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INFLUENCES OF THE PARENTAL MARRIAGE, TRIANGULATION,

AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION ON THE LEVEL OF INTIMACY

IN YOUNG ADULT MEN AND WOMEN

By

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ABSTRACT

INFLUENCES OF THE PARENTAL MARRIAGE, TRIANGULATION, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION ON THE LEVEL OF INTIMACY IN YOUNG ADULT MEN AND WOMEN

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Establishing intimate relationships is a major task of young adulthood, yet little is known about the developmental experiences and individual differences which influence variations in levels of intimacy in young adults' close relationships. A path model was developed to assess the influences of individual differences variables (gender, sex-role variables (parents' marriage, triangulation) on young adults' levels of intimacy. In addition, young adults' styles of coping with intrapsychic and interpersonal conflict was included in the model based on the significant role that theoretical accounts of close relationships attribute to conflict and conflict resolution. Intimacy was defined as having two conceptually distinct components: depth and commitment, and an approach for assessing intimacy is described.

Seventy-eight female and 72 male young adults and their parents participated in interviews and completed questionnaires as part of a larger study of intergenerational relationships. Tests

of the proposed model using structural modeling techniques for the total sample as well as for males and females separately generally did not support the predictions. Only family life cycle stage and young adults' conflict resolution styles accounted for substantial variations in intimacy status. Young adults who were married reported higher levels of commitment than parents, who in turn were more invested in their close relationships than single young adults. Young adults who described more adaptive strategies for coping with interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict reported higher levels of intimacy. More females tended to report higher levels of depth, but paths for men and women did not differ substantially. Unexpectedly, young women whose parents described better marriages reported lower levels of depth in their close relationships. Sex-role orientation and triangulation were not related to intimacy.

Tests of the "full" model revealed additional significant paths which were not predicted. Age played an important role in determining males' intimacy status, with older men reporting more depth and commitment. Family life cycle stage and age also influenced young adults' conflict resolution styles. Young adults who were married or parents described more adaptive conflict resolution styles, as did younger individuals.

In sum, the proposed model of intimacy did not support the idea of direct links between parent and young adult variables, nor provide strong evidence for sex differences in close relationships

in young adulthood. However, the results highlighted the importance of including a measure of conflict resolution in models of intimacy and generated a number of hypotheses to guide future research on close relationships.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Introduction

"Intimacy, companionship, sharing, communication, equality--these are the qualities of relationships we value most highly, we say. We work for them, struggle for them, analyze ourselves and our loved ones, seemingly without end. Still they elude us" (L. B. Rubin, 1983, p. 9).

Close relationships are the focus of a large body of research, but very little is known about the factors that contribute to variations in individuals' experiences in close relationships. This study will attempt to identify influences in the development of intimacy in close sexual relationships between young adult men and women.

It is well established that intimacy in the context of close relationships has a profound impact on individuals' mental and physical health throughout the life cycle (e.g., Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Lynch, 1977; Peplau & Perlman, 1982). For the most part, however, investigations have not attempted to describe the antecedents and determinants of the level of intimacy in close, sexual relationships. Furthermore, those studies which do exist are problematic due to methodological and conceptual limitations. For example, there is no clear consensus on the definition of intimacy, and as such, the conclusions drawn about intimacy vary

according to how intimacy is operationalized. In many cases
intimacy is measured as a unidimensional construct, such as self-
disclosure (Jourard, 1971; Rubin, 1973). This body of research
shows that women generally are more verbally expressive of their
feelings than men (e.g., Hendrick, 1981; Jourard, 1971; Levinger &
Senn, 1967) and therefore, typically concludes that women are more
intimate. These overly simplistic explanations contribute little
to our understanding of the development of intimacy. Clearly,
broader definitions and conceptualizations of intimate
relationships are necessary to understand sex-linked patterns and
other factors which maintain these differences. In this regard
recent models acknowledge the multidimensional nature of close
relationships and link differences in intimacy to individual
characteristics, dyadic features, and factors in the social
environment. For the purpose of the present study, the "level of
intimacy" (based on Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser's (1973) and White,
Speisman, Jackson, Bartis, and Costos's (1986) definition and
coding systems) refers to the degree to which sexual relationships
which subjects describe are empathic, differentiated, committed,
nonjudgmental, and include reciprocal sharing and openness.
Individuals in relationships characterized by a high level of
intimacy demonstrate an understanding of psychological causation
and self-awareness, as well as recognition of both the mutual
interdependence of a close relationship and the partner's need for
autonomy. A more detailed discussion of this study's definition of
intimacy follows below.

The issue which remains unclear in current theories of close relationships is how differences in what each person brings to the relationship are shaped and developed in a relational context. That is, each person enters relationships with a unique socialization history and previous interpersonal experiences which exert significant influences on ongoing and future relationships. This study attempts to develop a model to assess the contribution of social, psychological, and familial factors to the development of the capacity for intimacy. Specifically, relationships among aspects of the parental marriage in the family of origin, conflict resolution styles, and the level of intimacy in young adulthood will be examined. The role of the young adults' gender, sex role orientation, age, and life cycle stage will also be considered.

Gender and sex-role differences in close relationships and in individuals' levels of intimacy have been the focus of numerous investigations (e.g., Bernard, 1972; Chodorow, 1978; Costos, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Gove, 1972; Huston, Surra, Fitzgerald, & Cate, 1981; Levinger, 1977; Parelman, 1983; Parsons & Bales, 1955; Raush, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974). However, historical changes in men's and women's endorsement of traditional sex-role norms and values suggest that the nature of the link between gender and personality variables such as instrumentality and communion may not be the same as it was ten or fifteen years ago. For example, evidence from recent studies shows that men and women expect and want similar things in close relationships (Parelman, 1983; Peplau & Gordon, 1985). Conversely, Peplau and Gordon (1985) argue in

their literature review of sex differences in close relationships that "No examination of close relationships can be wholly complete or wholly accurate unless it recognizes differences in the experiences and behaviors of women and men" (p. 284). Accordingly, it is important to identify the unique effects of gender and sex role orientation in order to understand the relative contributions of each to the development of intimacy.

The effects of gender on the development of intimacy may be traced back to gender-specific socialization practices on the part of parents. For example, in a study of first-time parents, Rubin, Provenzano, and Luria (1974) report that within 24 hours of their first child's birth, fathers rate boy and girl babies differentially according to gender stereotypes. This finding illustrates how sex differences in children trigger differences in parental expectations. These expectations are then likely to be translated into socialization practices in the family, a number of which will be related to the child's attitudes toward interpersonal relationships.

The belief that young adults' learned attitudes and ways of relating to others are outcomes of the ways their families related to them as children brings up the alternative possibility that gender differences are a function of parental sex role expectations. Along these lines, Worell (1981) argues that, given the lack of substantial evidence of sex differences with respect to several categorical variables (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974) and the contradictory fact of "contrasting life experiences of males and

females" (p. 313), it is more meaningful to refer to sex-role orientation than to gender differences in attempting to understand individual development. To balance this viewpoint and demonstrate the utility of an approach which distinguishes between gender and sex role effects, a study by Frank, McLaughlin, and Crusco (1984) is of note. Although these researchers do not directly address questions about intimacy, they find that gender is associated with certain coping styles, whereas sex-role orientation accounts for other coping styles. These kinds of data demonstrate the gains in understanding obtained by an approach which attempts to specify the unique influences of gender and sex-role orientation.

Attempts to account for individual variation in intimacy by considering gender or gender-linked patterns alone are likely to be inadequate, however. Developmental and social factors such as maturation and changes in life situation affect sex role orientation (Abrahams, Feldman, & Nash, 1978; Nash & Feldman, 1981; Worell, 1981) and therefore need to be included in conceptualizations of intimate relationships. Specifically, whether a person is single, married, or a parent may have profound implications for how salient particular sociocultural role prescriptions are, and thus indirectly influences individuals' intimate relationships. In addition, age potentially impacts on young adults' levels of intimacy as a result of the confound between age and family life cycle (i.e., older persons are more likely to be married and parents). And while, clearly, there is a developmental process associated with age that can be linked to

increases in intimacy in childhood and adolescence (e.g.,
Rivenbark, 1966; Bigelow, 1977; Reisman & Shorr, 1978), this study
presumes that within a young adult population, the primary impact
of age on intimacy is a function of family life cycle, rather than
proposing a direct link between age and intimacy. This
conceptualization is congruent with a life-span perspective of
development which links changes in life events to changes in
personality and behavior throughout the life cycle (Nash & Feldman,
1981).

Finally, this study's major hypotheses focus on the
development of young adults' intimacy in the family, the primary
social context within which interpersonal styles are formed. As
noted above, the family exerts significant influence as agents of
socialization in childhood. Beyond the familial influences
inherent in the effects of gender and sex role differences in
intimacy, additional factors such as the parental marriage and the
extent to which parents involve their children in their marital
relationships are important but neglected areas of investigation
regarding the development of intimacy. As Berscheid and Peplau
(1983) note, the husband-wife dyad and the parent-child dyad within
the young adult's family of origin are the prototypes of close
relationships outside the family. Moreover, empirical studies as
well as the clinical literature document a link between conflictual
marital relationships and maladaptive parent-child relationships
(Elder, Caspi, & Downey, in press; Gilbert, Christensen, &
Margolin, 1984; Minuchin, 1974; Waring & Russell, 1980). Based on

this association one can speculate that young adults' levels of intimacy and the kinds of relationships they will become involved in are influenced by both direct and indirect effects of the parental marriage. Accordingly, a role model hypothesis asserts that successful socialization in the family of origin directly provides appropriate marital-role models on which children base their own close heterosexual relationships. The "indirect" transmission hypothesis posits the existence of intervening variables to account for effects of the parental marriage on their children's development. For example, Elder et al. (in press) hypothesize that aversive family relationships produce ill-tempered, difficult children who are consequently unable to develop and sustain enduring relationships as adults. In support of this position, they find that children who grew up in homes characterized by marital discord ranked highest on a measure of low self control and furthermore, "reproduce" the pattern of marital discord in their own marriages.

The clinical literature suggests more specifically how aspects of the parental marriage contribute to the development of intimacy. First, family systems theory (e.g., Minuchin, 1974; Satir, 1981) describes a common pattern in families with distressed marriages in which one or both parents attempt to draw their child into their conflictual marital relationship by using the child as a confidant and otherwise cultivating the child's support and sympathy against the other parent. This maladaptive parent-child coalition is referred to as triangulation. Because triangulation

inhibits both the development of autonomy and of relationships outside the family (Bell & Bell, 1982), it is likely that such dysfunctional patterns will have significant impact on the development of the capacity for intimacy.

Secondly, the way in which one's parents resolve conflicts is also likely to influence their children's level of intimacy by affecting their own approach to problems in intimate relationships. For the most part, conceptualizations of intimacy recognize the existence of a close relationship between intimacy and conflict (Feldman, 1979) yet fail to directly assess the nature and direction of this association. More importantly, most studies which have examined relationships between conflict and intimacy measure amount of conflict rather than the ways in which conflict is resolved in close relationships. Furthermore, most discussions of intimacy do not distinguish between interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict resolution (Braiker & Kelly, 1979). Both these constructs will be measured here, and their relationships to the parents' marriage, on the one hand, and the young adults' levels of intimacy, on the other hand, will be assessed.

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the contribution of the parental marriage and triangulation on young adults' levels of intimacy. The effects on intimacy of young adults' own styles of coping with conflict in their close relationships also will be examined. Additionally, the role of gender, sex role orientation, family life cycle stage, and age will be considered in order to account for significant sources of

variation in individuals' levels of intimacy. More broadly, I will develop a model using these variables to describe the direction of the interrelationships. The literature review which follows will provide the research and conceptual rationale for the model. Accordingly, this review focuses on 1) current conceptualizations of close relationships and intimacy, 2) the influence of young adults' conflict resolution styles on intimacy, 3) the influence of gender and sex role on intimacy, 4) the influence of life cycle stage and age on intimacy, and 5) the relationship of family variables to intimacy.

Current Theories of Close Relationships and Intimacy
The Historical Perspective

As a fundamental part of the American social structure close relationships are central to people's happiness and well-being. Kelley, Berscheid, Christensen, Harvey, Huston, Levinger, McClintock, Peplau, and Peterson (1983) summarize a large body of research and survey literature documenting the majority belief that "for almost everyone one necessary ingredient is some kind of satisfying, intimate relationship" (p. 2). This popular belief has been substantiated by the numerous reports which find relationships between being alone (single, divorced, widowed) and higher incidences of mental and physical illness, accidents, and alcoholism (e.g., Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Lynch, 1977; Peplau & Perlman, 1982; Waring & Chelune, 1983). From an historical perspective, the crucial role attributed to intimate relationships

in today's world can be traced to changes in the economic and social structure of society since Colonial times (Gadlin, 1977) and to changes in the traditional sex roles for men and women (Parelman, 1983; Safilios-Rothschild, 1981). Accordingly, with industrialization and the growth of cities the central function of the family ceased to be economic production. The division of work and home led to a new distinction between private and public life and an accompanying increase in the salience of interpersonal relationships in the family. Thus as the family decreased in economic importance, the psychological meaning of the marital relationship increased as did the emphasis on personal fulfillment within the marriage.

More recently, both structural socioeconomic changes and an evolving redefinition of sex role expectations make it likely that the close sexual relationship will continue to be the arena in which individuals strive to find meaning and happiness. As one author suggests, "...intimacy has become as important (if not more important) a goal as success, desired by all" (p. 378, Safilios-Rothschild, 1981). In a somewhat different vein, Levinger (1977) argues that socioeconomic forces have created a world where personal fulfillment is sought after at the expense of intimacy and describes the costs as estrangement and emptiness. These two sentiments may not be as discrepant from one another as they appear, and may actually serve to clarify the picture. In an increasingly technological, consumer-oriented world, estrangement and loneliness may in fact create a heightened emphasis on meeting

emotional needs, such as establishing intimate relationships. Thus as material and biological needs are routinely satisfied, interpersonal and affective concerns are more likely to be the focus of one's attention. This characterization is supported by the observation that as social and economic freedom increases, the prevailing features of human relationships are emotional characteristics (Andreyeva & Gozman, 1981).

Social Psychological Approaches to Close Relationships

Changes in the social and economic features of society were accompanied by the appearance in the 1950's of an increasing interest in the theory of relationships, previously the domain of novelists and playwrights (Berscheid & Peplau, 1983). Initially, the research and theorizing focused on notions of romantic love, but more recent work includes the development of complex models of dyadic relationships, from the initial stages (attraction) to the committed (friendship & marriage) (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Levinger & Snoek, 1972; Braiker & Kelley, 1979; LaGaipa, 1981). The theoretical and research questions asked by social psychologists for the most part have focused on delineating the progressive stages of a relationship from initial attraction to commitment or dissolution, and have generally involved samples of college men and women or premarital and young married couples (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Raush et al., 1974; Kelley et al., 1983). These "filter" or "sequential" models of close relationships simply describe progressively deeper levels of involvement in relationships over

time, and lack adequate conceptualizations of mediating factors
such as social and relational history. Furthermore, this research
often suffers from the incorrect assumption that premarital or
marital relationships are in fact intimate (Huston, Surra,
Fitzgerald, & Cate, 1981). As Cate and Koval (1983) point out, the
belief that marriage and intimacy are synonomous (e.g., Waring,
McElrath, Lefcoe, & Weisz, 1981) is contrary to the several studies
which find significantly low levels and even a lack of intimacy
among married and premarital couples (e.g., Broderick & Hicks,
1970; Cuber & Haroff, 1966; Rubin, 1976).

Applications of social exchange theory to close relationships
encompass a broader framework and comprise a significant proportion
of the close relationship research (Huston & Burgess, 1979).
Exchange theory addresses the issue of why some relationships are
superficial and others are characterized by commitment by referring
to the degree of interdependency. Interdependence is defined as
"the extent to which each one's outcomes depend on the outcome by
the partner, and to the degree to which each one's profits exceed
customary profits or those like in another relationship (Thibaut &
Kelley, 1959)" (p. 13, Huston & Burgess, 1979). In this same vein,
Kelley et al. (1983) agree that any analysis of close relationships
is primarily an assessment of interdependence between chains of
events. However, their work embellishes the exchange theorists'
conception of close relationships by elegantly articulating the
properties and multicausal conditions of interdependence in
relationships, thereby creating a context in which to understand

"actions, reactions, emotions, and thoughts" (p. 26). Kelley et al. designate eight categories which make up the important properties involved in the study of relationships. These include: events, conceptualized as actions, affects, and thoughts; patterns of interconnections, which define patterns of events between and within partners; strength of interconnections, defined as the degree and predictability of change in each partner's event chain; frequency of interconnections, or rate of interaction; diversity of interconnections; facilitation versus interference, the mechanism for mediating conflict by promoting or hindering connections between partners; symmetry, the degree to which each partner has similar or different effects on one another and the degree of dependence, amount of influence, etc.; and duration of the interaction and relationship. In addition, these researchers explicate the concept of causal conditions of close relationships. Causal conditions are relatively stable factors which influence the occurrence and sequence of events in a relationship; and depending on where they are located, causal conditions are referred to as conditions of the social environment, the physical environment, or the person. Furthermore, causal conditions can be described as existing between environments and persons or in the relationship between two people. In thus elaborating the types of information and concepts important for studying relationships, Kelley et al. also resolve many of the problems of applying exchange principles to close relationships.

Kimmel (1979) in a critique of social exchange theory finds the market principles and economic metaphor underlying the theory inappropriate for understanding a uniquely human phenomenon. Similarly, Huston and Cate (1979) acknowledge that social exchange theory interpretations based on reinforcement and exchange principles do not suit Western notions of love and intimacy. They furthermore suggest that as a relationship develops into a close, intimate bond, exchange theory may not in fact accurately portray the dyadic process, which is at that point more truly interdependent and communal (i.e., what is rewarding to one partner is rewarding to the other).

The above problems and criticisms notwithstanding, the models of close relationships developed by social psychologists have contributed significantly to the present awareness of the multidimensional, multicausal nature of interpersonal relationships. For example, LaGaipa's (1981) elaborate systems model of close relationships includes an analysis of three different dimensions of interdependence, which he describes as levels (cultural, interpersonal behavior, and individual-psychological), psychosocial resources, and support systems. Of particular relevance to this study's conceptualization of the development of intimacy in a close sexual relationship is the individual psychological level. This is the part of the model that accounts for what each person brings into the relationship and, although acknowledged as a critical contributor, has been largely ignored in social psychological investigations of close

relationships. As Milardo, Johnson, and Huston (1983) admonish, "Without accounting for the major sources of <u>individual</u> variation, it is not possible to clearly identify meaningful and consistent differences in the social activity of men and women, and it is perhaps more critical to establish how men and women come to be the way they are and the conditions that lead to similar or different outcomes for each gender" (p. 974, emphasis mine).

Approaches To Intimacy

Erik Erikson's (1963, 1968) epigenetic theory of development from infancy through adulthood has influenced empirical work on intimacy (Bellew-Smith & Korn, 1986; Fischer, 1981; Morgan & Farber, 1982; Orlofsky, 1978; Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982; White, Speisman et al. 1986) and theoretical formulations of close relationships (e.g., Bowlby, 1969). Erikson's model along with recent attempts to apply attachment theory to adult romantic love relationships (Antonucci, 1976; Hartup & Lempers, 1973; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kalish & Knudtson, 1976; Troll & Smith, 1976) share an emphasis on explaining how different individual and social histories result in differing relationship styles. This differential approach (Lerner, 1976) appears to be more directly relevant to developing the component of the close relationships model which accounts for differences in young adults' levels of intimacy and will be reviewed in greater depth in the following sections.

The Eriksonian Approach

According to the Eriksonian model (1963), development proceeds through eight critical periods marked by eight psychosocial stages from infancy to old age. At each stage, the resolution of an emotional crisis determines how neurotic or mature an individual will be with regard to the stage-specific ego capability. Furthermore, the epigenetic principle of development dictates that the extent to which an individual can successfully resolve the stage-specific crisis depends on development in the preceding stages. In sum, the Eriksonian model is a model of individual, emotional development. To account for differences in individuals' levels of intimacy Erikson stresses the interrelation of developmental and social forces. The Eriksonian approach thus is congruent with the interest of the current study in explaining the development of relational dispositions which individual's bring into close relationships.

The establishment of intimate relationships is the major task of young adulthood, the sixth psychosocial stage in Erikson's model. In order to successfully achieve a sense of intimacy the young person must learn "whom [he/she] cares to be with" (Erikson, 1974, p. 124, and develop the capacity for high degrees of openness and closeness, commitment, loyalty, mutuality, and mature sexuality. The inability to become involved in a caring, mutual relationship results in a sense of isolation. Accordingly, the two bipolar attributes which define this stage are intimacy and isolation.

The Eriksonian framework postulates that the nature and outcome of these eight stages can only be understood in the context of the developing individual's biology, psychology, and "society". This tripartite conceptualization underscores the importance and value of considering social, biological, and individual characteristics in explaining differences in intimacy in young adult men and women. Furthermore, Erikson's theory is unique in its focus on intimacy as opposed to unidimensional conceptualizations such as "love" (e.g., Rubin, 1976; Lee, 1976; Dion & Dion, 1979), or more inclusive constructs such as attachment (e.g., Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and close relationships (e.g., Kelley et al., 1983; Levinger, 1977; Rausch et al., 1974). For example, Rubin (1970) defines love as an "interpersonal attitude" and assesses behaviors such as mutual gazing and self-disclosure as indices of love, but fails to examine questions about why and how variations come about. In contrast, the close relationships literature attempts a much broader focus and emphasizes the dyadic interactions and the nature of behavioral influence each partner has on the other, usually only inferring internal processes which mediate each partner's actions (e.g., Kelley et al., 1983). Similarly, attachment theorists who attempt to extend Bowlby's original concept of attachment in infancy to the realm of adult romantic love are interested in describing and explaining the development of a social-behavioral system of attachment and integrating this system with the caregiving and sexuality behavioral systems (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). For the most part, this

theory relies on analyses of the relationship between early parent-child interaction and later dyadic interaction among adult lovers or spouses. None of the above theories or constructs directly address the specific origins or functions of intimacy. In contrast, the Eriksonian formulation of intimacy provides a model which specifically stresses the etiological antecedents, as well as the developmental consequences, of intimacy. Furthermore, this model has inspired a large body of research on intimacy addressing these and other issues, and is included in the conceptualization used in the current study.

A semi-structured interview designed by Orlofsky, Marcia, and Lesser (1973) to assess intimacy status in terms of the Eriksonian model categorizes individuals into one of five intimacy statuses. It or modified versions (e.g., Bellew-Smith & Korn, 1986; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982) have been used in much of the research in this area. Operationalizing Erikson's concept of intimacy requires evaluation according to two dimensions: 1) depth versus superficiality and 2) commitment versus no commitment. The five statuses are defined by the different combinations of the two dimensions based on the individual's perceptions of his/her close relationships in terms of openness and closeness, caring and loving feelings, responsibility, commitment, mutuality, and mature sexuality. Briefly, the five relational styles can be described as follows: The _intimate_ individual's relationships are characterized by both depth and commitment; the _pre-intimate_ person has involved but uncommitted relationships; _stereotypic_ individuals lack both

depth and commitment in their relationships; commitment with superficiality characterizes the pseudointimate relationship; and individuals with no close relationships of any kind are defined as isolates. Orlofsky (1976) interprets his failure to find significant age differences as evidence that the five different intimacy statuses represent a range of relational styles due to differences in ways of resolving the intimacy vs. isolation crisis rather than differences in maturity alone.

The system developed by Orlofsky et al. (1973) is one of the more comprehensive measures of intimacy as noted above, but it is not without its problems and limitations. As White et al. (1986) point out, Orlofsky et al.'s coding system lacks variability and adequate differentiation among the intimacy statuses for a number of reasons. First of all, Orlofsky et al.'s overall intimacy status score is derived by "combining" an individual's scores on Friendship and Sexual (love) relationships. This scoring system mistakenly confounds and confuses friendship and sexual relationships, and in doing so, also glosses over finer distinctions within each type of relationship. To make this point, White et al. (1986) note that "most married individuals, providing that they had at least one close same-sex friend, would be considered to have achieved intimacy" from the Orlofsky et al. perspective (p. 152). The current study addresses this problem by conceptually distinguishing between intimacy status in friendship and sexual relationships and maintaining separate ratings. (Only sexual relationships are dealt with in the present study.)

White et al. further suggest, however, that in order to more adequately account for variations in the range of "maturity" in relationships, modification and elaboration of the Orlofsky et al. coding scheme for intimacy is necessary. Accordingly, these researchers developed a coding system for intimacy maturity based on Orlofsky et al.'s system in order to add breadth and richness to the existing conceptualization. Briefly, White and her colleagues identify three broad levels of relationship maturity, each of which is composed of two stages. Level 1 describes egocentric, self-serving styles of relating to others and is referred to as self-focused. Level 2, or role-focused individuals are typically involved in more conventional and traditional relationships. And Level 3 includes the most mature forms of relatedness, such as the capacity to appreciate the uniqueness of one's partner, cope with frustrations, and balance one's own and the partner's needs. Individuals whose scores fall within Level 3 are referred to as individuated-connected. Scores are determined by individuals' ranking along five dimensions of intimacy maturity, which include: Orientation to the other and the relationship, caring/concern, sexuality, commitment, and communication.

Essentially, the intimacy maturity scoring system of White et al. presents a more differentiated conceptualization of depth than the Orlofsky et al. measure of intimacy by assessing the degree of orientation, caring, sexuality, and communication separately. However, as the high intercorrelations among these five scales demonstrate, it is likely that they are actually only measuring one

dimension; and it appears that this dimension is best described by Orlofsky et al.'s notion of "depth". There are other problems in White et al.'s modifications that also need to be addressed. Although they attempt to separately measure depth and commitment, they actually fail to adequately differentiate these two aspects of relationships. For example, in conceptualizing commitment, their system identifies the lowest level as void of commitment and then distinguishes between commitment in to the two highest levels by describing differences in depth (e.g., "a loving investment in this particular partner and appreciation for his or her individuality" is at Level 3, whereas "socially acceptable, role-stereotyped intention to stay in the marriage" is at level 2) (White et al., 1986, p. 155). The result is an intimacy maturity scoring system which serves to confound the distinction made in Orlofsky's system between commitment and depth rather than add clarity or power to the existing coding systems of intimacy. Therefore, while Orlofsky et al.'s system does not allow researchers to more clearly articulate the components of depth in intimacy, it does preserve the valuable distinction between depth and commitment.

I have used a coding system for intimacy in the present study which draws from both the Orlofsky et al. system and the White et al. system for operationalizing intimacy. "Depth" and "commitment" are measured separately, with each scale distinguishing among six different levels of intimacy. "Depth" is conceptualized according to the White et al. system and consists of three broad levels of intimate relationships. These are self-focused, role-focused, and

<u>individuated-connected</u>. <u>Self-focused</u> individuals have
relationships which are characterized by superficiality,
egocentricity, and a self-serving attitude toward others. <u>Role-</u>
<u>focused</u> individuals typically relate to their partner in a
conventional or stereotyped fashion, rely on stereotypical
constructs (e.g., "considerate", "responsible") as a way of
understanding the personal attributes of their partner, and appear
to value what is socially acceptable, rather than what is unique or
distinctive about the partner. <u>Individuated-connected</u> individuals
appreciate the autonomy and uniqueness of their partner, highly
value communication, and relate in an emotionally empathic way.
Each level is made up of two substages, which allows one to make
distinctions about whether a person is at the lower or upper end of
a particular level.

Accordingly, increasing levels of depth are defined by the
progression from stage 1 to stage 6, based on the degree to which
an individual describes close sexual relationships that include a
deep appreciation of the partner's differences, mutual
interdependence, open communication, and sharing. Specifically,
depth is measured by evaluating two aspects of relationships:
orientation and communication. Orientation, based on White et
al.'s (1986) definition and on Loevinger and Wessler's (1970) work
on ego development, refers to an individual's ability to see
his/her partner as a complex person and to value individual
differences. Underlying this dimension is consideration of the
degree to which interpersonal relationships are seen in terms of

concrete behaviors and cliches versus reciprocal feelings and complex motives and interactions. Communication refers to the level of openness and self-disclosure between partners in a close relationship. This dimension includes consideration of the young adults' communication skills and values regarding open communication and sharing, as well as the level of trust and tolerance for expressing differences of opinion in the relationship.

Thus, the depth scale is characterized in general by increasing levels of psychological awareness, sharing and openness, interdependence, and tolerance of individuality. Level 1 subjects rely on behavioral, concrete descriptions of their partner, particularly focusing on how the partner's behaviors affect them. At the lower end of this level, there is little interest in communication with the partner and perceptions of the partner are black and white, based on whether or not attitudes and wishes are shared or contradicted. At the upper end, subjects make some attempt to understand the partner as psychologically motivated, but descriptions of the relationship are simplistic and behavioral, and communication tends to be characterized by a lack of trust, a tendency to discuss superficial, non-controversial topics, if any, and to exclude relationship-oriented matters. Level 2 individuals describe their close relationships in terms of stereotyped images of a happy marriage and describe their partners in terms of their role as spouse or parent (e.g., "a good father"). Communication is valued by level 2 respondents, although it remains somewhat limited

in its range and degree of reciprocity. The upper and lower ends
are differentiated by the increasing awareness of the partner's
individuality and efforts to reveal oneself via communication in
stage 4 versus stereotypical, socially acceptable descriptions of
both the relationship and the communication process in stage 3.
Level 3 is distinguished by subjects' appreciation of their
partner's unique qualities, concern with the emotional and
spiritual facets of the relationship, recognition of
interdependence, and open, relationship-centered communication. At
the lower end of Level 3 there may still be a specific area or
topic which is difficult to discuss or difficulties in integrating
an appreciation of interdependency in the relationship with an
awareness of individual development and growth. In contrast, at
the upper end individuals feel free to express differences and
describe how each partner grows and changes in the context of
mutually influential interactions.

