

More interesting from the point of view of Rubin's argument, however, is that in the three most intimate of all the Closeness dimensions, females mention males nearly as often as they do other females. This South Africa finding directly contradicts Rubin's observations based on her American sample that women find men too remote for genuine closeness. Further, while it may be true that American women often articulate dissatisfaction about relationships with men, those whom Rubin (1983: 149-152) interviewed for Intimate Strangers were nonetheless married and operating within a context of certain attachments on both sides. What is salient in her material, then, seems to be dissatisfaction with, rather than rejection of the commitment.

Once again the difference may be one of idiom of discourse about intimacy. Rubin admits that direct comparisons across cultures are fraught with difficulty, although she believes that Western societies have more similarities than differences (Rubin, 1983: 136-139). Hence by her reckoning, one might expect strong similarities between the patterns of closeness in American marriage and friendship which she describes and those of the English-speaking whites in the Grahamstown sample, if not the Xhosa. The data do not substantiate this expectation, however. Indeed, there is no statistical difference between gender mentions by the English- and Xhosa-speaking groups in the three most ascribed dimensions (See Appendix I).

The women whom Rubin interviewed had appropriated a particular psychological style of closeness which Rubin believes to be uniquely "intimate" -- as opposed to "bonding," the more "primitive," less verbal male pattern (Rubin, 1983: 139). While it does seem true that males in this study frequently use females to sustain their closeness networks, a parallel phenomenon does not hold to the same extent for the females. On the basis of Rubin's argument one would expect that unhappiness about unsatisfactory relationships with males would lead females to choose other females more often. Instead, females were about as likely to choose males as females in these deeply intimate dimensions.

6.2.1.3 Gender Mentions by Gender of Respondent across the Life Course

A breakdown of these three most intimate dimensions by age might enable us to refine the argument. It is important to note that Rubin's data are drawn from adults only (aged 25 to 55), although she uses Freudian developmental theory to substantiate her thesis.

TABLE 28 Gender of Person mentioned in
Ascribed Category by Age by Gender of Respondent

MALE RESPONDENTS

<u>Mentions</u>	<u>Years</u>					Total	Sig.
	9-11	16-17	22-25	36-46	62+		
Male	50 23%	105 41%	85 33%	48 19%	62 25%	350 28%	.0154 (p<.05)
Female	131 60%	107 41%	137 54%	193 75%	185 73%	753 61%	.0002 (p<.001)
Both	37 17%	47 18%	33 13%	15 6%	5 2%	137 11%	.0005 (p<.001)
Total	218 100%	259 100%	255 100%	256 100%	252 100%	1240 100%	

FEMALE RESPONDENTS

<u>Mentions</u>	<u>Years</u>					Total	Sig.
	9-11	16-17	22-25	36-46	62+		
Male	41 19%	66 25%	158 61%	162 62%	93 38%	520 42%	.0000 (p<.001)
Female	150 69%	174 67%	91 35%	66 25%	132 54%	613 49%	.0000 (p<.001)
Both	25 12%	20 8%	11 4%	32 12%	19 8%	107 9%	.1886
Total	216 100%	260 100%	260 100%	260 99%	244 100%	1240 100%	

The foregoing tables indicate that a central gender shift typically occurs in the life course of women rather than of men. Accepting the argument of Dorothy Dinnerstein and Nancy Chodorow that boys must break from their mothers to form a separate identity while girls do not, Lillian Rubin does not remark on an opposite phenomenon in patriarchal society which better conforms to the above

data. This phenomenon is the shift from "being mothered" to "mothering," from "attachment" to "care-taking," especially of adult males by young adult and middle-aged females. While both male and female children are typically cared for by females, only men can expect to be cared for by a woman for life. Although males generally do break from their first care-giver (the mother), men in contemporary industrial society can take for granted that their primary emotional nurturance will always be provided by a woman.

Females typically experience radical discontinuity between their childhood and adult emotional worlds, on the other hand. Unlike their brothers, they must move from taking to essentially giving emotional services. They generally move from an intimate world of intense closeness to a primary female, to a world where an emotionally dependent male is central. Indeed, since women often outlive their spouse, they not infrequently shift back to a female-centered world in their later years.

It may be as Dinnerstein, Chodorow, and Rubin suggest, that women are socialized to mother children and, indeed, in many traditionally patriarchal societies, to mother male adults, but the latter obligation tends to be overlooked in Freudian analysis, which stresses the maturity of "genital" male adulthood. The data from the current study indicate the continuity of the male

intimate world, however. The social and economic status of men seems to confer on them the right to perpetual care by women.

On the other hand, women move from a dependent, emotional attachment to the mother to a care-giving relationship with an emotionally demanding male. In traditional societies where the subordination of women is taken for granted, anticipatory socialization of little girls by their mothers is not complicated by an egalitarian ideology (cf. for example, Wellman's, 1985, working and lower middle-class Canadian sample). In middle-class American society, however, without the support of custom and tradition, indeed, with egalitarian assumptions, women become prime targets for disappointed expectations. Small wonder that the shift from taking to giving becomes problematic and its emotional fallout is endlessly analysed in therapeutic language, and that demands are made upon men to do their share of giving -- or at least their share of analysing the relationship (for gender differences in discussion of marital relationships, cf. Acitelli, 1988:196-197). The problems Rubin discovers may be explained as much by more widespread egalitarian expectations on the part of American women and a new psychological language as by psycho-analytic theorizing about ego-boundaries and/or the lack thereof.

