broken homes even when black subjects are excluded from the contrast. When Mann-Whitney U-Tests were run for the white, Hispanic and Asian groups combined using all possible scoring methods, there was no significance for AIS. However, for both number and proportion of "1"s, subjects from broken homes were indeed significantly more idealizing than those from intact homes, $p.<.05$.

Gender, Loss, and Idealization

There is one more, albeit secondary aspect to the comparison of groups on the variables of ethnicity/race and intactness of the home. Given that male and female subjects, although not differing significantly in mean AIS, were shown to respond somewhat differently to the stimulus figures, a breakdown of the variables of ethnicity/race and loss by gender was done.

(See Tables 15 and 16.) Sample sizes were small so the results cannot be more than suggestive.

There is a large drop in mean AIS from the intact to the broken home condition for all female subjects combined, while for all male subjects combined the difference between conditions, though in the same direction, is negligible. Looking closer, it can be seen that it is the group of black women from broken homes who are largely responsible for the big difference in the mean scores for all women; there is .57 of a point difference between the black women in the two conditions, the largest difference yet encountered. In contrast, intactness of the home has no effect on the scores of the black men.

The question arises whether it is possible that women respond with idealization to the loss of a parent whereas men may not. This question comes to mind because the gender difference between blacks also holds for Hispanics, though it is less pronounced. None of the Asian subjects came from broken homes, and though the gender difference goes in the opposite direction in the white group (with white men showing greater idealization when they have come from broken homes and the women showing virtually no difference) the Ns are even smaller. Because the Ns are so extremely small, even with black males, this question must be very tentatively ventured. The fact that the gender difference for whites is in the opposite direction must be kept in mind. The conclusion has to be that it would require many more subjects to investigate whether such a gender difference actually exists.

Table 15:

Intactness of Home by Ethnicity/Race of Female Subjects

	Intact Home			Broken Home		
Ethnic/Racial Group	X AIS	s.d.	N	X AIS	s.d.	N
White	2.76	1.05	3	2.82	0.00	1
Black	3.13	0.88	12	2.56	0.43	13
Hispanic	3.11	0.48	14	2.88	0.65	4
Asian	3.76	0.76	6	-	-	-
All female subjects	3.20	0.75	35	2.65	0.48	18

Table 16:

Intactness of Home by Ethnicity/Race of Male Subjects

	Intact Home			Broken Home		
Ethnic/Racial Group	X AIS	s.d.	N	X AIS	s.d.	N
White	3.10	0.44	7	2.74	0.10	2
Black	2.80	0.46	7	2.80	0.67	5
Hispanic	3.41	0.84	8	3.44	0.72	3
Asian	3.11	0.18	4	-	-	-
All male subjects	3.12	0.59	26	2.98	0.65	10

CHAPTER V:

DIFFERENTIAL PATTERNS OF RESPONSE TO THE INTERVIEWS

Six women students designated as "High" idealizers and five designated as "Low" idealizers were interviewed. (See Chapter III for an explanation of how subjects were selected on the basis of Idealization Test ratings.) The 11 women were all between the ages of 18 and 24, and the spread of ages was approximately the same for both groups. They were all living with parents or other close relatives and were in their first to third years of college.

Briefly, the demographic characteristics of this qualitative group are as follows: As it turned out, all 11 interviewees were themselves from, or had parents from, the same region--the Caribbean area. Among the High idealizers there were four countries of origin and among the Low idealizers, three. Three different language backgrounds, English, Spanish, and French, were represented in both groups. Among the Highs there were five black students, mainly from English speaking backgrounds, and one Hispanic; among the Lows, four Hispanics and one black. All but one of the Highs were born and raised in the Caribbean area at least until early latency, and most through middle adolescence, and the other was born in the U.S. Two of the Lows were born and raised in the Caribbean, both through mid-adolescence, while the three others were born in the U.S.

Certain patterns which emerged from a close analysis of the interviews revealed a number of interesting differences between High idealizers and Low idealizers. This is a qualitative analysis and these findings are exploratory in nature. Interview patterns don't always hold for all members of each group. Where there are divergences from a pattern, this will be indicated. To preserve confidentiality, subjects will be identified by letters, the six Highs to be called A, B, C, D, E and F and the five Lows, V, W, X, Y and Z.

Subjects identified as Low idealizers on the test manifested two differing patterns in these interviews. Three Lows, X, Y and Z, are presented as a group, to be called the "Alpha Lows."

Systematic contrasts will be shown between this group and the Highs. V and W can't be contrasted as clearly with the Highs. They form a subgroup, to be called the "Beta Lows."

The Beta Lows are distinguished from all other subjects by the experience of an ongoing personal relationship with God from which they appeared to derive a marked sense of support. As one said, "I feel attached to God, whenever, in whatever I do," and the other, "I think God is..... the..... only person I could talk to when I have a problem....." In that such a relationship with and experience of God--who could be seen as the quintessential idealized figure--might conceivably substitute for idealizations of people, these two subjects may have scored low on the Idealization Test while still sharing certain characteristics with the Highs. They, together with one other subject, an Alpha, also spoke of current boyfriends with whom they were very involved, and who were seen as providing support and affection.

What follows will primarily represent an outline of general patterns rather than a description of individual cases. Though quotations will be used where possible to illuminate patterns, these will be tied to the specific issue rather than being used to expand on the clinical understanding of a particular individual. While more detail and individual case examples might have been valuable, I feel that issues of confidentiality preclude such an approach. In a few instances I made small alterations in order to disguise a subject's identity.

Idealization in Subjects' Personal Lives

One area of investigation was possible differences between Highs and Lows regarding admiration of people in their lives. I expected to find more admired figures among the Highs and/or that such figures might be presented with greater admiration and with less ability to realistically assess them. The rationale was that if subjects experienced idealization in relation to famous figures, the same idealizing need might well be expressed in relation to people they knew personally.

As it turned out, idealization was rather difficult to determine. The findings were that all 11 subjects--both Highs and Lows--had one or more people in their lives whom they said they

admired a great deal; the number of figures admired did not clearly differentiate between groups. It is noteworthy that the person who came to mind first, and who was the most admired figure, was a parent in all but two cases, that is, B and C among the Highs, who each admired a close male relative who functioned in certain ways as a parent substitute. (These two subjects, as I'll discuss below, had each experienced traumatic loss of a parent in early childhood.) For most subjects it was the mother who was most admired, although one Alpha Low, as well as both Beta Lows, admired their fathers most.

Statements of admiration also did not tend to distinguish between groups. For example, in talking about admiring her mother, one High said, "..... she's just a wonderful person," and when asked in what way she was wonderful, she said, "In every way, that I can think of." And in speaking of her father, an Alpha Low said, "I feel that I, I have the great father of the world, the greatest. And I feel like when I go by the street with him that I have a, a diamond in my..... side." The qualities that subjects said they admired also did not tend to clearly distinguish between groups.

The overall finding that for most subjects a parent, or a parent substitute, was so highly admired was interesting in itself. The literature on idealization in adolescence points to the unlikelihood of such a finding. As I have discussed, adolescence is generally viewed as a time when the young person must move away from close ties to parents and develop his or her own sense of identity, turning to new involvements with the outer world and with other people. As part of the process, deidealization of the mother and father is said to generally occur. However, while some criticism of parents did emerge in the interviews, each of these 11 subjects continued to highly admire at least one parent or parent substitute.

Certainly, along with the capacity to separate and become more individuated, maintaining an ongoing good relationship with parents is also considered an optimal outcome of the adolescent process. Adolescents and young adults can certainly use the support of parents and other close family members. Perhaps this is at least partially the basis of the finding made here. Another possibility has to do with the fact that almost all of these subjects had Caribbean backgrounds.

Continuing high regard and involvement with parents may be a cultural phenomenon, one which the literature does not generally encompass.

Differences between groups in relation to these figures did, however, emerge. Most importantly--and I will expand on this point later--where a parent was the most admired figure, Alpha Lows' positive feelings appeared to be less mixed with and compromised by other feelings than those of the other groups. Discrepancies which put into question a "perfect" image, in contrast to coherence and consistency regarding feelings towards and experiences with parents, have been used in other studies as an indication of idealization (Main, 1985; Adorno et al., 1956). Viewed in this way, the interviews seem to indicate some idealization of parents with the group of Highs, and possibly the Beta Lows, but not with the Alpha Lows.

Two of the Highs--again those who most admired a relative other than a parent--and none of the Lows, also spoke of experiencing almost mystical kinds of connection with the admired person. One said, "I think if he hurts, I hurt. ..... Like the time he was injured, right? ..... I don't know, and I started to cry. I don't know what I was crying for. I was just crying. And then I called my sister and she said, 'John was just in an accident.'" Though most subjects in both groups indicated some ability to realistically assess the admired figure, these two subjects were unable to think of a single flaw. The kinds of connection they both described may possibly indicate experiences of merger; such experiences may be involved in idealizations, particularly those that meet earlier needs.

