

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

F. Scott Christopher for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Human Development and Family Studies presented on October 29, 1982.

Title: The Interrelatedness of Sexual Intimacy and Relationship

Development

*Redacted for Privacy*

Abstract approved:

Rodney M. Cate

Fifty-four premarital couples were interviewed in an attempt to:  
(a) delineate pathways of premarital involvement; (b) investigate differences in the relationships of individuals who follow different pathways; and (c) examine which background variables predispose individuals to follow a specific pathway. Four sexual pathway types were established using a cluster analytic procedure. Rapid Involvement individuals experienced high levels of sexual intimacy early in their relationships. Gradual Involvement individuals gradually increased their level of sexual involvement over time. Couple Involvement individuals engaged in orgasmic sexual interaction at the "couple" stage of dating. Low Involvement individuals tended to restrict their sexual behavior to a pre-orgasmic level. No differences were found between individuals from the different sexual pathways on the relationship dimensions of love, ambivalence, maintenance behaviors, relationship satisfaction and dyadic trust. Conflict, however, tended to increase significantly as couples entered into orgasmic levels of sexual interaction. Differences

existed between individuals from the four sexual pathway types on the background measures of dating and sexual history, physical attractiveness, premarital sexual attitudes, and socio-economic status.

The Interrelatedness of Sexual Intimacy  
and Relationship Development

by

F. Scott Christopher

A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the  
degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Completed October 29, 1982

Commencement June 1983

APPROVED:

*Redacted for Privacy*

---

Rodney M. ~~Cate~~, Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Studies

*Redacted for Privacy*

---

June Henton, Head of Human Development and Family Studies

*Redacted for Privacy*

---

Dean of Graduate School

Date thesis is presented October 29, 1982

Typed by Michele Merfeld for F. Scott Christopher

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor, Rodney M. Cate, for his efforts on this research project. His guidance and knowledge have been invaluable at every stage of this venture. I would also like to thank June Henton, Alan Sugawara and Betty Johnson for serving on my committee. A special thanks goes to both Tom Murphy, for being my minor professor and helping me to expand my clinical skills, and to Clara Pratt for saving the day so often by serving as a substitute representative on my committee. Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to all those individuals who, in giving of themselves, sparked an interest in the area of premarital sexuality.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION. . . . .	1
REVIEW OF LITERATURE. . . . .	4
Premarital Sexual Behavior . . . . .	4
Religiosity . . . . .	4
Sexual Standards and Philosophies . . . . .	5
Reference Group . . . . .	6
Dating/Sexual History . . . . .	8
Physical Attractiveness . . . . .	9
Sex Guilt . . . . .	9
Source of Sexual Knowledge. . . . .	10
Summary . . . . .	11
Premarital Relationship Development. . . . .	12
Sequential Stage Models . . . . .	13
The Process Models. . . . .	15
Summary . . . . .	20
Relationship Development and Sexual Intimacy . . . . .	20
Statement of Purpose . . . . .	29
THE METHOD. . . . .	32
Overview . . . . .	32
Participants . . . . .	34
Procedure. . . . .	37
Interview Procedure . . . . .	37
Interviewers and Interviewer Training . . . . .	38
Measurement of Variables . . . . .	39
Sexual Behavior: Current and Lifetime. . . . .	39
Relationship Dimensions . . . . .	40
1. Love . . . . .	40
2. Conflict/Negativity. . . . .	41
3. Ambivalence. . . . .	41
4. Maintenance Behaviors. . . . .	41
Background Variables. . . . .	42
1. Religiosity. . . . .	42
2. Sexual Attitudes . . . . .	42
3. Reference Group Behavior . . . . .	43
4. Dating History . . . . .	43
5. Physical Attractiveness. . . . .	44
6. Sex Guilt. . . . .	44
7. Sources of Sexual Knowledge. . . . .	44
8. Influences on Sexual Decision Making . . . . .	44
9. Greek Affiliation. . . . .	45
10. Socio-Economic Status. . . . .	45
11. Truthfulness . . . . .	45

	<u>Page</u>
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION. . . . .	47
Constructing the Sexual Pathways . . . . .	48
The Clusters. . . . .	50
Cluster Differences in Sexual Involvement by Stage of Dating . . . . .	52
Analysis of Relationship Dimensions. . . . .	59
Predicting Sexual Intimacy by Dating Stage for the Sample as a Whole . . . . .	60
First Date . . . . .	61
Casually Dating. . . . .	61
Considering Becoming a Couple. . . . .	64
Relationship Dimension Differences by Dating Stage. . . . .	69
Relationship Dimension Differences by Sexual Pathway Type. . . . .	71
Analysis of Background Variables . . . . .	74
Age of First Date . . . . .	76
Self-Rated Physical Attractiveness. . . . .	76
Lifetime Sexual Behavior. . . . .	80
Premarital Sexual Attitudes . . . . .	82
Inventory of Sexual Decision Making Factors . . . . .	85
Positive Affect/Communication. . . . .	85
Circumstances. . . . .	87
Frequency of Church Attendance. . . . .	90
Socio-Economic Status . . . . .	90
Limitations of the Study . . . . .	93
Integrative Summary. . . . .	95
IMPLICATIONS. . . . .	104
Premarital Sexual Intimacy and Relationship Development. . . . .	104
Implications for Future Research . . . . .	107
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	113
APPENDIX . . . . .	122

LIST OF TABLES

		<u>Page</u>
Table 1.	Mean Sexual Scores by Type and Stage of Dating Involvement . . . . .	53
Table 2.	Mean Length of Involvement in Weeks by Stage of Dating Involvement. . . . .	57
Table 3.	Regression of Relationship Dimensions on First Date Sexual Intimacy Scores. . . . .	62
Table 4.	Regression of Relationship Dimensions on Casually Dating Sexual Intimacy Scores . . . . .	63
Table 5.	Regression of Relationship Dimensions on "Considering Becoming a Couple" Sexual Intimacy Scores . . . . .	65
Table 6.	Mean Conflict Scores by Sexual Pathway Type by Stage of Dating Involvement . . . . .	72
Table 7.	Mean Love Scores by Sexual Pathway Type . . . . .	75
Table 8.	Mean Age First Date by Sexual Pathway Type. . . . .	77
Table 9.	Mean Age of First Date by Sex . . . . .	78
Table 10.	Mean Self Rated Physical Attractiveness by Sexual Pathway Type. . . . .	79
Table 11.	Mean Lifetime Sexual Behavior by Sexual Pathway Type. . . . .	81
Table 12.	Mean Lifetime Sexual Behavior by Sex. . . . .	83
Table 13.	Mean Premarital Sexual Attitudes by Sexual Pathway Type. . . . .	84
Table 14.	Mean Positive Affect/Communication by Sexual Pathway Type. . . . .	86
Table 15.	Mean Positive Affect/Communication by Sex . . . . .	88
Table 16.	Mean Circumstances by Sexual Pathway Type . . . . .	89
Table 17.	Social Economic Status by Sexual Pathway Type . . . . .	91



THE INTERRELATEDNESS OF SEXUAL INTIMACY  
AND RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

"A month ago I started dating someone whom I'm very fond of. I have gone into this relationship very different than I would last year. We have not gone to bed yet; we talked about it but decided our heads were not ready for that." (Female, unspecified age; Morrison, Starks, Hyndman, and Ronzio, 1980.)

"We had been going out for about three years and we had discussed sexual intercourse a lot. We gave it very careful consideration. We were engaged and loved each other very much." (Female, age 19; from the author's files.)

"I had been hinting strongly to her for a month that I would like to have sex with her. I had known her for six months. A close girl friend of hers had sex for the first time and they talked about (it). She then had sex with me approximately two weeks later." (Male, age 19; from the author's files.)

"I didn't know him that well so it was more physical attraction that attracted me (towards intercourse)." (Female, age 24; from the author's files.)

"We had been going out almost ten months and during that time had done everything possible without actual intercourse. We started to mean something to one another. After a while it got so that when we played around it seemed like unfinished business, intercourse seemed to be the natural completion to the activity." (Male, age 18; from the author's files.)

"We were very honest about our feelings towards one another. We didn't say we loved each other because we didn't. But we needed one another and at the time that was more compelling than loving." (Female, age 19; from the author's files.)

These quotes come from college students describing their past sexual behaviors. They reveal that couples follow a number of different pathways in their sexual involvement, under a diverse set of social forces and circumstances. These quotes illustrate that some couples choose to have intercourse quite early in their relationship,

others wait until the relationship has progressed to greater levels of intimacy, while still another group chooses not to engage in intercourse at all. The purposes of this study are to examine these variations in sexual expression between premarital couples and how couples with differing progressions of sexual expression differ along selected relationship dimensions. Furthermore, various background variables that may predispose individuals to reach a given level of sexual expression will be examined.

In order to better understand the interrelatedness of premarital sexual expression and important relationship dimensions, it is necessary to review three areas of literature. The first of these areas involves those studies that have investigated overall premarital sexual behavior and its psycho-social correlates. These studies are important because they reveal some of the individual, intrapersonal, and social influences that come to bear on a person in their premarital sexual conduct. The thrust in this area has been to tease out those variables that best differentiate between those who have engaged in premarital coitus and those who have not.

The second body of research to be examined is that of how relationships develop. It has been shown that the nature of the premarital relationship is one of the most important influences in an individual's sexual behavior before marriage (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979). Therefore, there is a need to examine the different dimensions of premarital relationships and how these dimensions change across time.

Finally, the literature that centers on the interrelatedness of the nature of the premarital relationship and sexual expression will

be examined. A few researchers have attempted to investigate this interrelatedness (Burgess and Wallin, 1953; Ehrmann, 1959a; Kirkendall, 1961; Peplau, Rubin and Hill, 1977). Such work is of primary importance because it scrutinizes the most immediate context in which sexual behavior occurs and is also the focus area of this study.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Premarital Sexual Behavior

Various researchers who have investigated the phenomenon of premarital sexual behavior have focused on trying to discriminate between those who have participated in premarital sexual intercourse versus those who have not. To this end a number of different variables have been examined for their discriminatory ability. Religiosity, personal sexual standards, reference group norms, dating and sexual history, physical attractiveness, amount of sex guilt, and the source of an individual's sexual knowledge are among the variables that have been examined.

Religiosity

Several different aspects of the relationship between religiosity and premarital sexual behavior have been examined. It has been consistently shown that those who attend church frequently are less likely to engage in premarital intercourse when compared to those who either never attend church or attend infrequently (Bell and Chaskes, 1970; DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Herold and Goodwin, 1981; Jackson and Potkay, 1973; Jessor and Jessor, 1975). In addition, frequent church attenders hold moral or ethical objections to coitus occurring outside of marriage. Moreover, those who score high on religious attitude scales are significantly more likely to be virgins than those who score low on the same scales (Clayton, 1972; Kirkendall, 1967; Mahoney, 1980), although contradictory findings exist (King, Abernathy, Robinson and Balswick, 1976).

## Sexual Standards and Philosophies

Personal sexual standards have been shown to be significantly related to sexual expression (D'Augelli and D'Augelli, 1977; DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Reiss, 1960). In his classic study, Reiss (1969) outlined four sexual standards that were currently found in America: (a) the double standard, where it was acceptable for men to be sexually experienced premaritally, but women were expected to limit their sexual behavior and to be virgins at the time of marriage; (b) permissiveness without affection, where premarital coitus was perceived to be a body-centered act that focused on physical pleasure; (c) permissiveness with affection, where premarital coitus occurred as a by product of the emotional attachment between the partners; and (d) abstinence, where intercourse was saved for marriage. Reiss felt that these attitudes dictated behavior and in later studies it was so demonstrated (Reiss, 1967). This finding has been further supported by more current research (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979).

While Reiss' (1960, 1967) work focused primarily on individuals' attitudes and their sexual standards, D'Augelli and D'Augelli (1977) investigated the relationship of premarital sexual behavior and personal sexual standards. D'Augelli and D'Augelli (1977) found that individuals could be categorized as having adopted one of six personal philosophies. The first philosophy was that of "inexperienced virgin." Individuals in this category are those who had not dated much until they had entered college. Their sexual experience was limited to kissing and possibly light petting. "Adamant virgins" were individuals who felt that intercourse should be reserved for marriage, but other forms

of sexual expression were acceptable if love and commitment were present in the relationship. "Potential nonvirgins" had not experienced premarital coitus, but would be willing given the right partner and the correct circumstances. "Engaged nonvirgins" were willing to engage in premarital coitus if they reached the engagement stage of courtship. "Liberated nonvirgins" were willing to experience sexual relations without necessarily being in an engaged relationship. Commitment was less important in this philosophy, as it emphasizes the reciprocity of pleasure. Finally, "confused nonvirgins" were individuals who often engage in intercourse early in dating relationships without really knowing what part they want sexuality to play in their lives.

#### Reference Group

Several studies have shown a relationship between individuals' reference groups and their premarital sexual behavior. In one of the first studies, Reiss (1967) postulated that the higher the sexual permissiveness of a group, the greater the likelihood that social forces will alter individual levels of sexual permissiveness. Following this study, there was a flurry of research that examined the reference group of the individual, the reference group's perceived sexual orientation and/or behavior, and their relationship to the individual's own sexual behavior.

One group of researchers looked solely at the individual's perception of peer behavior and how that related to their own sexual behavior (Clayton, 1969, 1972; Davidson and Leslie, 1977; Kirkendall, 1967; Mirande, 1968). These studies show a strong relationship between an individual's perception of peer behavior and their own sexual

behavior. If individuals perceive their friends as being sexually active, then there is a high probability that they will also be sexually active. The reverse also holds true; those who have not experienced intercourse are more likely to have friends that are perceived to be similarly inexperienced.

Another group of researchers has focused on whether or not individuals perceive their primary reference group to be parents or peers (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Herold and Goodwin, 1981; Lewis, 1973a; Teevan, 1972; Walsh, Ferrell and Tolone, 1976). These researchers found that if parents were used as the reference group, as opposed to peers, then individuals were less likely to be sexually experienced and to have engaged in premarital intercourse. If the individuals were more peer oriented than parent oriented, and they perceived their peers to be sexually active, they were more likely to be sexually active themselves. Further evidence substantiates these findings concerning reference groups. These studies reveal that if individuals perceive their parents to be the source of knowledge about sex, then those individuals are less likely to be sexually experienced (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Lewis, 1973a; Spanier, 1977).

DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) examined which reference group, parents or peers, had the stronger effect on an individual's present sexual behavior. The parental influences acted indirectly through the individual's personal ideology, which in and of itself also had an indirect effect on present behavior. Peer behavior, however, had a direct effect on an individual's present sexual behavior, therefore exerting a stronger influence.

### Dating/Sexual History

A number of variables that are reflective of the dating and sexual history of individuals have been related to their current level of sexual behavior. The earlier the first date, the greater the likelihood of engaging in premarital intercourse at a later time in the dating career (Bell and Chaskes, 1970; Lewis, 1973a; Schofield, 1965; Sorenson, 1972). The higher the frequency of dating, the greater the number of dating partners, and the higher the number of "steadies," the more likely it is an individual has engaged in intercourse (Bell and Chaskes, 1970; Curran, Neff and Lippold, 1973; Ehrmann, 1959a; Herolds and Goodwin, 1981; Lewis, 1973a; Schulz, Bohrnstedt, Borgatta and Evans, 1977).

Lifetime sexual behavior has been shown to be an important variable for predicting current sexual behavior (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Ehrmann, 1959a; Peplau et al., 1977). Not surprisingly, it appears that having been sexually active in the past has a direct, substantial effect on the current sexual behavior of an individual (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979). This may be affected by the partner who is the most sexually experienced within the couple. Peplau et al. (1977) categorized couples into three groups (both nonvirgins, both virgins and mixed) according to their history of sexual intercourse prior to the relationship. They found that the best predictor of whether or not a couple would engage in intercourse was the previous sexual status of the women. Couples where both members were nonvirgins were the most likely to engage in coitus, while couples where both were virgins are the least likely. In mixed couples there was a significantly greater chance that the couple would experience intercourse if the



woman was the nonvirgin and the male was the virgin, than if the woman was the virgin and the male was the nonvirgin.

### Physical Attractiveness

Physical attractiveness has been shown to play an important role in the early stages of developing heterosexual relationships (Huston and Levinger, 1978). Its relationship to premarital sexual behavior is not as clear. Kelley (1978) found that the more physically attractive males and females perceive themselves to be, the more likely they are to be sexually active. DeLamater and MacCorquodale's (1979) research supported this finding for males, but not for females.

Kaats and Davis (1970) used experimenter's ratings as a measure of female physical attractiveness. They found that women who rated high in attractiveness were more likely to have engaged in premarital intercourse than women who were rated low in attractiveness. However, when DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) used experimenter's ratings of physical attractiveness, this finding was not supported. Furthermore, it was DeLamater and MacCorquodale's (1979) general finding that there was only a weak association between physical attractiveness and sexual behavior for both sexes.

### Sex Guilt

Sex guilt plays an important part in the dynamics of sexual expression (Bell and Coughney, 1980; D'Augelli and Cross, 1975; Kutner, 1971; Langston, 1973, 1975; Mosher, 1966, 1968, 1973, 1979; Mosher and Cross, 1971). Guilt is related to the inhibition of sexual responsiveness and behavior (Mosher, 1979). More specifically, those individuals

who possess high levels of sex guilt rate low on measures of sexual desire, responsiveness and passion, orgasm frequency, ease and relief (Kutner, 1971); and are likely to think that engaging in premarital intercourse is morally wrong (Mosher and Cross, 1971). Furthermore, virgins are significantly more likely to rate higher on scales of sex guilt than are nonvirgins (D'Augelli and Cross, 1975). Finally, the amount of sex guilt experienced by couples in general has greatly decreased over the last thirty years as reflected in the higher frequency of premarital coitus today (Bell and Coughy, 1980).

#### Source of Sexual Knowledge

In a series of studies, Spanier (1976a, 1976b, 1977) has attempted to establish the relationship between sexual knowledge and sexual behavior. There exists only a slight, but significant association between the degree of perceived sexual knowledge and current sexual behavior (Spanier, 1976a). The source of sexual knowledge, however, seems to have a greater influence on lifetime sexual behavior. There is a negative association for women between mother as a source of sexual information and lifetime sexual behavior. The same relationship does not hold true for males with their father; nor does the father have a substantial effect on the daughter's sexual expression (Spanier, 1977). For males it appears that if the peers are a source of sexual knowledge there is a strong positive relationship with later sexual expression. Interestingly, Spanier's (1977) data indicate that clergy, doctors, and teachers do not have a significant influence on the individual's sexual behavior.

Relatedly, DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) also found that formal sex education courses had a negligible influence on current sexual expression. They supported Spanier's (1977) finding that parents were not the primary source of knowledge about the mechanics of sex. This information was usually learned from lovers, professionals, and sex education courses. However, parents were influential in formulating the moral attitudes and values of the sample. Concurrently, the lover also was an important influence. In fact, those who indicated that the lover was the primary source of sexual knowledge rated high in lifetime sexual behavior, while those with parents as the primary source of knowledge were more limited in their lifetime experience.

#### Summary

A wide variety of correlates of premarital sexual behavior have been examined within this section. It appears that the following factors are characteristic of people who have been sexually active premaritally: (a) they are low in their church attendance; (b) they perceive themselves to be moderately high in physical attractiveness; (c) they perceive their friends to be sexually active; (d) they have a history of frequent dating with many partners; (e) they may have been sexually active in the past; (f) they hold personal standards that are permissive in nature; and (g) their peers, and/or lovers, had the greatest influence on their sexual knowledge and ideology. Those who are not sexually active premaritally would fall along the opposite end of the continuum on these variables (i.e., high in church attendance, low

perception of physical attractiveness, perceive their friends to be sexually inactive, etc.).

Perhaps the most important implication of these findings is that sexual expression does not occur in a vacuum. It is a social event and thereby responsive to the social forces around it. These psychosocial correlates demonstrate some of the factors that have been shown to be important influences on the sexual expression of today's youth. However, there has been a lack of attention to the relationship between sexual expression and the nature of the relationship between the partners. Without the inclusion of the relationship context, and its dimensions, a total picture cannot be achieved. Forgas and Dobosz (1980) have shown that both sexuality, and love and commitment, are primary dimensions in premarital relationships. Therefore, in order to better understand the interrelatedness of sexual behavior and relationships, it is necessary to understand how premarital relationships develop. Consequently, literature relating to how relationships develop over time will be reviewed in the next section.

#### Premarital Relationship Development

Of the numerous ways of explaining premarital relationship development, two basic models exist. The first is a sequential stage model (Kerckhoff and Davis, 1962; Lewis, 1973; Murstein, 1970, 1976). The basic premise of this model is that courtship can be reduced to a series of sequential stages. According to this theory, the completion of one stage propels the couple to the next prescribed stage within the model, which eventually ends in marriage. The other model, a process model, focuses on the processes that move people to marriage rather than on

specific stages of development (Bolton, 1961; Braiker and Kelley, 1979); Cate, 1979). The movement towards marriage is the result of the interaction of the couple and an outgrowth of their successive interactions with one another. Consequently, various courtship pathways are possible.

### Sequential Stage Models

As previously stated, sequential stage models set forth a series of stages that couples proceed through on their route to marriage. As the criterion of one stage is met, the couple progresses on to the next stage. Supposedly, if the criterion of a specific stage is not met, then the couple parts ways and the relationship ends.

Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) were the first to suggest that a sequential stage model might adequately explain relationship development. They conducted an eight month, longitudinal study which examined measures of the couple's (a) social characteristics, (b) value consensus, (c) needs complementarity, and (d) progress towards permanence at two points in time. Value consensus and need complementarity were found to relate differently to the couple's courtship progress depending on how long they had been involved with one another at the time the study began. Value consensus was related to progress towards permanence for short term couples (dating 18 months or less) while need complementarity was associated with courtship progress for long term couples (dating longer than 18 months). Social characteristics did not relate to progress towards permanence for either group. However, couples were quite similar in their social attributes at the beginning of the study. These data led Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) to propose that couples go through a series of filters, or stages, with

compatible couples passing through all of the filters and ending in marriage. Filtering begins as individuals select partners from a "field of eligibles" based on the similarity of their social characteristics. At the next filter, the partners examine each other for a compatibility of values. Finally, couples move closer to marriage if they find their needs to be complimentary.

Murstein (1970, 1976) developed a more elaborate stage theory that used social exchange concepts to explain movement from one stage to another. Murstein proposed three stages: stimulus, value, and role. At the "stimulus stage" people are drawn together based on the sensory cues (i.e., visual impression, voice, etc.) provided by the other person and on the individual's perception of self. There is no verbal interaction, and movement to the next stage occurs if the visual and auditory stimuli received from the potential partner is perceived as incurring more rewards than costs.

Verbal interaction marks the beginning of the "value stage," where each individual appraises the value system of the other person. If the couple perceives a compatibility in areas such as religion, politics, and other value areas, they will continue to see one another and move forwards to the "role stage." At this stage the individuals examine three things: (a) Does their partner fit their perception of what a spouse should be? (b) Is there a compatibility of personal adequacy? and (c) Are they sexually compatible as a couple?

Lewis (1973b) has developed a slightly different version of the sequential model than that of his predecessors. His proposed Pre-marital Dyadic Formation theory places an emphasis on the sequential interpersonal processes rather than on stages. There is an assumption

that each of the processes gives rise to the next process, and the outcomes of one process determines the outcome of the next. A total of six processes were proposed, all of which follow a developmental, time-ordered sequence. These processes are: perceiving similarities; achieving pair rapport; inducing mutual self disclosure; role taking; achieving interpersonal role-fit; and achieving dyadic crystallization. So, according to this theory, when a couple perceives certain similarities, this leads them into establishing pair rapport, which induces self disclosure, etc.

The sequential stage models have been criticized on a number of different levels (Cate, 1979; Levinger, Senn, and Jorgenson, 1970; Rubin and Levinger, 1974). Kerckhoff and Davis' (1962) findings have failed to hold up to replication (Levinger, Senn and Jorgenson, 1970). Murstein's Stimulus-Value-Role theory has been faulted because no data were presented to support the proposed chronological sequence of the stages. Furthermore, Lewis' (1973b) Premarital Dyadic Formation theory has received criticism for the statistical technique used (analysis of variance) to test the proposed sequence of processes (Rubin and Levinger, 1974).

### The Process Models

The process model of relationship development presents a different approach to explaining premarital relationship development when compared to the sequential stage models. The emphasis in the process model is on the symbolic interactional experience of the individuals involved in the relationship. In other words, it focuses on how the individual perceives the relationship and their role in it. Courtship

develops as a series of dyadic interactions. Each interaction is unique to the couple and establishes the basis for the next interaction. Therefore, by the time of marriage, each couple has formulated a courtship history composed of a series of unique interchanges (Bolton, 1961).

Bolton (1961) was the first to take this approach. His research (Bolton, 1961) suggests that couples follow one of five developmental pathways in their courtship: (a) the personality meshing developmental process; (b) the identity clarification developmental process; (c) the relationship centered developmental process; (d) the pressure and intrapersonal centered developmental process; or (e) the expediency centered developmental process. In the first pathway, the personality meshing developmental process, couples' interactions furnish the opportunity to mesh personality orientations. In the next pathway, the identity clarification process, couples focus on the change in identity that take place in one or both members of the dyad as the relationship develops. The relationship centered developmental process is characterized by each member of the dyad building amorous images of the other person. In the pressure and intrapersonal centered developmental process one of the dyad members usually uses direct pressure to increase the level of commitment, while the other member blocks the push for greater intimacy with subtle manipulations. With the expediency centered developmental process one, or both, members of the couple suffer from a basic personality need or identity crisis. Couples move toward marriage as the identity crisis is resolved.

The primary criticism of Bolton's (1961) work is that he does not offer any statistical treatment in support for his five posited



pathways. In fact, it would appear from the study that Bolton grouped couples together on the basis of the thematic qualities of their relationship rather than using an empirical base. By his own acknowledgment, however, Bolton's (1961) work is "only exploratory" and is in need of further development. Despite this drawback his work does contribute to the relationship development field. He is the first to depart from the idea of a unidimensional approach to relationship development. He recognizes that there exists more than one pathway for premarital relationships to evolve. The development of the five different processes shows that a simple sequential order of stages is an insufficient explanation of how the courtship process proceeds. Furthermore, his concept of turning points show that couples do not necessarily follow a primrose path of increasing intimacy during their courtship. It allows for couples to drift apart and to come together again, a phenomenon which can be found in any student discussion of premarital relationships in a marriage preparation class.

Braiker and Kelley (1979) followed Bolton's (1961) work by attempting to more systematically measure what basic qualities of a premarital relationship change over time, thereby revealing the process of relationship development. The work was done in two consecutive studies. The first study dealt with trying to develop a normative pattern of stages, or turning points, that couples follow in their courtship. A basic pattern of three stages was found: casual dating, serious dating, and engagement. In addition to specifying the stages, couples were also asked to describe their courtship using open ended questions. The descriptions were content analyzed in order to uncover the basic characteristics of developing premarital relationships.

Study two was designed to examine the developmental process of relationship change on the underlying characteristics uncovered in the first study. Participants were asked to recall what their relationships were like for four points in time (casual dating, serious dating, engagement, and marriage). The participants were then asked to respond to thirty questions for each of the four stages of involvement. The questions were identical for each of the four points in time and were derived from the content analysis conducted in the first study. The questions required participants to estimate the degree of particular attitudes, feelings, or behaviors concerning their relationships.

The thirty items were factor analyzed for each of the four stages to establish the basic underlying dimensions of developing premarital relationships. Two principal, independent factors were found: (a) love and (b) conflict/negativity. The love factor reflected the attributions made by the couples regarding love, belonging, and the degree of interdependence between partners. The conflict/negativity factor was defined by overt behavior conflict and the communication of negative affect. Two highly interrelated clusters of items (ambivalence and maintenance) were also extracted for use in the final scale. The ambivalence cluster contained questions that dealt with the individual's confusion of feelings and the uncertainty of continuing the relationship. The maintenance cluster included items that dealt with how much time was spent working on the relationship itself. These two clusters were not independent, but were incorporated because of the pattern of change that they demonstrated over the sequence of the four stages. Both groups of items always loaded together. However,

they loaded differentially on the two main factors depending on the stage of involvement.