The fact that virtually all men move out into the public world obscures the essential gender-stability of their

closest emotional relationships and the management of their emotional world. With the exception of what is usually a brief period of transition in adolescence between the family of origin and the family of procreation, males typically choose women in the most ascribed and emotionally loaded relationships. Indeed, Rubin's men seem dismayed that the kind of non-verbal bonding which characterized their original primary relationship with their mother no longer passes muster.

According to Young and Willmott's (1962) study of English working-class families, on the other hand, Mum loses her central intimate role for women only when she dies. Indeed, where one finds greater role segregation, as in the more traditional society of black and white Grahamstown, one would expect to find less dissatisfaction with the spouse's intimate style. Amongst married black individuals who were interviewed, for instance, dissatisfaction was expressed over failures to fulfill familial obligations and traditional loyalties (spouses tend to be criticized for their actions rather than style of interaction - i.e. drinking too much, not supporting the family, domicile with the wife's rather than husband's family) rather than for failures to discourse on relationships. In those instances where married whites volunteered that they wished their spouse did differently, the focus was indeed more psychological, involving a different style of interaction. While one English-speaking woman [#153] seemed to echo the

complaints of Rubin's American women, two men [#135, #176] wished their wives were more extroverted and sociable.

6.2.2 Voluntary Category

6.2.2.1 Gender Mentions

When we examine the results for the more voluntary end of the Closeness Continuum (Contact, Common Attitudes, and Shared Experiences), Rubin's assertion that closeness is essentially a female province looks even more dubious. Here although females are still mentioned more frequently, males are mentioned nearly as often. Indeed the difference between male and female mentions is statistically significant only for Contact ($p < .05$) and not at all for Common Attitudes and Shared Experiences ($p < .30$ and $.70$, respectively), the two dimensions in which friendships figure most prominently. Rubin's observation that women have more friendships fails to hold in this Voluntary category of closeness -- at least in quantitative terms. Further, in this study a comparison of means test between male and female first mentions of friends on page one of the questionnaire reveals no difference (T-test, $p = .973$), whether or not one controls for ethnicity (Xhosa, $p = .632$; English, $p = .749$). In fact, in her later work Rubin (1985: 61) concedes that men may have as many or more friends than women, but she insists that the quality of women's relationships are deeper than those of men -- "men are so

much less liable to have close friendships than women" (Rubin, 1985: 145). Qualitative impressions from the South African life histories, however, do not confirm Rubin's assertions cross-culturally, nor do the more nuanced quantitative data obtained by examining the gender of respondent for gender mentions (Figure 6).

6.2.2.2 Definitions of Friendship

Dimensions of closeness in the Voluntary category contain by far the most friendship responses (roughly half of the responses in the Voluntary dimensions are friend mentions) and are hence alternately referred to as the "friendship" dimensions. Once more we confront the ambiguous question of friendship and its place in social science research. Past psychological research on friendship has posited a definition of friendship and then sought to establish its "existence" in the subject population. Alternatively, researchers have ascertained their subject's formal relationships and assigned the latter to categories of "kin" and "nonkin," a procedure which fails to allow for the "friend-like" qualities of some kin and the familial or kindred qualities of certain friends.

While Rubin (1985: 60-61) found that the men she interviewed had fewer "friendships" overall and those they did have lacked the quality that characterized female friendships, Allan (1979: 135-141) found that working-class men had "mates" rather than "friends" and

that working-class women had even less adequate terminology than the men. These sorts of findings in research on friendship pose both analytical and practical problems. Rubin's solution is therapeutic -- teach men, such as her husband, to cultivate the kind of mutual sharing she advocates (1985: 76-77). Allan's solution is to deny the term "friendship" to the British working class and to speak instead of nonkin relationships that are situation specific and do not "flower out in the way the middle class do," (1979: 70). In the light of such conceptual discrepancies, John La Gaipa (1981: 86) suggests that:

The boundaries of friendship and kinship in western society are disintegrating, if they really ever existed....the use of kin terms to describe friends and friendship terms to describe kin is quite evident in both tribal and urban industrial societies...."

The present study avoided such problems by asking people to name close others in particular contexts, without suggesting that those individuals fit into such categories as kin, friend, or any other. Thus differences of terminology did not affect responses, which were only later grouped into "family," "friend," and "other" categories. "Friends" consisted of those only so identified by the subjects themselves; there was no discrepancy in terminology such as Allan found. At the same time, in the present study "friendship" dimensions include many family responses, thus overcoming the other problem confronted by past research. The discussion of "friendship" in this study thus refers to

the voluntaristic context of particular responses regardless of whether respondents chose to mention kin or nonkin.