Of relevance in relation to the Idealization Test, there was also a distinction between groups in terms of secondary figures who were admired. Often for both groups these were other relatives and sometimes friends or teachers. However, show business celebrities, sometimes representing models of how the subject would like to be, were spontaneously offered as current figures of admiration only for the Highs. Of the six Highs, four (A, B, C and E) talked of currently admiring such celebrities. As one High said of a star, "..... I kind of see myself in her..... if there's any super star, anybody, she's the one I could say..... I really admire. I can relate to her." Although two Alpha Lows said they had very much admired some stars when

they were younger, none were currently highly admired by any of the five Lows. (While one Alpha mentioned that "I admire..... people like, I mean, like singers.....," she also said, "but not too much.)"

Experiences of Devaluation

Another area I investigated was whether or not reports of devaluation of formerly admired figures would differentiate between groups. Based on Klein's theory, I thought that Highs might have had more such experiences. Since idealization involves the need to see the other as perfect, reality (and inner dynamic issues) must often undermine this experience of perfection with resulting disappointment and anger. Klein writes of the instability of idealized relationships and connects idealization with splitting which results in distortions of experience. It follows that when there is disappointment in someone who has been seen as all "good," the other side of the split, all the "bad" things, might come to the fore.

Here also, the interviews do appear to show differences between groups, especially between the Alpha Lows on the one hand and the Beta Lows and the Highs on the other. Of the Alpha Lows, only Y spoke of such a devaluing experience with people in her life and not with highly significant figures. This involved friends whom she had "looked up to because they seemed to be so kind, and so honest. And I found out it was the opposite." The only other experiences of devaluation by any Alpha Lows had to do with formerly admired show business celebrities. The two, X and Y, who had formerly very much admired such celebrities no longer did so. As X said when asked if her feelings had changed towards anyone she had admired, "Yah. The movie stars and stuff like that, you know. That's why I ..... laughed when..... we were taking that um study in the class..... And I was like, but why should I admire these people? I mean, you know, um so they got lucky, so they're..... beautiful, you know. Big deal..... Um, most of the people that I admire before, I still admire them, you know?"

By contrast, four Highs (A, B, C and F) had indeed experienced devaluation of previously

admired figures, for three of them very important people in their lives. One said that she wrote on the questionnaire, about a relative she formerly admired, "He's a jerk." Another said, speaking of someone who had been like a mother to her, "I used to admire her a lot but not any more." Of the Beta Lows, one articulated having had such an experience, and there were possible indications that the other had also. Again in contrast to the Lows, with one exception, the Highs who mentioned admiring celebrities continued to do so.

Childhood Security

The most interesting results which distinguish Highs from Lows are in the broad area of what might be called childhood "security." Unexpectedly, these patterns not only indicate a relationship between idealization and parental loss, but between idealization and other difficult experiences with parents.

The most striking finding was that of the six Highs, three (A, B and C) had had marked experiences of early loss. In each case a parent had left them before the latency period, and in two cases it was the mother who left and who did so when the child was three years old or less. Separation in all three cases involved little or no contact with the lost parent for at least several years--either because of physical distance or estrangement from the family. Though the other parent was still available, in one case that parent, a father, was probably not very involved with or close to the child--in that the subject mentioned no instances of interaction with the father other than prohibiting, angry ones. In the other two cases these parents were extraordinarily busy trying to cope with work and family in the absence of a spouse and almost certainly did not have a great deal of time for this child. For all of these three subjects the primary caregiver in the early years was not the remaining parent and was not someone who could be said to substitute for an adequate mother. Their memories were very clear on this, that this caregiver looked after them and provided for physical needs but was not emotionally available in the way a mother would be. Needless to say, the early loss of parents constituted traumatic disappointments, compounded in all three cases by subsequent insufficiently secure

and nurturing environments and in one case by further losses involving a parent and a parental figure.

In marked contrast, all of the Lows came from intact families. Indeed, there were only two exceptions to a pattern of family stability until late adolescence. One was an Alpha Low who, in mid-adolescence, experienced an eight month separation from parents while they established a new home for the family. During this time she and her siblings stayed with other close relatives. The other exception involved a separation from a father which started at the beginning of the latency period and lasted over two years, with rare visits during that time. The separation did not involve a dissolution of a marriage as with the three Highs and was based on economic necessity. However, it did occur under trying circumstances for the child in that the mother was quite emotionally unstable and abusive in this period. This subject, a Beta Low, falls in the subcategory of Lows which have some characteristics in common with the Highs.

Importantly, the interviews revealed differences between Highs and Lows in terms of other more subtle aspects of childhood experience. While three of the Highs, D, E and F, came from intact families, they nevertheless shared with A, B and C patterns of reported experience with their parents in childhood which appear to have been less satisfactory than those shared by the Alpha Lows. These patterns involve areas of experience such as emotional closeness, sense of support and availability of parents, openness of communication with them, the intensity of disappointments, and the presence and degree of residual feelings of anger towards them.

While individuals within each of the groups varied quite a bit in their experiences in these areas, what appears to be an overall more positive experience of the Alpha Lows rather clearly distinguishes them from the Highs. In discussing these dimensions of subjects' experience with their families, I'll first present the Alpha Lows and use their experience as a basis of comparison with the more mixed experience of the Highs. For each of the areas to be discussed, I'll also show where the Beta Lows, often resembling the Highs, fit in.

Positive Feelings Versus Ambivalence and Anger

To begin with, the Alpha Lows were unreserved in their positive feelings for at least one parent, for X and Y, their mothers, and for Z, both parents. Because of this, initially I thought they might be idealizing their parents, especially Z who was the most unreserved ("I think they are the best parents"). It is indeed sometimes difficult to distinguish overall positive, unambivalent feelings from idealization, especially in the absence of confirming evidence, and it is possible that there was some idealization of these parents. (A statement made by Z when discussing how knowledgable her mother was added to this possibility. She said, "'Mommy, I got to do whatever you say, because you, you are like magic. When you say something happen it happens.'") However, the evidence indicates that generally these expressions of positive feeling on the part of the Lows were just that. What distinguished these students' experience is that in their current feelings about one or both parents there was almost no evidence of ambivalence and they expressed only very positive feelings regarding the relationship between them.

The Alpha Lows were also able to express some criticism of this parent (e.g., regarding how this parent related to the other or a sense that the parent was overprotective). The fact that such feelings could be admitted into consciousness relatively easily is evidence, I feel, that these subjects were able to acknowledge flaws in their parents without much conflict. Two of the Alpha Lows had memories indicative of having been angry with the parent in the past. With X these memories were highly articulated. However, what was also highly articulated was a process of exploring and resolving her feelings. She indicated a good degree of understanding, including an awareness that her mother "wasn't all perfect" and didn't have to be, and of a relationship with the mother that had changed and developed over time as the mother herself had changed. Criticism expressed by all three Alpha Lows of these parents did not appear to be associated with any current negative feeling. X, for instance, when asked if she ever felt negative feelings towards her mother, thought for a few seconds and then replied, "No. I guess I really don't."

This was not true of the Highs with most of whom there was evidence of more ambivalence and sometimes a good deal of anger, even towards a parent they admired. Whereas, like the Lows, several of them initially expressed very positive feelings about a parent, most then gave indications, sometimes only gradually and reluctantly, that they also felt various degrees of resentment, anger, and other dysphoric feelings, either about past or present experience or both. (B was somewhat of an exception, but she had had much less contact with the admired parent than the others and hence may have more easily maintained positive feelings.) As examples, F agreed that she had probably hesitated when speaking about her mother "because there are some mixed feelings," and D, when it was suggested she might not like thinking about being angry at her mother said, "Right, but I guess if it comes over me, there's nothing that I can do." E, when asked if she ever had negative feelings said, "Yeh, sometimes. I say, why she has to be like that? Why can't she be like other people's mothers, you know?" The Beta Lows, also showed evidence of ambivalence. Both had some ongoing angry and/or dysphoric feelings about an admired parent, also not easily expressed, which like the experience of the Highs, stood out in contrast to the positive experience of the Alpha Lows.

Many of the negative feelings towards admired parents were associated with perceived shortcomings in areas of experience which I will discuss below. Some negative feelings about those parents who were not highly admired existed among both Highs and Lows.

Emotional Closeness and Support

The Alpha Lows indicated in various ways that they felt a great deal of closeness with their mothers, and in the case of Z with both parents. All three spoke of how important the relationship between them was, Y and Z emphasizing how "there" one or both parents had been throughout their lives, and how they had always spent a great deal of time together. As Z said, "we always have time, always have time." With X the sense of a close relationship with the mother developed during adolescence. There is another difference in that X's mother, after

"placing the family first" when her children were young, then could not be available for them all the time due to following her own career goals. However, it appears that it was also the personal changes that attended developing her own career that allowed for the development of a relationship based on mutual understanding with this daughter and closeness based on this.

