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AN INQUIRY INTO PSYCHODYNAMIC CORRELATES  
OF HIGH ROMANTICISM IN MALES

By

Richard Levine

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation is an effort to pull together Freud's scattered writings on romanticism and romantic love into a clear theoretical exposition of his views concerning this subject. It is also designed to subject to empirical testing some of the major tenets of Freud's theory of romanticism and romantic love. The orthodox psychoanalytic approach to romantic love focuses almost exclusively on males as smitten lovers, and casts women as adored and pursued love objects. In its attempts to shed light on this important dimension of human experience, psychoanalytic theory stresses the central role played by the Oedipus complex, more precisely unresolved conflicts catalyzed by it.

Specifically, the present study hypothesized that romanticism in males would correlate positively with Oedipal intensity, castration anxiety, self-rating as externally controlled, and death anxiety (conceptualized by Freud as a derivation of castration anxiety). As part

of the undertaking to test these hypotheses, a romantic love scale (the LRS) was constructed and validated with a view towards operationalizing the characteristics of romanticism delineated by Freud.

A sample of 62 unmarried male university undergraduates was drawn from Michigan State University's student body. Dean's (1961) Romanticism Scale (built upon an eclectic view of romantic love) and the LRS previously alluded to were used to operationalize romanticism. Cards IV and VI of the Blacky Test (Blum, 1949) were used to operationalize Oedipal intensity and castration anxiety, respectively. Rotter's (1966) Internal-External Locus of Control Scale was used to operationalize self-rating as externally controlled. Templer's (1970) Death Anxiety Scale was used to operationalize death anxiety. Point-biserial correlation tests were employed to test Hypotheses 1 and 2. Product-moment correlations were computed to test Hypotheses 3 and 4.

The results generally did not uphold the Freudian view of romanticism in males. Of the four major hypotheses, only Hypothesis 3, that romanticism in males correlates positively with self-rating as externally controlled, was supported by the data. There were some tentative additional findings which suggested that pre-Oedipal conflicts and concerns may play a more prominent role in romanticism and romantic love than Freud envisaged.

In retrospect and in discussing the results, several conceptual and practical problems in this study's design were considered. Some suggestions were offered regarding potentially fruitful directions for further research in the area of romanticism and romantic love. The need for developing new instruments and approaches to the problem of measuring romanticism was touched upon. In a related matter, it was suggested that the LRS be subjected to factor analysis as a means of determining more precisely just what it measures, and as a vehicle for clarifying further the extent to which Freud's concept of romanticism differs from more eclectic notions of the same phenomenon. Finally, the advisability of extending the range of sample characteristics and entertaining a modified theoretical orientation in future research pertaining to romanticism was specified.

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother, Leah Mandel, whose love and sparkle have brightened my life and strengthened my resolve.

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## INTRODUCTION

If a person from medieval times could be teleported to contemporary America, he might experience his surroundings with a sense of wonderment equal to that of a visitor from another planet. Nonetheless, certain facets of human experience would transcend the barriers of time and culture that separate medieval man from his modern counterpart. For example, romanticism and romantic love are profound aspects of human experience which seem to have undergone remarkably little change throughout the vicissitudes of historical development.

The romance of Tristan and Iseult, steeped in passion and suffering, is echoed thematically in current novels and films. Invoking Jungian terminology, Rougemont (1974), an acerbic critic of romantic love, characterized the Tristan legend as "a kind of archetype of our most complex feelings of unrest" (p. 18). The durability of romantic love is matched only by its elusiveness.

This elusiveness probably accounts for the failure of the empirical sciences in general and psychology in particular to explore the mysteries of romanticism and romantic love (Curtin, 1973; Spanier, 1972). Moreover, the surmounting of definitional ambiguities constitutes

only a tentative step in the quest to understand the unconscious and conscious elements which are called into play in romantic love. In short, social scientists, with few notable exceptions, have designated one of the most powerful currents in human experience as too intangible and ineffable to be suitable for scientific investigation.

In contrast to most of his successors, Freud attempted during the course of his brilliant career to unmask the seemingly impenetrable mysteries of romantic love. When the threads of his work on this arcane subject are pulled together, a coherent definition of romantic love emerges. This definition is then incorporated into a comprehensive theoretical matrix which purports to explain in psychodynamic terms the phenomenon of romantic love. Not surprisingly, Freud's theory of love focuses on man as the active pursuer and woman as the object of man's affections.

In general, psychoanalytic theory has not readily lent itself to experimental testing and validation. Psychodynamic processes which are observed and experienced within the context of psychoanalysis seem to lose their sharpness and clarity when they are examined in laboratory conditions (Leichty, 1958). Although individual components which enter into Freud's theoretical approach to romanticism and romantic love have been subjected to empirical scrutiny, there has not been a single study

directly concerned with testing the validity of the psychoanalytic explanation of these phenomena.

The present study is an initial effort to fill this void. It will unfold in the following manner. First, Freud's description of romantic love will be spelled out as fully as possible. The applicability of that description both to the past and the present will be considered. Secondly, Freud's theoretical view of the psychodynamics of romanticism and romantic love will be delineated. Thirdly, certain components of psychoanalytic theory will be synthesized in order to provide a basis for understanding the intimate relationship that exists between romantic love and death. Poets and scientists alike have been intrigued by the fact that love and death are such close companions. Finally, alternative explanations which reach beyond the pale of orthodox psychoanalytic thought will be presented in a further effort to decipher why love and death are so often inseparable.

The four areas of discussion just outlined will be focal points in the literature review of the present study. Once this theoretical scaffolding has been set in place, hypotheses will be promulgated and tested which are consonant with psychoanalytic perspectives on romanticism and romantic love. For reasons that will become manifest as the theoretical discussion unfolds, the

empirical investigation of the psychoanalytic view of romanticism and romantic love will be confined exclusively to males.

Social science has long neglected romanticism and romantic love. Direct empirical testing of the richest, most inclusive theory of these phenomena has been nonexistent. There is a challenge implicit in these two facts. The present inquiry is inspired in large measure by that implicit challenge.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Defining Romantic Love

The diversity and nuances of love have led many people to conclude that it defies coherent definition. Responding to its complexities, Freud developed a meaningful overview of the primary attributes of romantic love. His conceptualization parallels to a striking degree medieval and modern manifestations of romance. In the pages which follow, Freud's description of romantic love will be developed in considerable detail. This description will subsequently be related to medieval and contemporary times.

### Freud's Perspective

Although Freud (1925a) acknowledged that the meaning of love, in all its permutations, is exceptionally ambiguous, it is possible to cull from his writings a distinct and convincing rendering of the characteristics of romantic love. Focusing almost exclusively on the phenomenon of romanticism in males, Freud (1910) differentiated what he termed a special type of object choice made by men from the many varieties and intensities of human love. This special object choice closely resembles romantic love as it has been depicted in literature over

the centuries. Freud had a vision of romantic love as well as a theory to explain its pervasiveness in the human arena. It is opportune now to turn to that vision.

One of the first observations about romantic love made from a nascent psychoanalytic point of view was recorded in the 1890's (Breuer & Freud, 1893-1895). Mention is made of the propensity of moonstruck lovers to engage in an inordinate amount of fantasy about their typically absent or otherwise inaccessible love objects. This fantasizing is accompanied by intense affect and resultant enervation. It is so engrossing that other aspects of the swooning lover's existence fade into insignificance (Freud & Breuer, 1893-1895).

Years later, Freud (1915a) returned to the role of fantasy in romantic love and noted that such musing frequently took the place of action. There is also the suggestion in Freud's early speculations about romantic love that the commonplace inaccessibility or absence of the love object is attributable more to unconscious forces at work within the aspiring lover than to external circumstances wholly beyond his control (Freud, 1915a). The substitution of fantasy for action and the unavailability of the love object appear to go hand-in-hand.

In describing romantic love, Freud (1912) drew attention to the extraordinary obstacles to consummation which typically mark its course. While men have always

seemed to seek or create resistance in order to heighten passion, in romantic love these barriers are often insurmountable. Moreover, romance seems to die in the absence of formidable internal or external obstructions in its path. Thus the romantic lover characteristically directs his affections toward a woman who is already attached to another man through betrothal or marriage (Freud, 1910). Rivalry is one of the foremost preconditions for romantic love.

Perhaps the most powerful internally generated barrier to fulfillment in romantic love is the lover's predisposition to overvalue and idealize the object of his desires to such a degree that she is placed on a pedestal beyond the reach of his ostensible longings (Freud, 1910). Confronted by his beloved's perfection, the swain often deems himself to be unworthy of her love. An early and devoted adherent of Freud (Hitschmann, 1952) has singled out the irrational idealization of the love object as the most prominent feature of romantic love.

Even as the lover overvalues and idealizes his beloved, he is consumed by doubts about her fidelity and reliability (Freud, 1910). This creates two powerful sentiments in the suspicious suitor: jealousy and the urge to rescue his beloved from her real or imagined transgressions. The man who is caught up in the transports of romantic love exhibits inconsistency and

impairment of reality-testing powers (Hitschmann, 1952). Fantasy dominates the lover's experience of the world. Passionate feelings preoccupy him to the extent that virtually nothing else matters. A love relationship at its height leaves no room for interest in other parts of the environment (Freud, 1930).

In addition to being overwhelmingly intense, there is a compulsive quality to romantic love. The smitten lover commonly believes his destiny lies in the stars or some other mysterious external force. Romantic love is often "love at first sight." Although it would be premature at this point to present in detail Freud's explanation of romantic love's volatile, irrational, and compelling aspects, it is in order to point out he regarded unconscious determinants as keys with which to unlock many of love's enigmas.

The proclivity in romantic entanglements to idealize the love object proceeds, in extreme instances, to devour the lover's ego (Freud, 1921). Dependence on an exalted and remote loved one lowers self-regard (Freud, 1914). The romantic lover feels humble and unworthy of his beloved's attentions. He worships her from afar; demands little or nothing in return for his adoration; suppresses his sexual needs; and revels in compliments extended by others to his loved one (Freud,

1920b). The lover even suffers inobtrusively so as not to disturb the woman whom he adores.

Self-abnegation, unrequitedness, pathos, and bondage all enter centrally into Freud's description of the romantic variant of human love. Romantic love has been compared to hypnosis in that both engender an extreme admixture of exclusive attachment and credulous obedience in the hypnotic subject and the lover (Freud, 1905). Given the masochistic currents which run through romantic love, it comes as no surprise that Freud termed it potentially pathogenic in a lecture he delivered in 1914 (Hitschmann, 1952). Sounding a note of understated cynicism, Freud added that a scientific interpretation of romantic love might cost poets their readers (Hitschmann, 1952).

#### A Medieval Point of View

Theoretical presuppositions have been known to color an observer's perception and description of phenomena he is endeavoring to explain. Since Freud did elaborate a refined and intricate analysis of romantic love, it is legitimate to question whether his theory distorted his capacity to discern its essential characteristics. One means of assessing Freud's "objectivity" in this regard is to compare his description of romantic love with earlier and later meanings of the term. If

Freud was correct in his belief that the wellsprings of romance reside in unconscious conflicts which are universal in nature, then one would expect a substantial measure of consistency regarding the manner in which man has expressed his romantic impulses throughout history.

In the latter part of the twelfth century, Andreas Capellanus wrote The Treatise on Love, which contains a vivid rendering of the features of medieval courtly love (Askew, 1965). Both psychoanalytic and non-psychoanalytic observers have treated courtly love and romantic love as essentially interchangeable terms (Beigel, 1951; Koenigsberg, 1967). Courtly love rested upon the principle of scarcity in that noblemen and knights far outnumbered the ladies of the court who were the objects of their affections. Women of the lower social orders, such as the peasantry, were ravished and discarded rather than loved (Askew, 1965). The comparatively small number of noble ladies in part explains the intensity and competitiveness intrinsic to courtly love. More specifically, love which conformed to the tenets of the courtly code was adulterous and secretive (Askew, 1965).

Although shot through with intrigue and passion, courtly love typically relegated carnal desire to sublimated and spiritualized outlets of expression. The lover who attained the highest level of development, as measured

by the code of courtly love, was granted the right to accompany his lady to her bedroom, to remove all of her clothes, and to put her to bed. Occasionally he was even permitted to sleep with her provided he contented himself with only a brief kiss (Beigel, 1951).

The suppression of sexual desire in courtly love was not, however, simply a matter of honor. The lover's passivity, which often bordered on total paralysis, seems to have been inspired by fear as much as by a sense of honor. It is particularly intriguing that the presence of the beloved sufficed to change the courtly lover's longings into abject fear (Askew, 1965). As a rule, the courtly lover languished alone far from the woman he ostensibly desired.

Courtly love was thus suffused with conflict and suffering. The worshipped lady generally treated her passionate admirer with indifference or contempt (Koenigsberg, 1967). The maligned lover responded to inaccessibility, lack of consummation, and open rejection with increased longing, extreme deference, and self-effacement. Indeed masochistic submission to the lady was one of the central features of courtly love (Koenigsberg, 1967). The lover's capacity and willingness to suffer was a demonstration and measure of his love (Evans, 1953).

The elusive lady was sought after not only because of her qualities of beauty and nobility, but also

because she could confer and verify her pursuer's virtue by acceptance of him (Koenigsberg, 1967). Acts of valor, self-sacrifice, and self-punishment were undertaken by the lover to win his lady's approval. Since the code of courtly love dictated that the lady always be engaged or married (Beigel, 1951), acceptance of her lover's advances and affirmation of his worthiness necessarily involved some measure of betrayal vis-à-vis the man to whom she was already attached. This meant that a woman of questionable fidelity was elevated to the status of a revered judge by her lovestruck admirer.

Even this abbreviated delineation of courtly love bears a distinct resemblance to Freud's description of romantic love. Some of the most clear-cut parallels include: (1) the man falls in love with a woman who is attached and inaccessible; (2) ever-present jealousy not only inflames passion but also seems to be actively sought; (3) the lover irrationally overvalues the love object even though she may be of dubious character; (4) the lover is totally absorbed in his quest to the exclusion of all other concerns; (5) curiously, his passion usually spawns passivity, paralysis, and sickness instead of galvanizing action; (6) the beloved is an object of fear, especially as she becomes more approachable; (7) sexual desire is stifled rather than acted out; (8) the lover's self-concept rests to an

inordinate degree upon the attitude his beloved adopts toward him; (9) through demonstrations of courage and other impressive deeds both the courtly lover and the romantic lover express an impulse to rescue their loved ones in some manner. All of these parallels buttress Koenigsberg's (1967) view that courtly love, which he traces back to Plato, Ovid, and Ibn Hazm, is a form of romantic love whose historical persistence suggests it originates in an unconscious conflict universal to all men. According to Koenigsberg (1967), romantic love must be understood as a clearly defined, meaningful psychodynamic constellation.

#### A Contemporary American Rendition

With respect to definition, romantic love in contemporary America is, for the most part, remarkably similar to the main features of medieval courtly love and Freud's (1910) description of a special choice of object made by men. This definitional continuity indicates Freud's theory of romantic love is still germane and constitutes a worthy subject for empirical investigation. What then is the physiognomy of romantic love in America today?

Professional pulsetakers of the American scene, many of them sociologists and psychologists whose orientations are alien to psychoanalytic doctrine, have

described romantic love in the United States in terms that are consonant with those invoked by Freud (Ellis, 1962; Greenfield, 1965; Orlinsky, 1972; Reiss, 1960; Spaulding, 1970). The belief in self-mastery and hard-headed realism, which figures so prominently in popular conceptions of "the American character," evanesces in the context of romance. Romantic love is love at first sight (Reiss, 1960). The romantic lover feels himself to be a plaything of irresistible and transcendent forces beyond the locus of his control (Orlinsky, 1972). It is as if Cupid's arrows continue to hone in on their targets in twentieth century America. The romantic lover's sense of powerlessness mingles with extreme irrationality and flightiness (Ellis, 1962).