As in Orlofsky et al.'s system, commitment refers to an
enduring involvement and long-term interest in maintaining the
relationship with that particular partner, independent of the
degree of depth. Similarly, the commitment scale is also divided
into the three levels of self-focused, role-focused, and
individuated-connected, each of which is divided into two
substages. The progression from stage 1 to stage 6 is defined by
increasing levels of investment in both the relationship or
marriage and the particular partner. At the lower end of Level 1
are individuals who are ready to leave the relationship. At the

upper end of Level 1 are those not yet committed and struggling with the idea of a commitment. Level 2 individuals are more clearly committed to the relationship in stereotypic ways or to marriage as an institution. At the lower end of level 2, individuals may describe a troubled relationship and a willingness to try to work things out or may understand their commitments in a highly personified and stereotyped way (e.g., "We promised to stay together until death do us part"). In contrast, individuals at the upper end of this level are clearly invested in the abstract institution of marriage and view the relationship as "bigger" than the individuals. Level 3 is characterized by individuals' intention to stay in the relationship or marriage with references to long term investments in family and home, and an expression of loyalty and affection toward their particular partner, rather than to the institution of marriage per se. The distinction between the upper and lower ends of Level 3 is based on the degree to which the intention to "stick it out, no matter what" is expressed in combination with expressions of a loving investment in the partner.

Operationalizing intimacy in this way allows one to maintain the distinction between depth and commitment, while broadening and enriching the range of variability among the intimacy levels. For example, in Orlofsky et al.'s system, individuals with committed role-focused and self-focused relationships are coded identically based on the degree of commitment. The present system's conceptualization of intimacy avoids the confounding of depth and commitment and distinguishes between these two kinds of

relationships. A potential problem for this as well as other systems remains, however. It is likely that individuals who have similar degrees of depth and commitment in close relationships differ in other ways, such as their ways of handling conflict. No system for coding intimacy to date provides for distinctions between more and less adaptive conflict resolution styles. This issue will be addressed below after completing the discussion of current approaches to intimacy.

Previous Research on Intimacy

In attempts to distinguish how the intimacy statuses differ many investigations have focused on the relationships between intimacy and one or more of the five previous psychosocial tasks of infancy, childhood, and adolescence (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Marcia, 1976; Orlofsky, 1978; Orlofsky et al., 1973). Orlofsky (1978) found strong relationships between intimacy status and the subscales of Constantinople's (1969) Inventory of Psychosocial Development which assesses an individual's position of each of Erikson's stages. He concludes that optimal resolution of the intimacy crisis is related to successful resolution of the antecedent stages, but acknowledges the inferential nature of his conclusions and the need for longitudinal data. The majority of the studies on intimacy focus specifically on the relationship between identity and intimacy. These studies generally support the hypothesis that, for males, successful resolution of the intimacy task in young adulthood is dependent on establishing a firm sense

of identity, the developmental task of adolescence (Schiedel &
Marcia, 1985; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982; Kacerguis & Adams, 1980;
Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Marcia, 1976; Prager, 1977). The
relationship between identity and intimacy for females does not
appear to be as strong as that for males, which has led some
researchers to suggest that women deal with interpersonal issues
before resolving questions of identity (Schiedel & marcia, 1985),
or alternatively, that for most women, identity and intimacy
development merge or coexist (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Schiedel &
Marcia, 1985).

Until recently, most of the research in this field remained
within the confines of the above paradigm and stressed the
interrelationships of Erikson's psychosocial stages, particularly
identity and intimacy. An exception is a study by Orlofsky (1978)
which attempts to further operationalize some of the psychosocial
aspects of the development of intimacy proposed by the epigenetic
model. For example, congruent with Erikson's notion of development
as a process of successive psychosocial steps, he notes the
possibility that other factors such as relationships with parents,
relationships with peers, and early social successes or failures
account for differences in the resolution of the intimacy crisis.
Orlofsky's study, in actuality, taps the peer domain by
(retrospectively) assessing patterns of friendships and popularity
in childhood and adolescence. He finds that male undergraduates
who are isolates report low personal involvement and little
interpersonal success in peer relationships in childhood and

adolescence. Differences in the interpersonal sphere among the other intimacy statuses are negligible, suggesting that future conceptualizations should include a broader range of "other factors" selected with reference to a clear theoretical model.

Additionally, Orlofsky sampled college-age males only, a limitation (restricted age range and gender) which appears all too frequently in this research. In fact, the intimacy statuses were developed and tested initially on males only (Orlofsky et al., 1973). This limitation has wide-ranging implications and has only begun to be addressed. In this regard and as noted earlier, Levitz-Jones and Orlofsky (1985) remark that the findings for college and young adult men generally show stronger relationships between identity development and intimacy than the relationships for women on these same variables. To account for this discrepancy, they suggest that the intimacy statuses may not provide a valid assessment of women's interpersonal style. I suspect, however, the problem lies more in the conceptual model than in the measure. Other findings showing that women are more intimate regardless of identity status support the criticism that the Eriksonian model can not adequately account for female development of intimacy (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979). Finally, in a theoretical paper Franz and White (1985) spell out their viewpoint of the limitations in the Eriksonian account of intimacy: Due to his focus on identity development, Erikson fails "to provide a clear picture of how individuals become progressively able to form

intimate dyadic bonds characterized by openness, reciprocity, and sharing" (p. 234).

It is important to point out, however, that Erikson's formulations of development up through and including adolescence emphasize the importance of familial and social factors. The fact is that these family and psychosocial variables such as the parental marriage, sex role orientation and gender have not been adequately addressed in the empirical investigations of this model. The focus in a great deal of this research on identity achievement and its relationship to the capacity for intimacy is exceedingly narrow in its assumption that resolving issues about political, religious, and occupational ideology -- presumably the components of "identity" -- is the only pathway to intimacy. According to many authors, both the emphasis on identity and the "masculine" bias in the identity construct reflect Erikson's vague position on sex differences in development. To date, however, the attempts to explicate males' and females' developmental pathways to intimacy consist of modifications to current measures of identity (Bellew-Smith & Korn, 1986; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982; Grotevant, Thorbecke, & Meyer, 1982) or patchwork addenda to the theory itself (Franz & White, 1985). Relatedly, because the literature fails to articulate the role of the social sphere such as the family, most of the research takes a sharp detour around issues of values and attitudes with regard to close relationships. An extension of the identity status interview into the interpersonal domain (Grotevant, Thorbecke, & Meyer, 1982) attempts to resolve some of these

problems and will be discussed in a later section on gender and sex role.

In sum, Erikson's psychosocial model of personality development continues to be of significant value in assessing the capacity for intimacy in young adults, despite its limitations. Erikson's description of intimacy and the elaboration of the intimacy statuses (Orlofsky et al., 1973) provide one of the few in-depth analyses of intimacy as a psychological variable. Moreover, the model's theoretical framework functions as a "secure base", in the jargon of attachment theorists, from which current researchers continue to generate and explore expanded formulations of the development of intimacy.

Attachment Theory and Close Relationships

Attachment theory and recent work applying the theory to relationships in adulthood are particularly relevant for generating possibilities to account for the gaps in the Eriksonian model and existing research. As Franz and White (1985) have noted, Erikson's theory comprehensively describes the development of individuation in the first five stages of the model and essentially neglects the development of attachment until the onset of adulthood, marked by the intimacy versus isolation crisis. Attachment theories, on the other hand, stress the idea that development is continuous, and suggest that development occurs through a process which links childhood and adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986). Although both Eriksonian and attachment theories agree that

development occurs within the context of a social network (Hinde, 1979; Kimmel, 1979; Weinraub, Brooks, & Lewis, 1977), theorists writing about attachment and adulthood make explicit their conceptualizations of how events in early childhood influence attachment to a romantic partner in adulthood, in particular.

Because attachment theory and its extensions are newcomers to the relatively young field of close relationships, the literature to date is largely theoretical. Confusion in the literature (Haith, 1982) regarding the term attachment itself makes it difficult to precisely define the construct and even more difficult to note how it is similar or different to intimacy. Generally, it appears that attachment refers to an affective bond or relationship (Haith, 1982; Gaensbauer & Harmon, 1982; Ainsworth, 1969; Ainsworth, 1969). In this sense, attachment is a broader construct than intimacy, yet encompasses "the full spectrum of emotion and feeling" (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978, p. 23), and therefore includes intimacy.

Particularly salient to the study of intimacy is the emphasis given to the idea that relationships affect relationships (e.g., Antonucci, 1976; Hinde, 1979). According to this approach to development, the capacity for intimacy will have its roots in experiences and behaviors learned in childhood from the significant adults in the child's life (Antonucci, 1976; Troll & Smith, 1976). Evidence from empirical studies done by Rutter and his colleagues (Rutter, 1980) which show that family relationships characterized by disharmony interfere with the development of close relationships

in adulthood (and vice versa) substantiates the above claim. A related finding in Uddenberg, Englesson, and Nettelbladt's study (1979) demonstrates that the way a woman relates to her husband and son is influenced by her relationship with her own father. Others have stressed the need to consider the developmental context of relationships, particularly with regard to family relationships and to changes in the salience of roles over time (Kimmel, 1979; Lowenthal, Thurner, Chiriboga & Associates, 1975; Shulman, 1975).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) are particularly interested in the implications of attachment theory for differences in individual relational styles in adult romantic relationships. Specifically, they hypothesize that differences in parent-child attachment histories underlie variations in the quality of individuals' close relationships in adulthood. The foundation for Hazan and Shaver's basic premise comes from Bowlby's (1969) belief that attachment throughout the life-span is characterized by continuity and based on mental representations of one's self and social experiences. Results from two large scale studies (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) provide empirical support for Bowlby's continuity thesis. These studies show that the quality of the young adults' relationships with a romantic partner differed as a function of the differences in the young adults' attachment histories as assessed by respondents' perceptions of the quality of earlier parent-child relationships and of their parents' relationship with one other.

Because Hazan and Shaver use simple adjective checklists to retrospectively measure young adults' perceptions of parent-child

and parental marriage variables, it is difficult to ascertain the process of continuity in attachment from parent-child to close relationships in adulthood. Other life-span theorists have suggested, however, that children learn how to relate to others (Haith, 1982) and learn perspective-taking skills in the context of early parent-child attachment relationships, and that this capacity will "have a crucial bearing on [the child's] success in maintaining proximity and communication with new figures" (Ainsworth, 1969, p. 1008). For the most part, however, the processes posited by Haith (1982) and Ainsworth (1969) are speculative. In this regard, Haith (1982) notes that research which adequately and accurately describes the social factors which presumably affect parent-child attachment, such as the pattern and affective quality of family relationships, is lacking. Specifically, he draws our attention to the likelihood that the quality of mother-father and parent-child interactions affects the child's present and future relationships. Haith raises the question with regard to families characterized by chronic conflict, but notes that the larger issue is describing how different affective environments influence relational development.

The association between marital discord and child problems (O'Leary & Emery, 1984) and between parental characteristics such as lack of confidence, overinvolvement, or undercontrol and child problems (Mash, 1984; Patterson, 1985) receives considerable attention in the child development research, but remarkably few studies address the implications of differences in the quality of

parenting for children's ability to form intimate relationships in young adulthood. An exception is the work by Elder et al. (in press) which spans four generations of family relationships and finds evidence to suggest that children who grow up in homes characterized by marital conflict and aversive family relationships are also likely to have more difficulty forming and sustaining close relationships in adulthood. In a more speculative vein, Weiss (1982) posits that parents directly and indirectly foster or frustrate their children's attempts to form relationships outside the family. For instance, by undermining a child's sense of competence parents can impede a child's ability to make friends and later, to form more intimate relationships.

In another vein, in families where there are poor marriages one parent may monopolize a child's time and emotional energy to compensate for loneliness or other needs not being met in the marital relationship, thus limiting the child's outside relationships (Weiss, 1982). In both examples, parents' lack of sensitivity to the child's or adolescent's needs have the potential for critical consequences on the individual's ability to form intimate relationships in adulthood. Finally, Stierlin (1981) in his discussion of the process of parent-adolescent separation suggests that the goal of this developmental transition is for the adolescent to develop new loyalties outside the nuclear family without having to disengage emotionally from his/her parents at the same time. Important to the current study is their notion that the outcome of the adolescent's separation from parents is dependent

upon and is organized by the nature of the parental relationship and parental conflicts. In essence, in order to accomplish this task, the adolescent must feel free to become involved in relationships outside the family without experiencing guilt about leaving his/her parents.

To summarize, attachment theory's approach to close relationships sharpens the focus on specific factors within the child's social setting likely to account for differences in the capacity for intimacy in adulthood. Although attachment theory and other adult development approaches to close relationships do not specifically address the development of intimacy, these models do stress the importance of understanding how societal and familial influences act together to determine different outcomes in individuals' levels of autonomy, interpersonal competence, and ability to communicate effectively (Anastasiow, 1982). Additionally, these researchers' interest in the "affective environment" hints at the close ties between conflict and close relationships, and suggests an additional dimension of intimate relationships which heretofore has been neglected.

Experiences of Conflict in Intimate Relationships

The current study raises an additional question about the relationship between intimacy status or level of intimacy and the variations in conflict resolution in close relationships. As noted earlier in the critique of existing intimacy measures, current conceptualizations of intimacy as operationalized by Orlofsky et

al. (1973) and by White et al. (1986) confound conflict with the broad construct of depth. By burying notions of conflict resolution in more global categories such as "insight" or "communication", the current systems for defining intimacy obscure opportunities to examine more precisely the relationship between the level of intimacy and the ways in which people experience and cope with problems. Others have suggested, however, that the high rates of interaction and the diversity of activities which people share in close relationships also provides increased opportunity for conflict to occur (Peterson, 1983). Importantly, theoretical discussions of the role of conflict in intimacy propose that conflict can either facilitate relationship growth and commitment, or, alternatively, can ultimately cause the demise of a relationship (Braiker & Kelley, 1979; Peterson, 1983). What is missing in the literature, however, is the critical distinction between the amount or presence of conflict and conflict resolution. In the case of intimate relationships in non-clinical samples, it is likely that individuals' various ways of coping with conflict rather than the degree of conflict is the important variable to examine. This study accordingly focuses on the relationship between young adults' styles of conflict resolution, not on conflict per se, and intimacy. However, in extremely distressed couples, such as those seen in a clinic setting, it is likely that the amount of conflict is an important indicator of the level of stress.

Although I believe that a reciprocal interaction probably best characterizes the relationship between intimacy and conflict resolution, this is impossible to test in a cross-sectional study such as the present investigation. For heuristic reasons I will therefore focus on how individuals' conflict resolution strategies affect the level of intimacy. Based on the work of Braiker and Kelley (1979), the current study makes a distinction between interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution. "Interpersonal conflict resolution" refers to the way individuals typically approach and handle problems in close relationships. "Intrapsychic conflict resolution" refers to individuals' intrapersonal experience of coping with problems. Or stated somewhat differently, the intrapsychic conflict dimension reflects the degree of tension versus satisfaction expressed (directly or indirectly) about the way conflicts are resolved, whereas the interpersonal dimension is representative of what individuals typically do to resolve problems. The distinction between these two aspects of close relationships allows a closer look at the relationship between what individuals do and how they feel in intimate relationships, and is especially relevant to the present study's focus on exploring individual differences in what each person brings to the relationship.

To assess both intrapsychic and interpersonal conflict resolution, scales were developed based on a cognitive-developmental approach. Conceptually, the underlying framework of the scales is consistent both with ego psychology's developmental

model of interpersonal relationships (e.g., Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; White et al., 1986) and with cognitive models of coping with stress (e.g., Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), especially stress in the interpersonal domain (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978).

The ego development model describes a continuum of interpersonal style characterized by egocentricism and self-serving behavior on the low end, stereotyped and concrete thinking and interpersonal behaviors at the middle ranges, and by increasing capacities for empathy, interdependence, and appreciation for individual differences at the high ends. Conflict resolution style can be considered one aspect of interpersonal style. At the lower end of the developmental continuum, an egocentric or self-focused style of coping with conflict is characterized by a reactivity to negative affect and impulsive or aggressive behaviors (e.g., yelling, leaving the scene, verbal or physical abuse) that fail to take into account the needs of the other individual. This approach to conflict resolution reflects a style of coping that, in Loevinger's and Wessler's (1970) words, is "impulsive" and potentially exploitative and is driven by negative affect and self protective concerns. Accordingly, both of the conflict scales used in the present research are defined at the lower levels by maladaptive attempts to cope with conflict, that generally are unsuccessful at reducing the level of tension or resolving the problem. Strategies represented at the intermediate levels of the scales are based on palliative techniques that preserve the peace and avoid confrontational and negative interactions. Consistent

with the developmental model, individuals at intermediate levels of conflict resolution cope with interpersonal problems in terms of concrete behaviors rather than complex motives or feelings. When feelings are expressed, they are stereotypical and cliche, and they serve to facilitate minimization and denial of conflict. In contrast, at the higher levels of the scale, strategies involve efforts to acknowledge feelings of anger and guilt, and to cope with problems in a constructive, change-oriented manner. As depicted by a developmental model of interpersonal style, underlying these higher level strategies is the recognition of reciprocal dependence as well as appreciation for individual differences.

Additionally, the stress and coping model provides conceptual support to the framework described above. The stress and coping model distinguishes among styles of coping in which individuals are helpless in the face of negative and overwhelming affect, styles in which individuals rely on palliative strategies, and styles in which individuals focus on constructive resolution. While the stress and coping model typically does not presume a continuum for these three types of conflict resolution strategies, Pearlin and Schooler (1978) have shown that in marriage, the most effective responses are characterized by reflective consideration of problems, whereas those that involve emotional discharge of feelings are the least effective, and those that rely on avoidance and withdrawal fall somewhere in between.

Along these same lines, Holahan and Moos' (1987) summary of the research findings on the influence of coping strategies on psychological well-being is consistent with the conceptual underpinnings of the conflict scales used in the present study. Active or problem-oriented strategies, which are conceptually similar to the higher levels of this study's conflict scales, were more successful in reducing depressive symptoms (Mitchell, Cronkite, & Moos, 1983) and in reducing the effects of negative life events on psychological functioning (Billings & Moos, 1981; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Conversely, findings from studies by Menaghan (1982), Moos and Moos (1984), and Billings and Moos (1981) all demonstrated a positive association between avoidance strategies and psychological distress (e.g., depression, increased family conflict). In addition, a study which used intraindividual analyses to examine the relationship between conflict strategies and respondents' perceptions of satisfactory versus unsatisfactory outcomes found strategies which were hostile and aggressively confrontive or which relied on detaching oneself or creating a positive outlook were positively related to unsatisfactory outcomes (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis & Gruen, 1986). These same researchers found that a focus on personal growth and problem-solving, strategies found at the higher ends of the conflict scales in the present study, were positively related to reports of satisfactory outcomes.

Finally, a study by Rubsult, Johnson, and Morrow (1986) attempted to empirically establish the adaptive value of four

possible responses in the "exit-voice-loyalty-neglect" coping paradigm. The results of regression analyses based on 68 university couples' self-reports of their conflict resolution styles indicated that "exit" and "neglect" strategies in which individuals are abusive, threaten to leave, refuse discussion or ignore problems were related to self-reported decreases in satisfaction and increases in distress. "Voice" strategies which were characterized by a willingness to compromise and talk things over were predictive of nondistress, whereas the more passive-avoidant tendency to "wait for things to improve" was not predictive.

In sum, the conflict resolution scales developed and used in this study reflect Braiker and Kelley's (1979) distinction between coping with conflict on an intrapsychic level and coping with conflict on an interpersonal or behavioral level in close relationships. The underlying framework of both scales is based on the theoretical and conceptual formulations of the ego psychology developmental model and the cognitive model of stress and coping.

The Interpersonal Conflict Resolution scale was originally developed and used in a dissertation by Pedigo (1986). Individuals who score at the low end of the interpersonal conflict resolution scale typically approach difficulties in ways that escalate conflict such as verbally attacking the partner, yelling and screaming, or otherwise creating barriers to resolution. Individuals scoring in the middle range of the scale typically avoid confrontation and try to minimize negative affect in

resolving problems. And individuals scoring in the high range of the scale resolve problems via open confrontation and discussion, compromise, or other effective strategies.

In the present study, I developed the Intrapsychic Conflict Resolution scale to assess young adults' inner experiences of coping with conflict in their close relationships, based on the distinction pointed out by Braiker and Kelley (1979). The low, middle, and high points of the Interpersonal and Intrapsychic Conflict Resolution scales are conceptually similar, but the content of the latter refers to intrapsychic rather than interpersonal processes of conflict resolution. The Intrapsychic Conflict Resolution scale describes individuals at the low end who are overwhelmed by and experience conflict as distressful and as a threat to the relationship, and individuals at the high end who experience conflict as an inevitable, growth-enhancing part of the relationship. In the middle of this scale are those who attempt to deny or minimize the importance of conflicts, but who also may inadvertently acknowledge that problems exist.

Empirical evidence to guide the formulation of hypotheses about the function of conflict in close relationships is limited. In fact, the literature is actually more confusing than enlightening in this regard. As Peterson (1983) notes, there is a significant discrepancy between the relatively large amount of theoretical work and the paucity of actual data about the role of conflict in intimate relationships, which he suggests is due to practical and ethical restraints in collecting information about

how couples handle differences. However, for the most part theoretical conceptualizations and particularly, the empirical work on intimacy have neither emphasized nor explored in depth the interplay between the level of conflict experienced in close relationships and the level of intimacy. The exceptions are a longitudinal study by Raush et al. (1974) and a retrospective study by Braiker and Kelley (1979).

Raush et al. (1974) followed couples during the first three years of marriage, during which time couples completed questionnaires, interviews, and participated in videotaped role plays designed to stimulate conflict and conflict resolution. Based on the data from four role plays, they designate three distinct styles of dealing with conflict, and further stipulate that these categories did not differ by family life cycle stage or sex. Individuals in the avoidance classification scheme chose not to confront their differences openly. This particular style of handling problems appears to inhibit further growth of the relationship, but notably does not appear to impede the overall level of marital satisfaction or stability for these couples. A second style of handling conflict is characterized by a limited range of problem solving behaviors, presumably as an effort to remain uninvolved and maintain distance. These restricted couples usually resort to ineffective strategies which lead to escalation of the conflict and possibly to a break in the relationship. In contrast, the distinguishing feature of the third group is the varied repertoire available for solving problems. Individuals in

this group typically appeal to <u>constructive</u> means of resolving differences, and do so in a context of caring and concern, which ultimately promotes relationship growth. Notably, the consequences for the relationship differ according to each style, with the avoiders remaining satisfied but static; the restricted leading to further friction and possible dissolution; and the constructive achieving resolution and relationship development. These relationships suggest, in terms of the present study's hypotheses, that individuals who have more constricted interpersonal styles of dealing with conflict will be less intimate, i.e., more "self-focused". Additionally, individuals with avoiding styles of resolving conflicts will be more likely to score in the middle ranges of both the intimacy and conflict scales. And lastly, individuals with constructive styles of coping with problems will be more likely to score at the high end of the intimacy (i.e., "individuated-connected") and conflict scales.

Braiker and Kelley (1979) attempt to explore the relationship between conflict and the quality of relationships in a retrospective questionnaire study with twenty couples. The study describes a pattern of increasing interdependence from casual dating to serious dating to engagement and marriage accompanied by increasing opportunities and occurrences of conflict. Secondly, they note that "conflict is not necessarily destructive of or disruptive to relationship growth and continuation", given that all these couples were married (Braiker & Kelley, 1979, p. 150).

Peterson (1983) suggests that this and other studies (e.g., Stambul, 1975; Wills, Weiss, & Patterson, 1974; Orden & Bradburn, 1968) are not tapping what may be more complex relationships between conflict and "closeness". In this regard, Braiker and Kelley (1979) note that although their own data show love and conflict are not related, it is possible that there is a link between the two, such that the communication which facilitates feelings of love and closeness in the early stages of a relationship serves as an aid to resolving conflict in later stages. In a more clinical and theoretical vein, Kaplan and Klein (1985) present a somewhat stronger hypothesis about the growth-enhancing potential of conflict in close relationships:

> we see conflict as one mode of intense and abiding engagement, not as the leading edge of separation and disconnection. Conflict is a necessary part of relationships, essential for the changes which must be made so that the relationship and each person in it can change and grow (p. 5).

The results from the Braiker and Kelley (1979) studies do not allow statements about the causal relationship between conflict and successful relationships. They speculate, however, that "successful" relationships may differ in severity, number, or styles of conflict resolution from less satisfied couples. Moreover, it is their belief that successful couples are more likely to settle differences by discussion rather than avoidance. Similarly, the present study expects that individuals who have adaptive problem solving styles which lead to integrative agreements will have relationships characterized by structural

improvement, and therefore will also have higher levels of intimacy. Extending these implications beyond that which is postulated in the literature, it is proposed that young adults with more constructive interpersonal strategies for conflict resolution will also experience conflict as relationship-building and enriching rather than as painful and distressing. As Braiker and Kelley (1979) suggest, interpersonal conflict can trigger changes in attitudes and feelings (i.e., intrapersonal conflict), including "a crystallization of sentiments about the relationship that supports a new self attribution of 'being in love' (p. 161).

Missing in the above studies are analyses to explore what factors are contributing to these differences. Furthermore, there are a number of methodological problems. For example, the literature to date employs small samples and focuses on married couples, which have thus far prevented an adequate analysis of the contribution of variables, such as age and family life cycle stage. In addition, the data from Raush et al. (1974) are provocative, but have serious limitations due to the "staged" laboratory tasks and the fact that couples were asked to repeat the same role plays each year of the study. What these studies do is point out the importance of studying conflict resolution rather than the level of conflict. For example, both Raush et al. (1974) and Braiker and Kelley (1979) make it clear that they believe communication or conflict resolution skills contribute to the differences in satisfied and dissatisfied couples. Additionally, both research groups establish the relationship between "satisfaction" or

"success" and adaptive conflict resolution. While "success" seems to be fraught with problems such as value judgment and "satisfaction" is not the same as intimacy, a dimension in common to both of these terms and intimacy is commitment. It is possible that, among other things, the example of communication and conflict resolution in the parental marriage influences young adults' styles of resolving conflict in their own close relationships, which in turn affects the capacity for negotiating the level of commitment and intimacy.

The present study distinguishes between interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution in order to enhance the present understanding of close relationships. Hence, I expect there will be a positive, but only moderately strong relationship between interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution, because they are tapping two different types of experiences of one domain. More importantly, I will address previously unexplored issues by proposing: 1) that both interpersonal conflict resolution and intrapsychic conflict resolution will influence the level of intimacy; and 2) that young adults' own interpersonal and intrapsychic strategies for conflict resolution will partly mediate the relationship between their parent's style of conflict resolution and the level of intimacy.

The sections which follow will attempt to specify individual and familial factors which contribute to differences in the level of intimacy in young adulthood as well as suggest how these factors are related to one another.

Individual Differences Variables and Intimacy

Although the variables discussed in the following section are not psychological variables per se, the influences of gender, sex role, age, and family life cycle are included in the present study because they represent significant sources of developmental and social influences on close relationships. The sections below are not intended to suggest that all of the variables that account for or contribute to differences in levels of intimacy are being measured, but the above four indices are selected because they represent important sources of variation and information in the absence of other data. For example, age provides a useful marker of potential differences in individuals' maturation and "readiness" for intimacy, and sex-role orientation likely explains some of the variance accounted for by gender.

Gender and Sex Role

The fact that this section includes both gender and sex role orientation effects on intimacy reflects the close and obvious connection between the two variables, but hopefully will not obscure the importance of identifying each aspect's potentially unique influence on the development of intimacy. Although I expect that sex-role orientation will partly mediate the effect of gender on intimacy, I also believe that both sex-role orientation and gender will each contribute independently to intimacy. Additionally, the possibility that gender moderates the effects of

other predictors in the model will also be investigated. Finally, I expect that sex-role orientation will mediate the relationship between gender and intimacy.

The focus of the literature on gender and sex role with respect to intimacy has changed over time, with the earlier studies focusing on gender differences in intimacy and the more recent studies emphasizing that gender differences in intimacy are mediated by differences in sex role orientation. The goal of this section is to review these diverse findings for the purpose of underscoring the importance of understanding how both gender and sex role contribute to intimacy in today's changing world.

Gender. Bem (1981) has described the dichotomy between male and female as the basic organizing principle for the allocation of adult roles. This notion is particularly relevant for the study of close relationships, and is echoed in the frequently cited conclusion that in every heterosexual relationship, there are in fact two relationships, the male and the female (Bernard, 1972). In a similar vein, investigations of close relationships from a range of theoretical orientations generally agree that there are different developmental pathways for men and women which shape intimate relationships (e.g., Peplau & Gordon, 1985; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Orlofsky, 1977; Prager, 1977; Chodorow, 1974). Furthermore, numerous studies report differences in intimacy in men's and women's friendships reflecting a pattern similar to those differences found for heterosexual close relationships. For example, women report having more intimate

friends (Powers & Bultena, 1976), and are more likely to have an
intimate confidante throughout the life span (Booth & Hess, 1974;
Lowenthal & Haven, 1968). In contrast, men are described as
disclosing less personal information (Cozby, 1973), as less
emotionally expressive (Balswick & Peek, 1971), and as choosing
less intimate topics to discuss (Morgan, 1976). Both questionnaire
and role play data show that women value emotional sharing more
than men, and that men are more interested in sharing activities
(Reis, Senchak, & Solomon, 1985; Douvan & Adelson, 1966).