Cate (1979) provided an integration of the earlier research by empirically delineating a typology of premarital relationship development that included the process dimensions of Braiker and Kelley (1979). Cate (1979), using a retrospective technique, categorized couples into one of three "types" according to the pathways they followed during their courtship. "Prolonged couples" had extended courtships with many turning points. These couples took a long time in deciding that marriage was a viable alternative for them. "Accelerated couples" were exactly the opposite. They became sure of marriage very early in the relationship and experienced few turning points in their courtship. The final type of couple, "intermediate couples," fell between the first two groups. Their premarital relationship was moderate in length compared to the other two types of couples.

In order to examine the social psychological differences between these types, participants filled out Braiker and Kelley's (1979) subscales of love, conflict, maintenance and ambivalence for four points in time (casual dating, serious dating, engagement and marriage). When compared to the other two couple types, individuals in accelerated relationships were significantly lower in their love scores at casual dating and serious dating and significantly lower in their maintenance scores for all three premarital stages. Individuals in "prolonged relationships" engaged in significantly more conflict than accelerated or intermediate couples throughout the relationship. All the individuals were equal in their levels of ambivalence for the four stages of involvement.

Cate's (1979) study is important because it empirically derives different pathways that couples follow in their courtship development. Moreover, it shows that the couples exhibiting different pathways also vary in how the dimensions of their relationship change from casual dating to marriage. Such findings refute the concept that couples follow a single pathway in their premarital relationship development, the basic premise of the sequential stage model.

### Summary

Two models of premarital relationship development have been reviewed, the sequential stage model and the process model. From the previous discussion it can be seen that the sequential stage model is plagued with poor research design, poor statistical analysis, and a general lack of concurring research from other researchers (Bolton, 1961; Cate, 1979; Levinger, Senn and Jorgensen, 1970). In contrast, the process model has a stronger empirical base and provides for a more detailed understanding of relationship development.

### Relationship Development and Sexual Intimacy

The earliest attempt to tie together premarital relationship development and sexual intimacy was a study by Burgess and Wallin (1953). In this classic study, sexual behavior in relationships was examined longitudinally from the dating stage to the engagement stage. The researchers found that during "dating" men were the aggressive members of the dyad, i.e., the ones who initiated sexual advances. Women were expected to be moral and hold a prudential view of their sexual involvement. A good night kiss was acceptable behavior, but

not expected. "Necking" was acceptable for a woman only if she liked the man. Petting occurred if the couple was "in love." However, it fell to the woman to uphold her moral standards. Women who engaged in petting and sexual intercourse at this stage risked having a "bad reputation," which resulted in being placed on the bottom of the social ladder.

Burgess and Wallin (1953) did not treat sexual intimacy in their next stage, "going together." As has been stated in the above discussion, when the couple was in love some women allowed sexual intimacy to progress to petting. Since being in love was often a hallmark of this stage, it could be postulated that more couples were engaging in increased sexual intimacy. Burgess and Wallin (1953) did, however, examine the relationship between sexual intercourse and the next stage of development, "engagement." At the engagement stage a number of men had participated in premarital coitus outside of the engagement relationship, but this was not true of the women. Although half of the women had engaged in intercourse premaritally, fully two-thirds of them had done so within the engagement relationship.

Burgess and Wallin (1953) attempted to measure the impact coitus had on the premarital relationship by comparing those couples who had experienced intercourse with those who had not. A scale was developed to measure engagement success. The results showed that men who had experienced premarital coitus had a significantly lower engagement success score than did those who had not experienced it. There was a trend for the women to be similar. Those individuals who engaged in premarital intercourse were more likely to break their engagements. However, these findings should be viewed cautiously. When couples

were asked to evaluate the consequences of having engaged in intercourse, the overwhelming majority stated that it strengthened their relationship, brought them closer together, and increased their love for each other. Other couples indicated that for them intercourse "just happened," but more often it was discussed and decided upon, and once engaged in was likely to occur somewhat regularly.

Ehrmann (1959a, 1959b) collected data over a seven year period from successive marriage and family classes concerning sexual behavior and relationship characteristics. His study resulted in several major findings. First, it was found that premarital sexual behavior falls into a hierarchy of stages, with increasing degrees of physical intimacy and a need to make moral judgements with each stage. It was shown that males and females were more alike in their current sexual behavior than in their lifetime behavior. Males were more likely to have made sporadic adventures outside of serious relationships, hence they were more experienced in lifetime sexual behavior than females. In addition, Ehrmann (1959a, 1959b) found that as a man became emotionally involved with a woman and experienced love for her, he was reluctant to engage in the more involved forms of physical intimacy such as petting and intercourse. For women the opposite was true. Their personal standards were such that when they were in love it allowed them more freedom in their sexual expression. However, the women began at a base of deciding whether or not to give a good night kiss. Therefore the middle ground of kissing and hugging was the norm experienced by most couples as the most acceptable sexual behaviors to engage in.

Kirkendall (1961, 1966) was the first to probe the more specific effects of sexual intercourse on a relationship at different stages of emotional involvement. He interviewed 200 college males with a total of 668 sexual liaisons with different women. Six levels of liaison were identified that could be arranged along a continuum of emotional and personal involvement; a liaison with a prostitute; intercourse with a pickup; dating for sexual gratification; dating partners who became a sexual associate before a strong relationship developed; intercourse with those who the male had first become strongly attached to; and finally, intercourse within an engagement.

Sexual experiences at the first two levels, intercourse with a prostitute (Level I) and intercourse with a pickup (Level II), was of a fairly regimented type and involved little, if any, emotional investment on the part of the male. The roles were straightforward and intercourse was the goal. The communication that occurred with the prostitute was primarily verbal and business-like. With picking up women, however, the males indicated that communication was not as clear cut and involved both nonverbal and verbal forms. Usually in this situation, however, the intent was readily interpretable. The major function of engaging in intercourse with both of these liaisons was to raise the status of the male within his own group.

At the next level, dating for sexual gratification (Level III), there existed several different motives for engaging in intercourse. Curiosity, desire for physical pleasure, a demonstration of skill, and persistence in a game-like atmosphere were among those that the interviewees mentioned. Effective communication was a non-existent quality of this type of interaction. The men who had experienced

this level of liaison perceived women as being primarily interested in getting a boyfriend, becoming engaged, and getting married, with a willingness to trade intercourse for the completion of these goals. Hence, most of the interactions at this level were characterized by the men being dishonest, insincere, and deceitful. Personal attachment and a willingness to continue the relationship did not exist.

The next level (Level IV) was indicative of individuals who began their relationships as a means of sexual gratification and the interaction subsequently developed into a strong relationship. Kirkendall (1961) indicated that the actual distinctions between this level and the previous level (dating for sexual gratification) was not always clear. The motivations for entering into both of these levels were extremely similar. Some dissonance occurred from staying in a relationship that was meant to be exploitive and conflicts became inevitable. This was reflected in the argumentative-persuasive style of communication among couples at this level. Many times when intercourse did occur, it happened suddenly, without the couple talking about the ramifications of such an act. Some of the males indicated that they lost respect for the women they were involved with after they had engaged in intercourse with them.

The motivations for engaging in intercourse on the next level, where there exists a considerable amount of emotional attachment between the partners at the time of intercourse (Level V), showed a drastic change along the continuum of liaisons. Sex was less important as a goal. This approach to coitus was more leisurely and lacked the aggressiveness found at the first four levels. Sexual intercourse was a result of a prolonged behavioral intimacy that gradually increased



over time. There was a corresponding increase in the amount of communication that occurred prior to intercourse. The predominant style of communication was "mutual" with a marked decline in the argumentative-persuasive style indicative of Levels II, III and IV. This was not true of the entire group at Level V, as some of the individuals did not talk about coitus prior to the act for fear it would interfere with the chances of it occurring. In addition, there was also a rise in the willingness to take responsibility for actions at this level. Contraception was used in half of the individuals who had a liaison of this type, a marked change from the previous levels where usually no contraception was used.

At the final level (VI), engagement, there was a desire for a strong relationship, which made the management of sexual desire easier. The strong emotional attachment involved with being engaged provided the impetus to have intercourse for many of the individuals. There was much more concern with the partner and her feelings. Communication at this level was more objective and purposeful. A greater emphasis was placed on the decision making process, what each of the partners wanted, and how intercourse would affect them and the relationship. There was also much more evidence of responsibility. There was an increased concern about birth control and the reputation of the fiancée. The consensus of this group seemed to be that intercourse heightened a sense of intimacy for the couple.

Kirkendall's work (1961) shows some of the pathways couples may follow in the expression of their sexual intimacy. Those individuals at the last level, engagement, were characteristic of couples who had a prolonged relationship with a gradual increase in sexual intimacy.

This is in sharp contrast to Level IV where intercourse was engaged in very early in the relationship and, in fact, the emotional components of the relationship were probably absent at the time of coitus.

Furthermore, it also points to the stark differences in the type and quality of relationship from level to level.

By the late 1960's and mid 1970's there was evidence that the restrictions upon engaging in premarital coitus were relaxing and it was becoming more acceptable to engage in the act, and to do so at an earlier time in the relationship. Bell and Chaskes (1970) compared a 1958 sample of college women to a 1968 sample and found that the incidence of premarital coitus at the "going steady" stage of dating had come close to doubling (increasing from 15% to 28%) and at the "just dating" stage of the relationship had in fact more than doubled (10% to 23%). However, in another study (Schulz et al., 1977) it was found that affective commitment still had a strong effect on premarital sexual behavior. Moreover, the trend for males seemed to reverse from what Ehrmann (1959a) found to be true. Lewis and Burr (1975) found an increase in sexual behavior at four levels of commitment for both sexes. As commitment increased, males were just as likely as females to want to engage in premarital intercourse and to have experienced it. As may be recalled, this is contrary to Ehrmann (1959a, 1959b) who found that as commitment increased, the frequency of males having premarital coitus decreased.

Peplau, Rubin and Hill (1977) conducted a longitudinal study on the development of dating relationships during this time period. The sample in this study was randomly selected from four schools in the Boston area and included both members of the couple. Couples were

categorized into one of three groups according to their sexual involvement. "Sexually traditional couples" saw love alone as an insufficient reason to justify engaging in premarital intercourse. The act of coitus was to be saved for marriage. It appeared that among the sexually abstaining couples it was usually the women who controlled the degree of sexual involvement. Over half of the men in these couples indicated that the major reason they were not engaging in intercourse was the desire of the women not to. Women were significantly more likely than men to state that it was ethical standards that kept them from coitus. Many of the women were also likely to have said that it was too early in the relationship, indicating that their orientation might change with additional knowledge about their partner or with an increase in the present level of emotional intimacy. Couples who were in this category also tended to have significantly less permissive attitudes and were less experienced sexually.

"Sexually moderate couples" saw intercourse as being permissible if the man and the woman were in love with one another. However, a long term commitment was not necessary. The criteria these couples used for intercourse was seen as reflecting a romantic view of sex as an expression of love and caring. "Sexually liberated couples" saw sex with love as desirable, but sex without love was acceptable. The focus of these couples was more on eroticism than on emotional intimacy.

Interestingly, the longitudinal data indicate that clearly no one of the three types was more likely to foster satisfaction or permanence in the relationship. During the two years of the study, couples from all of the orientations (traditional, moderate and liberated) were

just as likely to have broken up, continued dating, or to have gotten married.

In addition to categorizing couples into three groups based on sexual philosophy, Peplau et al. (1977) compared couples who had intercourse early in the relationship (within the first month) with those who had intercourse later in the relationship (after the first month). Later coitus couples were found to be more in love at the time of intercourse, felt closer to their partner, and gave higher estimates to the probability of the couple eventually marrying than early coitus couples. Early coitus couples were more erotically oriented, had coitus more frequently, and reported significantly fewer guilt feelings when compared to the later coitus couples. Earlier sex women also reported a significantly higher satisfaction with sex than later sex women.

The Peplau et al. (1977) study illustrates that not all couples are alike in their sexual expression. Those that follow different sexual pathways also differ in the character of their relationships. The total psychological experience in the relationship, and especially the experience of intimacy, has a major impact upon the sexual expressions of the individuals involved. This phenomenon has received further support in two recent studies. DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) found that one of the major independent variables that had a direct effect on the current sexual expression was the relationship itself. It was revealed that there is a sizeable, positive relationship between the quality of the premarital relationship and the degree of sexual intimacy with the present partner. In other words, the more emotionally intimate the current relationship, the higher the degree

of sexual intimacy. There was also an independent association between the length of the relationship and the amount of sexual behavior the person had engaged in. The longer the couple was together the more intimate their sexual expression became.

Another study by Christopher and Cate (unpublished manuscript) delineated those independent factors that were involved in a person's decision making process when they first decided to have intercourse with their most recent partner. By factor analyzing their data they were able to establish such independent influences. The most important factor was a Positive Affect/Communication factor. The first three variables representing this factor dealt with the amount of love present in the relationship, followed by a variable that measured the degree of commitment by the respondent. The other variables that loaded on this factor showed the dynamic nature of the decision making process. As a group, these variables show that the status of the relationship is a major influence on individuals when they choose to participate in pre-marital intercourse.

#### Statement of Purpose

It can be seen from the literature that dividing couples into such a simple categorization as virgins and nonvirgins does not adequately depict the varied manner in which couples become sexually involved. It is obvious that some couples engage in a wide range of sexual behaviors early in their relationship, while others gradually increase their sexual involvement over time. Still another group may choose to limit sexual behavior until marriage. There have been some preliminary steps taken to determine the variation in the sexual

pathways couples take in their relationships (Ehrmann, 1959a, 1959b; Kirkendall, 1961; Peplau et al., 1977). However, such attempts have taken too simplistic of an approach in aggregating couples. None of these studies have made an attempt to delineate the progression of sexual expression over time, and how that progression differs from couple to couple, thereby developing a typology of sexual pathways that couples follow as their relationship develops. Therefore, the first purpose of this study will be to delineate the differing patterns of sexual involvement couples follow as they move from first date to the serious stage of dating.

