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Level of self-other differentiation and relational style.

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University of Massachusetts Amherst

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LEVEL OF SELF-OTHER DIFFERENTIATION AND RELATIONAL STYLE

A Dissertation Presented

By

LYNN R. STARKER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 1982

Psychology Department

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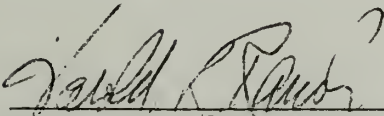
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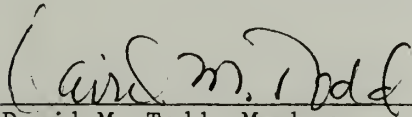
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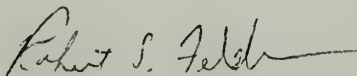
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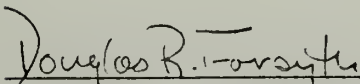
Harold L. Raush, Chairperson of Committee



David M. Todd, Member



Robert S. Feldman, Member



Douglas R. Forsyth, Member



Bonnie R. Strickland, Chairperson
Psychology Department

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ABSTRACT

Level of Self-Other Differentiation and Relational Style

(February, 1982)

Lynn R. Starker, B.S., Tufts University

M.S., University of Massachusetts, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Professor Harold Raush

The relationship between intrapersonal, personality characteristics and functioning in interpersonal relationships has been the subject of recent theoretical interest. The organizing concept of these investigations is that of individuation, the lifelong process of self-delineation by which a person becomes increasingly differentiated from his or her relational context. Theories of individuation which address development in the intrapsychic, cognitive, and relational levels of experience were reviewed. The process of conceptual differentiation was seen to parallel the process of self-other differentiation as discussed by clinical theorists. It was argued theoretically that a dialectical relationship exists between level of intrapsychic, personality development (specifically level of self-other differentiation) and functioning in relationships, since the ability to see others as separate from the self underlies behavior in relationships. Accordingly, relational style (the general patterns of relating which are enacted in interpersonal relationships) was viewed as reflective of the levels of self-other differentiation which have been attained. The hypotheses of the study were that

marital partners choose spouses of equivalent levels of differentiation, and that the relational styles of low and high differentiated persons can be distinguished.

Two measures of level of differentiation, the Interpersonal Discrimination Task (Carr, 1965) and the Adjective Check List (Gough, 1952) were used. Relational style was assessed through the analysis of Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) stories. Fantasy material offers indirect information regarding actual interpersonal behavior, but provides more direct access to the internal cognitive structures which influence behavior. The concept of object-relations schemata, the intrapsychic structures which organize relational experience and influence the person's interactions, was used conceptually to link levels of differentiation and their manifestations in projective test descriptions of relational style.

The hypotheses of the study were supported. It was found that people choose marital partners at equivalent levels of differentiation, and that the relational styles (as evidenced in fantasy) of the two groups (high and low differentiated) could be distinguished. Specifically, it was found that high-differentiated (HD) participants more clearly delineated the boundaries between story characters, while low-differentiated (LD) participants tended to blur interpersonal boundaries and fuse the thoughts and feelings of story characters. HD participants imbued story characters with a greater ability to tolerate ambivalence or other painful affects than did LD participants in their stories. Although the

stories of both groups indicated a tendency toward interpersonal fusion in moments of intimacy, differences were observed in the treatment of conflictual situations. The characters in LD stories seemed less able to tolerate interpersonal conflict and the threat to the relationship it imposed. Conflict situations in LD stories were most often resolved through the dissolution of the relationship (as in separation or divorce) or via magical solutions to problems. In HD stories, the characters manifested a greater ability to tolerate the psychological pain engendered by conflict. Because the other was seen more clearly as separate from the self, conflict in the relationship was not perceived as a narcissistic injury, and more appropriate measures for resolving the conflict could be taken.

The results were discussed in terms of the theories of individuation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Theoretical Context	1
Individuality and relatedness	2
Developmental considerations	3
The relational self	5
Individuation: Individual development	6
Cognitive differentiation	11
Bowen's differentiation of self scale	16
Individuation in relationships	18
II. METHOD	23
Participants	23
Investigators	23
Materials	23
Measures of differentiation	24
The Thematic Apperception Test	26
Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Questionnaire	30
Procedure	31
III. RESULTS	33
Description of the Sample	33
Preliminary Analyses	34
Effect of investigator	34
Effect of site of interview	34
Effect of method of contact	34
Correlates of an Individual's Level of Differentiation	37
Relational Patterns	38
Developmental stages	38
Feelings and interaction patterns	39
Affective patterns	39
Interactional patterns	39
Homogamy and Heterogamy	41
Feelings and interactions	44
Level of Differentiation and Marital Satisfaction	45
Relational Style: Thematic Material	49
Method of analysis	49
Mapping of stories	52
Properties of the stimulus materials	54

Differentiation and fusion of story characters	57
Intimacy	58
Complexity of feelings and thought processes	60
Tolerance for psychological pain and ambivalence	63
Outcomes	63
Methods of conflict resolution	67
Summary	70
IV. DISCUSSION	73
Theoretical Considerations	73
Developmental aspects of differentiation	75
Two Facets of Conceptual Differentiation	76
Homogamy	77
Homogamy and marital satisfaction	78
Homogamy and levels of differentiation	79
Fusion and Differentiation	80
Differentiation of object relations schemata	81
Management of conflict and ambivalence	82
Intimacy	86
Summary and Conclusions	88
Directions for future research	89
.	
REFERENCES	91
APPENDIX A. Packet of Experimental Materials	98
APPENDIX B. TAT Rating Sheet--Yufit System	113
APPENDIX C. Family Story Technique--Kadushin et al. system . . .	114
APPENDIX D. TAT Stories of Participants in the Subsample	116

LIST OF TABLES

1. Points of Convergence in Five Theories	7
2. Education Levels	35
3. Income Levels	36
4. Means and Standard Deviations of IDT Scores	42
5. Mean Number of Feelings and Interactions Articulated in TAT Stories	46
6. Homogamy, Heterogamy and Marital Satisfaction	48
7. Demographic Characteristics of Couples in the Subsample . .	50
8. Structural Categories Used in TAT Stories	53
9. Bits of Background Information Related by Each Participant .	55
10. Outcomes of TAT Stories	64

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The interconnections between intrapersonal, personality characteristics and relational style have been the subject of recent theoretical interest (Starker, 1980; Karpel, 1976). The organizing concept of these investigations is that of individuation, the lifelong process of self-delineation by which a person becomes increasingly differentiated from his or her relational context. The process of individuation has been described in early child development (Mahler, 1963, 1968), in adolescent development (Blos, 1962, 1979), in the psychotherapeutic relationship (Searles, 1971), and in adult couples (Bowen, 1971). As a central conception for understanding the functioning of individuals-in-relationship, the process of individuation has received attention from both psychoanalytic theorists (Giovacchini, 1958, 1967, 1976; Guntrip, 1961; Fairbairn, 1963; Erikson, 1950, 1968; Kernberg, 1976) and family systems thinkers (Minuchin, 1974; Bowen, 1965, 1966; Boszormenyi-Nagy, 1965; Fogarty, 1976).

The Theoretical Context

Two dimensions are critical to the understanding of the processes of individuation and differentiation. The first dimension concerns "the nature of the self in relation, the dilemma of 'I' and 'We'" (Karpel, 1976). The second dimension is the level of maturation of the self.

These are discussed in detail below.

Individuality and relatedness. The regulation of individuality (the concerns of the "I") and relatedness (the concerns of the "We") has been termed the core human dilemma. Each individual experiences the tension between striving for autonomous, self-directed action on the one hand, and yearning for relationships with others outside the self (Schechter, 1971; Bowen, 1974). Bakan (1966) has termed this the "duality of human existence."

For each person the two primary modes of experience are the individual and the relational. Although frequently viewed as the opposite ends of a continuum, these modes of experience are in dialectical relation to each other. An action in one mode necessitates a reaction in the other mode. "Every growing away threatens relatedness; every relating threatens independence" (Appley, 1966, p. 26). The two are different yet cannot be separated.

To further complicate the analysis of individuality and relatedness, the dynamics of this dialectic may be viewed in the various levels of human experience. Cultures may value either conformity to social norms or independent, individual action (Gergen, 1973). A family may establish norms for togetherness or separateness (Kantor & Lehr, 1975). Individual dynamics around the individuality-relatedness dialectic may be experienced intrapsychically and unconsciously (Guntrip, 1961; Giovacchini, 1976).

Furthermore, individuality and relatedness are not discrete states which either exist or do not exist for an individual. Rather, relative

degrees of individuality and relatedness will be found to characterize an individual's life or a particular relationship at any point in time or over the course of time. The balance between them is fluid and ever-changing. According to Karpel, "We can, in different ways and at different moments in our lives, choose either to set others apart, as an 'I' separate from others, or to enter into relationship with another or others, to become part of a 'We'" (1976, p. 67).

Developmental considerations. In order to fully understand the vicissitudes of individuality and relatedness in a person or in a relationship, the second dimension must be considered--the level of maturation of the self (Karpel, 1976). Development itself is a dialectical process in which unfolding biological and social capabilities, and intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences interact to allow the synthesis of these experiences and concomitant growth. The person develops in stages which are determined by his/her evolving readiness to be aware of and potentiate his or her own capabilities and social interactions, and the social environment generally supports and facilitates this growth. There is a dialectical relationship between biologically given phases and the social milieu, and each impinges upon the other (Erikson, 1950; Raush, Goodrich & Campbell, 1963).

The evolution of the self follows this developmental framework. At each stage of development, social and environmental influences interact with the individual in markedly different ways. In terms of individuality and relatedness, the person begins in a state of almost total relatedness and, with increasing self-development, capacity for autonomous

action and independent thought, moves toward individuality. Throughout this time, the person exists within a relational context, but the characteristics and meanings of these relationships (especially with family members, peers and teachers) change over time. This is the process of individuation which "involves the subtle but crucial phenomenological shifts by which a person comes to see him/herself as separate and distinct within the relational context in which s/he has been embedded. It is the increasing definition of an 'I' within a 'We'" (Karpel, 1976, p. 67). Finally, at maturity, the individuated self can fully give itself to another in mature relationship. Maturity, then, is defined as the successful development of the capacity for independent, autonomous action and the capacity for intimate relationships (Guntrip, 1961; Boszormenyi-Nagy, 1965; Erikson, 1968).

The complex processes which determine an individual's position on the developmental axes of maturity of self and individuality/relatedness are both intrapsychic and relational. The developing self is characterized by an increasing awareness of the differentiation between the self and others. The concept of the "I" gains distinction from its blurred relational context. As the awareness of separateness grows, individuality increases and relationships change from immature, fused to progressively more mature forms. But because individual experience is so closely connected with the vicissitudes of interpersonal experience, the intrapsychic and relational realms exert mutual influences over each other. There is an interrelation between intrapersonal organization and interactional style. Relationship patterns in the unconscious, inner world which have evolved during childhood, are infused with an emotional

reality and influence the individual's interactions in both reality and fantasy (Boszormenyi-Nagy, 1965; Karpel, 1976; Raush et al., 1974; Guntrip, 1961).

The relational self. The need for relationship is an ontic need which is fundamental to the very existence of the person. The sense of self develops from interpersonal experiences and occurs as the person recognizes similarities with others, differences from them, and gradually delineates boundaries between self and others (Jacobson, 1964; Sullivan, 1953). The development of self, through these processes of identification and differentiation, demands the presence of an other for the very existence of the self. The source of selfhood, then, is the formation of these subject-object boundaries. This reliance on the relationship with the other means that the other is an essential counterpart of one's selfhood (Boszormenyi-Nagy, 1965).

The forms which a person's relationships will take vary according to the degree of self-other differentiation which has been attained. The ability to "enter into relation" with another person presupposes the ability to "set the other at distance" (Buber, 1955). This act of setting the other at distance rests upon the ability to experience the self as separate and is a prerequisite to entering into relation. Only when the other is viewed as apart from the self can s/he be seen as the complex person s/he is, and can s/he be known. The act of being with another in this way, of trying to understand the world of the other and of thereby overcoming personal distance is the act of entering into relation. A cohesive sense of identity is required in order to temporarily

abandon one's ego boundaries and contact the other, without fear of losing the self (Erikson, 1968). Without clear self-other demarcations, interpersonal boundaries are confused. The other cannot be "set at distance" because of the experience of loss of self which would ensue. Transferential distortions in the relationship are common.

The process of individuation, then, operates at both the individual and relational levels of experience. Although describing equivalent phenomena, the level of analysis is different. Five theoretical perspectives will be reviewed below. These theories describe the process of individuation in the intrapsychic, cognitive and relational spheres of experience. Table 1 outlines these conceptualizations and their areas of convergence.

Individuation: Individual development. The process of individuation parallels the course of development more generally. Ego functions relating to character development, impulse control and cognitive style develop concurrently with changes in interpersonal style (Loevinger, 1976). In the individual's experience, these functions are integrated into a unified conception of self. At each developmental stage, relational modes emerge which are reflective of the degree of self-other differentiation which has been reached. A relational mode is seen as a fundamental orientation to the self, to the other and to the expectations about their interaction. It reflects the unconscious expectations about self-other complementarities which are manifested in human relationships (Boszormenyi-Nagy, 1965). Relational modes change as ego functions mature and as the various issues of development (i.e. needs to exert

TABLE 1
Points of Convergence in Five Theories

Level of Analysis	Individuation	Psychological Differentiation	Conceptual Differentiation	Differentiation of Self	Relationship
	Individual	Individual	Cognitive	Individual/Interpersonal	Relational
Major Developmental Events	Symbiotic Stage -oneness -trust	Undiff. -homogenous systems -repression, denial	Unilateral Dependence & Opposition to Absolute Control	Low levels -feeling dominated -rigidity -fusion	Pure Fusion Unrelatedness
	Individuation Stage -separation -autonomy	"sense of separate identity"	Negative Autonomy & Selective Compliance		Ambivalent Fusion
	Adolescence -diff. -identity development		Conditional Dependence & Autonomous Independence		Ambivalent Isolation
	Adulthood -transcend ego boundaries -intimacy	Differentiation -heterogeneous systems -intellectualization -sublimation	Interdependence	High Levels -independent thought and feeling -flexibility -autonomous self-functioning	Dialogue -individuation

autonomy, needs to feel protected) are engaged.

The process of individuation begins in infancy and progresses throughout the life cycle, as increasingly clear self-other demarcations are delineated. In the symbiotic stage, the child experiences the existence of the parent as differentiated from the environment, but not as differentiated from the self. The parent seems to be in tune with the child's needs and wants in a psychological "oneness." No self-other demarcation exists and ego boundaries are not established. Accordingly, the infant's inner life consists of self and other introjects which are undifferentiated from each other. The relationship with the parent is based totally upon identification (Mahler, 1968; Giovacchini, 1976; Kaplan, 1978; Isaacs & Haggard, 1966; Boszormenyi-Nagy, 1965). The vicissitudes of parent-child interactions during this stage (reliability, constancy and gratification versus inconsistency, abandonment and frustration) eventuates in the child's basic orientation toward trust and mistrust (Erikson, 1950).

The demarcation between self and other begins during the separation-individuation stage, and as such it marks the beginning of the sense of self and of identity. The self is defined as:

. . . a differentiated but organized entity which is separate and distinct from one's environment, and entity which has continuity and direction and. . . the capacity to remain the same in the midst of change. This awareness will find an emotional expression in the experience of personal identity (self feelings). . . (Jacobson, 1964, p. 23).

With identity development comes the ability to form personal relationships with other people and with the environment, and the ability to

assert oneself in the service of individual needs and freedom.

The child begins active exploration of the environment and begins to exercise autonomy in his or her relations with the world (Erikson, 1950) although the parent is needed as a source of security and safety in an unpredictable world (Mahler, 1968). When ready, the child begins to separate him/herself from the parent more frequently and for longer periods of time (Rheingold & Eckerman, 1970). The child requires a stable, internalized sense of the parent in order to tolerate separations without experiencing loss of the other, and the concomitant experience of loss of self (Mahler, 1968). Relationally, the child alternates between symbiotic merger with the parent, and more independent strivings permitted by self-other demarcations. Parental responses to the child's increasing assertiveness result in the basic orientation toward autonomy versus shame and doubt (Erikson, 1950, 1968).

During the school age years, the child begins to move away from the parental sphere. Dependence on family lessens as relationships with peers and other adults grow. Friendships with same-sex friends are especially important as aids in solidifying the identity sense by comparing the self with similar others. The sense of ego-identity is further delineated as the new people in the child's life add dimension and richness to internal object-representations (Sullivan, 1953; Kernberg, 1976; Freud, 1963). The patterns in which the child expresses his or her autonomy become established as reflecting industry (active, engaged and imaginative) or inferiority (marked by failure and the perception of new challenges as overwhelming) (Erikson, 1968). Relationships are likely to be ambivalent, as the child struggles with increased self-delineation

and simultaneously yearns for the comfort of identification with parents.