This irrationality manifests itself in diverse ways. The lover imputes remarkable qualities to his beloved that are, at best, pale reflections of reality (Greenfield, 1965). Idealization of the loved one is accompanied by total disinterest in anything or anyone else other than her (Greenfield, 1965). There is, in this unmitigated preoccupation, implicit acceptance of the notion that only one person is capable of satisfying the lover's erotic and affectional needs (Slater, 1971).

The self-effacement and suffering which Freud highlighted in his portrait of romantic love endure as

fixtures in the present American landscape. There is no sacrifice too great to make for romantic love. In fact, the degree of sacrifice is a measure of love's intensity (Ellis, 1962). When one is truly in love, he renders himself subservient to his beloved's every wish and whim (Ellis, 1962). The ecstasy which romantic love promises is invariably spiked with agony (Orlinsky, 1972). When romantic love is unreciprocated, or when one is abandoned by his loved one, the most painful feeling imaginable is inflicted (Ellis, 1962). Yet romantic love American style is marked by the same strange preference for unsummated, unrequited, interrupted, or otherwise tragic relationships that pervaded courtly love, as well as Freud's depiction of highly romantic liaisons (Slater, 1971). The romantic lover apparently fears the realization of what he ostensibly most desires. And unrequitedness stokes passion's fires rather than tamping them down (Ellis, 1962).

There is lively controversy concerning the linkage between romantic love and marriage in the United States. Some theorists (Goode, 1959; Spanier, 1972) assert that romantic love is the foremost catalyst for marriage among Americans. They further contend that conjugal love is not distinguishable from romantic love (Goode, 1959; Spanier, 1972). Others (Dean, 1962; Rougemont, 1974) retort vociferously that romantic love

is fundamentally different from conjugal love, and that romantics find the very thought of marriage repugnant.

In medieval courtly love and Freud's (1910) delineation of a special object choice made by men, a cardinal precondition for romantic involvement was that the pursued lady already be attached--usually married. Although rivalry and adultery are frequently encountered in popular media representations of romance in America, it remains problematic whether these elements are essential to romantic love in our society at the present time.

With the qualification that there are varied forms of romantic love and that cultural specificity must be taken into account, it is clear there are many points of conjuncture among medieval accounts of courtly love, Freud's concept of romantic love, and contemporary American renditions of romantic entanglement. Freud's definition and theoretical approach to romantic love are applicable to America today.

#### Freudian Theory and Romantic Love

In addition to defining romantic love, Freud tried to explain it. Frederico Fellini's recent film, Casanova, contains a scene which captures pictorially the keystone of Freud's theory of romantic love. By way of background, Casanova is a heroic fornicator, but throughout the long sexual odyssey which is his life, a loving,

reciprocal relationship eludes him. When he does succumb to his strong romantic urges, Casanova invariably falls in love with women who belong to other men and who must leave him. Frenzied lovemaking does not extinguish Casanova's unfulfilled desire for an enduring romantic liaison. Near the end of the film, Fellini provides a brilliant psychological insight into the psychodynamics of Casanova's futile quest. Unexpectedly, Casanova happens upon his aged mother to whom he offers profuse apologies for having remained out of touch for many years. He then carries his mother on his back to a waiting carriage. Fellini, undoubtedly influenced by Freud, conveys in this scene the truth that all men are saddled to some degree by the original attachment they formed with their mothers. Freud believed that romantic men are among the least successful in disengaging from their libidinal ties to their mothers. The Oedipus complex is at the core of Freud's theory of romantic love.

#### The Oedipus Complex: A Resume

Sexual life begins, in Freud's (1916-1917) view, with the act of sucking at the mother's breast. The child is at first incapable of differentiating between his mother's breast and his own body (Freud, 1940). He subsequently progresses to the point of experiencing himself as a separate entity, but only gradually replaces

his first object of attachment, the breast, with recognition of his mother as a person who nurtures and cares for him (Freud, 1940). In responding to her infant's physical and emotional needs, the mother becomes, as a matter of course, the child's first seducer (Freud, 1940). The bond that typically is formed between mother and child is so paramount and unique that it exercises profound influence over all the ensuing love relationships a person experiences during his lifetime.

At the age of two or three years, a boy enters the phallic stage of libidinal development, at which time he begins to focus on pleasurable sensations he derives voluntarily or involuntarily from stimulation of his penis. Coincident with attainment of this libidinal phase, the little boy yearns to be no less than his mother's lover. Freud (1916-1917) quoted Diderot to depict graphically the nature of the child's aspirations: "'If the little savage were left to himself, preserving all his foolishness and adding to the small sense of a child in the cradle the violent passions of a man of thirty, he would strangle his father and lie with his mother'" (p. 338). In our civilization, however, "the little savage" is quickly brought to heel.

The Dissolution of  
the Oedipus Complex

Although Freud (1916-1917) once suggested that a son's primary tasks during puberty are to transfer his libidinal desires from his mother to a viable alternative love object and to forge a new bond based on equality with his father, he made clear his belief in later writings (Freud, 1923b; 1940) that the course of developments in puberty is almost wholly dictated by events which take place before latency. In other words, Freud's final position concerning the outcome of the Oedipus complex contains a stronger dose of historical determinism, dating back to the efflorescence of sexuality in childhood, than do his earlier intimations that voluntarism and consciousness can be mobilized during puberty to break the libidinal chains which bind a son to his mother.

Given Freud's conclusion that the fate of the Oedipus complex is largely, if not completely, determined prior to the onset of the latency period around age five, what then is the "normal" course of events leading to its resolution? It is far easier to delineate the elements that enter into the dissolution or weakening of the son's Oedipal attachment to his mother, than it is to describe the plethora of individual outcomes that these elements help to shape. Freud (1924) advanced three self-admittedly vague alternatives to account for the

dissolution of the Oedipus complex. All three of these possible explanations are temporally situated between two or three and five years of age.

The first possible determinant of the Oedipus complex's eventual demise is the experience of repeated and powerful disappointments which the little boy endures in his futile quest to translate his libidinal desires for his mother into reality. According to this hypothesis, continual rebuffs eventually lead the boy-lover to turn away from the object of his affections (Freud, 1924). A second possibility entertained by Freud (1924) is that the Oedipus complex is genetically programmed to self-destruct. This second alternative, standing alone, leaves unanswered why there are so many instances of incomplete or unsuccessful Oedipal resolution. Finally, and most importantly, Freud came to regard castration anxiety as the Rosetta stone in resolving the mystery of how Oedipal ties are significantly vitiated or broken.

To elucidate, at some point during the phallic stage of her son's libidinal development, the mother becomes cognizant that his manifest sexual excitation relates to herself (Freud, 1940). Ordinarily she regards this state of affairs as wrong and forbids her son from continuing to masturbate. To put teeth into this admonition, the mother threatens the little boy with the possibility he may lose his penis, often invoking his father

as the executor of that punishment (Freud, 1940). This threat does not by itself make a big impression on the little boy until or unless he has had the opportunity of viewing the female genitals. Once that fateful observation occurs, the little boy is convinced his penis literally might be removed. This initiates the castration complex, the most severe trauma of his young life (Freud, 1940).

The threat of castration has profound effects on the boy's relationship to both of his parents, as well as his future interactions with both men and women. The impact of the castration complex, as intimated earlier, is far too varied and complex to forecast from some universal theoretical model the specific manifestations it will assume in any given individual. Nonetheless, certain broad predictions can be made.

Given the choice between his narcissistic interest in preserving his penis and continued expression of libidinal desires toward his mother, the child's ego normally veers away from the Oedipus complex and the latency period commences (Freud, 1924). At one point, Freud (1925b) averred that in ideal cases the shock of threatened castration does not simply repress, but literally demolishes the Oedipus complex, thereby laying the foundations for development of the superego. Years later, Freud (1940) abandoned this categorical position

with the more temperate conclusion that castration anxiety leads more or less completely to renunciation of the boy's wish to possess his mother. Although repression dominates the latency period, there is revivification of libidinal fixations and conflicts left over from the period before latency concomitant with the dramatic increase in somatic sexual processes that takes place in puberty.

Although the contents of these residual libidinal fixations and conflicts differ from one individual to another, it is possible to differentiate relatively successful cases of Oedipal complex resolution from those instances in which mature men remain libidinally bound to their mothers. In the course of articulating the psychoanalytic theory of romantic love, it will be proposed that highly romantic men have been comparatively unsuccessful in freeing themselves from archaic Oedipal attachments. Freud looked upon the Oedipus complex as an unavoidable and crucial factor in each person's life. His analysis of romanticism and romantic love is intimately related to his view of the Oedipus complex in all of its permutations.

#### Romantic Love and the Oedipus Complex

More than a century before Freud's work was first conceived and published, Jean-Jacques Rousseau described

his first sexual experience in the following manner:

"'Was I happy? No. I tasted the pleasure, but I knew what invincible sadness poisoned its charm. I felt as if I had committed incest'" (cited in Casler, 1973, p. 6).

The heart of Freud's theoretical structure for understanding the origins and essence of human love is embedded in Rousseau's remembrance.

At the risk of being redundant, it seems worthwhile to reiterate that Freud viewed the unfolding of the Oedipus complex in males, intricate as it is, to be much easier to follow than is the case with females. This helps to explain why most of the psychoanalytic literature concerned with romanticism and romantic love gives heavy emphasis to its manifestations in males. The present study will adhere to the focus of the theory it is endeavoring to explore.

Freud (1910) contrasted the singular characteristics of romantic love embodied in what he coined "a special type of object choice made by men" with the love of "normal" individuals. Yet he contended that all love represents a sublimation of unacceptable sexual impulses (Freud, 1921). What then is the basis for the distinction Freud drew between romantic love and "normal" love? Psychoanalytic theory holds that both romantic and "normal" forms of love originate in and are expressive of infantile fixation of tender feelings on the mother

(Freud, 1910). However, in the case of men who experience "normal" love, detachment of libido from the mother has taken place in a relatively swift and complete manner. By way of contrast, among those prone to romantic involvements, libido remains bound to the mother for a long time, even after the onset of puberty (Freud, 1910). Although it is disputable (Hitschmann, 1952; Rabin, 1965), Freud maintained the Oedipus complex is a universal rather than a culturally specific phenomenon. He also believed the particular, idiosyncratic form which the Oedipus complex assumes in the case of each individual determines, to a striking degree, the way in which that individual loves. This perspective harmonizes with the psychoanalytic dictum that the child is father to the man.

#### Freudian Theory and Romantic Love Unmasked

With the Oedipus complex at the center of his theoretical framework, Freud was able to integrate and interpret the seemingly baffling characteristics of romantic love he had particularized. At this juncture, clusters of the major features of romantic love will each be scrutinized in turn through the prism of psychoanalytic theory. The result of this synthesis will be to evoke a unified, comprehensive means for unravelling the formidable complexities of romanticism and romantic love.

### The Aura of Predestination

The romantic lover experiences falling in love as a process which lies totally outside the domain of volition. Destiny, not choice, is the ruler of romance. Romantic literature is replete with descriptions of lovers as hapless pawns manipulated by unseen forces beyond their control. The occurrence of "love at first sight" is a dramatic manifestation of the aura of predestination which envelopes romantic relationships.

In his first explicit articulation of the Oedipus complex, Freud (1897) wrote to his friend and collaborator, Fliess, that Sophocles' Oedipus Rex exercised riveting power over its audiences because it is constructed around a theme which is universal, though unconscious, in man. In the same letter, Freud (1897) commented that Sophocles had, through striking a primal chord in the unconscious, succeeded in overcoming the rebellion of man's reason against the notion he is controlled by unfathomable forces external to himself. Freud (1900) elaborated upon this idea in The Interpretation of Dreams, when he observed that Oedipus Rex teaches that man must acquiesce to the will of the gods and acknowledge he has little power to be the architect of his own fate. In the case of Sophocles' play, it is clear Freud regarded the powers attributed to gods as

emanating, in fact, from man's own, compelling unconscious impulses.

All love relationships contain elements of romanticism which, in the psychoanalytic view, derive from the original libidinal attachment to the mother. In the case of extremely romantic forms of love, Freud (1910) relied upon careful observations of men whom he perceived to be sharply defined romantic types. Highly romantic men retain powerful, unconscious libidinal desires for their mothers, and they are fated repeatedly to act out these repressed strivings in lieu of remembering them (Freud, 1920a). The sense of helplessness and absence of control which pervade the experience of romantic love are thus products of repressed childhood wishes. Until and unless these forbidden desires are confronted at the level of consciousness, romantic impulses will continue to strip man of his phenomenological sense of internal control. It is his unconscious, not the gods, which transforms a man immersed in romance into a pawn.

From this vantage point, "love at first sight," which so often heralds the advent of romantic love, is divested of much of its mystery. Its very suddenness suggests unconscious contents have been tapped. "Love at first sight" is made possible by repressed memories and associated lust for the first love object in a man's life--his mother (Hitschmann, 1952).

### Adultery, Jealousy, Rivalry

One of the preconditions for romantic love specified by Freud is that the sought-after love object be intimately involved with another man, usually either engaged or married to him. This precondition is included in the code of courtly love as well (Koenigsberg, 1967). The existence of a competitor for the affections of the woman whom one loves naturally generates jealousy and rivalry. Yet in romantic love this very situation seems to be especially alluring despite its complications.

This allure is understandable if romantic love is, as Freud (1910) believed, an unconscious quest to recreate in adult experience the childhood situation in which the mother "belongs" to the father. Through this re-enactment the romantic lover unconsciously seeks to undo the fact of his father's original and inevitable triumph, as well as to come to terms with the trauma which this devastating defeat inflicted (Koenigsberg, 1967).

The Oedipus complex is inherently riddled with jealousy and rivalry. Not only does the little boy wish to possess his mother sexually, he also experiences hateful feelings toward his father, who is the major obstacle to realization of his desires. The rivalry and jealousy that dominate the romantic relationships of men who have failed to resolve the Oedipus complex are echoes of childhood history. The intensity and ubiquitousness of jealousy

in romance harken back to unconscious longings blindly being replayed in contemporary settings. These feelings of jealousy are not fully subject to control by the conscious ego and, in the psychoanalytic view, they constitute a testimonial to the durability of the earliest stirrings of the child's affective life (Freud, 1922).

### Overvaluation of the Loved One

Since, in romantic love, the woman whose affections are sought is already involved with another man, to win her favors would necessarily entail an act of infidelity on her part. Notwithstanding the fact that questionable fidelity has traditionally been cited as betokening a serious characterological flaw, the infatuated romantic grossly overvalues the woman he loves to the point of idealizing her. This propensity to overvalue the love object in romantic love is impervious to the powers of reason or the impingement of reality. How is this selective impairment of the romantic lover's reality-testing powers to be explained?

Freud (1910) answered this question by observing that the romantic man responds to his beloved in the same way he responded to his mother as a child, viewing her as unique and irreplaceable. There is, to be sure, a dualism in the little boy's estimation of his mother as regards her sexuality. On the one hand, the sexually

awakened child tries to perpetrate the fiction that his parents are not sexual beings (that they do not engage in sexual activity). On the other hand, when the little boy can no longer deny his mother's sexual liaison with his father (a recognition that usually coincides with the phallic stage of development), he equates her activity with an act of infidelity (Freud, 1910). This jarring experience narrows the gap between the son's image of a pure mother and that of a prostitute. Reinforcing the specific content of the child's conflicting impressions of his mother is Freud's (1910) general principle that in the unconscious a pair of opposites often appears as a unity. Koenigsberg (1967), in a variation on Freud's theme, held that idealization of the love object in romantic love replicates a defense the child built in the face of the profound disillusionment he experienced upon learning of his mother's sexual "transgressions" (her sexual complicity with his father).