The literature on close relationships depicts similar
findings for differences in men's and women's levels of intimacy,
or in variables believed to promote intimacy. Women have been
shown to be more empathic (Hoffman, 1977), more sensitive to
nonverbal communication (Hall, 1978), and to value emotional caring
and support more than men in close relationships (Parelman, 1983).
In a more detailed theoretical account, Chodorow (1974) discusses
the ramifications of the "social organization of gender" from a
psychoanalytic perspective and stresses differences in the ways
boys and girls resolve the oedipal crisis. Briefly, the task for
boys involves a positional identification with their father and
thus with aspects of the masculine role as provider and worker (not
as husband or parent), which effectively curtails the
acknowledgement of nurturant and relational capacities and needs.
Girls' development, on the other hand, involves a personal
identification with their mothers, which effectively establishes a
link between the affective, nurturant aspects of personality and

aspects of learning the adult female role. Similarly, Stiver (1984) suggests that girls' identification with "mother as mother" leads to the enhancement of emotional and nurturant capacities in women and not men. According to Stiver, men's development occurs via a path which begins with attachment and proceeds to separation to individuation to autonomy. Girls, in contrast, move from attachment to further connectedness, always developing within a relational context.

Sex-role orientation. The above discussion of male-female differences in intimate relationships illustrates the problematic tendency in this literature to lump together psychological and social influences on attitudes and behaviors by measuring and examining relationships between variables in terms of gender alone. For example, the psychodynamic model referred to above stresses identification with the same-sex parent and describes two, neat pathways defined as "masculine" and "feminine". In a similar vein, the sociological and developmental literature focuses on the consequences of gender-linked socialization for male and female sex-role differentiation. However, the social-developmental approach which emphasizes gender differences in learned values and behaviors, establishes a means for accounting for differences in intimacy by assessing beliefs and attitudes rather than simply describing sex differences. Parsons' and Bales' (1955) conceptualization of women as socio-emotional (expressive) specialists and men as task (instrumental) specialists represents

the early work in this field. In fact, it is often cited to account for the differences in the experiences of men and women in close relationships. Similarly, the developmental account of differences in the capacity for intimacy frequently refers to Bakan's (1966) concepts of agency and communion which represent the masculine and feminine aspects of personality, respectively, and essentially parallels the Parsons-Bales dimensions of instrumentality and expressiveness. Both of these theories describe how socialization differences influence differences in the relational styles of males and females. Generally stated, these schemas propose that the interaction between culture and personality results in gender-based differentiation of roles. Males characteristically are instrumental or agentic, and females are communal or expressive. Bakan tempered the earlier formulation, however, by proposing that every individual has both feminine and masculine aspects which ideally become integrated with mature personality development. In keeping with Bakan's work, the construct of androgyny has gained prominence in the sex role literature, and sex-role research increasingly focuses on the degree to which individuals report high levels of both masculine and feminine traits. Presumably, the androgynous person can then call upon expressive (feminine) or agentic (masculine) attributes, depending on the demands of the situation. Relatedly, recent work challenges the traditional differentiation of male-female roles, and argues that the changing roles of men and women, the feminist movement and the rising divorce rate make it likely that gender-

based role assignments will hinder rather than enhance close relationships (Peplau & Gordon, 1985; Parelman, 1983).

Similarly, more recent studies show that the pattern of differences in close relationships is not adequately described by a male versus female dichotomy. Rather, these studies have begun to identify patterns of consensus and similarities rather than differences among men and women along various dimensions of intimacy (e.g., Parelman, 1983; Peplau, 1983). Accordingly, the focus of contemporary studies has been the study of sex roles to explain differences in men's and women's perceptions of and experiences in close relationships. Furthermore, these efforts have been guided by a number of studies which report minimal overall sex differences in what men and women want in marriage and other close relationships, and which therefore contradict earlier studies which upheld the stereotyped view of the "resistant" male, averse to marriage and involvement (Peplau, 1983; Komarovsky, 1976; Raush et al., 1974; Levinger, 1964). Underlying this trend is the belief that greater role flexibility or non-sex-stereotyped interactions (androgyny) facilitates sharing and closeness between men and women (Parelman, 1983; Bem, 1974). This line of thinking suggests that it is not gender per se which explains differences; rather researchers need to examine how sex role socialization mediates differences in values and goals, which in turn affect how men and women act and view close relationships (Gilligan, 1982; Thorbecke & Grotevant, 1982).

Several studies examining the relationship between sex role and intimacy assess the Eriksonian claim that adolescents establish their identity before resolving the intimacy-isolation crisis in young adulthood (e.g., Costos, 1986; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Fischer & Narus, 1981; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Orlofsky, 1978; Prager, 1977). The central issue in these studies is the clarification of male and female developmental pathways.

As Matteson and Marcia (1987) point out, the focus in this endeavor changed in correspondence with changes in sociocultural norms and values, such as those represented by the feminist movement. Thus, rather than simply attempting to delineate a male versus female style of development, "it seemed wise to move beyond a study of 'sex differences' and to focus, instead, on different styles of development within each sex" (Matteson & Marcia, 1987, p. 6).

In this regard, several researchers have amended or used expanded versions of the standard Identity Status Interview to include the assessment of sex-role ideology (Grotevant, Thorbecke, & Meyer, 1982; Matteson, 1977; Schenkel & Marica, 1972). Justification for this modification can be found in Erikson's belief that the identity process consists of resolving several "part conflicts", including attempts "to face what it means to be male or female, to learn and be comfortable with particular sex roles while rejecting others" (p. 41, Hodgson & Fischer, 1979). The rationale for the inclusion of sex-role thinking also reflects two basic hypotheses of this research: 1) female development

occurs in a relational context, and therefore requires the measurement of the interpersonal domain (Fischer & Hodgson, 1979), and 2) sex-typed individuals typically avoid gender-inappropriate behaviors, making it likely that masculine persons will avoid nurturant and emotionally expressive interactions required in intimate relationships (Schiedel & Marcia, 1985).

In a recent review of the research on sex differences in identity, however, Matteson and Marcia (1987) issue a strong caveat about interpreting past studies relating identity and intimacy. Basically, they believe that existing models of identity development as currently operationalized are inadequate to explain women's development, and therefore that it is fruitless to persist in efforts to describe development based on assumptions that identity precedes intimacy. Rather, they propose that the evidence suggests the concurrent development of agentic and communal traits for both sexes, and furthermore, that development in one area is likely to complement rather than hinder the other (Matteson & Marcia, 1987).

Based on the above arguments, Matteson and Marcia believe that identity as presently conceptualized in Eriksonian theory is a masculine, agentic, decision-making model, and hence, that future investigations whose goal is to understand and explain developmental pathways would do best to depart from Erikson's system. However, the existing research in this tradition does provide findings which suggest hypotheses about the effects of sex role and the development of intimacy in young adult men and women:

1) Femininity and androgyny will be positively related to the development of intimacy in men and women and 2) More women than men will be classified as "intimate". While there appear to be some contradictions in the literature about the effects of femininity on intimacy in women (Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Fischer & Narus, 1981), the findings generally show that men who are feminine or androgynous are more likely to have higher levels of intimacy (Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979). For women, the only relevant distinction noted across studies is that women who are undifferentiated with regard to sex role orientation are less likely to have developed higher levels of intimacy than women who are sex-typed or androgynous (Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Fischer & Narus, 1981; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979). Along these same lines, Matteson and Marcia (1987) suggest that, because masculine and feminine characteristics are additive rather than bipolar as once thought, both males and females who have high levels of both are more likely to achieve both identity and intimacy. In this same vein, White et al. (1986) find that for both husbands and wives, the degree of communion (femininity) was positively, although only moderately, related to intimacy maturity. With respect to the second hypothesis, the literature consistently finds that more women than men are ranked in the highest intimacy statuses regardless of sex role ideology (Schiedel & Marcia, 1985; Fischer & Narus, 1981; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979), indicating that the effects of sex role and gender on intimacy are independent of one another. Matteson and Marcia (1987) propose that Western cultural values and

norms maintain the artificial dichotomy of masculinity and femininity, which results in making intimacy a priority for women, and conversely, "retarding intimacy development among those men not sufficiently high in masculine and feminine characteristics" (p. 48).

Alternatively, White et al. (1986) find in a sample of 31 couples that husbands and wives did not differ on levels of intimacy, but also report that the patterns among correlates of intimacy, including sex-role orientation and marital adjustment, varied greatly by gender. In particular, although the overall relationship for communion (femininity) and intimacy maturity was significant as noted above, the strength of the association varied according to gender. They found a strong, significant relationship between men's level of communality (femininity) and overall intimacy maturity, whereas the relationship was only marginal for women. In addition, they found that the more other-oriented (feminine) the wives, the lower the level of husbands' intimacy. Conversely, husbands' higher levels of communality (femininity) were positively associated with wives' intimacy maturity.

Although the distinction between gender and sex-role orientation in the literature is not altogether clear, one can summarize the findings related to intimacy with the following general conclusion: The roots of the capacity for intimacy lie within the realm of socialization, with gender influences taking precedence over, yet not necessarily accounting for those of sex role orientation. Similarly, Fischer and Narus (1981) draw the

conclusion from their study of intimacy among college age men and women that being male or female is itself probably more related to individuals' experience of close relationships than femininity, masculinity, or androgyny. Accordingly, I expect that more females than males will be intimate, but that this relationship will be mediated in part by sex role, with more feminine young adults also scoring in the higher levels of intimacy (i.e., "individuated-connected").

Generally, the difficulty in making sense of all the various discussions of gender-linked differences in men's and women's intimate relationships stems from two sources: a lack of data for the adult years and the ambiguous use of the term "sex role" as an all-purpose label for male-female differences (Nash & Feldman, 1981). The use of diverse measures to assess sex roles adds to the confusion. Furthermore, both gender and sex role are linked to socialization influences. However, whereas gender is a discrete bipolar dimension, for which the norms regarding behavior are dictated by global societal norms, sex role is more subject to intrafamilial influences and differences in individual interpersonal histories. It is therefore necessary to describe the roles which both gender and sex role play in the development of intimacy as well as how they might interact.

In a related vein, it is likely that variations in individuals' life circumstances, such as whether a person is single, married, and/or a parent, and relatedly, how old a person is, will also effect sex role orientations (Worell, 1981). To

date, however, the reliance on adolescent and undergraduate samples
makes it difficult to assess the contribution of these person-
situation variables adequately. Accordingly, a comprehensive
account of social and psychological contributions to differences in
intimacy includes gender, sex role, and variations in life cycle
stage and age.

Age and Family Life Cycle Stage

Age and family life cycle stage are obviously confounded: as
individuals get older, they are more likely to make commitments
such as marriage and parenthood. Hence, age functions in effect as
a "predictor" of family life cycle stage, and is treated as such in
this study. Accordingly, I expect that older young adults are more
likely to be in the later family life cycle stages (marriage and
parenting), and that they will describe more intimate
relationships. Furthermore, it is predicted that the relationship
between life cycle stage and intimacy will be partly explained by
the mediating influence of sex role orientation, with more
individuals who are married and parents having higher levels of
femininity.

Age. Recent efforts to describe the development of intimacy
have included age and generally hypothesize the existence but often
not the direction of a relationship for age and intimacy (Schiedel
& Marcia, 1985; Parelman, 1983; Fischer, 1981; Fisher & Narus,
1981). The primary theme in the theoretical and empirical
literature on the development of adult love relationships is that

deeper levels of intimacy characterize relationships over time
(Reedy, Birren, & Schanie, 1981).

Not surprisingly, however, studies using samples of differing
ages find contradictory results. For example, a study of male and
female college students, ages 18-24, shows that older males are
more intimate, and that there is a general trend for both males and
females to achieve increasing intimacy as they get older (Schiedel
& Marcia, 1985). Similarly, Fischer (1981) finds that college
women are more likely to be involved in relationships characterized
by mutuality, a sense of uniqueness, open communication,
attachment, and affection than are males in college and males and
females in high school. Yet a questionnaire study of 332
undergraduates ranging in age from 18 to 54 years old shows that
younger women were more likely to be in more intimate heterosexual
relationships (Fischer & Narus, 1981). Although the three studies
are not directly comparable for a number of reasons, one possible
explanation for the discrepancy is a tendency for younger
respondents to idealize their relationships and thus report higher
intimacy (e.g., Hazan & Shaver, 1987). In addition, the results of
the Fischer and Narus (1981) study may represent a cohort effect,
rather than a clear effect for age. Notably, the only other study
which reports a negative relationship for age and intimacy is a
study of marital intimacy, which qualifies this finding by noting
that age in this sample is correlated with length of marriage,
cohort effects, number of children, and remarriage (Parelman,
1983). Consequently, it is impossible from such data to tease out

the actual contribution of age to marital intimacy. However, these methodological problems are noteworthy because they call our attention to the "natural" confound of age and life situation, and the accompanying likelihood that variations in both of these factors impact the nature of intimate relationships. Hence, age is included in the present study to account primarily for its influence on family life cycle rather than to assess the direct relationship with intimacy in the relatively narrow range of young adulthood.

Life cycle stage. Both the theoretical and empirical literature stress the role of major life events in creating intra- and interpersonal changes. Studies which elaborate on the relationship between family life cycle stage and sex role substantiate the crucial role of life situation suggested by life-span theories. Especially striking are the results found in several studies showing that pregnancy and parenthood mean an increase in femininity for both men and women, an increase in cross-sex behavior for men and, conversely, a decrease in cross-sex behavior and increase in sex-typed behavior for women (Nash & Feldman, 1981; Hyde & Phillis, 1979; Abrahams, Feldman, & Nash, 1978). Extrapolating from these findings regarding sex role, increases in men's capacity for intimacy might also be expected to co-occur with the early years of marriage and parenthood.

There is a continuing debate in the literature regarding precisely how variations in life cycle stage, in particular

marriage and parenting, affect intimacy in close relationships.
Early studies based on Parsons' and Bales' (1955) depiction of the
sex role differentiation of the family show that parenting has a
"traditionalizing effect" on men and women's sex role orientation
(Guttman, 1975; Blood & Wolfe, 1960). According to this line of
thought, in marriage, women identify with a socio-emotional
orientation and men identify with the provider or instrumental-task
orientation. Moreover, women are likely to have a greater capacity
for intimate relationships than men, given a social structure which
encourages such role differentiation. Several challenges to this
conceptualization suggest that there is actually a great deal of
overlap in family roles for men and women (Levinger, 1977; Raush et
al., 1974; Rossi, 1968). The majority of the work in this area
focuses on delineating how sex role behaviors or ideologies are
modified as individuals' life situations change. For instance,
Balswick and Peek (1970) believe that the marriage relationship
creates needs and demands for emotional expressiveness on the part
of both partners. Similarly, Levinger (1964) proposes that
successful marriages are characterized by reciprocity and mutuality
rather than a sex-typed division of socioemotional behavior akin to
the traditional division of labor in Western families. And
finally, Fischer (1981) suggests that young women socialize their
male partners for intimacy once they are involved in relationships.
Thus as relationships evolve, it appears that differences due to
sex typing decrease with increasing closeness or marriage, the
formal institution for the expression of intimacy.

In sum, although very few studies directly address their role in shaping differences in levels of intimacy, both theoretical and empirical sources suggest the importance of assessing ways in which age and life cycle stage influence variations in individuals' level of intimacy. In addition, researchers' continued efforts to understand sex differences in development highlights the importance of considering variations in life cycle stage and age. Moreover, because sex role is identified as one of the keys to understanding differences in the capacity for intimacy, the inclusion of mediating factors such as life stage is crucial.

Family Variables

The Parental Marriage, Triangulation, and Intimacy

Developing a rationale for studying the association between the parental marriage and the level of intimacy in young adulthood rests primarily on two ideas about development and about relationships found in both the clinical and empirical literature. First, there appears to be a widespread belief, which only recently has been addressed by research efforts, that individuals develop ideas or schemata in their families of origin of what it means to be a man in relation to a woman, and vice versa (Raush et al., 1974). Once these internal plans for interpersonal relationships are formed, individuals will choose partners whose behavior is congruent with that learned in the family (Elder et al., in press; Lurie, 1974). Secondly, with regard to the level of intimacy, the behaviors and values likely to be most salient for developing

schemata are those found in the most obvious intimate dyad, the parental marriage.

I expect, therefore, that the parental marriage will play a significant role in young adults' levels of intimacy via direct and indirect routes of influence. In particular, I expect that parents with better marriages will have young adult children with higher levels of intimacy (i.e., more "individuated-connected"). Also, the relationship between the parental marriage and young adults' intimacy status will be partly mediated by triangulation in the family of origin and by its influence on young adults' experiences of conflict in their own relationships. (The relationship for triangulation will be discussed in the section following this one, and the relationship explained by young adults' experiences of conflict are discussed in the earlier sections on intimacy.)

Previous studies have examined the role of parenting styles on adolescent development, but rarely have considered the spousal system's or the marital unit's potential for influencing development in young adulthood. Moreover, when studies do include questions about the parental relationship, they generally involve simple yes or no responses to an adjective checklist and rely on retrospective reports (Elder et al., in press; Coleman, Ganong, & Ellis, 1985).

In a study using the same data set as the present study, Pedigo (1986) identifies three components of the parental marriage which are consistently found to correlate with marital satisfaction and which presumably are important for developing intimate

relationships. These aspects of the parents' marital relationship
are used in the present study to measure relationships between the
parental marriage and young adults' capacity for intimacy, and are
as follows: the degree and quality of communication, conflict
resolution, and companionship. Furthermore, these variables are
assessed by interviews with the parents of the young adults being
studied rather than the young adults' retrospective reports.

To date, there is very limited empirical evidence documenting
the association between the parental marriage and relational styles
in young adulthood. The studies that do exist often refer to
related topics such as the transmission of marital instability
(Mueller & Pope, 1977; Pope & Mueller, 1976), attitudes toward
marriage (Wallin, 1954), and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965); and
generally rely on retrospective perceptions of the parental
marriage. For example, Pope and Mueller (1976) report that their
analyses of five large national survey samples only provide weak
support for the role model rationale of the transmission of marital
stability. The role model rationale suggests that children learn
marital and sex roles best in an environment consisting of two
loving, competent parents. To address the plausibility of this
thesis, Pope and Mueller carried out regression analyses with
marital dissolution in the child generation as the dependent
variable and intact versus disrupted (divorced, separated, or death
of one spouse) parental families as the predictor. Their results
fail to substantiate most of their research predictions, and they
therefore claim that the role model rationale is not very useful.

However, their analyses involve rather crude categorical data, and do not begin to address the complexities inherent in family processes and interactions likely to mediate such relationships. Furthermore, it is important to note that one cannot make inferences about the capacity for intimacy based on data about marital disruption, as there are a multitude of reasons marriages break up. In sum, it appears that neither a "dissolution begets dissolution" rationale nor the survey data are sufficiently elaborated to account for relational outcomes.

Other studies focus on relationships between the parental marriage and patterns of dating in adolescence. Both Landis (1963) and Coleman et al. (1985) find that adolescents who perceive their parents' marital relationship positively are more likely to have more active dating histories, measured by age at first date, number of long term dating relationships, etc. In addition, both developmental and psychodynamic theories stress family influences in development, but for the most part focus on the parent-child interaction and generally study development prior to adulthood. An extensive literature describing the development of identity and autonomy in adolescence emphasizes the role of adolescents' perceptions of their parents as autocratic, democratic or permissive (Enright, Lapsley, Drivas, & Fehr, 1980), as warm, consistent, concerned (Lavoie, 1976), or as harsh, fair, encouraging of independence, and controlling (Adams & Jones, 1983), to name a few. Similarly, a number of studies examine the contribution of the mother-child relationship to interpersonal

outcomes, such as the formation of attachment in infancy and early childhood. However, the parental marriage and its potential for shaping values and attitudes regarding intimate relationships is largely overlooked.

A notable exception in this regard is the work of Grotevant and Cooper (1986). Grotevant and Cooper (1986) formulate a model which links family relationships and adolescent psychosocial competence. Specifically, they propose that "the opportunity to observe an individuated relationship of their parents and to participate in individuated relationships with their parents" (p. 91) will promote the development of the critical skills involved in identity exploration and role-taking. Their results indicate that adolescents who scored lowest on a measure of psychosocial functioning were in families who avoided conflicts and had weaker differentiation of boundaries between family members. Furthermore, of special interest to the present study were the relationships found for the development of role-taking skills in this investigation. Role-taking is defined as the ability to "conceive of the distinctive perceptual, cognitive and affective experiences and perspectives of another person and to consider those perspectives in subsequent thinking and behavior" (Grotevant & Cooper, 1986, p. 86). Defined in this way, role taking appears to be closely related to the capacity for empathy, which has been found to be related to intimacy (Hoffman, 1977). Grotevant and Cooper (1986) find that adolescents who scored high on role taking had fathers who were sensitive and respective of other's beliefs

and ideas, suggesting that the skills and abilities which enhance
the development of intimacy are affected by relationships in the
family.

In a similar vein, but on a more theoretical plane, Hill and
Aldous (1969) believe that the family is the primary socialization
agent for training individuals for heterosexual relationships by
virtue of the continuous exposure and availability of the parental
marriage as a model. Due to its prominence and repetition,
parental displays of love and affection as well as ways of
resolving differences serve as models for establishing intimate
relationships outside the family. Waring, Tillman, Frelick,
Russell, and Weisz (1980) provide additional support for the
important role played by the parental marriage. They report that
fifty couples in an unstructured interview about what intimacy
means identified childhood exposure to intimacy in the parental
marriage as one of five key concepts of intimacy.

The following sections review the literature related to
communication, conflict resolution, and companionship in the
parental marriage and present an argument for including these
components in a model of the development of the capacity for
intimacy in young adulthood.

Communication

Perhaps the most widely studied aspect of intimacy is
communication, conceptualized as self disclosure (Jourard, 1971;
Levinger & Senn, 1967) or expressiveness (Halberstadt, 1986;

Balswick & Avertt, 1977). Gilbert (1976) in a thoughtful discussion of the debate about whether more self-disclosure necessarily leads to higher levels of intimacy suggests that intimacy by definition requires communication involving risk, affective responses, acceptance, and commitment. She concludes, like Jourard (1971), that truly intimate relationships probably are characterized by increasing amounts of self disclosure and open communication.

Only two studies directly address the question of how parental expressiveness influences children's interpersonal skills and expressiveness. Halberstadt's (1986) study of nonverbal communication in college students links subjects' reports of the degree of family expressiveness and the students' ability to communicate different emotions in a videotaped discussion. He finds that subjects from families perceived as highly affective and expressive are more skilled at nonverbally communicating their feelings. In contrast, he finds that subjects from families who tend to be more reserved are better able to decode emotionally laden messages. Making an inferential leap and applying these results to intimate relationships, it appears that while both skills are important to successful two-way communication, individuals who fall at the extremes of these dimensions are more likely to experience problems communicating with their partners. That is, low-expressive/high receptive and high-expressive/lo receptive individuals will probably feel resentment and frustration

and less intimacy, due to problems in making themselves understood or in understanding others, respectively.

Balswick and Avertt (1977) also examine the contribution of parental expressiveness, but focus on verbal communication. They use self-report questionnaires to assess the respondents' expressiveness as well as their perceptions of parental expressiveness. Importantly, they show two separate pathways to expressiveness: a) an association between gender and expressiveness, with females consistently more expressive than males, and b) an association between parental expressiveness and expressiveness in young adulthood, with gender and parental expressiveness each contributing independently to subjects' reports of expressiveness. Both studies help clarify how patterns of uneven communication in intimate relationships become established, where one partner withdraws (typically, the male) and the other discloses even more (typically, the female) (e.g., Peterson, 1983). Furthermore, the evidence for two independent pathways to expressiveness helps us understand differences not adequately explained by gender-linked or sex-stereotyped explanations alone.

To briefly summarize, the belief that the opportunity to observe open and expressive communication between one's parents will facilitate one's own interpersonal communication skills in adulthood is corroborated by empirical evidence. These studies are limited both in number and by methodological problems due to cross-sectional data and retrospective perceptions of the parental communication. However, they suggest that communication in the

parental marriage has a significant impact on the development of interpersonal skills in young adulthood, and therefore justify the inclusion of parental communication in a model of the development of intimacy. Specifically, I expect that parents who engage in higher levels of communication in their marriages will have young adult children who are more "individuated-connected" in their own close relationships.

Conflict Resolution

Closely related to the ability to communicate is the capacity to work through conflicts and resolve differences. As Peterson (1983) points out, however, the lack of longitudinal and "close descriptive" studies of patterns of conflict in close relationships make it difficult to clearly distinguish among types of relationships and degree of conflict. That is, patterns of conflict are likely to differ along the dimensions of intensity, frequency, diversity, and duration, with the implication that all conflictual relationships are by no means alike (Peterson, 1983). Nevertheless, one can infer from the clinical accounts of treatment programs for distressed couples that the capacity to resolve conflict constructively leads to more moderate levels of conflict, as opposed to either extreme in which conflicts are avoided or occur at high rates. For example, a number of clinicians as well as researchers believe that teaching people (e.g., spouses) to communicate accurately and without distortions will effectively ameliorate one cause for conflict and additionally provides

individuals with a general skill for avoiding minor conflicts and for dealing constructively with important problems (e.g., Peterson, 1983; Guerney, 1977; Gottman, Notarius, Gonso, & Markman, 1976).

According to Gilbert (1976), being able to confront and cope with problems is an inherent part of any relationship which requires commitment. Said in another way, with greater levels of emotional involvement, or with increased frequency and diversity of interaction, there is also greater opportunity for conflict (Peterson, 1983; Gottman, 1979). Burgess (1981) concurs with this conceptualization, and further notes the potential of the marital relationship for serving as an "intimate battleground" versus an "intimate oasis". Accordingly, the possible outcomes of conflict range from a weakening or destruction of any affective bond to improvement in the relationship through a strengthened bond and deeper levels of understanding (Peterson, 1983; Braiker & Kelley, 1979; Raush et al., 1974).

The clinical literature provides the strongest support for a link between styles of conflict resolution in the parental marriage and children's strategies for conflict resolution in relationships outside the family. Virginia Satir (1981) is perhaps the best spokesperson on this subject as she has formulated a model of how conflict functions in distressed families. She proposes that negative interactions in the parental marriage due to ineffective means of resolving problems interferes with the parents' ability to function as effective role models and socializers. On a more positive note, she believes that parents' ability to confront

problems openly and work through conflict has a direct impact on children, which is carried into the child's own intimate relationships and style of solving problems.

The empirical literature offers scant support for the proposed relationship between parental conflict resolution and children's styles of resolving conflict in intimate relationships in young adulthood mostly because it has not been studied. However, the capacity to solve problems constructively has repeatedly been shown to influence marital satisfaction (Billings, 1979; Ort, 1950; Raush et al., 1974; Snyder, 1982). Moreover, marital tensions often lead to problems in parenting (Elder et al., in press; Belsky, 1984; Emery, 1982), and problems in parenting potentially lead to ineffective socialization, as discussed by Satir above. A recent work by Elder et al. (in press) substantiates this pattern, and additionally establishes evidence for the intergenerational transmission of marital tensions. These authors find evidence in four generations of families that marital tensions in one generation are carried over into the next generation through the "socialization of unstable offspring" (p. 18). These children then enter into their own relationships outside the family bringing with them ineffective problem solving strategies, and so on. Referring to social interaction theory's notion of the self-other dynamics of family life (Cottrell, 1969), Elder and his colleagues suggest that interaction patterns learned in the family are likely to be elicited in similar situations later in life. Following this logic, growing up among parents who can

not constructively deal with their problems is likely to be replayed in one's own close heterosexual relationships. Although the focus of this extensive work on unstable personalities does not directly address conflict in the parental marriage and its link to intimacy in young adulthood, the authors' emphasis on the way individuals learn to cope with problems in the family of origin and the evidence for the intergenerational transmission of marital tensions serve as heuristic stepping stones to the questions posed in the current study, and argue for the validity of an intergenerational approach. In particular, I expect that parents who resolve conflicts in their marriages through constructive discussion, open confrontation, and compromise will have young adult children who are more "individuated-connected" in their own intimate relationships.

Companionship

The third aspect of the parental marriage in this three-pronged approach to the relationship between the parental marriage and young adult children's capacity for intimacy is companionship. Companionship refers to the quality of sharing time and interests together, or the way in which spouses relate to each other. Like communication and conflict, companionship is reported in numerous studies to be a positive correlate of marital satisfaction (Snyder, 1982; Miller, 1976; Hawkins, 1968). Companionship also maintains a prominent place in the close relationship literature as a distinguishing feature in numerous marital typologies (Walster &

Walster, 1978; Scanzoni & Scanzoni, 1976; Stapleton & Bright, 1976; Young & Wilmott, 1973; Blood & Wolfe, 1960). In Peplau's (1983) summary of marital typologies, both the modern marriage and the egalitarian marriage emphasize companionship and togetherness. Furthermore, both these marital types are attempts to depart from conventional patterns of marital role specialization and to overcome traditional sex-linked inequality in emotional expressiveness. The implication of relevance to the current study is that companionship is a significant component of close relationships, and presumably, intimacy. Moreover, its expression is likely influenced by the degree of companionship in the parental marriage.

Attachment theory and its extension into adulthood is of special interest here as a theory of the development of affectional bonds. Companionship may be viewed as an operational aspect of an affectional bond. As such, Bowlby's notion of mental models of the social world of infancy and childhood suggests that the quality of the affective bond between an individual's parents and the manner in which it is expressed will "play an important part in determining the fate of a person's feelings and relationships across the life span" (Shaver, Hazan & Bradshaw, 1988, p. 8). In this regard, Hazan and Shaver report that respondents' descriptions of their parents' marital relationship differentiated between respondents who had avoidant and secure adult romantic relationships and between respondents who had anxious/ambivalent and secure adult romantic relationships in a large sample of

university students. Subjects categorized as secure used terms such as friendship and trust to describe their relationships, and emphasized acceptance of their partner's faults. Avoidant relationships included a fear of getting close, jealousy, and emotional lability. Anxious/ambivalent adults described their relationships as consuming, and as involving "extreme sexual attraction and jealousy" and a "desire for reciprocation and union" (Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988, p. 14). Avoidantly attached respondents described their parents' marital relationships as "unaffectionate", and anxiously attached subjects characterized their parents' marriage as "unhappy". The securely attached subjects who described their parents' marriages more positively, Hazan and Shaver suggest, appear to have romantic relationships in adulthood similar to Tennov's (1979) definition of "love" as calm friendship and support. Tennov's version of love is contrasted with "limerence", a more passionate, painful attachment, apparently based on efforts to compensate for needs not previously met in other relationships. Thus, individuals who grow up in homes characterized by affectionate and happy parental marriages are more likely to involve themselves in close relationships based on mature rather than neurotic needs.