In the Voluntary category, the gender of the family member or friend mentioned does not vary significantly by ethnicity/social class (see Appendix I). In addition, as we have seen, overall mentions of males and females are much closer to parity although females continue to have a slight edge. Only in the Contact dimension, closest of the three to the ascribed end of the continuum, is there a statistically significant difference between mentions of males and females, however. For both Common Attitudes and Shared Experiences, mentions of males and females are roughly equal. Thus in the three dimensions of closeness where friend mentions are most frequent, the predominance of females -- so pervasive in all the other dimensions except Finances -- diminishes substantially.

6.2.2.3 Gender Mentions by Gender of Respondent

Looking at the graph for gender of respondent by gender of the person mentioned (Figure 6), one notes that males and females in the Voluntary dimensions differ substantially and complementarily. Females mention females approximately two thirds of the time; males mention males about two thirds of the time. In the Voluntary category of closeness, then, males and females tend to occupy fairly distinctive worlds of friendship. Males had no more apparent difficulty naming people in

the friendship dimensions than did females, although they each tended to name their own gender in these more voluntary spheres. More refined analysis is possible if one breaks down gender of person mentioned by friend and family mentions.

TABLE 29 Male/Female Friend and Family Mentions by Gender of Respondent

<u>Person Mentioned</u>	<u>Gender of Respondent</u>		Total	Sig.
	Male	Female		
Male Relative	178 16%	215 20%	393 18%	p<.05
Male Friend	397 36%	91 8%	488 22%	p<.001
Female Relative	278 25%	297 27%	575 26%	p<.5
Female Friend	71 7%	337 31%	408 19%	p<.001
Other & Missing	176 16%	160 15%	336 15%	p<.5
Total	1100 100%	1100 101%	2200 100%	

Significances calculated by chi square analysis

Very few of the friend mentions are of the opposite gender, which suggests even more strongly than the data in Figure 6 that the worlds of friendship (used here in its conventional sense) are largely gender-segregated. Indeed, if one breaks down the figures in Table 29 by age, the analysis may be even further refined.

TABLE 30 Male/Female Friend and Family Mentions by Gender of Respondent by Age

MALE RESPONDENTS

<u>Person</u> <u>Mentioned</u>	<u>Age of Respondent in Years</u>					Total	Sig.
	9-11	16-17	22-25	36-46	62+		
Male	36	50	28	29	35	178	.3547
Relative	16%	23%	13%	13%	16%	16%	
Male	83	119	86	53	56	397	.0038
Friend	38%	54%	39%	24%	25%	36%	
Female	26	20	14	104	114	278	.0000
Relative	12%	9%	6%	47%	52%	25%	
Female	2	5	59	4	1	71	.0000
Friend	1%	2%	27%	2%	0%	6%	
Other & Missing	73	26	33	30	14	176	.0000
	33%*	12%	15%	14%	6%	16%	
Total	220	220	220	220	220	1100	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	99%	

FEMALE RESPONDENTS

<u>Person</u> <u>Mentioned</u>	<u>Age of Respondent in Years</u>					Total	Sig.
	9-11	16-17	22-25	36-46	62+		
Male	27	11	47	98	32	215	.0000
Relative	12%	5%	21%	45%	15%	20%	
Male	0	20	60	8	3	91	.0000
Friend	0%	9%	27%	4%	1%	8%	
Female	48	78	39	53	79	297	.0700
Relative	22%	35%	18%	24%	36%	27%	
Female	73	86	60	44	74	337	.1110
Friend	33%	39%	27%	20%	34%	31%	
Other & Missing	72	25	14	17	32	160	.0000
	33%*	11%	6%	8%	15%	15%	
Total	220	220	220	220	220	1100	
	100%	99%	99%	101%	101%	101%	

Significances calculated by analysis of variance on each row; all percentages rounded up

*Two questions were for adults only.

Note that opposite gender friendships are almost exclusively "dating and mating" phenomena for young adult males and females and for adolescent girls (cf. Kon, 1981:201-203). Of the 71 female friends mentioned by males, 59 (83%) are mentioned by young adults. In a similar vein, of the 91 male friends mentioned by females, 80 (88%) are mentioned by young adults and adolescents.

Although for females there are not statistically significant differences in female friendships across the life course, such friendships tend to drop off during the years of courtship and marriage. A statistically significant trend in the same direction occurs for men, with adolescence the high point of same-gender friendships. However, for men the drop-off with marriage is more dramatic, occurs later than for females, and continues even into senior adulthood, whereas older women return to early levels of same-sex friendship (cf. for similar conclusions with an American sample, Fischer & Phillips, 1982).

As noted before, women are more often widowed in senior adulthood, which may help explain this gender difference. Indeed, male mentions of female relatives in these Voluntary or "friendship" dimensions rise during the years of marriage and remain high in senior adulthood. Female mentions of male relatives, on the other hand, rise in the years of marriage and then drop off in senior

adulthood. Again this may be explained to some extent by the smaller number of married women in the senior years. Neither mentions of male relatives by males nor of female relatives by females vary significantly across the life course for these friendship dimensions, implying a certain continuity in same-gender "friend-like" family relationships, although the latter are somewhat more prominent for females.