Past studies show that couples with different sexual intimacy patterns also vary in the social psychological attributes of their relationships. They may vary in their motives for intercourse, their communication styles (Kirkendall, 1961), the amount of love at the time of intercourse (Peplau et al., 1977), and in what influenced their decision to have sex (Christopher and Cate, unpublished manuscript). More specifically, the second purpose of this study is to examine the developmental processes of relationships and their interrelatedness to the progression of sexual intimacy. By comparing couples of different sexual pathways on measures of specific relationship dimensions a clearer picture will be achieved of how these relationships vary in their development.

Finally, researchers have found several background variables that have been successful in differentiating individuals who have experienced premarital coitus from those who have not. It has been shown that when compared to virgins, sexually experienced individuals are

less religious (Bell and Chaskes, 1970), more permissive in their sexual standards (Reiss, 1967) and perceive their friends to be sexually active (Clayton, 1972). There is a need, however, to examine these, and other background variables for their ability to differentiate between individuals who follow different sexual pathways in their relationships. Therefore, the third purpose of this study will be to examine what background variables predispose individuals to follow specific patterns of sexual involvement.

## THE METHOD

### Overview

The first purpose of the present study was to develop a typology of premarital sexual behavior on the basis of retrospective material provided by couples who had reached the serious stage of dating. Participants were asked to divide their dating relationship into four stages (first date; casually dating; affectionately involved, and seriously dating). The participants then completed a measure of sexual involvement for each stage. From this material a typology of sexual pathways was developed using a cluster analysis on the sexual involvement scores for each dating stage, and grouping couples according to the patterns they follow.

The second purpose of this study was to compare couples who follow different sexual pathways on several relationship dimensions. Participants completed measures of love, conflict, maintenance behaviors, ambivalence, dyadic trust, and relationship satisfaction for each of four stages of involvement. Comparisons were made between couple types, and males and females, for each of the relationship dimensions at each stage of dating using a repeated measures analysis of variance. In addition, in order to more fully investigate the relationship between premarital sexual intimacy and premarital relationship development a series of multiple regressions were conducted on the sexual intimacy scores for each stage of dating using the relationship dimensions as predictor variables.

The final purpose of the study was to examine what background



characteristics of participants predisposed them to follow specific patterns of sexual involvement. Participants completed a background questionnaire that included measures of religiosity, sexual attitudes, physical attractiveness, sex guilt, perceived peer group behavior, source of sexual knowledge, dating history, influences on sexual decision making, Greek affiliation, and socio-economic status. Comparisons were made using analysis of variance and chi square analysis between each of the couple types, and males and females, on these background measures.

It is recognized that problems may have existed with the use of retrospective data. There is a potential threat to validity and reliability because of faulty recall and falsified accounts (Spanier, 1976c). It has been suggested that the accuracy of recalling past events is related to the saliency of what is being recalled (Huston, Surra, Fitzgerald, and Cate, 1981; Spanier, 1976c). The events of the courtship period, and the sexual behavior of the couple, are both seen as being highly salient to the members of the dyad and able to be recalled with acceptable accuracy (Huston et al., 1981). Furthermore, steps have been taken within this study to increase the likelihood of correct recollection (Huston et al., 1981; Spanier, 1976c). In the early stages of the interview the participants were asked to give an open ended description of the major events in the relationship. The events were arranged in chronological order and participants were given the opportunity to make changes. Finally, questions dealing with sexuality were asked later in the interview after a measure of rapport had been established between the interviewer and the interviewee. These efforts were, at least in part, successful at reducing the error due to faulty recall. The correlation between the dating partners on their reported sexual behavior

ranged from moderate agreement to high agreement over four dating stages: (a) first date,  $r = +.76$ ,  $p < .001$ ; (b) casually dating,  $r = +.46$ ,  $p < .001$ ; (c) considering becoming a couple,  $r = +.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and (d) perceived themselves as a couple,  $r = +.71$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Falsified accounts are not seen as being a great threat to the present study. Past research shows that most participants involved in studies on premarital sexuality are either truthful in their responses (DeLamater & MacCorquodale, 1979; Johnson & DeLamater, 1976; Udry & Morris, 1967), or do not differ significantly from the rest of the sample if they choose to be untruthful (DeLamater & MacCorquodale, 1979). In this study, the couples were interviewed separate from each other with full knowledge that the partner was to be asked similar questions. Past research that has used this technique reports a high, positive relationship between what the two partners report (Huston et al., 1981). Finally, participants were told at the beginning of the interview that the interest of this study is in how their relationship was unique, not in how it was similar to others, but in how it was different. This statement has been used in other studies (Huston et al., 1981) to guard against participants providing socially desirable responses, as opposed to true responses, during the interview. Again, these efforts were seen as successful at reducing falsification. Participants were asked to rate how truthful they had been on a Likert-like scale ranging from one (completely truthful) to seven (completely untruthful). The sample's mean score was 1.99 indicating few falsifications.

### Participants

Participants in this study consisted of fifty-four premarital

couples (108 subjects) who had reached the serious stage of dating (perceived themselves as a couple with a commitment to the relationship). The mean age for the males was 20.88 years and for the females was 20.00 years. A one-way analysis of variance for age shows that the males were significantly older than the females,  $F(1, 105) = 7.09, p < .009$ , although the actual difference was just under one year. This finding is not unexpected since it is usual in today's society that males are older than females in dating relationships (Bowman & Spanier, 1976). All four levels of undergraduate education were represented (16.3% seniors, 28.8% juniors, 28.8% sophomores, 26% freshman). Chi square analysis of the frequency distribution of undergraduate class membership indicates that its distribution does not significantly deviate from the expected distribution. Finally, there was a significantly higher representation from the upper end middle levels of the socio-economic stratum,  $\chi^2(4) = 50.38, p < .005$ . Thirty-eight percent of the sample came from households of professionals (physicians, lawyers, etc.), 28.6 percent of the sample came from households of semiprofessionals (registered nurses, middle managers, etc.), and 25 percent of the sample came from households of skilled workers (craftsmen, mechanics, etc.). Only 2.8 percent of the sample came from households of semiskilled workers (transportation operatives, armed services, etc.), and 4.8 percent of the sample came from households of unskilled workers (assembly line, laborer, etc.).

Recruitment of participants took place from four sources. First, a portion of the participants were recruited by use of the student directory. A list of random numbers was used to choose individuals to solicit for participation (see Appendix A for telephone solicitation

procedures). Second, students from three Family Life courses were asked to volunteer to participate in the study. These courses are typical elective courses and the students that are enrolled in them come from a variety of disciplines across campus. Third, a classified ad was placed in the school newspaper asking couples to volunteer to participate in the study. Finally, a notice was posted in all of the university dormitories requesting couples to volunteer as participants in the study. During recruitment, the following restrictions were put upon eligibility for participation: (a) participants must have been involved in a serious relationship; (b) the participant's relationship partner must have agreed to participate in the study; (c) participants must have never been married; (d) participants must have been under the age of 30; and (e) participants must have been Caucasian.

To increase the incentive for participation, each individual who took part in the study was given one chance at a \$40.00 gift certificate at a local restaurant. At the completion of data collection a drawing took place to award the certificate.

It is recognized that having used a student population limited the generalizability of this study. However, recent research in the area of premarital sexuality has found that there are only minor differences between student and nonstudent populations (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Kelley, 1978). In one study, student and nonstudent groups were compared on a broad range of variables for differences in the effects these variables had on current sexual behavior. Although some minor differences did surface, on a whole the populations were far more similar than they were different (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979).

## Procedure

### Interview Procedure

The interview was conducted in five phases (see Appendix B for the interview schedule). The first phase began with the interviewer exchanging social pleasantries in an attempt to establish rapport and to set the participants at ease. The interviewer then explained the purpose of the study, assured complete confidentiality, and obtained their signature on the informed consent form. Also during this time the participants filled out a card that was used in the drawing for the gift certificate.

In the next phase participants were asked to recall the date of their first date with their present partner. The interviewer marked this down on the Relationship Event Sheet (RES; for copy see Appendix C). The participants were then asked to recall, in chronological order, the major hallmarks, or events of the relationship. Each event, and its date, was listed on the RES.

The next task in this phase was to have participants indicate on the RES four stages in their dating: (a) first date; (b) casual dating (seeing each other, but did not identify as a couple); (c) affectionately involved, (beginning to feel that they might want to be a couple); and (d) seriously dating (identify as a couple with a monogamous commitment to the present relationship, but no future commitment necessary). A similar schema has been successfully employed by DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979).

The third phase consisted of giving participants several relation-

ship dimension measures for each of the four stages of involvement. These measures included: (a) Braiker and Kelley's (1979) love, conflict, ambivalence, and maintenance behavior scales; (b) Larzelere and Huston's (1980) Dyadic Trust Scale; and (c) Austin's Contentment/Distress measure (1974), a measure of relationship satisfaction. The participants then completed Bentler's (1968a, 1968b) Heterosexual Behavioral Assessment for each of the four stages. Prior to administering Bentler's scale participants were reminded that their responses were to be kept strictly confidential.

Several background measures were completed in the fourth phase. These measures included lifetime sexual behavior, sexual attitudes, dating history, religious attendance, physical attractiveness, degree of sex guilt, perceived peer group behavior, source of sexual knowledge, and factors influencing sexual decision making the first time they had intercourse with their present partner (if applicable). The final phase of the interview consisted of giving the interviewees a more complete idea of the purpose of the study, thanking them for participating, and asking if they would like a copy of the results.

#### Interviewers and Interviewer Training

The interviewers were five upperclass, undergraduate students with coursework in psychology and/or family life, and a doctoral candidate in family studies. Other researchers have successfully trained and used undergraduate interviewers. In fact, it has been shown that subjects were more comfortable and less embarrassed with an interviewer of average technical competence than they were with an interviewer who possessed a high level of technical competence (DeLamater and

MacCorquodale, 1979).

Each interviewer underwent a minimum of three hours of training during a three phase training period. First, the interviewers were introduced to the interviewing materials. They were made familiar with each step of the interviewing process, the purpose of the steps, and what each of the measures was expected to yield from the participants. Second, the interviewers watched an actual interview take place with an experienced interviewer conducting the interview. Third, each interviewer arranged a practice interview. The interview was audiotaped. These tapes were reviewed and the appropriate feedback was given on the quality of the interview. Finally, interviews were conducted by same-sex interviewers. It has been found that when cross-sex interviewers are used, it results in females underreporting their level of sexual behavior (DeLamater, 1974). Interviewing bias was assumed to be kept at minimum. Chi square analysis of the interviewers by sexual pathway types frequency distribution produced nonsignificant results,  $\chi^2 (15) = 8.76$ ,  $p < .89$ , indicating that the distribution did not deviate from the expected distribution. In other words, no one interviewer elicited a specific response set from the participants on the sexual intimacy scales (Bentler, 1968a, 1968b).

### Measurement of Variables

#### Sexual Behavior: Current and Lifetime

Several researchers have developed Guttman-like scales for sexual behavior (Bentler, 1968a, 1968b; Brady and Levitt, 1965; DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Ehrmann, 1959a; Podell and Perkins, 1975); Spanier

1976a). It appears that most couples follow a unidimensional pattern of increasing sexual intimacy. For this study Bentler's 21 item (1968a, 1968b) Heterosexual Behavioral Assessment scales I and II (see Appendix D) were used to measure the extent of sexual involvement for the four stages of dating and for lifetime sexual behavior. Scores may range from zero to 21 with a zero indicating the least amount of sexual involvement and a 21 indicating the greatest amount of sexual involvement. Bentler's scales are preferable to the other scales for a number of reasons. First, only Bentler has developed separate scales for men and women. All of the other scales have been developed using a male population. Second, the coefficient of reproducibility for this scale is .987 for the male scale and .99 for the female scale, both well above the accepted level of .90. Finally, the scales have been shown to be internally consistent with a Kuder-Richardson reliability coefficient of .95 for both male and female scales.

### Relationship Dimensions

A total of six relationship dimensions were measured for the four stages of dating. The dimensions were: love, conflict, ambivalence, maintenance behavior, dyadic trust, and relationship satisfaction. The first four of these scales were developed by Braiker and Kelley (1979) (see Appendix E). They are:

1. Love. The love subscale is measured by ten items. These items reflect feelings of belonging, closeness, and attachment. Participants rated themselves on Likert-like scales ranging from one to nine. These scores were summed yielding a range of possible scores from ten (the



least amount of love) to 90 (the greatest amount of love).

2. Conflict/Negativity. Five items tap this dimension. These items reflect the amount of overt behavioral conflict and the communication of negative affect. The scores on this subscale can range from five (the least amount of conflict) to 45 (the greatest amount of conflict).

3. Ambivalence. The ambivalence subscale has five items. These items reflect feelings of confusion about the partner, anxiety about the increased commitment, and the uncertainty of continuing the relationship. This subscale can range from a score of five (the least amount of ambivalence) to 45 (the greatest amount of ambivalence).

4. Maintenance Behaviors. The maintenance subscale has five items that reflect the behaviors the couples engage in to keep the relationship viable. It includes items concerning disclosure of personal feelings, working on problems, and the extent of behavior change the participant has gone through in order to solve problems in the relationship. The scores on this subscale can range from five (the least amount of maintenance) to 45 (the greatest amount of maintenance).

In addition to the above four dimensions, two other dimensions were measured. The first was dyadic trust, as measured by Larzelere and Huston's (1980) Dyadic Trust Scale (see Appendix F). This eight item, Likert-like scale has been used with premarital couples with good success. It measures dyadic trust separate from general trust and socially desirable responses. Participants indicated the degree of agreement with each item using a seven point scale. Five of the items were reversed scored, and then the eight items were summed. The scores may range from seven (the least amount of dyadic trust) to 56 (the

greatest amount of dyadic trust).

The final dimension measured was relationship satisfaction. This was assessed with the Austin Contentment/Distress measure (see Appendix G). Participants were asked to think about their relationship, what each partner puts in and gets out, and then to assess how they felt. They then indicated how "happy," how "content," how "guilty," and how "angry" they felt on a scale from one to four (1 = "not at all" to 4 = "very much"). The total satisfaction score is derived by summing the content and the happy scores and subtracting the guilty and the angry scores. The resulting scores may range from -6 to +6. The higher the score, the more content the participant is with their relationship.

### Background Variables

As has been previously stated, several background measures were used as a means to differentiate couples who followed different sexual pathways. This included measures of sexual attitudes, dating history, religiosity, physical attractiveness, sex guilt, perceived peer behavior, source of sexual knowledge, and factors influencing sexual decision making. The following is a description of each measure.