Studies such as Hazan and Shaver's and others (Coleman et al., 1985) which use simple adjective checklists to measure the parental marriage make it difficult to draw any clear conclusions regarding specific aspects of the relationship. Furthermore, these studies typically rely on subjects' recall of their parents'

marriages and therefore inevitably involve distortion and unreliability. Aside from these shortcomings, the life-span attachment model's attention to the quality of the parental marriage rather than child rearing practices is an important contribution to the study of close relationships. In addition, others' endeavors to describe the affective flavor of parental interaction in the family of origin to account for adult relational style establish a foundation from which to make further and finer distinctions. Accordingly, the inclusion of companionship in the current study is an attempt to elaborate relevant aspects of family relationships for the development of the capacity for intimacy. I expect that parents who experience their marriage as a partnership which enhances their development both as spouses and as individuals will have young adult children who are more "individuated-connected" in their own close relationships.

Summary

The prevailing belief among theorists, clinicians, and researchers alike is that patterns and styles of relating to others develop in individuals' family of origin (Bell & Bell, 1982; Bowen, 1981; Satir, 1981; Waring, Tillman, Frelick, Russell, & Weisz, 1980; Hess & Waring, 1979; Uddenberg et al., 1979; Bengtson & Troll, 1978; Framo, 1976; Hill & Aldous, 1969). Coleman et al. (1985) summarize this consensus: "...children who grow up observing their parents interacting lovingly and positively will be more likely to value and seek 'healthy' heterosexual dating and

courtship experiences than children who observe an unhappy parental relationship..." (p. 537). In accordance with these beliefs and because an intimate relationship consists of the joining of two life histories which "reflect socialization experiences of each [partner] in their own family of origin" (Elder et al., in press, p. 17), it makes sense to more systematically examine the ways in which these experiences affect individuals' levels of intimacy. The current study will focus specifically on the ways in which young adults integrate and assimilate styles and patterns of communication, conflict, and companionship in their parents' marriage into their own intimate relationships outside the family.

The Parent-Child Relationship: Triangulation

Equally as important as the affective family climate established by the quality of the parental marriage is the child's role in the family system, which is also mediated by the parental marriage. The link between marriage and dysfunctional parent-child relationships is extensively documented in both the clinical and empirical literature (Elder, et al., in press; Belsky, 1984; Emery & O'Leary, 1982; Satir, 1981; Haley, 1980; Minuchin, Rosman, & Baker, 1978; Solomon, 1973). Broadly speaking, there appear to be two general explanations for this link, but whether an overinvestment in parenting creates distressed marriages or poor marriages lead to overinvolved parenting and cross-generational coalitions between parent and child is not clear.

In this regard, Minuchin and Fishman's (1981) discussion of family structure and its relation to healthy development highlights the critical aspects of family relationships relevant to the development of intimacy. These authors define the family in terms of differentiated subsystems called holons (a term coined by Arthur Koestler to capture the concept of "part-whole", (Minuchin, 1981)), of which the spousal holon is primary. The spousal holon consists of the husband-wife dyad and plays a vital role in children's development. One crucial task of the spousal holon is to create and maintain boundaries to protect the spouses, giving them space within which to meet each other's needs without the intrusion of children or others. Reasons for failing to maintain these boundaries include the spouses' inability to resolve problems or communicate effectively. According to Minuchin and Fishman, "if there is any major dysfunction within the spouse subsystem, this will reverberate throughout the family" (p. 18). Furthermore, in such situations a child is often "co-opted into an alliance with the spouse against the other" (p. 18). To put it simply, in families where there is a poor parental marriage, one parent may ally with a child in order to get his/her psychological needs met and to enlist the child's sympathy against the other parent. Bell and Bell (1982) refer to this particular form of cross-generational alliance as triangulation.

The significance of triangulation for the development of intimacy is the psychological and developmental consequences to the child involved. In particular, I expect that young adults who are

triangulated in their family of origin will also have close relationships characterized by lower levels of intimacy, i.e., "self-focused". Additionally, I expect that more young women will report being triangulated in their families of origin, based on the work of psychoanalytic (Chodorow, 1978) and developmental theorists (Franz & White, 1985; Gilligan, 1983). Briefly, according to this body of work, girls' developmental pathways qualitatively differ from boys' development in terms of the close relationship and identification girls maintain with their mothers. Hence, while boys identify with the more distant father, girls remain more tied to and, perhaps, tied up in family relationships. The outcome for females is potentially greater capacities for empathy and closeness, but also a tendency for young females to become and remain entangled in relationships in the family of origin.

Essentially, the triangulated child experiences himself in a very "close" relationship with one parent, privy to the complaints and disappointments in the parental marriage. Because the child is being related to in response to the parent's needs, rather than through empathy and respect for the child as an autonomous person, the triangulated relationship is invalidating to one's sense of self (Bell & Bell, 1982; Satir, 1981). In addition, such a close relationship between a parent and child inevitably restricts the developing child's opportunities for differentiation and autonomy, a great deal of which normally take place via relationships and experiences outside the family. As Hoffman (1981) describes the situation, "members of a family in which a child is one of the

possible factors that is mediating a parental conflict may resist or even block the child's departure" (p. 162). Obviously, these limitations on the child's sense of autonomy will severely detract from attempts to establish relationships outside the family.

Similarly, Grotevant (1983) in a review of studies of family relationships and adolescent development suggests that moderate levels of connectedness promote adolescent growth, whereas high or low levels of parental openness and closeness are likely to inhibit crucial adolescent exploration. Furthermore, Satir (1981) includes in a summary of the effects of the triangulated child's "contradictory experiences" the tendency of the child to reject the other parent and from a long term perspective, the child's inability to integrate a healthy model of a heterosexual relationship. Projecting into the future, children involved in triangulated relationships in the family of origin will choose partners in adulthood to compensate for their invalidating experiences in childhood and adolescence rather than make choices based on a differentiated sense of self. Alternatively, it is possible that the consequences of triangulation will be expressed by repeating patterns from the family of origin and choosing a person one can relate to as a parent rather than a mutual partner. Essentially, triangulation serves to effectively stunt the development of intimacy by restricting individuals' opportunities for social and emotional growth.

Attempts in the empirical literature to measure systemic aspects of family functioning are only just emerging, and therefore

offer more guidance and direction than substantiation for the relationship between triangulation and intimacy. The literature on adolescent development establishes the significance of parental warmth and the encouragement of autonomy for psychosocial maturity and growth (Becker, 1964; Schaefer, 1959). These dimensions of healthy parenting represent the converse of what occurs in the triangulated parent-child constellation. In this same vein, Gold and Yanoff (1985) specifically address the issue of intimacy, and find that adolescent girls who reported that their mothers are respectful and discussed concerns with them also had more intimate relationships with friends. Thus mothers who relate to their children authentically and with empathy apparently promote their children's sense of a differentiated self and encourage further exploration of this self via close relationships outside the family.

In one of the two studies which could be located measuring triangulation as it is defined here and its consequences for interpersonal functioning, Bell and Bell (1982) collected interview and questionnaire data from ninety-nine families with an adolescent female, age 15-17. The adolescent girls who described themselves as less psychologically mature and as less skilled interpersonally on a composite measure derived from scales on the California Personality Inventory were also found to be in triangulated family relationships. Of these "lower functioning" triangulated girls, four out of five had father-daughter coalitions, whereas only two of the "higher functioning" girls were in cross-generational

coalitions, and these were mother-daughter dyads. Satir (1981) suggests that girls suffer the most if their mothers are the depreciated, disparaged member of the system, and similarly, for boys, it is worse if their fathers are belittled and berated. These clinical impressions are in line with Bell and Bell's (1982) belief that coalitions which cross generations and sex are the most detrimental for adolescent development.

Kleiman's (1981) study involved twenty high school males only and therefore cannot shed any light on outcomes of cross-sex versus same-sex triangulation. Importantly, though, Kleiman pinpoints the extent to which parents are able to exclude their adolescent children from the marital relationship as a critical variable in explaining adolescents' levels of psychological adjustment. He reports that boys who were ranked "healthy" on the Offer Self-Image Questionnaire (Offer, 1973) had parents who, on the basis of structured interviews, were rated as better able to keep their children out of parental decision-making, to maintain marital problems within the boundaries of the marriage, to argue more constructively, and also who reported higher levels of marital satisfaction as compared to parents of "normal" boys. These results are limited due to the small, nonclinical, males-only sample and because they globally measure adjustment rather than intimacy, but they nevertheless substantiate clinical claims that adolescent development is affected by the parental marriage and the extent to which the boundaries of the marital relationship are appropriately maintained with respect to the child.

Although triangulation has received little attention in the
literature on adult development thus far, the above discussion of
the clinical and empirical literature on adolescence makes it
apparent that the effects of the parental marriage on development
are potentially mediated by dysfunctional family systems. In
particular, the negative ramifications of triangulation for the
development of intimacy are strongly suggested by clinical
formulations (e.g., Green, 1981; Hoffman, 1981; Minuchin & Fishman,
1981; Satir, 1981), and backed up by the empirical literature on
adolescence that currently exists (e.g., Grotevant, 1983; Bell &
Bell, 1982). The current study proposes to extend these results
into the realm of the young adult's development of the capacity for
intimacy by directly assessing how triangulation is related to
intimacy in young adulthood as well as how it explains the effects
of the parental marriage on intimacy.

Summary and Hypotheses

In conclusion, the capacity for intimacy, long a domain of
interest to artists and therapists, is only recently emerging as a
topic of investigation among psychologists. These recent studies
generally fall under the rubric of "close relationships" (e.g.,
Kelley et al., 1983; Levinger, 1977) or attachment (e.g., Hazan &
Shaver, 1987; Kalish & Knudtson, 1982) and focus on interactional
process, defining the stages of close relationships, or tracing
continuity in relational style from childhood to adulthood. No
work in this area to date looks specifically and comprehensively at

the factors which influence what each person brings into intimate relationships. Both the clinical literature and socialization theorists direct our attention to the critical part played by the family of origin in shaping the capacity for intimacy. Only recent attempts to extend attachment theory to adult romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and a small number of studies which focus on adolescent development (Gold & Yanoff, 1985; Bell & Bell, 1982) touch on this proposed association. In this regard, those few studies which are beginning to look at the impact of family relationships on interpersonal skills and the discussions by family therapists (Hoffman, 1981; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981; Satir, 1981; Minuchin et al., 1978) and socialization theorists (Coleman et al., 1985; Cottrell, 1969; Hill & Aldous, 1969) stress the role of the parental marriage. Studies which examine continuity in development and the intergenerational transmission of interpersonal skills (e.g., Elder et al., in press; Pope & Mueller, 1977; Heiss, 1972) further suggest the possibility that the influence of the parental marriage may be both direct and indirect. Additionally, those who study life-span development increasingly emphasize the importance of accounting for "person/situation" variables, such as age and family life cycle stage, yet few investigations to date have heeded this suggestion. Finally, gender and sex-role orientation have each been discussed to account for differences in the experience of close relationships, but how accurate these distinctions between male and female or masculine and feminine

differences continue to be in a society whose sex-linked conventions are currently in flux needs further edification.

The current study addresses the above issues by constructing a model to assess the development of the capacity for intimacy in young adulthood which includes the following variables: quality of communication, conflict, and companionship in the parental marriage, and triangulation in parent-child relationships. The moderating influences of gender, and the effects of sex-role orientation, age, and family life cycle stage are also examined. Additionally this study sought to overcome the limitations as well as the gaps in the previous literature on intimacy. First, intimacy status is assessed by an interview measure developed by Orlofsky et al. (1973), which is based on Erikson's formulation of intimacy development. The system used to operationalize intimacy in the present study defines six levels which differ in the degree to which individuals describe relationships characterized by both depth and commitment. This method is in contrast to previous questionnaire studies' use of unidimensional constructs (e.g., Rubin, 1973; Jourard, 1971) and additionally avoids confounding depth and commitment, which has been noted as problematic in other systems. Secondly, whereas previous studies rely on adolescent and college student samples, this investigation appropriately utilizes a community sample of young adult men and women between twenty-two and thirty years of age, in keeping with the theoretical definition of intimacy as a young adult developmental acquisition (Kimmel, 1979; Erikson, 1968). Also, adequate numbers of young adults, and

women in particular, are included in this study, in contrast to previous work which looks exclusively at male development or at small samples. A third problem which the current study seeks to redress is a tendency in the empirical literature to compare groups rather than account for variations in individual development. Accordingly, the current study asks about gender-linked differences, but also attempts to go beyond explanations which rely simply on male-female differences. Therefore, to account for the complexity in individual development, questions are also posed regarding the role of the parental marriage and triangulation with regard to the development of intimacy. Lastly, on a more exploratory basis, this study examines the relationship between intimacy status and young adults' conflict resolution styles in close relationships. The ability to resolve problems is a well documented correlate of marital satisfaction, but how differences in interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution influence the level of intimacy in close relationships has not been explored.

In sum, the purpose of the present investigation is to examine the associations among intimacy status, the parental marriage (communication, conflict, and companionship), and triangulation, while also accounting for the influences of gender, sex-role orientation, age, and family life cycle stage. Relationships between intimacy and young adults' conflict resolution strategies in close relationships also will be examined. The specific goal is to test a causal model to determine the direct

and indirect influences on variations in levels of intimacy. The hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1

Gender, family life cycle stage, and sex role identity are expected to directly influence differences in the levels of intimacy in the following ways: Young adults who are female, who are further along in the family life cycle (i.e., are married or parents), or who have a feminine sex role identity will report higher levels of intimacy.

Hypothesis 2

I also predict that age, family life cycle stage, sex role orientation and gender will have several indirect effects on young adults' levels of intimacy:

a) Older young adults are more likely to be married or parents, and adults who are married or parents will report higher levels of intimacy.

b) More young adults who are married or parents are more likely to have a feminine sex role orientation. This relationship will partly explain the relationship between sex role orientation and intimacy described above.

c) Sex role orientation will partly mediate the relationship between gender and intimacy, with feminine young adults reporting higher levels of intimacy.

d)   In addition, gender is expected to indirectly effect
     intimacy through its relationship with triangulation, as
     described below.

Hypothesis 3

Family systems variables such as the parental marriage and
triangulation will influence young adults' levels of intimacy in
the following ways:

Young adults whose parents have better marriages and who are
not triangulated in their families of origin will have higher
levels of intimacy. Each aspect will contribute
independently, but triangulation will partly mediate the
relationship between the parental marriage and intimacy.

Hypothesis 4

Young adults whose parents report better marriages (higher
levels of communication, companionship, and conflict resolution)
will describe higher levels of interpersonal and intrapsychic
conflict resolution in their own close relationships.

Hypothesis 5

Intimacy and conflict resolution will be related in the
following ways:

Young adults who approach conflicts in their close
relationships via active discussion, open confrontation, or
other effective strategies and young adults who experience
conflict as growth enhancing will have higher levels of

intimacy. Each aspect will contribute independently, and each will partly explain the relationship between the parental marriage and intimacy.

These hypotheses will be tested using the total sample, as well as for males and females separately.

The overall model with the hypothesized variable relationships is illustrated below in Figure 1.
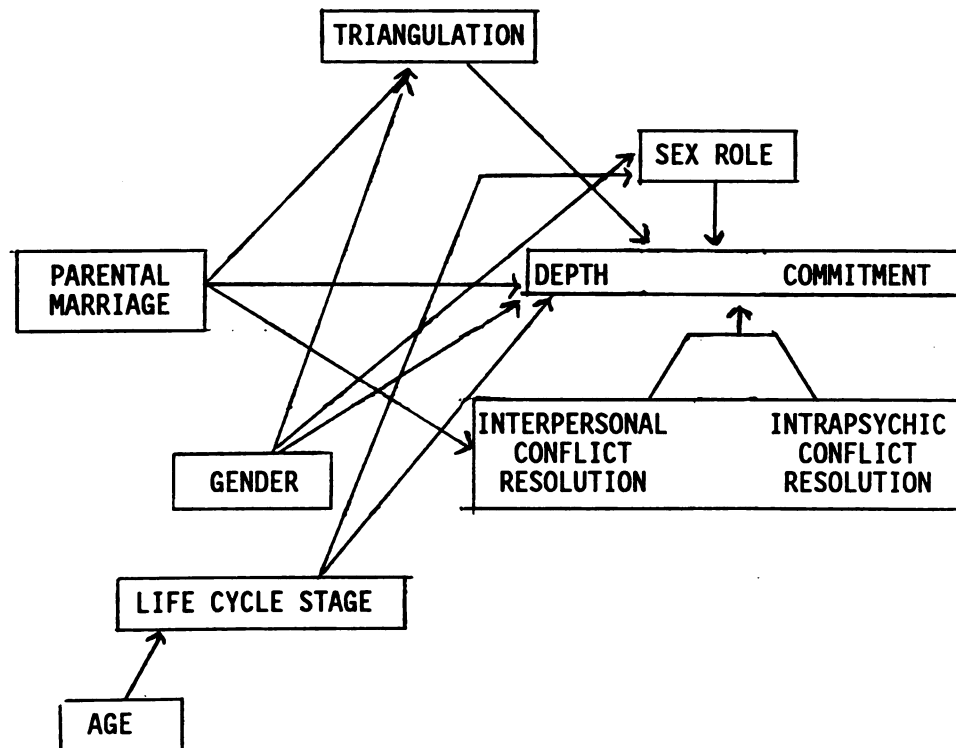
Figure 1. A Model of Influences of the Family-Systems and Individual Differences Variables on Intimacy in Young Adulthood.

Method

Participants

The current study is part of a larger study of intergenerational relationships between young adults and their parents. Seventy eight female and 72 male young adults and their parents participated in this study. The young adults' names were randomly selected from the 1970-71 (N=50), 1973-74 (N=49), and 1978-79 (N=51) graduation lists of a midwestern high school. At the time of the interview for this study, the mean age for those in the earliest graduation cohort was 29.5 (range=28-32 years old) as compared to 26.5 (range=26-28 years old) for those in the middle cohort, and 23.5 (range=22-25 years old) for those in the latest cohort. There were approximately the same number of men and women in each cohort.

Men and women did not differ significantly in social class background, number of siblings, marital or parental status, nor level of education (35% of the sample had some college experience, 46% had a four-year college degree, and 9% had a postgraduate degree). Men, however, had higher status occupations ($\underline{M}$=3.9; $\underline{SD}$=2.3) than women ($\underline{M}$=4.7; $\underline{SD}$=2.4; $p < .01$).

The average age of the middle-aged mothers was 54.22 ($\underline{SD}$ = 5.87), and the fathers' average age was 58.04 ($\underline{SD}$ = 6.9). All were white and most were middle class households. Mothers' average educational level was 2.89 ($\underline{SD}$ = 1.05). The fathers' mean educational and occupational levels were 2.6 ($\underline{SD}$ = 1.3) and 2.6 ($\underline{SD}$ = 1.15), respectively (Hollingshead, 1957).

Of those located, the study included young adults and their families only if both natural parents were still living together and the young adult lived within two hours driving distance of the parents' home. A fairly large number of the families who were contacted to participate in the study failed to meet the three eligibility criteria. These were: 1) attended the community high school at least 3 years; 2) live within 2 hours driving distance from parental home; and 3) parents still living together and are the natural parents or primary caretakers since age 5. Overall, 694 families were asked to participate. Approximately one-third of the families contacted met eligibility criteria. The three major reasons for ineligibility were a) the young adult had moved out of the area (37%), b) the father was deceased (23%), or c) the parents were divorced (18%). The one hundred fifty young adults in the study represented 65% of those asked to participate. Sixty-seven were currently married, 7 were divorced, and 44 were parents of young children.

Instruments

Demographic information including the young adults' age, gender, and family life cycle stage was collected in the Intimacy Interview. For the present study the family life cycle stages were coded as: single, separated/divorced, married-childless, and parents. Because only four women and three men were divorced, these participants' data were not included in the analyses and were treated as missing data. Three measures assessed the young adults'

sex-role orientation, perceptions of triangulation in the parent-young adult relationship, capacity for intimacy, and degree of conflict experienced in their close relationships. (Data for coding both the intimacy scales and conflict resolution scales were derived from the Intimacy Interview, originally developed by Orlofsky et al., 1973.) To assess the degree of companionship, communication, and conflict in the parental marriage, the middle-aged parents were asked about their own marriages as part of a larger Lifestyles Interview (see measures and coding manuals in Appendices).

The Young Adults

Sex-role orientation. The PRF-Andro Scale (Berzins, Welling, & Wetter, 1978; Berzins, Wetter, & Welling, 1977) was used to measure participants' sex-role orientation. The Andro scale includes two subscales: a 29-item masculinity scale and a 27-item femininity scale obtained from the item pool of the Personality Research Form (Jackson, 1967). These items were included as part of an 85-item Personal Description Inventory (see Appendix A). Item selection was based on a conceptual analysis of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). Masculine items describe dominant, instrumental behaviors indicative of autonomy, social intellectual ascendancy, individualism, or orientation toward risk. Feminine items describe caring, expressive behaviors indicative of nurturance, affiliation, or self-subordination. Each item is a sentence describing a particular behavior. Participants respond

true or false to indicate whether the item describes their own behavior.

Berzins et al. (1978) sampled over 2,000 college students and found the subscales of the PRF-Andro to be reliable, independent, and minimally influenced by socially desirable response biases. In addition, evidence of construct validity was substantiated by the findings that the PRF-Andro subscales were significantly related to the corresponding subscales of Bem's Sex Role Inventory and to major personality dimensions. Further support for the construct validity was obtained in 18 additional samples that included clinical and other non-college samples.

Triangulation. A measure of triangulation in the parent-child relationship was developed using data collected in the Young Adult/Parent Relationship Interview (Frank, Avery, & Laman, 1988; see Appendix B). The relationship interview tapped the degree of autonomy and the extent of relatedness in the young adult/parent relationship, based on the young adult's perceptions. The present research focused on the dimension of triangulation only, and only used questions from the relationship interview which asked the young adult about conflicts and pulls between his/her own obligations and needs and the needs and obligations to the parents.

Triangulation is defined as a cross-generational coalition between one parent and the young adult in which the parent seeks to fulfill his/her own unmet needs by co-opting the son's or daughter's attention and loyalty and enlisting the child's sympathy

against the other parent. I developed a scoring manual to code the existence and degree of triangulation in each family (see Appendix C.) On a 3-point scale, a score of 1 indicates the absence of triangulation; a mid-range score (2) denotes some attempt (but only moderately successful) by the young adult to resist the parent's efforts to inappropriately ally with him or her against the other parent; and a high score (3) indicates a triangulated parent-young adult relationship in which the young adult appears to accept his/her role of being "in the middle" of his parents' problems and disagreements, and generally identifies with one parent while deprecating the other.

Using the coding manual developed by the author, a trained rater coded 20 randomly selected protocols that I had independently rated to establish interrater reliability. The rater then coded all the remaining protocols.

Intimacy. Intimacy status was measured, with some modifications, by the semi-structured interview and rating manual developed by Orlofsky et al. (1973) (see Appendices D and E). The revisions were directed at making the interview more applicable to young adults, rather than adolescents, and additional changes were made after piloting the revised interview. Questions were re-organized to fit together logically and probes were standardized.

The coding procedures used to assess intimacy status draws from the coding system developed by Orlofsky et al. (1973) and from the system developed by White et al. (1986). Descriptions of the

stages in the intimacy scales, as White et al. (1986) also note, are parallel to other developmental systems, such as Loevinger and Wessler's (1970) ego development schema. Accordingly, the stages in the present study represent increasing levels of psychological complexity and maturity, in this case with regard to close relationships. The scoring system focuses on two components of intimate relationships: depth and commitment. Each dimension is scored individually on a scale consisting of six stages, ranging from a low of stage 1 to a high of stage 6. Following White et al., the six stages were grouped into three broad developmental levels: self-focused (stages 1 & 2), role-focused (stages 3 & 4), and individuated-connected (stages 5 & 6), which represent the low, medium, and high levels, respectively.

"Depth" is defined by two aspects of relationships: 1) orientation, which refers to an individual's ability to understand the partner as a complex person and to appreciate the partner's feelings and perspectives, even when these differ from one's own; and 2) communication, which refers to an individual's level of self-disclosure and openness in the relationship. Raters assign an overall rank based on their assessment of both components considered together, resulting in a single score per subject ranging from stage 1 to stage 6. The progression from stage 1 to stage 6 is characterized by respondents' emphasis on content and behavior in the lower stages and on process and feelings in the upper stages.

Level 1: At the self-focused level, cognitions and affects are global, simple and undifferentiated. The individual at this level describes the partner in concrete, behavioral terms and sees the partner as a means to personal and self-serving ends, or as an obstacle to those ends. The individual who views his/her partner as a source of supplies or as a hostile rival for supplies would be coded at this level. Communication is characterized by a lack of trust and a tendency to discuss superficial, non-controversial topics (see Appendix E for examples from protocols that illustrate each stage.)

Level 2: At this level, individuals have a basic understanding that the other has needs and feelings too, but descriptions of relationships lack complexity and depth. Responses rated as role-focused tend to focus on concrete, external things as the source of problems or as the way to express support. Role-focused descriptions of relationships often take the form of stereotyped images of a happy marriage. They are socially acceptable responses, lacking specific examples that would demonstrate an appreciation of the partner's individuality. The role-focused individual's responses are characterized by lack of introspection and a tendency to generalize. The level 2 individual lacks an imaginative, intuitive sense of what it is like to be inside the other's skin. He or she needs to have the partner's needs or feelings spelled out. (Replies that fall in the role-focused level but show positive appreciation for the partner and the marriage are usually rated stage 4.)

Level 3. Individuals at the individuated-connected level provide evidence that a free choice is made to be close to the specific partner--a choice made from a position of autonomy, rather than out of need or convenience. These young adults demonstrate a greater understanding and psychological mindedness than individuals in the first four stages. For example, even though individuals at the higher end of Level 2 (stage 4) are characterized by greater empathy and psychological complexity, these young adults still view their relationships in terms of two separate entities. In contrast, young adults at stages 5 and 6 recognize the "systemic" qualities of their relationships and describe them in terms of mutual interdependence and reciprocity. These individuals also demonstrate the ability to recognize the partner's individuality, to appreciate the other's unique qualities and to take pleasure in enhancing the development of the other's talents and powers. At this level individuals have a concern with more than the concrete, visible signs of the relationship's quality. They have a concern with the emotional and frequently, the spiritual satisfactions to be gained from intimacy with this particular partner. Individuated-connected individuals pay a lot of attention to the relationship and how it is going. At this level, individuals express a very high value on open communication, including affective and relationship-centered discussion.

"Commitment" refers to the extent to which persons have committed themselves, their affection, and their loyalty to the relationship and to their particular partner. This scale is

identical to the commitment scale developed by White et al. (1986) as a component of their five-part intimacy maturity scoring system. The commitment scale is also parallel to the depth scale, as it, too, is defined by the three broad levels of intimacy described above. Along these lines, Level 1 responses indicate self-centered, self-serving reasons for staying in the relationship, or are representative of a lack of commitment and individuals who are ready to end the relationship. Level 2 responses are role-focused, and include individuals who refer to the sanctity of marriage and to stereotypic images (e.g., "a good provider") to describe their commitment to their partner. Level 3, or individuated-connected responses reflect a sense of commitment via an autonomous choice to be with a particular partner, "warts and all".

Level 1: Individuals who are ready to leave the relationship or who appear to stay in the relationship out of dependency or reasons of convenience receive the lowest rating of stage 1. Those individuals who are still struggling with the idea of commitment and who have difficulty describing any interpersonal or emotional concerns related to their conflict are coded as stage 2.

Level 2: Role-focused individuals appear to have difficulty describing what is unique about their partner, and generally rely on stereotypes, such as a "good father" or a "real family man". Individuals with stage 3 commitments also describe a commitment to marriage as an institution--understood in terms of personified and cliche-ish notions of "till death do us part" and "marriage is forever"--, rather than to their partner as a unique and complex

individual. Individuals who indicate a troubled relationship but who also indicate they are making an effort to improve things are also coded at stage 3. Stage 4 young adults' notions of commitment are less stereotyped and personified and indicate their beliefs that commitment is to the relationship or the marriage institution--understood more abstractly and in societal rather than personal terms.

Level 3: At the lower end of this level, individuals acknowledge special feelings, appreciation for and loyalty to their partner as an individual, and commit themselves to the relationship via investments in marriage, home, and children, for example. There may be acknowledgment of problems in the relationship which need attention, as well as a willingness to devote some energy to working things out. Stage 6 includes all of the above, but also is characterized by the expression of a solid intention to stay in the relationship. Both a firm commitment to stay in the relationship and a clearly stated positive appreciation of and commitment to preserving the partner's individuality are the hallmarks of this highest stage.

In the present study, individuals' intimacy score consists solely of the score based on descriptions of sexual relationships. The section on friendship included in the Intimacy Interview is not used in the present study.

One rater coded depth and one rater coded commitment. To train the raters, each read the depth or commitment coding manual several times, completed twelve practice protocols, and then

discussed the ratings with me. The "final consensus" ratings on twenty reliability protocols, that I and the senior investigator of the larger study rated for depth and for commitment, were used as the criteria for reliability. After establishing reliability, each trained rater then coded all the remaining protocols for depth, in one case, and for commitment, in the other case. Spot checks on reliability at various points in the coding process insured that coders maintained the criteria specified in the coding manual.