What is particularly striking about the data in Table 30, however, is the extent to which males and females live in gender-segregated worlds of friendship. Except for the stages of "dating and mating," most of the cross-gender relationships mentioned in the Voluntary category are with family members. Thus where males perform "friendship functions" for females, and vice versa, they tend to be conjugal or consanguinal kin rather than friends. The caveat about adolescent females and young adults of both genders once more raises questions about much psychological research on aspects of friendship that is based entirely on samples of college students.

6.2.2.4 Gender and Expressions of Friendship

With respect to the quality of gender differences, which Rubin (1985) and the psychotherapists make so much of, there are suggestive data from the Grahamstown sample. Statistical analysis of different modes of expressing affection to same-gender peers (question 44: "How do you express affection to a person who is the same age and

gender as yourself?") turns up interesting commonalities within male and female responses. Answers to this question were offered freely, without prompting or suggestions by the interviewer, and were grouped into categories on the basis of the respondents' own answers, which were sometimes multiple. Although ethnic differences have already been dealt with in the preceding chapter, gender cannot be meaningfully separated from ethnicity and social class in the matter of different expressions of friendship.

TABLE 31 Expressions of Affection by Gender by Ethnicity

XHOSA

<u>Expressions of Affection</u>	<u>Gender of Respondent</u>			Sig. (X ²)
	Male	Female	Total	
Spending Time Together	42	38	80	.4533
Bed/Food/Gift	34	46	80	.0060 p<.01
Affirmation of Other	2	8	10	.0956
Physical Demonstration	14	8	22	.2274
Advising/Helping/Favours	3	4	7	1.000
Joking	5	3	8	.7124
Intro. to Close Others	17	12	29	.3780
Drinking Together	16	4	20	.0060 p<.01
Other	20	13	33	.2019

ENGLISH

<u>Expressions of Affection</u>	<u>Gender of Respondent</u>			
	Male	Female	Total	Sig. (X ²)
Spending Time Together	42	41	83	1.000
Bed/Food/Gift	3	11	14	.0437 p<.05
Affirmation of Other	24	33	57	.1061
Physical Demonstration	14	20	34	.2912
Advising/ Helping/Favours	20	19	39	1.000
Joking	23	2	25	.0000 p<.001
Intro. to Close Others	0	0	0	
Drinking Together	4	0	4	.1258
Other	10	6	16	.4132

Thus, differences in expressions of affection, which are so significant for the separate ethnic groups, turn out to be much less important in gender terms. Indeed, only "hospitality/gift" is mentioned significantly more often by women of both groups. "Joking" is favoured by English-speaking males over females and "drinking together" by Xhosa-speaking males over females. Even "affirmation of the other" does not prove to be statistically significant when ethnicity is controlled for. Although mentions of affirmation by females are somewhat higher, the difference is not so great as

psychotherapeutic theory might predict, given the subordination of women. Thus, while the data from gender mentions in the Voluntary category seem to suggest two gender worlds of friendship, the styles and idiom of these worlds are not so differentiated as are culture/class expressions between the two ethnic groups.

6.2.3 Interlude: Reflections on Findings about Ascribed and Voluntary Categories

In section 1.2, it was suggested that there have been two major theoretical developments in the study of close relationships since 1980 -- Rubin's (1985) extension of Chodorow's psychoanalytic feminism to adult friendships, and Weiss (1982), Marris (1982) and Shaver et al.'s (1987) application of Bowlby's attachment/caretaking "behavioural systems" theory to adult life. Both theories root their analysis in the infant/care-giver situation, but they understand it somewhat differently.

According to psychoanalytic theory, masculine autonomy and ego-strength is a direct result of the male's successful negotiation of the Oedipal phase, that is to say, his achievement of a successful break from an exclusive early sexual desire to possess his mother (Chodorow, 1978:169). On the other hand, Rubin's (1985) account of male friendships describes a "primitive" level of bonding in adulthood, which suggests failure to break from the object-relations mode of early childhood.

Chodorow, who does not discuss the nature of friendship, implies that adult males are able to recover their primary infant/mother bond only in conjugal sexuality. What then do we make of the phenomenon of male "bonding," especially but not exclusively during adolescence? Is this but a pale "homosexual" reflection of the primary sexual bond, or does it represent an ability to form asexual attachments on the model of a pre-sexual care-giver/dependent relationship as in attachment theory?

Attachment theory makes no assumptions about infant/mother sexuality. All human beings must form firm dependent attachments to a primary care-giver in order to develop normally. Such attachments are not abandoned after infancy, but become models for certain adult relationships, argue Weiss and Marris. Care-giving is considered the obverse of attachment. Thus, certain human beings must switch to care-giving in order that the species may continue. Attachment theory is silent on this process of transition, which in most societies is a female experience. Psychoanalytic feminism explains it by adverting to the female's different Oedipal experience in which a decisive break with the mother is never achieved (Chodorow, 1978:199-205).