The period of adolescence has been termed the second individuation stage (Blos, 1979) and the stage of identity versus identity confusion (Erikson, 1968). The adolescent begins disengaging from parents in order to join the adult world. This disengagement from childhood ties is paralleled by a maturation of the self and the emergence of new coping strategies and self-reliance. The degree of individuation which can occur at this stage depends upon the degree of ego-strength which has been acquired in prior development. Inadequate self-development precludes toleration of the separateness required for the development of autonomy. To further his or her individuation, the adolescent must accept increasing responsibility for his or her own behavior, and must transfer relational ties to others. Otherwise, this period can result in alienation as opposed to individuation. The adolescent process is, in essence, the acting out of a dialectic tension between enmeshment with the family and differentiation from it. The synthesis which emerges from these opposing tensions holds the promise for increased personal integration (Blos, 1979). Cohesive identity formation "arises from the selective repudiation and mutual assimilation of childhood identifications and their absorption in a new configuration" (Erikson, 1968, p. 159). The identity pattern evolves from intrapsychic structures and is further shaped by cultural norms and values.

In adolescence, relationships with others are used in the continuing definition of the self. Others are viewed as like the self (self-definition through identification) or as unlike the self (self-defini-

tion through differentiation). Both are equally important as the adolescent moves away from familial ties and substitutes validation from others (Kernberg, 1976; Scroggs, 1978). Identity formation is a critical variable in later adult relationships:

. . .only an attempt to engage in intimate fellowship and competition or in sexual intimacy fully reveals the latent weakness of identity. . . . True "engagement" with others is the result and the test of firm self-delineation (Erikson, 1968, p. 167).

Without a cohesive identity-sense, friendships and other peer relationships continue as attempts at self-delineation with each person using the other for egocentric needs.

The final developmental stage to be discussed here does not relate to individuation per se, but to the manifestation of an individuated self in intimate relationships. In the stage of intimacy versus isolation (Erikson, 1968) or of mature dependence (Guntrip, 1961) the person strives to transcend his or her own ego boundaries in order to engage in relationship, risking and testing the self by offering it to another person. Each encounter presents the threat of rejection, but also holds the promise of acceptance and confirmation of the self.

Through the process of intrapersonal individuation, the person who began as fused with the relational context has gained a relatively complete differentiation of self from others and from the environment. This enables the "primal setting at distance" which then allows "entering into relation" (Buber, 1955).

Cognitive differentiation. Cognitive theories of differentiation paral-

lel almost exactly the more clinically derived theory of individuation previously discussed. Witkin et al. (1962), expanding the early work of Lewin (1935) and Werner (1948), articulated a developmental theory of psychological differentiation which begins in infancy and continues throughout life. The emphasis is on the complexity of the structure of psychological systems, as opposed to their content. Other important variables include concreteness-abstractness, degree of integration of subsystems and self-consistency. Witkin's work developed from conceptions of field-dependence and field-independence as measured by the rod and frame test, but findings were later verified using a vast array of other psychological measures. Most of Witkin's research examined levels of differentiation in children, thereby validating the developmental basis of the theory.

According to Witkin, undifferentiated systems are relatively homogeneous while more differentiated systems become progressively more heterogeneous. Subsystems relating to affect, cognition, perception and action develop. Higher levels of differentiation are thus characterized by specific reactions to specific stimuli, as opposed to diffuse reactions to any of a variety of stimuli. A high level of differentiation thereby implies a

. . .clear separation of what is identified as belonging to the self and what is identified as external to the self. The self is experienced as having definite limits or boundaries. Segregation of the self helps make possible greater determination of functioning from within, as opposed to a more or less enforced reliance on external nurturance and support for maintenance, typical of the relatively undifferentiated state (Witkin et al., 1962, p. 10).

The process of differentiation begins in the growing awareness in the infant of the distinction between inner and outer, as boundaries between the body (the early representation of the self) and the outer world are formed and grow stronger. Separation from the unity with the mother results in an "inner core" of experience and the segregation of that core from the surrounding field. This then fosters development of the self and a "sense of separate identity"--the awareness of a person's "own needs, feelings, and attributes, and his identification of these as distinct from the needs, feelings, and attributes of others" (Witkin et al., 1962, p. 134). A clearly articulated inner differentiation is thereby associated with a clearly articulated experience of the world.

Higher degrees of differentiation are also manifested in the formation of controls and defenses for coping with impulses and anxiety. Accordingly, some defensive systems are viewed as reflecting higher levels of differentiation. Massive repression and primitive denial, as means of negating perceptions or memories, are viewed as reflecting relatively nonspecific ways of functioning and are less differentiated than the more complex defense mechanisms of intellectualization and sublimation.

Witkin stresses that the integration of subsystems is as critical as their level of differentiation. Well-developed intellectual functioning, if it thwarts one's emotional life, may be dysfunctional. Maturity, then, is seen as connoting both high differentiation and effective integration of subsystems.

Harvey, Hunt and Schroder (1961) have presented another model of cognitive development which closely parallels the process of individuation. Concepts, the basic unit of analysis, are seen as schemata for

evaluating stimulus objects or events. They comprise a system by which the environment is differentiated and integrated into its psychologically relevant parts. An individual's unique conceptual configuration forms the basis by which self-identity and existence are articulated and maintained. In this regard, a concept reflects the relationship or connection between the subject and object. It is a schema for the organization of events and objects in relation to internal referents. The self is viewed as "the totality of one's concepts, of one's subject-object relationships, in their intertwined interdependencies. . ." (Harvey, Hunt & Schroder, 1961, p. 62).

These theorists propose a four-stage theory of the development of conceptual functioning. The development of concepts is seen as bipolarly determined through the interaction of internal, dispositional and external, situational forces and through the joint processes of assimilation and accommodation. Furthermore, concepts themselves are seen as essentially bipolar. In order for a gross concept (i.e. good-bad) to become increasingly differentiated, its two poles must exert contradictory pulls strong enough to produce alternatives other than the either/or categories of the previous stage. This is a dialectical model of development, in which the tension between a thesis and its antithesis results in a new synthesis which integrates the original polarities. Barring environmental inhibitions, the development of increasingly differentiated conceptual structures follows a given course.

The bipolar issues of each developmental stage are organized around conceptions of dependence and independence at progressive stages of maturity. The first stage, unilateral dependence, is expressed in the

need for external control and externally derived schemata. There is a lack of differentiation between a rule and its purpose and between self and others. Other manifestations are concrete thinking and the immediacy of behavior. The polar opposite is the opposition to absolute control. In the first transition period, symbiotic dependence is lessened as the self is differentiated from the other and a delineation between internal and external control emerges.

The second stage involves the interaction of negative independence (negativistic autonomy, counterdependence, stubbornness) and a chameleon-like dependence, selective compliance and recognition of the need for external support. These are synthesized into the issues of the third stage. Conditional dependence is manifested in interactions with others which take the feelings of the other into account. Others are seen as more separate and mutuality enters relationships although the self is still experienced through the reactions of others and self-evaluations are dependent on external standards. The polar opposite here is autonomous independence and separation which may at times involve egocentric action.

In the fourth stage, these are integrated into interdependence in which mutuality and autonomy are integrated into a complementary whole. Subject-object connections are abstract. Relationships are freed from constrictions due to the power, resistance to control or fears of rejection which marked earlier stages. Because the conceptual system has developed from previous conflicting polarities, the person has more flexibility and more complex resources available in times of stress.

The four stages outlined here can be seen to correspond very closely

to the progression of the stages of symbiotic, separation-individuation, adolescence and intimacy described above. It appears that theories of individuation and cognitive differentiation are describing the same phenomena from slightly different perspectives and levels of analysis.

Cognitive theories of psychological differentiation and conceptual development imply that interpersonal experiences, like all others, are organized into psychological systems and structures. These object-relations schemata are:

. . .organized structures of images of the self and others, together with the needs and affects characterizing the relationships between the images; the schemata evolve out of contact with varying psychosocial contexts, and they influence the individual's actual and fantasied interpersonal interactions (Raush et al., 1974, p. 43).

Object-relations schemata assimilate new experiences, and are themselves modified through the process of accommodation. They are intrapersonal structures which are activated in interactions in the world. Like other psychological structures, object relations schemata may be relatively simple or complex, undifferentiated or differentiated.

Each of the theories discussed above describes a developmental process which begins in infancy and continues throughout adulthood. Other writers have described the manifestations of developmental arrests in adults. These are outlined below with an emphasis on their significance for relationships.

Bowen's differentiation of self scale. Individuation, as discussed above, corresponds closely to Bowen's (1976, 1972) concept of levels of differentiation of self in adults. Bowen discusses a hypothetical "dif-

ferentiation of self scale" which ranges from 0 (completely undifferentiated) to 100 (completely differentiated). The scale exists as a theoretical construct only, derived from clinical experience. Highly differentiated people can readily express "I positions" which serve to set them apart from others. By stating "This is who I am", the person clearly draws his or her own boundaries. Low differentiated people, however, tend to fuse with others in close relationships. According to Bowen, the thinking and emotional patterns of high and low differentiated people are so disparate that people choose spouses or close friends from those with equal levels of differentiation.

Low levels of differentiation are marked by a lack of distinction between the emotional and intellectual spheres. Reactions are feeling-dominated, are not available for reflection and are accordingly rigid. Relationships are characterized by high degrees of fusion, and relational equilibrium is required for psychological stability. High needs for love and approval are evident, and others are attacked when these needs are not adequately fulfilled. Without a well-developed sense of self, others are depended upon to maintain one's own balance in the world.

At higher levels of differentiation, intellectual functioning complements the emotional system and reactions are more flexible. In relationships, each person maintains his/her autonomous self and can thereby participate in the emotional life of the other. Because the other is not needed for one's own psychic stability, each partner can pursue autonomous activities without threatening the relationship.

Most people exhibit some degrees of fusion in their relationships, and Bowen states that people above "60" on his hypothetical scale are

rare. The construct is useful only theoretically, as a bridge between intrapersonal and relational conceptualizations of experience.

Individuation in relationships. Karpel (1976) addressed the process of individuation in adult couples. He delineated six relational modes which reflect the interaction of the two dimensions of maturity of self with individuality and relatedness.

At the immature stage of development, unrelatedness (the extreme form of individuality) and pure fusion (the extreme manifestation of relatedness) are the two relational modes. In unrelatedness, all relationships are rejected or denied. The "We" as a mode of experience is eliminated from the person's life. Unrelatedness represents a rejection of the total dependence on the parent characteristic of the symbiotic stage, and relational development is arrested at that level. Accordingly, unrelatedness is seen as a defense against fusion, and the concomitant loss by engulfment of the infantile ego.

The alternative position in the immature stage is pure fusion. In adult couples, the defining characteristics of the relationship are the high degree of identification that exists between the partners and the feelings of absolute, needy dependence typical of young infants. The boundary between self and other is indistinct and partners see each other as necessary for their very survival. As a result, intrapsychic and interpersonal processes are confused. Partners project their own feelings onto the other, then believe that they know each other's thoughts and feelings. Each partner assumes absolute responsibility for the well-being of the other. The relationship is predicated upon the

acceptance and encouragement of infantile dependence to the exclusion of any vestiges of individuality. Relational patterns are rigid and inflexible, thereby precluding change or growth, but averting the dangers of unpredictability. These relationships, when they work, offer the experience of total bliss and contentment which eradicates loneliness, insecurity and conflict.

The transitional stage of development is characterized by the twin relational modes of ambivalent fusion and ambivalent isolation.

The essence of the transitional period is the conflict between progressive tendencies toward differentiation and regressive tendencies toward identification, between the responsibility and self support that characterize individuation and the blame, guilt, and manipulation for environmental support that characterize fusion (Karpel, 1976, p. 73).

The conflicts of this period may take many forms, but generally center around the desire for the bliss of fusion and the anxiety over ego-loss which fusion engenders. The partners are not comfortable as separate beings, and tend to oscillate between periods of intense closeness and equally intense separateness, neither of which is comfortable. It is the anxiety of this time which impels the partners toward increasing individuation.

At the mature stage of development, the individuated person can engage in the relational mode of dialogue, in which the "I" and the "We" are integrated. The dialogue, as a communion of two individuated people, encourages the growth of the partners' differences as well as their similarities. In less mature relationships, difference and change are seen as endangering the continuation of the relationship. Security is

thought to derive from sameness. In mature relationship, however,

Partners aim toward an ideal of responding to the other as a whole and truly other person and not merely as part of their own experience. Their ability and their decision to respond to the other in this way provides an optimal context for the increasing individuation of each. Where difference and change are felt as threatening and responded to as betrayal, individuation is crippled. Where they are accepted and valued, individuation is enhanced. The cycle is completed in that each partner's increased individuation makes him/her more capable of accepting the otherness of the other (Karpel, 1976, p. 78).

In dialogue, then, both individuality and relatedness are integrated into a whole which subsumes neither but fosters both. The dialectical tension between the forces of individuality and relatedness is synthesized in the relationship which is the creation of the participants and which in turn creates them.

In dialogic relationships, the partners accept individual responsibility for their own lives as each acts as an autonomous self-directed individual. These relationships are characterized by high levels of empathy and commitment. Commitment is viewed as the ". . .awareness of mutual entitlement and accountability over time. . .an expression of caring acted upon by members within the relational system and therefore a commitment both to the members and to the relational system itself" (Appley & Winder, 1977, pp. 285-286). Trust is a requisite for commitment, and commitment begets deeper levels of trust. Security in dialogic relationships develops from this trust--that each partner trusts the other to offer him/herself temporarily as an object for the continuing self-delineation of the other. This dynamic also reflects the dependence which is an integral part of dialogic relationships. Mature

dependence is very different from its infantile precursor which is marked by the abdication of responsibility for the self and attempts to merge with the other in order to feel complete. Mature dependence cannot exist without the simultaneous capacity for independence and, as such, dialogue is characterized by the interdependence of the partners (Guntrip, 1961; Weingarten, 1978).

The process of individuation has been examined in individual development and in adult couples. It has been suggested that a couple's relational mode is reflective of the levels of self-other differentiation which the individuals have attained. Most authors agree that people select partners who have attained an equal level of differentiation of self, or who have similar character structures (Bowen, 1965; Giovacchini, 1958). Significant developmental experiences tend to be alike. Each partner finds, in the other, a person who validates his or her early experience and who will perpetuate it. Within the relationship, each person continually projects a part of the intrapsychic self-representation onto the other, and introjects the part of the other which is projected onto the self. In individuated persons, cohesive self-representations are exchanged, leading to the further integration of each partner. In less differentiated partners the same intermeshing of personalities occurs, but unintegrated parts of the self are exchanged which tend to reinforce current levels of functioning (Giovacchini, 1976; Moss & Lee, 1976). Change occurs within these relational systems when one partner moves to a higher level of differentiation, thereby upsetting the relational homeostasis and requiring a corresponding adaptation by the other in order to maintain the relationship (Bowen, 1965).

From the foregoing theoretical discussion, three primary points can be abstracted. The present investigation examined these hypotheses.

1. Self-other differentiation is an important and useful dimension for understanding individual development. Level of differentiation correlates with other dimensions of individual development and has implications for interpersonal and interactional style.
2. People choose partners at equivalent levels of differentiation of self.
3. The relational modes of high versus low differentiated couples can be reliably distinguished.

In order to examine these hypotheses, a sample of adult, married couples was selected. Two measures of differentiation were used to discriminate high and low differentiated participants. Relational style was assessed through TAT stories. Although fantasy material offers indirect information regarding actual interpersonal behavior, it provides more direct access to the internal cognitive structures which influence actual behavior. The concept of object relations schemata, the intrapsychic structures which organize relational experience and influence the person's interactions, was used conceptually to link levels of differentiation and their manifestations in relational style.

C H A P T E R I I

METHOD

Participants

Forty Amherst-area married couples who had been living together for at least two years participated in this study. Twenty-one couples were randomly selected from the Amherst Street Directory. The remaining couples were identified by a process in which subject couples and other people recommended participants. This process was very effective in producing a diverse sample.

Investigators

During the process of data collection, the primary investigator was assisted by another female psychologist. Each couple interacted with only one investigator. The two researchers trained together regarding the system of data collection, and used identical procedures during experimental sessions.

Materials

The study made use of the following measures:

1. Two measures of cognitive differentiation:
 - a. Interpersonal Discrimination Task
 - b. Adjective Check List
2. Thematic Apperception Test

3. Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Questionnaire

These materials, their background, and the rationale for their use, are described in detail below.

Measures of differentiation. Two facets of cognitive differentiation have recently been articulated (Carr, 1974). Differentiation within conceptual dimensions (Dw) refers to the tendency to make fine distinctions among people or other stimulus objects and thereby to perceive them as distinct from each other within one conceptual dimension (i.e. good-bad). Differentiation between conceptual dimensions (Db) refers to the number of concepts which comprise the structure, or, the number of conceptual dimensions that a person has available for use in describing the self or another person. These constructs are independent of each other and operate differentially in interpersonal interaction (Carr, 1974). Because the exact nature of their operation has not been articulated, measures testing both Dw and Db were used.

As a measure of differentiation within conceptual dimensions (Dw), the Interpersonal Discrimination Task (IDT) was used in this study (Carr, 1965). The IDT, developed from the theory of Harvey, Hunt and Schroder (1961), is a modification of the "Role Construct Repertory Test" developed by Kelly (1955). Each participant is asked to write six self-descriptive traits (three liked and three disliked), and their opposites. A list is thereby generated of self-descriptive, conceptual dimensions which have idiosyncratic meaning to the participant regarding the way s/he organizes his or her interpersonal world. Each participant is then asked to place six people who are known well (in this study, the

participant's spouse, mother, father, two same-sex friends and one opposite sex friend) and the self along each of the six conceptual dimensions to represent perceived discriminations among the people along each dimension. The participant could place all seven people in one group (completely undifferentiated) or could construct up to seven groups with one person in each group (completely differentiated). The IDT yields four separate scores: a) an overall score which represents the mean number of discriminations across dimensions; b) an Other-Other score representing the mean number of discriminations made between others, excluding the self; c) a Self-Other score representing the mean number of others placed in a different group from the self; and d) a Self-Distinctiveness score representing the mean number of times the participant placed him/herself in a group separate from all others. Because these scores are highly intercorrelated, the overall score was selected for primary use in this study and in the data analysis.