1. Religiosity. Religiosity was measured with a forced choice question. Participants were asked to indicate how often they attend church services: (1) more than once a week; (2) once a week; (3) more than twice a month; (4) once a month; (5) on religious holidays; (6) never.

2. Sexual Attitudes. The Premarital Sexual Permissiveness scale (see Appendix H) was developed by Reiss in 1964. Since that time it

has been widely used as a measure of sexual attitudinal permissiveness (Clayton and Bokemeire, 1980). The scale is a 12 item, Guttman-like scale with scores ranging from zero (most conservative attitude) to 12 (most liberal attitude). The twelve items are assessed twice, once with males as a referent and once with females as a referent. The scores from the male and female scales can be compared with equivalent scores reflecting an attitude of sexually permissive equality and a difference in scores indicating a more permissive attitude for one sex. The scale has a coefficient of reproducibility of .97 (Hampe and Ruppel, 1974). It has demonstrated known group validity by discriminating between highly permissive groups and low permissive groups (Reiss, 1964).

3. Reference Group Behavior. This variable was measured by asking participants to rate the perceived sexual behavior of their three best, same-sex friends. Shorter versions of the Bentler's (1968a, 1968b) Heterosexual Behavioral Assessment scales (see Appendix I) were used. These 10 item, Guttman-like scales have been shown to be highly correlated to the longer scales (.97 for both male and female scales). Scores may range from zero to ten. The higher the score, the greater the sexual involvement.

4. Dating History. Several questions were asked about the participants' dating history. A forced choice question established an estimate of the dating frequency over an average month: (1) twice or more a week; (2) once a week; (3) once every two weeks; (4) once a month; (5) rarely date. Participants were also asked their age when they began dating, how many of their past relationships had reached the serious stage of dating, and how many sexual partners they had prior

to the present relationship.

5. Physical Attractiveness. Two measures of physical attractiveness were used. The interviewers rated the participants, and each of the participants rated themselves. Both measures used a seven point Likert-like scale (1 = not attractive, 7 = very attractive).

6. Sex Guilt. Sex guilt was measured by using a subscale from the Mosher Forced Choice Guilt Inventory (Mosher, 1979; see Appendix J). The Sex Guilt subscale has been extensively used as a measure of sexual guilt and has been shown to be negatively correlated to the degree of sexual experience (D'Augelli and Cross, 1975; Langston, 1973, 1975; Mosher, 1973; Mosher and Cross, 1971). Separate scales exist for males and females. The male scale consists of 28 items, whose summed, weighted scores yield a possible range of scores from -45 (low guilt) to +37 (high guilt). The corrected split-half reliability for the male scale is .97 (Mosher, 1966). The female scale has 39 items. By summing the weighted scores a possible range of scores from -64 (low guilt) to +64 (high guilt) is achieved. The corrected split half reliability for the female scale is .95 (Mosher, 1968).

7. Sources of Sexual Knowledge. Participants were asked to indicate who they saw as being the primary source of their sexual knowledge. The choices were: (1) parents, (2) peers, (3) lover, (4) professionals, (5) sex education courses, and (6) the media.

8. Influences on Sexual Decision Making. Each participant who had experienced coitus in their present relationship completed an Inventory of Sexual Decision Factors (see Appendix K) which measures important, independent influences at the time of first intercourse with their present

partner. Developed by Christopher and Cate (unpublished manuscript) it has four subscales: (a) the Positive Affect/Communication subscale has 14 items, each on a one to seven scale, yielding a possible range of scores from 14 (small influence) to 98 (great influence); (b) the Arousal/Receptivity subscale with nine items on a seven point scale yielding a possible range of scores from nine (small influence) to 63 (great influence); the Pressure/Obligation subscale has six items on a seven point scale and yields a range of possible scores from six (small influence) to 42 (great influence); and finally a circumstantial subscale with five items on a seven point scale with a range of possible scores from five (small influence) to 35 (great influence). The four subscales have been found to be internally consistent with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .67 to .86.

9. Greek Affiliation. It was determined if the participant was a member of a student Greek organization, either a fraternity or a sorority.

10. Socio-Economic Status. Each participant was asked to indicate their parents' educational level, and each parent's income and occupation. The socio-economic status was then classified as being: (1) Professional (physician, engineer, etc.); (2) Semi-professional (registered nurse, middle management, etc.); (3) Skilled worker (craftsman, mechanic, etc.); (4) Semi-skilled worker, (transportation operative, armed services, etc.); (5) Unskilled worker (assembly line, laborer, etc.); (6) Other (never employed, student, etc.).

11. Truthfulness. Finally, participants were asked to complete a seven point, Likert-like scale on how truthful they were throughout the

interview (1 = "completely truthful" and 7 = "completely untruthful").

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The statistical analyses in this study were conducted in four phases. In the first phase, a cluster analysis was performed on the sexual intimacy scores at each stage of dating. This procedure yielded groups of couples with similar patterns of sexual intimacy over time. In the second phase, utilizing the sample as a whole, a series of four multiple regressions were performed on the sexual intimacy scores for each stage of dating using the relationship dimensions of love, conflict, ambivalence, maintenance behaviors, relationship satisfaction, and dyadic trust as predictor variables. In addition, length of the relationship to the specific dating stage being analyzed was also entered into the regression as an independent variable in order to test its ability to predict sexual intimacy.

Third, once the typology of sexual pathways was established, each of the types were compared on the relationship dimensions of: (a) love, (b) conflict, (c) ambivalence, (d) maintenance behaviors, (e) relationship satisfaction, and (f) dyadic trust. A repeated measures analysis of variance was performed on the relationship dimension scores for the purpose of comparing the mean scores of individuals at the "first date," the "casually dating," the "considering becoming a couple," and the "perceived themselves as a couple" stages of dating.

In the final phase of the data analysis the types were compared on various background variables. Analyses of variance were used to assess differences between types on: (a) lifetime sexual behavior, (b) sex guilt, (c) perceived peer sexual behavior, (d) premarital sexual attitudes, (e) age of first date, (f) number of prior serious relation-

ships, (g) participant's self ratings of physical attractiveness, (h) interviewer ratings of participant's physical attractiveness, (i) number of past sexual partners, and (j) influences on sexual decision making. Chi square analyses were used to examine the distributions of (a) dating frequency, (b) greek affiliation, (c) source of sexual knowledge, (d) socio-economic status, and (e) frequency of church attendance by sexual pathway type.

### Constructing the Sexual Pathways

The typology of sexual pathways was constructed using a cluster analytic technique with a Euclidean distance amalgamation rule, a rule that is based on the sum of the squares of the differences between two variables (Engleman, 1979). For this study, couples were clustered using the Bentler Heterosexual Behavioral Assessment scores (Bentler, 1968a, 1968b) for each member of the dyad for the four points in time that were assessed: (a) first date, (b) casually dating, (c) considering becoming a couple, and (d) perceived themselves as a couple. Therefore, couples were clustered based on the measure of eight variables, with four of the measures coming from each member of the dyad.

The process of cluster analysis, using the Euclidean distance rule, begins with each case, a couple in this instance, as its own cluster. Then, in a stepwise fashion, those couples which have the least distance between their variables (are the most similar in their measures) are joined to form a cluster. A new mean for each of the variables is computed for the newly formed cluster based on all of the cases within the cluster at that time. The process continues until all of the cases



have been joined into one cluster.

One of the limitations of cluster analysis is that there are no set rules to determine the optimal number of clusters in a data set (Anderberg, 1973). For the purposes of this study two decision rules were used. First, the derived clusters must have been interpretable at an intuitive level. Second, it was necessary that each of the clusters showed a unique pattern of sexual involvement. The uniqueness of the clusters' sexual involvement pattern was determined by comparing the clusters' mean sexual intimacy scores at each dating stage using analyses of variance and post-hoc comparisons of the means where appropriate.

A total of 44 couples were used in the cluster analysis. Nine of the couples were not included in the analysis because one of the dyad members reported that a particular stage of dating did not exist in their relationship. For example, it may have been that the male member of the dyad did not feel that there was a time when the couple was "considering becoming a couple," that the couple had moved directly from casually dating into the couple stage of dating. In such a case the male would not have completed a sexual intimacy scale (Bentler, 1968a, 1968b) for the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating. The cluster analysis was performed on only those couples for which all of the stages of dating existed for both members of the dyad. However, each of the nine couples who had one missing data point were assigned to the cluster group whose mean sexual intimacy scores most closely approximated their own sexual intimacy scores. New means for the sexual intimacy scores were calculated for each of the cluster groups that received one or more previously unassigned couples.

## The Clusters

Four clusters were derived by the cluster analysis (see Table 1 for the mean sexual intimacy scores). Four couples, 7.4 percent of the sample, formed the first cluster. The progression of sexual behaviors for couples within this group began with a mean level of sexual involvement on the first date (11.75) just beyond the level of sexual intercourse in a face to face position. In actuality three of the couples in this cluster reported engaging in intercourse on the first date with the final couple reportedly halting their sexual involvement just short of coitus. At the casual stage of dating, the average sexual behavior (16.37) achieved by these couples was the oral manipulation of the male genitals by the female. At the next stage of dating, "considering becoming a couple," the mean level of sexual intimacy (16.72) showed little change from the previous dating stage. However, at the "couple" stage of dating these couples, on the average, had progressed through mutual oral-genital manipulation, sexual intercourse in a face to back position, and had reached the mean level of sexual involvement (20.00) of oral manipulation of the male genitals to ejaculation by the female. Because the couples in this cluster demonstrated such high levels of sexual intimacy at the early stages of dating, they were termed the Rapid-involvement couples.

Seventeen couples, 31.48 percent of the sample, comprise the second cluster. Couples in this group were termed Gradual-involvement couples because of their gradual increase in sexual involvement over the four dating stages. Gradual-involvement couples had a fairly low mean level of sexual involvement (1.59) for the first date, engaging in one minute

continuous lipkissing and the manual manipulation of the female breasts over her clothes. At the casual stage of dating, Gradual-involvement couples increase their mean level of involvement (7.01) to the level of manipulation of the male genitals, over the clothes, by the female. At the "considering becoming a couple" dating stage, Gradual-involvement couples progressed to the average sexual behavior (14.52) of oral contact with the male genitals by the female. Finally, at the couple stage of dating, Gradual-involvement couples have reached a mean sexual score of 19.97, reflecting the approximate level of sexual behavior as the Rapid-involvement couples for this stage, that of oral manipulation of the male genitals by the female to ejaculation.

The third cluster is the largest with 24 couples, 44.44 percent of the sample. Couples in this cluster were termed Couple-involvement couples because they reached the orgasmic levels of sexual involvement at the "perceived themselves as a couple" stage of dating. Couple-involvement couples had a low average level of sexual involvement on the first date (.81) with one minute continuous lipkissing being the average behavior. The progression to the casual stage of dating showed an advancement in the mean level of sexual behavior (2.06) to manipulating the female breasts over her clothes. At the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating involvement, Couple-involvement couples' mean level of sexual intimacy (5.76) still showed a pre-orgasmic level of involvement, manipulating the female genitals under her clothes. Finally, at the "perceived themselves as a couple" stage of dating, Couple-involvement couples show a dramatic rise in their mean level of sexual involvement (18.46) to the level of mutual oral-genital manipulation.

The fourth cluster, termed the Low-involvement cluster, is comprised of nine couples, 16.60 percent of the sample. These couples were characterized by overall low levels of sexual involvement when compared to the other types. Low-involvement couples have a first date mean sexual score of .44, a score that indicates that some of these couples did not engage in any of the sexual behaviors listed on the sexual intimacy scale while on their first date. By the casual stage of dating, Low-involvement couples progressed to a mean level of sexual behavior (1.28) of one minute continuous lipkissing. At the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating, Low-involvement couples experienced a slight increase in their mean level of sexual intimacy (3.33) to the level of manipulation of the female's breasts under her clothes. Finally, at the last stage of dating, "perceived themselves as a couple," Low-involvement couples were still pre-orgasmic in their mean level of sexual intimacy (9.78) with an average behavioral involvement of manual manipulation of the female genitals to massive secretions.

#### Cluster Differences in Sexual Involvement by Stage of Dating

In order to test the uniqueness of each clusters' pattern of sexual involvement, a series of four one-way analyses of variance were performed on each clusters' sexual intimacy scores for the different levels of dating (see Appendix L, Tables L1, L2, L3, L4). Tukey's post-hoc comparisons (Neter and Wasserman, 1974) were conducted, when appropriate, to explore significant differences between means. Nonsignificant differences between means are not discussed.

At the first stage of dating, a significant main effect for type

Table 1

Mean Sexual Scores by Type and Stage of Dating Involvement

Stage of Dating	Sexual Pathway Type			
	Rapid Involvement	Gradual Involvement	Couple Involvement	Low Involvement
First Date	11.75 <sup>a</sup>	1.59 <sup>b</sup>	.81 <sup>b</sup>	.44 <sup>b</sup>
Casually Dating	16.37 <sup>a</sup>	7.04 <sup>b</sup>	2.06 <sup>c</sup>	1.28 <sup>c</sup>
Considering Becoming a Couple	16.72 <sup>a</sup>	14.52 <sup>a</sup>	5.76 <sup>b</sup>	3.33 <sup>b</sup>
Couple	20.00 <sup>a</sup>	19.97 <sup>a</sup>	18.46 <sup>a</sup>	9.78 <sup>b</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b, c) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

was found,  $F(3, 104) = 67.06$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post-hoc analysis shows that Rapid-involvement individuals were significantly higher in their level of sexual involvement than Gradual-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ), Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ), and Low-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) on their first date.

A significant main effect for type was found for the "casual stage of dating,"  $F(3, 104) = 42.75$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post-hoc analysis revealed that Rapid-involvement individuals have a significantly higher level of sexual involvement than Gradual-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ), Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ), and Low-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) at this stage. Furthermore, Gradual-involvement individuals reported significantly higher levels of sexual involvement during the casually dating stage than Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) and Low-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ).

The analysis at the third stage of dating, "considering becoming a couple," showed a significant main effect for type,  $F(3, 104) = 52.02$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post-hoc analysis revealed that both Rapid-involvement individuals and Gradual-involvement individuals were significantly more involved sexually at this stage of dating than Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) and Low-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ).