Grahamstown data suggest that it is indeed women who make the shift from attachment to care-giving. Men, on the other hand, move through the life course ever dependent on a central female. Thus, contrary to the conventional

psychoanalytic argument, it may be women who have to negotiate a radical discontinuity in their personal development, not men. Attachment theorists need to focus much more closely on the manner in which the change from attachment to care-giving takes place. Perhaps this is the locus for the female resentment of males and women's preoccupation with relationships documented by Rubin (1983 & 1985). Perhaps, as Gilligan (1982) suggests, achievement of autonomy can take place only through, not over-against, relationships.

Such conclusions are obscured because of male dominance in both South African and American societies. On the one hand, genuine autonomy is said to be attained only through suffering (Helson et al., 1985). On the other hand, why should males suffer when they have both control of and trouble-free attachment to a care-giving female? The helplessness of the male infant is exchanged for the paternalism of the patriarch without sacrificing attachment. Furthermore, between childhood and adulthood, males apparently enjoy same-gender gang attachments to see them through to marriage. While the gender division of labour and processes of socialization require of women personal reformation (from attachment to care-giving), why should men necessarily change?

As for friendships, it has been argued since Aristotle that friendship is prototypically between equals. Can an imbalance of power then not also help explain the lack of

psychoanalytic argument, it may be women who have to negotiate a radical discontinuity in their personal development, not men. Attachment theorists need to focus much more closely on the manner in which the change from attachment to care-giving takes place. Perhaps this is the locus for the female resentment of males and women's preoccupation with relationships documented by Rubin (1983 & 1985). Perhaps, as Gilligan (1982) suggests, achievement of autonomy can take place only through, not over-against, relationships.

Such conclusions are obscured because of male dominance in both South African and American societies. On the one hand, genuine autonomy is said to be attained only through suffering (Helson et al., 1985). On the other hand, why should males suffer when they have both control of and trouble-free attachment to a care-giving female? The helplessness of the male infant is exchanged for the paternalism of the patriarch without sacrificing attachment. Furthermore, between childhood and adulthood, males apparently enjoy same-gender gang attachments to see them through to marriage. While the gender division of labour and processes of socialization require of women personal reformation (from attachment to care-giving), why should men necessarily change?

As for friendships, it has been argued since Aristotle that friendship is prototypically between equals. Can an imbalance of power then not also help explain the lack of

cross-gender friendships outside of the family? Male domination makes women more vulnerable. Can that be why in her American sample, Rubin finds that women's friendships are more consciously constructed and why men trust so readily without words? More work needs to be done on the relationship styles of men in situations where they lack power (cf., for a beginning, Kanter, 1977), of socially powerful women (cf. Brain, 1976:56-59), and indeed on power in close relationships more generally (but cf. Falbo & Peplau, 1980, McAdams, 1984, and Howard, et al., 1986). Surely recent confirmation of the finding that American men in love are more romantic and risk-taking whereas women are more pragmatic, possessive and safe (Hendrick et al, 1984) is not unrelated to social structures of power.

6.2.4 Shared Resources Category

In the intermediate Continuum category of Shared Resources (cf. Figure 5) females are mentioned about twice as often as males -- a higher proportion of female mentions than in any closeness dimension except Personal Services. The resources mentioned here are as much psychological as economic. They obviously plumb the more traditionally supportive role of women as compared to men. It seems that women are often expected to understand more about one's personal wants, intimate past, and to go along with, rather than contest, ideas about major spending. Given the more subordinate status

of women, allocating these roles to women lessens potential risks implicit in the reciprocity demanded by the questions in this dimension.

When mentions by gender are broken down by the gender of the subject responding (Figure 6), we note that the gender of the respondent is fairly equally distributed for both male and female answers. Clearly the gender of the person interviewed has little significant relationship to the distribution of male-female mentions. Indeed, females or males alone mention females roughly as often as males and females together mention males. There are no significant differences when these results are broken down either by age or ethnicity. This is not surprising in a category of closeness which is intermediate between the Ascribed category of closeness, with its predominance of family and female mentions by males, and the Voluntary or "friendship" category, in which males generally choose males and females usually choose females. In the Shared Resources category of closeness, the need for long-standing proof of another's benevolence seems to counterbalance conscious choice of a congenial companion.

6.2.5 Practical Category

6.2.5.1 Relationship Mentions by Gender of Respondent

It is only in the Practical category of closeness that one finds statistically significant differences between

male and female mentions of family, friend and others on the Closeness Continuum (see Appendix G).

In Finances, for instance, women mention family significantly more often (74%), as opposed to men (61%) -- a difference of 13 percentage points ($p < .05$). At the same time, male mentions of "other" (38%) are significantly higher than female (24%) -- a difference of 15 percentage points ($p < .05$). These figures indicate that in this Grahamstown sample, females are somewhat more likely to be financially dependent on family members than are males, whereas males are more often economically self-sufficient. In fact, it is Xhosa-speaking rather than English-speaking females ($p < .01$) who differ significantly from the males in their greater dependence on family. Mentions of friends in both Finances and Personal Services are exceedingly low for both genders alike, and gender differences between them are not significant here.