The IDT has not previously been used with couples. Early investigations established that the IDT can reliably distinguish between the four developmental stages described by Harvey, Hunt and Schroder (1961). Subsequently, the IDT has proved useful in studies of cognitive matching when applied to psychotherapy outcome research (Carr, 1974; Carr & Posthuma, 1975), the functioning of community groups (Posthuma & Carr, 1974) and professional training (Townes & Carr, 1973). Because the IDT elicits conceptual dimensions which are personally meaningful to the participant and which reflect the ways in which the participant organizes his or her interpersonal world, it is assumed that the IDT evokes elements of the participant's object relations schemata which are also activated

in interactions in the world.

To assess differentiation between conceptual dimensions (Db), a measure similar to the one reported by Carr (1974) was used. A shortened version of the Adjective Check List (Gough, 1952) was devised by randomly selecting 100 of the 300 adjectives on the original measure. This shortened Adjective Check List was presented to participants with instructions to check all adjectives which applied to the self. The total number of adjectives checked was considered a crude measure of the number of self-descriptive conceptual dimensions available to the participant. The meaning of varying levels of Db, and its assessment, is less well documented in the literature than is Dw. During the formulation of the study, it was uncertain whether the Adjective Check List as a measure of Db would prove useful since implications of Db in interpersonal behavior or relationships are not clearly understood.

The two measures of differentiation were used to assess each individual's level of differentiation, and the differentiation scores of both members of each couple were paired in order to evaluate the homogamy (equal level of differentiation) or heterogamy (unequal levels of differentiation) of the couple. It was expected that three groups would be distinguished: a Low Differentiated homogamous group; a High Differentiated homogamous group; and a heterogamous group. These groups were compared in the analysis.

The Thematic Apperception Test. For the past forty years, the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) has been used in the assessment of personality. Because the pictures present ambiguous, interpersonal scenes, the TAT

has been found to be especially useful in eliciting conscious and unconscious elements of the person's internal object relations system. Sohler et al. (1957), in attempting to determine which areas of human behavior could best be described by projective tests, found that the TAT was the best source of information about attitudes toward family members. Calogeras (1958) found high congruence in reported family interaction patterns between the TAT and interview data. Although the nature of the relationship between TAT data, internal object relations schemata and actual interpersonal behavior cannot be specified, it can be assumed that some form of relationship does exist.

Several methods of analyzing TAT stories in order to assess interpersonal behavior patterns have been reported (Kadushin et al., 1969; Werner, Stabenau & Pollin, 1970; Winget, Gleser & Clements, 1969; Katz, 1965; Goldstein et al., 1970; Winter, Ferreira & Olson, 1965). These methods vary along several dimensions. Some investigators have had families tell stories jointly, while others have compared individual stories. Some stories are told orally, while others are written by the subjects. Most investigators instruct subjects to tell a story to one card, but others ask subjects to integrate several TAT cards into one story. Some scoring methods rely on the manifest content of the stories, but others require the investigator to make inferences about the meaning of the stories.

In the present investigation, participants were asked to write individual stories to TAT cards. For each story the participant was asked to describe what led up to the event shown in the picture, what was happening at the moment, what the characters were thinking and feeling, and

the outcome of the story. These instructions correspond to the original format suggested by Murray (1943). Participants were shown six cards, and were asked to write six stories. Cards which have a relatively neutral emotional tone, and which were most likely to pull for interpersonally descriptive themes according to research on the TAT (Henry, 1973; Murstein, 1963; Bellak, 1954) were selected. The cards which were used in the study are:

- TAT #2 A country scene including two women and a man. This card elicits feelings toward interpersonal interactions, parent-child relationships, heterosexual relationships and attitudes about autonomy and compliance.
- TAT #4 A woman clutching the shoulders of a man with a picture of another woman in the background. This card also elicits feelings regarding heterosexual relationships and sexual problems.
- TAT #6BM A short, older woman with her back to a tall, young man. Themes regarding mother-son relationships and attitudes toward maternal figures more generally are elicited by this card. Issues regarding dependence on or independence from parental figures are also predominant.
- TAT #10 An older couple with the woman's head resting on the man's shoulder. This card elicits feelings regarding physical contact, sensuality, and intimacy, especially in parental figures.
- TAT #12BG A pastoral scene of a rowboat and stream but without people. This card elicits the participant's tolerance for sensitivity and quiet relaxation. Additionally, whether or not the participant introduces people into the scene suggests the degree of interpersonal relatedness, need for interpersonal contact, and ability to tolerate solitude.
- Card #6 Two trapeze artists, a man and a woman, grasping each other's arms in mid-air. This card was developed by Robert May, who permitted its use in this study. This card elicits feelings regarding trust in heterosexual relationships.

The six cards were presented to all participants in the following order: TAT #2, TAT #10, TAT #6BM, TAT #4, the May card, and TAT #12BG.

TAT protocols were coded by two different methods thereby yielding two sets of measures. In the first coding scheme, the themes of TAT stories were rated on a five-point scale of ego qualities developed by Yufit (1969) and based on Erikson's (1950) theoretical framework of ego growth and development. The scale is organized according to the Eriksonian conceptions of Trust, Autonomy, Identity and Intimacy; the revealed pattern of these ego qualities across TAT stories can allow the formulation of a composite description of the participant across these dimensions. It was expected that lower differentiated participants would also score lower on the ego qualities scale--specifically, that they would demonstrate relatively higher levels of mistrust, lack of autonomy, identity diffusion and isolation than would higher differentiated participants. This measure was included as a bridge between the cognitive differentiation measures and the more intrapsychic focus of the TAT, and as a link to the theory of individuation previously discussed. Unfortunately, it did not prove to be useful in the analysis, and had to be discarded from the study. This is discussed more fully in the next chapter.

The second coding system which was employed was reported by Kadushin et al. (1969) and adapted from Fine (1955). Following this method, TAT protocols were evaluated according to: a) affects and affect-related conditions present in the stories; b) interpersonal interactions in the stories, and c) outcomes. Affects were scored according to a list of categories generated by Fine from TAT protocols. Interpersonal

interactions were scored according to Horney's (1945) categories of Moving Towards, Moving Against, and Moving Away From and the type of relationship in which the interaction occurred (i.e. husband-wife, mother-child). Outcomes were scored as Favorable, Unfavorable or Indeterminate. Two measures, the Sum of Feelings and the Sum of Interactions, were derived from the scoring of protocols in this way.

In a final procedure using the TAT data, the protocols of three High Differentiated and three Low Differentiated couples were selected. These protocols were subjected to a more qualitative examination of the affects and interpersonal interactions expressed in the TAT stories. Assuming that the participant's response to the TAT cards is at least partially determined by the activation of internal object relations schemata, this more qualitative treatment of the TAT protocols was undertaken to offer some insight into the participant's characteristic modes of response to interpersonal situations. It was hoped that this analysis would yield patterns of relational orientation which distinguish between high and low differentiated participants.

Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Questionnaire. This, the last measure used in the study, was employed to obtain an estimate of marital satisfaction for each participant couple. The Locke-Wallace scale (Locke & Wallace, 1959) is a short measure, and is relatively easy to complete. It was included to assure that differences in level of differentiation were not a byproduct of marital dissatisfaction. Additionally, the use of the Locke-Wallace permitted the investigation of the relationship between homogamy, heterogamy, and marital satisfaction.

To recap, the primary experimental measures are summarized below.

1. The Interpersonal Discrimination Task (IDT) is a measure of differentiation within conceptual dimensions (Dw) which yields a score of overall cognitive differentiation for interpersonal stimuli. The IDT scores were divided into High Differentiated and Low Differentiated groups for individual participants, and into High Matched, Low Matched and Heterogamous groups for participant couples.

2. A shortened version of the Adjective Check List (ACL) as a measure of differentiation between conceptual dimensions (Db) which yields a score of number of adjectives checked by the participant. The ACL scores were treated in the same manner as IDT scores.

3. Five cards from the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) and one card developed by R. May, to which participants wrote stories. TAT stories were coded and yielded two measures: Sum of Feelings and Sum of Interactions, as well as providing raw data for a qualitative analysis.

4. The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (LW) which estimated marital satisfaction and was used to investigate the relationship between homogamy, heterogamy and marital satisfaction.

Procedure

Experimental sessions were conducted either at the couples' homes or at the Psychology Department of the University of Massachusetts and lasted approximately two hours. During each session, the study was introduced and each member of the couple was given the packet of experimental materials with detailed instructions for their use. A copy of that packet is included in Appendix A. Debriefing sessions were con-

ducted with each participant couple after the completion of the study.

C H A P T E R I I I

RESULTS

Description of the Sample

The sample consisted of 40 married couples. Participants ranged in age from 24-44 years, with a mean age of 32.7. The men were, in general, slightly older than the women (\bar{X} men = 33.68 years, \bar{X} women = 31.8 years). Couples were married for an average of 9.15 years, with a range from 1-19 years. Twenty-seven couples had children (67.5%) and 13 couples had no children (32.5%). Only 8 people had been married before, and none had more than one previous marriage. As many men as women were previously married ($\chi^2(1) = 1.34, p \geq .24$).

Of the 80 people in the study, 68 (85%) were employed outside the home. The 12 participants who did not work outside the home were all women (40% of the subsample of women), and most were full-time mothers. Sex significantly discriminated those who did not work outside the home ($\chi^2(1) = 11.86, p < .001$).

On all other demographic variables, participants in the sample were distributed across all categories. Education levels ranged from high school degrees through advanced professional degrees (mode = M.A./M.S. degree). Income levels ranged from \$5,000 per year to more than \$25,000 per year (mode = more than \$25,000 per year). All major religions were represented, as were some nontraditional religious groups, and people who expressed no religious affiliation. Amherst is a university commu-

nity, and the high number of professional degrees and the income levels are probably reflective of the influence of the universities, although no empirical standard of comparison is available. Tables 2 and 3 display the distributions of education and income for this sample.

Preliminary Analyses

In order to ensure that the experimental procedures themselves did not artificially affect the pattern of results, several initial analyses were conducted.

Effect of investigator. A comparison of the sample characteristics and results on the dependent measures by investigator revealed only one difference between the groups who interacted with the two researchers. Fewer Adjective Check List items were endorsed by participants who were interviewed by the primary investigator ($\bar{X} = 42.98$) than by those who were interviewed by the second researcher ($\bar{X} = 52.17$; $t(78) = 3.29$, $p < .01$).

Effect of site of interview. There were no interesting effects of the site of the interview. The only obtained differences were expected-- couples with children were more likely to have been interviewed in their own homes ($\chi^2(1) = 8.26$, $p < .01$) than in the Psychology Department.

Effect of method of contact. Participants solicited by letter were found to have significantly higher IDT scores ($\bar{X} = 2.6$, $t(78) = 2.16$, $p < .05$). Because no other differences distinguished one method of contact from the other, this single discrepancy in IDT scores seems attri-

TABLE 2
Education Levels

Education Level	Number of Participants
High School Degree	8
Some College	15
College Degree	22
M.A./M.S.	25
Ph.D./M.D./Other professional degree	10
Total	80

TABLE 3
Income Levels

Income Level	Number of Participants
Less than \$5,000	0
\$5,000-\$10,000	8
\$10,000-\$15,000	8
\$15,000-\$20,000	20
\$20,000-\$25,000	9
More than \$25,000	33
No data	2
Total	80

butable to the vagaries of sampling.

It can be seen that some minor differences across experimental procedures were found. However, because the subsequent analyses rely on pooled scores which do not compare groups associated with the investigators, experimental sites or methods of contact, these differences do not obstruct interpretation of the results. Additionally, the lack of any consistent pattern to these results suggests that they are primarily attributable to random sampling procedures and not to significant inter-group differences resulting from the experimental procedures.

Correlates of an Individual's Level of Differentiation

The concept of differentiation, as used in this study, refers to the psychological process involving the delineation and subsequent reintegration of elements along conceptual dimensions pertaining to relational stimuli. As such, level of differentiation is assumed to derive primarily from past and present interpersonal experiences and not directly from factors such as intelligence, sex, or other socioeconomic variables.

This assumption was confirmed by analyses which examined the relationships between scores on the IDT and demographic variables. Neither sex, age, income nor education level varied significantly with IDT scores. This pattern of results indicates the independence of level of differentiation from demographic factors, and replicates Carr's (1980) findings in similar research.

Relational Patterns

Perhaps more interesting than demographics is the relationship between cognitive style and relational style--the congruence between cognitive processes and responses to interpersonal stimuli. To examine this relationship, the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), which elicits conscious and unconscious elements of the person's object relations system, was used. Each participant wrote stories in response to six TAT cards. These stories were then coded by two independent coders (doctoral candidates at the University of Denver School of Professional Psychology) who had prior training and experience in interpreting projective test data.

Developmental stages. The themes of all TAT stories were rated according to their treatment of the developmental issues of Trust, Autonomy, Identity and Intimacy. The coding procedure employed was developed by Yufit (1969) and based on Erikson's (1950) theory of ego development (the scoring form is included in Appendix B). Given Erikson's theory, it was expected that those who evidenced higher levels of cognitive differentiation would also achieve higher scores on the four developmental dimensions than would lower differentiated participants. Unfortunately, this hypothesis could not be adequately tested. The criteria for scoring the thematic material proved to be vague, and did not reliably distinguish between developmental levels. Themes relating to Trust and Intimacy, for example, were often indistinguishable, as were themes of Autonomy and Identity. The ambiguity of the scoring criteria also resulted in many stories being coded as void of clear manifestations of

any of the four developmental stages. Additionally, the coders were required to subjectively determine the theme of the stories and to evaluate the appropriate developmental issue. The variability inherent in subjective assessments, combined with the ambiguity of the scoring criteria, was reflected in the reliability correlation coefficients (ranging from .27 to .94) for the four developmental stages. Because of all of the difficulties with this system outlined above, these measures were excluded from the study and from the subsequent analyses.

Feelings and interaction patterns. Several analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between level of differentiation and affective and interactional patterns. Measures were taken from the total number of feelings and interactions related by participants in their TAT stories. Feelings and interactions were coded according to the procedure reported by Kadushin et al. (1969). A copy of the scoring form is included in Appendix C. Unlike the Yufit scoring system described above, the Kadushin system required the coders to consider only the manifest content of the stories, and thus avoided the subjective interpretation of themes. The clarity of these scoring criteria was reflected in the obtained reliability correlation coefficients between the two coders ($\underline{r} = .98$ for feelings and $\underline{r} = .97$ for interactions).

Affective patterns. An initial question was whether one's level of differentiation is related to the number of feelings reported in his or her responses to TAT cards. In other words, do those at varying levels of differentiation project different amounts of affective content into ambiguous events? To answer this question, the distribution of IDT

scores was dichotomized, at the median, into two groups--a High Differentiated group of 36 people (45% of the total sample) and a Low Differentiated group of 37 persons (46.2% of the sample). The IDT scores of seven others were exactly at the median score of 2.66 (8.8% of the sample); this group was excluded from the analysis.

Analysis revealed no direct relationship between differentiation scores and the number of feelings articulated in TAT stories ($\underline{r} = .01$, $p > .40$), indicating the seeming independence of level of differentiation and affective orientation to ambiguous interpersonal stimuli. Although differentiation level was not significantly related to the number of feelings reported, it was found that husbands and wives, regardless of level of differentiation, articulated similar numbers of feelings in their TAT stories ($\underline{r} = .55$, $p < .01$). This finding suggests that orientation toward feelings, while not related to differentiation, tends to be a significant area of compatibility between partners in relationships.

Interactional patterns. The total number of interactions was also coded according to the Kadushin et al. system. Affective and interactional variables were drawn from the same data--TAT stories. Accordingly, a strong correlation between these two variables was both expected and was found ($\underline{r} = .54$, $p = .001$). The results of these analyses therefore closely parallel analyses of affective patterns.

No direct relationship was found between level of differentiation and numbers of interactions reported in TAT stories ($\underline{r} = -.09$, $p < .25$). However, again, there was a significant correspondence between marital partners in terms of the number of interactions which were a part of

their TAT stories ($r = .43$, $p < .01$). The interesting finding here, as with the analysis of the number of feelings reported above, is that level of differentiation has little bearing on a person's tendency toward interaction, but that couples demonstrate congruence in this regard. It appears that orientations toward feelings and interactions do not derive from differentiation levels, but that synchrony in this regard is an aspect of the marital bond.