Beigel (1951) concurred that the love object in romantic love is a mother substitute, but he explained the overvaluation that permeates romance in terms which differ from those of Freud. Most fundamentally, Beigel (1951) believed that the romantic lover, like the adolescent, is more interested in winning his loved one's approval than he is in possessing her sexually. The woman's acceptance of her admirer is the sole means he

has available to strengthen his tenuous sense of self-esteem, and it is for this service that the beloved is idealized (Beigel, 1951).

Jekels and Bergler (1949) advanced a more sophisticated explanation of the idealization of the loved one in romantic love which antedated and helped to inspire Beigel's (1951) formulations concerning this subject. Having conceptualized romantic love as a quest to re-establish the sense of narcissistic integrity that most infants possess in the first months of their lives, Jekels and Bergler (1949) described the romantic experience as one in which the ego ideal is first projected onto the love object and then is partially reintrojected into the lover's ego. In this pre-Oedipally based view of romantic love, overvaluation and idealization of the adored woman constitute an unconscious project to mold the love object to conform to the parameters of the projected ego ideal, the contents of which extend back into earliest infancy. "Reality" does not pose an insuperable obstacle to pursuit of this quest. With wry cynicism, Jekels and Bergler (1949) concluded that in the final analysis "there is only the wish to be loved." This revisionist psychoanalytic point of view claims that romantic infatuation is best understood as narcissistic intoxication. Man does not seek to love, but rather to be loved.

The orthodox Freudian explanation of overvaluation of the love object in romantic love is not irreconcilably in conflict with the pre-Oedipal alternative approach evolved by Jekels and Bergler (1949). Elements of both theoretical positions may play a role in romantic relationships. Freud (1931) himself belatedly conceded that pre-Oedipal attachments are important developmentally, though he contended (perhaps erroneously) that this was more true of women than of men.

#### The Rescue Motif

Classically, the romantic lover feels impelled to rescue his beloved from some real or imagined danger. This theme has provided considerable grist for the psychoanalytic mill. At first glance, the rescue motif might be regarded as reflecting an understandable response to "objective" circumstances surrounding a given love relationship. Thus if the woman whom one loves is tempted to use drugs or faces some other peril, what could be more natural than a determination to save her? This does not answer, however, the question of why the romantic lover consistently falls in love with women who are in some kind of jeopardy or whom he needs to perceive as requiring his assistance.

Freud (1910), citing his study of screen memories, fantasies, and dreams, discerned beneath the surface

manifestations of the rescue theme an unconscious motive analogous operationally to the successful secondary revision of a dream. This unconscious motive was identified as a wish on the lover's part to have a child (one like himself) with his first love object--his mother (Freud, 1910). This unconscious wish presupposes a complete identification with his father.

Freud (1910) was less than categorical in offering this interpretation of the rescue fantasy in romantic love. He cautioned that rescue fantasies, like dream material, cannot be understood through recourse to some universal key. Rather, the rescue fantasy, as well as the dream, assumes an idiosyncratic meaning for each individual which can only be deciphered in the context of his whole life history and experience (Freud, 1910). Having raised this crucial proviso, Freud reiterated his belief that an unconscious wish to give one's mother a child is the nucleus of many of the rescue fantasies which infuse romantic love.

There is no unanimity among psychoanalytic theorists about this question. Koenigsberg (1967), for example, relegated to a position of secondary importance Freud's interpretation of the unconscious meaning of rescue fantasies. Koenigsberg (1967) regarded the imperative to rescue one's beloved lady (or, according to the ideal of courtly love, being rescued by her) as

representing the unconscious and/or conscious desire to be the sole possessor of her affections. In attempting to realize this aspiration, the romantic lover discounts his beloved's tendencies to be unfaithful (except, of course, with himself) and tries to win from her an affirmation that he alone possesses the qualities necessary to attract her (Koenigsberg, 1967). This interpretation of the rescue fantasy meshes rather well with the conclusion of Jekels and Bergler (1949) that romantic love is essentially a quest to have one's narcissistic needs gratified.

#### Intensity and Approach-Avoidance Conflict

Romantic love is, by definition, intense. It consumes the lover's energies to the extent of precluding interest in the rest of the world. Yet for all the intensity and single-mindedness displayed by the romantic lover, he is more predisposed to fantasize about his loved one than to seek her favors actively. Should he find himself in the presence of his idealized beloved, he more often than not is beset by foreboding and fear instead of being overcome with joy. Concomitantly, sexual interest is either renounced, sublimated, or acted out fleetingly with dire consequences of one sort or another.

The intensity of romantic love is another indicator that unconscious sources are being tapped

(Hitschmann, 1952). The degree to which the romantic lover is obsessed by his passion may be a measure of the extent to which he has failed to resolve his unconscious libidinal ties to his mother. All of this is self-evident if the basic tenets of psychoanalytic theory are accepted as valid. Other riddles remain to be solved. These include the reasons for the romantic lover's passivity; the origins of the fear he experiences in the presence of his beloved; and his marked tendency to sublimate his sexual interest.

Solutions to these riddles are hinted at in a strictly literary analysis of courtly love's major features crafted by Askew (1965). In the medieval version of romance, the only "worthy" objects of love were, as intimated earlier, already married. Although the impassioned lover longed for his chosen lady from afar, he knew that to have an actual sexual liaison with her meant risking the danger of instant death at the hands of a more powerful rival (Askew, 1965). Given this set of circumstances, it is understandable why active pursuit of sexual gratification with the overvalued love object was suffused with ambivalence, timidity, and fear. It is also worth noting that the perils attendant upon sexual fulfillment in courtly love mirror circumstantially the dangers inherent in the original Oedipal situation.

Specifically, during the phallic stage of sexual development, the little boy wants to possess his mother sexually. In the optimal course of events, this impossible wish is shattered or satisfactorily weakened primarily by fear of castration. Adult males who are highly romantic have, in the psychoanalytic schema, retained inordinately strong, unconscious libidinal ties to their mothers. Their propensity to shrink from direct contact with the idealized women (surrogate mothers) whom they ardently desire from a distance is attributable to the terrible consequences they unconsciously anticipate as retaliation for realization of their sexual longings (i.e., castration and/or death at the hands of the father). Koenigsberg (1967) held that beneath the surface scripts of medieval courtly love and modern romantic love, there is a replaying of the Oedipal scenario in which desire increases as the love object is approached but only to a point at which avoidance tendencies become predominant.

There is yet another component which contributes to the romantic lover's passivity or paralysis vis-à-vis the woman whom he loves. That component is guilt. Success in romantic love means, in unconscious terms, not only sexual conquest of the mother but also murder of the father (Freud, 1916-1917). The combination of fear and guilt helps to explain the observation that while romantic

tradition abounds in sexualizing, little sexual intercourse takes place (Dean, 1962). The suggestion of sex hangs redolent in the air; its substance is noticeably absent.

As for the daydreaming that supplants action in romantic love, it too has its origins in the crucible of unresolved Oedipal strivings and accompanying castration anxiety. To paraphrase Freud (1940), the little boy ultimately renounces masturbation, but not the operations of his imagination which coincided with this activity. On the contrary, fantasy often becomes the sole outlet for sexual expression left to the child, and he indulges in it more than ever. These early masturbatory imaginal creations contain identifications with both mother and father, and they eventually find their way into the individual's developing ego, thereby helping to shape his adult character (Freud, 1940).

#### Obstacles, Suffering, Absence of Consummation

Romantic love seems to thrive on the various and sundry obstacles to consummation that typically block its pathway. Often the intensely romantic person wends his way through a series of unsatisfying and/or unrequited relationships, none of which fulfill the promise which marked their beginnings. In sum, tragedy rather than

ecstasy is the final destination of most romantic journeys.

Freud (1912) looked upon romantic love as constitutionally unfulfilling and bathed in sadness because it is an unconscious and doomed quest to win the love of the first object of libidinal strivings--the mother--expressed in the cathexis of a series of substitutive objects or surrogates. These surrogate love objects are incapable of bringing full satisfaction to the romantic lover since his original impulses are repressed and intrinsically unattainable (Freud, 1912). The original love object becomes an idealized fantasy image of the mother that is retained beyond the grasp of time in the unconscious (Slater, 1971). Driven blindly to possess this idealized fantasy image, the romantic lover is prey to an unremitting craving which resembles that of a drug addict. Momentary highs are transient and are built on illusion.

Psychoanalytic theory posits that the compulsion to repeat repressed aspects of one's personal life history includes past experiences that neither provided nor had the potential to provide satisfaction even to instinctual impulses long buried in the unconscious (Freud, 1920a). In utilizing this principle to shed more light on the psychodynamic meaning of the characteristics of romantic love, the sexual aspirations of the child must

be considered. The little boy cannot sexually possess his mother. He cannot give her a child. He cannot eliminate his father. His childish wooing usually elicits rejection, scorn, and punishment from his beloved mother, especially once she senses the sexual undercurrent in her son's amorous advances. Despite the inevitable frustration of these childhood sexual longings and the concomitant pain of unrequitedness and impotence, the compulsion to repeat the Oedipal drama remains irresistible in those individuals who remain libidinally attached to their mothers.

The obstacles and tragic denouements of intense romantic involvements originate in an unconscious urge to repeat the original Oedipal situation with all of its impediments, unrequitedness, and sorrow. In addition, the inability to consummate romantic relationships because of obstacles which are unconsciously sought serves another function beyond that of replicating the child's futile Oedipal undertaking. That additional function is to insure that success does not take place in order to protect the romantic lover from his archaic unconscious fear of retribution in the form of castration or death inflicted by his father. The legacy of unresolved Oedipal desires is to make the romantic lover wish for failure even as he craves success. The

coexistence of conflicting aims remains largely in the domain of the unconscious.

There are, of course, many forms of expression which this success-failure, approach-avoidance conflict assumes in romance. One variation which is particularly interesting relates to Freud's (1914) distinction between anaclitic and narcissistic types of object attachment. The anaclitic object choice is represented as being typical of males (Freud, 1914). Substantively this suggests that most men seek women who will feed (nurture) them as they were nourished by their first love objects--their mothers (Freud, 1914). But the highly romantic man, saddled as he is by unresolved Oedipal feelings toward his mother, is simultaneously attracted and repelled by the anaclitic type of object choice. This generates considerable tension and ultimate impasse. The romantic, unconsciously driven to find a compromise solution to the dilemma posed by forbidden wishes and anticipated retaliation for attainment of those wishes, may choose a narcissistic type of woman who, by her nature, is not willing or able to provide her lover with the nurturance that an anaclitic object choice would bring him.

Freud (1914) assessed as "very high" the importance of the narcissistic type of woman for the erotic life of mankind. What is the narcissistic woman like? She loves herself with ardor that matches that of the men

who pursue her; she needs to be loved much more than to love; she is often exceedingly beautiful (Freud, 1914). Almost always, the narcissistic woman seems enigmatic, elusive, and unreliable to the men who are attracted to her (Freud, 1914). Although these qualities catalyze conscious dissatisfaction and doubt in her male admirers, the narcissistic type of woman has a special allure for the highly romantic man at an unconscious level. This allure derives precisely from her inability and disinclination to respond to the nurturance needs he has harbored since childhood, the fulfillment of which he fears as much as he desires.

To recapitulate, the choice of a narcissistic type of love object is one of the myriad ways in which the romantic lover unconsciously sabotages realization of his conscious aspirations. The obstacles which block consummation and foment tragedy in romantic love are primarily the lover's own creation, not that of cruel gods or a capricious universe. As long as the Oedipus complex remains acutely unresolved, fear is the constant companion of romantic aims. Therein lies the key to understanding why romantic love is beset by barriers, incompleteness, impermanence, and suffering.

Dependency, Self-Abnegation,  
Masochism

The romantic lover is excessively dependent upon his beloved. His sense of self-worth and self-definition pivots almost exclusively on her estimation of him. This relinquishing of self by the romantic lover is but one aspect of the masochistic ambiance that surrounds romantic liaisons. Even more explicitly masochistic is the lover's extreme humility in his beloved's presence; his dedication to fulfill her every wish and whim; and his self-depreciation.

Although orthodox psychoanalytic thought places the Oedipus complex at the center of its explanation of romantic love, Freud (1926) conceded that deeply held feelings of dependency often originate in the early pre-Oedipal relationship that exists between mother and child. Freud (1914) examined the romantic lover's inordinate humility and self-depreciation from what is metapsychologically known as the economic point of view. All love, given this perspective, involves forfeiture of some of the lover's narcissistic supplies to the loved one. In romantic love this tendency is accentuated, and the lover exalts the love object to the level of regarding her as a sexual and/or ego ideal (Freud, 1914). Concurrently, this idealization of the loved one, with the substantial transfer of narcissism which it implies, renders the



romantic lover almost wholly dependent on his beloved's acceptance of him as the basis for certifying his self-worth (Freud, 1914). Unfortunately, for reasons already discussed (see above), the romantic lover unconsciously prevents himself from receiving the reciprocity, validation, and acceptance he craves.

While acknowledging the role of pre-Oedipal factors, Freud (1940) directly linked the masochistic character of romantic love with the Oedipus complex and accompanying castration anxiety. Convinced that unresolved Oedipal strivings precipitate a struggle, the outcome of which may take many forms, Freud (1940) concluded, "a residue of his [the son's] erotic fixation to his mother is often left in the form of an excessive dependence on her, and this persists as a kind of bondage to women" (p. 191). The romantic lover's subservience to the women he worships results from an unconscious conflict which pervades his conscious desires and actions. Put succinctly, this unconscious conflict produces outward manifestations which translate into his not venturing to love his mother, but being unable to accept the risk of not being loved by her. Lacking his mother's love, the man who is erotically bound to her unconsciously feels he is in constant danger of being betrayed by his mother and turned over to his father for punishment (Freud, 1940).

Askew (1965) lent support to Freud's portrayal of this unconscious Gordian knot with his observation that the courtly lover is afraid not only of potential rivals but also of the love object herself. The romantic man's original love object, his mother, has frequently been both seductive and castrating towards him. The masochistic posture so often adopted by the romantic lover may be interpreted as an effort to protect himself from the image of the threatening mother which still inhabits his unconscious, as well as a reaction formation against his own anger at having been rebuffed and betrayed.

Beigel (1951), having called attention to the similarities between courtly love and romantic love, described acts of symbolic self-castration (like Van Gogh sending his severed ear to his mistress) which are carried out to impress the love object. The legends of medieval romance are replete with anecdotes reminiscent of "the adolescent's obsessional yearning to impress the chosen female by valiance, self-sacrifice, and self-punishment" (Beigel, 1951, p. 328). The masochistic tone of romantic love is echoed in medieval courtly love.

Koenigsberg's (1967) survey of courtly love also harmonizes with Freud's presumption that there is an intimate connection between the romantic lover's self-abnegation and unconscious castration anxiety. In the

code of courtly love, the desired lady was invariably a superior, infallible, forbidding figure who remained aloof and resisted familiarity. According to Koenigsberg (1967), if the lady were to allow herself to become more accessible, her lover's desire would wane since castration fear intensifies as the love object is approached.