In the Personal Services dimension, the roles are generally reversed. Males are more than twice as likely ($p < .001$) to mention family members for personal services (83%) than are females (35%), whereas females are more than four times as likely ($p < .001$) to mention "other" (64%) than are males (15%). This signifies a much lower level of self-sufficiency with regard to personal services for males than for females, implying a sort of quid pro quo between financial support and personal

services. These findings support the traditional conception of a gender division of labor within the family.

The reciprocity required in this division of labor binds couples more firmly into conjugal relationships. In the words of a 43-year-old Xhosa male: "I have been working at Grahamstown pottery for twelve years. My wife is not working -- I don't want her to work. She must look after the children [#125]." A similar ethos was echoed by a white homemaker:

I don't agree with those today who are pushing for women to go out and leave the home. Who is to look after the children? No, that's my job...Our home is like a ship; he [my husband] is the captain and I am the first mate. My mom told me when I was growing up that marriage is 70% dependent on the woman. It's not equal -- or fair -- but that's really how it is [#152].

The wider social structure helps to maintain this division of labor by paying women less than men and reserving lower-paying jobs for women (Wilsworth, 1980: 111).

When women with families, whether Xhosa or English-speaking, are unable to perform domestic duties on account of their employment, they typically arrange for another female, either in the family or someone hired, to perform the domestic services. In the same manner African men who migrate for work often arrange for another male relative or very trusted friend to help out their wives with "men's work."

6.2.5.2 Gender Mentions

If one examines gender mentions, one notes that in the Finances dimension, male responses form the majority (51%), with females a substantial but secondary 30%. This pattern holds across both ethnic groups. Obviously English-speaking and Xhosa men continue to exert more economic power in intimacy networks than do the women, although the latter figure more prominently both alone and alongside men than might be expected in so traditional a place as Grahamstown. Even though patriarchal tradition amongst both cultural groups maintains that men are the mainstay and breadwinners, when the system breaks down through unemployment or divorce, women tend to step in and take over the financial responsibility. Indeed, even where husband and wife are not separated, there is often a move for women to bring in a second income to ensure a more viable or comfortable standard of living, especially when responsible for children. As a young Xhosa mother stated:

I would like to train as a nurse. My friends are all working, and I stay home. It is not fair to my husband. He would also like me to work so we could help each other with our needs. My mother-in-law wants me to stay home and look after the house. How does she think I feel? I am younger than she, and not working, and she is older than I and working [#104]!

In fact, the "both genders" response (19%) is higher in this dimension than any other. What accounts for this is the significantly higher number of "both" mentions by children and adolescents rather than by adults ($p < .001$).

Conflicting expectations between the woman's place as properly in the home and the woman's perceived obligation to help out, especially with supporting the children, might well place strain on the traditional structure. That structural tension is the more likely because distribution of practical obligations is asymmetrical.

The dimension of Personal Services, by contrast both to Finances and the Continuum dimensions, is dominated almost entirely by female responses (96%). The domestic domain is apparently much more exclusively female than the economic one male. That reality is captured in the words of a Xhosa cleaning woman:

I am very close to my children but haven't enough time for them. They need my love, especially 10-year-old Khephu, the youngest. When I get home from work he is always waiting for me at the gate to tell me what's been happening while I was away. My 12- and 16-year-old daughters are very helpful. They look after the house, cook and clean. I depend very much on them. On the weekends we are very happy with their father also at home. We have a big dinner together [#146].

The results then suggest that there is something akin to a taboo for men on performing domestic services.

(Wellman, 1985, discovered a similar taboo in his Canadian sample.) They also suggest that the above-mentioned quid pro quo between men on the economic side and women on the domestic is not equal -- if it ever was -- and may be under strain. Given the universally low status accorded domestic services in both Xhosa and English-speaking societies, the results also imply a

tradition of female servitude toward men. It is interesting that even in a society where most whites have domestic servants in Grahamstown these servants are female (cf. Cock, 1980). Even the domestics hired by Xhosa families in the present study were female.

6.2.5.3 Gender Mentions by Gender of Respondent

If one considers gender mentions by gender of respondent (Figure 6), these observations are confirmed, and indeed the suggestion that male hegemony is rooted in male financial independence is further strengthened. In the realm where women predominate almost exclusively, Personal Services, men and women both tend to choose women with almost the same frequency. The barely significant difference ($p=.05$), may be explained by the tiny number of males who depend on themselves or a younger male relative for such services. What is striking by its absence, of course, is any single mention of males performing personal services for females.

On the other hand, in Finances, the single dimension where males predominate, male hegemony is clear. About two thirds of the male mentions constitute men relying on themselves or other men, while one third of male mentions are by female dependents ($p<.001$). Slightly more females are essentially independent or dependent on other females, however. Roughly one quarter of female mentions are by males ($p<.001$). This means that 16% of the male subjects are dependent on women for financial support.