Homogamy and Heterogamy

A primary hypothesis of this study was that marital partners are matched (homogamous) as opposed to mismatched (heterogamous) in the levels of self-other differentiation which they demonstrate. To test this hypothesis, the measures of differentiation and the procedures recommended by Carr (1970) were employed. Using Carr's criterion, couples were defined as homogamous if their IDT scores were within ± 1.00 of each other, and were assigned to low or high differentiation groups according to the placement of their scores relative to the median IDT score. The use of this procedure resulted in the creation of three groups: a High Differentiated group ($n = 14$ couples), a Low Differentiated group ($n = 16$ couples), and a Heterogamous group ($n = 10$ couples). Table 4 summarizes the means and standard deviations for these three groups and for the sample as a whole. As can be seen, 30 of the 40 couples in the sample (75%) were homogamous on level of self-other differentiation. In the heterogamous group, no differences were found according to sex in terms of which marital partner demonstrated the higher IDT score.

To test the significance of the difference between heterogamous and

TABLE 4
Means and Standard Deviations of IDT Scores

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
Total Sample	2.80	.79
High Differentiated Group	3.23	.56
Low Differentiated Group	2.29	.43
Heterogamous Group	3.00	1.05

homogamous couples, the expected proportion of homogamous couples was computed assuming no correlation between husbands and wives. The null distribution of difference scores (score of male minus score of female) was generated. This distribution is normal, with $\bar{X} = (\bar{X}_{\text{males}} - \bar{X}_{\text{females}})$ and standard deviation = $\sqrt{S^2_{\text{males}} + S^2_{\text{females}}}$. A Z test was computed to evaluate the difference between the observed proportion of homogamous couples and the expected proportion of homogamous couples under the null distribution, yielding $Z = 1.743$, $p < .05$. The difference between the number of homogamous and heterogamous couples is significant, supporting the hypothesis that marital partners have achieved congruent levels of self-other differentiation.

This analysis examined the role of Dw in homogamy. The relationship between Dw and Db was an additional interest of this research. The ACL was included as a measure of differentiation between conceptual dimensions (Db). In the absence of any empirically verified procedure for determining matching of marital partners on this measure, the standard used to evaluate homogamy on the IDT was applied to ACL scores. The ± 1.00 criterion used for IDT scores was found to equal 1.25 standard deviation units on the distribution of IDT scores. Therefore, couples were defined as homogamous on Db if their ACL scores were within ± 1.25 standard deviations of each other. Using this criterion, 27 participant couples were homogamous on the ACL (67.5%) and 13 couples were heterogamous (32.5%). The same procedure was used to evaluate the significance of this finding as was used for IDT scores. It was found that $Z = 0.818$, $p > .20$ indicating that married couples do not demonstrate equivalent levels of Db.

It appears, then, that Dw and Db are two independent facets of the process of conceptual differentiation. This conclusion is supported by the absence of an observed relationship between the two measures ($\underline{r} = -.09$, $\underline{p} > .20$). It also appears that Dw is the more significant dimension for understanding compatibility in relationships, and it is the one used in subsequent analyses.

Parenthetically, it was interesting to note that nine of the 10 couples (90%) who did not match on the IDT matched on the ACL. The converse of this was not true--16 of the 30 couples who matched on the IDT did not match on the ACL (53%). It appears, then, that homogamy on Dw does not predict homogamy or heterogamy on Db ($X^2(1) = .03$, $\underline{p} > .10$), but that heterogamy on Dw may predict homogamy on Db ($X^2(1) = 4.9$, $\underline{p} < .05$), at least in this sample. This finding is based on only 10 couples; accordingly its reliability is uncertain. However, it may be that homogamy on Db affords a secondary type of psychological intermeshing which is of relational significance in a subset of the population.

Feelings and interactions. The negative results associated with the analyses of the relationship between level of differentiation and feelings and interactions continued to be puzzling. According to the theories reviewed above, Dw, as a measure of self-other differentiation, should predict differences in relational style. Since no overall relationship between IDT scores and feeling and interactional variables was found, perhaps homogamy and heterogamy on Dw was the more significant dimension. The analysis indicates that this hypothesis, too, was in error. Comparisons of the three groups (High Differentiated, Low Dif-

ferentiated and Heterogamous) revealed no significant differences for either feelings ($F(2,79) = 1.29, p > .25$) or interactions ($F(2,79) = .33, p > .70$). The mean numbers of feelings and interactions for all three groups are summarized in Table 5.

These results further confirm the independence of level of differentiation and willingness to imbue ambiguous interpersonal stimuli with feelings and interpersonal interactions. Additionally, it appears that homogamy in marital relationships does not contribute to the underlying process. Perhaps, it was reasoned, the content of those feelings and interactions, as opposed to their numbers, would better illuminate any differences in relational style between the two groups. This idea was confirmed in the analysis of the subset of the sample which was selected for a more intensive review, and which is presented in detail later in this paper. In this subsample, for example, agreements between husbands and wives on the specific feelings which were mentioned in TAT stories were tallied. It was found that High Differentiated participant couples more often used the same feelings in their stories (56.67% agreement) than did Low Differentiated participants (30.5% agreement). Accordingly, it appears that a more content-focused analysis of thematic material was required to illuminate the manifestations of level of differentiation in relational styles. This analysis will be presented after a brief review of the findings on marital satisfaction in this sample.

Level of Differentiation and Marital Satisfaction

The previous analyses support the view that married partners have achieved similar levels of self-other differentiation. The next step

TABLE 5
Mean Number of Feelings and Interactions
Articulated in TAT Stories

Group	\bar{X} Feelings	\bar{X} Interactions
High Differentiated	11.46	9.14
Low Differentiated	13.65	9.59
Heterogamous	13.80	10.10

Feelings - $F(2,79) = 1.29, p > .25$

Interactions - $F(2,79) = .33, p > .70$

was undertaken to determine if levels of differentiation were related to the degree of marital satisfaction that partners enjoy in their relationship.

An initial question was whether or not level of differentiation was related to the degree of marital satisfaction. The obtained correlation between IDT scores and Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (LW) scores was small and nonsignificant ($r = -.06$, $p > .30$), indicating that there was no direct relationship between an individual's level of differentiation and the satisfaction that is derived from a marriage.

Further analyses examined the relationship between satisfaction and differentiation in subsets of the sample. It was hypothesized that homogamous couples, regardless of level of differentiation, would demonstrate marital satisfaction more often than would heterogamous couples. Following the procedure recommended by Locke and Wallace (1959), a couple was defined as satisfied if both partners' LW scores exceeded 100. This procedure yielded a classification of each couple as satisfied or dissatisfied in their marriage. This new measure of satisfaction was then compared with the couple's homogamy or heterogamy. Table 6 displays the results and shows a tendency for more homogamous than heterogamous couples to report marital satisfaction ($\chi^2(1) = 1.74$, $p < .10$). This finding was not replicated when comparing marital satisfaction and homogamy or heterogamy on the ACL ($\chi^2(1) = .07$, $p > .10$). Other analyses examining the relationship between marital satisfaction and all of the other dependent measures produced nonsignificant results. Accordingly, marital satisfaction was not deemed to contribute to the other questions under study, and was not included in subsequent analyses.

TABLE 6
Homogamy, Heterogamy and Marital Satisfaction

Group	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Homogamous	21	9	30
Heterogamous	4	6	10
Total	25	15	40

$$\chi^2(1) = 1.74, p < .10$$

Relational Style: Thematic Material

The preceding analyses were directed at understanding characteristics of the sample as a whole, and of the three groups developed according to homogamy or heterogamy. In order to further delineate differences between High and Low Differentiated participants, a more in-depth and qualitative analysis of the TAT protocols was required. The protocols of three couples from the High Differentiated group and three couples from the Low Differentiated group were selected. Couples with the highest and lowest scores on the IDT were chosen to maximize differences between the two groups. The mean IDT score of High Differentiated couples was 3.8 and the mean IDT score of couples from the Low Differentiated group was 1.8 (the mean for the entire sample was 2.8). Because couples for these groups were selected solely on the basis of IDT scores, no attempt was made to match the subsamples on any demographic variables. However, the groups were found to be fairly comparable although some areas of difference were found. Table 7 displays the demographic characteristics of each couple in the subsample.

Method of analysis. Initially, the method of analysis outlined by Kadushin et al. (1969) was employed. According to this system, the affects and interactions embodied in each story are diagrammed to represent the total interactional pattern which the characters in the stories enact. As was seen in the previous section, the total number and types of interactions and feeling categories were not significantly different between the two groups, and when the stories were mapped out, no salient differences emerged.

TABLE 7
Demographic Characteristics of Couples in the Subsample

Couple	Age	Occupation	Education	Income	Religion	Children
Mr. A	28	C.P.A.	M.B.A.	25+	Catholic	No
Mrs. A	28	Computer Operator	College	25+	None	No
HD Mr. B	35	Mailman	M.S.	25+	None	Yes
Mrs. B	33	Mother	High School	25+	None	Yes
Mr. C	30	Geologist	M.A.	15-20	Protest.	No
Mrs. C	26	Unemployed	M.Ed.	15-20	None	No
Mr. D	29	Truck Driver	Some Coll.	15-20	Catholic	Yes
Mrs. D	29	Housewife	High School	15-20	Catholic	Yes
LD Mr. E	34	Professor	Ph.D.	15-20	Catholic	Yes
Mrs. E	32	Housewife	High School	15-20	Catholic	Yes
Mr. F	31	Field Underwriter	M.S.	10-15	Jewish	Yes
Mrs. F	30	Mother	College	10-15	Jew/Prot.	Yes

It was found that one problem with the Kadushin et al. system was that it excluded important aspects of the stories, because anything that was not a feeling or interaction could not be coded. The investigator therefore devised a more comprehensive coding system to incorporate other types of material. Each story was divided into bits of information which were then placed into one of the following five categories:

1. Interactions--defined as occurring between the main characters in the story. Interactions could be verbal communications, acts of affection toward the other person, or acts of moving away from the other person.
2. Feelings--defined as any mention of the affective state of the characters.
3. Actions--defined as any autonomous or independent action by one character, as an interaction with a person peripheral to the main characters in the story, or as a joint action between the main characters without significant meaning for their relationship.
4. Thoughts--defined as glimpses into the internal thought processes of one character, without explicit affect-laden content which were not communicated to the other character(s) in the story.
5. Background information/explanations of events--defined as any information which sets the stage for the action, describes the character's history or motivation, or embellishes the story's action.

The stories were then mapped by placing each bit of information in the appropriate category. The investigator also noted her comments and reactions to the material of each story, to see if consistent themes or patterns would emerge. During the first coding, the investigator did

not know which protocols belonged to HD participants and which belonged to LD participants. In subsequent analysis, the protocols were divided into groups and the coder was aware of the group to which the participant couple belonged. Although a small amount of bias may have been introduced by this procedure, the bulk of the analysis was conducted in the first coding, and it seemed unlikely that the results were compromised.

A final step was the notation of the outcome of each story as favorable, unfavorable or indeterminate as scored from the point of view of the main character in the story. This procedure follows the one suggested by Kadushin et al. (1969). The determinations about the outcomes of the stories were made by the independent coders who initially worked with the data.

Mapping of stories. In mapping the stories according to the system described above, a primary question was whether or not the two groups used different approaches to interpersonal material. This was in essence a question regarding the structure which participants used in telling the stories. In general, the High Differentiated (HD) group wrote longer stories which yielded a higher number of bits of information than did the Low Differentiated (LD) group. Table 8 compares the structures used by the two groups.

As can be seen from the table, the two groups are about equal in most categories. Exceptions are Feelings and Background Information. In comparing the mean number of feelings reported per story, the HD group ($\bar{X} = 2.2$) and the LD group ($\bar{X} = 1.7$) were not significantly dif-

TABLE 8
Structural Categories Used in TAT Stories

Group	Categories					
	Interactions	Feelings	Actions	Thoughts	Background	TOTAL
HD	33	66	43	32	91	265
LD	38	51	40	29	64	222
TOTAL	71	117	83	61	155	487

Background - $t(58) = 2.046, p < .025$

All others nonsignificant

ferent from each other ($t(58) = .13$, $p > .10$). However, when comparing the number of bits of background or explanatory information in each story, the difference between the HD group ($\bar{X} = 3.03$) and the LD group ($\bar{X} = 2.23$) was significant ($t(58) = 2.05$, $p < .025$). Table 9 details the number of bits of background information used by each participant.

On the whole, however, it appears that the structures of the stories, in terms of numbers of interactions, feelings, action and thoughts were equivalent for the two groups. Both groups were equally able to use these various modes in writing about interpersonal experiences. An analysis of the content of the stories was required to illuminate salient differences in their approaches to interpersonal situations.

Properties of the stimulus materials. In selecting the TAT cards for inclusion in the study, pictures with relatively neutral emotional tones were chosen. Despite this, the cards appeared to have differential emotional valences which influenced the types of themes chosen by participants in their stories. The cards are briefly described below, and the most predominant themes are listed. The cards are numbered according to the order in which they were presented to participants.

#1. A farm scene including a pregnant woman, a man and a teen-aged girl. This card was the only one with three people, and the relationships described in the stories were often triadic. Because these data were not handled well by the coding systems, this card was excluded from this portion of the analysis and only the remaining five stories were used.

#2. Two people, usually perceived as a middle-aged man and woman,

TABLE 9

Bits of Background Information Related by Each Participant

	Participant	Total Bits of Background Information
HD	Mr. A	17
	Mrs. A	17
	Mr. B	14
	Mrs. B	10
	Mr. C	17
	Mrs. C	16
	Total	91
	Mean per story	3.03
LD	Mr. D	10
	Mrs. D	6
	Mr. E	16
	Mrs. E	13
	Mr. F	11
	Mrs. F	8
	Total	64
	Mean per story	2.23

$$t(58) = 2.05, p < .025$$

embracing. Themes relating to happiness and contentment after long years in a satisfying relationship were most common, although some participants introduced conflict into the scene.

#3. An older woman staring out of a window, and a young man, looking downward, holding a hat in his hands. The characters were usually perceived as mother and son involved in a conflict between themselves, or facing an outer threat (i.e. the death of the husband/father) together.

#4. A young woman clutching the shoulders of a young man who is trying to move away from her. This card, more than any other, elicited stories about conflict in love relationships.

#5. A man and a woman engaged in a trapeze act. Many participants perceived this card as less stimulating than the rest. Themes were generally about the feelings of pride and accomplishment after successfully completing the routine.

#6. A country scene, and a rowboat by a pond. There are no people in the picture. Most participants used themes of lovers or families on a picnic or vacation. Some stories were about a solitary person at the pond. Very occasionally a story was written which did not include any characters.

The varied contents and emotional tones embodied in the stimulus materials offered opportunities to see how the participants handled these various situations. Accordingly, differences emerged between the HD and the LD groups not only in general approaches to interpersonal situations, but in specific responses to intimate or conflictual material. These are discussed below. All the stories of these participants

are included in Appendix D.

Differentiation and fusion of story characters. In most cases, HD participants imbued their characters with higher levels of differentiation than did LD participants. The identities and personalities of the characters were more clearly defined. Each character was able to have his or her own thoughts and feelings, even if this caused conflict in the relationship. The boundaries between the people were well delineated. Participants in the LD group were more likely to fuse the boundaries between the characters. Stories were often worded only in terms of "they" with little or no delineation of the individual characters. In this regard, LD participants were more involved in the relational mode of fusion, marked by high levels of identification with the partner and rejection of individuality (Karpel, 1976) than were HD participants.

Two stories are presented below to illustrate these findings. Both were written in response to Card #6 as described above. Each depicts an intimate scene by a pond, but in one story the characters are clearly differentiated from each other. The authors of the stories will be identified by using false initials, i.e., Mr. A, Mrs. B, etc. Couples A, B, and C are in the HD group. Couples D, E, and F are in the LD group. The first story below is by an LD woman, Mrs. F, the second is by an HD woman, Mrs. A.

The boat is awaiting the return of a young man and woman who have come to a secluded part of the lake for a picnic and to be alone. They are in love and come to this special place to dream and talk about their deepest thoughts and secrets. They are in school now and must wait a few years before they can marry which they eventually do.

Everyone in the family loves this rowboat in the pond behind the house. The parents bought it for themselves to explore their pond and eventually brought the children with them. Now Mom and Dad prefer to row at night after dinner to talk and be alone. Their oldest likes to row around and around to build strength and get rid of tension, their daughter takes her boy-friends, like the parents, to be alone, and their youngest lives to fish. It is an important part of the family as it brings them all together in conversation and working to put it in shape.

The feeling tone of both stories is of contentment and happiness. The primary difference is that the characters are better delineated in the second story, which also carries a feeling that the family members can share a special part of their lives in spite of their differing activities and needs.

Intimacy. The issue of fusion between or differentiation of the characters arose consistently in stories relating to contentment in close relationships. All participants tended more toward fusion when the themes were of intimacy than when they were of conflict. Stories expressing feelings of contentment or happiness tended to be ones in which the characters shared experiences, memories, or feelings, and as such, tended to "speak as one." The trend was more pronounced and more widespread, however, among LD couples. Two stories dealing with intimacy, both in response to Card #2, are presented below. The first is by an LD man, Mr. E, the second is by an HD woman, Mrs. B.

Father and mother in tender embrace. Fiftieth wedding anniversary and contemplation of fifty years of togetherness, sharing and bringing up children. Male is father. Female is mother. Both are happily tired and appreciative of the past 50 years. Continued bliss.

Middle aged husband and wife have just had a conversation which brought up some sensitive feelings for both of them.

They are showing each other their love and support of each other's feelings and expressing their contentment in being together. They feel closer together and the partnership is reaffirmed.