Revisionist psychoanalytic theorists (Evans, 1953; Jekels and Bergler, 1949) have emphasized unresolved pre-Oedipal fixation to the mother in their explanations of the masochism which is so prevalent in romantic love. Evans (1953) asserted that romantic men are dominated by an unconscious fixation to the image of a cruel and menacing pre-Oedipal mother. This picture of the fearsome pre-Oedipal mother emerges from projections of the child's own hostility and hate (Evans, 1953). In adulthood, the man who remains transfixed by the image of a threatening pre-Oedipal mother tends to fall in love with women who stand in the same relation to him as the female spider which devours its mate. Romantic involvements are shrouded in illusion and come to a sorry end (Evans, 1953). The male romantic, burdened by frightening memories of the pre-Oedipal mother, cannot, for all his professions of love, surrender himself emotionally. Emotional surrender would immerse him in his deep, unconscious masochism, the discovery of which he seeks to avoid (Evans, 1953). Of course, there are extreme occasions in

which the romantic lover falls victim to his own masochistic strivings and destroys himself in the process.

While reducing all love to the wish to be loved, Jekels and Bergler (1949) distinguished between an infantile (pre-genital) and mature (genital) mechanism for expressing this wish. In the pre-genital case, the lover experiences the love object as coinciding with the ego ideal; in the genital case, the lover acts as his own ego ideal and reduces the love object to ego (Jekels & Bergler, 1949). Romantic love, with its strong tinge of dependency and masochism, conforms closely to the pre-genital schema outlined by Jekels and Bergler (1949).

The debate within psychoanalytic circles concerning the genetic, i.e., temporal, origins of masochism in romantic love rages back and forth. Koenigsberg (1967) rejected the pre-Oedipal point of view and interpreted the romantic lover's masochistic submission to his lady in medieval times as a reaction formation against his own hostility and sadism. To elucidate this point, Koenigsberg (1967), in contrast to Evans (1953), traced the romantic man's hostility and sadism to the phallic stage of his development when his mother refused to abandon her husband and acquiesce to her son's wishes to possess her sexually. Lurking behind the romantic's obeisance to his beloved (surrogate mother) is long-standing rage at having been rebuffed by his mother years ago.

To pull the strands of this discussion together, it is intriguing to consider that the pre-Oedipal theoretical perspective is not inherently incompatible with the more orthodox point of view. It seems plausible that pre-Oedipal and Oedipal remnants commingle in the unconscious of men who have failed to loosen or break childhood ties to their mothers. The exact content of the male romantic's unconscious fixation on his mother is, in all likelihood, a highly idiosyncratic amalgam of pre-genital and genital strivings.

### Romantic Love and Death

L'amour and la mort, love and death, in the annals of romantic tradition they are companions as intimate as the similitude of the words which represent them in French. The literature and folklore of diverse cultures and epochs are replete with allusions to the mysterious bond which exists between romantic love and death (Anthony, 1972; Lepp, 1968).

### Introductory Perspectives

Psychologists and literary figures alike have come to regard death as romantic love's shadow, often illustrating their observations with references to the legend of Tristan and Iseult (Beauvoir, 1961; Evans, 1953; Rougemont, 1974; Sadler, 1969). Indeed, the first sentence of this famous story of romance announces a "high

tale of love and of death and how at last they died of that love together on one day; she by him and he by her'" (quoted in Evans, 1953, p. 75). Although the Tristan and Iseult legend is perhaps the clearest statement of the blending of romantic love and death, the same theme recurs in all of man's mythology (May, 1969). Egyptian myths, for example, characteristically depict the lover and the loved one as the slayer and the victim (May, 1969).

Other artistic productions which portray the fusion of romantic love and death include Michelangelo's early rendering of the "Pieta," Wagner's "Liebestod," and such literary works as Antigone, Romeo and Juliet, etc. (Anthony, 1972; Casler, 1973). In a rare empirical study of this subject, references to love and to death in W. Somerset Maugham's short stories were statistically analyzed using the Chi-square technique and a significant relationship between these variables was found (cited in Casler, 1973).

Although sexual impulses are infrequently acted out or sustained in romantic tradition, sexuality seems to play a mediating role of some sort in the dialectic between love and death. In French, the words for orgasm are petit mort (little death) (Choron, 1964). In general the threads that bind together romantic love and death remain obscure. One school of thought, represented by Rougemont (1974), believes that barely concealed behind

the passion of romance there lurks a dark desire for death. An opposing point of view, promulgated by Brown (1959) and others, perceives in romantic love an expression of the human struggle against mortal limits, the wish to vanquish death. Although Freud did not address himself directly to the interrelationship of romantic love and death, psychoanalytic theory contains building blocks for constructing a far-reaching explanation of this puzzling union. The issue is, however, far from resolved and all of the different approaches to the love-death bond warrant careful consideration.

#### The Psychoanalytic Nexus

Preliminary to considering the relationship of romantic love and death from a psychoanalytic frame of reference, it is necessary to outline Freud's views concerning man's encounter with his own mortal nature. Initially, Freud (1915b) regarded death anxiety as a derivative phenomenon expressive of other concerns since he believed that in the unconscious every man feels himself to be immortal. Freud (1915b) stated this proposition unambiguously: "The fear of death, which dominates us more often than we know, is on the other hand something quite secondary, and is usually the outcome of a sense of guilt" (p. 297). Several years later, Freud

(1919) was more equivocal about the origins and importance of man's fear of death.

Without scuttling his conclusion that man feels himself to be immortal in his unconscious, Freud (1919) began to recognize that conscious, intellectual uncertainty about death is an important dimension of human existence in its own right, not just as a secondary phenomenon. Concern about man's mortal nature has occupied a prominent position in the domains of religion, philosophy, art, and science. Is death anxiety always a secondary phenomenon? Freud was as ambiguous about this issue as he was concerning the degree to which consciousness is able to tame unconscious conflicts through the exercise of will. It is indisputable, though, that by the end of his life Freud had acknowledged the profound impact that awareness of death has upon man's experience of the world.

The psychodynamics of romanticism and romantic love delineated in psychoanalytic theory (see above) include a basis for understanding the close relationship which exists between love and death. If romanticism itself is largely an outgrowth of unresolved Oedipal strivings, so too is the ubiquitous presence of death in romance. In Sophocles' Oedipus Rex, Oedipus discovers he has "unknowingly" murdered his father and married his mother. Thus, two of the most elemental crimes of

mankind--parricide and incest--constitute the warp and woof of the Oedipus complex, which Freud deemed to be a universal phenomenon. Death, guilt, anxiety, and love are all inescapably welded together in every man's "first romance," his erotic attachment to his mother.

The little boy, locked in combat with his father in the struggle to win a monopoly over his mother's affections, naturally wishes to eliminate his rival from the scene (Freud, 1900). The boy who has reached the phallic stage of sexual development (three to five years old) is cognizant that dead people do not return (Freud, 1900). It follows that one common fantasy which the little boy constructs has at its core the wish that his father die. This wish, accompanied by its original concomitants, remains alive and powerful in highly romantic men who have never broken their libidinal ties to their mothers.

Psychoanalytically oriented theorists have posited that fear of death derives from unconscious death wishes directed toward loved ones (Dickstein & Blatt, 1966; Fenichel, 1945). Romantic males unconsciously re-enact the original Oedipal drama and harbor murderous wishes toward their main competitor (the father) and their secondary rivals (other siblings). Freud (1900) reported that dreams which include the death of a parent usually involve the parent who is the same sex as the

dreamer. While attributing this phenomenon to vestiges of the Oedipus complex, Freud (1900) reaffirmed that psychoneurotics (and, one might add, intense romantics) differ only in degree from their more normal counterparts as far as the resolution of Oedipal conflicts is concerned.

From the vantage point of psychoanalytic theory, fear of death and romantic love originate in a common source. In addition to the wish to eliminate his rivals (father and siblings) in the original Oedipal situation and the guilt which results from having such wishes, a second determinant of the romantic lover's fear of death is castration anxiety itself (Freud, 1918). In man's pre-history, the father was clearly the castrator (Freud, 1918). The son's fear and hatred of his father in the Oedipal struggle is, in Freud's (1918) estimation, exacerbated by this pre-historical legacy. Fear of death, like dread engendered by conscience, is a consequence of castration anxiety (Freud, 1923a).

How does castration consciously or unconsciously become equated with death? Fodor (1942) hypothesized that since castration is a calamitous bodily injury, a real or imagined threat of castration mobilizes the same defenses as a threat to life itself. Greenberger (1965) stated directly her belief that in the unconscious of men, death is represented by the terrible punishment of castration.

Greenberger (1965) went on to explain that at the level of consciousness most people, regardless of their religious convictions, view death as heralding the end of bodily functioning. This being the case, death is associated with all threats to bodily integrity, the most formative of which for males is injury to their sexual organs in reprisal for incestuous aspirations (Greenberger, 1965). In a study of the attitudes of psychoneurotics towards death, Bromberg and Schilder (1936) adduced empirical data consistent with the ideas Greenberger was to advance some 30 years later.

Greenberger (1965) hesitated to endorse Freud's ranking of castration anxiety as primary and death anxiety as secondary. She also cautioned that the equation, death anxiety=castration anxiety, is probably not applicable to women. Loss of love may have the same meaning for women that fear of castration has for men (Greenberger, 1965).

Clinical evidence for the existence of castration anxiety and the interrelationship between castration fear and fear of death was discovered by Kobler (1948) in a small town north of Canton, China. There, he encountered a bizarre medical syndrome in which the patient presents himself in a highly anxious state to his physician with the complaint that his penis is going to disappear (Kobler, 1948). Even more remarkable is the

patient's insistence that the imminent loss of his penis is a sign of his impending death (Kobler, 1948).

A research project carried out by Sarnoff and Corwin (1959) produced additional empirical support for the proposition that a positive relationship exists between castration anxiety and fear of death. This study predicted and confirmed that a group of male undergraduates with high castration anxiety would show a significantly greater increase in fear of death after being exposed to sexually arousing stimuli than a comparable group of low castration anxiety subjects (Sarnoff & Corwin, 1959). Moreover, a strong relationship (significant at the .01 level) was found to exist between fear of death and castration anxiety (Sarnoff & Corwin, 1959). These results were interpreted to mean that sexual arousal intensifies fear of death in men whose childhoods were marked by intense Oedipal conflicts and severe castration threats (Sarnoff & Corwin, 1959). Put succinctly, for susceptible individuals (including flaming romantics) castration fear involves dreading the loss of one's very being, not just one's penis (Kastenbaum & Aisenberg, 1972).

The interrelationships that link together death, guilt, anxiety, and romantic love in orthodox psychoanalytic theory are intricate and incisive. In a brilliant synthesis, Freud (1928) focused on the complex

connection of love and death in an essay about Dostoevsky and parricide. As a boy, prior to experiencing his first epileptic attack, Dostoevsky was afflicted with seemingly inexplicable spells of melancholy accompanied by fear of impending death. Freud (1928) attributed Dostoevsky's episodes of depression and terror to death wishes the future literary genius was feeling towards his father. These death wishes were an integral part of Dostoevsky's unresolved Oedipus complex (Freud, 1928).

The fact that Dostoevsky's hostile feelings towards his father became transmuted into death anxiety suggested to Freud that the great author identified with the victim of his venomous fantasies. Dostoevsky's attacks of acute death anxiety also are to be understood as a form of self-punishment for having directed hatred and death wishes towards a father with whom he concurrently identified (Freud, 1928). Parenthetically, this theme of death fear as self-punishment meshes comfortably with Rougemont's (1974) polemic that the wish to die is an intrinsic component of romantic love.

In addition to the ambivalence fostered by admiring and identifying with a more powerful rival whom one wishes to eliminate, there is the harsh reality that the child's intended victim has at his disposal the threat of castration (Freud, 1928). The father has a fearsome capacity to punish his son's desire to win exclusive

rights to his mother's love. In the normal course of events, the son's wish to possess his mother sexually and to murder his father is overridden by concern with preserving his masculinity. The surviving remnants of incestuous and murderous impulses in the unconscious are critical ingredients in creating the sense of guilt (Freud, 1928).

Freud (1928) commented wryly that it is not by chance that three of the greatest literary masterpieces of all time--Sophocles' Oedipus Rex, Shakespeare's Hamlet, and Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov--all are pervaded by the theme of parricide. "In all three, moreover, the motive force for the deed, sexual rivalry for a woman is laid bare" (Freud, 1928, p. 188). The very core of romantic love--unresolved, powerful, erotic ties to the mother--is steeped in murderous intent and fear of death. No wonder these motifs are highlighted in romantic legends.

In conclusion, while some psychoanalytic theorists (Bromberg & Schilder, 1936; Friedman, 1961-1962) have linked death anxiety to factors such as separation from loved ones and anticipated loss of impulse control, even they concur with Freud that the primary determinants of fear of death grow out of castration anxiety, incestuous wishes, and guilt associated with murderous feelings towards the father. If the psychoanalytic point of view

is valid, all of these primary determinants of death anxiety interact in romantic love.

### The Immortalist Alternative

There is a compelling alternative to the psychoanalytic mode of understanding the ubiquitousness of death and fear of death in romantic love. This alternative concept harmonizes with, but is not wholly contingent upon, the premise that there is indeed in man's unconscious a primal fear of death. This premise clashes with Freud's conclusion that death anxiety is a secondary or derivative phenomenon. More centrally, the immortalist point of view discerns in romantic love an expression of man's yearning to transcend the finitude of the human condition. In this theoretical script, romantic love is cast as the would-be conqueror of death.

Invoking her own analytic observations, Melanie Klein (1975) took issue with Freud when she wrote, "there is in the unconscious, a fear of the annihilation of life" (p. 29). In her estimation, then, apprehension about mortality is a fundamental source of anxiety which, like the struggle between life and death instincts, persists throughout life. In this framework, the fear of death is not a derivative of the felt threat of castration. Rather, castration anxiety may be reinforced by what is primary death anxiety (Klein, 1975). Rank (1959) likewise

rejected the notion that death anxiety is derived from the fear of castration. He recounted that liberation or satisfaction of sexuality does not necessarily eliminate castration anxiety or fear of death and, in point of fact, may intensify these apprehensions (Rank, 1959).

There are other prominent members of the psychoanalytic camp, such as Therese Benedek and Mary Chadwick, who have taken exception to Freud's three theses that there is no primary fear of death; that the unconscious is ignorant of death; and that the fear of death is not a causative agent in psychopathology (Choron, 1964). Although by no means a majority viewpoint, the conviction is growing among psychoanalytic thinkers that castration anxiety and/or separation anxiety are derivatives of a primordial death fear (Stolorow, 1973).

Using instruments designed to measure empirically the fear of death at different levels of consciousness, Feifel and Hermann (1973) found that both mentally ill and normal subjects shared similar responses to the fact of their own mortality. At the level of consciousness, both groups displayed repudiation of the fear of death; at the level of fantasy, ambivalence predominated; and at the level of the unconscious, repudiation and ambivalence yielded to dread (Feifel & Hermann, 1973). The data developed in this study and another similar one (Feifel & Branscomb, 1973) tend to support those critics

who have challenged Freud's views regarding death anxiety. Shneidman (1971) has gone so far as to assert that "the most distressing contemplation one can have is of his own cessation" (p. 11).

Apart from whether human beings feel themselves to be mortal or immortal in their unconscious, they expend prodigious amounts of energy in explicit and disguised efforts to come to terms with the grim reaper. Christian doctrine, with its promise of an afterlife for the faithful, is but one dramatic illustration of man's preoccupation with the limits of his earthly existence. And there are many others.

These introductory points of discussion provide a setting for presenting the keystone tenet of the immortalist approach to romantic love and death: namely, that romantic love is a manifestation of man's desire to vanquish death, and Oedipal dynamics require reinterpretation in terms of this primordial yearning for immortality. The belief that love is an expression of man's desire for immortality has been traced back at least as far as the writings of Plato (Alles, 1933). In more contemporary times, Binswanger observed that love is often predicated upon faith it is impervious to death itself (Rheingold, 1967). In developing this line of thought, Binswanger came to regard love as no less than an heroic attempt to conquer death (Choron, 1964). When Juliet assures Romeo

from her balcony that her bounty and love for him are infinite, she captures in her promise the phenomenologically boundary-less world which is created by romantic love (Sadler, 1969).