Conflict Resolution in Intimate Relationships

Two coding systems were used to assess the two aspects of conflict resolution in intimate relationships, and applied to young adults' responses on the Intimacy Interview (see Appendix F). Questions such as: "Do you ever fight? What kinds of things do you fight about?"; "In what ways do you function well as a couple?"; "In what ways do you function less well as a couple?"; and "What do you see as the main problem you two have to work out as a couple? In what ways could your relationship be improved?" were the primary sources of data for coding conflict resolution, but in all cases, the entire interview was reviewed.

Both the interpersonal conflict resolution scale and the intrapsychic conflict resolution scale are based on a cognitive-developmental approach to coping and interpersonal relationships. Specifically, the ego psychology developmental model of interpersonal relationships (e.g., White et al., 1986; Loevinger & Wessler, 1970) and the cognitive model of stress and coping (e.g.,

Lazarus, 1980; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978) provide the conceptual and theoretical rationales for describing a continuum that reflects the degree to which individuals report conflict resolution strategies that are adaptive and contribute to growth and development. The development of the interval scales used here was guided by the ego development model's notion of conflict resolution, which proposes that at higher levels, individuals have "the courage to acknowledge and cope with conflict, rather than blotting it out or projecting it onto the environment" (p. 6, Loevinger & Wessler, 1970). Similarly, the research based on the stress and coping model (e.g., Folkman & Lazarus, 1988; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978) consistently has found that responses that are hostile and confrontive or involve avoidance and withdrawal exacerbate stress, whereas the most effective responses appear to include reflectiveness, negotiation, and compromise. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) specifically address the nature of adaptive conflict resolution in the context of a close relationship: "In marriage it is a reflective probing of problems, rather than the eruptive discharge of feelings created by the problems, that is among the more effective responses" (p. 11).

The lower levels of both conflict scales include individuals whose attempts to deal with conflicts are maladaptive and generally unsuccessful at resolving difficulties or reducing the level of tension. Typically, these strategies are confrontational and hostile, and similar to Folkman and Lazarus' (1988) "confrontive coping". Strategies represented by the intermediate levels of the scales rely on suppression and/or denial and minimization of

negative emotions and behaviors. These strategies parallel the developmental model's notion of the conformist whose view of interpersonal relations does not include an analysis of feelings and motives and whose aim is to maintain socially appropriate appearances. The stress and coping model also describes strategies such as distancing (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988), selective ignoring (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978), neglect (Rusbult et al., 1986), and avoidance coping (Holahan & Moos, 1987) that are conceptually similar to this study's intermediate conflict resolution scales. As pointed out by Moos and Moos (1984), these avoidance strategies presumably lead to greater psychological dysfunction over time, despite their potentially adaptive role in the initial phases of a conflict. These strategies are accordingly assigned a mid-range position in the conflict scales in the present study. Finally, the higher level or adaptive strategies are characterized by attempts to confront problems in a constructive, change-oriented manner and to work through feelings of anger, guilt, and resentment.

The Interpersonal Conflict Resolution scale is a 5-point scale developed by Pedigo (1986) and focuses on the way that individuals deal with and resolve conflicts in close relationships. (This scale also was used to measure conflict in the young adults' parents' marriages (Pedigo, 1986)). At the lowest level, strategies are maladaptive or ineffective at resolving the conflict. Individuals at this level rely on ways of coping with problems which escalate difficulties or create barriers to problem solving (e.g., screaming, leaving in anger, deprecating the

partner). Individuals at Level 2 tend to resort to ways of resolving conflict which for the most part exacerbate the conflict but also make some attempt either to approach problems more adaptively (e.g., calm discussion) or to avoid conflict and keep the peace. The midpoint of this dimension reflects strategies based on palliative techniques in order to avoid confrontation and negative interactions. At this level, therefore, problems often go unresolved. The highest levels of interpersonal conflict resolution, Levels 4 and 5, are characterized by adaptive confrontation, in which conflicts are resolved and negative situations are changed, via discussion and compromise, for example. Level 4 is distinguished from Level 5 by the presence of a few areas in which one or both partners resort to more palliative means of coping with conflict, characteristic of Level 3.

The Intrapsychic Conflict Resolution scale was developed for this study and assesses the extent to which individuals' descriptions of the ways they experience conflict in intimate relationships reflect tension and are maladaptive or reflect a sense of well-being and are adaptive. This scale presumes that positive morale, in Lazarus's (1981) terms, or a sense of well-being, is an adaptive outcome and that experiencing distress and anxiety are maladaptive outcomes in close relationships. However, as the scale reflects, it is not conflict itself which is considered maladaptive, but how individuals regulate and experience their feelings about conflicts in their close relationships that determine whether a particular strategy is adaptive or not. A low

score on this 5-point scale indicates that individuals experience conflict and disagreements in close relationships as distressing, overwhelming, and as potentially threatening to the relationship. Individuals at Level 2 are often overwhelmed by negative feelings, but make some effort to deintensify their negative feelings in order to maintain the relationship. A mid-range score describes individuals who minimize or deny the importance of conflict and who typically see conflict as something to accept, even if that means problems remain unresolved. Individuals at the higher levels, Levels 4 and 5, view conflicts as part of the relationship and attempt to master negative feelings through self-reflection and empathy. At Level 4, individuals recognize the potential for conflicts to be growth-enhancing, but still find it difficult to integrate them into the relationship in adaptive ways. In contrast, individuals at Level 5 view problems as a means to greater understanding of their partner and relationship enhancement, and master negative feelings by understanding that conflicts are part of the close relationship.

Scores on twenty protocols that I and the senior investigator of the larger study rated served as the standard for evaluating the interrater reliability on both conflict scales. Two raters, one for each conflict resolution scale, completed twelve practice protocols, discussed the ratings with me, and then established reliability using the twenty "standard" protocols. Each rater then coded the remaining interviews. As a check of reliability, spot

checks at various points in the coding process insured that coders maintained the criteria specified in the coding manuals.

The Young Adults' Parents

The parental marriage. The degree of communication, companionship, and conflict in the parental marriage was measured by mothers' and fathers' responses to twelve open-ended questions about their relationship with their spouse. These questions were part of a larger Lifestyles Interview (see Appendix G) which included additional sections about work, health, parenting, filial responsibility, religion, leisure, pleasure, and sex roles. Only responses to the questions about the marriage are included in the present study's results.

Spouses were asked about how they decided to get married, why they stayed married, what pleasures they provided each other, the extent to which feelings are shared, the meaning and pleasure of sex in the relationship, and about stresses and conflicts in the marriage and how they resolve them. Responses that were pertinent to issues of communication, companionship, and conflict resolution were identified and typed on separate protocols. The examplar method of coding was then used to code each aspect of the marriage. Raters were instructed to master the concepts in the coding manual defining each point of the five-point scale relevant to each component and to refer to prototype interviews selected to illustrate each point on the scale. Three raters, one for each dimension of the parental marriage, established reliability with

the author of the coding manual. Once reliability was established,
these 3 raters then proceeded to code the remaining interviews.
Raters periodically met with one of the authors of the manual to
check reliability and discuss ratings as an aid in preventing rater
drift.

Communication. The dimension of communication reflects the
level and quality of marital communication. At low levels of
communication the respondent's perception indicates closed
communication channels and very little sharing of feelings or
thoughts. Mid-range scores describes marriages in which the
communication is generally open and accompanied by a desire to work
things out. However, at this level communication is largely
focused on conflicts or conventional areas of the marriage, rather
than a genuine exchange of thoughts and feelings. High levels of
communication are characterized by open, mutually active,
pleasurable exchanges, and includes sharing of deep feelings,
values, and ideologies, as well as problems and conflicts.

Companionship. Distinctions in companionship are based on
the different kinds of bonds which keep the couple together in the
marriage. Low levels of companionship are found in couples who are
emotionally isolated from one another and in marriages where
bonding is based on obligation or meeting basic needs rather than
enjoyment of each partner. Mid-range levels of companionship
describe marriages in which bonding transcends role obligations of
husband/wife, but in which there is primarily sharing of activities
rather than emotions. Companionship based on appreciation of each

other's unique qualities and sharing of experiences and feelings is rated at the high end of the scale. At the highest level the relationship is experienced as a joint partnership involving mutual growth and development of each individual.

Conflict resolution. The same measure used to assess Interpersonal Conflict Resolution in the young adults was used to code their parents' level of conflict resolution. The only difference was that "partner" in this instance meant spouse, and "relationship" meant the marriage (see previous section describing Interpersonal Conflict Resolution Scale.)

Procedures

The young adults. The young adults met with two different interviewers on two separate occasions to report (in counterbalanced orders) on a) aspects of life such as friendships, intimate relationships, work, etc. and b) relationships with their parents. (Only the data regarding intimate relationships and young adults' reports of triangulation are considered here.) The majority of young adults were interviewed in their homes. Fourteen trained interviewers (7 males and 7 females) administered the Intimacy Interview and 8 trained interviewers (4 males and 4 females) administered the Young Adult/Parent Relationship Interview to a young adult of the same sex. In the latter interview, approximately half of the participants talked first about their mother, and approximately half talked first about their father.

The sex-roles orientation questionnaire (PRF-Andro) was included in a battery of questionnaires used in the larger study. At the time of the first interview respondents received a questionnaire packet and completed and returned the packet at the second interview or by mail.

The young adults' parents. Mothers and fathers of the young adults were contacted separately to schedule interviews. For the most part, interviews were conducted in the participants' homes. Two interviews were administered to each parent, usually in 3 sessions. The first interview concerned the parent's relationship with the young adult child; the second involved questions about the parent's lifestyle, including the marriage. This second interview typically was conducted in two sessions lasting about 2 hours each.

Results

Reliability coefficients established on sets of twenty protocols for depth, commitment, intrapsychic conflict resolution, and interpersonal conflict resolution were quite high. Interrater reliability coefficients for depth and commitment were .92 and .93, respectively. The correlations for coders on the interpersonal conflict scale and the intrapsychic conflict resolution scale were .96 and .88, respectively. In addition, the reliability coefficient for triangulation was .86, based on twenty randomly selected protocols that I and a trained rater coded. Similarly, Pearson correlations showing the degree of interrater agreement between each rater's scores and scores on the twenty reliability

protocols for each parental marriage dimension were also fairly high (.90 for communication, .85 for companionship, and .78 for conflict resolution).

Demographic characteristics described in the section on participants had little or no effect on the dependent or independent variables. Although young adults who were more educated reported more depth ($r(138) = -.19$, $p<.05$) and commitment ($r(138) = -.16$, $p<.05$), these associations were relatively weak. In addition, neither educational nor occupational level was significantly related to any of the predictor variables, and therefore were not included in the tests of the proposed model of young adults' intimacy.

Data Reduction

Parent variables. Correlations among communication, companionship, and conflict resolution for mothers and for fathers can be seen in Table 1. Based on the high intercorrelations among the parent marital variables, a marital harmony score was created by averaging communication, companionship, and conflict resolution separately for mothers and fathers. As might be expected, mothers' and fathers' marital harmony scores were significantly correlated, $r(105) = .57$, $p<.001$. To reduce the number of predictor variables and simplify the results, I then combined mother and father scores for communication, companionship, and conflict resolution into a single parent marital harmony score (PMH). The correlation for father marital harmony ($\underline{N} = 105$) with the combined score was .87,

Table 1

Intercorrelations Among Mothers' and Fathers' Marital Variables.

	MCONRES	MCOMMUN	MCOMPAN	MMH
MCONRES	---	.48***	.44***	.77***
MCOMMUN	---	---	.60***	.86***
MCOMPAN	---	---	---	.83***
	DCONRES	DCOMMUN	DCOMPAN	DMH
DCONRES	---	.47***	.31***	.73***
DCOMMUN	---	---	.53***	.86***
DCOMPAN	---	---	---	.77***

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

p<.001. Mother marital harmony ($\underline{N}$ = 128) was also strongly related to the total marital harmony variable, r = .91, p < .001. Relationships among the variables remained the same regardless of whether the composite score or the separate mother and father marital variables were used. Therefore, the more robust total parent marital harmony variable was used for the remaining analyses. Because it made little difference whether marital harmony was defined by mothers' or fathers' scores alone or by an average for both parents combined, in cases where data for one parent is missing, the other parent's score (usually the mother's) was used.

    <u>Young adult variables</u>. Depth was correlated with commitment (r(141) = .60, p < .001), and, as expected, interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution (r (137) = .51, p < .001) were significantly interrelated. In order to preserve important conceptual distinctions between depth and commitment and between the two conflict resolution variables, these variables were not combined.

Predictors of Intimacy: Tests of the Predicted Model

    Intercorrelations between the predictor variables (parent marital harmony, triangulation, sex role identity, gender, family life cycle, age, conflict resolution) and intimacy variables (depth and commitment) for the total sample, and for males and females are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4, respectively. In addition, these tables show correlations among the various predictor variables.

Table 2

Correlations between Predictor Variables and Intimacy for the Total Sample.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	.08 (124)	.15 (122)	.03 (123)	-.36*** (125)	-.04 (117)	.02 (118)	-.13 (121)	-.01 (121)
Sex	.12 (143)	-.36*** (143)	.29*** (144)	.22** (145)	.02 (137)	-.06 (138)	.16 (141)	.05 (141)
Age	.52*** (143)	-.04 (143)	-.02 (144)	-.01 (145)	-.04 (137)	.03 (138)	.03 (141)	.33*** (141)
FLC	---	-.20* (136)	.23** (137)	-.04 (138)	.25** (130)	.20* (131)	.24** (134)	.59*** (134)
M	---	---	-.07 (142)	-.04 (139)	-.11 (134)	-.02 (135)	-.10 (137)	-.05 (137)
F	---	---	---	.10 (140)	.03 (135)	-.02 (136)	.06 (138)	-.07 (138)
Triang	---	---	---	---	.05 (133)	-.04 (134)	.12 (137)	.01 (137)
Intra-Cnfl	---	---	---	---	---	.51*** (137)	.56*** (137)	.54*** (137)
Inter-Cnfl	---	---	---	---	---	---	.44*** (138)	.44*** (138)
Depth	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.60*** (141)

Note: *p < .05.
       **p < .01.
       ***p < .001.

Table 3

Correlations Among the Predictor Variables and Intimacy for Males.

	AGE	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	.08 (62)	.04 (60)	.27* (58)	.04 (59)	-.26 (62)	-.06 (56)	-.05 (56)	.02 (59)	.01 (59)
Age	---	.57*** (69)	.01 (68)	-.07 (69)	.03 (72)	.02 (66)	.11 (66)	.23^t (69)	.45*** (69)
FLC	---	---	.02 (65)	.06 (66)	-.13 (69)	.31* (63)	.36** (63)	.31** (66)	.62*** (66)
M	---	---	---	.09 (68)	-.00 (68)	-.10 (64)	-.09 (64)	-.05 (66)	.10 (66)
F	---	---	---	---	-.12 (69)	-.15 (65)	-.10 (65)	-.08 (67)	-.05 (67)
Triang	---	---	---	---	---	-.10 (66)	-.05 (66)	-.11 (69)	-.19 (69)
Intra-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.48*** (66)	.58*** (66)	.50*** (66)
Inter-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.50*** (66)	.42*** (66)
Depth	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.67*** (69)
Commit	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Note: *p < .05.
**p < .01.
***p < .001.

Table 4

Correlations Among the Predictor Variables and Intimacy for Females.

	AGE	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	.16 (66)	.14 (64)	.01 (64)	.06 (64)	-.43*** (63)	-.01 (61)	.08 (62)	-.28 (62)	-.02 (62)
Age	---	.50*** (74)	-.13 (75)	.04 (75)	-.01 (73)	-.09 (71)	-.05 (72)	-.20^t (72)	.22* (72)
FLC	---	---	-.33* (71)	.30* (71)	-.02 (69)	.20 (67)	.07 (68)	.12 (68)	.56*** (68)
M	---	---	---	.00 (74)	.11 (71)	-.11 (70)	-.00 (71)	-.05 (71)	.18 (71)
F	---	---	---	---	.11 (71)	.14 (70)	.07 (71)	.10 (71)	.14 (71)
Triang	---	---	---	---	---	.11 (67)	-.01 (68)	.26* (68)	.13 (68)
Intra-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.54*** (71)	.54*** (71)	.57*** (71)
Inter-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.41*** (72)	.45*** (72)
Depth	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.53*** (72)
Commit	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Note:
$*p < .05.$
$**p < .01.$
$***p < .001.$

Beta weights for the predicted model are shown in Tables 5, 6, and 7 for the total sample and for males and females, respectively.

The correlation matrix is based on pairwise rather than listwise correlations. Correlations with the parent marriage variables are based on 117 participants. N's for pairs of correlations for the other variables range from 121 to 150. Accordingly, the path analyses are based on estimates from subsamples used to compute correlations in the total sample; because even the smallest N's are greater than 100, the relationships are assumed to be representative of the sample as a whole. Because the correlations and beta weights reflect similar findings, the results reported subsequently are based on the path analyses.

Hypothesis 1. Tests of the predicted model only partially supported predictions that more females, young adults who are married or parents, or who have a feminine sex role orientation would report higher levels of intimacy. Gender tended to be related to depth (p<.10), with females reporting slightly more depth than males. In contrast, family life cycle stage was significantly related to commitment, but not depth for the total sample, as well as for males and females separately. When the data for males are analyzed separately, only the effects of being married or a parent influenced variations in levels of commitment. The prediction that more feminine young adults would report higher levels of intimacy was not supported.

Table 5

Beta Weights in the Predicted Model for All Subjects.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	--	--	--	-.34***	-.04	.02	-.10	-.06
Sex	--	-.35**	.27**	.19*	--	--	.16^t	.04
Age	.52***	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
FLC	--	-.16*	.20*	--	--	--	.09	.51***
Masc	--	--	--	--	--	--	.04	.11
Femin	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.01	-.06
Triang	--	--	--	--	--	--	.05	.00
Intra-Conres	--	--	--	--	--	--	.41***	.34***
Inter-Conres	--	--	--	--	--	--	.23*	.17*

Note: *p < .05.
**p < .01.
***p < .001.

Table 6

Beta Weights in the Predicted Model for Males.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	---	---	---	-.26	-.07	-.05	.06	-.06
AGE	.57***	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
FLC	---	.02	.06	-.21	---	---	.08	.48***
Masc	---	---	---	---	---	---	.00	.15
Femin	---	---	---	---	---	---	.00	-.05
Triang	---	---	---	---	---	---	-.03	-.12
Intra-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.26*	.11
Inter-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.28*	.12

Note: *p < .05.
       **p < .01.
       ***p < .001.

Table 7

Beta Weights in the Predicted Model for Females.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	--	--	--	-.43***	-.01	.08	-.26*	-.05
Age	.52***	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
FLC	--	-.31***	.34**	--	--	--	.05	.51***
Masc	--	--	--	--	--	--	.01	.01
Femin	--	--	--	--	--	--	.01	-.10
Triang	--	--	--	--	--	--	.10	.08
Intra-Conres	--	--	--	--	--	--	.40**	.34**
Inter-Conres	--	--	--	--	--	--	$.21^t$	.25

Note: *p < .05.
      **p < .01.
     ***p < .001.

Hypothesis 2. For the most part, the predicted indirect effects of age, family life cycle stage, sex role orientation, and gender on intimacy were unsubstantiated by the results. The failure to support the predictions are due primarily to the non-significant findings for intimacy, whereas the antecedent links were frequently significant. For example, the path predicting family life cycle as a function of age was significant and in the expected direction for both males and females, but family life cycle was unrelated to depth. Similarly, being female and being further along in the family life cycle were related to more femininity and less masculinity, but sex role orientation did not predict intimacy. And finally, gender was related to triangulation in the expected direction, but triangulation did not predict intimacy in this model.

Hypothesis 3. As expected, the predicted model indicated that parent marital harmony was significantly and negatively related to triangulation for the total sample. The results were replicated for males and females when the data were analyzed separately, although relationships for the young women tended to be somewhat stronger. As noted above, however, the results did not support the prediction that young adults who were not triangulated in the parental marriage would report higher levels of intimacy, nor was the relationship between the parental marriage and intimacy as predicted. Unexpectedly, in the analyses for depth, young women whose parents had better marriages described their own close

relationships in terms of lower levels of sharing, openness, interdependence, and tolerance of differences. This relationship was not replicated for males.

Hypothesis 4. The hypothesis that young adults whose parents reported better marriages would describe more adaptive interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution strategies in their own close relationships was not supported.

Hypothesis 5. Young adults' conflict resolution styles were the only successful predictors of intimacy in the model, other than family life cycle stage. In the total sample, young adults who described more adaptive intrapsychic and interpersonal conflict resolution styles reported more depth and commitment, although the relationships between intrapsychic conflict resolution and intimacy tended to be stronger than those for interpersonal conflict resolution. In analyses using the male sample, conflict resolution styles are unrelated to commitment. The results for females generally replicated those for the total sample, with both types of conflict resolution influencing commitment and depth, although the relationship between interpersonal conflict resolution and the latter is not as strong.

The Full Model

Beta weights from the path analyses based on predictions of each endogenous variable from all the antecedent variables (i.e., the "full" model) are shown in Table 8 for the total sample and in

Table 8

Beta Weights in the "Full" Model for All Subjects.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	.03	.13	.05	-.36	-.01	.00	-.10	-.07
Sex	.15^t	-.33*	.25**	.21*	-.06	-.08	.16^t	.05
Age	.53***	.02	-.16	.20	-.26*	-.12	.01	.12
FLC	---	-.18^t	.29**	-.09	.40***	.29*	.08	.43***
Masc	---	---	---	.08	-.06	-.00	.04	.11
Femin	---	---	---	.08	-.06	-.06	-.01	-.04
Triang	---	---	---	---	.08	.00	.05	-.01
Intra-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.41***	.36***
Inter-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.23*	.17*

Note: *p < .05.
       **p < .01.
       ***p < .001.

Tables 9 and 10 for males and for females, respectively. Tests of the "full" model elaborated on the relationships between the predictors and intimacy in some unexpected ways, which are described below.

Age, which is assigned only an indirect role in the predicted model and therefore not included in the first hypothesis, significantly influenced males' descriptions of their close relationships. Older males reported higher levels of investment in their close relationships, and also tended to describe greater depth ($p<.10$). In contrast, age did not effect females' reports of intimacy.

Results of the "full" model analyses also suggested additional explanations for variations in young adults' sex role orientation and family life cycle stage. For example, better parental marriages accounted for variations in young men's masculinity, whereas family life cycle stage did not. And gender tended to be related to family life cycle stage. Although this finding was not predicted, given the theories that women attain intimacy earlier, it is not surprising to find that more females have attained spousal or parental status.

Finally, both aspects of conflict resolution were predicted in the "full" model analyses by family life cycle stage. In the total sample, young adults who are married or parents tended to describe more adaptive styles of resolving intrapsychic conflicts in their close relationships. Moreover, family life cycle stage

Table 9

Beta Weights in the "Full" Model for Males.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	.00	.27*	.05	-.29*	0.06	-.04	.03	-.08
Age	.57***	-.03	-.17	.16	-.26	-.15	.25^t	.26
FLC	---	.02	.16	-.21	.47***	.45**	-.09	.31*
Masc	---	---	---	.08	-.07	-.08	.01	.16
Femin	---	---	---	-.09	-.20	-.13	.03	-.01
Triang	---	---	---	---	-.07	-.01	-.06	-.14
Intra-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.48***	.33**
Inter-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.28*	.12

Note: *p < .05.
       **p < .01.
       ***p < .001.

Table 10

Beta Weights in the "Full" Model for Females.

	FLC	M	F	Triang	Intra-Conres	Inter-Conres	Depth	Commit
PMH	.04	.05	.03	-.45**	-.05	.10	-.23^t	-.05
Age	.51***	.03	-.19	.07	-.25	-.11	-.20	.02
FLC	---	-.33*	.43***	.00	.27	.09	.17	.50***
Masc	---	---	---	.13	-.07	.00	.01	.01
Femin	---	---	---	.13	.04	.04	-.01	-.10
Triang	---	---	---	---	.14	.03	.12	.08
Intra-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.36**	.35**
Inter-Conres	---	---	---	---	---	---	.22^t	.25

Note: *p < .05.
        **p < .01.
        ***p < .001.

appeared to suppress the effect of age on intrapsychic conflict resolution; after controlling for family life cycle stage, the data suggested that younger men and women are better at coping with intrapsychic conflict. However, as can be seen in Tables 9 and 10, when the data are analyzed separately for males and females, this finding seemed to be a function of the males.

In sum, and as can be seen in Tables 11, 12, and 13, there is very little discrepancy between the amount of variance accounted for by the "full" versus the predicted model of intimacy. Overall, neither the "full" nor the predicted model was particularly successful in predicting depth or commitment. Only the conflict resolution styles of the young adults, and in the case of commitment, family life cycle, were significantly related to intimacy. In the one notable exception to the overall similarity between the variance predicted by the "full" and predicted models, the hypothesis that parents' marital harmony would influence young adults' levels of intrapsychic conflict resolution was not supported by the predicted model. In contrast, the "full" model accounted for 12% of the variance in intrapsychic conflict resolution, as compared to 0% in the predicted model. This was due to the effects of age and family life cycle and to the failure to find a relationship in the predicted model between parent marital harmony and intrapsychic conflict resolution.

Table 11

Predicted Variance in the "Full", Predicted and Trimmed Path Models
of Intimacy for All Subjects

	"Full" Model	Predicted Model	Trimmed Model
Commit	$r^2 = .56$*** 11 1-9	$r^2 = .55$*** 11 1,2,5-9	$r^2 = .53$*** 11 4,8,9
Depth	$r^2 = .39$*** 10 1-9	$r^2 = .39$*** 10 1,2,4-9	$r^2 = .37$*** 10 2,8,9
Inter- Conres	$r^2 = .06$ 9 1-7	$r^2 = .00$ 9 1	$r^2 = .04$* 9 4
Intra- Conres	$r^2 = .12^t$ 8 1-7	$r^2 = .00$ 8 1	$r^2 = .10$** 8 3,4
Triang	$r^2 = .18$*** 7 1-6	$r^2 = .16$*** 7 1,2	$r^2 = .16$*** 7 1,2
Femin	$r^2 = .15$*** 6 1-4	$r^2 = .13$*** 6 2,4	$r^2 = .13$*** 6 2,4
Mascul	$r^2 = .18$*** 5 1-4	$r^2 = .16$*** 5 2,4	$r^2 = .16$*** 5 2,4
FLC	$r^2 = .30$*** 4 1-3	$r^2 = .28$*** 4 3	$r^2 = .30$*** 4 2,3

Note: *$p < .05$.
       **$p < .01$.
       ***$p < .001$.

Subscripts refer to the following: 1=PMH, 2=Gender,
3=Age, 4=FLC, 5=Mascul, 6=Femin, 7=Triang, 8=Intra-Conres,
9=Inter-Conres, 10=Depth, 11=Commit.

Table 12

Predicted Variance in the "Full". Predicted and Trimmed Path Models
of Intimacy for Males

	"Full" Model	Predicted Model	Trimmed Model
Commit	r^2 = .57*** 11 1,3-9	r^2 = .53*** 11 1,4-9	r^2 = .52*** 11 3,4,8
Depth	r^2 = .45*** 10 1,3-9	r^2 = .41*** 10 1,4-9	r^2 = .44*** 10 3,8,9
Inter-Conres	r^2 = .17 9 1,3-7	r^2 = .00 9 1	r^2 = .13** 9 4
Intra-Conres	r^2 = .19^t 8 1,3-7	r^2 = .00 8 1	r^2 = .10** 8 4
Triang	r^2 = .12 7 1,3-6	r^2 = .07 7 1	r^2 = .07 7 1
Femin	r^2 = .02 6 1,3,4	r^2 = .00 6 4	----------
Mascul	r^2 = .07 5 1,3,4	r^2 = .00 5 4	r^2 = .07 5 1
FLC	r^2 = .33*** 4 1,3	r^2 = .33*** 4 3	r^2 = .33*** 4 3

Note: *p < .05.
 **p < .01.
***p < .001.

Subscripts refer to the following: 1=PMH, 2=Gender,
3=Age, 4=FLC, 5=Mascul, 6=Femin, 7=Triang, 8=Intra-Conres,
9=Inter-Conres, 10=Depth, 11=Commit.

Table 13

Predicted Variance in the "Full", Predicted and Trimmed Path Models of Intimacy for Females

	"Full" Model	Predicted Model	Trimmed Model
Commit	r^2 = .58*** 11 1,3-9	r^2 = .58*** 11 1,4-9	r^2 = .56*** 11 4,8,9
Depth	r^2 = .44*** 10 1,3-9	r^2 = .41*** 10 1,4-9	r^2 = .40*** 10 1,8,9
Inter-Conres	r^2 = .02 9 1,3-7	r^2 = .01 9 1	-----------
Intra-Conres	r^2 = .10 8 1,3-7	r^2 = .00 8 1	-----------
Triang	r^2 = .23* 7 1,3-6	r^2 = .19*** 7 1	r^2 = .19*** 7 1
Femin	r^2 = .14 6 1,3,4	r^2 = .11** 6 4	r^2 = .11** 6 4
Mascul	r^2 = .10^t 5 1,3,4	r^2 = .10** 5 4	r^2 = .10** 5 4
FLC	r^2 = .27*** 4 1,3	r^2 = .27*** 4 3	r^2 = .27*** 4 3

Note: *p < .05.
   **p < .01.
       ***p < .001.

Subscripts refer to the following: 1=PMH, 2=Gender, 3=Age, 4=FLC, 5=Mascul, 6=Femin, 7=Triang, 8=Intra-Conres, 9=Inter-Conres, 10=Depth, 11=Commit.

Results from trimmed models are summarized below in Figures 2 and 3 for the total sample, Figures 4 and 5 for males, and Figures 6 and 7 for females. Analyses to derive trimmed models included only variables that were significant at the $p < .10$ level in the "full" model analyses.

Additional Analyses

Family life cycle stage proved to be a significant predictor in a number of paths in the model for intimacy, and along with conflict resolution, appeared to account for a large portion of the variance in intimacy. A series of one way analyses of variance with family life cycle as the independent variable were carried out to explore further the effects on commitment, interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution, and sex-role orientation. The results are shown below in Tables 14, 15, and 16 for the total sample, males, and females, respectively.