In the first story (LD), the characters are not differentiated at all, except by sex and role (father/mother). In the second story (HD), a feeling is conveyed that the two people have differences which are respected within their relationship and that the relationship acknowledges these differences. This sense of the separateness of the two characters is conveyed despite the lack of delineated boundaries between the partners.

Problems in the easy expression of intimate feelings were also evident in the stories. The following story, also to Card #2, was written by an LD man, Mr. F:

Just before the man and woman began to hug each other as shown here, something traumatic happened. The man and woman are fearful at this time as to what has just happened, but if they stay together they will be able to work it out. They are feeling unsure of what has just happened and are probably thinking they would like to be away from each other for a while.

A great deal of ambivalence about closeness is expressed here. Although the characters are embracing, their feeling is fearful. The characters are not at all differentiated from each other in terms of their thoughts, feelings, or responses to the situation. The writer expresses uncertainty about what will take place: on the one hand, he expresses confidence that they can work it out; on the other hand, they want to be away from each other. The sequence of embracing, to fearfulness, to wishes for separation suggests deep ambivalence about the expression of

intimacy originally mentioned.

A story by Mr. A (HD) also describes difficulties in intimacy, but from a different perspective. The story is also in response to Card #2.

The war was never easy, but this was just too much for Mrs. Moriarty. Her most loved son has just been killed in action. She turns longingly to her husband for comfort--emotion has never been allowed in this house. Father feels deeply, too, but his rigid, old world upbringing makes it all the more difficult. He holds her for a while and soon both are crying in each other's arms. Why is it only the death of their Sean could bring them so close?

In this story, the characters are clearly differentiated. Each has his or her own thoughts and feelings. In addition, the writer offers us some background to better understand the characters. Affective themes are of sadness for the loss of their son and of a new closeness achieved by the parents. Simultaneously, the mother is able to experience regret that this closeness has not been a part of their relationship before. The characters in this story can experience conflicting feelings (i.e. closeness and regret) without having to eradicate one of them. In the previous story, the concurrent feelings of fearfulness and closeness seemed to be distressing, such that separation was required. This concept of the ability to tolerate ambivalence or ambiguity in close relationships emerged as an important one which will be discussed further throughout this section.

Complexity of feelings and thought processes. Higher levels of psychological differentiation imply increasingly differentiated internal representations of the self and others which allow greater flexibility in response to interpersonal situations (Raush et al., 1974). The

repertoire of responses available to the person is greater--accordingly, reactions can be stimulus-specific. At lower levels of differentiation, reactions are more feeling-dominated and rigid. Any one of a number of stimuli are likely to provoke similar emotional reactions and thereby equivalent responses.

One of the hallmarks, then, of higher levels of differentiation is the integration of intellectual functioning and emotional responses (Bowen, 1976). Affects are mediated by cognitive processes, leading to the greater flexibility of response style mentioned above. This process was also evident in the TAT stories. In general, the stories of the HD group demonstrated greater degrees of complexity in feelings and thought processes than did the LD group. Characters were more likely to engage in internal monologues, as they weighed their responses to a situation. The affective and cognitive life of the characters was more available for report. Again, stories of the HD group were more likely to reflect internal conflict and ambivalence. The presence of these "mixed feelings" was more likely to lead to pain for these characters. The following story, written by Mrs. A in response to Card #3, exemplifies these points:

John has finally decided to visit his mother again. He only comes about once a year to assuage his guilty conscience. She is always happy to see him, yet saddened by the knowledge that he comes only out of guilt and not affection. John has a high position in sales for a large company in New York City. He has never felt comfortable in his small hometown or their values. He is an ambitious, socially active person who feels that life should be more than family and the quiet life, it should be exciting. He doesn't think his mother understands, but she does. She wants him to be himself and be happy and a part of her life, even if only every few months. She wants him to want to see her, not feel he ought to see her.

In this story, no resolution is offered to the dilemma of the two characters. The richness of their internal cognitive processes is evident, however they are unable to act on their awareness to remediate their predicament. This story, then, illustrates the complexity of internal processes but indicates the paralysis of action which can sometimes occur when one understands the feelings of the other person as well as one's own, and can thereby see the seemingly unreconcilable differences between them.

A story, written by Mrs. D (LD) in response to Card #3, offers action and resolution, but without affording access to the inner processes of the characters:

A son comes home to visit his mother, he tells her some bad news of his wife. She feels very bad for her son and turns away while she tries to figure out how to help him. She decides to tell him that everything will be all right and to move in with her until he can put things to right again.

The writer does not offer insight into the mother's decision-making process. It is only known that she feels "bad", a relatively undifferentiated feeling-state. However, this character is able to overcome her feelings and reach out to her son, which the character in the preceding story was not able to do.

The idea that ambivalence and complexity of feelings may inhibit action, while less awareness of or access to internal processes may facilitate response was examined in the stories. Insufficient evidence could be found to confirm or disconfirm this hypothesis. However, it should be noted that greater differentiation of object-representations does not necessarily lead to greater flexibility in response styles in

action, at least not in all situations.

Tolerance for psychological pain and ambivalence. It has been noted that the stories of HD participants more often display ambivalent feelings and psychological pain. The greater differentiation of both cognitive and affective conceptual dimensions allows the simultaneous experience of disparate thoughts and feelings. The characters in LD stories appear to be more often caught in either/or situations whereby the experience of conflicting emotions is intolerable, and one or the other must be negated or eradicated. It has also been suggested that the stories of HD participants more often include the psychological pain of the characters, largely as a result of internal conflict. At times, this ambivalence may inhibit action.

Outcomes. This pattern is borne out in the analysis of outcomes to stories. Outcomes were rated as favorable, unfavorable or indeterminate. Table 10 depicts the outcomes to TAT stories for the two groups. The most striking result of this analysis is that LD participants are significantly more likely to write stories with favorable outcomes. HD participants are more likely to leave the outcomes of stories indeterminate.

Earlier, it was suggested that the ambivalence which HD participants experience (as reflected in the TAT stories) may inhibit appropriate action in interpersonal situations. The predominance of indeterminate outcomes seems to support this hypothesis. However, in the process of avoiding the experience of ambivalence, it appears that LD participants may often act too quickly, thereby forcing early closure of an is-

TABLE 10
Outcomes of TAT Stories

Group	Participant	Outcomes		
		Favorable	Unfavorable	Indeterminate
HD	Mr. A	0	1	4
	Mrs. A	0	1	4
	Mr. B	2	1	2
	Mrs. B	2	2	1
	Mr. C	1	0	4
	Mrs. C	3	0	2
	Total	8	5	17
LD	Mr. D	4	1	0
	Mrs. D	2	1	2
	Mr. E	3	1	1
	Mrs. E	2	1	2
	Mr. F	4	0	1
	Mrs. F	5	0	0
	Total	20	4	6

$$\chi^2(2) = 9.8, p < .01$$

sue. Thus, the ability to tolerate ambivalence and psychological pain emerged as an important area of difference between the two groups. The following story, written by Mr. F in response to Card #4, illustrates this inability to tolerate painful feelings:

She is restraining him from going after the other guy who he wanted to start a fight with. The other guy beat him out of a job and it's going to cost him a lot of money in the process. She's thinking there will be more jobs for him in the future and not to hold his hopes on that one job. But he doesn't care. He had his heart set on that one job and he's just so frustrated he doesn't know what to do. There will be more jobs for him in the coming days and it all works out all right.

In this story, the feeling of frustration is followed directly by a "happy" ending which does not follow logically from the story. The pain of the frustration is negated and erased by a discontinuous jump into the future, and a "bad" experience is miraculously turned into a "good" one.

The following story by Mrs. A, also to Card #4, presents a good ability to tolerate distress, but without any hope of resolution:

These two are acting in a play in Fort Wayne, New Jersey. Both are from New York City and enjoy the city theatrical life. Although each wishes they could be a star, they know they aren't good enough. They will always be in that limbo of never better, never worse, just mediocre.

Although the affective tone of this story is one of depression, there is also a good sense that the characters know (and regret) their limitations, and are able to tolerate the frustration of being unable to fulfill their dreams. In spite of the lack of differentiation between the characters (which some HD participants also demonstrate in some stories),

there is a clear ability to tolerate frustration.

The following stories also illustrate the differences in the ability to tolerate pain and realistically acknowledge and deal with distressing feelings. The first story is by Mr. D (LD), the second by an HD female, Mrs. B. Both were written in response to Card #3.

Mother is giving her son a little help and counselling on a problem her boy is going through. Maybe that he is having a hard time finding work or his family is in financial trouble. Mother knows best, puts the lad on the right track, and his problems are worked out in no time at all.

Young man's father has just died and he has arrived to comfort his mother. He is struggling with unresolved angry feelings about his father. Mother is calm but deeply into her personal grief. She cannot accept her son's comfort because she feels he is to blame for his father's unhappiness. They cannot talk about their feelings and the situation remains unresolved.

In the first story, a clear and favorable outcome is reported. The difficulty of the son is resolved by an omnipotent mother. Of interest in this story is the son's inability to resolve his own problems, and his dependence on the mother. She is able magically to solve his troubles, thereby alleviating his pain and sparing him the necessity of working things out on his own. The story may be an expression of the author's wish that his own troubles could be resolved in this way.

In the second story, the characters are well-differentiated and the reader is given good insight into their thoughts and feelings. The lack of resolution to the differences between them is striking. The author is aware of the steps the characters need to take to resolve their problem (to talk about their feelings), but does not have the characters take these steps. The ability to tolerate pain is evident, but the

price is the lack of resolution to the problem. Here, the inhibition of action often seen in HD stories is apparent. In this story, the resolution of the differences between the characters would result in the re-establishment of closeness. It may be that although HD participants seem better able to tolerate pain and ambivalence, the cost is the lack of intimacy in relationships; HD participants may use their experience of ambivalence defensively, to avoid the experience of intimacy.

Methods of conflict resolution. Implicit in the foregoing section are differences in the methods the two groups use to resolve conflictual situations. The HD group is more likely to elaborate the views of the two characters clearly, yet leave the situation unresolved. The LD group exhibits a greater need for closure and resolution, which is often achieved at the expense of fully examining the issues involved. Card #4 was most likely to pull for themes of interpersonal conflict. In general, LD stories involved an argument or disagreement between the two characters which threatened the existence of their relationship. Resolution was achieved either by ending the relationship or through a magical, unspecified process by which "everything turns out all right." In HD stories, conflict more often occurred because of the incompatibility of the independent strivings of the characters. Even when their relationship was not able to accommodate these manifestations of individuality, the integrity of the characters was not threatened.

The following story was written by an LD man, Mr. D:

Husband is about to break loose at his wife after a heated fight. The husband is being a bullhead and will not give an inch. The wife, being a good looking, will not stay home so they fight and split up with neither one wanting to give in

they stay apart.

In this story, conflict is resolved through separation. The author adopts an "all or nothing" attitude toward conflict resolution--the only two options are to give in (which here suggests total abdication of one's integrity and independence) or to remain apart (affirmation of one's individuality through unbending adherence to one's position). No path to compromise is possible in this relational mode, because any movement is seen as "giving in."

The next story, written by Mrs. F (LD), illustrates the interpersonal neediness and tendency toward magical solutions which is the alternative to the "all or nothing" position described above:

Husband is walking away from his wife after he finds out she has been unfaithful to him. He is feeling angry and hurt. She realizes she made a mistake and tries to explain what happened. They separate for a while but miss each other and are unhappy. They eventually get back together and work out their problems.

Again, in this story, the conflict threatens the continuation of the relationship. The characters separate, which activates their feelings of neediness and unhappiness at being alone. Their reconciliation is achieved through the somewhat magical "and they work out their problems," although there has been no clear definition of what the problems are or how they will be resolved.

Interpersonal conflict in LD stories, then, challenges the very existence of the relationship. The options for conflict resolution are the termination of the relationship, or a return to the soothing contentment of togetherness. The steps for achieving the latter alterna-

tive tend to be lacking. Again, there is little ability to tolerate painful or ambivalent feelings within the relationship.

The stories of HD participants are markedly different in this regard. The following story was written by an HD woman, Mrs. B:

Man is with female friend in a bar. She has been insulted by another man and the man in the picture is responding angrily and physically. Woman is trying to prevent a scene and calm the man down. He retreats, but remains agitated all evening. She is embarrassed by his behavior. Unpleasant evening.

In this story, as in all HD stories to Card #4, the conflict between the characters does not involve the substance of the relationship. The reactions of the characters are explicitly delineated. The outcome, although indeterminate, is interesting in that the author states it to be an "unpleasant evening." The implication is that the relationship will continue, and is able to accommodate occasional embarrassing moments--the characters do not need to be in synchrony with each other all the time.

The following story, written by Mr. A, illustrates the acknowledgement of and toleration for individuality, even when it might threaten the relationship:

"It's not your fight," she pleads--"stay with me--we can forget the world and all its problems." But she knew it was useless. Kent was the kind of man who saw his friends going and knew he had to follow. He asks only that she wait for him because he'll be back--he loves her. But Meg knows how long separations/new circumstances/and new people tend to get in the way during a war. She promises--but does not see a future for them if he goes. He doubts also--but cannot change his mind.

Here, the relationship between the characters is threatened by the indi-

vidual needs of one person. The conflict is between the desires of the characters (to stay together) and the man's sense of duty and responsibility. Both are realistic about the kind of person that he is, and about likely consequences for the relationship if he leaves. Both characters demonstrate the kind of "knowing" the other person as a truly separate person that derives from what Buber (1955) terms "setting the other at distance." The conflict is not resolved, and the relationship between them might end. However, this does not elicit the needy dependence or rigid counterdependence evident in other stories.

Conflict in LD descriptions of relationships is often seen as threatening to the continuation of the relationship. Strategies for conflict resolution tend to be poorly defined. In HD stories, personal differences are acknowledged by the characters and are understood to be a part of the relationship. Resultant conflict is thereby more easily accepted within the relationship, and its effect is not perceived to be as devastating.

Summary. Analysis of the thematic material of three High Differentiated and three Low Differentiated couples allowed insights into the content of the relational styles of the participants. Several consistent patterns emerged which distinguished the HD from the LD group.

Paralleling the data obtained from the IDT, HD participants were more likely to clearly differentiate the characters in their stories from each other. Boundaries between the two characters were more clearly delineated and each character had his or her own thoughts and feelings. Often, these contributed to conflictual situations, as the

characters were faced with their partner's differences in goals or temperament. Ambivalent feelings predominated and outcomes to the stories were often indeterminate. Conflict was often unresolved, but the characters demonstrated the ability to tolerate the pain and ambiguity of the situation.

Participants from the LD group were less likely to differentiate the characters from each other. Boundaries between the characters were blurred, and they tended to experience the same thoughts and feelings. At intimate moments, this mode appeared quite satisfactory. However, when differences between the characters became evident in conflictual situations, their relationship was often threatened. Characters in LD stories demonstrated less of a capacity to tolerate the "otherness" of the partner, and its attendant anxiety. Conflict situations were approached as "all or none" confrontations which were most often resolved by the dissolution of the relationship or by a magical solution to difficulties. These reactions seemed to be in response to the significant distress engendered by the ambiguity and uncertainty of conflictual episodes.

Both groups tended more toward expressions of fusion in describing moments of intimacy, although the phenomenon was less consistent in the HD group. It appears that the sharing and closeness of intimate moments leads to the blurring of ego boundaries more typical of symbiotic states. Qualitative differences were noted between the descriptions of intimacy by LD and HD participants which reflected the degrees of "otherness" experienced even in the intimacy of the moment. HD participants portrayed an integration of individuality within fusion, while

LD participants' stories reflected a state of relatedness without individuality.

C H A P T E R I V

DISCUSSION

The study investigated the relationship between level of self-other differentiation and relational style in adult couples. Self-other differentiation has been considered the critical dimension underlying the development of object relations schemata, the internal, cognitive structures which organize relational experience and influence the person's interactions in actuality or fantasy. Many authors (Karpel, 1976; Giovacchini, 1976; Bowen, 1972) have elaborated the relationship between intrapsychic, personality organization and relational style, however few empirical investigations have been spawned from this work. Accordingly, this study was undertaken as a first step toward clarifying and documenting this relationship. More specifically, the study sought to determine whether or not people choose marital partners at equal levels of differentiation and, if so, whether the relational styles of high versus low differentiated couples could be distinguished.

Theoretical Considerations

To briefly summarize the theoretical position presented in Chapter I, the process of individuation "involves the subtle but crucial phenomenological shifts by which a person comes to see him/herself as separate and distinct within the relational context in which s/he has been embedded. It is the increasing definition of an 'I' within a 'We'"

(Karpel, 1976, p. 67). As such, the process of individuation entails the gradual construction of boundaries between the self and others. Other people are seen as like the self in some ways, and as different in others. As the internal self-representation solidifies and grows, object-representations also become more clearly defined as independent and separate from the self. This process allows the self and others to be viewed as distinct from each other, and each person in an interaction can be seen as having his or her own feelings, thoughts and personality characteristics. When these internal self- and object-representations are less well defined, boundaries between the self and others are blurred. One's own feelings and thoughts cannot be separated from those of another. Confusion and relational distortions are thereby likely to occur (Jacobson, 1964; Kernberg, 1976; Guntrip, 1961).

The dialectic tension between the two primary relational modes of individuality and relatedness is the medium within which the process of individuation unfolds. Moves toward individuality take place within the relational context, and concomitant changes in self- and object-representations then alter one's functioning in relationships.