A similarity with all three was that they felt that their parents had provided a lot of security. Both Y and Z emphasized how much support they were given throughout their lives by their mothers (with Z by both parents) with a sense of having felt very accepted by them. As Y said, "And my mother..... she's beautiful with me, she just supports me all the way." They all indicated in various ways that they felt they could depend on and trust their mothers, again Z feeling this way with both parents. X did have memories of difficult times in early adolescence and of a time in her childhood when her mother had not supported and understood her but had rather been quite punitive. She was able to articulate that this had been "the worst... really bad," but was clear that her mother's behavior had been caused by insecurity and lack of knowledge about raising children before she made the significant changes the subject repeatedly emphasized. As she said, "But um, she's changed, you know what I'm saying? And that's why I can admire her for that. Because she's been able to like um, throw away these..... old ways of raising children and things like that....." With this student too, by her report, the mother appears to have been concerned about her daughter and involved with her in active and affirmative ways. Though the sense of having been supported was not as emphasized by X as it was by Y and Z, mutual understanding was heavily emphasized by her as well as the closeness based on this.

The experience of most of the Highs was somewhat different from that of the Alpha Lows. A few of them expressed closeness with one parent (none with both), some speaking of their mothers or fathers as good "friends" (as did the Alpha Lows). With all Highs, however, except A and D, there was less emphasis on closeness than with the Alpha Lows. Further, the overall descriptions of relationships with parents added to my impression that many of these subjects felt less close and secure with either parent than did the Alpha Lows. Even for those

students who indicated they felt the most closeness (A, D, and F), this appeared to be flawed or compromised in some way--for example, by the feeling that they had to vie with someone else for the parent and felt they didn't have the kind of time or attention they would have liked, or because of feeling unresponded to or concerned at some point that they were not cared about. Three of the Highs (A, C and D) and none of the five Lows mentioned having had feelings or fears of not being cared about or loved, either by a parent or another close relative, with A saying, "I thought she didn't care," and C, "he maybe care..... but it's like he doesn't care," and D, speaking about how uncomfortable it makes her to be angry, "It makes me feel unloved like."

None of the Highs, except F, talked about the same kind of consistent availability in terms of time spent together with a parent as Y and Z did, having experienced major separations from parents (A, B and C) and/or because their parents worked very long hours (A, D and E). How hard their mother's worked, usually said with at least surface admiration, was emphasized by these three students.

Though some Highs (A, D, E and F) expressed feelings of being understood and supported emotionally, none seemed to feel the full degree of understanding by a parent, uncompromised by evidence of other feelings, that X indicated, or the complete support, acceptance, and trust experienced by Y and Z. Rather, for most of them there were indications of having felt let down or unsupported in various ways. In a couple of cases this involved a sense of not feeling fully accepted for themselves or a feeling of being criticized. Another talked of an experience by which she must have felt quite betrayed. One subject experienced her parents as turning away from her and/or punishing her when she expressed unhappiness or disappointment, and two others talked about patterns, very distressing to them, of being punished by close relatives with the parents' tacit approval. Certainly, for those subjects who had experienced major separations there was some ongoing sense of having been let down. As one said, "I wouldn't want that, any child of mine to grow up like I grew up without Mom for a while.....," and

another, "I wasn't going to be with my mother..... it was kind of tough." "It's like, I did everything on my own."

The parent who wasn't there to protect and support--at least at times--is a clear theme among all the Highs, including those with both parents at home. Thus, a full sense of security, involving an ability to trust and depend on a parent, was compromised to various degrees for the Highs as compared to the Alpha Lows.

The Beta Lows also did not feel the same degree of closeness with parents and sense of security as did the Alphas. Though V and W bear a similarity to the other Lows in that they had mothers who were at home with them throughout childhood, the relationship with these mothers was not experienced positively as it was with the Alpha Lows. In both cases they appeared to feel closer to their fathers, but here too they felt that their fathers had not always been there for them when they needed them. Though both parents were present throughout most of their lives, each experienced a period of separation from the father at a time when she needed him, one during latency (W) and the other in late adolescence (V). Further, neither felt fully understood or supported by their fathers. However, with V it was possible that a marked feeling of being let down had developed only recently. She found this issue difficult to talk about and so I did not explore it.

Mutuality and Concern for the Other

A further characteristic that set the Alpha Lows apart was that all three talked in terms of two-way relationships between parent and child, indicating that they were of great mutual importance to one another, and with two (X and Y), that the relationship was one of mutual giving and understanding. As Y said of her mother, "we've been there for each other." Also speaking of her mother, X said, "I guess the best quality is the relationship I have with her. She's my best friend, you know? I can tell her every-, anything, and she'll be able to understand me. And um, the same goes for her. Like she can tell me what's going on in her life and I can understand her." This was not a theme for the Beta Lows or for the Highs in the

same way. While, as mentioned above, some Highs spoke about being good "friends" with a parent, where mutuality was discussed it was usually more in terms of a wish to do something for the parent or to be there for them rather than reported experiences of give and take or indications that the relationship was of central importance to both parent and child.

Often for the Highs this involved a wish to protect or take care of parents as with F who said, "sometimes I think..... after I finish anything..... I want to..... help my parents, you know, buy a house for them..... when they get..... old so they have..... a place to stay." And E said, "I see my mother, working you know, just working and supporting all of us and..... I'd like to do something for her, you know, before, she might die one day, I know." Such a wish to protect a parent or other close relative, with the implicit anxiety attendant on this wish, was expressed by B, C, E and F. Among the five Lows only Y talked about protecting a parent and mostly did so in terms of what she had already done as when she said, "I guess because of all those struggles she went through I was always trying to protect her from any other pains." While she did also express concern about her mother in the future, she was questioning her own motives for this, appearing to recognize that the issue resided in herself. Further, though there was some feeling of having been protected among the Highs (especially those from intact homes) as well as with the Beta Lows, this was emphasized more by the Alpha Lows, and particularly so by Y and Z.

It should be noted that for the same two Alpha Lows there was another side to the closeness, support, and relatedness they experienced. Their relationships with at least one parent were of a very intense nature and there appears to have been a great deal of involvement as well as time spent together. X also spoke of being very involved with her mother during early adolescence, spending time helping her mother with school at the mother's request; but for X this was something about which she had had very mixed feelings. So much time spent and such intensity of involvement did not appear to be present among the other groups. At the same time these relationships among the Alpha Lows had also undergone (X) or were currently undergoing (Y and Z) change. Illustrative of the intensity, Z said of her relationship with her

mother, indicating a felt need for agreement between them, "We going to win both or we are going to lose both." Of her family she said, "We have to be together, all the time," and "I mean, if one like die, I think that all, all of us die because we are like, like this" (putting her fingers together to indicate closeness). These latter comments were made, however, in the context of discussing her parents' "overprotectiveness," and Z was able to say that she herself was changing and becoming more independent as a result of going to college. Y, indicating the intensity of her relationship, said, "I was always with my mother. And I wasn't very active with other children." However, Y had developed friendships, especially in college, and also was aware of a need to "get detached from her and ..... like be, totally independent."

Communication

Another major area of difference between Alpha Lows and Highs in their relationships with parents had to do with openness of communication. The Alpha Lows all emphasized how freely and openly they were able to speak with their mothers, and in the case of Z again, with both parents. As Y said of her mother, "She's quite open minded... She's the type of person that you could come to and you could have ... a world of problems and she... could make it seem so much better" and also, "I can talk to her about anything, you know? and have no shame about it." X said of her relationship with her mother, "Anything goes wrong, you know, we're able to speak about it..... If, if I have a problem, you know, or she's..... angry with me for whatever reason, we're able to speak about it." Z said, "My mother taught me that when you have something to say, say it. If you have problems, say it too" because, she indicated, they believe it's important to understand one another. In this family, the parents had the last word--if they felt strongly that she shouldn't do something, she wouldn't do it--but the experience of this was tempered for Z by the fact that her parents always gave her "reasons," that they always talked about everything a lot until they felt they were in agreement.

With Beta Lows there was somewhat less openness. They both indicated they felt "comfortable" speaking with their fathers, and certainly more at ease than with mothers.

However, there were some important issues that were not easily and fully discussed because the father didn't make himself unavailable (V) or found certain things unacceptable (W).

Also in contrast to the Alpha Lows, most of the Highs had some problems speaking freely and easily with either of their parents. The main exception was A who, having felt as a child that her mother wouldn't listen, now seemed to experience the same kind of openness with her as the Alpha Lows did with their mothers. B was also unreserved about how easily she could speak with her father but he was for most of her life not a primary caretaker. Generally, communication was flawed for the subjects in the group of Highs. C, for instance, said of her mother, "It's like talking to a wall." E had difficulties speaking easily, saying, "If you're having a problem you can go and talk to her, but most of the times I just sit there..... sometimes I don't feel like talking, you know. She'll be talking but I just sit there and..... Sometimes I'm just quiet."