Conceptualizing in a sociological idiom, Slater (1963) described romantic love as a dyadic rejection of societal forces which is doomed to failure. Despite the fact that it is ultimately thwarted, romance abounds in defiant symbols that attest to the continuation of love after the lovers have died. Symbolic of love's immortality are plants or trees which grow out of lovers' graves entwining (Slater, 1963). Others have also remarked upon romantic love's transient power to elevate us beyond temporal limits (Harrington, 1969; Hitschmann, 1952). Since the obstacles so characteristic of romantic love seem to inflame passion, their omnipresence may indicate not a wish to fail or to die but rather a desire to suspend the hand of time which, in the absence of such barriers, transforms romantic intensity into pedestrian housekeeping (Harrington, 1969).

Rougemont (1974), perhaps the most acerbic critic of romantic love, argued that concealed in romance's affinity for tragedy is a longing for death itself. Yet even his own words can be read as undercutting this contention: "The god Eros is the slave of death because he wishes to elevate life above our finite and creature

state" (Rougemont, 1974, p. 311). Biased perhaps by his philosophical commitment to the necessity of accepting life's limits, Rougemont (1974) interpreted the striving for secular transcendence in romantic love to mean a wish for death.

In contrast, Lepp (1968) suggested that even those romantic lovers who explicitly embrace death may be groping for a means of immortalizing and purifying a relationship which they fear is beginning to lose its intensity and beauty. This reluctance, however fanatic, to relinquish an ecstatic experience cannot legitimately be equated with a longing for death in its own right. In fact, Anthony (1940) saw in romances of the troubadours an elaborate code of sexual conduct employed as a defense against death anxiety. The spiritualization of carnal desire embodied in this code helped to protect the romantic lover from the physical risks entailed in sexually consummating a relationship with a married woman (Anthony, 1940). There is clearly a case to be made for the immortalist view of romantic love.

In concert with the immortalist position, Rank (1959), Brown (1959), and other neopsychoanalytic luminaries have reinterpreted the meaning and significance of the Oedipus complex in terms of the human encounter with death. Rank (1959) claimed that Oedipus sought to become his own father. Inveighing against simplistic

analyses of the Oedipus myth, Rank (1959) deemed it to be far more than the story of a son's wish to murder his father and possess his mother sexually. "The incest desire is a symbol of personal immortality to which the ego clings in order to escape the compulsion of a mere racial immortality [i.e., propagation of the species] through sex" (Rank, 1959, p. 312). Incestuous desire goes beyond the sexual dimension. It is expressive of man's futile but heroic aspiration to perpetuate himself. Placed in this context, the Oedipus myth represents a powerful alternative to collective belief in the soul or hope that immortality can be realized through one's children as man tries to cope with the prison of his finiteness (Rank, 1959).

Brown (1959) also reinterpreted the Oedipus myth in terms of man's determination to vanquish death, but he was more specific than his progenitor, Rank. Having depicted the Oedipus project as "a revolt against death generally" (p. 127), Brown (1959) linked this revolt to unconscious rejection of the biological principle that separates mother and child.

To elaborate on this point, the pre-Oedipal child experiences separation from the mother upon whom he is totally dependent as death (Brown, 1959). The Oedipus complex represents the desire to reunite with the mother in a pre-genital sense, thereby recapturing the oceanic

feeling of merger endemic to early childhood which confers the sensation of immortality (Brown, 1959). The Oedipal ambition to become father to oneself is more a flight from death than an effort to achieve sexual union with the mother as an end in itself. Within this frame of reference, castration anxiety is fused with death anxiety in that the loss of the penis constitutes loss of the instrument which makes reunion with the mother possible.

Brown's (1959) linkage of death anxiety to separation from the mother and his reformulation of the Oedipus complex as a quest to conquer death through reunion with the mother are concepts which have received serious consideration from other theorists. Reik (1944) wrote that the child's realization of the possibility of losing his mother's love can no more be coped with than an earthquake. It may well be that our first presentiment that we will die one day is encapsulated in the initial experience of being separated from our mothers. In researching the reactions of children to death, Anthony (1972) found that often the child's anxiety about death assumes the form of fear of separation from the original love object--the mother. Concomitantly, a common defense against death anxiety is unconscious anticipation of a closer union with the original love object in death than was ever possible in life. Anthony (1972) explained the recurrent romantic

theme of lovers being reunited in death as originating in a childhood defense against death anxiety. What Rougemont (1974) perceived as a craving for death in romantic love is, in Anthony's (1972) view, a paradoxical, unconscious belief that only in death is immortality possible.

Stolorow (1973) cited Chadwick's work with thanatophobic children as tending to confirm Brown's (1959) reformulation of the Oedipus complex. Chadwick discovered that children who are thanatophobic create fantasies of self-procreation as a bulwark against their fears of death. This finding recalls to mind Brown's (1959) notion that embedded in the Oedipus complex is the aspiration to become father to oneself.

Harrington (1969), an eloquent proponent of the immortalist perspective, saw in romantic love a resurrection of the god-like sense of invulnerability that marks our existence in our mother's womb. As long as we are experientially unindividuated from our mothers, we remain impervious to the truth of our ultimate aloneness and mortality. Romantic love restores, for an instant, the freedom from self and time that characterizes the earliest moments of life (Harrington, 1969).

Orthodox psychoanalysis and immortalist revisionism both recognize that an intimate connection exists between romantic love and death. It is possible that a synthesis of these two schools of thought will shed more

light on the complex love-death relationship than either point of view standing alone. Many of the subjects in a study conducted by Bromberg and Schilder (1936) produced a fantasy image of death as the perfect sexual union--an idealized closeness unknowable in life. Desire for this perfect sexual union was interpreted as an unconscious incest wish (Bromberg & Schilder, 1936). The orthodox psychoanalytic mode of understanding the fantasies described by Bromberg and Schilder (1936) may be illuminating but incomplete.

To flesh out this possibility, romantic love may well be a flight from death through symbolic reunion with the pre-Oedipal mother and a project to supplant the father as the mother's lover. Death may well be a catalyst for romantic love and a punishment feared by man as retaliation for seeking a forbidden avenue of transcendence. That a symbiosis exists between death anxiety and Oedipal strivings seems irrefutable. The precise content of that symbiosis is still a matter of informed speculation.

Notwithstanding his belief that man feels himself to be immortal in his unconscious, Freud (1913) discerned in the phenomenon of love a desire for immortality. Because man vigorously rejects the inevitability of death, the myth of the Moerae was created to remind him that there is no escape from the grim reaper's scythe (Freud,

1913). In what Freud (1913) called a clear manifestation of wish-fulfillment, man constructed a new variation derived from the myth of the Moerae in which the Goddess of Death was replaced by the Goddess of Love and by what was equivalent to her in human form. Freud (1913) further asserted that this manifestation of man's rebellion against his mortal nature had historical antecedents in Western and Oriental mythology, both of which contain Mother-goddesses who are creators and destroyers at one and the same time.

Freud's (1913) discussion of the myth of the Moerae elucidates the promise and the peril each man confronts in pursuing his unconscious desire to possess the original love object in his life. Romantic love contains the certainty of finiteness and death, even as it seductively promises transcendence of earthly limits. Almost a half-century after Freud (1913) wrote The Theme of the Three Caskets, Simone de Beauvoir (1961) sounded the same basic theme: "Thus what man cherishes and detests first of all in woman--loved one or mother--is the fixed image of his animal destiny; it is the life that is necessary to his existence but that condemns him to the finite and to death" (p. 154).

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite their profound influence upon the human condition, romanticism and romantic love have generally received benign neglect from psychological researchers. Freud, driven by his insatiable curiosity and aided by his extraordinary breadth of knowledge, sought to strip love of its mysteries. With the Oedipus complex as its centerpiece, Freudian theory offers impressive insight into the psychodynamics of romanticism and romantic love. In his treatment of these phenomena, Freud displayed more surety in dealing with the experiential world of men, as opposed to that of women. The present study will thus confine itself to investigation of the psychodynamics of romanticism in males.

Dispersed throughout Freud's prolific writings are the requisite components for constructing a solution to the riddle of why romantic love and death have always been inseparable companions. The present study has endeavored to pull these components together into a coherent theoretical structure (see above).

The central problem which the present study proposes to tackle was summed up by Casler (1973) at a

symposium on love. Referring to the psychoanalytic theory of love, he stated:

Unfortunately, rigorous testing of many psychoanalytic theories are extraordinarily difficult. Some, including those just mentioned, simply do not seem to be susceptible to any experimental method yet devised. This is not to say such formulations lack validity, but only that they lack the type of evidential support required for scientific acceptability (Casler, 1973, pp. 6-7).

It is a matter of record that as of the present time, no one has woven together all of the strands of the richest, most inclusive theory of romantic love yet devised. Nor has there been any attempt to test experimentally the central tenets of their theory. The present study is undertaken with a two-fold purpose. First, it intends to provide a clear, thorough exposition of the psychoanalytic theory of romantic love, as well as some of the challenges to it which have been raised. Second, with full cognizance of the obstacles alluded to by Casler (1973), it endeavors to begin to subject to experimental scrutiny the major propositions concerning romantic love contained in Freudian theory.

## HYPOTHESES

In his theory of romantic love, Freud asserted that highly romantic males harbor particularly intense, repressed incestuous wishes. Viewed on a continuum, then, psychoanalytic theory postulates that the highly romantic male has been relatively unsuccessful in accomplishing the vital task of resolving his original libidinal attachment to his mother as embodied in the Oedipus complex. Besieged by his own repressed incestuous impulses and weakened ego strength, the romantic male feels driven in love by forces phenomenologically experienced as irresistible and external to himself. These forces are often labelled fate, destiny, or god.

Hypothesis I: Romanticism in males correlates positively with Oedipal intensity.

Hypothesis II: Romanticism in males correlates positively with castration anxiety.

Hypothesis III: Romanticism in males correlates positively with self-rating as externally controlled.

Both orthodox psychoanalytic theory and immigrant revisionism acknowledge that an intimate

relationship exists between romantic love and death. From the psychoanalytic point of view, death anxiety is a secondary phenomenon originating in the Oedipus complex with its attendant conflicts and guilt. Highly romantic males, it is assumed, have been relatively unsuccessful in breaking their libidinal bonds to their mothers.

Hypothesis IV: Romanticism in males correlates positively with death anxiety.

## METHOD

### Description of Instruments

#### The Dean Romanticism Scale

The Dean Romanticism Scale (DRS) was developed in 1961. It is predicated on the assumption that romantic love and companionship love can be conceptually differentiated as polar types (Dean, 1961). The DRS (see Appendix A) consists of 50 items that express beliefs about the nature of love. Twenty-seven items of the DRS were rated as Romantic by agreement of 10 of 12 judges who weighted the direction (Romantic or Companionship type) of each item. Five items were rated as Companionship. The remaining 18 items are fillers. Subjects are requested to indicate degree of agreement or disagreement with each item on a 5-point scale. Each of the 27 Romantic items receives the maximum score of "5" when respondents strongly agree with the statement. Each of the 5 Companionship items receives the maximum score of "5" when respondents strongly disagree with the statement. Thus, using a 1-5 scoring format, scores attainable on the DRS may range from a minimum of 32 to a maximum of 160.

Dean (1961) garnered the nearly 150 items from which the DRS was constructed from scientific writings, literature, and popular songs. Other than differentiating between romantic love and companionship love, Dean (1961, 1964) did not operate out of any particular theoretical framework in defining romanticism. Despite this eclecticism, 19 of the 32 scored items of the DRS seem consistent with the psychoanalytic definition of romanticism and romantic love (see Chapter 1).

Reliability of the DRS was tested by the split-half technique, and a correlation of .90 was obtained (when corrected for attenuation) on the final sample of 194 subjects (Dean, 1961). On the basis of a 1-5 scoring format, reported observed scores on the DRS varied from 47 to 136 covering almost the entire possible range (32 to 160) and approximating a normal curve (Dean, 1961). These results argue against the possibility that the Romanticism scores obtained were merely artifacts.

#### The Levine Romanticism Scale

The Levine Romanticism Scale (LRS) was developed for use in the present study. Unlike earlier romanticism measures (Dean, 1961; Gross, 1944; Knox & Sporkowski, 1968; Rubin, 1970), which were all eclectically derived, the LRS (see Appendix B) adheres closely to Freud's definition of romanticism and romantic love. The LRS

consists of 44 items concerned with the experience of love. The LRS items are designed to tap 22 attributes of romanticism and romantic love found in Freud's writings. In order to preclude the possibility of a unidirectional response set distorting the score, half of the LRS items are worded in a positive direction with the other half worded in a negative direction. Subjects are requested to indicate degree of agreement or disagreement with each item on a 5-point scale.

The construct validity of the LRS was established by having three experts in the area of psychoanalytic theory confirm that the scale items do indeed appear to tap the attributes of romanticism and romantic love delineated by Freud. Using the Spearman-Brown procedure, a split-half reliability correlation of .84 was obtained on the sample of 62 male subjects used in the present study. Obtained scores ranged from a low of 92 to a high of 150. The mean LRS score obtained in the present study was 115.98.

Finally, a correlation of .25 was found to exist between the LRS and the DRS. This reliable ( $p < .025$ ) but weak relationship suggests that the psychoanalytic definition of romanticism and romantic love may be quite different from the eclectic conventional notions of romanticism in America upon which the DRS (Dean, 1961) is based.



All previous romanticism measures have been marked by considerable theoretical inconsistency among the items of which they are comprised. A secondary purpose of the present study has been to construct and validate a romanticism scale designed to be wholly consistent with Freud's definition of romanticism and romantic love in all of its items.

### The Blacky Test

Blum (1949) developed the Blacky pictures to provide an instrument for conducting empirical research pertaining to the psychoanalytic theory of psychosexual development. Since its inception, the Blacky test has been used in a considerable number of studies. Kline (1972) evaluated this projective instrument as a legitimate means for testing hypotheses derived from psychoanalytic theory.

The Blacky test includes 12 cartoon drawings that depict a dog, Blacky, and the rest of its family, consisting of Mama, Papa, and Tippy, a younger sibling. Each of the cards is intended pictorially to elicit responses directly relating to a specific major Freudian concept. Of particular relevance to the present study are Cartoons IV and VI of the Blacky. Cartoon IV is designed to produce responses which are concerned with Oedipal intensity. Cartoon VI is intended to elicit

responses centering on castration anxiety. Both Leichty (1958) and Rabin (1965) have employed the Blacky cards to investigate hypotheses relating to Oedipal intensity and castration anxiety.

The Blacky test is presumed to tap unconscious material. Each subject is exposed to the cards one by one and is requested to make up a story about each in turn. The subject is also asked to reply to a structured set of questions pertaining to each cartoon. Blum (1949) developed criteria for standardizing scoring of the stories elicited from subjects as well as their responses to the structured set of questions for each card. The standardized scoring procedure outlined by Blum (1949) results in the creation of dichotomous groups. It is assumed that the subject will identify with Blacky, the hero of indeterminate sex, and project his or her feelings and thoughts when asked to imagine Blacky's reactions to diverse situations.

#### The Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale

Rotter (1966) devised the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale) with a view toward tapping subjects' beliefs about the nature of the world. The I-E Scale (see Appendix D) is a forced-choice 29-item scale which includes 6 filler items. The test is scored

by the total number of external choices, and is regarded as a measure of generalized expectancy.