At the final stage of dating, "perceived themselves as a couple," the analysis of variance also showed a significant main effect for type,  $F(3, 104) = 38.66$ ,  $p < .01$ . Post-hoc comparisons of the means showed that at the couple stage of dating, Low-involvement individuals were significantly lower in their level of sexual involvement than the Rapid-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ), Gradual-involvement individuals

( $p < .01$ ), and Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ).

A further analysis was undertaken to see if any differences existed between clusters in the mean length of their relationships for each stage of dating. Such an analysis was necessary because differences in sexual pathway types on the relationship dimensions could possibly be attributed to differences in the length of each clusters' dating stages. No analysis was conducted on the "first date" stage of dating since all relationships would have been one day long at that time regardless of sexual pathway type. However, one-way analyses of variance were conducted for the stages of "casually dating," "considering becoming a couple," and "perceived themselves as a couple" (see Appendix L, Tables L5, L6, L7). No significant differences were found between the four sexual pathway types for length of time in the "casually dating" stage of dating or the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating. A significant main effect for type was found for the "couple" stage of dating,  $F(3, 104) = 4.39$ ,  $p < .006$ , the amount of time the couples had been dating by the time of the interview. Although the analysis of variance indicated a difference in means, Tukey's post-hoc analysis (Neter and Wasserman, 1974) failed to show any significant differences in the mean times. The failure of the Tukey's post-hoc comparison statistic to show significant differences may be attributed to the large mean square error (MSE) in the analysis of variance (1883.86). The MSE is used in calculating the critical difference in the Tukey's statistic. When a large MSE is encountered, it inflates the value of the critical difference used to compare differences in the means (Neter and Wasserman, 1974). There is a trend, however, for Couple-involvement individuals to

have been seeing each other longer than the other three couple types (see Table 2).

It can be seen from this analysis that the four clusters derived from the analysis show certain important differences in their levels of sexual involvement at each stage of dating and are unique in their patterns of sexual involvement. Moreover, the progression of mean sexual intimacy scores for the four stages of dating within each cluster are intuitively understandable. Therefore, the dual selection criteria set out earlier have been met and the four cluster groups, Rapid-involvement couples, Gradual-involvement couples, Couple-involvement couples, and Low-involvement couples are assumed to adequately represent major sexual pathways that many individuals follow in their premarital relationships.

The establishment of four sexual pathway types is different from those made by past researchers. Burgess and Wallin (1953) chose to divide individuals into those who engaged in premarital intercourse and those who did not. Ehrmann's (1959b) work was the first to note the progressive nature of sexual involvement, however, he failed to make further distinctions. Kirkendall's (1961) six levels of sexual intimacy were done only on an intuitive level with only three of the levels referring to the sexual intimacy of long term dating couples (relationships that began solely for the purposes of sexual gratification of the male; relationships that entered into premarital coitus at the time of emotional attachment; relationships where premarital intercourse was experienced after engagement). Finally, Peplau et al. (1977), divided couples into "sexually liberated couples" (engaged in intercourse within



Table 2  
 Mean Length of Involvement in Weeks  
 by Stage of Dating Involvement

Stage of Dating	Sexual Pathway Type			
	Rapid Involvement	Gradual Involvement	Couple Involvement	Low Involvement
Casually Dating	7.75	9.26	9.56	7.72
Considering Becoming a Couple	22.50	20.09	22.69	15.78
Couple	68.50	55.74	87.15	55.56

Note. No significant differences found between means.

a first month of the first date), "sexually moderate couples" (engaged in intercourse after a month of the first date), and "sexually traditional couples" (did not engage in intercourse). Peplau et al. (1977) only used a criterion of time in constructing their typology of couples rather than using the level of involvement as a criterion of amalgamating couples. However, it should be noted that the sexual pathways delineated in this study most closely parallel the sexual behaviors of the three groups of Peplau et al. (1977). The sexual involvement pattern of the Rapid-involvement couples is a close approximation of Peplau et al.'s (1977) "sexually liberated couples." The behavioral involvement pattern of Low-involvement couples is similar to "sexually traditional couples." The cluster analysis would indicate that there is a need for an additional two groups rather than just one (Peplau et al.'s "sexually moderate group"), one group that first engages in orgasmic levels of sexual intimacy during the traditional stage of "considering becoming a couple" (Gradual-involvement couples) and another group that first engaged in orgasmic levels of sexual intimacy after they began to consider themselves a couple (Couple-involvement couples). Support for this separation comes from the significant differences between these two clusters in their sexual involvement as the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating and the "casually dating" stage of dating.

In summary, the cluster analysis of the sexual involvement scores for the couples of this study produced four clusters, or types of sexual pathways. The first type, Rapid-involvement couples, become highly sexually involved quite early in their relationship when compared to the other three couple types. Rapid-involvement couples are significantly higher on their mean sexual intimacy scores than the other three couple

types on the first date, and continue to be significantly higher during the casually dating and the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating when compared to Couple-involvement couples and Low-involvement couples.

The second type, Gradual-involvement couples, reach the orgasmic level of sexual involvement at the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating involvement. Furthermore, couples of this type have a significantly higher level of sexual involvement at the "casually dating" stage of dating and the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating when compared to the level of sexual intimacy for these same stages for Couple-involvement couples and Low-involvement couples.

The third type, Couple-involvement couples, maintain a nonorgasmic level of sexual intimacy until the "couple" stage of dating, at which time they experience a dramatic rise in their level of sexual intimacy to the higher levels of orgasmic sexual involvement. Finally, the last couple type consists of the Low-involvement couples. The mean sexual intimacy scores of this group would indicate that their sexual involvement is restricted to the nonorgasmic levels of involvement throughout their relationship. Furthermore, they are significantly lower in their sexual involvement than the Rapid-involvement couples and the Gradual-involvement couples at every stage of dating, and significantly lower than the Couple-involvement couples at the final stage of dating.

#### Analysis of Relationship Dimensions

The analysis of the relationship dimensions took place in two phases. First, using the sample as a whole (disregarding sexual path-

way type), an attempt was made to see which relationship dimensions were the best predictors of sexual intimacy for each of the four stages of dating involvement. A multiple regression was performed on the sexual intimacy scores of individuals for the "first date," "casually dating," "considering becoming a couple," and "perceived themselves as a couple" stages of dating. The scores for the relationship dimensions (love, conflict, ambivalence, maintenance behaviors, relationship satisfaction, dyadic trust) from the corresponding dating stage served as the independent variables. In addition, for the last three stages of dating, the length of the relationship to the end of that stage was also used as an independent variable since past research has indicated time may have a direct effect on the level of sexual involvement (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979).

The second phase of analysis involved comparing each type on the selected relationship dimensions. Six  $4 \times 2 \times 4$  (Type X Sex X Stage of Dating Involvement) analyses of variance were performed on the relationship dimensions of love, conflict, ambivalence, maintenance behaviors (Braiker and Kelley, 1979), relationship satisfaction (Austin, 1974), and dyadic trust (Larzelere and Huston, 1981). Tukey's post-hoc comparisons (Neter and Wasserman, 1974) were performed, where appropriate, to determine significant differences between means.

#### Predicting Sexual Intimacy by Dating Stage for the Sample as a Whole

Stepwise multiple regressions were performed on the sexual intimacy scores for each stage of dating using the relationship dimension scores for the corresponding dating stage as independent variables. In addition,

length of the relationship to the end of the specific dating stage was also entered into the regression for the latter stages of dating. When using a stepwise regression, it is necessary to consider which model is the best explanatory model; that is, which model maximizes the amount of variance explained in the dependent variable while minimizing the level of error and bias present in the model. Neter and Wasserman (1974) suggest using three criteria in choosing the best model: (a) one that maximizes the  $R^2$ , a measure of explained variance in the dependent variable; (b) one that minimizes the level of error within the model; and (c) one that has a  $C_p$  statistic lower than the number of parameters in the model, a measure of bias present in the model. Using these three criteria a model was determined for each of the stages of dating. For the couple stage of dating none of the relationship dimensions predicted sexual intimacy. The regressions for each stage are as follows:

First Date. Table 3 shows a summary of the model that best predicts sexual intimacy for the first date. Four relationship dimensions predicted sexual intimacy at the first stage of dating in the following order: (a) conflict, (b) ambivalence, (c) maintenance behaviors, and (d) love. With these four variables in the model a total of 11.38 percent of the variance ( $R^2$ ) in the sexual intimacy scores is accounted for. Moreover, with the  $C_p$  statistic (2.11) being lower than the number of parameters in the model (4) bias is minimized.

Casually Dating. Table 4 shows a summary of the model that best predicts sexual intimacy for the casual stage of dating. A total of four relationship dimensions predicted intimacy at the "casually dating"

Table 3

Regression of Relationship Dimensions on First Date Sexual Intimacy Scores

Dimensions	Beta	$\underline{R}^2$	$R^2$ Change	$\underline{MSEp}$	$\underline{Cp}$	Simple $\underline{r}$	Overall $\underline{F}$	$\underline{p}$ for the model
Conflict	.1602	.0782	.0782	11.52	.20	.280	9.00	.003
Ambivalence	.0471	.0884	.0101	11.50	1.03	.228	5.09	.008
Maintenance	-.1145	.0934	.0050	11.54	2.45	.080	3.57	.017
Love	.0619	.1138	.0204	11.40	2.11	.135	3.30	.014
Constant	-3.064							

Table 4

## Regression of Relationship Dimensions on Casually Dating Sexual Intimacy Scores

Dimensions	Beta	$\underline{R}^2$	$R^2$ Change	$\underline{MSE}_p$	$\underline{C}_p$	Simple $\underline{r}$	Overall $\underline{F}$	$\underline{p}$ for the model
Conflict	.2827	.1155	.1155	27.50	9.66	.340	13.85	.001
Love	.1990	.1540	.0384	26.55	6.63	.239	9.55	.001
Ambivalence	.1928	.1885	.0345	25.71	4.11	.273	8.05	.001
Maintenance	-.2050	.2142	.0258	25.13	2.75	.177	7.02	.001
Constant	-10.02							

stage of dating. In their predictive order they were: (a) conflict, (b) love, (c) ambivalence, and (d) maintenance behaviors. With these four variables in the model a total of 21.42 percent of the variance ( $R^2$ ) in the sexual intimacy scores is accounted for. Furthermore, bias within the model is limited ( $C_p = 2.75$ ).

Considering Becoming A Couple. Table 5 shows a summary of the model that best predicts sexual intimacy for the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating. A total of three relationship dimensions predicted sexual intimacy for this stage. In their predictive order they were: (a) love, (b) conflict, and (c) relationship satisfaction. The three variables in the model accounted for 17.23 percent of the variance ( $R^2$ ) in the sexual intimacy scores and the  $C_p$  statistic (.199) shows little bias present in the model.

Taken as a whole, there are several noteworthy findings from the preceding analysis. First, the role of conflict at all three stages of dating as a predictor of sexual intimacy is particularly interesting. It is the best predictor for level of sexual behavior for the first two stages of dating, and the second best predictor of sexual intimacy for the third stage of dating. In addition, the correlation for conflict with level of sexual intimacy is positive for each of the three stages. This would indicate that the more conflict a couple engages in, the higher the level of sexual intimacy. Since the conflict scale is a measure of general conflict, it is unknown what the specific source of the conflict is. However, past research would indicate that the premarital sexual roles (Parson and Bales, 1955) that men and women play would be a natural lead into conflict. Some of the research that has been done



Table 5

Regression of Relationship Dimensions on "Considering Becoming a Couple" Sexual Intimacy Scores

Dimension	Beta	$\underline{R}^2$	$R^2$ Change	$\underline{MSEp}$	$\underline{Cp}$	Simple $\underline{r}$	Overall $\underline{F}$	$\underline{p}$ for the model
Love	.1864	.0895	.0895	37.18	6.420	.299	10.42	.002
Conflict	.3050	.1543	.0648	34.83	.425	.243	9.57	.001
Satisfaction	.5596	.1723	.0180	34.42	.199	.113	7.22	.001
Constant	-9.620							

after Parson and Bales (1955) shows why this conflict may exist. Both Ehrman (1959b) and Kirkendall (1961) found that it was expected for the male to be the sexual aggressor within the dating relationship. The corresponding expectations for the woman is to be the one who limits the degree of sexual intimacy within the relationship (Burgess and Wallin, 1953; Peplau et al., 1977). Moreover, recent research has indicated that men expect higher degrees of sexual intimacy with a fewer number of dates when compared to women. College students have indicated that on less than 15 percent of their dates do they encounter a dating partner that shares their personal view on what level of sexual intimacy they should progress to (Knox and Wilson, 1981). Therefore, some of the conflict dating couples experience may be attributed to differing expectations about which level of sexual involvement should be achieved at various stages of dating.

The above findings show that love increases as a predictor of sexual intimacy as couples reach the more involved stages of dating. DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) found that there was a direct, positive relationship between the level of sexual intimacy and the emotional quality of the relationship. Furthermore, past research has indicated that the emotional portion of the relationship is paramount in deciding whether or not to engage in the higher levels of sexual activity (Christopher and Cate, unpublished manuscript; Lewis and Burr, 1975; Schultz et al., 1975).

Ambivalence is the third predictor variable for the first two stages of dating, but not for the latter two. Its relationship to sexual intimacy is positive for both of the initial stages of dating.

No past research has linked ambivalence to sexual intimacy; however, it may be postulated that as individuals engage in higher levels of intimacy they view such involvement as a symbolic representation of commitment (Weiss, 1979). Consequently, engaging in sexual behaviors that are socially prescribed for committed relationships prior to actually having the commitment may contribute to a feeling of ambivalence about the relationship. Furthermore, the importance of ambivalence as a predictor variable decreases as dating involvement increases. This may indicate that engaging in a progression of sexual behaviors as a couple moves from first date through casually dating makes the members of the dyad aware of the potential of a relationship, which in turn may contribute to the feelings of ambivalence. The fact that love increases in predictive value as ambivalence decreases may indicate that love is a necessary precondition to engaging in behaviors that are a precursor to intercourse. Moreover, ambivalence has a negative relationship with love ( $r = -.41$ ) at the third stage of dating indicating that the feelings of ambivalence decrease as feelings of love increase.