Family life cycle stage was significantly related to young adults' levels of commitment for the total sample ($F(134) = 89.73$, $p<.001$), and for males ($F(66) = 54.89$, $p<.001$) and females ($F(68) = 36.94$, $p<.001$) alone. The relationships were in an unexpected direction. The results for males were similar to the results for males and females combined. In the total sample and in the male subsample, married subjects reported greater levels of investment in their close relationships than single young adults or parents. In addition, young adult males with children described higher levels of commitment than single individuals. In the female

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p.001
         ——> predicted path   - - ->paths not predicted
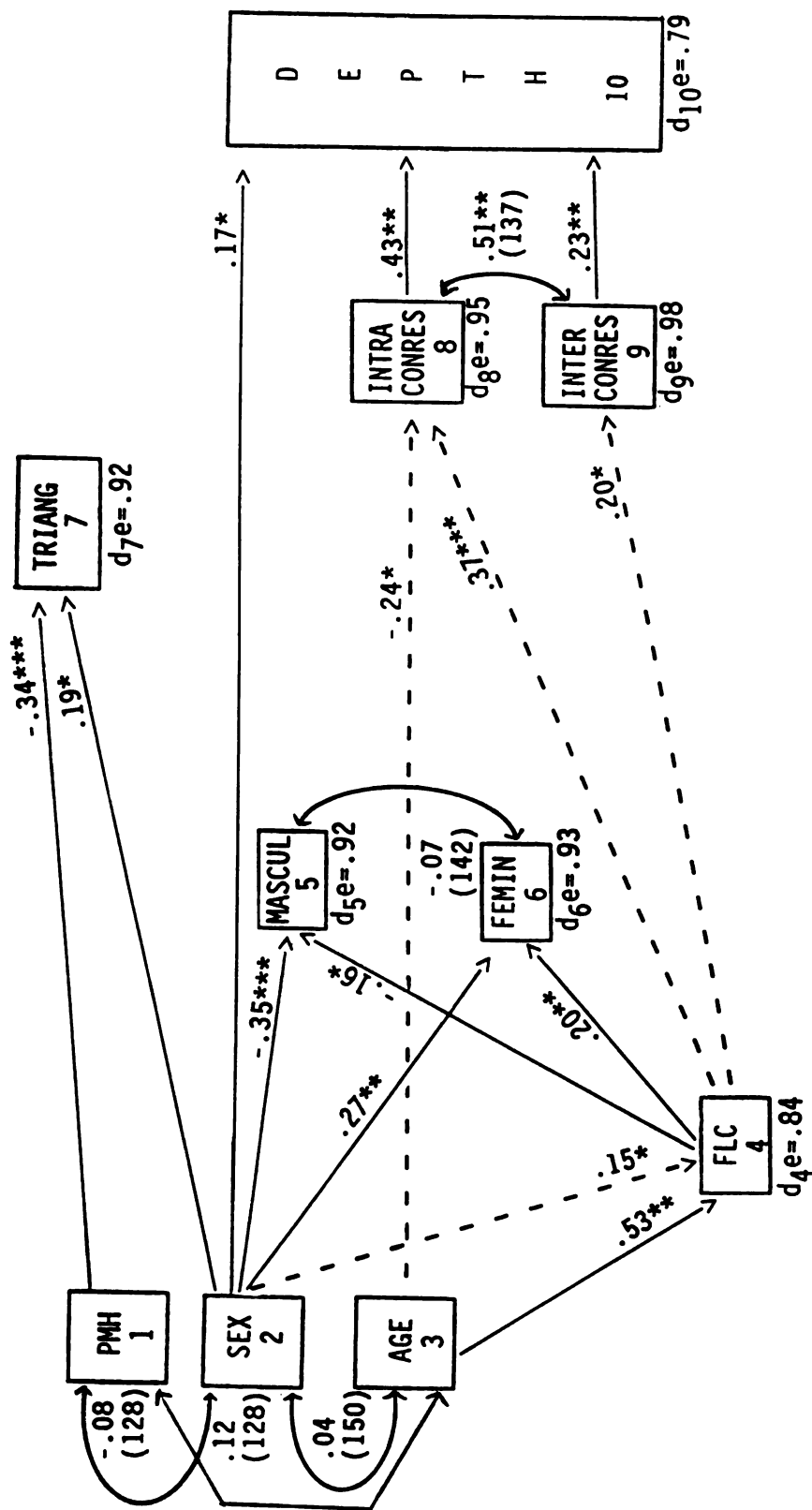
Figure 2. Trimmed Model Predicting Depth for Total Sample.

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p.001
——> predicted path – – >paths not predicted
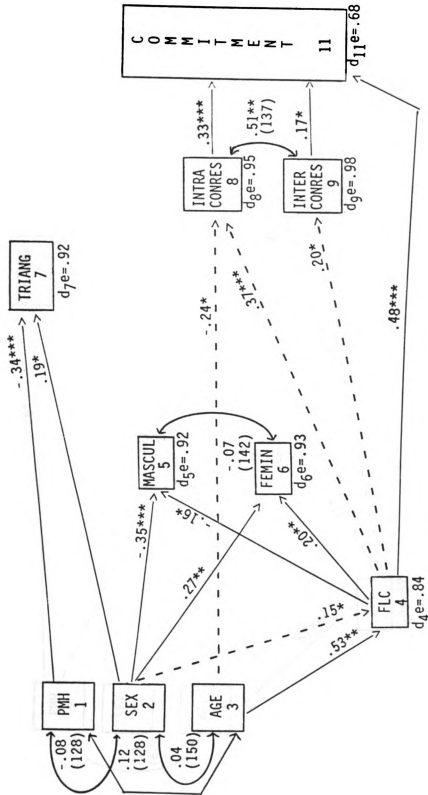
Figure 3. Trimmed Model Predicting Commitment for Total Sample.
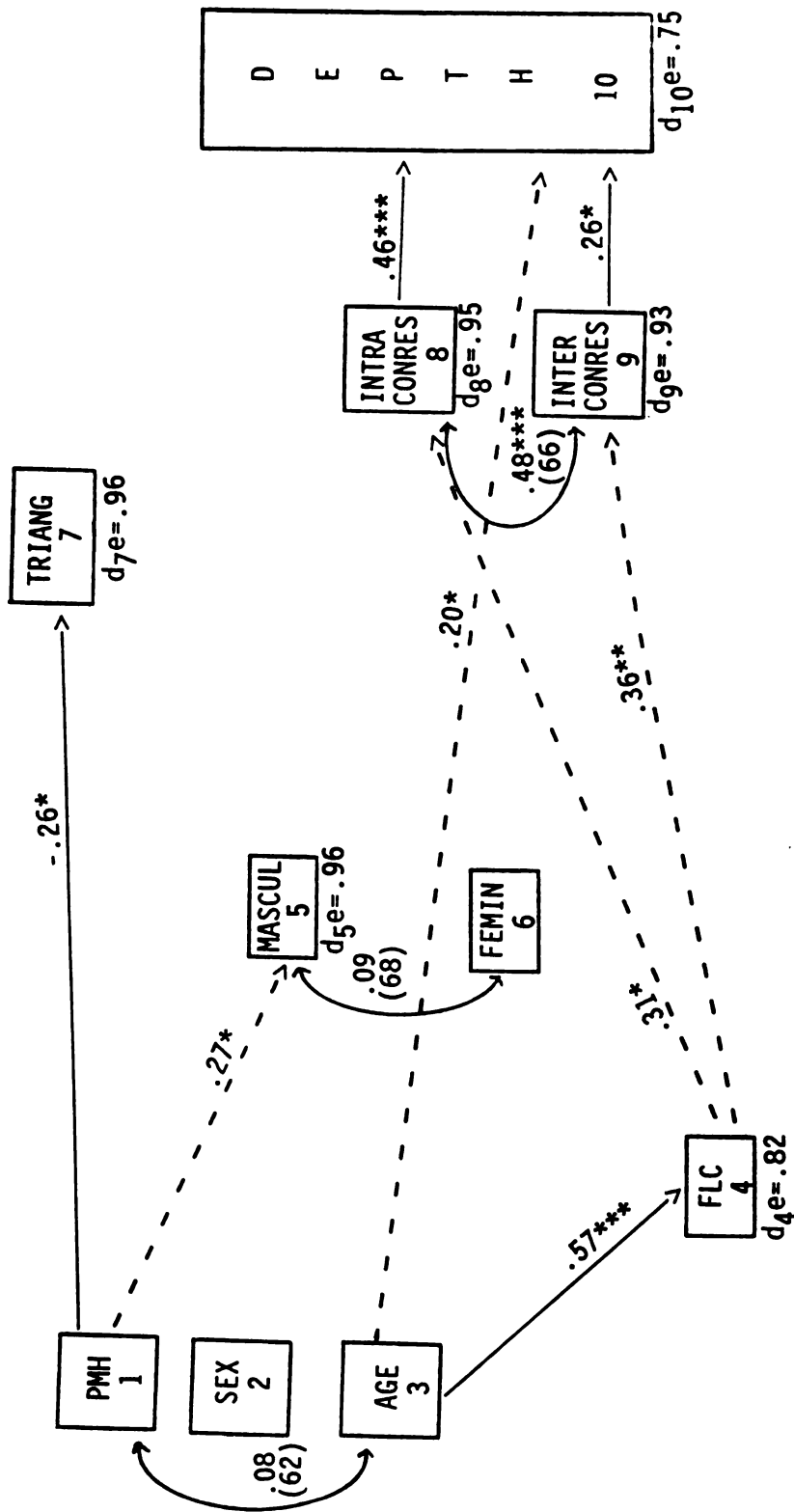
Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p.001
       ——→ predicted path - - -> paths not predicted

Figure 4. Trimmed Model Predicting Depth for Males.
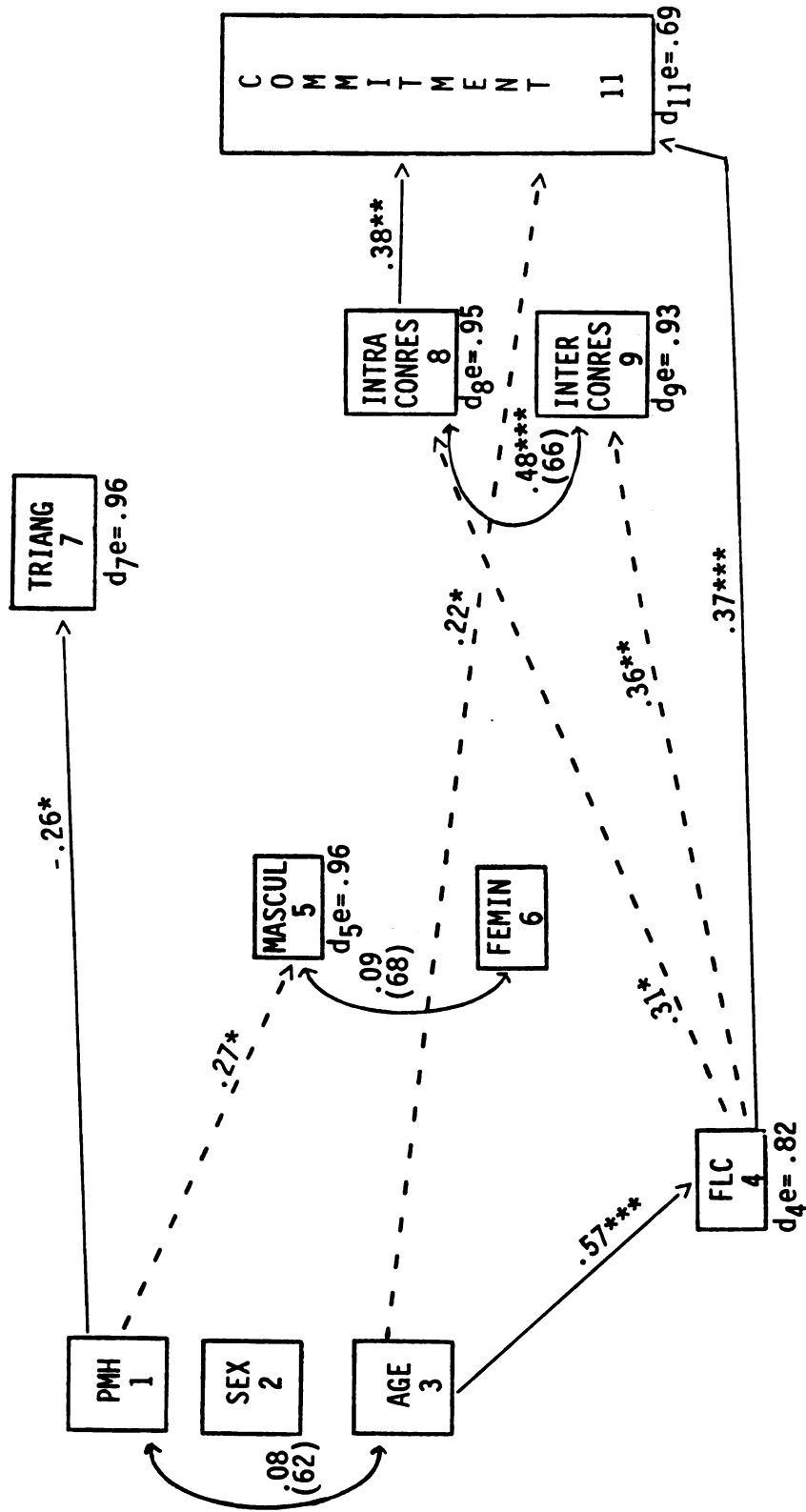
Figure 5. Trimmed Model Predicting Commitment for Males.

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p.001
        ———> predicted path - - -> paths not predicted

135
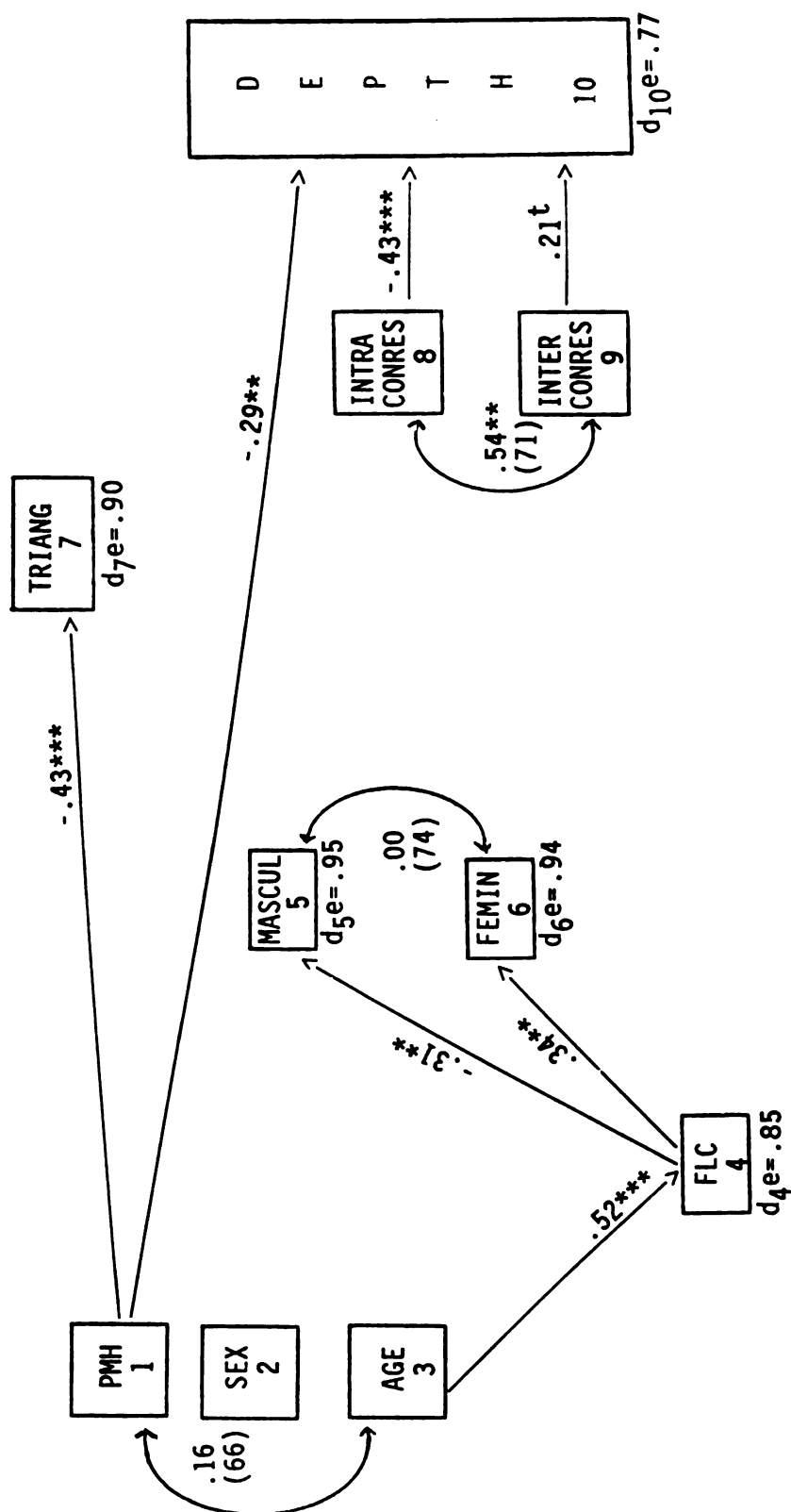
Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p.001   t < p .10
——> predicted path   - - -> paths not predicted

Figure 6.   Trimmed Model Predicting Depth for Females.
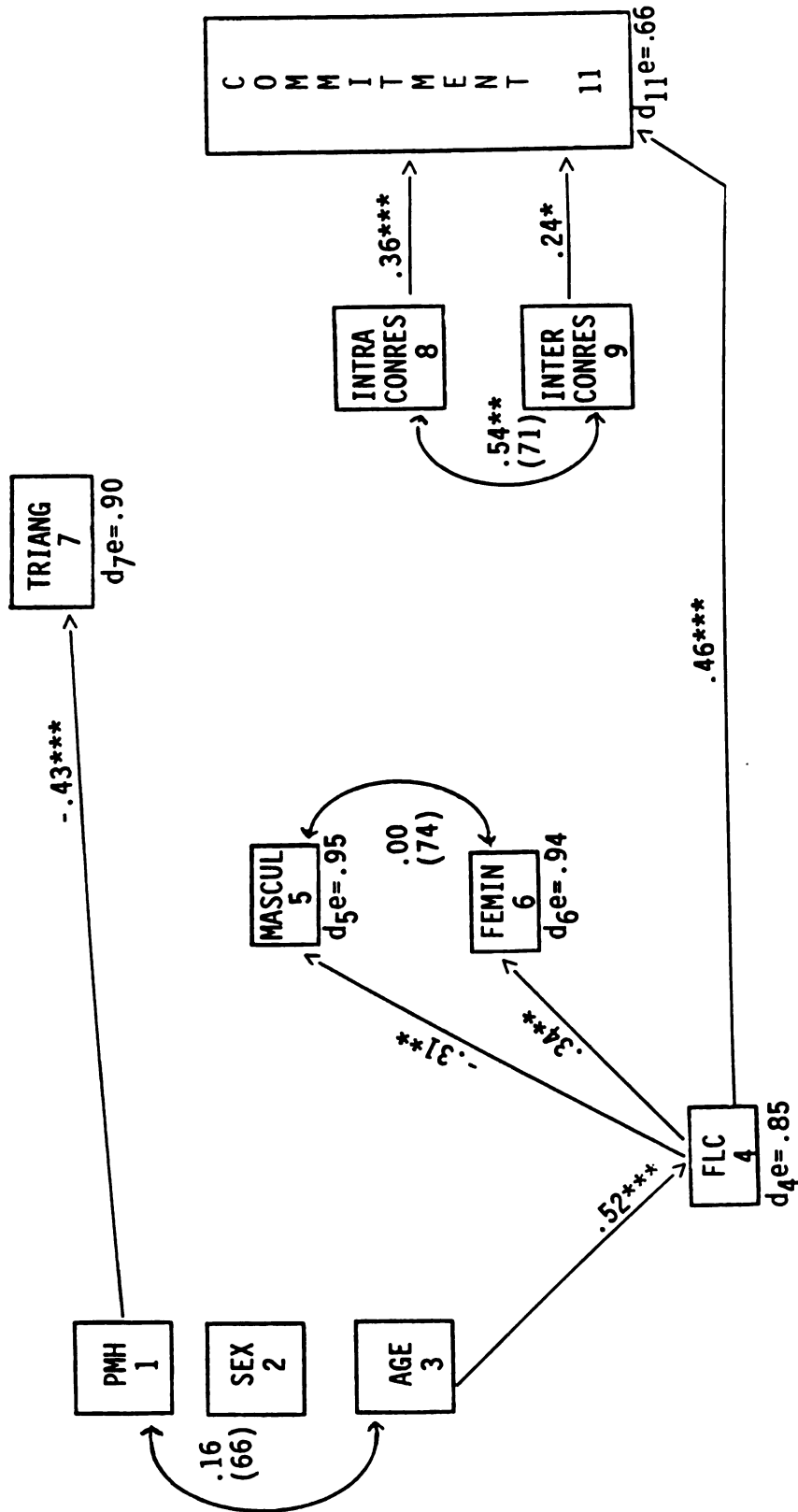
Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p.001
        ——> predicted path   - - -> paths not predicted

Figure 7. Trimmed Model Predicting Commitment for Females.

Table 14

<u>Oneway Analyses of Variance for Commitment, Conflict Resolution,
and Sex Role Orientation by Family Life Cycle Stage: All
Subjects.</u>*

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Parents</u>
Commit	1.82^a (N = 63)	4.70^b (N = 33)	3.89^c (N = 38)
Intra Conres	2.74^a (N = 59)	3.67^b (N = 33)	3.29^b (N = 38)
Inter Conres	2.48^a (N = 60)	3.09^b (N = 33)	2.97^b (N =38)
Mascul	16.88^a (N = 61)	16.44^{ab} (N = 36)	14.36^b (N = 39)
Femin	15.10^a (N = 62)	16.69^{ab} (N = 36)	17.02^b (N = 39)

*Groups with same superscripts do not significantly differ ($p <$
 .05).

Table 15

Oneway Analyses of Variance for Commitment, Conflict Resolution, and Sex Role Orientation by Family Life Cycle Stage: Males.*

	Single	Married	Parents
Commit	1.8^{9a} (N = 36)	4.93^{b} (N = 14)	3.94^{c} (N = 16)
Intra Conres	2.73^{a} (N = 33)	3.78^{b} (N = 14)	3.31^{b} (N = 16)
Inter Conres	2.39^{a} (N = 33)	3.43^{b} (N = 14)	3.25^{b} (N =16)
Mascul	17.68^{a} (N = 34)	18.80^{a} (N = 15)	17.69^{a} (N = 16)
Femin	14.66^{a} (N = 35)	14.40^{a} (N = 15)	15.19^{a} (N = 16)

*Groups with same superscripts do not significantly differ ($p <$ .05).

Table 16

Oneway Analyses of Variance for Commitment, Conflict Resolution, and Sex Role Orientation by Family Life Cycle Stage: Females.*

	Single	Married	Parents
Commit	1.74^a (N = 27)	4.53^b (N = 19)	3.86^b (N = 22)
Intra Conres	2.77^a (N = 26)	3.58^b (N = 19)	3.27^{ab} (N = 22)
Inter Conres	2.59^a (N = 27)	2.84^a (N = 19)	2.77^a (N =22)
Mascul	15.88^a (N = 27)	14.76^{ab} (N = 21)	12.04^b (N = 23)
Femin	15.67^a (N = 27)	16.62^{ab} (N = 21)	18.30^b (N = 23)

*Groups with same superscripts do not significantly differ ($p <$ .05).

subsample, family life cycle stage did not differentiate between young women who are married and who are parents. However, both women who are married and women with children described more committed relationships than single women.

Variations in family life cycle stage also contributed to differences in young adults' intrapsychic styles of coping with conflict in close relationships for the total sample ($F(130)$ = 9.64, $p<.001$), for males ($F(63)$ = 7.69, $p<.001$), and for females ($F(66)=3.05$, $p<.05$). Family life cycle stage was significantly related to interpersonal conflict resolution for the total sample ($F(131)=4.04$, $p<.05$) and for males ($F(62)$ = 6.38, $p<.01$). The results for intrapsychic and interpersonal conflict resolution for the total sample and for males were similar. Young adults in the total sample and males, in particular, who are married or parents, described higher levels of resolving both interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict in their close relationships. When the female subsample is examined separately, significant differences appeared only in the case of intrapsychic conflict resolution, with married women reporting more adaptive ways of coping with conflict than single women.

The findings for the effects of family life cycle on sex-role orientation were in the expected direction, though not as consistent or clear-cut as predicted. Family life cycle stage was significantly related to masculinity for the total sample ($F(136)$ = 3.19, $p<.05$) and for females ($F(41)$ = 4.38, $p<.05$). Relationships between family life cycle and femininity were significant for the

total sample (F(137) = 4.06, p<.05) and for females (F(71) = 3.56, p<.05). In the total sample and in the female subsample, parents described themselves as more feminine and as less masculine than single young adults. However, married young adults did not differ significantly from either single young adults or parents. Masculinity (F(65) = .33, ns) and femininity (F(66) = .33, ns) among males did not differ as a function of differences in family life cycle.

Discussion

In general, the proposed model of individual differences and family systems variables accounted for 53% and 37% of the variance in commitment and depth, respectively. Unexpectedly, young adults' conflict resolution styles and family life cycle stage accounted for substantial portions of the variance in intimacy status. In contrast, tests of the model for the most part did not support the proposed links between gender, sex role orientation, parent marital harmony, triangulation, and intimacy status. Possible explanations for the relatively weak findings are considered below.

The role of gender, sex role orientation, and family life cycle stage in intimacy. The hypothesis that sex differences play an important role in explaining variations in intimacy was only partially supported. As expected, young women tended to describe their close relationships in terms of higher levels of depth, but gender did not influence levels of commitment. It may be that the notion of depth in this study most closely resembles definitions of

intimacy, such as "closeness" or self-disclosure, being measured by other studies of intimacy which report strong sex differences. Furthermore, depth as defined in this study includes the capacity for empathy, expressiveness, valuing communication and support, all of which reportedly are more likely to characterize women than men (e.g., Parelman, 1983; Hoffman, 1977; Baslwick & Peek, 1971). In addition, being masculine or feminine had no effect on young adults' reports of intimacy. Other researchers have qualified their statements about the influence of sex-role orientation on intimacy based on their findings. For example, White et al. (1986) found stronger patterns of relationships between husbands and wives as opposed to within the samples of husbands and wives. The present study did not examine intimacy in the context of the dyad, which represents a possible explanation for the failure to find an effect for sex-role orientation as well as points out a weakness of the design.

Family life cycle stage turned out to be one of two critical factors which accounted for substantial portions of the variance in commitment. Depth, however, was not influenced by differences in the young adults' phase of life. In the total sample and in the sample of males only, married respondents reported higher levels of commitment than either single young adults or those who were parents. Parents' levels of commitment were higher than single young adults as expected, but unexpectedly lower than married young adults. The pattern of results was similar for women, though not as strong. Whereas having children was expected to strengthen

young adults' perceptions of commitment, it appears that the levels of commitment described by young adults perhaps reflected the lowering in marital satisfaction reported in the literature (e.g., Rossi, 1968) that accompanies the arrival of children into a family. Moreover, as males in this sample were more likely to carry the primary financial burden and females were more likely to the primary caretakers, the addition of children meant greater financial responsibility and perhaps less time as a couple, and may have stressed their perceptions of their relationship and lifelong commitment.

Indirect effects of age, family life cycle stage, gender, and sex-role orientation on intimacy. The predicted indirect effects of the individual differences variables were largely unsubstantiated. The relationships with variables that preceded intimacy in the model were for the most part in the expected direction, but the link with intimacy was not supported. For example, sex role orientation did not partially explain the relationship between family life cycle and intimacy, but there was a linear relationship between family life cycle and sex role. The findings that parents endorsed more feminine and less masculine items and that single young adults endorsed more masculine and less feminine items supported the prediction that variations in individuals' lifestyles would affect changes in values and ideologies, but did not translate into differences in young adults' levels of intimacy. Similarly, more females described feminine orientations, more males described masculine orientations, and more

young women reported being in triangulated relationships. However, these relationships did not influence variations in levels of intimacy as expected.

The prediction that older young adults were more likely to be further along in the family life cycle and to report higher levels of commitment was supported in terms of the total sample. However, as discussed below, age also played a significant role in explaining men's levels of investment in their close relationships independently of family life cycle stage.

The role of parent marital harmony.

In general, the prediction that the quality of the parents' marriage would play a significant role in explaining young adults' levels of conflict resolution strategies or intimacy was not supported. The only predicted finding was that young adults whose parents reported poorer marriages were more likely to describe being in triangulated parent-child relationships in their family of origin. Triangulation, however, was unrelated to intimacy.

Parent marital harmony influenced young women's reports of depth, but not in the expected direction. Young women whose parents described higher levels of marital harmony tended to report lower levels of depth in their own close relationships. Whereas a positive relationship between parents' marital harmony and intimacy was predicted based on both the role model and the "indirect" transmission hypotheses, these results bring up the possibility that the young women in this study were "trained" for intimacy in

homes where the parent's marriage was conflictual and low in companionship and communication. As a result, one, or even both, parents turned to their daughter for closeness, and effectively prepared her for her own close relationships. Alternatively, it may be that growing up with parents whose marriage was less satisfying and positive, provided some young women with counter examples of close relationships. By the time these young women reached young adulthood, they had had opportunities for examining and reflecting on their parents' marriages, and perhaps had rejected various aspects in favor of more communication, sharing, and problem solving in their own close relationships.