The process of individuation occurs in both intrapsychic and relational modes of experience. The accumulated wealth of experiences are organized into object relations schemata which embody the needs, affects and expectations regarding interpersonal situations. In any interaction, these internal object relations schemata are activated; the meaning of the situation is inferred, likely consequences are anticipated, and a response is thereby formulated. Level of self-other differentiation is one of the primary dimensions embodied in object rela-

tions schemata. Accordingly, the behavior of more highly differentiated people has been assumed to be distinguishable from that of lower-differentiated persons (Raush et al., 1974; Bowen, 1972).

Self-other differentiation is only one of many complex ego processes. It has been assumed here that self-other differentiation is a critical variable in understanding interpersonal behavior, but it is only one of many developmental pathways (Freud, 1963) which lead to various adult capabilities. Other developmental lines, relating to other intellectual or emotional domains, evolve independently and level of differentiation in one sphere does not necessarily predict level of differentiation in others.

Developmental aspects of differentiation. In this study, degree of self-other differentiation was measured by the Interpersonal Discrimination Task (Carr, 1965). The theoretical basis of this measure (Harvey, Hunt & Schroder, 1961) postulates that conceptual differentiation occurs as a product of a developmental process in which gross, undifferentiated concepts become increasingly more specific. In Chapter I it was argued that this process closely parallels other theories of individuation. As such, an attempt was made to link differentiation scores with treatment of developmentally-significant themes in TAT stories.

This procedure was unsuccessful. A primary problem was that the scoring system (Yufit, 1969) did not sufficiently distinguish between the developmental issues. The question remains whether, with a more appropriate measure, the hypothesized findings could be demonstrated. All five of the theories reviewed earlier indicate a developmental basis to

the process of self-other differentiation and predict that the answer to the question would be "yes." A more appropriate measure might be Loevinger's (1976) system for evaluating ego development. This comprehensive system details milestones of ego development across four categories: impulse control and character development, interpersonal style, conscious preoccupations, and cognitive style. Because this system stresses the points of convergence between the areas of ego development, it might better elucidate the interrelations between cognitive, conceptual development and the concurrent development of object relations schemata and relational style.

The hypothesis that levels of self-other differentiation parallel ego development in other domains was the only one that could not be tested. The other hypotheses which governed the study were supported. These are discussed below.

Two Facets of Conceptual Differentiation

As was expected, differentiation within conceptual dimensions (D_w) proved to be the facet of conceptual differentiation with more powerful relational implications. The IDT, the measure of D_w , instructs the participants to determine whether people known well by the participant are similar or dissimilar to the self and to each other along dimensions which are idiosyncratically meaningful to the participant. The discrimination of these similarities and differences reflects the participant's ability to see others as separate and distinct from the self. As such, the IDT taps into the internal, object relations schemata which organize the participant's perceptions of the significant people in his

or her life. IDT scores reflect the degree of self-other differentiation which is embodied in those internal self- and object representations.

Differentiation between conceptual dimensions (Db), however, assesses the number of conceptual dimensions available to the participant for self-description. It was found that the numbers of dimensions did not predict relational style or matching (on the number of dimensions) within couples, and as such it appears to be less useful for investigations aimed at understanding relational behavior. The ACL, as a measure of Db, asked the participant to describe only him or herself and thus was a measure of self-differentiation devoid of any relational context. It is interesting to note that of the 10 couples who were heterogamous on the IDT, nine were homogamous on the ACL. It may be that for these couples synchrony in self-description (Db) provides a basis for understanding the other person and forming an intimate bond. Although the couples evidenced disparate levels of self-other differentiation, there may be a significant similarity between the partners such that perceptions of each other are experienced as valid and true. These hypotheses are speculative, but homogamy on Db may circumvent some of the interpersonal difficulties which otherwise arise in partners of unequal levels of differentiation.

Homogamy

Because of the relational significance of Dw, homogamy was defined as matching on the IDT. The finding that 75% of the couples were homogamous on the IDT confirmed the primary hypothesis of the study--that

people choose marital partners at equivalent levels of self-other differentiation. This finding lends credence to the theoretical work of Bowen (1965, 1971, 1976) who states that:

The life style and thinking and emotional patterns of people at one level of the scale are so different from people at other levels that people choose spouses or close personal friends from those with equal levels of differentiation (1972, p. 117).

Moss and Lee (1976) working from the theoretical formulations advanced by Giovacchini (1958, 1967) view homogamy in slightly different terms--as the basic similarity of character structure between the spouses. Each partner utilizes the total personality of the other to maintain intrapsychic and relational equilibrium. In heterogamous marriages, the partners have different character structures, and are attracted only to a particular trait in the other person. The marital bond in these relationships is more transitory and superficial; these marriages more frequently end in divorce. Moss and Lee stress that homogamous marriages are not necessarily "healthy" or "happy", but the strife involved in some chronically conflictual marriages may serve deep, intrapsychic needs for the partners, validating internalized relational expectations, and ensuring the continuation of the relationship. In a study of couples in therapy, Moss and Lee found that homogamous couples were more likely to evidence high levels of mutual investment in the relationship. They stay in treatment longer, and are less likely to divorce than are heterogamous couples.

Homogamy and marital satisfaction. The work of Moss and Lee (1976) re-

lates to the findings in the present study on marital satisfaction. Homogamous couples, regardless of level of differentiation, were somewhat more likely to report marital satisfaction than were heterogamous couples. Certain deep, intrapsychic needs seem to be fulfilled. Homogamous couples are more likely to have had similar relational backgrounds and experiences (Giovacchini, 1976). Their expectations for current relationships are accordingly more congruent. Even in conflictual relationships, the basic expectations and rules deriving from object relations schemata (i.e. spouses fight) are more likely to be the same. Because the relationship is one in which the total personalities of the partners are intertwined, both intrapsychic and relational homeostases can be established. This equilibrium not only maintains the current levels of ego integration, but can also provide the medium for further ego growth and differentiation resulting from the experience in the relationship of empathy, security and stability.

Homogamy and levels of differentiation. The previous section discussed implications of homogamy regardless of level of differentiation. Differences between the High Differentiated (HD) and Low Differentiated (LD) groups were also expected. An unanticipated finding was the lack of difference between the two groups in terms of the numbers of feelings and interactions used in telling TAT stories. It had been expected that because HD participants more finely discriminate their own affective lives and the people close to them, they would also report greater numbers of feelings and interactions in interpersonal situations. In retrospect, this can be seen to be faulty reasoning. The ability to make

fine discriminations along conceptual dimensions in no way implies that those dimensions would be used more often. The measures used were frequencies, and did not utilize the content of the feelings or interactions. When viewed in this light, it is not surprising that no differences were found between the two groups. Although LD participants may not discriminate as finely within conceptual dimensions, the two groups use approximately equal numbers of affects and interactions. The equivalent numbers of these categories may in fact reflect a congruence in relational orientations deriving from equivalence in object relations schemata, and it may be the similarity between partners and not the differences between groups that is important. Level of differentiation has been said to influence the way one views the self, the partner, and the expectations for the relationship. The use of feelings and interactions are certainly a part of this, and the similarity between marital partners probably reflects the homogamy of internal object relations schemata.

Fusion and Differentiation

While the frequencies of feelings and interactions did not discriminate between the stories of LD and HD groups, striking differences were observed in the content of those feelings and interactions. A primary difference was in the ways that the participants in the two groups described the characters in their stories. The boundaries between characters in LD stories were more often blurred. The thoughts and feelings of the characters were blended together. A striking lack of individuality was apparent. This contrasted with the portrayal of

characters by HD participants. In those stories, the characters were more clearly defined, treated as separate from each other and as having different thoughts and feelings. This pattern most clearly illustrates the manifestations of self-other differentiation which has been discussed theoretically throughout this paper.

Internal (self) differentiation is a prerequisite for a clearly articulated experience of the world (Witkin, 1962). Without a well-differentiated self-system, the concepts which govern one's world are bipolar, offering only either/or response choices. The concepts can be modified when the tension between the two poles is sufficient to force the evaluation of new alternatives and the integration of previously irreconcilable alternatives (Harvey, Hunt & Schroder, 1961). The two primary poles of relational concepts are individuality and relatedness. The schemata which organize these concepts, and their degree of differentiation, have been shown to underlie relational behavior.

Differentiation of object relations schemata. The incorporation of well-differentiated conceptual dimensions into object relations schemata derives from resolution of the tension between bipolar concepts through the synthesis of the once opposite concepts (Harvey, Hunt & Schroder, 1961). The differentiation of conceptual dimensions leads to "shades of gray" which replace the "black or white" alternatives, and facilitates the ability to hold both ends of the continuum in awareness at the same time. In lower levels of differentiation, without as many "shades of gray," there remains more involvement in the polarities and, since these cannot be integrated, either/or responses are more prevalent.

Management of conflict and ambivalence. Differences were observed between the HD and LD groups most clearly in conflictual or ambivalent situations. As was seen in TAT stories, HD participants, who more clearly differentiated the story characters from each other, also allowed more access to the internal cognitive and affective processes of the characters. The primary character was more able to see the other as separate and to acknowledge the ways in which the other was different from the self. The thoughts and feelings of both characters were often articulated. In many cases this led to the experience of ambivalence as story characters struggled with their own conflictual feelings and with relational difficulties. It was seen that the articulation of these feelings reflected the characters' abilities to differentiate their affective and cognitive experiences such that they were not governed by non-specific, feeling-dominated "reflex" responses. This conscious acknowledgement of ambivalence is one of the hallmarks of higher levels of differentiation. Searles (1981) emphasizes this point:

It is to be noted that ambivalence which is largely unconscious, rather than conscious and therefore integratable by the ego, requires symbiotic relatedness with the other person, relatedness in which the other personifies those components of the ambivalent feelings which one is having to repress at the moment. Contrariwise, when one can face and accept his own ambivalent feelings, one can be a separate person and can react to the other as being, also, a separate person (p. 422).

The conscious acceptance of ambivalence requires the ability to hold two opposing feelings (concepts) in awareness at the same time, and is thus possible only when conceptual dimensions are sufficiently differentiated and synthesized.

In the stories, the ability to accept ambivalent feelings was also related to the ability to tolerate psychological pain. The experience of pain was generally not as noxious for HD participants as it was for LD participants. Pain, especially regarding relational disappointments, was not as overwhelming and there was less need to immediately excise it. For the characters in HD stories, the relationship was not seen as necessary for the survival of the self. Pain resulting from relational disappointments could theoretically be relegated to one part of the self-system, without devastating overall self-esteem. Higher levels of differentiation, and the concomitant separation of affective and cognitive processes, allowed the use of higher level defense mechanisms, especially intellectualization and sublimation, to cope with difficult circumstances (Witkin, 1962).

It has also been mentioned that this ability to tolerate ambivalence and pain can lead to problems for HD participants, especially in terms of inhibiting action. The outcomes of HD stories were often indeterminate. The ability to tolerate pain and ambivalence may offer the time necessary to reach appropriate decisions about plans of action, however it can also lead to entrapment in the conflictual feeling-state. The awareness of what is given up by any course of action may impede action altogether. In this way, the perpetuation of ambivalence as a relational style may be a conflict-avoidance strategy--in essence, a way of not confronting the issue. This strategy also can serve defensive purposes--the avoidance of conflict also implies the avoidance of the consequences of the conflict, in some cases inevitable separation, in other cases, reconciliation and intimacy. The TAT stories do not afford

enough data to draw firm conclusions. However, Eidelberg (1968) discusses this phenomenon, which he terms ambivalent oscillation:

. . .a condition characterized by the subject's inability to make up his mind; quick changes from positive to negative impulses occur with resultant indecision. . . . Ambivalent oscillation, as a defense mechanism, serves to protect the patient from a conscious awareness of the presence of an infantile wish and its defense. The patient also maintains the illusion that he can gratify both contradictory wishes at the same time (p. 28).

In HD couples, conflict can be conceptualized as arising from incongruities in the partner's desires for varying degrees of individuality and relatedness. In some of the stories reproduced above, the partners were able to acknowledge their differences in this regard and take appropriate action. Other stories ended ambivalently and without resolution. In these cases, it is possible that the ambivalence of the partners served the defensive functions outlined above.

Participants from the LD group face different pitfalls. The lack of tolerance for ambivalence in their stories led to quick action, often without considering all sides of an issue. In LD stories, too, conflicts revolved around tensions between striving for individuality and relatedness. According to Bowen, "marital conflict occurs when neither spouse will 'give in' to the other in the fusion, or when the other who has been giving in or adapting refuses to continue" (1972, p. 115). Relationships which are characterized by higher levels of fusion are ones in which fewer relational alternatives exist. The primary options are fusion or separation, both extreme ends of the relational continuum, and both of which may be unacceptable. Using Karpel's (1976) conceptualiza-

tion, LD stories are most reflective of the relational mode of ambivalent fusion, the essence of which is the conflict between progressive tendencies toward differentiation and the regressive tendencies toward identification.

. . .partners in an ambivalently fused relationship experience not only the gratifications but the anxieties of fusion. They have differentiated sufficiently to feel threatened by the loss of self that accompanies fusion. However, they have no haven outside of the fused state, since they are not sufficiently individuated to feel comfortable as separate persons. Outside the fusion, they are always lonely, never just alone. In addition, each will be repeatedly faced with his/her partner's attempts to avoid fusion and with all the anxiety over loss of self through loss of the other that this creates (Karpel, 1976, p. 74).

Conflict is especially overwhelming in relationships of ambivalent fusion, since conflict implies a loss of fusion and the risk of loss of self. Such couples try to find ways of maintaining an acceptable balance of closeness/distance in an attempt to circumvent this occurrence. The goal of these relationships, which in the ambivalent stage cannot be attained, is a return to blissful fusion. Moves toward individuation by one partner are experienced by the other as a betrayal of the goal of total synchrony. The anxiety which this arouses leads to the need for fast action to reestablish fusion or eradicate anxiety. The lack of differentiation between cognitive and affective processes means that more global defense mechanisms are used to cope with distress. Magical reconciliations in conflictual situations reflect the use of massive denial to disavow the problems which exist. Separation usually results when one partner projects his or her own negative feelings onto the other, thereby being able to see the self as "good" and the other as

"bad." Oscillations between fusion and isolation, then, characterize these relationships.

It was seen that LD stories about conflict most often ended with separations or magical solutions. The magical solutions seem to represent the wished-for outcome which brings the reestablishment of fusion. If it cannot be attained, the only other option is the rejection of the other and separation. Also, there was more evidence in LD stories that deep rage is aroused when relational needs are not gratified. Since the relationship is the medium by which psychological equilibrium is maintained, and the self is so entwined with the other, failures in synchrony tend to be experienced as narcissistic injuries which threaten the existence of the self.

Intimacy. The preceding discussion has centered around the treatment of conflict in which the two groups were most dissimilar. In stories about intimacy, the groups resembled each other quite closely. In intimacy, the fusion of characters was most often present. The themes of these stories revolved around the characters remembering shared experiences in the past, and as such they "speak as one." Most theoreticians agree that all experiences of intimacy involve a blurring of ego boundaries and at least a partial fusion. Giovacchini (1976) postulates that all intimate contacts involve an attempt to reenacting the original symbiotic relationship with the mother. In this sense, intimacy, as the ultimate manifestation of relatedness, reflects regressive tendencies. However, Giovacchini goes on to state that:

The initial symbiosis has undergone a series of refinements and progressive development leading to an expansive sense of

self. . . . A person seeks a spouse whom he values in the same way he values himself. The elements of the earlier symbiosis continue to operate even in so-called "mature" object relationships, but they are expansive rather than constrictive because the symbiosis has undergone considerable organization. The person finds that, in order to value another person, he must know how to value himself, and he must rediscover in the other a valued part of the self (1965, as quoted in Moss & Lee, 1976, p. 399).

It is not surprising, then, that all participants tended toward fusion of characters in intimate scenes.

Differences in the experience of intimacy do exist according to Giovacchini (1976), and they vary with level of differentiation. Regardless of that level, the spouse is essential to the maintenance of the relational homeostasis. In intimate moments, each partner projects aspects of the self-representation onto the other, and introjects the projected self-representation of the spouse. The degree of integration of the self-representation determines the experience of the moment.

"The well-developed ego possesses a coherent self-representation that views itself as a whole object and also responds to external objects as whole objects. . ." (Giovacchini, 1967, p. 13). In less differentiated partners, the other person is responded to as a part-object. The projection of these part-object-representations offers less integrative potential for the participants in the relationship.

The ideal options in intimate moments then seem to be the fusion characteristic of less differentiated states, or a different kind of intimacy which can occur when both tender and aggressive feelings have been integrated into an ability to respond to the other as a whole object, or to tolerate ambivalence toward love objects (Kernberg, 1976).

In some stories, however, difficulties in the expression of intimacy were noted. These cases probably involve either the fear of fusion which would result from the blurring of boundaries or a significant amount of anger such that aggression inhibits the willingness to contact the other.

Summary and Conclusions

The thesis that intrapsychic organization is related to relational style has been supported in this study. It was seen that level of self-other differentiation discriminates relational style, especially in terms of the management of conflict, and that these differences conform well to current psychological theories. The primary dimension discussed was the degree of fusion/differentiation in perceptions of the self and others, and the concomitant ability to view the personality and needs of others as independent from one's own. This type of conceptual differentiation has formed the basis of all of the analyses.