Item analysis and factor analysis of the I-E Scale suggest it possesses reasonably high internal consistency for an additive scale. Test-retest reliability for combined males and females over a 1-month period was found to be .72. The I-E Scale correlates satisfactorily with other methods of assessing the same variable such as Likert scale, interview assessments, and ratings from a story-completion technique (Rotter, 1966). The test shows reasonable homogeneity considering that items are sampling broadly generalized characteristics over a number of different situations.

Although the I-E Scale is not built upon the premises of psychoanalytic theory, Rabin (1976) found that self-rating as internally controlled correlates positively with ego strength. This suggests that the I-E Scale can be germane to investigation of psychoanalytic concepts.

#### The Death Anxiety Scale

The Death Anxiety Scale (DAS) is a 15-item forced-choice test (see Appendix E) constructed and validated by Templer (1970). It was specifically designed to measure anxiety and general affective arousal mobilized by the subject of death (Krieger & Epting, 1974).

Nine of the 15 items that comprise the DAS are keyed "true" and 6 are keyed "false" in order to preclude the possibility that a unidirectional response set might distort the test results.

The 15 test items of the DAS were selected from an initial pool of 40 items devised on a rational basis (Templer, 1970). Seven judges selected the 15 items which they deemed to be most closely associated with death anxiety. Reasonable internal consistency was established by utilizing item-total score biserial correlation coefficients for three independent groups of subjects. Acceptable test-retest reliability was confirmed as well. As for construct validity, the DAS was administered to 21 psychiatric patients who had spontaneously verbalized fear of and preoccupation with death, and a group of controls matched for diagnosis, sex, and approximate age (Templer, 1970). The 21 death anxiety subjects had a DAS mean of 11.62. The control group obtained a mean of 6.77. A  $t$  of 5.79 was significant at the .01 level (two-tailed test). DAS scores also correlated significantly with Boyar's Fear of Death Scale (FODS), another death anxiety measure, and with a sequential word association test (Templer, 1970).

### Subjects

The subjects used in this study were 62 unmarried male undergraduates drawn from the student population of Michigan State University. Subjects were recruited from undergraduate psychology courses and a student dormitory by means of direct appeals and posters. Additionally, several subjects were obtained through advertising in the State News, a student newspaper. All subjects except for those drawn from psychology classes received \$2 for participating in the study. Subjects from psychology classes received extra credits from their professors for volunteering to participate in research projects. All subjects were between 17 and 27 years of age. Subject variables are shown in Table 1.

### Procedure

The subjects (Ss) were contacted by telephone and a mutually convenient time was agreed upon for administration of all of the instruments employed in the study. The experimenter (E) met with each of the 62 Ss individually in an office at Olds Hall. At the outset of the test procedure, the first six cards of the Blacky were administered (Cards IV and VI being the only ones directly germane to the hypotheses under investigation in the present study). The remaining instruments were assigned in a random sequence in order to prevent any

**Table 1: Sample Variables (N = 62).**

| Variable                        |                             | Range | Mean |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|------|
| Age of Subjects                 |                             | 17-27 | 21.6 |
| Number of Siblings <sup>a</sup> |                             | 0- 7  | 2.6  |
| Variable                        |                             | N     |      |
| Position<br>in<br>Family        | Only Child                  | 1     |      |
|                                 | Youngest                    | 18    |      |
|                                 | Middle                      | 20    |      |
|                                 | Oldest                      | 23    |      |
| Parental<br>Mortality           | Both Living                 | 60    |      |
|                                 | Father Dead                 | 1     |      |
|                                 | Father Unknown <sup>b</sup> | 1     |      |

<sup>a</sup>Two subjects have twin brothers.

<sup>b</sup>One subject is an illegitimate child with no knowledge of his real father's identity.

order effects. The entire procedure took an average of 90 minutes to complete.

#### Predictions in Terms of Instruments Employed

To test the hypotheses outlined on pages 68 and 69, the following specific predictions were formulated in terms of the instruments used in this study. Each prediction corresponds with the previously stated hypothesis of the same number.

The variable of romanticism is operationally defined in two ways, each to be considered individually: (1) the score obtained on the Dean Romanticism Scale

(DRS); and (2) the score obtained on the Levine Romanticism Scale (LRS). The variable of Oedipal intensity is operationally defined by ratings of free story and structured question responses to the Oedipal cartoon (Card IV) of the Blacky Test. Castration anxiety (more specifically its intensity) is operationally defined by ratings of free story and structured question responses to the castration cartoon (Card VI) of the Blacky Test. Self-rating as externally controlled is operationally defined by the score obtained on the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale). Lastly, the variable of death anxiety (more specifically its intensity) is operationally defined by the score obtained on the Death Anxiety Scale (DAS).

1. Romanticism in males correlates positively with Oedipal intensity.
2. Romanticism in males correlates positively with castration anxiety.
3. Romanticism in males correlates positively with self-rating as externally controlled.
4. Romanticism in males correlates positively with death anxiety.

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA

Hypothesis 1 and 2 involve the use of the Blacky Test, an instrument which generates data that can best be arranged in dichotomized groups. In the case of these two hypotheses, point-biserial correlations were computed between each pair of variables to be compared. The significance of each of the point-biserial correlation coefficients obtained was assessed with a t-test.

In the case of Hypotheses 3 and 4, product moment ( $r$ ) correlations were computed between each pair of variables to be compared. A critical ratio Z test was performed to test each  $r$  for significance. All hypotheses were stated in a one-directional manner; hence all tests were one-tailed.

## RESULTS

Hypothesis 1. Romanticism in males correlates positively with Oedipal intensity.

Hypothesis 1 was tested by a point-biserial correlation test between Romanticism (DRS and LRS Scores, considered separately) and Oedipal Intensity (ratings obtained on free story and structured question responses to Card IV of the Blacky Test, considered separately and together). Two advanced graduate students in clinical psychology, well versed in psychoanalytic theory, independently rated free story responses to Card IV of the Blacky Test as either "strong" or "not strong" on the dimension of Oedipal intensity. Blum's (1949) criteria for scoring free story responses to the Oedipal card were strictly adhered to in the present study. Inter-judge reliability obtained was 90.32%. When differences in scoring did arise, they were resolved through a review of the test protocols in question and an exchange of views between the two judges. The structured question responses to Card IV of the Blacky Test were rated "strong" or "not strong" on the dimension of Oedipal

intensity in accordance with the scoring criteria devised by Blum (1949).

The point-biserial correlation or  $r = .08$  obtained between DRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity (as measured by ratings of Blacky free story responses) was not significant. The point-biserial correlation of  $r = -.07$  obtained between DRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity (as measured by ratings of Blacky structured question responses) was not significant. Looking at the data in a third way, a point-biserial correlation test was carried out between DRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity on a subsample ( $N=45$ ) comprised only of those Ss who were rated as "strong" or "not strong" on both the free story and structured question responses to Card IV of the Blacky Test. The correlation obtained of  $r = .005$  was not significant (see Table 2 for summary of correlations obtained between DRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity as measured by the Blacky Test).

In addition to the DRS, the LRS was designed and used in the present study to operationalize the variable of Romanticism. The point-biserial correlation of  $r = -.08$  obtained between LRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity (as measured by ratings of Blacky free story responses) was not significant. The correlation of  $r = -.15$  obtained between LRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity (as measured by ratings of Blacky structured question

responses) was not significant. The correlation of  $r = -.15$  obtained between LRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity on a subsample (N=45) comprised only of those Ss who were rated as "strong" or "not strong" on both the free story and structured question responses to Card IV of the Blacky Test was not significant (see Table 3 for summary of correlations obtained between LRS Scores and Oedipal Intensity as measured by the Blacky Test).

Table 2: Coefficients of Correlation for DRS Scores Versus Oedipal Intensity.

| Hypothesis | Variable                                                                                                       | r    | N  |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|
| 1          | DRS Scores versus Oedipal Intensity (free story responses)                                                     | .08  | 62 |
| 1          | DRS Scores versus Oedipal Intensity (structured question responses)                                            | -.07 | 62 |
| 1          | DRS Scores versus Oedipal Intensity (only those Ss rated "strong" or "not strong" on <u>both</u> Blacky parts) | .005 | 45 |

In this table, for N=62, the correlation must be .21 or higher to be significant at the .05 level. For N=45, the correlation must be .24 or higher to be significant at the .05 level.

To summarize, Hypothesis 1 was not supported by the data. No relationship was found between Romanticism and Oedipal Intensity in any of the ways in which these variables were operationalized in the present study.

Table 3: Coefficients of Correlation for LRS Scores  
Versus Oedipal Intensity.

| Hypothesis | Variable                                                                                                          | r    | N  |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|
| 1          | LRS Scores versus Oedipal Intensity (free story responses)                                                        | -.08 | 62 |
| 1          | LRS Scores versus Oedipal Intensity (structured question responses)                                               | -.15 | 62 |
| 1          | LRS Scores versus Oedipal Intensity (only those Ss rated "strong" or "not strong" on <u>both</u> parts of Blacky) | -.15 | 45 |

In this table, for N=62, the correlation must be .21 or higher to be significant at the .05 level. For N=45, the correlation must be .24 or higher to be significant at the .05 level.

Hypothesis 2. Romanticism in males correlates positively with castration anxiety.

Hypothesis 2 was tested by a point-biserial correlation test between Romanticism (DRS and LRS Scores, considered separately) and Castration Anxiety (ratings obtained on free story and structured question responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test, considered separately and together). The free story responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test were rated either as "strong" or "not strong" on the dimension of castration anxiety by two judges who scored the protocols independently. Blum's (1949) scoring criteria constituted the basis for the judgments

which were rendered. Interjudge reliability obtained was 87.09%. Differences in scoring were resolved through review of the data and discussion between the judges. The structured question responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test were rated "strong" or "not strong" on the dimension of castration anxiety in accordance with the scoring criteria delineated by Blum (1949).

The point-biserial correlation of  $r = -.17$  obtained between DRS Scores and Castration Anxiety (as measured by ratings of Blacky free story responses) was not significant. The point-biserial correlation of  $r = 0.00$  obtained between DRS Scores and Castration Anxiety (as measured by ratings of Blacky structured question responses) obviously was not significant. Looking at the data in a third way, a point-biserial correlation test was carried out between DRS Scores and Castration Anxiety on a subsample ( $N=39$ ) comprised only of those Ss who were rated as "strong" or "not strong" on both the free story and structured question responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test. The correlation obtained of  $r = -.16$  was not significant (see Table 4 for summary of correlations obtained between DRS Scores and Castration Anxiety as measured by the Blacky Test).

In testing Hypothesis 2, the LRS was also used as a means of operationalizing the variable of Romanticism. The point-biserial correlation of  $r = -.14$

Table 4: Coefficients of Correlation for DRS Scores  
Versus Castration Anxiety.

| Hypothesis | Variables                                                                                                   | r    | N  |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|
| 2          | DRS Scores versus Castration Anxiety (free story responses)                                                 | -.17 | 62 |
| 2          | DRS Scores versus Castration Anxiety (structured question responses)                                        | 0.00 | 62 |
| 2          | DRS Scores versus Castration Anxiety (only those Ss rated "strong" or "not strong" on both parts of Blacky) | -.16 | 39 |

In this table, for N=62, the correlation must be .21 or higher to be significant at the .05 level. For N=39, the correlation must be .27 or higher to be significant at the .05 level.

obtained between LRS Scores and Castration Anxiety (as measured by ratings of Blacky free story responses) was not significant. The correlation of  $r = -.11$  obtained between LRS Scores and Castration Anxiety (as measured by ratings of Blacky structured question responses) was not significant. The correlation of  $r = -.17$  obtained between LRS Scores and Castration Anxiety on a subsample (N=39) comprised only of those Ss who were rated as "strong" or "not strong" on both the free story and structured question responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test was not significant (see Table 5 for summary of correlations obtained between LRS Scores and Castration Anxiety as measured by the Blacky Test).

Table 5: Coefficients of Correlation for LRS Scores  
Versus Castration Anxiety.

| Hypothesis | Variables                                                                                                          | r    | N  |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|
| 2          | LRS Scores versus Castration Anxiety (free story responses)                                                        | -.14 | 62 |
| 2          | LRS Scores versus Castration Anxiety (structured question responses)                                               | -.11 | 62 |
| 2          | LRS Scores versus Castration Anxiety (only those Ss rated "strong" or "not strong" on <u>both</u> parts of Blacky) | -.17 | 39 |

In this table, for N=62, the correlation must be .21 or higher to be significant at the .05 level. For N=39, the correlation must be .27 or higher to be significant at the .05 level.

To summarize, Hypothesis 2 was not supported by the data. No significant relationship was found between Romanticism and Castration Anxiety in any of the ways in which these variables were operationalized. If anything, there was a slight trend in a direction opposite of that predicted.

Hypothesis 3. Romanticism in males correlates positively with self-rating as externally controlled.

Hypothesis 3 was tested by a product-moment correlation between Romanticism (DRS and LRS Scores, considered separately) and Self-Rating as Externally

Controlled (I-E Scale Scores). The correlation of  $r = .288$  obtained between DRS Scores and Self-Rating as Externally Controlled was significant at the .01 level of confidence. The correlation of  $r = .254$  obtained between LRS Scores and Self-Rating as Externally Controlled was significant at the .025 level of confidence.

To summarize, Hypothesis 3 was upheld by the data (see Table 6 for summary). There does appear to be a positive relationship between romanticism in males and self-rating as externally controlled.

Table 6: Coefficients of Correlation for Romanticism Scales Versus Self-Rating as Externally Controlled.

| Hypothesis | Variables                                                        | r     | N  |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| 3          | DRS Scores versus I-E Scale Ratings of External Locus of Control | .288* | 62 |
| 3          | LRS Scores versus I-E Scale Ratings of External Locus of Control | .25** | 62 |

\*p < .01.

\*\*p < .025.

Hypothesis 4. Romanticism in males correlates positively with death anxiety.

Hypothesis 4 was tested by a product-moment correlation between Romanticism (DRS and LRS Scores,

considered separately) and Death Anxiety (DAS Scores). The correlation of  $r = .04$  obtained between DRS Scores and DAS Scores was not significant. The correlation of  $r = .07$  obtained between LRS Scores and DAS Scores was also not significant.

The data, therefore (see Table 7 for summary) did not support Hypothesis 4. No relationship was found between Romanticism and Death Anxiety in any of the ways in which these variables were operationalized in the present study.

Table 7: Coefficients of Correlation for Romanticism Scales Versus Death Anxiety.

| Hypothesis | Variables                    | r   | N  |
|------------|------------------------------|-----|----|
| 4          | DRS Scores versus DAS Scores | .04 | 62 |
| 4          | LRS Scores versus DAS Scores | .07 | 62 |

In this table the correlation must be .21 or higher to be significant at the .05 level.

#### Additional Results

Some additional results which fall outside of the confines of the original hypotheses are worth noting briefly. There has been considerable debate both within and outside of psychoanalytic circles regarding the relationship of fear of death to castration anxiety (see Review of the Literature above). Indeed, orthodox

psychoanalytic theory calls into question the very existence of death anxiety as a primary (as opposed to derivative) phenomenon.

Given this controversy, the present study included a point-biserial correlation test between Death Anxiety (DAS Scores) and Castration Anxiety (ratings obtained on free story and structured question responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test, considered separately and together). Blacky Test responses were scored using the procedures described in the discussion of results pertaining to Hypothesis 2 (see above).

The point-biserial correlation of  $r = .02$  obtained between DAS Scores and Castration Anxiety (as measured by ratings of Blacky free story responses) was not significant. The point-biserial correlation of  $r = .09$  obtained between DAS Scores and Castration Anxiety (as measured by ratings of Blacky structured question responses) was not significant. The point-biserial correlation of  $r = .08$  obtained between DAS Scores and Castration Anxiety on a subsample ( $N=39$ ) comprised only of those Ss who were rated as "strong" or "not strong" on both the free story and structured question responses to Card VI of the Blacky Test also was insignificant (see Table 8 for summary of correlations obtained between DAS Scores and Castration Anxiety as measured by the Blacky Test).