Those Highs that indicated they could speak freely, generally had to qualify this. F, for instance, said, "Sometimes, you know, I feel my mother acts..... as a friend..... somebody that I..... if I have any problem that I could come and I... could tell her. But sometimes I get, you know..... I stop..... because I think maybe she, she's not going to like the idea." D at first seemed to feel among the most open of the Highs in speaking to parents, talking about "sharing, mostly everything. If you have a problem, you know, you just talk it over." However, she also said, speaking of herself as well as her siblings, "whenever (my mother) has a problem with them, she just tells them the way she sees it. She doesn't listen to their explanation. Even though she listens..... she doesn't um act upon what you said. She tells you what she wants you to do and you better go along with it." Like Z's mother, this mother has the final say, but she has it in a manner that has a more autocratic feel to it and is not as open to discussion. And E said of her mother, "She loves to argue..." even if "she'll really know that she's wrong....." "but she knows what she wants to know and... you just have to accept it."

Democratic or Authoritarian Relationships

A somewhat authoritarian quality of parents was found in many of the Highs' experiences (C, D, E, and F) and with none of the Alpha Lows in their current relationships with the parent to whom they felt closest. With the Highs there was a sense of parents not only laying down the law but of shutting off communication beyond a certain point. A related phenomenon in the families of three of these subjects (B, C, and D) involved parents keeping information from their children and/or not openly discussing difficult issues with them, which led them to have to discover painful facts (such as the remarriage of a parent or the existence of a sibling) and work out how they felt about them on their own. In contrast, Alpha Lows experienced parents as open with them. As Y said, "..... she's always been open with me and honest. And that's, I think, so important because, I've never been surprised about anything."

The openness of communication, the feeling of being listened to and understood by parents on the part of the Alpha Lows implies a relatively democratic relationship at least with the parent to whom they felt closest. Even Z, although her parents made the final decisions, had a lot of input. As she said, "If they don't listen, I make them listen." There were indications with both X and Y that the other parent was somewhat less open, but the primary relationship was with the more democratic and open parent.

In contrast, the Highs, in addition to limited communication, had other authoritarian experiences in their homes. All of the Highs in one way or another described parents, or other relatives who had had caretaking responsibilities, as being strict and sometimes punitive. Mostly, they discussed these issues fairly spontaneously. E, for instance said of a close relative, "Yeh, she used to beat us..... She had this ..... 'little red belt of justice,'" and C offered, "Okay, my..... father was very strict, from the time I start developing, and I couldn't hang out with boys no more..... even..... when I graduate from junior high school, I didn't go to my prom." Others described things like feeling they had to "report" more than they wanted (D), or being ordered around, like "you have to do this!" (F).

The Lows, including the Betas, did not describe their families in this way. Exceptions

among the Lows do not, I believe, detract from this general picture. One was X, whose mother had been strict and punitive when she was a child but over time stopped being so, becoming much more open and understanding in her relationship with her daughter The other was W, whose mother had been physically punitive as an aspect of emotional disturbance. However, W's primary relationship was to her father who was experienced as generally protective, not as strict or punitive.

Openness Versus Reticence and Discomfort

There were differences between the groups as well in terms of how easily they articulated their thoughts and feelings to themselves and/or others. The three Alpha Lows appeared to have the easiest time with this, perhaps reflective of the openness of communication and the acceptance they had experienced in their own families. This was evidenced in several ways. For one thing, I sensed a contrast between the Alpha Lows on the one hand and several of the other subjects in terms of the ease with which they communicated in the interview. The Alpha Lows were all quite open and at ease, very ready to enter into the interview process. They were quite articulate, especially X and Y, and all three showed little hesitation or uneasiness in talking about anything, including those topics that were potentially troubling or emotion laden. The only exception was that Z at one point preferred not to talk about a relationship with a friend that had caused her some emotional pain.

Among the Highs, A, B, and C also spoke quite openly and easily. However, the other Highs (D, E, and F) and the Beta Lows were somewhat held back at times, not elaborating as much, or spoke with somewhat less comfort. One had particular difficulty articulating thoughts, in part because of their conflictual nature. Indeed, they all appeared to find some emotionally laden subjects difficult to talk about.

Several Highs (again, D, E, and F) acknowledged difficulty thinking about or expressing certain things, particularly negative things about parents. B and E indicated they had a tendency to laugh rather than express anger. A also said, "I'll keep most things to myself."

Beta Lows also gave indications of pushing their feelings down. On the other hand, only one of the Alpha Lows, Y, talked of holding things inside. The difference was that she described how her mother helped her to open up and talk about troubling things. She said her mother says, "'You talk to me... I want to hear you... I'm your friend. I'm here for you any time you need me.'"

Among the Highs, other evidence of their usually holding things inside was that several of them, and none of the five Lows, when asked how it had been to do the interview, indicated that the experience of talking openly to someone, or in some cases even of thinking about certain issues, was new to them. B: "It's ok-, it was good because half of the things I tell you I don't speak to people about..... I like to keep things to myself." "It's like, to me it feels like if you open up to them completely, they'll have something over you." C: "You know for the first time I ever speak somebody that openly?" And D: "It's just the first that I've been through an interview like this and it's been a great experience..... Stuff that I've talked to you about. I've never really, um, thought of it..... It's not like it was (there), like, like obvious to me."

Related to the above, the Alpha Lows all indicated an active interest in communication with others, in sharing ideas or feelings, including a wish to get to know and understand other people. This was in contrast to the Highs and both Beta Lows where there was not this emphasis. For instance, Z said, "I am a very open person and I..... always like to know people, I mean, deeply, their, their feelings, how, how they act." She also said, indicating at the same time a lack of idealization, "I don't admire people a lot. I just try to be with them like sharing feelings." X talked about wishes to be like some professors, who "have a nice, rapport with the students, you know. And, I would like something like that..... I would like to be able to like, help students out or something." Speaking of a project she had headed up she said "..... communicating to people, it felt good, you know?" Y, talking of wanting to have colleagues when she begins working said "So like that we can exchange thoughts and the experiences we have with other people." Two of the Highs mentioned liking to share

experiences with others or mutual understanding with another person but the emphasis on the importance of communication and relationship was only found among the Alpha Lows.

Self-Esteem and Felt Emotional Difficulties

With most of these eleven women there were indications of some anxiety, including varying degrees of uncertainty about themselves and where they were going in life, an expectable finding in a group of people in the transition from adolescence to adulthood. They all appeared to be at least coping with, and often mastering, whatever anxiety or other difficulties of an emotional nature that they were experiencing in their lives. Given this overall picture, there were nevertheless differences between the groups both in terms of apparent degree of self-esteem and statements about the presence of emotional difficulties and distress in their lives.

The Alpha Lows all expressed a high level of self-esteem and a fair degree was indicated by those in the Beta group as well. All of the Lows had formed personally meaningful professional goals, though one Beta Low (V) was somewhat dissatisfied because she had had to put aside a goal she had originally preferred. All five of the Lows appeared to feel a good deal of confidence about their ability to reach their goals, though X at one point indicated some anxiety. In the process they generally expressed a high degree of interest in and dedication to school and learning. These qualities are illustrated by the following quotes: Z: "I think that I am a great person, in the way that I am..... I feel that I am unique." X: "I like the way I am....." "..... I'm thinking, gosh, I'm 20 and, and, I've done a lot of things, and ..... I still have a lot more things to look forward to....." Y, talking of her interest in her subject said, "(My professor) really got me enthused about it....." "..... I'm very dedicated in what I want to do, and..... me personally, I don't see anything, standing in my way. I want to go for it." The Beta Lows expressed confidence as well. As V said, "I believe in myself."

In contrast to the Lows, among many of the Highs there were indications of possible problems with self-esteem and/or of less confidence regarding school, with B and E tending to be exceptions to this. Most Highs did have long-range goals that were meaningful to them and

that they seemed to feel they would achieve, A, B, and E showing the most confidence. However, two (C and D) were somewhat dissatisfied because they were not directly aiming for what they wanted and a third (F) was experiencing school difficulties that meant putting off her goals. Though at least three of the Highs appeared to be doing quite well in their classes, there were fewer expressions of involvement in and positive feelings about school among the Highs. Where there were such expressions they were usually tempered by indications of difficulties or of occasionally flagging interest, as when D said, "Well, I just wish I could do better in school..... " "I think I'm just tired sometimes, tired of doing the same thing over and over. Tired of studying."