Maintenance also showed a corresponding predictive role for the first two stages of dating, but not for the last two. Its relationship to sexual intimacy is a positive one for both stages. This relationship may be explained by examining the items within the maintenance behavior subscale (see Appendix E). A portion of this subscale deals with accommodating one's behaviors to the needs of the relationship. Assuming, at least in part, that the previously noted conflict concerns the level of sexual intimacy the couple should achieve, this may indicate that the conflict is resolved by either the male not demanding as much sexual

intimacy, or by the female allowing greater sexual intimacy, or by degrees of both. Moreover, the other items on the maintenance behavior subscale deal with self-disclosure. Altman and Taylor (1973) have shown appropriate levels of self-disclosure can lead to greater levels of emotional intimacy. The symbolic representation of the enhanced emotional intimacy may be an increase in sexual expression. The finding that maintenance behaviors do not enter into the third equation may have two potentially plausible explanations. First, it may be a product of the lesser importance of conflict as a predictor. As conflict decreases in importance in its relationship to sexual intimacy, there may be a lower need for maintenance behaviors in this area also. Secondly, it may be that the accommodation of behavior to resolve sexual conflicts, and the self-disclosure that is done on the first date are the early signs of love beginning in the relationship. Maintenance behaviors have an extremely high positive correlation with love at the time of the first date ( $r = .81$ ) and during casually dating ( $r = .78$ ). Therefore, the dimension of maintenance behaviors may lose its predictive ability in the area of sexual intimacy as love increases its strength as a predictor of premarital sexual interaction.

It is interesting to note that some of the relationship dimensions were predictive of sexual intimacy for the first three stages of dating, but none of the relationship dimensions were predictive of sexual intimacy for the final stage of dating. It may be that the explanation for this finding may be found in the mean level of sexual activity for the sample as a whole at this stage of dating. The mean sexual intimacy score for this stage is 17.60. Such a score would indicate that not only

had the average couple engaged in intercourse, but that they had explored other areas of orgasmic sexual behavior as well. Furthermore, the standard deviation for this mean (4.93) would indicate that there was little variance in sexual behaviors achieved at this stage of dating outside of the orgasmic levels of sexual involvement. It would appear from this that sexual behaviors had become an integral part of the relationship by the "couple" stage of dating and therefore, none of the relationship dimensions is predictive of its occurrence.

#### Relationship Dimension Differences by Dating Stage

In addition to examining the predictor variables for each of the dating stages, it is also advantageous to examine how the relationship dimensions change as couples move from initial dating to later stages of dating. This was accomplished with six 4 x 2 x 4 (Type x Sex x Stage of Dating Involvement) repeated measures analysis of variance, with type and sex as grouping measures and stage of dating as a repeated measure (see Appendix L, Tables L8 through L13). Stage of dating was treated as a repeated measure because the same scale was completed for each of the four stages of dating. Tukey's post-hoc comparisons (Neter and Wasserman, 1974) were used, where appropriate, to establish where significant differences in the means existed.

The results of these analyses point to a number of differences for the sample as a whole. Significant dating stage differences were found for all of the relationship dimensions. According to the analysis, love, conflict, satisfaction, and maintenance behaviors showed a significant increase at each of the four stages of dating. Ambivalence was high

through the first three stages of dating and then dropped at the "couple" stage of dating. Trust dropped significantly at each of the dating stages.

The patterns of change in the relationship dimensions of love, conflict, ambivalence, and maintenance behaviors closely parallels the findings of other studies that have used these scales to investigate change in premarital relationship dimensions (Cate, 1979; Braiker and Kelley, 1979; Huston et al., 1981). The fact that satisfaction increases significantly at each dating stage makes intuitive sense. The finding that dyadic trust decreases significantly at each stage of dating is not consistent with past research (Larzelere and Huston, 1980); nor is the finding that there is a significant main effect for sex,  $F(1, 100) = 9.02, p < .003$ , with women having a significantly lower mean trust score (15.29) than men (19.13). The decrease in trust may be the result of the lack of a formal commitment between the couples. Although they perceived themselves as a couple, there was a lack of a formal symbol of commitment among the couples in the sample. Women may have less trust than men in the relationship because, as Peplau et al. (1977) have pointed out, women stand to lose more from becoming deeply involved in a relationship that may lead to marriage. She must depend on the marriage to give her status and income. Therefore, it stands to reason that in the early stages of the relationship, prior to a formal commitment to marriage, trust may be lower for the female as she evaluates whether or not the male will continue to the more formal levels of commitment.

### Relationship Dimension Differences by Sexual Pathway Type

The final stage of the analysis of the relationship dimensions was the comparisons of sexual pathway types (derived from the cluster analysis) along the relationship dimensions of love, conflict, ambivalence, maintenance behaviors (Braiker and Kelley, 1979), dyadic trust (Larzelere and Huston, 1981), and relationship satisfaction (Austin, 1974). In other words, it was of interest to examine what differences exist between the different couple types on the relationship dimensions for the different points in the dating relationship.

The statistical technique used for this analysis is the same series of six 4 x 2 x 4 (Type x Sex x Stage of Dating Involvement) repeated measures analyses of variance that has been previously described. Type and sex were treated as grouping measures and stage of dating involvement was treated as a repeated measure because the same scale was completed for each of the four dating stages. As before, all post-hoc analyses of differences in means were conducted using the Tukey's post-hoc comparison statistic (Neter and Wasserman, 1974). No significant differences between types were found for the relationship dimensions of ambivalence, maintenance behaviors, dyadic trust, and relationship satisfaction.

Conflict. Although no main effect for type was found for conflict, a Type by Stage of Dating Involvement interaction was found,  $F(9, 300) = 17.32$ ,  $p < .004$ . Post-hoc comparisons of the means (see Table 6) revealed that Rapid-involvement individuals had a significantly higher level of conflict than did Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .05$ ), and Low-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) on the first date and at the "casually

Table 6  
 Mean Conflict Scores by Sexual Pathway Type  
 by Stage of Dating Involvement

Stage of Dating	Sexual Pathway Type			
	Rapid Involvement	Gradual Involvement	Couple Involvement	Low Involvement
First Date	16.00 <sup>a</sup> <sub>x</sub>	11.62 <sup>a</sup> <sub>x</sub>	10.04 <sup>b</sup> <sub>x</sub>	9.55 <sup>b</sup> <sub>x</sub>
Casually Dating	18.00 <sup>a</sup> <sub>x</sub>	14.85 <sup>b</sup> <sub>xy</sub>	12.17 <sup>b</sup> <sub>x</sub>	12.25 <sup>b</sup> <sub>x</sub>
Considering Becoming a Couple	14.88 <sub>x</sub>	17.65 <sub>y</sub>	15.51 <sub>y</sub>	13.35 <sub>x</sub>
Couple	16.13 <sub>x</sub>	18.56 <sub>y</sub>	19.46 <sub>yz</sub>	16.22 <sub>y</sub>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ . Column values with different subscripts are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .



dating" level of involvement.

In comparing means within the sexual pathway types it was found that for Gradual-involvement individuals conflict is found to rise significantly from the "first date" when compared to the "considering becoming a couple" ( $p < .05$ ), and the "couple" ( $p < .01$ ) stages of dating. For the Couple-involvement individuals, conflict is found to increase significantly from the "first date" to the "considering becoming a couple" ( $p < .01$ ) and the "couple" ( $p < .01$ ) stages of dating. Furthermore, conflict also significantly increases for these individuals when comparing the "casual stage of dating" to the "couple stage of dating" ( $p < .01$ ). Finally, for the Low-involvement individuals it was found that conflict was significantly higher at the "couple" stage of dating when compared to the "first date" ( $p < .01$ ).

The pattern of the differences in the means is such that it suggests support for the linkage of conflict to level of sexual involvement for the couple. With Rapid-involvement individuals there is a significantly higher level of conflict at the beginning of the relationship when compared to the other sexual pathway types. Concurrently, Rapid-involvement individuals become involved at a significantly higher level of sexual involvement from the beginning of their relationship when compared to the other sexual pathway types. Moreover, Rapid-involvement individuals do not increase their level of conflict significantly over the course of their relationship while each of the other sexual pathway types, Gradual-involvement individuals, Couple-involvement individuals, and Low-involvement individuals, experience significant increases in conflict the more sexually involved they become, particularly when they achieve the orgasmic

levels of sexual involvement.

Love. A significant main effect was found for sexual pathway type for the love measure,  $F(3, 100) = 3.09, p < .03$ . However, post-hoc analysis failed to elicit the significant difference between the mean love scores. Table 7 does indicate a trend for Rapid-involvement individuals to have a slightly higher mean love score than the other sexual pathway types. The failure of the post-hoc analysis to extract the significant differences in the means may originate from two sources. First, the Tukey's post-hoc statistic is a moderately stringent statistical test (Neter and Wasserman, 1974). The probability level of the  $F$  test indicated that the differences between the means were small. Therefore, the differences may have been too small to be detected by the moderately stringent Tukey's statistic. Secondly, the cell size of the Rapid-involvement individuals is small ( $n = 8$ ) and this leads to a larger Critical difference to use when comparing means in order to guard against Type I errors.

#### Analysis of Background Variables

The final purpose of this study was to examine a set of background variables to see which ones might predispose individuals to follow a given sexual pathway. This was accomplished by the use of  $4 \times 2$  (Type x Sex) analyses of variance for the continuous variables and by the use of the Chi Square statistic for the categorical variables. Post-hoc analyses were conducted, where appropriate, using the Tukey's post-hoc test for significant differences between means (Neter and Wasserman, 1974). No differences by sexual pathway type were found for the measures

Table 7  
Mean Love Scores by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals	Low- involvement Individuals
66.38	62.05	58.28	61.82

Note. No significant differences were found between means.

of: (a) perceived peers' sexual behavior; (b) interviewers' rating of physical attractiveness; (c) number of past sexual partners; (d) past dating frequency, (e) Greek affiliation; (f) source of sexual knowledge; and (g) degree of sexual guilt.

#### Age of First Date

A significant main effect for type was found for the age at first date,  $F(3, 98) = 3.63$ ,  $p < .002$  (see Appendix L, Table L14). Post-hoc analysis revealed that Rapid-involvement individuals began dating at a significantly lower mean age (14.75) when compared to Low-involvement individuals (16.44;  $p < .01$ ) (see Table 8). Furthermore, a significant main effect for sex was found for age of first date,  $F(1, 98) = 3.97$ ,  $p < .049$ , with females beginning to date earlier than males (see Table 9). The actual difference, however, was just under one half year (.49).

The findings that Rapid-involvement individuals tend to date earlier than Low-involvement individuals is supportive of past research that has shown that individuals who restrict themselves to the lower levels of sexual involvement tend to have begun dating at a later age in comparison to individuals who reach higher levels of sexual involvement in their relationships (Bell and Chaskes, 1970; Lewis, 1973a; Schofield, 1965; Sorenson, 1972).

#### Self-Rated Physical Attractiveness

A significant main effect was found for sexual pathway type on the self ratings of physical attractiveness,  $F(3, 98) = 3.85$ ,  $p < .012$  (see Appendix L, Table L15). Post-hoc analysis (see Table 10) showed that

Table 8  
Mean Age First Date by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals	Low- involvement Individuals
14.75 <sup>ab</sup>	15.38 <sup>b</sup>	15.44 <sup>b</sup>	16.44 <sup>c</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b, c) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

Table 9  
Mean Age of First Date by Sex

Males	Females
15.77 <sup>a</sup>	15.28 <sup>b</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

Table 10  
 Mean Self Rated Physical Attractiveness  
 by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals	Low- involvement Individuals
4.88 <sup>a</sup>	5.18 <sup>ab</sup>	4.98 <sup>a</sup>	4.31 <sup>c</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b, c) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

Low-involvement individuals rated themselves significantly less attractive than Gradual-involvement individuals ( $p < .05$ ). Again, this is, in part, consistent with past research that has shown that individuals who are more sexually active perceive themselves as having a higher level of physical attractiveness (Kelley, 1978). However, it is interesting that significant differences on self rated physical attractiveness were not found between Rapid-involvement individuals and Low-involvement individuals; nor were differences found between Couple-involvement individuals and Low-involvement individuals. The lack of consistent findings in comparing the physical attractiveness ratings of those who are low in sexual activity to those who are high in their sexual activity is supportive of DeLamater and MacCorquodale's (1979) finding that the relationship between physical attractiveness and sexual activity is weak.

#### Lifetime Sexual Behavior

A significant main effect was found for sexual pathway type,  $F(3, 97) = 5.24, p < .002$  (see Appendix L, Table L16), on the lifetime sexual behavior measure. As can be seen from Table 11, post-hoc analysis revealed that both Rapid-involvement individuals (mean = 20.13) and Gradual-involvement individuals (mean = 18.06) had significantly higher levels of lifetime sexual behavior than Low-involvement individuals (mean = 11.53;  $p < .01$ ;  $p < .05$ ). It would appear that having experienced high levels of sexual involvement prior to a relationship predisposes individuals to engage in (a) high levels of sexual activity, and (b) at an earlier time in their relationships. This is consistent with past



Table 11

Mean Lifetime Sexual Behavior by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals	Low- involvement Individuals
20.13 <sup>a</sup>	18.06 <sup>a</sup>	15.44 <sup>b</sup>	11.53 <sup>b</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

research (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) which indicates that the level of lifetime sexual behavior has a direct effect on the level of current sexual behavior. It extends beyond previous research, however, by showing that the progression of sexual interaction in a current relationship is related to how sexually experienced an individual is prior to entering into that relationship.

Also consistent with past research (Ehrmann, 1959b) was a significant main effect for sex on lifetime sexual behavior,  $F(1, 97) = 3.86$ ,  $p < .05$ , with the average male being more experienced than the average female (see Table 12).