**Table 8: Coefficients of Correlation for Death Anxiety Scores Versus Castration Anxiety.**

| Variables                                                                                                   | r   | N  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| DAS Scores versus Castration Anxiety<br>(free story responses)                                              | .02 | 62 |
| DAS Scores versus Castration Anxiety<br>(structured question responses)                                     | .09 | 62 |
| DAS Scores versus Castration Anxiety<br>(only Ss rated "strong" or "not strong"<br>on both parts of Blacky) | .08 | 39 |

In this table, for N=62, the correlation must be .21 or higher to be significant at the .05 level. For N=39, the correlation must be .27 or higher to be significant at the .05 level.

In brief, the data obtained in the present study did not support the orthodox psychoanalytic view that death anxiety is derived from castration anxiety, or the corollary that in his unconscious, man feels himself to be immortal.

Revisionist thinkers within the psychoanalytic camp have suggested that pre-Oedipal conflicts and needs may play a central role in the psychodynamics of romantic love (see Review of the Literature above). To explore this alternative to Freud's point of view, a point-biserial correlation test was carried out between Romanticism (DRS and LRS Scores, considered separately) and Oral Eroticism (ratings obtained on free story responses to Card I of the Blacky Test). Two judges

independently scored the free story responses to Card I of the Blacky Test as "strong" or "not strong" on the dimension of oral eroticism. Blum's (1949) criteria constituted the basis for the scoring. Interjudge reliability obtained was 93.5%.

The correlation of  $r = .22$  obtained between DRS Scores and Oral Eroticism (Blacky free story ratings on responses to Card I) was significant at the .05 level of confidence. The correlation of  $r = .109$  obtained between LRS Scores and Oral Eroticism was not significant but represented a slight trend in the same direction as that obtained between DRS Scores and Oral Eroticism.

Blum's (1949) criteria were used to score structured question responses to Card I of the Blacky Test. Using this procedure, only 2 of the 62 Ss in the present study were rated as "strong" with respect to disturbance on the Oral Eroticism Card of the Blacky Test. The striking lack of congruity between free story ratings and structured question response ratings in this instance differed sharply from the results pertaining to Cards IV and VI obtained in the present study (see above). This suggests Blum's (1949) scoring criteria for structured question responses to Card I may warrant reconsideration. This, however, is a side issue which falls outside of the focus of the present study.

To summarize, the data in part upheld the possibility that pre-Oedipal conflicts and concerns play a role in the psychodynamics of romantic love (see Table 9 for summary of correlations obtained between Romanticism Scales and Oral Eroticism).

Table 9: Coefficients of Correlation for Romanticism Measures Versus Oral Eroticism Disturbance.

| Variables                                                              | r    | N  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|
| LRS Scores versus Oral Eroticism<br>Disturbance (free story responses) | .109 | 62 |
| DRS Scores versus Oral Eroticism<br>Disturbance (free story responses) | .22* | 62 |

\*p < .05.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Overall support of the predictions did not occur. Of the four hypotheses which were tested, only one was upheld by the data. The following several paragraphs explore possible implications of the results taken as a whole. A critical exploration of some of the problems relating to theory, design, and sample will be incorporated into this discussion of the results.

### The Findings

Hypothesis 1, that romanticism in males correlates positively with Oedipal intensity, was not substantiated by this research. No significant relationship was found between the variables of Romanticism and Oedipal Intensity. This result contradicts Freud's basic premise that romanticism in males originates predominantly in unresolved erotic attachment to the original love object--mother. While raising important doubts about the correctness of Freud's view of romanticism in males, the data obtained in the present study are far from conclusive in this regard. The results may be explainable in terms other than outright rejection of the centerpiece of Freud's theory of romantic love.

Freud (1905) compared the experience of intense romantic love to that of a hypnotic-like state of mind. Romanticism scores obtained from Ss in the present study may have been influenced, to an important degree, by whether the respondent felt himself at the time of his participation to be involved in a romantic relationship. Even a highly romantic person may revert to a more dispassionate, "realistic" view of love in the absence of an ongoing romance. If Freud was correct in his assertion that romanticism involves regression to unresolved Oedipal concerns, it is not a necessary corollary that high romantics constantly live in a state of regression. On the contrary, the historical determinism embodied in the metapsychology of the genetic point of view does not rule out a continual dialectic between present circumstances and past events. The present study neglected to ascertain whether the subjects who participated felt themselves to be in love at the time the test instruments were administered. This experiential oversight places some constraints on the theoretical inferences which can justifiably be drawn from the data at hand.

There is another possible explanation for the absence of empirical support for Hypothesis 1 which is conceptual in nature. The present study was built upon the theoretical assumption that the "special type of choice of object made by men," described by Freud (1910),

is an extreme or pure form of romanticism which infuses many forms of human loving to one degree or another. In fact, "the special type of object choice made by men" may be a singular and psychopathological phenomenon which differs essentially from popular notions of romantic love even though it shares some of the latter's characteristics. The small (but significant) correlation obtained between the DRS (derived from popular conceptions of romanticism) and the LRS (based largely on Freud's description of "a special choice of object made by men") tends to confirm that there is more of a distinction than had been anticipated between the phenomenon Freud delineated and more eclectic definitions of romanticism.

If Freud's (1910) special choice of object made by men is a unique, relatively rare, psychopathological syndrome which shares some of the features of romanticism but yet is qualitatively different from it, then it is possible that none of the Ss who took part in the present study met the criteria of the singular phenomenon described by the founder of psychoanalysis. In other words, although the LRS, in fact, may be an accurate measure of the special variant of love which was analyzed by Freud, the sample used in the present study may not have contained a single individual who was extreme enough to be designated legitimately as a "romantic" in the special

sense previously discussed. Hypothesis 1, that there is a positive correlation between Romanticism and Oedipal Intensity in males, may only be applicable to individuals who unqualifiedly fall into Freud's (1910) category of "a special choice of object made by men." In short, the present study may have suffered from definitional imprecision.

In yet another vein, revisionist psychoanalytic theorists (Evans, 1953; Jekels & Bergler, 1949) have emphasized unresolved pre-Oedipal fixation to the mother in their explanations of the complex fabric of romanticism and romantic love (see Review of the Literature above). Some support for this viewpoint emerged in the present study in that DRS Scores correlated positively with disturbance on the dimension of Oral Eroticism (Blacky Test free story responses to Card I) at the .05 level of significance. This inconclusive but intriguing piece of data provides an alternative possibility in accounting for the overall lack of support for Hypothesis 1. It also suggests the pre-Oedipal approach to a psychodynamic understanding of romanticism is worthy of additional investigation. Freud (1926) himself conceded that the elements of dependency and masochism which he discerned in romanticism and romantic love might originate in the early pre-Oedipal relationship that existed between mother and child. Perhaps erroneously, Freud

concluded that pre-Oedipal factors were more important in the development of women than of men. In his theory of romantic love, Freud's emphasis on Oedipal fixation may have been overstated and/or misplaced.

Hypothesis 2, that romanticism in males correlates positively with castration anxiety, also was not confirmed. This result, coupled with the absence of support for Hypothesis 1, tends to strengthen the doubts which the present study raises concerning the validity and/or comprehensiveness of Freud's view of romanticism and romantic love.

The methodological and conceptual flaws which may have marred the present study (see discussion of Hypothesis 1 above) are potentially relevant in explaining the absence of empirical support for Hypothesis 2. Once again, however, it is worth considering the possibility that while Freud was correct in emphasizing the historical remnants of the mother-child relationship in spawning romanticism and romantic love, he may have erred in assigning Oedipal factors primacy over pre-Oedipal determinants. Castration anxiety would appear to be of negligible importance in the pre-Oedipal attachment of the child to his mother.

With respect to Hypothesis 1, it was suggested that Freud's (1910) description of "a special choice of object made by men" may represent a circumscribed

psychopathological state which shares some of the features of romanticism but yet differs qualitatively from it. It was further speculated that none of the Ss who participated in the present study may have met Freud's (1910) criteria even though the LRS was specifically designed to measure the characteristics of this syndrome. To further clarify this possibility, it would be helpful to do a factor analysis of the responses obtained on the LRS with a view toward discovering whether any of the Ss used in the present study scored high on some of the more blatantly psychopathological items contained in the scale (for example, masochistic components, tendency to become infatuated only with married women, etc.). Oedipal intensity and castration anxiety may correlate positively with extreme examples of what Freud termed "a special choice of object made by men." As the results obtained in the present research suggest, there may be no such correlation as regards more commonly encountered variants of romanticism and romantic love.

Hypothesis 3, that romanticism in males correlates positively with self-rating as externally controlled, was upheld strongly by the data developed in the present study. Both measures of Romanticism (the DRS and the LRS) correlated positively with self-rating as externally controlled (as measured by the I-E Scale) at the .01 and .025 levels of confidence, respectively.

These results gain additional cogency when they are set against an earlier study (Dion & Dion, 1973) which relates directly to Hypothesis 3. Using the I-E Scale in conjunction with various measures of romanticism which they designed, Dion and Dion (1973) found that proportionally fewer "internals" than "externals" reported having been romantically attached, and that "internals" experience romantic attraction as less mysterious and volatile than "externals."

In the present study, Hypothesis 3 germinated within a psychoanalytic framework. The central assumptions of this psychoanalytic rationale were that unconscious determinants, specifically unresolved Oedipal strivings, are fundamental to understanding the experience of romantic love and, moreover, that unconscious determinants are experienced as unfathomable forces external to oneself. Freud (1900) put it succinctly when he claimed that Oedipus Rex teaches that man is not master of his own fate, but must instead bow to the will of the gods. Freud demystified "the will of the gods" by designating it as none other than man's own unconscious.

Given the failure of the data to support Hypotheses 1 and 2, which contain the central tenets of Freud's theory of romanticism and romantic love, it is unwarranted to interpret the strong confirmation of Hypothesis 3 previously reported as proof of the validity of Freud's

point of view. Although the weight of available evidence does indicate that "externals" (those who feel themselves to be more externally controlled) are more romantic than "internals," the origins of this relationship remain obscure.

Stepping outside of the psychoanalytic rubric for the moment, alternative explanations for the relationship that appears to exist between romanticism and the feeling of being externally controlled have grown out of a social learning approach to understanding human behavior. Dion and Dion (1973) acknowledge that the prevailing cultural stereotype of romantic love is one of an ineffable, overpowering force which consumes its hapless victims. They (Dion & Dion, 1973) suggest that "internals" may be less sensitive to the cultural stereotype of romantic love because of their penchant for interpreting events in terms of personal causes. From this vantage point, "internals" experience romantic attraction as less mysterious, less intense, less volatile, and less idealized than their "external" counterparts.

It has also been proposed that "internals" are more averse to being influenced than "externals." It might follow that since intimacy intrinsically involves heightened feelings of influenceability and vulnerability, "internals" are less susceptible to experiencing romantic

love (Dion & Dion, 1973). These arguments, rooted in social learning theory, endeavor to explain human behavior in wholly rational terms. In addition to denying the importance of unconscious determinants, advocates of the social learning approach rely on tautological thinking in their proposed explanations of the phenomenon in question.

Taking another tack, Rabin (1976) found a positive relationship exists between ego strength and ratings on the I-E Scale in the direction of higher internal locus of control. Freud (1914) believed the idealization of the loved one in romantic love entails a substantial transfer of narcissism from the lover to the love object. The lover's self-worth is largely contingent upon acceptance of him by the woman whom he adores (Freud, 1914). The nexus between external locus of control and romanticism may be understandable in terms of the weakened ego strength of romantics, especially while they are experiencing a romantic relationship. As previously noted, Freud (1926), for all his emphasis on the Oedipus complex, traced the intense feelings of dependency inherent in romantic love to the early pre-Oedipal relationship between mother and child. Further investigation may reveal that regression to pre-Oedipal levels, with concomitant manifestations of dependency and weakened ego

strength, is a key to understanding more fully the relationship between romanticism and external locus of control.

Hypothesis 4, that romanticism in males correlates positively with death anxiety, was not upheld by the data developed in the present study. In a related post hoc assay of the data, no significant relationship was found to exist between castration anxiety and death anxiety. These results, considered together, further militate against the orthodox Freudian view which roots romanticism in Oedipal concerns and regards death anxiety as a secondary fear that derives from castration anxiety.

Although the findings of the present study call for rejection of Hypothesis 4, it should be noted that the measure used to operationalize death anxiety, the DAS, may be inadequate in its failure to encompass the multilevel appraisal of fear of death so eloquently argued for by Feifel and Branscomb (1973). Using fantasy productions and word association tests in addition to direct questioning of subjects concerning the extent of their fears about death, Feifel and Branscomb (1973) found that the dominant conscious response to fear of death is one of rejection; that of fantasy or imagery, one of ambivalence; and that of the unconscious, one of outright negativity. In addition to other findings,

Feifel and Branscomb (1973) concluded that there is indeed a primary fear of death in man's unconscious.

The DAS is an instrument which is primarily a measure of conscious attitudes towards death. To explore more comprehensively the recurrent linking of romanticism and death that wends its way through the literature of many epochs, it is important to probe fear of death at the deeper levels described by Feifel and Branscomb (1973). The data obtained in the present study constitute only a beginning in evaluating the bond between romantic love and death. Similarly, a final determination regarding the hypothesized relationship between castration anxiety and fear of death is not possible in the absence of multilevel approaches to operationalizing death anxiety.

#### Directions for Further Research

Romanticism and romantic love have long been avoided as subjects for systematic investigation by researchers in psychology and related disciplines. Psychoanalytic theory contains what is probably the most comprehensive and ambitious effort to trace the origins of romantic sentiments. Despite the failure of the present study to produce overall support for some of the key tenets of Freud's model of romanticism, the results represent only an initial foray into a very complex area

of inquiry. In the course of conducting and thinking through various facets of the present study, certain directions for further research have suggested themselves.

As a general proposition, future testing of the psychoanalytic theory of romanticism should be designed to include subjects who are experientially immersed in what Freud termed "the hypnotic-like state" of romantic love. It is at least plausible that regression to Oedipal or pre-Oedipal stages which may be an intrinsic aspect of the romantic experience is only activated (and detectable) when the psychodynamic constellation of any given individual is influenced by the present, ongoing experience of romantic love. This presumes the existence of a vibrant dialectic between present and past rather than recourse to some form of sterile determinism. Concretely, Oedipal intensity or castration anxiety, as measured by a projective instrument like the Blacky Test, may vary considerably in response to the balance of forces that prevails in a person's life at any given moment. The present study omitted to take this factor sufficiently into account, and future studies might profit by trying to encompass its effect.

Romanticism is, by its very nature, difficult to operationalize and measure. In order to accomplish this challenging task, it may be necessary to use other means in addition to romanticism scales. Structured

interviews and/or case studies are potentially fruitful methods for discriminating intense romantics from their less romantic counterparts. In the discussion of results above, it was suggested that Freud's description of "a special choice of object made by men" may be a highly distinctive, psychopathological state that shares some of the features of more common variants of romanticism. If that is the case, then hypotheses based upon Freud's theory of romanticism ought to be tested using individuals who stringently conform to the singular type of romantic love that Freud described. In the present study, none of the Ss may have been "romantic" in the psychopathological sense of the term. This lends additional support to the notion that means other than scales may be essential in subjecting to experimental scrutiny Freud's view of romanticism and romantic love.