Some problems related to self-esteem among the Highs were suggested by dissatisfaction with body image (A and C), social life (A, B, and D), and behavior (A, B, C, D and E). For instance, as one student said, "..... I had a lot of problems being fat, you know..... I thought the world was against me." In response to being asked how each expected or hoped to change as a person, one talked of, "Being more ladylike..... being the way a woman's supposed to be," another said, "I often let people influence me..... Um, if they're doing something which..... I don't approve of..... I've got to learn to be my own person and stop following them. I told myself that a thousand times. I haven't done it yet," and yet another, "I hope I'd change to be a better person in terms of sticking to my goals. Sometimes I can be weak minded." Indeed, in response to this question, all but one of the Highs (F) expressed some way in which they felt they should change; for several this involved thoughts about becoming more mature (B), "serious" (E) or "responsible" (D).

In contrast, in response to this question none of the five Lows expressed dissatisfaction with themselves or talked about ways in which they felt they should change. They tended rather to express positive feelings about themselves and their values while at the same time some expressed thoughts about learning from experience and possibly changing somewhat in their ideas. As W said, "..... I might, you know, learn a lot, each day, and (hope I'm) aware of things, I never knew before."

As noted above, there also appeared to be some differences between the groups in terms of felt emotional difficulties and distress. Although two of the Alpha Lows (Y and Z) indicated they had had some problems which caused them a certain amount of distress when younger--one saw herself as having been introverted and another saw herself as having been timid--evidence that they felt they had emotional problems or distress at the time of the interview was minimal. Only one Alpha Low indicated any such difficulties--some feelings of distrust which she was trying to master.

Among the Highs, however, three of the women indicated that they experienced problems including depressive feelings, sleep difficulties, nightmares, unnamed "personal problems," and issues of identity. Three others did not speak as though they experienced themselves as currently having any such problems; however, one appeared to have concerns about death which came up several times in the interview, and yet another talked of having had suicidal feelings when she was younger. Highs talked about problems in various ways, one saying, "Sometimes I wonder how I came out so well. I do, cause, I feel like going crazy sometimes, you know." Another said, "You know, sometimes you can have some problems bound up inside of you, and, that's ..... how come people go crazy, you know? ..... They got a lot of disappointments and a lot of experience they'd like to share with someone and nobody to talk to about it. They can't trust no one to talk to about it, you know?" In the group of Beta Lows, both women were aware of feeling troubled by current issues related to their families, one acknowledging this in words and the other, who had recently experienced a major loss, expressing it more by her affect when sensitive issues were raised.

Memories of Lost Perfection

A final characteristic differentiating Highs from Lows was a pattern found with many of the Highs (A, B, C, and D), especially those who had lost a parent, and with none of the five Lows. These Highs reported memories of times that had an "ideal" quality, usually connected to being given material things. These four subjects each spontaneously described a time in

childhood when some important figure or figures gave them many gifts, with accompanying loving attention either implied or explicitly mentioned. As one said, "My father..... he give me whatever I want, without thinking about it." Another said, "He (made) me very, very happy, you know?" "And..... he spoiled me too. Anything I want I always get it, you know?" And another: "And even to this day I remember him taking me to the park, buying me bicycles and, the games we used to play." Remembering the love and attention she used to get from this relative, she said she liked being "the apple of his eye."

It seems to me that there might well be a relationship between holding this kind of ideal memory and an ongoing need for idealized others. It accords well with Kohut's thoughts that should there be losses and traumatic disappointments in childhood, there may well be an ongoing search to maintain the experience of lost perfection via idealization of other people.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

In this chapter I will discuss some selected aspects of the research. These will include the Idealization Test itself, the finding of a relationship in the test sample between idealization and loss, and the patterns which emerged from an analysis of the interviews indicating a relationship between idealization and experiences of disappointment with parents. I will present these interview patterns in light of the literature, particularly Kohut's ideas concerning idealization and some new findings in the field of attachment research, both of which indicate that experiences in relation to childhood objects are involved in an ongoing need to idealize others.

The Idealization Test

The results indicate that the Idealization Test does assess individual differences in the use of idealization. (The confirming evidence is summarized in Chapter VII.) What the test provides is a way of discovering the presence of idealization as an aspect of an individual's characteristic psychological functioning, and to some extent how marked such idealization is. The function or adaptiveness of the idealizing process is not addressed.

This test is different from most assessment efforts that have been undertaken in the general population. My focus was not on whether subjects idealize specific people in their lives but rather on assessing an ongoing general tendency to imbue others with qualities of perfection. My assumption is that by presenting any array of current well-known, idealizable figures for evaluation, the expression of idealizing feelings can be evoked and assessed in predisposed individuals. In that the Idealization Test makes use of only one possible array of figures, it should be seen as a flexible model for future tests, one that can be modified according to the particular circumstances of the testing situation.

Idealization and Loss of a Parent

The hypothesis regarding the existence of a relationship between idealization and loss of a parent from the childhood home was confirmed with the test sample of 94 students. In forming the hypothesis, a primary source was Kohut's view that traumatic losses of idealized objects can lead to an ongoing search for external, ideal figures. He proposes that not only idealization of the lost or absent object can ensue from such massive loss--for which there is already some empirical evidence--but a more general need to find people to idealize as a support for a vulnerable self. It was an association between this more general need and the loss of a parent that was confirmed for this test sample, thus providing support for this aspect of Kohut's theory. This finding also suggests that the Idealization Test could be used in exploring the characterological structure of adults who have undergone childhood loss.

The results showing a relationship between idealization and loss also further support the meaningfulness of the test in terms of measuring idealization. When subjects from intact and broken homes were contrasted using various scoring methods, the stronger results were yielded by a method employing only the extreme positive score.

Idealization and Childhood Disappointment

Kohut's Theories

Kohut contends that not only loss but traumatic disappointments in the idealized self-object in childhood may also lead to such a generalized need for idealized figures. His clinical presentations suggest that chronic disappointments may function in a similar way. The idealized self-object is not only omnipotent but is the perfect caretaker, empathically available to soothe and protect the child. Though Kohut is not explicit, I think it can be assumed that the disappointments to which he refers may occur in various important areas of experience including basic needs for responsiveness and empathy from parents. Although such issues were not addressed with the overall test sample, the interviews can be used to consider them.

The patterns which emerged from the interviews and which differentiated between groups, particularly between Highs and Alpha Lows, seem to lend some support to the crucial importance of parental empathy. Of course it is hard to know from one interview with a subject whether difficult experiences actually constitute trauma, but the interviews with subjects who idealized on the test do give more indications of disappointment in their relationships with both parents, and reveal experiences with them which seem less satisfactory, than do the interviews with low idealizers (Alpha Lows). There are indications that Highs experienced their parents as having let them down in areas which Kohut would see as important, such as communication, support and understanding. Disappointments with parents, sometimes quite strong, were often repeated and Highs tended not to have examined these disappointments, either with themselves or with their parents. My implication is that these subjects had difficulty doing "psychic work" concerning these disappointments.

The Highs not only idealized on the test, but many of them also appeared to idealize in their personal lives. Again as Kohut predicts, the parent who was disappointing often seemed to be idealized by these women. Where actual loss of a parent had occurred, however, that parent was no longer idealized. This also accords with his expectations that idealization, once traumatically interrupted, may either continue (without subsequent normal transformation) or may be displaced onto other objects. In these cases of extreme loss, other relatives appear to have been invested with the idealization.

In contrast, the experience of the three Alpha Lows suggests very warm, close, supportive and empathic relationships with at least one parent. Indeed, Alphas experienced their relationship with one or both parents as highly satisfying. Where disappointment had occurred in one case, subsequent mutual understanding had allowed for reconciliation and emotional healing. It is of interest that this woman, X, had idealized quite heavily and appears to have given up the idealizations as the relationship with the parent greatly improved. Further, the consistency and coherence between subjects' reported experiences of these parents and their

positive statements about them suggest that idealization did not play a prominent role in these relationships.

Like the Alpha Lows, the Beta Lows did not idealize on the test; however, they seemed to have experienced more childhood disappointments than the Alphas and their current experience of their parents was less consistently satisfying and positive. Kohut certainly does not propose that a need for idealized self-objects will invariably follow from disappointments in the idealized parent. For these subjects, disappointments may have been less severe, or ameliorated by other experiences, or they may have found other means of coping with the disappointment. In contrast to the others, they have become involved in relationships. This may mean that they have moved further along in the adolescent process so that idealization has receded for them. It is possible, in any case, that they did experience some idealization--in relation to people in their lives and in their relationship to God.

Kohut's work appears to have relevance for two other observations: there were indications of somewhat lower self-esteem and more felt emotional difficulties and distress among the Highs. In addition, while the evidence for this is limited, the more conflictual nature of Highs' feelings about college suggests the possibility of somewhat less solidly internalized ideals. These patterns are in accordance with his predictions concerning difficulties which may arise in the development of the self. Individuals who have experienced empathic failure by parents are likely to have more vulnerable self-esteem, may have had difficulty in firmly establishing internalized ideals and goals and may feel a need for idealized others to provide narcissistic balance and support.