It should be noted that, in terms of the theories presented (i.e. Karpel, 1976), none of the participant couples could be classified at either extreme of the continuum of relational modes. The stories written by LD couples were certainly not typical of pure fusion, nor did the stories of HD participants match descriptions of the dialogic mode. Instead, both groups fall broadly into the realm of ambivalent fusion, although they can be seen as being at different ends of that mini-continuum. Even in the subsample, which was selected by choosing participants with the highest and lowest differentiation scores, the extreme forms of fusion and dialogue were not found. In reality, the vast majority of

people fall in the middle of the range, and the upper and lower ends of the continuum are probably theoretical constructs only for normally functioning adults. Most people display manifestations of fusion at some times, and of dialogue at others. They slip into symbiotic relatedness, then re-individuate. The object relations schemata of all persons contain elements of immature relational patterns from childhood which are sometimes acted upon, and at others are transcended. This is not meant to negate the findings presented above, but to place them within a broader, theoretical context.

Directions for future research. The bulk of the findings reported here derive from the analysis of the TAT stories of a subset of the sample. Although the trends in the results are strong, they should be validated using a larger sample. This would require a much larger starting sample, since an analysis of extreme groups seems necessary to illuminate differences in relational style. In the current research, the expansion of the subsample would have resulted in the dilution of the differences between the groups. In future research, a battery of measures to assess relational style would be useful. TAT stories were effective, but because they are fantasy productions, the generalizability of these findings to actual behavior can only be assumed.

The specific relational complementarities between husbands and wives could not be assessed here, because the TAT stories did not provide sufficient data for this type of analysis. Other researchers (i.e. Raush et al., 1974) have achieved this by having participants engage in videotaped interactional sequences. This methodology, while more de-

manding, may be required to evaluate the relational patterns which characterize specific relationships.

In sum, however, the current research achieved its original goals: the elucidation of the relational styles of high and low differentiated people. The results support widely held theoretical views, previously verified only through clinical experiences.

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APPENDIX A

Packet of Experimental Materials

PART I

Participant Number _____

General Information

Please complete this questionnaire as accurately as possible. To ensure confidentiality, the survey is identified by participant number only. The information contained in the items below will permit a more complete description of the general population from which the data have been collected.

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Occupation: _____

Education: (Please check the highest level completed)

Junior high school _____

Some college _____

Some high school _____

College degree _____

High school degree _____

Graduate school _____ years

Graduate degree _____

Other occupational training: (Please specify) _____

Total family income: (Please check one item)

0 - 5,000/yr. _____

15,000 - 20,000/yr. _____

5,000 - 10,000/yr. _____

20,000 - 25,000/yr. _____

10,000 - 15,000/yr. _____

More than 25,000 _____

PART I - 2

Participant Number _____

Marital Status:

- (a) How long have you been married? _____ years
- (b) Were you previously married? Yes _____ No _____
- (c) If previously married, how many times? _____
(Do not count present marriage)

Children:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Living at home</u> (yes or no)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Religious Affiliation: _____

Interpersonal Discrimination TaskPART II

Participant Number _____

This is a survey of the various ways people can describe one another. It is not a test, and so there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. We are going to ask you to describe some people you know. As you do this, please write legibly and express yourself as clearly as possible.

On the six lines below, write the first names or initials of your spouse, mother, father, two friends of the same sex as yourself (i.e. female friends if you are a woman, and male friends if you are a man) and one opposite-sex friend. List six different persons whom you know well. If you never knew a parent, substitute an older relative or friend of the same sex as the parent, and to whom you felt close as a child. Please list these people next to the appropriate designation below:

- (1) Spouse --
- (2) Mother --
- (3) Father --
- (4) Same-sex friend --
- (5) Same-sex friend --
- (6) Opposite-sex friend --

This list is for your convenience only. Throughout the rest of the questionnaire each person will be referred to by number only, that is, Person (1), Person (2), and so on. Feel free to use false names if it is more comfortable for you, but please be careful to place the correct name next to each designation.

PART II - 2

Participant Number _____

PERSON M

Now, think about yourself. We shall call you Person M (for Me).
In the left-hand column below write three qualities or characteristics
you have which you like. Next, write their opposites in the right-hand
column.

QUALITYOPPOSITE

1. _____

--

2. _____

--

3. _____

--

PART II - 3

Participant Number _____

PERSON M

Now, please think of three qualities or characteristics you have which you do not like, or like least, and write them in the left-hand column below. Again, write their opposites in the right-hand column.

QUALITYOPPOSITE

1. _____

--

2. _____

--

3. _____

--

PART II - 4

Participant Number _____

Now, turn back to page 2 in this booklet and look at the first quality you listed for yourself. How would you compare the six people you have named and yourself on this first characteristic? We want you to show which persons are alike on this quality, if there are any alike, and which persons are different, if there are any that are different.

For example, let us say that "honesty" is the quality in question. Now, if you thought that there was really no difference between everyone, that yourself and the six others were equally "honest", then you would have one group and would represent this by merely putting everyone's number in one box:

1	5	2	4
M	6	3	

Or let us say that you thought Persons 1, 3, 4 and M (yourself) were more honest, and that Persons 2, 5, and 6 were less honest. Then you would have two groups and would represent this by dividing the rectangle into two boxes:

1	3		2	6
4	M		5	

PART II - 5

Participant Number _____

Or, what if you thought that Persons 3, 5, and M (yourself) were very honest. Persons 1 and 2 were less honest, and that Persons 4 and 6 were least honest. Then you would have three groups and would represent this by dividing the rectangle into three boxes:

3 M	5	1 2	4 6
--------	---	--------	--------

In the same way, you could also use four, five, six, or even seven boxes, if you like, to compare everyone. As a last example, let us say that none of the six others and yourself were alike, that you were all different, that Person 2 was most honest, Person 1 next most honest, Person 5 next, then Person M (yourself), then Person 3, then Person 4, and finally Person 6 the least honest of all. You would then use seven boxes to represent this:

2	1	5	M	3	4	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

In other words, you can divide this group of seven people in any way you like by using one, two, three, four, five, six, or seven boxes. The idea is that if people are alike, then they should be in the same box, and if they are different, they should be in different boxes. Each box should represent less of the quality and more of its opposite as you

PART II - 6

Participant Number _____

move from left to right. You may, of course, use different numbers of boxes for each of the six qualities.

Now please go back and compare everyone, the six others and yourself, on each of the six qualities you used to describe yourself. Thank you.

Adjective Check List

Participant Number _____

PART III

DIRECTIONS: The following pages contain a list of adjectives. Please read them quickly and put an X in the line beside each one which you would consider to describe yourself. Do not worry about duplications, contradictions, and so forth. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective. Try to be frank, and check those adjectives which describe you as you really are, not as you would like to be.

PART III

Participant Number _____

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ absent-minded | _____ easy going |
| _____ adventurous | _____ emotional |
| _____ affectionate | _____ enthusiastic |
| _____ aggressive | _____ excitable |
| _____ appreciative | _____ fearful |
| _____ artistic | _____ flirtatious |
| _____ autocratic | _____ forgetful |
| _____ awkward | _____ formal |
| _____ calm | _____ frivolous |
| _____ cautious | _____ gentle |
| _____ cheerful | _____ good-natured |
| _____ clever | _____ hard-headed |
| _____ complaining | _____ healthy |
| _____ conceited | _____ high-strung |
| _____ conscientious | _____ humorous |
| _____ contented | _____ imaginative |
| _____ cooperative | _____ impulsive |
| _____ cruel | _____ individualistic |
| _____ daring | _____ informal |
| _____ deliberate | _____ inhibited |
| _____ dependent | _____ intelligent |
| _____ dignified | _____ irresponsible |
| _____ dissatisfied | _____ jolly |
| _____ dominant | _____ leisurely |

PART III - 2

Participant Number _____

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| _____ loyal | _____ self-punishing |
| _____ mature | _____ sensitive |
| _____ mild | _____ severe |
| _____ modest | _____ sharp-witted |
| _____ natural | _____ shrewd |
| _____ obliging | _____ simple |
| _____ optimistic | _____ slow |
| _____ original | _____ sociable |
| _____ patient | _____ sophisticated |
| _____ peculiar | _____ spontaneous |
| _____ pessimistic | _____ steady |
| _____ pleasure-seeking | _____ strong |
| _____ practical | _____ submissive |
| _____ precise | _____ superstitious |
| _____ prudish | _____ tactful |
| _____ quick | _____ temperamental |
| _____ rational | _____ thorough |
| _____ rebellious | _____ timid |
| _____ reflective | _____ tough |
| _____ resentful | _____ unambitious |
| _____ responsible | _____ undependable |
| _____ rigid | _____ unfriendly |
| _____ sarcastic | _____ unkind |
| _____ self-controlled | _____ unselfish |

PART III - 3

Participant Number _____

_____ vindictive

_____ warm

_____ wholesome

_____ worrying

TAT InstructionsPART IV

Participant Number _____

DIRECTIONS: The following pages contain six pictures and six blank pieces of paper. Please write a story about each picture, but do not look at the pictures before you are ready to write. Make the stories brief. Spend about 5 minutes on each story, and certainly no more than 8 minutes. Please write the stories in the same order in which the pictures are presented.

Please answer the following questions in each story:

1. What is happening in the picture?
2. What led up to the event shown?
3. Who are the characters, and what are they thinking and feeling?
4. What will the outcome be?

Do not worry about spelling or grammar, but try to write clearly.

Thank you.

Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Questionnaire

PART V

Participant Number _____

This questionnaire assesses your feelings about your present marriage. Please try to answer all questions as honestly and frankly as possible.

1. Check the place on the scale below which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered, of your present marriage. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness which most people get from marriage, and the scale gradually ranges on one side to those few who are very unhappy in marriage, and on the other, to those few who experience extreme joy or felicity in marriage.

•	•	•	•	•
Very Unhappy		Happy		Perfectly Happy

State the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your mate on the following items. Please check one level of agreement for each item.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occa- sionally Disagree	Fre- quently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
2. Handling family finances						
3. Matters of recreation						
4. Demonstra- tions of affection						
5. Friends						
6. Sex rela- tions						
7. Convention- ality (right, good or proper con- duct)						
8. Philosophy of life						

PART V - 2

Participant Number _____

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occa- sionally Disagree	Fre- quently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
9. Ways of dealing with in- laws						

PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONS BELOW:

10. When disagreements arise, they usually result in:

Husband giving in

Wife giving in

Agreement by mutual give and take

11. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together:

All of them

Some of them

Very few of them

None of them

12. In leisure time do you generally prefer:

"To be on the go"

To stay at home

13. Do you ever wish you had not married:

Frequently

Occasionally

Rarely

Never

14. If you had your life to live over, do you think you would:

Marry the same person

Marry a different person

Not marry at all

15. Do you confide in your mate:

Almost never

Rarely

In most things

In everything

APPENDIX B

TAT Rating Sheet - Yufit System

Participant Number _____

TRUST-MISTRUST

						Score
						<u>Story Number</u>
t/n	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}

AUTONOMY-SHAME AND DOUBT

						<u>Story Number</u>
t/n	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}

IDENTITY-IDENTITY DIFFUSION

						<u>Story Number</u>
t/n	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}

INTIMACY-ISOLATION

						<u>Story Number</u>
t/n	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}

				<u>T</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>INT</u>
Average of Need and Press							

APPENDIX C

Family Story Technique - Kadushin et al. system

Scoring Form #1

Participant Number _____

Feeling Categories	Stories						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Affection							
2. Anger							
3. Anxiety							
4. Compulsion							
5. Conflict							
6. Depression							
7. Effort							
8. Escape							
9. Frustration							
10. Guilt							
11. Hostility (aggression)							
12. Loneliness							
13. Orality							
14. Pain							
15. Pleasure							
16. Sex							
17. Suicide							
18. Wishful Thinking							
TOTAL							

Family Story Technique Scoring Form #2

Direction of Relationship (or Action)

Interpersonal- Relationships	Participant Number										Total	
	M-C	C-M	F-C	C-F	Auth-S	S-Auth	M-M	M-W	W-M	W-W		Other
Moving Towards												
Affection												
Acceptance												
Submission												
Dominance												
Moving Against												
Hostility												
Moving Away From												
Separation												
Rejection												
Total												
<u>Outcome</u>												
Favorable												
Unfavorable												
Indeterminate												

APPENDIX D

TAT Stories of Participants in the Subsample

Mr. A

1. Mary is going off to college--finally getting away she thinks. Living on the farm with her parents has been such a drag--all the work--early hours, bad years, etc. Her hard work at the rural school house has finally paid off--a full scholarship to the State University. Her parents will never understand her need to get away. Her mother dreams and her father hopes their next child will be a son who loves to farm as they do. With luck all three will be happy with the future.
2. The war was never easy, but this was just too much for Mrs. Moriarty. Her most loved son has been reported killed in action. She turns longingly to her husband for comfort--emotion has never been allowed in this house. Father feels deeply too but his rigid old world upbringing makes it all the more difficult. He holds her for awhile and soon both are crying in each other's arms. Why is it only the death of their Sean could bring them so close?
3. John is so puzzled. The constible is telling his mother that there is no trace of Mary in the town. Where could she have gone? And why? She seemed happy--or at least content these last few months. It has been two years since Sean's death, surely that wound has healed. John was so close to Mary yet now he feels he never knew her. He knows it will be hard on his mother--it is up to him to take care of her now. So ends the independence John had felt--duty is ruling the future as it has so often in this world.
4. "It's not your fight," she pleads--stay with me--we can forget the world and all its problems." But she knew it was useless. Kent was the kind of man who saw his friends going and knew he had to follow. He asks only that she wait for him because he'll be back--he loves her. But Meg knows how long separations/new circumstances /and new people tend to get in the way during a war. She promises --but does not see a future for them if he goes. He doubts also--but cannot change his mind.
5. The circus was their life and they loved to perform. Ever since they were kids and watched their parents doing the same daring act they wanted to perform. The discipline, hard work and sacrifice was worth it all--they were the best of them all--the BIG TOP gave them life and nothing could take that away.

6. It was a perfect fall day. The trees were turning to golden red, and various shades of brown. It was cool but not cold. The river was calm and the day was everything to the couple. They found a perfect spot for their picnic--perhaps the last of the season. The boat was securely anchored and a walk in the woods was only natural. Life has its pleasures and this was one.

Mrs. A

1. Ema's parents have died and she has moved to the midwest to live with her aunt and uncle who are very kind but old and set in their ways. Ema is left much to herself. She has few friends and is a loner. After school during her free time, of which she has plenty, she wanders over the countryside, thinking of her parents and friends back east, wishing her life had never changed. Watching the farm people, leading their hard but useful lives she enviously dreams of the day when she will be free to do something with her life, just to even really feel alive. Of course she realizes that the farm people would rather her leisurely empty life instead of theirs nobody is ever satisfied.
2. Seth and Marion have just decided to sell their home of forty years. Actually, they didn't really decide, they have to do it, they just can't afford the upkeep anymore on their social security. This was the only house they ever owned. It wasn't such a showplace at first, but they added on as their income and family grew, they put in the pool only because it was cheaper than a vacation. Their four children and their families are all doing well. They feel bad about their parents having to sell their beloved house but not so much to help them financially. It will be interesting to see how long this sad couple lives after moving to the elderly people's condominiums.
3. John has finally decided to visit his mother again. He only comes about once a year to assuage his guilty conscience. She is always happy to see him yet saddened by the knowledge that he comes only out of guilt not affection. John has a high position in sales for a large company in New York City. He has never felt comfortable in his small hometown or their values. He is an ambitious, socially active person who feels that life should be more than family and the quiet life, it should be exciting. He doesn't think his mother understands but she does. She wants him to be himself and happy and a part of her life, even if only every few months. She wants him to want to see her not feel he ought to see her.
4. These two are acting in a play in Fort Wayne, New Jersey. Both are from New York City and enjoy the city theatrical life. Although each wishes they could be a star, they know they aren't good enough. They will always be in that limbo of never better, never worse, just mediocre.

5. Nobody looks like this woman or this man so they must be part of someone's imagination. Someone who isn't very educated or well read. A person in a dull day to day job that they don't enjoy yet don't have the courage or skill to leave, in other words, the majority of people that dream but only of things that are impossible, that way they never have to try to achieve them.
6. Everyone in the family loves this rowboat in the pond behind the house. The parents bought it for themselves to explore their pond and eventually brought their children with them. Now Mom and Dad prefer to row at night after dinner to talk and be alone. Their oldest likes to row around and around to build strength and get rid of tension, their daughter takes her boyfriends, like the parents to be alone, and their youngest loves to fish. It is an important part of the family as it brings them all together in conversation and working to put it in shape.

Mr. B

1. Hard working father. Long suffering mother. Dreaming daughter wants something more than farming. Longs to go to school and get away from the farm. Daughter has told parents she wants to leave farm. Father goes out to field angry. Mother feels tired, undecided about daughter's feelings. Daughter will leave. See "My Brilliant Career."
2. Old man and his wife embracing. Just celebrated milestone wedding anniversary. Reflective and still much in love. Will continue so until they die.
3. Son with his mother. "I have to go in the Army, Mom." "Oh, no, Son, what will I do without you?" "It's O.K., Mom, I'll be back and take care of you." He doesn't make it back.
4. Man and his girlfriend. He's about to leave in search of his fortune. She thinks he's foolhardy and should stay and raise a family with her. He leaves but soon discovers he needs her and returns.
5. Straight forward picture. Not very provocative for me. Man and woman on trapeze. She is a new partner for the man. This is their first show together. She is successful on trapeze but runs away with the bearded lady so after this picture.
6. Peaceful country scene. A boy has come out to the pond to do some fishing. Lovely day, boy catches a few fish but mostly just lie by the bank thinking pleasantly and enjoying the sun.