Reporting such income were 48 men and 43 women. Their answers sustain the argument that men earn principally in order to support a woman, and women to support children and themselves. While more than half of the men (54%) claim to spend most of their money on their wives, only a small number of women (7%) spend most on a husband. This supports the argument made earlier of a conjugal division of labor between men and women, with men providing financial support in exchange for domestic services. While 19% of men say they spend most on children, only 15% put themselves first. The women, on the other hand, say they spend most on children (46%) and then on themselves (33%). The large number of mentions by women of children is partly explained by female-headed households and also by the fact that women may have more discretionary income when they are not the principal earner. The frequency of "self" mentions by women may also be explained by the same reasons.

When asked to name the person on whom they spend the second largest part of their income, somewhat fewer than a third of the 33 responding women mention their husbands, but children are mentioned as often, and the self almost as frequently. The 40 responding men, on the other hand, replied naming children 50% of the time, "other relatives" 23% of the time, and spouse 20% and self but 8% of the time. There are at least two reasons why the men may claim to spend so little on themselves. First, they earn so much more than women, and second they

do not count the cost of personal services (including food and its preparation, laundry, cleaning, and the like) provided by women on their behalf.

Finally, the remarkable difference between spending on sons and grandsons, compared to that on daughters (granddaughters were not mentioned at all), remains to be noted. The four to five times greater frequency of mentions of male than female children (54%:11%; 64%:16%) underscores the economic base of male hegemony in what are, after all, two patriarchal societies. Both males and females distribute their income to the next generation in a manner which reinforces this male hegemony, demonstrating that the latter operates by consensus around a taken-for-granted "common sense" (cf. Williams, 1977: 108-127).

6.3 CONCLUSION

Three particularly salient issues emerge from the rather complex data on gender differences in the Grahamstown sample. First, females predominate in the Ascribed dimensions of closeness, largely because they are mentioned much more often by males. Thus Lillian Rubin's (1983) observation that women are the "emotional specialists" is supported in familial dimensions of closeness for males, but not for females. For men and boys in the Ascribed category of closeness, female gender is a significant correlate of closeness, whereas for

females, gender is essentially irrelevant.

Second, there are separate worlds of friendship for males and females. In the Voluntary category, males typically choose males and females choose females. This is not surprising, given evidence from numerous American samples at different stages of the life course (cf., for example, Matthews, 1986). Nearly all the exceptions are female adolescents and male and female unmarried young adults in transition between family of orientation and family of procreation, or "friends" who are also kin. The latter instance is most interesting and points up the importance of the family as the near single locus for intimate "friend-like" cross-gender relationships. In Grahamstown, at least, cross-gender "friendships" which provide bridges between the two gender worlds occur between family or potential family members. Fischer and Phillips' (1982) distinction between kin and nonkin as indicators of loneliness is thus far too crude. Indeed, Fischer (1982) himself seems to recognize this in a later article, although he does not operationalize the more subtle distinction.

Third, both male dependence on females in the family as emotional supports and the reality of gender-segregated worlds of friendship coexist with a strict gender division of labour between "reproducers" (females) and "non-reproducers" (males and infant females) who benefit from these services. Production, or wage labour at

least, is much less gender-segregated, denoting an imbalance of power in which males dominate. In Grahamstown, South Africa, as in Toronto, Canada (Wellman, 1985), the "double loaders" (simultaneously producers and reproducers) are all women.

Thus, male hegemony defines gender relations and permeates close relationships in subtle and significant ways across ethnic boundaries in small-town apartheid society. The two worlds of gender, unequal in terms both of status and labour, are held together by kin ties. With the exception of a brief period of dating and mating, it is only in such capacities as brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, nephews and aunts, uncles and nieces and cousins that Grahamstown males and females become intimates -- true familiars.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

Problems of theoretical incoherence and hence of fragmentation in empirical research have beset the still relatively new area of interpersonal closeness, or intimacy, in academic psychology. In an effort to confront these problems the author has sought to develop an analytical delineation of the parameters of intimacy in general through a rigorous and comprehensive research strategy. The study develops an empirically based taxonomy of closeness in personal relationships that is applicable for both genders across the life course for English- and Xhosa-speaking inhabitants of Grahamstown, South Africa.

A random sample of 200 inhabitants of Grahamstown was divided equally by gender, ethnicity, and five age groupings. Those subjects replied to an open-ended questionnaire of 56 items, many of which required them to name an individual (or individuals) whom they would choose in a series of closeness contexts. Life histories were also gathered to aid in interpretation of the quantitative findings. All answers were coded, with relationship responses divided into the three age-, ethnic- and gender-neutral categories of "family," "friends" and "other."

The null hypothesis that intimacy is a single factor was disproved by a count procedure to measure homogeneity and heterogeneity of response. Although no one mentioned the same person in response to all the questions, neither were the responses widely dispersed. Thus it was concluded that the phenomenon of closeness is multi-dimensional, rather than completely homogeneous on the one hand or totally heterogeneous on the other.