While it is Kohut who focuses most clearly on a connection between idealization and failures of empathic parenting, the existence of such a connection is supported by, or can be understood within, other frameworks. Roy Schafer (1967) speaks directly to such a connection, indicating that the adequate parent is necessary to sustain the formation and healthy elaboration of ideal images, as well as their gradual moderation in accordance with reality. Melanie Klein (1975) speaks from a very different perspective when she proposes that

idealization is the corollary of persecutory anxiety; the child's experience of the object as dangerous arises centrally from his or her own projected aggression. While this is clearly not an environmental view, I think it can be argued that disappointment in, or loss of, a parent may well be experienced as persecutory, with a resulting need to turn the now very bad object into an "all good" one.

The Attachment Literature

It is interesting also to consider the different experiences in relation to parents between Highs and Alpha Lows in light of some recent studies in the field of attachment research. Attachment theory is concerned with the effect of early experiences with parents, particularly the mother, on emotional life and on object relations. The degree of felt security that a child develops is seen as dependent on the mother's dependability and sensitivity to his or her needs. Children organize mental representations regarding the security or insecurity of attachment experiences, called "attachment organizations," which maintain a good deal of continuity into adult life.

Three studies of attachment in adults (Haft, 1989; Kobak,1988; and Main, 1985) are of particular interest because idealization of parents was assessed, along with other variables, in relation to attachment organization. The findings from these studies provide additional support for an association between idealization and less than satisfactory relationships with parents. In these studies, idealization as a general phenomenon was not addressed but idealization of parents was. They all found that subjects who were deemed to have secure attachment organizations showed much less idealization of parents than did those with insecure attachment organizations.

Main (1985) studied over 100 middle-class parents of both sexes while Haft (1989) studied a smaller number of middle-class mothers. Kobak's (1988) subjects were late adolescents (first year college students). They all used the Adult Attachment Interview, an instrument which investigates the way in which thoughts and memories about an adult's attachment

experiences with parents are organized and understood in the present. While my interview was not designed with a primary focus on relationships with parents, much material was forthcoming about how these relationships were experienced; hence I feel the patterns which emerged can be compared, at least in broad outline, with the results of these studies.

Subjects with secure attachment organizations, similarly to my Alpha Lows, generally felt supported, protected and loved by parents and had positive feelings about them. Main (1985) found that if secure subjects had not had a secure, supportive base in childhood, they had nevertheless become secure adults by virtue of the fact that they were particularly thoughtful regarding their experiences and were able to forgive the parent. This was true of one Alpha Low, X, whose relationship with her mother had changed in very beneficial ways. Main also saw secure subjects as generally characterized by "ease" and/or by thoughtfulness as were my Alpha Lows.

In these studies, subjects with insecure organizations, similarly to my Highs, had attachment experiences in childhood which were in one way or another unfortunate, e.g., relationships were experienced as less close; parents were experienced as unsupportive, less loving, less protecting, and/or more rejecting. (These insecure subjects fell into one of two broad groups--those who tended to be detached from and dismissive of attachment experiences and those who were enmeshed in and preoccupied by them.) Main (1985) indicates that insecure subjects seemed to have integrated thoughts and feelings about attachment experiences less well than her secure group. They presented a less consistent and coherent picture, and showed more evidence of defensive processes, such as idealization and denial, distorting their internal organization of attachment processes. There were also indications of this with my Highs. Finally, Kobak (1988), using self-report measures, found that insecure subjects showed more symptoms of distress--as did my Highs--than the secure group.

Main (1985) found idealization of parents to be particularly characteristic of her detached group of insecure subjects. Because my interview did not yield all of the same information as the Adult Attachment Interview, it would be too speculative to consider whether my Highs

might fall into one or the other type of insecure group. However, the other studies provide evidence that insecurity and idealization tend to go hand in hand irrespective of the form that the insecure attachment experience takes: Kobak (1988) found significantly more idealization of parents in both insecure groups than in the secure group and Haft (1989) also found idealization of parents to be characteristic of insecure subjects of both types. Some probable idealization of a parent was shown by several of my Highs as well, and two who did not idealize a parent appeared to idealize another close relative. (My Beta Lows, who had less positive experiences with parents than the Alphas, may also have idealized a parent to some extent.)

As a final point, it is noteworthy that idealization of parents, in connection with unfortunate experiences with them, was also found in The Authoritarian Personality (1956). Thus, this pattern holds for all three interview studies in which experiences with parents and idealization were assessed.

Limitations

My assumption is that the use of specific figures in the Idealization Test has the advantage of evoking an immediate emotional response in a subject. It does, however, represent a limitation. There are legitimate questions about how accurately any test which uses specific people as stimuli can be said to assess a general tendency to idealize. This is because such figures have a particularity which may not elicit idealization in everyone predisposed to idealize--no specific figure or group of figures can have universal appeal. While it can be argued that if a subject gives any extreme positive ratings there is evidence of idealization, lack of such ratings may not represent an accurate negative finding. There are bound to be subjects who do idealize but nevertheless do not respond, or do not respond strongly, to any figures within a given array of figures. This problem holds for degree of idealization as well; while the finding of a high degree of idealization, I think, speaks for itself, subjects who give very few

extreme positive ratings may, for one reason or another, not respond to most of the figures in any given array.

Ethnic/racial identification, evoked by the use of particular figures, appears to be a possible confounding variable. Two points are particularly relevant here: 1) While black celebrities were idealized more than white celebrities by all groups except the Asian, they were even more idealized by black students. Further, black students were the most idealizing group. The presence of particularly idealizable black celebrities (and the fact that there were 10 black celebrities in all) may have been a factor in the greater idealization shown by black students. 2) There was a relative paucity of stimulus figures from the Asian and Hispanic groups and these groups showed the least idealization; while there is no direct evidence that this was responsible for the lower idealization, it might well have been one factor. These two points suggest that the ethnic/racial make-up of any subject population should be taken into account in designing future tests and that any array should include a reasonable number of idealizable figures from within each subject's ethnic/racial group. However, because idealization occurs across group lines, I would suggest there also be some diversity of figures.

There are other issues that make it difficult, with this type of test, to tap idealization in every predisposed individual and to accurately assess its extent. Some people may only idealize figures from certain groups (e.g., military men, scientists) or seek very specific qualities in their idols. Some may idealize only very specific people, e.g., individuals who have continued to heavily idealize a parent might have a strong investment in this one person only.

Much of this is related to the important question of whether idealization is seen as a characteristic aspect of personality functioning which can find expression in relation to a wide variety of people, as this test assumes, or whether it is a more focused phenomenon, bounded by considerations of the type outlined above. Because of the limitations addressed here, it is best to regard this test as a method which appears to be capable of discovering the presence of idealization in many but probably not all predisposed individuals. Further, findings regarding degree of idealization have to be regarded as rough estimates only.

In terms of the qualitative analysis of the interviews, there were some differences in ethnicity/race and immigrant generational status between my two groups of interviewees: the group of Highs was comprised mainly of English speaking black students (most born outside the U.S.) and Lows were mainly Hispanic students (most born in the U.S.) all with families from the Caribbean area. (See Chapter V.) It is, however, hard to generalize in any way about these differences. This is because of the smallness of the sample and the many demographic variables which are present in this qualitative group, including country of origin, language, and race. Given that subjects were selected solely on the basis of test scores, other factors differentiating between groups have to be considered simply an artifact of the sample.

Suggestions for Future Research

To confirm that the Idealization Test is indeed capable of assessing idealization as a characteristic aspect of personality functioning, further studies would be necessary in which the test would be used in conjunction with other measures of idealization. For instance, a semantic differential technique assessing idealization of individuals in a person's life (as employed by Counter, 1981) might be used. While this would not assess a general tendency, it would still strengthen the findings of the Idealization Test if there were a statistically significant result linking positive findings on both tests.

The finding concerning the relationship between childhood loss and idealization suggests many possible areas for future work. It would be interesting to understand, for example, how idealization is affected under different conditions of separation. Divorce presents a child with a very different kind of loss than does illness or death. Each experience affects the formation of the representation of the object differently. With death the object is completely gone, with divorce, the object still exists but has chosen to leave, and with illness, debilitation has created a less satisfactory relationship to the object. In divorce, there is a question of whether degree of contact with an absent parent might have differential effects. More contact might afford greater reality testing but might also tend to heighten the importance of the partially available

parent with whom the child may never feel fully secure. Gender differences might also be explored since among subjects who had experienced loss in the test sample, men did not have as idealizing scores as women. Larger Ns than were available in this study would be necessary to test these differences statistically.

Regarding the interviews, it would be useful to carry out further studies, following the pattern of interviewing high and low idealizers, to discover whether my observations concerning experiences with parents can be replicated. Future interview studies could focus on the nature of these experiences, exploring them in greater depth. Further, since my interviews were carried out with women subjects only, it would be important to discover what kinds of patterns emerge for men.