Mrs. B

1. Young girl is going off to school, father has begun working the field, mother is daydreaming before beginning her work. All have been together earlier at breakfast and said goodbye to daughter before she left. Mother and father not aware that daughter is unhappy. Father over-worked and pressured with his responsibility. Mother dreamy and self involved and pregnant (thinking ahead, anticipating birth). Young girl dreams of a different life and is very lonely. She is planning to and eventually leave to make her own life and her parents worry about her restlessness but never realize what she has been feeling.
2. Middle aged husband and wife have just had a conversation which brought up some sensitive feelings for both of them. They are showing each other their love and support of each other's feelings and expressing their contentment in being together. They feel closer together and the partnership feel re-affirmed.
3. Young man's father has just died and he has arrived to comfort his mother. He is struggling with un-resolved angry feelings about his father. Mother is calm but deeply into her personal grief. She cannot accept her son's comfort because she feels he is to blame for his father's unhappiness. They cannot talk about their feelings and situation remains un-resolved.
4. Man is with female friend in a bar. She has been insulted by another man and man in picture is responding angrily and physically. Woman is trying to prevent a scene and calm the man down. He retreats but remains agitated all evening. She is embarrassed by his behavior. Unpleasant evening.
5. Husband and wife circus performers are practicing stunt for their act. She has been afraid to try because it seemed dangerous and she didn't trust his judgment. He has spent some time re-assuring and persuading her. She's very nervous, he's calm but getting frustrated. Finally, she decides to try and over-come her fear and do it to please him and because she needs to prove to herself that she can. She succeeds but still feels unsure of herself.
6. There are no people in the pictures but there would have been a few minutes ago. Two young lovers just rowed down a stream and stopped in this beautiful meadow to pick wild flowers, picnic, make love and take a nap. They feel wonderful. Happy ending.

Mr. C

1. A young girl is on her way home from school and is passing a farmer hard at work in his fields. With the farmer is his pregnant wife who is watching her husband at work. The farmer is busy plowing

the field and concerned about the many stones in the way of his plow. The two women however seem to be thinking each about their respective lives and the paths they have chosen--are to be a farmer's wife and bear children, the other to become a career woman. Their thoughts are probably motivated by social pressures which makes each one question their position. Both women will probably continue to follow the same path they are now on and will soon forget this moment. The farmer is too concerned with his work to worry about the path he is taking through life.

2. In this picture a middle aged married couple are dancing a slow dance. They have gone out for the evening to celebrate a special event and both are tired because they are not adapted to this life style. Both people feel comfortable with each other despite the fact that they are tired. They have both had a great evening. While not speaking, they seem to be communicating with each other very nicely. There is a certain tenderness in the way they embrace each other. The outcome will be for them to go home and collapse in bed!
3. The son has just come home from the county hospital to tell his mother that dad has to have a serious operation and his chance of survival is small. The son finds it difficult to discuss since his father is very close to him, and because he is afraid of his mother's reaction. Her reaction is one of shock, non-believing--"Why just yesterday he was out in the fields pitching hay." Both have a helpless feeling because the life of a loved one is in someone else's hands. Both are afraid to think of the consequences if the operation is not successful, but with time both will come to accept the situation and continue their lives despite any set-backs.
4. This guy is a real "tough" guy who enjoyed picking up women for a good time. However, this time the girl he has picked up has fallen for him. Realizing the kind of person that he is and the "nice girl" she is, he decides to leave her now before she gets attached! She is reluctant to let him go. She cannot understand his desire to leave, especially for her good!? He will however leave and she will cry over his loss, but will recover in the long run.
5. Guessupie Marchasie is da man on da flying trapesee. Today is the last day of practice before the big show tomorrow! They will have to perform perfectly, otherwise it could mean the end of the little circus for which they are working. His wife Linda shares the same feeling. What will all the little bambinos do if daddy has no work? "But stop! I must put these thoughts out of my head and concentrate on my work." Tomorrow both must perform their best! Guessupie's thought pattern is a little more confused because of the pressure on his wee brain while laughing upside down.
6. The edge of the swamp is quiet. The creature has vanished into the green darkness with another victim. The only evidence that remains

is the boat that the children were playing in! For several years there were no reports of the creature, but now there was proof that he still lives! Tomorrow the hounds will be unleashed and the men gathered to track down the creature. Billy Blackwell will lead the party because of his "swamp" experience. He has lived "out there" for 20 years. Only he knows that the search is useless, but he agrees to lead the "possie" anyway. After all, a fella's gotta make a buck once in awhile.

Mrs. C

1. It is late afternoon. Jeremy has been out plowing the fields all day. He has to hurry to get the fields prepared before the rains come soon. His wife, Judith, expecting their second child, has just come out to be with her husband--to listen to the birds and smell the fresh air. She'd been inside all morning doing the cooking and cleaning and wanted to come out for awhile. At this time her sister, Susan, has just returned from school. She's stayed with her sister during this time to be of extra help since Judith had lost their first child. Susan is worried about her sister and will be of a lot of help when the child arrives as she's studying to be a midwife. The outcome will be a healthy happy son and proud parents and glad sister.
2. This is a moment of reunion between mother and son. He'd gone to another country to make a career for himself and had not seen her for many years but had written often and sent some money whenever he could. At this time, his father had just died and he'd (son) come back to be with his mother at this time. She is glad to have him back, if only for a short time, for she knows he'll have to return to his job and family abroad. She's deeply grateful to have him there--and he is feeling sorry that it has been so long since he'd been home. He will stay awhile to help her get re-established, then return to his country--leaving her the means to come and visit him.
3. Todd has come back to his mother to ask her forgiveness for marrying the girl she didn't want him to. His mother will not accept him back and has said that now she will not even help him out when he needs some extra dough to pay his rent. He's angry at her and trying to figure out a way he can make ends meet. He's lost his job, but feels that since his mother won't help out he may have to go somewhere else, so he goes to the local priest who helps him by giving him the extra money that he'd just been sent as a birthday gift from his mother.
4. This is the last encounter between Tony and his girlfriend, Trudy. He has come to tell her that he has decided to return to his wife, Geraldine, who is now pregnant with their first child. Trudy is pleading with him to stay with her just a while longer, but he has

made up his mind and will not be dissuaded. Thus he returns to Geraldine, a bit unhappy with his misadventures, but decides to be faithful to his commitment. For he is a man of his word--so he says.

5. Hildegard and Hanzel have been doing the show for 15 years. This is their whole life--the love, the feeling of physical fitness, the thrill of danger, the roar of the crowds. Tonight Hanzel is worried though for he has a weak wrist and a pulled muscle in his arm. Hildegard has insisted that they must go on, but he is hesitant--yet agrees to do just one act without the nets. As she swings, into his arms, the pain is nearly unbearable--yet he holds tightly and she swings to safety. Hurray!
6. John and Sue have been married for 4 years and wanted to get away from the kids for a weekend alone. So they got Aunt Nanny to sit with the little ones while they took off for a camping weekend in the only boat they could find--an old sawed-off fishing boat. The boat held up well and got them back into the back country where they could listen to the loons and watch the raccoons catch fish. They treasured these moments alone--it was like a second honeymoon--and all the romance was there. It was good to know that even in their busy family lives they'd still retained the freshness of their mature and growing love. This moment is theirs and not to be intruded, so we'll just leave them alone and slip away to another camping spot without disturbing them.

Mr. D

1. Another day on the farm back in the 1800's. The mother looks to be pregnant and the daughter seems to be heading out for school. Dad is tilling the land and looks as though he wants to get it planted and move on to other work.
 Daughter may have interrupted the work with some troubling questions, but it does not seem as though she was helped out much.
 Mother will eventually help daughter work out her problem and dad gets the corn in.
2. Husband loving and consoling wife. Seems as though a troubling problem may have just been talked about, I know the two are in agreement. A little loving and fun loving to follow and happiness to follow.
3. Mother is giving her son a little help and thoughtful counseling on a problem her boy is going through. Maybe that he is having a hard time finding work or his family is in financial trouble.
 Mother knows best, puts the lad on the right track and his problems are worked out in no time at all.

4. Husband is about to break loose at his wife after heated fight. The husband is being a bull head and will not give an inch. The wife being a good looking will not stay home so they fight and split up with neither one wanting to give in they stay apart.
5. Partners in a circus or carnival putting the finishing touches on their routine, the two are really striving to be the best act in the show and their hard work and diligent practice pays off in the end. Eventually they live and love together and prosper by having the biggest and best circus in existence.
6. Taking a break from fishing a man reflects on the quiet and beauty of the pond. Just to look out at how beautiful and wild the out of doors can be is relaxing. The moment he has to himself by the lake makes life beautiful and gives him a chance to think and appreciate life and living a good and full life. Too few and far between are the moments to breath deep and enjoy the peacefulness of the pond.

Mrs. D

1. A time ago a young girl came home from school to find her parents working hard and little time for her. It's almost like she sees herself in that kind of lifestyle which she does not want to grow up in. The mother's pregnant always busy the father working hard. She feels her life passing her by, she finally leaves and becomes her own self.
2. A middle aged couple, having decided to dine for the evening. A nice slow song came along and he decided to ask her to dance. The song brings back memories of younger years, they hold on to each other for the fear and the comfort of years to come.
3. A son comes home to visit his mother, he tells her some bad news of his wife. She feels very bad for her son and turns away while she tries to figure out how to help him. She decides to tell him that everything will be alright and to move in with her, until he can put things to right again.
4. A young man and woman are arguing about him leaving. They have had a terrible fight and she wants to talk to him. He wants to leave he feels down, not understood. She comes to him trying to express her feelings but he won't listen he just leaves.
5. There's a circus in town. The trapiz artist are working out on their routine for the night. She jumps twirls fear goes through her again as it's done before, hoping nothing will go wrong. He feels as strong as an ox, he knows that this will be perfect. They go on that night with all the strength they have, and put on a perfect performance.

6. A boat sitting lonely amongst the trees, waiting for someone to take it out and give it life again. A small boy comes along with his pole, sees the boat and gives it life again.

Mr. E

1. Daughter is going off to school while mother is pregnant, tired and overlooking father working in the field. (2) The daughter is old enough to leave home. (3) The daughter, with the books, is sad to be leaving but eager to begin a new life. The mother is tired and sad to see her daughter go to school. The father is tired because of physical labor. (4) The daughter will leave, become independent, and succeed.
2. (1) Father and mother in tender embrace. (2) Fiftieth wedding anniversary and contemplation of 50 years of togetherness, sharing and bringing up children. (3) Male is father. Female is mother. Both are happily tired and appreciative of the past 50 years. (4) Continued bliss.
3. (1) Male is son of female--The male is visiting the female who is in a retirement facility. (2) It is her birthday and he has come to visit her. (3) Female is mother and is not in tune with reality and quite dejected. Her son is guilty for having placed her in such a place. (4) She will remain. He will leave. She will die. His sense of guilt will eventually leave him.
4. (1) Male is attempting to leave the pressure of the female who is pleading with him. (2) An argument over the children precipitated the argument. (3) Male is father. Female is mother. He is upset because he knows he is wrong but cannot accept this fact. She feels sorry for having offended him and is pleading to get him to stay. (4) He will leave, return and finally they will separate and divorce.
5. (1) Trapeze artists are doing their routine at a showing of the Barnum-Baily circus. (2) My wife and I have taken the children to the circus, where we view this scene. (3) Female is a member of the trapeze group. Male is also a member of the trapeze group. They have no relationship with each other. Female is worried that she will not be caught by the male and will slip and fall. Male is confident and in control of the situation and is thinking of the next routine in the performance. (4) The performance will conclude successfully and they will do it again in two more hours.
6. (1) A boat is beached on the edge of a stream. (2) Our family was out for a picnic and in order to get to the picnic area we used the pictured boat. (3) The characters are the members of our family and all are happy to be on a picnic. The children would rather be playing with their friends but the parents are making an attempt to

keep the family image intact. (4) The family will return via the boat and continue to grow as a unit.

Mrs. E

1. It was going to be a long time until harvest. That is what Anna was thinking as she watched her husband working the fields. She was pregnant and was glad that her sister Julie was staying with them until fall. Anna was glad that Hal, her husband, had invited Julie for the summer since the baby was due soon. She knew Hal was worried about her, living way out in the country as they did. But everything would work out; she was sure of that.
2. When George came home, Louise couldn't wait to ask him the results of the test. As soon as she saw his eyes, she knew, the test result was negative. Thank God, she couldn't bear to lose him now. The children were all grown and married and George had just retired from his job. It just wouldn't have been fair. But there is a just God after all. Thank you.
3. Harry didn't want to be the one to tell her, but he had to. There wasn't anyone else. He had to tell his mother she had to move in with him or go to a nursing home. She couldn't stay alone in the house anymore. He just had to convince her it wasn't practical to stay alone anymore. He would make it as easy as possible for her. He loved her dearly. She had given him everything she could, now it was his turn to help her.
4. Elaine didn't want Sam to turn away. That's always what he did when she wanted to talk about things that really mattered. Tonight she wouldn't let him get away with it. If he didn't want to go with her, she would go alone. She couldn't bear to go on living this way without money and with interference from his parents. She wanted to move closer to her family where they would have a better chance at life.
5. With the greatest of ease. That is just the way their first performance went and they were a great success. Jenny and Matt would have a wonderful life traveling with the circus. When she ran away from home, she never thought she would be a star, but Matt taught her how to fly and she loved it.
6. We're almost there. I can see the boat. I can't wait for a peaceful afternoon on the water, quietly fishing. But the best part is we'll be alone, away from phones and the children. Not that I don't love the children, but to be alone, with nothing to do, with you is a great dream.

Mr. F

1. The father is plowing and readying the fields for planting while mother is waiting to get back to work. The daughter looking a little unsure of the situation is going to school for the day. The mother appears to be expecting another child. The family looks a little unsure of the future but it should work out all right. They have enough land, it appears, to make a go of it. It looks as though the family has not been settled all too long which probably is why they might look unsure of what they're doing at this time.
2. Just before the man and woman began to hug each other as shown here, something traumatic happened. The man and woman are fearful at this time as to what has just happened, but if they stay together they will be able to work it out. They are feeling unsure of what has just happened and are probably thinking that they would like to be away from each other for a short time.
3. The mother and son have just found out that her daughter (his wife) has a terminal illness. They just found out from the doctor. They were both feeling quite upset and trying to figure out what they are going to do next and prepare for the untimely death. Everything will work out ok. He will go and continue his life even though it's without his wife.
4. She is restraining him from going after the guy who wanted to start a fight with. The other guy beat him out of a job and it's going to cost him a lot of money in the process. She's thinking that there will be more jobs for him in the future and not to hold his hopes on that one job. But he doesn't care; he had his heart set on that job and he's just so frustrated he doesn't know what to do. There will be more jobs for him in the coming days and it all works out all right.
5. He has just caught her after she let go of the swing. They each have a firm grip on each other's forearms and there's no danger of letting go. They both feel confident and comfortable with what they're doing. They have such a feeling of comfort that they are probably man and wife. Again they are both feeling totally at ease and comfortable with each other. They go on and perform together for another 15 years or so and are totally happy with what they're doing and are going to do.
6. In this scene we see a row boat that just brought two loving people across the lake. They have brought food for a beautiful afternoon picnic on a nice spring day. They have been working hard for several months and are going to enjoy their first afternoon off together in a long time. They will have a great afternoon and will return to their work feeling refreshed and ready to go back to work.

Mrs. F

1. Daughter is going off to school leaving her parents behind on the farm. The daughter has been accepted at a college and wants to fulfill her ambitions yet feels a little sad about leaving her folks with the farm work. Father continues with his work, trying not to show emotions while mother dreams about her daughter's future. The daughter will complete her education and her parents will be very proud of her.
2. Man and wife are dancing as he whispers how much he loves her, after having spent a lovely evening out by themselves. The wife is remembering all the good times they have shared and the excitement they felt when they first fell in love. They will return home and make love.
3. Son has come home to be with his mother after the death of his father. Mother is thinking about how she will be able to continue living without her husband--"What will I do now?" Son is feeling a sense of emptiness and wondering what he should do for his mother now. Because the son does not live near his mother he is concerned how best he can help her. They eventually talk over the situation and mother decides to stay where she is for now and son returns to his home but keeps in close touch with his mother.
4. Husband is walking away from his wife after he finds out she has been unfaithful to him. He is feeling angry and hurt. She realizes she made a mistake and tries to explain what happened. They separate for awhile but miss each other and are unhappy. They eventually get back together and work out their problems.
5. Two performers for a large circus doing their act before a full house. They both grew up in circus families and love the thrill and adventure of performing and taking risks. Because of their love for adventure and performing they fall in love. They eventually marry and have 5 children who share their parents' love for acrobatics and become a family act.
6. The boat is awaiting the return of a young man and woman who have come to a secluded part of the lake, for a picnic and to be alone. They are in love and come to this special place to dream and talk about their deepest thoughts and secrets. They are in school now and must wait a few years before they can marry which they eventually do.