On the basis of the ratio between "family," "friend" and "other" responses, a nonparametric "goodness-of-fit" test (confirmed by a Cramer's V test of association) compared the pattern of responses on each question to that of every other. The method then clustered together response ratios that fitted closely with at least two others in the group. This procedure identified eleven dimensions of closeness, nine of which form a Closeness Continuum ranging from those with a high ratio of family responses to those in which the family-friend ratio is more nearly equal. Dimensions at the family end of the Continuum were identified as Ascribed while those with a larger proportion of friendship responses were categorized as Voluntary. This division enables a researcher to distinguish between "familiar" and "friend-like" close relationships without making a formal kin/nonkin dichotomization. The two dimensions which fall outside the Closeness Continuum deal with the Practical areas of finances and personal services, respectively.

The balance of the study looks at the three independent variables -- age, ethnicity and gender -- as regards both their homogeneity/heterogeneity of responses and their correlations with the dimensions of closeness. Most interesting with regard to age is the finding that children and middle-aged adults scored proportionally higher on Ascribed closeness while young adults were highest on the Voluntary dimensions. Young adulthood, and to a lesser extent adolescence and senior adulthood, appeared each in their own right to be major periods of transition in close relationships. These quantitative results were supported by a careful hermeneutic analysis of the qualitative life history material.

Xhosa and English-speaking networks of closeness were totally segregated from each other (an artefact of institutionalized racism). Although black South Africans listed more close others at the outset of the interview, their range of mentions in response to the questionnaire was no greater than that of the white English-speakers. On the Closeness dimensions, blacks mentioned somewhat more family than did the whites, especially on the ascribed end of the Continuum, but the differences were not so great as might have been expected, given studies on working class personal relationships. Striking differences were noted, however, with regard to discursive idiom about relationships. Studies that fail to allow for such marked differences in style and language run the risk of cultural imperialism.

With regard to gender, male and female family/friend mentions on the Closeness Continuum do not differ significantly, although the feminist hypothesis of male public and female private spheres might have expected more family mentions from females. In terms of whether respondents mentioned males or females, however, significant differences emerged. In the Ascribed dimensions, females mentioned males and females about equally, thus not rejecting the null hypothesis, whereas males mentioned females two to three times as often, an asymmetry matched by an imbalance in the division of labour in the Practical category. On the other hand, in the Voluntary dimensions, same-gender mentions predominated. Further, where males mentioned females or females mentioned males, the mentions were almost exclusively family members (except for the young adult group).

7.2 FINAL REFLECTIONS

It is a common propensity of modern day adults to stress their individuality and self-sufficiency. Indeed, youth hasten to attest their maturity through vigorous assertions of their self-sufficiency and independence. However these same individuals get married, regularly remarry after divorce and seek out others with whom to share their favorite recreations and who will affirm and approve their personhood.

These persons likewise daily encounter a host of indifferent third parties. There are others waiting at the bus stop or grocery check-out counter or whom one passes on the way to class who remain part of the distant landscape, often scarcely noted. Indeed the unexpected absence of these persons, as experienced when one arrives at the wrong time or place for an appointed gathering, typically evokes more notice than their presence.

At the other end of the spectrum are those few individuals we consider most intimate. With these persons we are happy to share our meals and even our bed. Their well-being or misfortunes we see as our own. We expect that they in turn will rejoice in our successes and share our sorrows. We trust them more than any others with our possessions and with our physical body. They are part of our most interior landscape, and as such the boundaries between their personhood and our own are frequently unclear and fluctuating. Indeed, we sometimes take them for granted in the same manner that we treat our own bodies as extensions of ourselves. We can become more angry, violent or abusive with them than with any perhaps except our own selves -- indeed, we may readily project anger at ourselves onto them. How they look and behave, we feel, reflects in some measure our own personal worth.

In between our closest familiars and indifferent third parties are our "friends" (whether kin or nonkin) --

those whose company we enjoy for conversation or shared experiences. These are not so much extensions of our own selves but rather others who are for us, encouraging and supporting us and keeping company with us on life's challenging course. "Friendship" implies reciprocity in enjoyment, tasks in common, comradeship rather than kinship, voluntary mutuality rather than formalized structural commitment.

The divide between "friendship" affiliation and those other, more intimate attachments is not absolute, of course, but without both types of close relationships, society would come apart. Behind the formal structures of society, indeed often mediating between them, operate the informal networks of close relationships which hold things together. Those networks weave their own intricate webs that undergird and maintain the public world and sustain public presentations of self with innumerable private acts of nurturance and support.

That there is a gender divide, with private women supporting and sustaining public men, somehow makes it easier for both men and women to take the importance of such "reproductive" ties for granted -- until they are threatened or removed (cf., for example, Lynch, 1979/77). Until recently, the private world could be slighted and ignored, but the effect of the threat of its loss, not only on children, but also upon male actors in the public sphere and upon those women whose advancement has meant

Author Aldrich Meredith J

Name of thesis Intimacy: A Developmental Perspective. 1988

PUBLISHER:

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg Library website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the Library website.