Another set of issues which might fruitfully be explored using the Idealization Test is the possibility of a relationship between idealization and difficulties in the realm of the self, e.g., low self-esteem and difficulty with firmly establishing ideals and goals. The interviews indicate the possibility that such a relationship exists, and it is one which has a foundation in Kohut's theory.

Conclusions

This study has addressed very circumscribed aspects of a rich and complex subject and has produced necessarily limited data. Because of the exploratory nature of the research, the findings and observations must be considered to be tentative.

Having assessed idealization by means of a test designed for this study, I used those assessments to examine idealization in relation to childhood loss and to explore differences between high and low idealizing subjects via in-depth interviews. A relationship between idealization and loss was found in the test sample, and observations from the interviews suggested a relationship between idealization and disappointments with childhood objects.

What links these findings is that a secure childhood environment is in both instances seriously compromised. Particularly compromised, I would suggest, is the experience of the

parent as completely good, protective, loving and sustaining--the ideal caretaking object. As Kohut proposes, such childhood idealizations are normally given up in a very gradual way, through tolerable small disappointments in the empathic object. When the idealization is compromised too severely, this may well have long lasting effects on relationships to objects--by preventing the deidealization of the original object and/or by displacement of the idealization onto others. This view is supported by the findings and observations made here.

I think that it is also likely that anger plays a role. Certainly anger is likely to be aroused by loss and disappointment--and in contrast to the Alpha Lows there was indeed anger among the High idealizers in the interview sample. Idealization might well be one means of handling that anger and of mitigating its danger.

All interview subjects, and most subjects in the test sample, were late adolescents or young adults. This study does not permit generalizations about groups; however, the findings regarding loss and disappointment suggest that childhood experience continues to exert an influence regarding the existence of a need to idealize in late adolescence and young adulthood. The literature is unclear about when idealization characteristically diminishes after its heightened expression during adolescence. There are, however, suggestions that idealizations during this time may be indicative of some difficulties and unresolved emotional issues. Certainly the findings regarding disappointment and loss suggest this, as well as the indications of vulnerable self-esteem among Highs in the interview sample. This may well be true of idealizations during adolescence itself and throughout adulthood. Identifying idealization and exploring its origins may be particularly important to young people who might be helped to channel such idealizations in adaptive directions. With the help of a mentor, or with psychotherapy, depending on the need, the young person might achieve new internalizations and integrations that could eventually provide support for the self from within, rather than depending for such sustenance on the external idealized object.

CHAPTER VII: SUMMARY

This research has had several parts: 1) The design of a group-administered test to assess individual differences in idealization. 2) In-depth interviews exploring personal experiences relating to idealization with a subsample of women subjects. 3) A comparison of test results with questionnaire responses to examine the relationship between loss and idealization.

The Idealization Test

The Idealization Test presents photographs of celebrities for evaluation with an appropriate rating scale. Idealization was operationally defined as the willingness to give some of these figures an extreme positive rating.

Test data for 94 college students was analyzed. The results indicate that the Idealization Test is indeed capable of discovering individual differences in the use of idealization. While some stimulus figures tended to be more idealized than others, there were large differences in the willingness of subjects to give idealized ratings to any single figure and in the willingness to give such ratings over the 24 figures. Summary scores for idealization showed wide differences between subjects: in a possible range of "1" to "5," Average Idealization Scores ranged from 1.955 to 5.000.

The particular meaningfulness of giving "1"s, the most idealizing rating, was supported by the following: 1) Subjects were especially discriminating in giving this rating. 2) Familiarity/Interest ratings were in good accord with idealization ratings. 3) Assessments made of the overall idealizing, moderate, or negative quality of statements given by subjects to explain their ratings were in good accord with idealization ratings as reflected in the summary score. 4) The strongest findings concerning the relationship between idealization and loss were yielded by a measure using only "1"s.

Because it is not possible to provide stimulus figures equally idealizable to all subjects with

a predisposition to idealize, a false negative reading on the test is possible. For the same reason, the test can only roughly be said to assess degree of idealization.

The Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with eleven women subjects for whom presence or absence of marked idealization had been determined by the test. There were six "High" and five "Low" idealizers. An analysis of the interviews revealed patterns of experience which distinguished rather clearly between these groups. There were two groups of "Lows," designated "Alpha" and "Beta." The Alpha Lows showed patterns which differed more clearly from the Highs than did the Beta Lows.

The Highs had had experiences within their families which were more problematic than those of the Alpha Lows. Loss of the same kind that was studied with the overall test sample was found in marked degree among the Highs: of the six , three had lost a parent through separation in early childhood. In contrast, all five Lows came from intact families. The interviews contributed something of particular importance, however. Highs, even from intact families, seemed to generally experience some lingering disappointment, some sense of having been unsupported or let down by parents. Their families were experienced as more authoritarian and communication within them was less open. These subjects tended to feel some anger or other negative feelings towards parents, often not easily acknowledged. Though both groups appeared to be generally functioning well, among Highs there was some evidence of experiencing more emotional distress, having somewhat lower self-esteem and somewhat more conflict about investment in striving towards goals.

Alpha Lows on the other hand felt more supported and appeared to have very close and satisfying relationships with at least one parent. Where in one case there had been disappointments with this parent, the relationship had undergone positive change and feelings had been resolved. These relationships were more open and democratic, and feelings about

these parents were consistently positive. In this group, self-esteem was high and few emotional problems were experienced.

While the Betas' experience was more mixed than the Alphas, with more evidence of disappointment, their families, like those of the Alpha Lows, were intact. Further, the Betas were similar to each other, and distinguished from other interviewees in two ways: they had a sense of an ongoing personal relationship with God and a relatively long-term relationship with a boyfriend (shared also by one Alpha Low); both provided them with support and may have obviated the need to find figures to idealize. Their self-esteem seemed to be fairly good. All Lows appeared to be highly invested in striving towards their goals.

All subjects had people in their lives whom they admired a great deal and usually a parent was admired the most. However, with Alpha Lows, admiration for parents seemed to reflect basically positive experiences and thus did not appear to constitute idealization. With Highs who admired a parent the most, and possibly also the Betas, mixed feelings and experiences indicate that there may have been some idealization involved. Devaluation of formerly idealized objects was also evident among several Highs but with none of the Alpha Lows.

Idealization and Loss

In order to test the relationship between idealization and childhood loss of a parent in the test sample, I compared Idealization Test scores of subjects from intact and broken homes. The results reveal that significantly more subjects in the latter group showed evidence of idealization. The interview patterns expand on this relationship and lend support to Kohut's position that not only outright loss but also disappointments in the idealized object may be related to an ongoing need to idealize others.

APPENDIX A

#_____

Most of us regard some people in the world as highly admirable, as close to perfect -- not that we necessarily know much about them, but from what we do know and feel, we regard them as close to ideal. We feel that if we knew them personally, we would admire them greatly. The aim of this research is to study the different ways that we react to a number of well-known figures, specifically, how much we admire them as people.

This booklet contains 24 pictures of famous people. For each of these pictures, would you please rate by circling a number from 1 to 5 how close you feel the person is to being perfect, ideal, without any important flaws.

For example, on the scale below, if you feel that someone is perfectly ideal, then you would circle the 1. If you feel that someone is not at all perfect, then you would circle the 5. And if your reaction is somewhere between these two extremes, then you would indicate where your reaction is by circling numbers 2, 3, or 4. If you don't have any opinion, please check the appropriate line.

Perfect, ideal, without any important flaws.	1	2	3	4	5	Not at all perfect or ideal. Has flaws.

Have no opinion ___

Then, in a sentence or two, please write what about the person makes you feel this way.

Don't think too much about it. What I'm most interested in is your impressionistic or emotional response.

APPENDIX B

#_____

Most of us regard some people in the world as highly admirable -- though no one is perfect, we see them as coming close to our personal ideal. We may feel this way about people from many areas of our lives, including well-known figures in public life. Not that we necessarily know much about them, but from what we do know and feel, we regard them this way. We feel that if we knew them personally, we would admire them greatly. The aim of this research is to study the way that we react to a number of well-known figures, specifically, how much we admire them as people.

This booklet contains 24 pictures of famous people. For each of these pictures, would you please rate by circling a number from 1 to 5 how you feel about the person. Each point on the scale is labeled according to how close the person comes to being everything you want a person to be.

For example, on the scale below, if you feel that someone comes close to being everything you want a person to be -- to your personal ideal -- you would circle the 1. If you feel that someone has nothing you admire and is not at all what you want a person to be, then you would circle the 5. And if your reaction is somewhere between these two, then you would indicate where your reaction is by circling numbers 2, 3, or 4. If you don't have any opinion, please check the appropriate box.