That the negative relationship between parent marital harmony and depth was not found for males in this sample is not terribly surprising. Given that daughters' development occurs via connectedness and in the relational context of the family, and sons move from attachment to autonomy (e.g., Stiver, 1984; Chodorow, 1978), daughters are more likely to be directly influenced by the affective climate and relationships in the family. Presumably, sons are not immune to family influences, but experience the effects of the parental marriage more indirectly.

Missing in the present study are tests of possible mediators of experiences in the family, such as the young adults' level of mental health and the young adults' perceptions of their relationships with their parents, in particular, their experiences of autonomy and relatedness with their parents (Frank, Avery, & Laman, 1988). As Bowlby (1969) and Hazan and Shaver (1987)

suggest, it is individuals' internal or mental models of their family relationships which impact on the kinds of relationships developed outside the family of origin. Preliminary analyses in the larger study from which this research stems suggest that young adults' experiences of relatedness and autonomy with their parents, at least for males, do in fact influence intimacy status.

It is also important to point out that the relationships described by the parents in this study are not derived from a clinical sample. In more distressed populations, I expect that parents' reports and young adults' perceptions of their parents' marriages would similarly reflect poor marriages, whereas it may be essential to measure young adults' perceptions in a normal sample in order to tap the critical factors underlying differences in intimacy. It also may be that the level of disharmony described by parents in the present study would fall in the moderate range when compared to a clinical sample. Hence, it is possible that a relatively poor marital relationship in this sample still allows for young adults to experience optimal levels of connectedness in the family, which in turn facilitates autonomy and presumably, the development of close relationships outside the parental home (e.g., Grotevant, 1983). Relatedly, Frank and Tuer (1988) found in a sample of college students that more conflict between parents was associated with differentiation for daughters, which presumably facilitates age appropriate separation and launching into the world of relationships outside the family.

Finally, it is also important to point out that the measure of marital harmony reflects the quality of the young adults' parents' marriage at the time of the study. It may be that some of the families in this sample include couples who have "stuck it out", but who had more conflictual or distressed marriages when their children were younger. An important question then arises regarding the degree of continuity that can be expected in a normal young adult sample. On the one hand, it can be argued that by the time individuals reach young adulthood, they have developed a "new" life, and are no longer simply products of their childhood. Particularly in non-clinical samples, normal ups and downs of family life and a relatively large amount of instability in terms of the degree of family conflict can be expected. Whatever negative effects conflict exerts in less distressed populations are likely to be transitory. On the other hand, what remains to be assessed is the possibility that an earlier period of conflict in the parental marriage impacts on children's internalized models of relationships and influences attempts to form their own close relationships. While the negative effects of family conflict on intimacy are beginning to be documented in clinical samples, such as Wallerstein's ten year follow-up of children in divorced families (e.g., Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989), it is unclear if earlier experiences of "normal" family conflict threaten young adults' ability to have intimate relationships.

The role of young adults' conflict resolution styles. The young adults' styles of coping with both interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict in their close relationships proved to be a critical factor in understanding variations in levels of intimacy. Together with family life cycle stage, young adults' conflict resolution styles accounted for substantial portions of the variance in intimacy status. One explanation for the strong relationship between young adults' conflict resolution styles and levels of intimacy is shared method variance. Both intimacy status and the conflict resolution scores were based on young adults' responses to questions in the Intimacy Interview. Furthermore, both the intimacy and conflict resolution scales share to some degree an underlying theoretical rationale based on the ego psychology developmental model (Wessler & Loevinger, 1970). Accordingly, moderate correlations between young adults' conflict resolution styles and levels of intimacy are to be expected to the extent that each scale is actually measuring aspects of ego development.

Nevertheless, these findings also substantiate Folkman and Lazarus' (1988) notion that coping, which includes conflict resolution, functions as a mediator of individuals' emotional responses and cognitive appraisals. For example, in the case of conflict resolution in close relationships, this theory posits that following a conflictual encounter, individuals appraise the situation and the other person involved, form an emotional response, and then proceed to resolving the problem. Individuals

then reappraise, re-formulate their emotional response, and in the case of adaptive conflict resolution, ultimately arrive at perceptions of an improved relationship. Intimacy, as measured in the present study, can be thought of as a conglomerate or "average" of the feelings (emotional responses) and thoughts (cognitive appraisals) individuals have about a particular close relationship. The strong positive relationship between conflict resolution and intimacy in the present study provides compelling support that coping, and particularly conflict resolution, is a powerful mediator of young adults' perceptions of intimacy.

Additionally, although it is likely that more adaptive approaches to resolving conflict in close relationships creates the context for relationship growth and increasing levels of intimacy (e.g., Braiker & Kelley, 1979), it is also possible that the relationship is bi-directional. That is, individuals at the individuated-connected level of depth value open communication and relationship-centered discussion and hence, are more disposed towards adaptive confrontation of problems, integrating problem-solving into the relationship, and recognizing the potentially growth-enhancing aspects of working through conflicts. Similarly, young adults who described committed relationships have resolved to stay in the relationship and perhaps are more motivated to find adaptive ways of resolving conflicts, or alternatively, feel freer to openly discuss and negotiate problems based on respect and appreciation for the partner's needs.

Unexpected findings. Tests of the "full" model revealed several unexpected paths in the model that explained differences in intimacy, sex-role orientation, and young adults' conflict resolution styles. For example, in describing the levels of depth in their close relationships, older males were more likely to describe close relationships characterized by higher levels of openness, trust, reciprocity, and appreciation of the partner's differences. In addition, older males were more likely to describe higher levels of investment. Age did not influence women's reports of depth or commitment. Hence, for males, it appears that there continue to be developmental differences in intimacy status independent of the effects of family life cycle stage. The different results for men and women in this case is not surprising, based on the Eriksonian model of development which suggests that males first focus on consolidating an identity by pursuing career goals before turning towards more interpersonal tasks. And, as others have argued, males' developmental pathway is characterized by achieving greater levels of autonomy and separateness (e.g., Chodorow, 1978) prior to seeking connectedness in close relationships outside the family. Furthermore, some researchers (e.g., Fischer, 1981) have suggested that males are "socialized" and shaped towards higher levels of intimacy by the female partner only after they are in close relationships, rather than by forces, such as the family of origin, outside the relationship. And finally, age presumably reflects the additional relationship experiences young men encounter as they get older, some of which

likely contribute to the development of intimacy either by providing "intimacy mentors", to borrow from Rossi (1980) or by providing opportunities for empathy and self-disclosure.

A second contribution of the "full" model was the partial explanation, again in the case of males, of sex role orientation. The predicted model was altogether unsuccessful at predicting males' levels of femininity and masculinity. Tests of the "full" model showed that parent marital harmony accounted for 7% of the variance in young men's attributions of masculine role orientations. Developmental theories are again useful in providing explanations of this finding. One possibility, based on the psychoanalytic model of development, postulates that boys develop by identifying with their masculine fathers who then encourage individuation and autonomy (e.g., Stiver, 1984; Chodorow, 1978). It follows that young men whose parents described harmonious relationships and who were therefore less likely to become entangled in the parental marriage as a confidant or ally, would identify with the more instrumental provider role of the father rather than identify with the more nurturant feminine role or relational needs of either parent. What remains unclear is how this pathway affects males' levels of intimacy.

Thirdly, family life cycle stage turned out to be an important determinant of young adults' perceptions of their problem-solving styles in close relationships. Being married or a parent predicted adaptive interpersonal and intrapsychic conflict resolution when the data for males and females were combined.

Being younger also predicted intrapsychic resolution for the total sample. When paths for males and females are examined separately, the model was unsuccessful in predicting conflict resolution styles for females altogether. The findings for males replicated the total sample in the case of interpersonal conflict resolution. Age dropped out of the path predicting males' intrapsychic conflict resolution, indicating the presence of a suppressor effect.

In this sample, as young adults made commitments such as marriage and parenthood, they tended to describe more adaptive styles of conflict resolution. This finding reflects the likelihood that the areas of conflict differ across family life cycle stages (Raush et al., 1974), and suggests that for individuals who are married or parents, issues perhaps revolved around more instrumental decisions, such as division of labor and child rearing, rather than issues of separateness versus connectedness (Raush et al., 1974). As such, young adults may be better able to openly discuss problems, negotiate, and compromise, when less is at stake emotionally. It may even be the case that these (theoretically) less "personal" opportunities for problem solving afford partners opportunities for practicing more adaptive strategies, which then potentially facilitates relationship growth and intimacy.

In light of this interpretation of the results, the finding that younger individuals reported more adaptive intrapsychic conflict resolution strategies appears to reflect a tendency for younger subjects to idealize their close relationships or report

socially desirable behavior (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Alternatively, this finding could reflect cohort differences and an increase in younger individuals' expectations for intimate relationships secondary to change in sociocultural norms. Presumably, such changes are related to the growing recognition of equality between men and women, and the tendency to value an emerging cross-pollination of what were previously strictly "masculine" or "feminine" domains. For example, Fitzpatrick (1988) suggests that two emerging facets in American marital relationships are the "therapeutic" and "companionship" roles. These involve responsibilities such as listening to the partner or spouse, helping one's partner cope with worries and anxieties, and sharing leisure time with one's partner. In line with these changing attitudes, younger adults are perhaps more likely to embrace views that conflict is an inevitable part of close relationships and to experience problem solving as relationship-enhancing.

Methodological issues and consideration for future research. In addition to the questions raised above, the limitations of the cross-sectional data and research design make it difficult to make conclusive statements about intimacy in young adulthood at the present time. For one, the recursive model demanded by the structural modeling technique used here does not adequately capture the complex, reciprocal effects that presumably are necessary to more fully explain the development of intimacy. Additionally, while this model can function as the springboard for future models

which can undergo more rigorous inferential tests, it does not adequately clarify the interrelationships posited due to problems in measurement, such as shared method variance. As such, this model does not adequately test the conceptual distinction proposed between commitment and depth, and raises additional questions about the nature of intimacy. For example, future studies might examine the relationship between commitment and depth, as one way to continue developing the somewhat elusive definition of intimacy.

Ideally, future research will attempt to fill in some of the gaps identified in the present study. In order to truly test the developmental model, a longitudinal, multi-method research design will be required. Based on the review by Sroufe and Fleeson (1986) of the construction of relationships and the present model's hypotheses that relationships in the family of origin are critical to explanations of variations in intimacy, observational methodology such as the Ainsworth strange situation (Ainsworth et al., 1978) in the earliest years of infancy and toddlerhood make a logical starting point. Sroufe and Fleeson argue that what individuals bring to close relationships can be explained by their "relational histories" and that all personality development is ultimately based on the earliest attachment relationship with the primary caretaker. According to their model, individuals develop a "framework of expectations for self and other that emerges from the primary relationship" (p. 52) of infant and caretaker. Furthermore, because individuals are motivated to maintain coherence and stability (Cottrell, 1969), these internalized

relationships influence the establishment of new relationships by ensuring that they are congruent with past experiences, according to this theory. Sroufe and Fleeson cite a body of literature showing that assessments of the quality of the infant-caretaker relationship predict reliably over time the kinds of relationships children have with peers, teachers, and parents up to the pre-school years. Although costly in terms of time and money, it would be important to build on this work to explore the development of intimacy in adolescence and young adulthood. For example, over time, I would expect that infants with secure attachments have internalized responsive relationships, developed models of what it is like to give and receive empathy, formed intimate "chumships" in adolescence (Sullivan, 1953), and in terms of the present model, would be most likely to have individuated-connected and committed close relationships.

In addition, future research on a less grand scale should study intimacy in the context of the close relationship dyad. The present study suffers somewhat from a reliance on self report and bias towards the verbally facile in addition to attempting to measure a relationship construct out of context. This may explain in part why some of the findings did not replicate White et al.'s work on intimacy maturity. Future studies also would certainly be enriched by exploring the relationship between partners' perceptions and interactions. While there are drawbacks to analogue laboratory data, the combination of self-perceptions,

partner perceptions, and observational data would address a number of lacunae in existing studies to date.

Summary and conclusion. In sum, method variance notwithstanding, the findings underscore the importance of examining further the relationship between young adults' approaches to resolving problems in their close relationships and intimacy. Secondly, these results also substantiate the significance of viewing variations in perceptions of intimacy in terms of the family life cycle. Family life cycle stage predicted commitment but not depth in the present sample. The role of family life cycle stage in explaining variations in intimacy, while clearly important in the present study, needs to be explored further. In particular, these findings suggest the possibility that a bi-directional relationship exists between family life cycle stage and intimacy. For example, higher levels of depth, which is not related to family life cycle stage, probably facilitate individuals readiness for commitment, which in turn may lead to marriage and parenthood.

Research that develops models of intimacy is valuable to the extent that individuals strive for intimate relationships. Furthermore, recent work on marital typologies substantiates the belief that individuals can be in close relationships (i.e., marriage), can report high levels of marital satisfaction, and low levels of intimacy (e.g., Fitzpatrick, 1988). These distinctions have important implications for clinical applications of research on close relationships. Like models of ego development (e.g.,

Loevinger & Wessler, 1970), most intimacy coding systems reflect
"optimal" development, and are based on the value systems and
ideology of its developers, which may not in fact be the same
values and attitudes of most individuals who come to a clinic
seeking help for marital or relationship difficulties. It may be
useful to develop research on close relationships that reflects a
more "pluralistic view" of what intimacy is or perhaps, that
captures attitudes and beliefs about what constitutes a "good close
relationship".

However, the study and development of models of intimacy that
attempt to understand the complex relationships between
intrapersonal and interpersonal variables continue to make valuable
contributions to our understanding of individual development and
family systems. The approach used in the present study
demonstrated its usefulness by substantiating the significant role
played by variations in young adults' conflict resolution
strategies in their close relationships. The findings presented
here are congruent with Braiker and Kelley's (1979) belief that a
strong association exists between conflict resolution styles and
the level of ease or difficulty that partners in close
relationships have making the transition to deeper levels of
involvement and interdependence. In addition, these findings are
presented in the context of a theoretical framework, in contrast to
much of the marital literature, which is atheoretical or focuses on
micro-analyses of couple behavior (e.g., self-disclosure). The
model of intimacy in close relationships in the present study was

based on ego-analytic, cognitive developmental, attachment and family systems theories. The effects of gender on intimacy were also examined. As predicted, the findings revealed that more women reported deeper close relationships. However, while the paths for commitment and depth differed somewhat for males and females, there were also similarities and consistencies across gender, as found by other researchers (e.g., Peplau & Gordon, 1985). The results also suggested that several additions to the model are needed to explain the lack of direct relationships between parents' marriages, triangulation, and sex-role orientation, particularly for males. Finally, in order to address the many unanswered questions generated by this research and to refine current definitions of intimacy, future models should also include a longitudinal design, dyadic data, and interactional data. If the burgeoning number of recent articles and books about intimacy in the popular press is any indication of the desire to understand close relationships, it becomes especially important to provide methodologically sound, empirically based information from which others can learn about being close.

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160

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION INVENTORY

APPENDIX A

Sex: M
      F

Age:_____

Code No._____

Date:_____

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION INVENTORY

Directions: Please read each statement and decide whether or not it describes you. If you agree with a statement or decide that it does describe you, answer TRUE. If you disagree with a statement or feel it is not descriptive of you, answer FALSE. Answer every statement by putting a circle around either true (T) or false (F), even if you are not completely sure of your answer.

1.	Self-control is not a big problem to me.	T	F	1.
2.	I like to be with people who assume a protective attitude toward me.	T	F	2.
3.	I try to control others rather than permit them to control me.	T	F	3.
4.	Surf-board riding would be too dangerous for me.	T	F	4.
5.	Often I don't trust my emotions.	T	F	5.
6.	If I have a problem, I like to work it out alone.	T	F	6.
7.	I seldom go out of my way to do something just to make others happy.	T	F	7.
8.	Adventures where I am on my own are a little frightening to me.	T	F	8.

9.   I usually know what to say to
people.   T   F   9.

10.   I feel confident when directing
the activities of others.   T   F   10.

11.   I will keep working on a problem
after others have given up.   T   F   11.

12.   I would not like to be married
to a protective person.   T   F   12.

13.   There are many things I would
change about myself if I could.   T   F   13.

14.   I usually try to share my problems
with someone who can help me.   T   F   14.

15.   I don't care if my clothes are
unstylish as long as I like them. T   F   15.

16.   When I see a new invention I
attempt to find out how it works. T   F   16.

17.   I can make up my mind and stick
to it.   T   F   17.

18.   People like to tell me their troubles
because the know that I will do
everything I can to help them.   T   F   18.

19.   Sometimes I let people push me around
so they can feel important.   T   F   19.

20.   I am only very rarely in a position
where I feel a need to actively
argue for a point of view I hold. T   F   20.

21.   I am usually disorganized.   T   F   21.

22.   I dislike people who are always
asking me for advice.   T   F   22.

23.   I seek out positions of authority. T   F   23.

24.   I believe in giving friends lots
of help and advice.   T   F   24.

25.   I am poised most of the time.   T   F   25.

26.   I am too shy to tell jokes.   T   F   26.

27.   I get little satisfaction from
serving others.   T   F   27.

28.   I make certain that I speak softly
when I am in a public place.   T   F   28.

29.   I am afraid of what other people
think about me.   T   F   29.

30.   I am usually the first to offer
a helping hand when it is needed. T   F   30.

31.   When I see someone I know from a
distance, I don't go out of my
way to say "Hello".   T   F   31.

32.   I would prefer to care for a sick
child myself rather than hire a nurse. T   F   32.

33.   I am in control of what happens to
me in my life.   T   F   33.

34.   I prefer not being dependent on
anyone for assistance.   T   F   34.

35.   When I am with someone else, I do
most of the decision-making.   T   F   35.

36.   I make all my own clothes and shoes. T   F   36.

37.   I don't mind being conspicuous.   T   F   37.

38.   I am afraid of a full-fledged
disagreement with a person.   T   F   38.

39.   I would never pass up something
that sounded like fun just because
it was a little bit hazardous.   T   F   39.

40.   I get a kick out of seeing someone
I dislike appear foolish in front
of others.   T   F   40.

41.   When someone opposes me on an issue,
I usually find myself taking an
even stronger stand than I did at
first.   T   F   41.

42. I feel adequate more often than not.   T   F   42.

43. When two persons are arguing, I often settle the argument for them.   T   F   43.

44. I will not go out of my way to behave in an approved way.   .T   F   44.

45. I am quite independent of the people I know.   T   F   45.

46. I frequently doubt my sexual attractiveness.   T   F   46.

47. I have never ridden in an automobile.   T   F   47.

48. If I were in politics, I would probably be seen as one of the forceful leaders of my party.   T   F   48.

49. I prefer a quiet, secure life to an adventurous one.   T   F   49.

50. I prefer to face my problems by myself.   T   F   50.

51. I'm pretty sure of myself.   T   F   51.

52. I try to get others to notice the way I dress.   T   F   52.

53. When I see someone who looks confused, I usually ask if I can be of any assistance.   T   F   53.

54. It is unrealistic for me to insist on becoming the best in my field of work all of the time.   T   F   54.

55. I often kick myself for the things I do.   T   F   55.

56. The good opinion of one's friends is one of the chief rewards for living a good life.   T   F   56.

57. If I get tired while playing a game, I generally stop playing.   T   F   57.

58.	I was born over 90 years ago.	T	F		58.
59.	When I see a baby, I often ask to hold him or her	T	F		59.
60.	I have a good deal of initiative.	T	F		60.
61.	I am quite good at keeping others in line.	T	F		61.
62.	Most animals are rather uninteresting to watch.	T	F		62.
63.	All babies look very much like little monkeys to me.	T	F		63.
64.	I usually have the feeling that I am just not facing things.	T	F		64.
65.	I think it would be best to marry someone who is more mature and less dependent than I.	T	F		65.
66.	Going barefoot in cool grass is great fun.	T	F		66.
67.	I don't want to be away from my family too much.	T	F		67.
68.	I am sexually attractive.	T	F		68.
69.	I have attended school at some time during my life.	T	F		69.
70.	Once in a while, I enjoy acting as if I were tipsy.	T	F		70.
71.	I feel incapable of handling many situations.	T	F		71.
72.	I delight in feeling unattached.	T	F		72.
73.	I often feel inferior.	T	F		73.
74.	I would make a poor judge because I dislike telling others what to do.	T	F		74.
75.	Seeing an old or helpless person makes me feel that I would like to take care of him or her.	T	F		75.

76. I usually make decisions without consulting others.   T   F   76.

77. I feel emotionally mature.   T   F   77.

78. It doesn't affect me one way or another to see a child being spanked.   T   F   78.

79. My goal is to do at least a little bit more than anyone else has done before.   T   F   79.

80. I rarely use food or drink of any kind.   T   F   80.

81. To love and be loved is of greatest importance to me.   T   F   81.

82. I take a positive attitude toward myself.   T   F   82.

83. I avoid some hobbies and sports because of their dangerous nature.   T   F   83.

84. One of the things which spurs me on to do my best is the realization that I will be praised for my work.   T   F   84.

85. People's tears tend to irritate me more than to arouse my sympathy.   T   F   85.

APPENDIX B

YOUNG ADULT/PARENT RELATIONSHIP INTERVIEW

APPENDIX B

Young Adult-Mother
Transition

Interview

Name_____   Age_____

Interviewer_____   Code_____

Date_____   Parent Name_____

Introduction:

WE TALKED A LITTLE ABOUT THIS ON THE PHONE. . . . WHAT KINDS OF CONTACTS DO YOU HAVE WITH YOUR PARENTS NOW, SUCH AS VISITS, WRITING LETTERS, TELEPHONE CALLS, AND SUCH. LET'S START WITH YOUR MOTHER.

What kinds of contacts do you have with your Mother? (List each below.) For each one mentioned, ask: "About how often do you do this?

	CONTACT	PER MONTH	PER YEAR
1.			

If each is living in the parental home, ask:

"About how much time do you spend with your mother?

2. What kinds of things do you do when you're together with your mother?

3. What do you enjoy about your contacts with your mother?

4. What does your mother enjoy about these contacts?

5. Of course, there's usually something we don't enjoy about others. . . . what might these things be about your mother?

6. What do you think might not be so enjoyable about these contacts for your mother?

7. Who initiates the contacts between you and your mother? Can you give me an example?

8. Do you wish you had more or less contact with your mother?

    IF MORE OR LESS: Why would you prefer (more/less) contact?

If SAME: What makes it seem about right?

9. In general, how much does your mother talk about her personal concerns with you? What kinds of things does she discuss? How do you feel about that?

10. And how much do you talk about your personal concerns with her? What kinds of things do you discuss? (How do you feel about that?)

11a. Are there things that you avoid talking about with your mother? What kinds of things?

11b. What do you think makes you avoid these topics? (Can you give me one or two examples? How do you feel about that?)

12. In what ways do you feel close to your mother? What kinds of things bring you together?

And how do you and your mother express closeness?

13a. Are there any feelings of tenseness when you and your mother are together? Can you give me an example?

13b. How often does that occur?

13c. What do you think that feeling of tenseness is about?

14. What ways would you like to be closer to your mother? (Can you give me an example?)

15. What gets in the way of closeness between you and your mother?

16a. At what point were you closest to your mother?

16b. At what point were you the most distant from your mother? In what ways?

16c.   (Take latest referent point, or age, whether close or
       distant, and ask) Your relationship has changed singe (age .
       . . or time. . .). How do you account for the difference?

17.   In what ways are you like your mother? What does that tell
       you about yourself?

18.   What ways are you different from your mother? (What does
       that tell you about yourself?)

19.   In what ways does your mother show concern for your needs or
       welfare? (Can you give me a few examples. How do you feel
       about this?

20.   In what ways do you show concern for your mother's needs or
       welfare?

       Do you think she gets the message?
       If NO: What makes you say that? Do you wish it were
       different?

If YES: How do you know?

21.   Can you think of a time recently when you felt conflicted
       about your mother's needs and your needs? What was that
       about? (How did you handle it? How did you feel about the
       way it was resolved?)

22a.   Which parent do you feel closer to? (Probe. . . "Lots of
       people feel closer to one parent than the other. . . If says
       Neither. . . What makes this so?)

22b.   What makes you feel closer to _____ than to _____
       (other parent)?

22c.   How do you think it came about (that you're closer to
       _____).

23a.   To change focus somewhat. . . Can you think of a time you
       talked over an important decision with your mother?
       If says NEVER: Imagine what would happen if you did. . .
       what might happen?
       If says Can't Imagine: "What makes that impossible to
       imagine?"

23b. What other kinds of decisions do you discuss with mother. . . for example, your financial affairs, personal relationships, work or career choices?

24. Can you think of a time you and your mother disagreed about something very important? Tell me about that (How did you handle that, How did you feel about your response, How did it get resolved, Is that how disagreements usually get resolved between you and your mother?)

25a. In what ways are your values different from those of your mother? (Did you ever discuss that?)

25b. In what ways are your values similar to those of your mother?

26. We've talked about things that you discuss with your mother. Besides advice, what other kinds of things does she help you with? (Do you ask for help, or does she always offer--who initiates--How do you think she feels about doing that for you? How do you feel?)

27. What happens when your mother is not available? (If says Nothing, ask. . . Imagine. . .)

28. Are there ways in which you wish you could rely more on your mother. . . or maybe less? (How do you expect that to come about?)

29. What are some of your mother's weaknesses? What do you think makes her that way?

30. In what ways would you like her to change? Do you think she ever will? (How will that come about? If says I don't know. . . What do you think you, she might do to change?) If says NO: What might prevent her from changing?

31. In what ways has she let you down?

32. What kinds of things about your mother make you feel proud? What are her strengths?

APPENDIX C

TRIANGULATION CODING MANUAL

APPENDIX C

TRIANGULATION CODING MANUAL

Triangulation is defined as a cross-generational coalition between a child and parent in which the parent seeks to fulfill his/her own needs by co-opting the child's attention and loyalty and enlisting the child's sympathy against the other parent. One or both parents may attempt to ally with the child, although the child will typically feel closer to only one parent. The overall picture can take two general forms: One variation is a family in which both parents confide in the child, thereby putting the child in the middle of the parent's problems; the second is a family in which the balance of power is unevenly distributed due to a parent-child coalition on one hand, and an outcast or deprecated parent on the other hand.

From the child's perspective, triangulation is evidenced by a clear preference for one parent, and feelings of sympathy, identification, and understanding for this parent. This is true even in families where both parents confide their marital troubles to the child. In contrast, the other parent is often disparaged, belittled, or avoided. Additionally, the child typically reports that the "favored" parent confides in the child and shares his/her problems and disagreements regarding the other parent. Notably,

the child _enjoys_ these discussions and is an interested
participant.

Scoring System

Triangulation is rated on a 3-point scale, with "1"
indicating the absence of triangulation and "3" indicating
triangulation. The criteria for rating a protocol as 1, 2, or 3 on
the triangulation scale are described below.

Indicators of LEVEL 1:

Young adults at this level are not caught up in or involved
in their parents' marital relationship. The young adult may
describe his/her own conflicts with the parent but is not a party
to conflicts _between_ the parents. In this regard, the young adult
does not appear to feel more loyalty to or closeness to one parent;
rather, there is a quality of "evenness" in the young adult's
description of their relationship and feelings towards his/her
parents.

Indicators of LEVEL 2:

Young adults at this level are emotionally caught up in their
parents' conflicts, but are struggling to avoid taking sides. As a
result, the young adult typically tries to maintain "neutral"
relationships with _both_ parents, but often acts as confidant or
advice-giver to either or both parents.

Indicators of LEVEL 3:

Young adults at level 3 are triangulated in the parents' marriage. This is manifested in one of 2 ways (see a and b). In both cases, however, the young adult's feelings of loyalty and understanding are clearly allotted to only one parent, with the result that the "other" parent-child relationship is characterized by feelings of disrespect, lack of understanding, or disapproval on the part of the young adult.

a)   The young adult acts as confidant to <u>both</u> parents regarding their marital conflicts, and is essentially <u>caught in the middle</u> of the conflictual marital relationship. Each parent seeks the young adult's support, understanding, and loyalty and attempts to enlist the young adult's sympathy against the other parent. In contrast to level 2, the young adult does not attempt to remain neutral. At this level the young adult functions as an active member of the "triangle" and typically chooses sides, although he/she may be solicited and pulled by both parents' needs.

b)   Alternatively, the young adult may be clearly aligned with only one parent. In this form of triangulation, the young adult offers support and loyalty to only one parent, and casts the other parent in the role of a deprecated outsider. In addition, the young adult is privy to the "favored" parent's complaints and disagreements with the other parent, and acts as an advisor and interested participant in such discussions.

APPENDIX D

INTIMACY INTERVIEW

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

APPENDIX D

GIVEN: FIRST   SECOND   Code No._____

                                            Sex_____

Intimacy Interview
Relationships

Date_____   Interviewer_____

I'd like to ask you some questions about the kinds of relationships
you have with other people and what some of your attitudes are
concerning your relationships. Again, I want to assure you that
whatever you say will be strictly confidential.

Whom do you live with?_____

How long have you been living with him/her?_____

  1.   Do you have friends with whom you're especially close?
       _____ What kinds of things do you have in common with
       these friends? (If they bring up girlfriend or spouse, ask
       them to choose another friend).

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

2. What kinds of things don't you have in common? How do you
    feel about the differences?

3. What makes you feel close to these friends?

4. In general, what does being close with someone mean to you?

5. Think of the friends you feel closest to. What kinds of
    things do you talk about with them? Can you give me an
    example? (Respondent can focus on one friend, if necessary).

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

6. In particular, what kinds of personal things do you talk
    about? (If necessary, can say, "You mentioned ----------
    previously, are there other personal things you discuss?

7. Can you discuss your problems with each other? What kind of
    problems do each of you discuss? (Get example of each).

8. What makes you discuss your problems with these particular
    persons in the first place?

9. Are there any matters that you couldn't or wouldn't share
    with them about yourself? What makes you avoid sharing these
    things? (Would you share these things with someone else? If
    Yes, "what makes for the difference)?"