Surely, further exploration of the origins of romanticism should be directed towards assessing the role of pre-Oedipal factors. Freud, for all his emphasis on unresolved Oedipal strivings, conceded that the elements of dependency and masochism which enter into romantic relationships originate to a significant degree in the pre-Oedipal stage of development. Some preliminary support for this point of view was found in the present study (see Additional Results above). Future attempts to investigate romanticism might establish more

conclusively that there is a link between fixation at the oral stage and the propensity to be romantic. A more ambitious project would entail consideration of whether and to what degree a combination of pre-Oedipal and Oedipal concerns enters into the phenomenon of romanticism. In pursuing the possibility of an intimate connection between pre-Oedipal concerns and romantic love, women as well as men should be included in the sample population.

Finally, the LRS was designed to adhere very closely to Freud's definition of "a special choice of object made by men." The present study established that the LRS has sufficient construct validity and internal reliability to warrant additional exploration of the instrument itself and the uses to which it may be applied. The LRS should be administered to a large sample of men and women of diverse ages and social classes. The results obtained should then be subjected to factor analysis in order to determine more precisely just what it is that the scale is measuring. The LRS and a more eclectically based romanticism scale, the DRS, appear to be related in a small but significant manner. Factor analysis of the LRS might elucidate the differences between Freud's "special choice of object made by men" and more common variants of romanticism.

Casler's (1973) observation that the instruments for rigorous testing of the psychoanalytic theory of love and other facets of psychoanalytic theory have yet to be devised represents a caveat that should be attached to the data obtained in the present study. Before Freud's emphasis on the role of the Oedipus complex in romanticism and romantic love can be conclusively discarded, it will be necessary to discover measures in addition to the Blacky Test which can tap variables like Oedipal intensity and castration anxiety. The present study, therefore, should not discourage further testing of the major premises of Freud's view of romanticism and romantic love.

Dr. Norman Abeles of Michigan State University has raised one additional observation which has potentially important implications for future research relating to psychoanalytic concepts. This observation is that the vast majority of studies which have tried to establish correlations between data elicited by projective techniques and data elicited by appeals to more conscious levels of functioning (such as questionnaires) have failed to obtain significant results. Researchers should be cognizant of the difficulties that may arise in attempting to correlate experimental results which originate at different levels of consciousness. This difficulty may well have been in evidence in the present study.

## SUMMARY

This study was designed to synthesize and articulate a psychoanalytic theory of romanticism and romantic love, and to generate and test certain hypotheses relating to that theory. Freud regarded unresolved conflicts stemming from the Oedipus complex as the crucible in which romanticism in males develops.

In the present study, it was hypothesized that romanticism in males would correlate positively with Oedipal intensity, castration anxiety, and death anxiety (which in orthodox psychoanalytic circles is viewed as a derivation of castration anxiety). It was further theorized that romanticism in males would correlate positively with self-rating as externally controlled.

To test the above hypotheses, Dean's (1961) Romanticism Scale (DRS) was used as a measure of Romanticism. In addition, the Levine Romanticism Scale (LRS) was developed specifically for this study and was constructed to conform closely to the characteristics of romanticism delineated by Freud. Cards IV and VI of the Blacky Test (Blum, 1949) were used to measure, respectively, Oedipal Intensity and Castration Anxiety. The DAS (Templer, 1970) was used to measure Death Anxiety.

The Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale was employed to measure self-rating as externally controlled. All of these instruments were administered to 62 unmarried male university undergraduates.

Overall support for the hypotheses advanced in this study did not occur. Of the four main hypotheses, only Hypothesis 3, that romanticism in males correlates positively with self-rating as externally controlled, was confirmed by the data. Additionally, some preliminary evidence was developed which indicates that pre-Oedipal concerns may be more crucial to an understanding of romanticism than Freud envisaged.

In discussing the results of the present study and suggesting possible directions for future research, problems of theory and design were touched upon. It was suggested that problems of definition regarding the content of romanticism remain and that the quest to develop new measures of this phenomenon be continued. It was also pointed out that additional analysis of the LRS might elucidate the distinctions that exist between Freud's (1910) definition of "a special choice of object made by men" and more eclectic notions of romanticism.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### THE DEAN ROMANTICISM SCALE

Most people marry for love; but love enough to marry on is difficult to describe. Below are statements we have obtained from young people in love, from magazines, from newspapers, etc. Would you please give us your opinion? THERE ARE NO "RIGHT" OR "WRONG" ANSWERS. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Please read each statement carefully. Then mark each statement with the response from those listed below which most nearly fits your beliefs.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 1. Love is a mutual responsiveness.
- \_\_\_ 2. Love is the strange bewilderment which overtakes one person on account of another person.
- \_\_\_ 3. People truly in love try to play down their differences.
- \_\_\_ 4. Deep love grows through many shared experiences.
- \_\_\_ 5. One can't help falling in love if he (she) meets the right person.
- \_\_\_ 6. Parents should not attempt to influence their children's selection of a mate.
- \_\_\_ 7. Love includes willing self-restraint, at times, for the sake of the other person.
- \_\_\_ 8. True love wouldn't be affected by poverty.
- \_\_\_ 9. "Every time we are near each other we get a funny feeling inside" is a good sign of being in love.
- \_\_\_ 10. One doesn't "fall in love;" it has to be achieved.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 11. The wish to be with someone constantly is a good test of love.
- \_\_\_ 12. Perfect love means one is always satisfied with his (her) partner.
- \_\_\_ 13. "Marriage for convenience" can be successful.
- \_\_\_ 14. One can truly love only once.
- \_\_\_ 15. True love is not based at all on physical attraction.
- \_\_\_ 16. All love is tainted, at times, with some anger and hostility.
- \_\_\_ 17. Problems always work out when two people are really in love.
- \_\_\_ 18. People in love are often oblivious to their surroundings.
- \_\_\_ 19. Real love can only be founded on a close acquaintance with the whole personality.
- \_\_\_ 20. Love usually makes the heart beat faster.
- \_\_\_ 21. The strength of your feelings towards each other demonstrates the fact that you were made for each other.
- \_\_\_ 22. Love can develop after marriage.
- \_\_\_ 23. People do not need to have a long engagement if they are made for each other.
- \_\_\_ 24. True love lasts forever.
- \_\_\_ 25. It's impossible to think one is in love when he (she) is only "in love with love."
- \_\_\_ 26. Love sometimes gives one a sickly feeling.
- \_\_\_ 27. When in love, it is hard to see the other's faults.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 28. Expecting to find all things in one woman or man in unrealistic.
- \_\_\_ 29. A loss of appetite usually accompanies true love.
- \_\_\_ 30. Love knows no bounds.
- \_\_\_ 31. The marriage ceremony marks the beginning of true love, not the culmination of it.
- \_\_\_ 32. Love is an "all-or-nothing" feeling; there is no in-between.
- \_\_\_ 33. One in love should just love and not reason why.
- \_\_\_ 34. True love grows out of a deep respect for each other.
- \_\_\_ 35. One in love will never be bored.
- \_\_\_ 36. One shouldn't strive to maintain love; it maintains itself.
- \_\_\_ 37. Marriage requires hard work in order to succeed.
- \_\_\_ 38. Love will find a way..
- \_\_\_ 39. If it's true love, one won't need to actively seek the other.
- \_\_\_ 40. The way people fall in love is largely determined by the society they live in.
- \_\_\_ 41. If one's marriage turns out to be a failure, it was because he (she) chose the wrong mate.
- \_\_\_ 42. Happiness is inevitable in true love.
- \_\_\_ 43. Love doesn't happen, it's learned.
- \_\_\_ 44. People in love are always considerate of each other.
- \_\_\_ 45. Life without being in love is barren.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 46. "Love at first sight" is physical attraction,  
not real affection.
- \_\_\_ 47. It's love if it makes you feel good.
- \_\_\_ 48. Opposites attract each other.
- \_\_\_ 49. One can be in love and still want his (her)  
own way.
- \_\_\_ 50. You really fall in love just once in a lifetime.

## APPENDIX B

### THE LEVINE ROMANTICISM SCALE

Please read each statement carefully. Then mark each statement with the response from those listed below which most accurately represents your experience and point of view. THERE ARE NO "RIGHT" OR "WRONG" ANSWERS.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 1. What I am in love, it isn't all that intense an experience for me.
- \_\_\_ 2. Based on my own experience, the deepest love is not returned (reciprocated).
- \_\_\_ 3. When I am in love, I am active and about a lot.
- \_\_\_ 4. When I am in love, I often feel worthless and inferior.
- \_\_\_ 5. When I am in love, I try to obey my beloved's every wish and command.
- \_\_\_ 6. I often find it frightening to be with the woman I love.
- \_\_\_ 7. Sex is the most important factor in love for me.
- \_\_\_ 8. Love is more a "meeting of souls" than a matter of sex.
- \_\_\_ 9. For me, love is an overwhelming and intense experience.
- \_\_\_ 10. When I am in love, I become more involved and interested in the world around me.
- \_\_\_ 11. When I am in love, I feel confused, irrational, and less certain of my judgment.
- \_\_\_ 12. Love seems to inspire me to act.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 13. When I am in love, it's hard for me to do anything.
- \_\_\_ 14. Even when I am in love, I feel I could live without my beloved.
- \_\_\_ 15. I usually fall in love with a woman who does not need my protection.
- \_\_\_ 16. Even though I am in love, I recognize my beloved's faults.
- \_\_\_ 17. To be in love is the opposite of suffering.
- \_\_\_ 18. Love is a matter of fate, not choice.
- \_\_\_ 19. Love always seems to end badly for me.
- \_\_\_ 20. As a rule, my love relationships are full of obstacles.
- \_\_\_ 21. In general, what my beloved thinks of me does not affect my self-image.
- \_\_\_ 22. I can only love deeply when that love is returned.
- \_\_\_ 23. When I am in love, I feel I couldn't live without my beloved.
- \_\_\_ 24. I am never afraid to be with my beloved.
- \_\_\_ 25. When I am in love, I lose interest in everything else.
- \_\_\_ 26. I am much more likely to fall in love with a woman who is involved with another guy than with a woman who is unattached.
- \_\_\_ 27. For me, love usually ends in fulfillment and satisfaction.
- \_\_\_ 28. I find true love takes a long time to build.
- \_\_\_ 29. For me, jealousy is very much a part of love.

SA -- indicates Strongly Agree  
A -- indicates Agree  
U -- indicates Uncertain  
D -- indicates Disagree  
SD -- indicates Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_ 30. I often seem to fall in love with a woman who needs to be rescued.
- \_\_\_ 31. I am much more likely to fall in love with a woman who is unattached than with a woman who is involved with another guy.
- \_\_\_ 32. When I am in love, I feel great about myself.
- \_\_\_ 33. For me, true love is love at first sight.
- \_\_\_ 34. When I am in love, I daydream and fantasize more than act.
- \_\_\_ 35. To love is to suffer, based on my experience.
- \_\_\_ 36. Love is a matter of choice, not destiny.
- \_\_\_ 37. I generally feel equal or superior to the woman I love.
- \_\_\_ 38. Usually my love relationships are free of obstacles.
- \_\_\_ 39. I usually feel very inadequate in relation to my beloved.
- \_\_\_ 40. Even though I am in love, I don't put my beloved's wishes ahead of my own.
- \_\_\_ 41. When I am in love, what I think of myself depends almost entirely on what my beloved thinks of me.
- \_\_\_ 42. When I am in love, my beloved seems perfect.
- \_\_\_ 43. When I am in love, I feel clear-headed, rational, and sure of my judgment.
- \_\_\_ 44. When I am in love, I'm rarely, if ever, jealous.

## APPENDIX C

### CARTOONS USED IN THE BLACKY PICTURES TECHNIQUE



Frontispiece: Cast of Characters



Cartoon I: Oral Eroticism



Cartoon II: Oral Sadism



Cartoon III: Anal Sadism



Cartoon IV: Oedipal Intensity



Cartoon V: Masturbation Guilt



Cartoon VI: Castration Anxiety (Males);  
Penis Envy (Females)



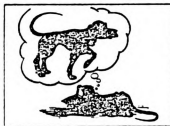
Cartoon VII: Positive Identification



Cartoon VIII: Sibling Rivalry



Cartoon IX: Guilt Feelings



Cartoon X: Positive Ego Ideal (Males);  
Love-object (Females)



Cartoon XI: Positive Ego Ideal (Females);  
Love-object (Males)

## APPENDIX D

### SOCIAL REACTION INVENTORY (I-E SCALE)

We are interested in the way different people look at things which happen in our society. We have listed below 29 pairs of statements. You will probably agree more with one of the two statements than you will with the other one. Sometimes neither of the two statements will really say what you would like for it to say. If this happens, just choose the one which is closest to what you believe.

There are no right or wrong answers. Just choose the one which is closest to what you really believe, and circle the appropriate letter.

Go ahead and start. Remember to choose the one which is closest to what you really believe.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. A. Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.  
B. The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.
2. A. Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.  
B. People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.
3. A. One of the major reasons why we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.  
B. There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.
4. A. In the long run people get the respect they deserve in this world.  
B. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he tries.

Social Reaction Inventory  
Continued

- 5. A. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
- B. Most students don't realize the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.
- 6. A. Without the right breaks one cannot be an effective leader.
- B. Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.
- 7. A. No matter how hard you try some people just don't like you.
- B. People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others.
- 8. A. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality.
- B. It is one's experiences in life which determine what they're like.
- 9. A. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
- B. Trusting to fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.
- 10. A. In the case of the well prepared student there is rarely if ever such a thing as an unfair test.
- B. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.
- 11. A. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
- B. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.
- 12. A. The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions.
- B. This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.

Social Reaction Inventory  
Continued

13. A. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.
- B. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.
14. A. There are certain people who are just no good.
- B. There is some good in everybody.
15. A. In my case getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.
- B. Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.
16. A. Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place first.
- B. Getting people to do the right thing depends upon ability, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
17. A. As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are victims of forces we can neither understand, nor control.
- B. By taking an active part in political and social affairs the people can control world events.
18. A. Most people don't realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings.
- B. There really is no such thing as "luck."
19. A. One should always be willing to admit mistakes.
- B. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.
20. A. It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.
- B. How many friends you have depends upon how nice a person you are.

Social Reaction Inventory  
Continued

21. A. In the long run the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.
- B. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.
22. A. With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.
- B. It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.
23. A. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the grades they give.
- B. There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the grades I get.
24. A. A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.
- B. A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.
25. A. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.
- B. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.
26. A. People are lonely because they don't try to be friendly.
- B. There's not much use in trying too hard to please people, if they like you, they like you.
27. A. There is too much emphasis on athletics in high school.
- B. Team sports are an excellent way to build character.
28. A. What happens to me is my own doing.
- B. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.

**Social Reaction Inventory**  
**Continued**

29. A. Most of the time I can't understand why politicians behave the way they do.
- B. In the long run the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as on a local level.

## APPENDIX E

### THE DEATH ANXIETY SCALE

Please read the following statements carefully. Then indicate whether the statement is true or false for you by circling either T or F.

There are no right or wrong answers. Just choose the one which most closely applies to you.

\*\*\*\*\*

- T F 1. I am very much afraid to die.
- T F 2. The thought of death seldom enters my mind.
- T F 3. It doesn't make me nervous when people talk about death.
- T F 4. I dread to think about having to have an operation.
- T F 5. I am not at all afraid to die.
- T F 6. I am not particularly afraid of getting cancer.
- T F 7. The thought of death never bothers me.
- T F 8. I am often distressed by the way time flies so very rapidly.
- T F 9. I fear dying a painful death.
- T F 10. The subject of life after death troubles me greatly.
- T F 11. I am really scared of having a heart attack.
- T F 12. I often think about how short life really is.
- T F 13. I shudder when I hear people talking about a World War III.
- T F 14. The sight of a dead body is horrifying to me.
- T F 15. I feel that the future holds nothing for me to fear.

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