Is everything I want a person to be.	In many ways is what I want a person to be.	In some ways is what I want a person to be & in other ways is not.	Is very little of what I want a person to be.	Is not at all what I want a person to be.	No Opinion ☐
1	2	3	4	5	

Then, in sentence or two, please write what about the person makes you feel this way.

Don't think too much about it. What I'm most interested in is your impressionistic or emotional response.

(APPENDIX C: FAMILIARITY/INTEREST RATINGS)

1) Not all of these people are equally well-known. Please indicate below, by checking the appropriate line, how well you know each of the people whose pictures you have just seen. (In case you're not clear what this question is asking for, think about whether you know what they do and how familiar you are with them.)

2) Please also indicate below how interested you are in the person. (In case you're not clear what this question is asking for, it might be helpful to think about whether you would read about them, or talk about them, or go see them if you had the chance.)

	How Familiar			How Interested		
	Very	Somewhat	Not at alll	Very	Somewhat	Not at all
Diana Ross	___	___	___	___	___	___
John Lennon	___	___	___	___	___	___
Coretta Scott King	___	___	___	___	___	___
Walter Cronkite	___	___	___	___	___	___
Whitney Houston	___	___	___	___	___	___
Prince Charles	___	___	___	___	___	___
Muhammad Ali	___	___	___	___	___	___
Chris Evert Lloyd	___	___	___	___	___	___
Julio Iglesias	___	___	___	___	___	___
Evelyn Ashford	___	___	___	___	___	___
Eddie Murphy	___	___	___	___	___	___
Jane Fonda	___	___	___	___	___	___
Bruce Lee	___	___	___	___	___	___
Michael Jackson	___	___	___	___	___	___
Princess Diana	___	___	___	___	___	___
Joe Namath	___	___	___	___	___	___

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

	How Familiar			How Interested		
	Very	Somewhat	Not at alll	Very	Somewhat	Not at all
Ella Fitzgerald	___	___	___	___	___	___
Mary Lou Retton	___	___	___	___	___	___
Sugar Ray Leonard	___	___	___	___	___	___
Keith Hernandez	___	___	___	___	___	___
Dorothy Hamill	___	___	___	___	___	___
Lou Gossett Jr.	___	___	___	___	___	___
Barbara Walters	___	___	___	___	___	___
Sylvester Stallone	___	___	___	___	___	___

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE

(APPENDIX D: PERSONAL INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE)

Please fill out the information below. If there are any questions you prefer not to answer, please leave them blank. However, it will be very helpful to the study if you feel able to answer the whole questionnaire. This information will be kept completely confidential.

Name: _____

(Nickname or first name, whichever you choose. Please choose a name that would call you to the phone if I need to telephone you for possible further work on this study.)

Telephone: _____

Sex : M__ F __ Age: _____

Marital Status: _____ Number and ages of children if any: _____

Year in College: 1st ____ 2nd ____ 3rd ____ 4th ____ beyond 4th ____

Occupational goal, if known: _____

Birthplace: _____

If you didn't grow up in the U.S., when did you move here? _____

What is your ethnic identity? _____

Father's age: ____ Mother's age: ____

Did your mother work outside the home any time during your childhood (up to age 15)?
If yes, how old were you when she started to work? _____
_____ For how long did she work? _____

Are or were your parents (please check):
Always living together _____ Separated _____ Divorced _____
Mother remarried _____ Father remarried _____

With whom did you live as you grew up? _____

_____

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

If you lived apart from one or both parents, how much contact did you have with them? (Please describe) _____

_____

_____

With whom do you live now? _____

When you were a child how religious was your family? (Please check)
Not at all ____ minimally ____ moderately ____ strongly ____
Catholic ____ Protestant ____ Jewish ____ Other (specify) _____

How religious do you consider yourself to be now?
Not at all ____ minimally ____ moderately ____ strongly ____

If anyone close to you has died (parents, spouse, children, sister, brother, or close friend) please indicate relation, age at death, year and cause of death.

List the ages and sex of all of your brothers and sisters (include any who have died) starting with the oldest. Include yourself ("me").

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW

I'm studying two main areas: One is the things that are important to the individual in her life, and how she views them. Another part has to do with the study in class--I asked what you all thought of some well-known people. I'm studying what people admire about other people--what their experiences have been with this. I'm going to ask you questions that will help me understand this about you--about people you admire in your own life.

I'd like to ask you some questions so that I can get to know you a bit and learn more about you. I haven't read the questionnaires yet so there are things you've written there that I don't yet know.

- What is your major at City?

- How did you get interested in .....?

- What year are you in at City?

- When you think about what you want for yourself after finishing with college, what do you think about?
  (see yourself doing)

- How about 5 years from then?

- (If haven't mentioned one) Do you have a vocational goal?

- Do you see any difficulties standing in the way of reaching these goals?

- You've talked about .... (Ex. what you want in your field). What about the rest of your life?

- Do you have any thoughts about how you expect or hope you will change as a person?
- (If HOPE) Do you expect this will work out for you?

- Getting married, having children
  - Have you thought of how that will be --
    - What changes you will go through.

- Are there other things you wish for yourself or that are important to you would like to tell me about?

- How do your goals or interests compare to the goals your parents have for you?
  (If don't mention and they are different) - How have you worked that out with your parents?

- How satisfied are you with how you are doing in life?
  (Ex. - friends, school, other things that matter to you)

- How would you like to be doing better?

Okay, let's switch gears and go to another part of the interview. Most of us have one or more people in our lives whom we admire a lot, whom we see as meeting our personal ideal.

Think about your own experience and about the people in your life whom you admire. Who comes to mind?

- Tell me about ....

- (Ask for description somewhere if not given spontaneously.)

- How long have you known ....?
  How well do you know ....?

- What is it about .... that makes you admire him/her?

- What do you feel you have in common with .... and how do you feel you are different?

- In what ways would you like to be (more) like ....?

- Do you see yourself becoming more like him/her over time?

- Do you feel that knowing .... has had some influence on your goals and/or values?

(If talking about family member, can ask:)
- What is (was) it like to be with ....?
- How does it make you feel?

- How is it when you can't spend much time with .....?

- And when you're away from .... for some time?

- Does .... have any faults or flaws that you can think of?

- Have you ever experienced disappointments with .....?
  - What was that time like for you?

- Do you ever have negative feelings about ....?
  - When does that happen?

- Now think about it and see, is there anybody else?

- Tell me something about ....
  - What happened in your relationship with them?

- Are there people you remember admiring when you were younger?
  - What happened in your relationship with them?

- Have there been people in your life whom you once admired very much but then found that your feelings had changed?
  - Did you ever find that someone you had once admired, you then had very negative feelings about?
    - How was that?
  - Were there other times that this happened?

- What about your parents in terms of what we've been talking about -- How close do your parents come to your personal ideal?

Do you have any thoughts about this interview you'd like to tell me about?

APPENDIX F

The City University of New York Psychology Department

CONSENT FORM

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

This is an experiment which involves looking at 24 photographs of well-known people. You are asked to indicate how ideal or perfect you feel each person is, to state briefly why you feel this way, and to answer some additional brief questions about these famous people. In addition, there is a personal information questionnaire to be filled out.

The purpose of this experiment is to study the different ways that we react to a number of famous people, specifically, how close to perfect or ideal we consider them to be.

I have read the above description of this experiment and I have agreed to participate in it. I hereby give my consent to be a subject. I understand that my responses will be kept in the strictest of confidence and anonymity. I have the option to withdraw from this experiment at any time without penalty and I also have the right to request that my responses not be used.

_____ _____

Subject's Signature Experimenter's Signature

_____ _____

Date Date

APPENDIX G

The City University of New York Psychology Department

CONSENT FORM

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

This is an experiment which involves looking at 24 photographs of well-known people. You are asked to indicate how close you feel each person comes to a personal ideal, to state briefly why you feel this way, and also to answer some brief questions about these famous people. In addition, there is a personal information questionnaire to be filled out.

The purpose of this experiment is to study the different ways that we react to a number of famous people, specifically, how much we admire them as people.

I have read the above description of this experiment and I have agreed to participate in it. I hereby give my consent to be a subject. I understand that my responses will be kept in the strictest of confidence and anonymity. I have the option to withdraw from this experiment at any time without penalty and I also have the right to request that my responses not be used.

_____ _____

Subject's Signature Experimenter's Signature

_____ _____

Date Date

APPENDIX H

The City University of New York Psychology Department

CONSENT FORM

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

This is a study which involves an interview about 1) your goals and other things you consider to be of importance in your life, and how you view them, as well as 2) your experiences with people whom you have admired.

I have read the above description of this study and I have agreed to participate in it. I hereby give my consent to be a subject. I also agree to have my responses tape recorded. I understand that my responses will be kept in the strictest of confidence and anonymity. I have the option to withdraw from this experiment at any time without penalty and I also have the right to request that my responses not be used.

_____ _____

Subject's Signature Experimenter's Signature

_____ _____

Date Date

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