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

10.   Do you find that you go out of your way to help each other
      out? In what ways? What makes you do these things?

11.   Do you generally prefer to be with friends or by yourself?
      (What makes you feel that way)? If subject says, "It
      depends", say, "How about in general)"?

12.   The friend that you spend the most time with: What in
      particular do you like about him?

13.   What in particular do you dislike about him?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

14.   How would you define friendship? In what ways does your
      friendship with _____ include those things?

      IF SUBJECT IS MARRIED, SKIP TO QUESTION #21.

15.   Do you date much?

      a.   If NO, Have you ever dated (or spent time with one
           girl/guy?

      b.   Would you like to date more? Are there any particular
           reasons why you haven't dated much up to now?

16.   Have you ever dated one girl/guy exclusively?

      a.   If NO, How often do you date?

      b.   How long do you see a particular girl/guy?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

17.   What kinds of things about a girl/guy would or do prompt you
      to ask her/him out again?

18.   Do you usually date several girls/guys at the same time? For
      what reason do you date several girls/guys?

19.   In the course of your dating, have you ever met a girl/guy
      with whom you would like to have an enduring or long-term
      relationship? What happened and how did you feel about that?
      What caused the break-up?

20.   IF DATING ONE GIRL/GUY EXCLUSIVELY: How long have you been
      seeing each other? USE PAST TENSE IF RELATIONSHIP IS OVER;
      BUT CONTINUE WITH THE REMAINING QUESTIONS.

      Do you see her/him often?

      Do you ever date other girls/guys? Why is that?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

21.   How close do you feel to steady/spouse? (Are you open with
      each other? Share worries and problems? Can the other come
      to you with his/her problems)?

22.   What in particular do you like or find attractive about
      him/her? (How would you describe him)?

23.   What are the things about him/her that you dislike?

24.   Are you able to discuss this with him/her?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

25.   Do you ever fight? What kinds of things do you fight about?
       (If says never, PROBE: How do you explain that)?

26.   In what ways do you function well as a couple? (like working
       together, playing together well)

27.   In what ways do you function less well as a couple?

28.   What do you see as the main problem you two have to work out
       as a couple? In what ways could your relationship be
       improved?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

29.   Tell me about the sexual side of the relationship? What's it
      like?

30.   What role does sex play in the relationship?

31.   Is one of you more involved or in love in the relationship
      than the other?

32.   Which one of you is more jealous or possessive in general?
      How do you feel about that?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

33.   In what ways are you committed to the relationship? Where do
      you want it to go in the future?

34.   What relationships with other men/women did you have before
      you were married? How does this relationship compare with
      previous ones? What makes for the difference?

35.   How crucial is this relationship to your present and future
      happiness? In what ways?

FOR ALL SUBJECTS

36.   What is a meaningful or good relationship as you see it?

Intimacy Interview   Code No._____

37.   In what ways does your relationship include (characteristics
      listed above)?

38.   What kinds of changes would you like to see in the way you
      relate to others?

APPENDIX E

INTIMACY CODING MANUALS FOR DEPTH AND COMMITMENT

APPENDIX E

INTIMACY STATUS CODING MANUAL: DEPTH

Based on intimacy coding systems by Orlofsky et al. (1973) and White et al. (1986), this scoring system focuses on two components of intimate relationships: depth and commitment. These two dimensions are assessed through an open-ended interview by Orlofsky. Each is scored individually on a scale consisting of six stages, ranging from a low of stage 1 to a high of stage 6. The six stages can be grouped into three broad developmental levels: self-focused, role-focused, and individuated-connected, which represent the low, medium, and high levels, respectively. To score each dimension, first identify the level and then decide whether the subject's response is at the lower or upper end of that level. The progression from stage 1 to stage 6 of the scale is characterized by an emphasis on content and behavior in the lower stages and on process and feelings in the upper stages.

"Depth" is defined by two aspects of relationships: 1) orientation, which refers to an individual's ability to understand the partner as a complex person and to appreciate the partner's feelings and perspectives, even when these differ from one's own; and 2) communication, which refers to an individual's level of self-disclosure and openness in the relationship. Raters assign an overall rank based on their assessment of both components considered together, resulting in a single score per subject ranging from stage 1 to stage 6.

LEVEL 1 - Self-Focused

At the self-focused level, cognitions and affects are global, simple and undifferentiated. The individual at this level sees the partner as a means to personal and self-serving ends, or as an obstacle to those ends. The individual who views his/her partner as a source of supplies or as a hostile rival for supplies would be coded at this level.

Stage 1

Orientation. At stage 1, the self-focused individual typically relates to his/her partner as an extension of him/herself or as an object and is unable to see the world from the other's view. The subject may have difficulty when asked to describe the partner. Alternatively, the person at this level may describe the partner in primarily concrete behavioral or black and white (extremely bad or good) terms. The self-focused individual considers the partner wrong or bad for behaving in ways that contradict his/her own wishes. This person is sensitive to the other's personality only as it affects the self.

Communication. The self-focused individual generally places a low value on communication in the relationship. At stage 1, such a person usually has very poor communication skills and indicates that he or she has little interest in communicating with the partner. However, sometimes a person is rated at the self-focused level because he or she uses lying or attacks the other's position. Level 1 communicators usually focus exclusively on concrete issues and matters external to the relationship (as opposed to affective and relationship-centered material).

Examples:

Stage 1:   "She has a very happy, unassuming type of personality, very chipper, rarely in a bad mood. Can listen to what I have to say. Keeps a nice house and cooks o.k."

Stage 1:   "If I feel a fight brewing I usually leave the house for a while, rather than having a battle which will serve no purpose. I don't enjoy talking about our problems and so I avoid it. I see little value in talking about things. If something's wrong, it should just be changed."

Stage 2

Orientation. At stage 2, the self-focused individual's description of the partner is mostly behavioral and concrete as in stage 1, but he or she makes a minimal effort to understand the partner as a psychological being in a simplistic, mostly behavioral way. For example, persons at this level will often describe the relationship as "close", based on observations that the partners "share everything". The shared activities, however, are generally superficial, such as "we cook together". The focus at stage 2 is still on how the partner's feelings and behaviors affect the self.

Communication. At stage 2, the self-focused individual communicates with the partner around superficial, non-controversial

subjects and there are clear limits on what can be talked about. Persons at this stage may indicate a sense of discomfort or distrust in talking about more personal or meaningful issues.

Examples:

Stage 2:   "On one hand, she wants to be a liberal woman. On the other, all the reasons she loves me are traditional. I make good money, provide a home, have a car. I share what I have with her. In the same breath, those conflicting things is why I have contemptuous outlook. That's the reason I don't know if I would use the word love."

Stage 2:   "I can keep a sense of privacy which I enjoy. I don't like having to tell anyone my every thought and feeling."

LEVEL 2 - Role-Focused

At this level, individuals have a basic understanding that the other has needs and feelings too, but descriptions of relationships lack complexity and depth. Responses rated as role-focused tend to focus on concrete, external things as the source of problems or as the way to express support. Role-focused descriptions of relationships often take the form of stereotyped images of a happy marriage. They are socially acceptable responses, lacking specific examples that would demonstrate an appreciation of the partner's individuality. The role-focused individual's responses are characterized by lack of introspection and a tendency to generalize. The level 2 individual lacks an imaginative, intuitive sense of what it is like to be inside the other's skin. He or she needs to have the partner's needs or feelings spelled out. (Replies that fall in the role-focused level but show positive appreciation for the partner and the marriage are usually rated stage 4.)

Stage 3

Orientation. Individuals at stage 3 often describe their relationship in simplistic terms, and refer to the partner's needs or the partner's role (e.g., "a good husband, a good father") to describe him or her. Stereotypical, socially acceptable descriptions of the partner or the relationship are typical stage 3 responses. Responses at this level also tend to be behavioral and somewhat judgmental, although subjects at this level may acknowledge their partner's right to a point of view.

Communication. Stage 3 communicators include many concrete and external topics in their conversations with partners. However, they place a value on communication in their relationships, and typically include some sharing of feelings with their partners. Individuals at stage 3 make generalizations about their communication without giving specific examples to support the claim.

Examples:

Stage 3:   "Stubbornness -- it's not really a big problem. She just likes to do things her own way so I just kind of let her do things her own way."

Stage 3:   "We are very close. She is somebody I can talk to about anything."

Stage 3:   "He's sharp, he's got class, he's attractive, he's really no slouch, he's good with people. You'd never worry about going somewhere, introducing him to my friends, he just takes over. He knows how to act. (How do you function as a couple?) It's o.k. We could function excellently. I wish I could talk about parents, sex, religion, or any of the crucial things.

Stage 4

Orientation. Individuals at stage 4 understand that the partner may have a different view and recognize the other's individuality, but remain fairly concrete and behavioral in describing him or her. Socially acceptable and stereotyped descriptions of the relationship as "happy" or "solid" are also found at this level. Stage 4 individuals are not likely to anticipate the partner's needs, especially if such needs depart from the expected role. However, once informed, persons at this level can respond accordingly to the partner.

Communication. The emphasis in a stage 4 response is on revealing who you are to one another and on self-disclosure, rather than on changing together in the relationship as a result of communication. Individuals who describe efforts to communicate even if they are not always successful are ranked as stage 4.

Examples:

Stage 4:   "She's a very close friend, intimately. We share view
            points. We're going to have a child together."

Stage 4:   "We always talk. We ask if there is something the
            other doesn't like."

Stage 4:   "There is nothing we haven't lived through, discussed.
            We talk about everything. She sits there while I get
            it all out of my system. Then she explains her point
            of view. We do everything together. Just did our
            whole apartment over-painting, papering-worked well
            together. She might feel better if we had a house--
            we're working toward that.

LEVEL 3 - Individuated-Connected

     To rate individuals at the Individuated-connected level,
scorers must see evidence that a free choice is made to be close
with the specific partner--a choice made from a position of
autonomy, rather than out of need or convenience. The individual
should demonstrate the ability to recognize the partner's
individuality, to appreciate the other's unique qualities and to
take pleasure in enhancing the development of the other's talents
and powers. At this level individuals have a concern with more
than the concrete, visible signs of the relationship's quality.
They have a concern with the emotional and frequently, the
spiritual satisfactions to be gained from intimacy with this
particular partner. Individuated-connected individuals place high
value on these intangible qualities and generally demonstrate a
willingness to pay a lot of attention to "our relationship" and how
it is going.
     Individuals at the individuated-connected level express a
very high value toward communication in their relationships. Their
communication style includes concrete and external topics as well
as a great deal of affective and relationship-centered discussion.
There is usually evidence of a commitment to making time to talk,
despite busy schedules and other obstacles.

Stage 5

     Orientation. At this level a person gives evidence of an
intuitive sense of his or her partner. These individuals tend to
describe the relationship, feelings they have for the partner, or
characteristics and qualities of the partner, rather than concrete
behaviors. At stage 5, the individuated-connected individual does
not necessarily understand everything without being told, but
understanding is of an active nature that goes beyond simply

repeating a description of what the partner has explained. In addition, individuated-connected persons must show some evidence that the partner's expectations contribute to and influence the growth of the individual. Changes and growth are described as occurring in the context of developing and recognizing the "rules" and reciprocity of the relationship.

Communication. At stage 5, the individual describes open and deep communication with the partner, but qualifies this response by indicating that there is a specific area or topic which is off limits or more difficult to talk about. At this stage, the individual also notes the detrimental effect of this limitation on an otherwise open and close relationship.

Examples:

Stage 5:   "Some of her strong points are my weak points, so they really complement each other. My openmindedness and patience vs. her stubbornness and impatience. My passiveness and complacency vs. her aggressiveness.

Stage 5:   "We are very close, but some things we don't talk enough about: ultimate family goals, like children and career aspects for her. We love each other, we would do anything for each other. We have respect for one another."

Stage 6

Orientation. At stage 6, the highest level, the individual view his or her partner as an individual in his or her own right outside the dyad. He or she can also anticipate the other's needs and explain motivations that the partner may not be clearly aware of. These individuals describe their partners in process rather than behavioral terms and focus on complex motives, feelings, values, and ideologies.

Communication. At stage 6, the individual describes a relationship based on open communication and characterized by the ability to express differences in views and values. Communication is characterized by a mutual sharing of deep and meaningful concerns and feelings, including relationship issues. At this level, communication is much more than two people sharing their thoughts and feelings; rather, each partner is defined by the process of their communication and the relationship is viewed as a unit, not simply "my perspective" and "his/her perspective".

Examples:

Stage 6:   "There are certain things that will never change, like some of her outlooks on values and things. Because the way we were raised, somewhat similar, but yet vastly different backgrounds. We can understand each other's feelings fairly well and can easily tell when each of us is bothered by something. We don't think any less of each other because of these differences--we view each other as independent people and therefore accept those differences more easily.

INTIMACY STATUS CODING MANUAL: COMMITMENT

"Commitment" refers to the extent to which persons have committed themselves, their affection, and their loyalty to the relationship and to their particular partner.

LEVEL 1 - Self-Focused**:

Stage 1

Someone who is ready to leave the relationship ranks at the lowest end of the commitment scale. Similarly, a person who needs to stay in the relationship out of dependency or reasons of convenience receives a stage 1 ranking. Responses by individuals who in their hearts have not made a commitment to the relationship are ranked stage 1. Responses throughout the interview which reveal strong wishes and fantasies about divorce, love affairs, or the partner's death also indicate that a person is at stage 1 of the self-focused level.

Examples:

Stage 1:   I was unhappy with the group and I wanted to get out. So I thought I'd get married and then get out of the group, go on my own musically, and she would keep the home fort down. The group moved to New Jersey, and I saw her more. There was a real big class difference between us, but I thought I could change the way she talked and acted. A week before the marriage I wanted out of it, but I did it anyway.

Stage 1:   We weren't at all sure of our futures. His inability to decide on what he was going to do made it hard for us to plan a future. Deep down I knew I had to become a full person before I could think of settling down. I

had to go back to the States. I got committed to come back. It was time to get some career skills. Because I left the country, I left the right to be committed. You know when you have to go and I knew when I had to grow.

Stage 2

Individuals who are not yet committed but who are struggling with and appear to be moving toward the idea of commitment are ranked as stage 2. These individuals typically focus on external rather than affective or interperson concerns as they describe their conflict and indecision about commitment to a particular partner.

Examples:

Stage 2:   The jury is still out. I'm asking myself how committed am I to it? I guess I realize she's totally devoted to this thing. Not being married, I don't feel I have an ultimate commitment. The question I'm asking myself is if I ever will get married. It's kind of the uncertainty that the whole institution of marriage is suffering.

Stage 2:   We both don't want to go too fast and have a big downfall, but we both want to keep going with the relationship. I'm at the age where I feel I need to really start thinking about whether I want to get married and have a family and that I need to stay with one guy and get to know him. I'd like this guy to be Mr. Right.

**   If a subject is referring to a past relationship, it must be coded as "1" or a "2". If the response indicates that there was some effort to work things out and to make the relationship last, it should be ranked as stage 2.

LEVEL 2 - Role-Focused:

Stage 3

Individuals who describe the relationship as troubled but who also indicate that they are devoting some energy to repairing the damage are ranked as stage 3. In general, commitment at this level appears to be more to marriage as an institution than to a particular individual. Similarly, these individuals are committed to their partners in a stereotypic way and often have difficulty talking about what is unique about his or her partner.

Examples:

Stage 3:   Family-wise, very committed. I would hate to leave
            him. It's part of my life, family, and all. I'm
            interested in seeing him happy. That's a commitment.
            He's the father of my children. He handles most of my
            affairs.

Stage 3:   Right now we're in a holding pattern--being pregnant,
            getting the house, working a lot. We don't have a lot
            of time. Hopefully, it will all come together in a
            year. The long range outlook is good, but somewhere
            along the line we might see a counselor. (How crucial
            is this relationship to your happiness?) Fundamental.
            If anything happened to it I would find my life was
            made miserable by him. But a lot of my feelings have
            shifted to my son. He would see me through.

Stage 4

        Individuals who are clearly invested in the relationship, but
appear to be committed to the institution of marriage rather than a
particular partner are ranked as stage 4. From the perspective of
stage 4 individuals, the end result is a stronger relationship,
because there is more at stake than the individuals involved.

Examples:

Stage 4:   We both have a, more than an understanding that if any
            serious problems arrive, that we would be better off
            working them out rather than breaking off. I imagine
            just to get closer together, to help each of us become
            the best of whatever we're interested in career-wise or
            whatever.

Stage 4:   I love him and trust him very much. I feel a strong
            loyalty to him and I don't want to see anything
            separate us. I always want to see us in a solid stable
            marriage. The idea of divorce instills an apprehension
            in me and I hope nothing ever will cause the marriage
            to break up. I have a lot of trust in him and I know
            he does too. I want us to always be able to talk and
            work out our problems.

LEVEL 3 - Individuated-Connected

Stage 5

At this stage individuals indicate an appreciation for the partner as an individual, but may not be committed to sticking it out "no matter what". (e.g., These subjects may acknowledge problem areas of the relationship which need work, but indicate a commitment to the relationship by demonstrating a willingness to problem-solve.) These individuals generally express their commitment as a commitment to the institution of marriage via their desire to buy a home and have a family together, but also acknowledge special feelings for their partner.

Examples:

Stage 5:   In so far as children and length of time, and I'm happy with the way the relationship is going and don't see the need to look elsewhere. I have affection for her and she for me and it's developing. To just continue its growth, learning; relationships always require work and as long as we continue working at it, it can continue to grow and flourish. By discussing problems, by assuring that she knows I'm appreciative of things that she does that I like, by asking questions if there's anything I can do to make her happy.

Stage 5:   We want to have a family some day, see our family grow. I expect to be married to him forever. Right now, we're so much into our relationship. I think we can always grow closer. We have some differences. I know I want to have a family, whereas before we were married he didn't know if he wanted them. We worked on that before we got married. (You said "grow closer"?) Feelings about particular things, like in a particular situation if I'm hurt and I don't bring it up right then.

Stage 6

To rate the highest score in commitment, subjects must show a solid intention to stay in the marriage through thick and thin--as shown by investment in such concrete things as children and a home, combined with a loving investment in this particular partner. Both a commitment to stay in the marriage and a positive appreciation of the partner's individuality are the hallmarks of stage 6.

Examples:

Stage 6:   I'm married to my best friend and I wouldn't do
           anything to hurt her. Because I enjoy being with her,
           I don't feel obligated. I'm Catholic. My parents
           taught me the sanctity of marriage. You don't fool
           around--this is the person you'll spend the rest of
           your life with. We plan to have kids. I don't think I
           could be happy if she was to go. It would take a long
           time to get over it. She's my best friend--would be
           like losing my right arm. She's my buddy.

Stage 6:   It's great. I'm really happy. I believe the reason I
           have self-confidence and assuredness right now is
           because of my marriage. I think I'm happier now than
           I've ever been so naturally I'd like it to stay this
           way. He's very understanding and sensitive. He's
           really open and easy to talk to. He'll listen about
           the dishes if I want to talk about washing dishes.
           He's good-looking, funny and an awful good father. He
           takes time with his kids. He loves them.

APPENDIX F

CONFLICT RESOLUTION CODING MANUALS

APPENDIX F

CONFLICT RESOLUTION CODING MANUAL

INTRAPSYCHIC CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Definition: This dimension reflects the degree of tension versus satisfaction expressed (directly or indirectly) about the way conflict is typically resolved in one's close heterosexual relationships. This scale is based on Lazarus's (1981; 1983) concept of emotion-focused coping, which refers to the ways individuals appraise their efforts to cope with problems. In particular, this dimension focuses on the way an individual experiences or evaluates the impact of his/her attempts to resolve conflicts with his/her partner (e.g., as stressful, challenging, etc.) on his/her own well-being.

LEVEL 1:

Individuals at this level experience conflict in their relationships as overwhelming and painful, and as __threatening__ to the relationship. For example, responses at this level may include examples of good communication or a good relationship, but there are also reports of extremely problematic or negative coping strategies which are distressing or painful.

Examples:

Level 1:   "He didn't care if there was company at the house. He'd yell and scream. Sometimes he can really be tactless, say things that are inappropriate to people or to a place. If you criticize him a little, he'd sit and mope all evening about it. He doesn't take criticism well. He doesn't take rejection well. He just feels the world is against him, he gets mopey and depressed and withdraws into himself."

Level 1:   "I didn't feel close at all to him. I kept most of my feelings to myself. He didn't tell me half the things he did. I knew then I didn't want to stay married to him. He wasn't going to change and I didn't want to be married to a person like that. We discussed and argued about it constantly. The discussion would help for a

while, but it wasn't a long term change. He was that
way about everything. If something was wrong in the
house, he'd wait until I finally had to nag. I felt
like I had to tell him what to do."

LEVEL 2:

Individuals at Level 2 are often overwhelmed by negative
feelings, but not to the degree that they are ready to end the
relationship. However, the result is often a devaluing of the
relationship. These individuals indicate that they still make some
effort to keep their negative feelings under control. For example,
these responses include attempts to diminish, deintensify, or deny
negative feelings in order to maintain the relationship.
Accordingly, individuals at level 2 may feel emotionally out of
control, but tend to rationalize as they are clearly not yet ready
to leave the partner or the relationship. Level 2 may also be a
combination of 1 and 3.

Examples:

Level 2:   "Three problems. Most important is financial, we need
             money. I have to grow up a little, but about her
             situation,she's got to relax, meaning she's bored at
             night. She shouldn't go out to singles bars at night.
             I've got to be more accepting and open of her and her
             life; of the idea that guys she went out with would
             call. When they would call I'd want to kill them.
             (how could relationship be improved?) The way we deal
             with each other. We've changed a lot since summer. We
             don't watch Saturday Night Live. If she would realize
             I do all this work and not bother me if I watch a
             football game. She doesn't like it if I watch
             football. Because she's a little spoiled. She wants
             attention I'm giving to the TV. She doesn't like it
             when I bring newspapers round there."

Level 2:   "I would say I'm very dependent and insecure. I'm also
             the great compromiser. It doesn't seem fair to him.
             I'm a lot more expressive about my needs and maybe he
             just isn't expressing his needs. Also it's not fair
             that he's not contributing his half."

LEVEL 3:

The individual at Level 3 minimizes or denies the importance of conflicts. However, individuals at Level 3 often inadvertently acknowledge that conflicts exist. Level 3 individuals typically see conflict as something to accept rather than as something to confront or to view as growth-producing. Often these individuals give the impression that they are content with the way problems get handled, even if that means problems remain unresolved or continue to surface.

Examples:

Level 3: "We seem to get along in most respects. I don't think we have any problems to work out. She tries to be friendly even if she's not feeling well or angry about something. She compromises. It seems pretty ideal, not alot of fireworks. (what are things you dislike about her?) Well, her Southern Baptist background sometimes gets in the way. It's not there's anything wrong with it. I was brought up around here with fairly liberal parents the way I look at the world is a little different: manners, alcohol, taste in food. Those are examples where you can be rubbed the wrong way."

LEVEL 4:

Individuals at Level 4 try to master their negative feelings through self-reflection and empathy. These individuals recognize the potential for conflicts to be growth-enhancing, but still tend to avoid or experience conflict in non-adaptive ways rather than integrate them into the relationship.

Example:

Level 4: (main problems?) "right now it would be me overcoming my pickiness and attention to detail. Maybe for him to work out his non-confrontiveness if he's upset about something. I might bring up problems that are minor and we can live with them. No relationship is perfect. If anything major develops in our sexual or personal communications, hopefully we'll be able to work them out."

LEVEL 5:

Individuals at Level 5 view conflicts as part of the relationship. Level 5 responses typically reflect an acceptance of conflicts in the relationship as inevitable and as opportunities for relationship development and growth. Individuals at Level 5 experience their approach to problems as a means to greater understanding of their partner and relationship enhancement. Mastery of negative feelings is accomplished through integrating conflicts into the relationship.

Example:

Level 5:   (discuss problems?) Oh yeah. I harp on them. They are basic. He changed alot. His being there for everybody but me. That really annoyed me. He gets lots of calls at home, a lot. He's in insurance and he's always working. So we talked about that. And he's changed. (what is a good relationship as you see it?) When you can share your problems and when you can understand somebody. (In what ways does your relationship include these characteristics?) I'd say 100%. I was describing my marriage."

Level 5:   "We are extremely close. We share problems. They are usually problems that come about through money, family, friends. We both realize that we need time apart and we work on that too. (can you discuss problems?) Yes, we do. The result is that she gets mad and then we talk about it again. We try and not do things that bother each other. We work things out."

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Definition: This dimension focuses on the ways in which the
partner deals with and resolves conflicts within the relationship
or marriage. At lower levels the respondent's (or the couples')
way of dealing with disagreements or tensions in the relationship
exacerbate rather than resolve difficulties, whereas at higher
levels difficulties are confronted in ways that lead not only to
diminished tension, but also to adaptive changes in the situation.
This scale is conceptually similar to Lazarus's (1981; 1983)
problem-focused coping, which refers to individuals' efforts to
change the situation or master the problems.

SPECIFIC RATING CRITERIA

The respondent's perception of the couple's way of resolving conflicts in the relationship is rated on a 5 point scale with 1 referring to "low" conflict resolution and 5 referring to "high" conflict resolution. The criteria for rating a protocol as 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on the Interpersonal Conflict Resolution Scale are described below.

Indicators of Level 1

Ways of resolving conflict escalate rather than diminish difficulties or create clear barriers to conflict resolution (e.g., yelling and screaming, angrily leaving the scene, cutting off discussion, deprecating the other, physical repercussions, doing one's own thing at the expense of the other, etc.).

Indicators of Level 2

a)   As at Level 1, ways of resolving conflict for the most part exacerbate the negative situation, but unlike at Level 1, there is at least some attempt to resolve some differences in a more adaptive way (e.g., via calm discussion, etc.).

b)   Strategies are a combination of those from Levels 1 and 3.

Indicators of Level 3

To keep the peace, the respondent or both partners avoid conflict via palliative techniques that reduce or prevent negative affect but then leave the situation unresolved (e.g., don't confront or bring up controversy, sacrifices or deny the importance of his or her own needs or wishes, rationalizes or resentfully accepts or denies limitations, etc.).

Indicators of Level 4

In most areas the couples is able to adaptively confront and resolve conflicts via discussion, compromise or other effective ways of changing negative situations or resolving differences. However, there are a few isolated areas in which one or both partners deal with conflict in palliative ways characteristic of Level 3; OR some cases in which attempts to resolve problems adaptively elicit friction and/or tension, such as an emotional outburst or raised voices. These emotionally-charged episodes of

conflict typically concern a <u>specific</u> issue and do not represent the usual style of effective problem solving in these couples.

Indicators of Level 5

The couple adaptively confronts and resolves conflicts via discussion compromise, reframing, or other effective means of changing a negative situation or resolving differences.

APPENDIX G

PARENT LIFESTYLE INTERVIEW - MARRIAGE

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

APPENDIX G

42.   Is this your first marriage?

   IF NO: What year were you first married?_____

   How old were you?_____

   How long were you in that marriage?_____

   How did the marriage end?_____

   How many times have you been married?_____
   IF MORE THAN 2, get duration and outcome for EACH ONE:

   All: When did you enter this marriage?_____

   How old were you?_____

   How long have you been in this marriage?_____

ASK FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT MARRIAGE:

43.   Why did you marry (current spouse)--rather than someone else,
       or remaining single?

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

44. Today many people are getting divorced--Why do you think you
     have remained married, rather than separating or getting
     divorced?

45. a) What gives you most pleasure in your relationship with
         your (husband/wife)?--e.g. what do you feel most
         positive about?

     b) Has it always been this way?

     c) How do you account for the change? (or lack of change)

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

    d)   What have you done to make sure this is part of your relationship?

46.   In what ways is your (husband/wife) important to you now? What does (he/she) provide in your life? ·

47.   a)   What sorts of things do you <u>wish</u> (he/she) could provide?

    b)   In what ways have you let (him/her) know how you feel?

IF HAS NOT SHARED FEELINGS:

    c)   What makes you avoid letting (him/her) know?

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

    d)   What would happen if you did?

    e)   What could you do to change the situation?

48.   How about sex--

    a)   How important is sex to you now?

    b)   What changes have there been in how you feel about sex--
        the pleasure you derive from it, or what it means to
        you?

    c)   When did you notice the changes?

    d)   How do you account for the changes?

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

     e)   What are your feelings about the changes? (or lack of changes?)

     f)   If you could, would you change the present situation? How would you do that?

49.   In what ways are you important to you (husband/wife)? What do you provide in his/her life?

50.   a)   What sorts of things do you think (he/she) wishes you could provide?

     b)   What prevents you from satisfying those wishes?

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

    c)   What does (he/she) do to change the situation?

    d)   How do you respond?

51.   a)   What do you think gives your (husband/wife) most
           pleasure (his/her) relationship with you?

    b)   Has it always been this way?

    c: IF NOT: How do you account for the change?

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

    d)   What has your (husband/wife) done to make this part of the relationship?

52.   a)   What other kinds of stresses are there in your relationship with your (husband/wife) now?

    b)   How do you handle these stresses?

    c)   What are your feelings about the ways they are resolved?

53.   a)   In what ways would being alone, that is, without your (husband/wife) change your life?

Parent Life Style Interview: Code No._____

    b)   What would be the biggest change for you?

    c)   In what ways are you prepared for this possibility?

54.   a)   Can you think of a particular time recently when you felt conflicted about your needs and your spouse's needs?. . . What was that about?

    b)   How did you handle it?

Parent Life Style Interview:　　　　　　　　　　　Code No._____

    c) What were your feelings about the way it was resolved? -
       - e.g. Ideally, how would it have been resolved?

55. a) What is your reaction when your (husband/wife) is
       irritable or nags you or is sharp-tongued with you?

    b) What would you _really_ like to do?

    c) What would happen if you did that?

**GIVE INVOLVEMENT AND FEELINGS ABOUT MARRIAGE QUESTIONNAIRES,
COUNTERBALANCED**