#### Premarital Sexual Attitudes

A significant main effect was found for sexual pathway type on the Premarital Sexual Permissiveness scale (Reiss, 1964),  $F(3, 100) = 15.51$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Appendix L, Table L17). As might be expected from the past research (D'Augelli and D'Augelli, 1977; DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Reiss, 1964, 1967) the mean scores on the premarital sexual permissiveness scale (see Table 13) show that Rapid-involvement individuals and Gradual-involvement individuals were significantly more liberal than Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and Low-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ;  $p < .01$ ). It is not surprising that those individuals who engage in higher levels of sexual intimacy early in the relationship possess more liberal attitudes than those individuals who either wait until a time of commitment, or choose to engage in lower levels of sexual intimacy. What cannot be established with this analysis is a casual relationship. That is, it may be that having engaged in orgasmic levels

Table 12  
Mean Lifetime Sexual Behavior by Sex

---

Males	Females
17.31 <sup>a</sup>	14.89 <sup>b</sup>

---

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

Table 13

Mean Premarital Sexual Attitudes by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals	Low- involvement Individuals
11.50 <sup>a</sup>	11.29 <sup>a</sup>	9.67 <sup>b</sup>	8.22 <sup>b</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

of sexual intimacy early in the relationship may predispose individuals to change a prior conservative attitude; or it may be that having had a liberal attitude prior to the present relationship allowed the individual to engage in high levels of sexual activity early in the relationship.

### Inventory of Sexual Decision Making Factors

As previously mentioned, the Inventory of Sexual Decision Making Factors (ISDF) measures important, independent influences on sexual decision making at the time of first intercourse with the present partner. This scale has four subscales: (a) Positive Affect/Communication; (b) Arousal/Receptivity; (c) Pressure/Obligation; and (d) Circumstance. The subscales of the ISDF were analyzed with a series of four 3 x 2 (Type x Sex) analyses of variance, with only Rapid-involvement individuals, Gradual-involvement individuals, and Couple-involvement individuals included in the analysis. Low-involvement individuals were not included because of their low level of sexual activity. No significant differences were found for the Arousal/Receptivity subscale and the Pressure/Obligation subscale.

Positive Affect/Communication. A significant main effect was found for sexual pathway type on the degree of influence of positive affect and communication on the incidence of first intercourse in the relationship,  $F(3, 75) = 12.29$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Appendix L, Table L18). It was revealed by post-hoc analysis that Rapid-involvement individuals were significantly lower on this measure than Gradual-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) and Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) (see Table 14).

This finding makes intuitive sense when the sexual activity pattern

Table 14

Mean Positive Affect/Communication by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals
35.43 <sup>a</sup>	57.38 <sup>b</sup>	66.69 <sup>b</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

of the Rapid-involvement individuals is examined. The mean sexual involvement score for this group (11.75) would indicate that many of these individuals engage in intercourse at this stage of dating. It is doubtful that as high a degree of positive affect would have been established by Rapid-involvement individuals on their first date when compared to the degree of positive affect that would have been established by the time of first intercourse for Gradual-involvement individuals and Couple-involvement individuals. Furthermore, both of these latter two groups would have had more time to discuss the meaning of intercourse, become aware of each others feelings, and been out together more times prior to their first act of sexual intercourse in comparison to Rapid-involvement individuals.

A significant main effect was also found for sex on the Positive Affect/Communication subscale,  $F(1, 75) = 4.00, p < .05$ , with females possessing a higher mean score (62.68) than males (52.26) (see Table 15). This is consistent with past research (Christopher and Cate, unpublished manuscript; Mosher and Cross, 1971) and indicates that the emotional climate of the relationship is a more important factor for females than it is for males in deciding to engage in premarital intercourse.

Circumstances. A significant main effect for sexual pathway type was found on the Circumstances subscale,  $F(3, 75) = 5.76, p < .001$  (see Appendix L, L19). Post-hoc comparisons of the means (see Table 16) show that for the Rapid-involvement individuals, circumstances played a significantly more salient role in the decision to engage in intercourse than it did for Gradual-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ) and Couple-involvement individuals ( $p < .01$ ). This would indicate that with Rapid-involvement

Table 15  
Mean Positive Affect/Communication by Sex

---

Males	Females
56.26 <sup>a</sup>	62.68 <sup>b</sup>

---

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .



Table 16  
Mean Circumstances by Sexual Pathway Type

Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals
15.86 <sup>a</sup>	8.97 <sup>b</sup>	9.75 <sup>b</sup>

Note. Row values with different superscripts (i.e. a, b) are significantly different at  $p < .05$ .

individuals there was more of an effort to preplan events to increase the chances of intercourse occurring and that alcohol and/or drugs may have played a role in influencing these individuals when they decided to engage in their first act of intercourse.

#### Frequency of Church Attendance

Frequency of church attendance was measured by the participants marking one of six choices that indicated how frequently the participant attended church. A contingency table of Frequency of Church Attendance by Sexual Pathway Type was not significant,  $\chi^2 (15) = 19.48$ , n.s. However, the correlation between the two measures ( $r = -.246$ ) did reach an acceptable level of significance ( $p < .003$ ) indicating that those individuals who attended church frequently were more likely to engage in the higher levels of sexual intimacy later in the relationship, or not at all. Concurrently, those who were low in their church attendance were more likely to engage in the higher levels of sexual intimacy earlier in their relationships. These findings should be tempered with the recognition that the overall correlation between these two measures is not overly large.

#### Socio-Economic Status

Chi square analysis of the Social Economic Status by Sexual Pathway Type contingency table revealed significant differences in the distribution,  $\chi^2 (12) = 25.61$ ,  $p < .012$  (see Table 17). Snedecor and Cochran (1973) have suggested that when a large contingency table shows a significant difference in its distribution, additional chi square tests may

Table 17

## Social Economic Status by Sexual Pathway Type

Social Economic Status Level	Sexual Pathway Type			
	Rapid- involvement Individuals	Gradual- involvement Individuals	Couple- involvement Individuals	Low- involvement Individuals
Level One - Professional	37.5%	48.5%	33.3%	31.3%
Level Two - Semiprofessional	12.5%	18.2%	41.7%	18.8%
Level Three - Skilled Worker	25.0%	27.3%	18.8%	43.8%
Level Four - Semiskilled Worker	25.0%	00.00	2.1%	00.00
Level Five - Unskilled Worker	00.00	6.1%	4.2%	6.3%
Total:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

be conducted to investigate where the differences lie. Such additional tests revealed that significant differences occurred in the social economic status frequency distribution of the Gradual-involvement individuals,  $\chi^2 (4) = 24.12$ ,  $p < .005$ , the Couple-involvement individuals,  $\chi^2 (4) = 29.29$ ,  $p < .005$ , and the Low-involvement individuals,  $\chi^2 (4) = 10.24$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Chi square analysis is used to establish either the existence, or the nonexistence, of a relationship between two variables. It does not, however, measure the strength of the association between the two variables if a relationship exists (a significant  $\chi^2$  is found). Cramer's V is an appropriate statistic to use in measuring the strength of the association between two variables in a large contingency table (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Brent, 1975). Its values can extend between 0 and +1, a 0 indicating no relationship and a +1 indicating a perfect relationship. The Cramer's V statistic between socio-economic status and sexual pathway type for Gradual-involvement individuals is .53, for Couple-involvement individuals is .51, and for Low-involvement individuals is .52. Each of these would indicate a moderate association between socio-economic status and sexual pathway type.

The pattern that emerges from the data (see Table 18) is one where a significantly large proportion of Gradual-involvement individuals (48.5%) come from households of professionals (physicians, lawyers), a significantly large proportion of Couple-involvement individuals come from households of semiprofessionals (middle management, registered nurses), and a significantly large proportion of Low-involvement individuals (43.8%) come from households of skilled workers (craftsmen,

mechanics). These findings are interesting in view of past research. Ehrmann (1959b) and Kinsey (1948) found a negative relationship between socio-economic status and sexual behavior, upperclass individuals were low in their sexual activity and lower class individuals were high in their sexual activity. More recent research, however, has failed to replicate their findings (Bell et al., 1970; DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979). The findings of this study would suggest that the lower the socio-economic status, the more conservative individuals will be in the progression of their sexual expression. Possibly there exists something in the socialization of individuals that predisposes them to follow a given sexual pathway. Alternatively, it may be that college students are attempting to increase their socio-economic status from their present level. This attempt to raise their status may be manifested in individuals of one socio-economic status emulating many of the behaviors of individuals who belong to the next higher level of socio-economic status, including patterns of sexual expression. Therefore, a more liberal sexual expression is evidenced by individuals striving to behave in a sexually similar manner to the next level of socio-economic status.

#### Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the data obviously exist. First, its basic design makes use of retrospective data, the validity of which is endangered by falsified reporting and faulty recall. However, the sample's mean score on the truthfulness scale would suggest that the participants, as a whole, did not falsify their reporting on the feelings and behaviors examined in this study. Furthermore, faulty recall may not have been a

large problem since there were moderate to high positive correlations between dating partners on reported sexual behaviors for the four stages of dating.

A second limitation of the study is the sample itself. First, there is a large representation from the upper and middle levels of the socio-economic stratum and a concurrent underrepresentation of the lower levels of the socio-economic stratum. Second, the sample consisted exclusively of dating couples who had advanced to the point in their relationship where they perceived themselves as a couple. Not all dating couples progress to this level of dating involvement and the sexual interactions of these individuals may be varied. There is a potential for individuals to become highly involved sexually very early in the relationship, only to find out that they are incompatible as partners prior to perceiving themselves as a couple. On a similar vein, sexual partners may choose to limit their sexual interaction to a one night occurrence, without any intention of a prolonged relationship (Kirkendall, 1961). Because of the sample selection criteria used in this study, individuals from either of these situations would not have been included in the study's sample. Third, the sample was composed entirely of students. Past research has shown that students and nonstudents are extremely similar in areas concerning premarital sexual behavior (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979), but such research has not been conducted in the area of premarital relationship development. The generalizability of the study, therefore, is limited.

A final limitation of this study centers around the issue of causality. Within the discussion of this study several relationships between various variables and premarital sexual behavior have been suggested.

Linkages have been revealed between sexual involvement and conflict. Certain relationship dimensions have been described as predictors of sexual intimacy. It has been suggested that the direction of causality is such that the development of the relationship leads to increasing sexual behaviors. Although this orientation is based on past research (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) it may be that the casual relationship is reversed, that engaging in sexual behaviors leads to the development of the relationship dimensions. A conclusive statement about which orientation is correct cannot be made given the design of this study and the statistical analysis used.

#### Integrative Summary

The results of this study can be grouped into two main areas: (a) findings relative to sexuality in premarital relationships in general and (b) findings relative to differences in types of sexual pathways. First, for the group as a whole, the relationship dimensions of love, conflict, ambivalence, maintenance, relationship satisfaction, and dyadic trust were significantly different by dating stage. Love, conflict, relationship satisfaction, and maintenance behaviors increased from the time of first date to the time when individuals perceived themselves to be a couple. Concurrently, dyadic trust and ambivalence decreased from the time of the first date to the time when individuals perceived themselves as a couple. That both love and conflict increased across the dating relationship may seem contradictory, however, Braiker and Kelley (1979), and Cate (1979) have reported similar findings. In Braiker and Kelley's (1979) original study, love and conflict were

orthogonal to one another, or independent. Therefore, both love and conflict could increase at the same time contrary to popular belief that high conflict means little love.

The fact that dyadic trust decreases as premarital couples move from their first date to the couple stage of dating, and that women are less trusting than men is a surprising finding. Since the majority of the sample was increasing their level of sexual involvement as they increased their emotional involvement and had engaged in orgasmic levels of sexual intimacy without the benefit of engagement or marriage, it may be that the lack of a public symbol of commitment leads to a lower level of trust, especially for women who must be more critical in their evaluation of their premarital choice of an eventual marriage partner (Peplau et al., 1977).

A series of multiple regressions were used to establish what relationship dimensions were predictors of sexual intimacy at each of the four dating stages. The results point to the overall importance of conflict as a primary predictor of sexual intimacy for the first date and for casually dating, and as a secondary predictor during the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating. Although the data do not indicate specifically what the areas of conflict are, it may be postulated that the conflict is inherent in: (a) the prescribed social-sexual roles that men and women are expected to act out in their premarital relationships (Ehrmann, 1959b, Peplau et al., 1977) and in (b) gender differences as to what is acceptable sexual behavior at the different stages of dating intimacy (Knox and Wilson, 1981). Men are expected to be the sexual aggressors in a dating situation (Ehrmann, 1959b, Kirkendall,



1961). Moreover, men expect higher levels of sexual intimacy with fewer numbers of dates (Knox and Wilson, 1981). Women, on the other hand, are expected to limit the degree of sexual intimacy (Peplau et al., 1977) and want to achieve the higher levels of sexual intimacy only after a prolonged period of dating (Knox and Wilson, 1981). With such differences in roles and role expectations conflict would appear to be inevitable.

The series of regressions also show that love increases its potency as a predictor variable of sexual intimacy as couples move from the first date to the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating involvement. This is not surprising since much of the past research has shown a close link between sexual expression and love (Christopher and Cate, unpublished manuscript, DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979). Furthermore, it may be that as couples increase their level of sexual intimacy, love is a necessary requirement for either engaging in intercourse, or engaging in behaviors that will eventually lead to intercourse.

Ambivalence and maintenance are predictors of sexual intimacy for the first two stages of dating, although their saliency as predictors decreases until they no longer have predictive value for the final two stages of dating. Ambivalence may be the outgrowth of engaging in sexual behaviors that have the potential to lead to higher levels of both sexual and emotional intimacy. Moreover, ambivalence's importance as a predictor decreases as love increases in its importance as a predictor of sexual intimacy. In other words, as emotional intimacy occurs it reduces the degree of ambivalence in the relationship.

Maintenance behaviors may serve to begin the binding process within

the relationship. Modifying behaviors may resolve sexual conflicts. Self-disclosure may prompt feelings that will eventually grow into love. The importance of maintenance as a predictor also decreases as the importance of love as a predictor increases. This may occur because (a) conflict is not as important as a predictor and therefore, maintenance behaviors are not needed to resolve conflict, and (b) because love may be a necessary precondition for most couples as they gravitate towards the orgasmic levels of sexual involvement in the later stage of dating.

Relationship satisfaction replaces ambivalence and maintenance behaviors as a predictor variable at the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating. Again, this may be a natural outgrowth of the development of the relationship where satisfaction with the relationship is a necessary requirement of entering into the more involved levels of sexual behavior.

None of the relationship dimensions were predictive of sexual intimacy for the final stage of dating, when the dyad identifies themselves as a couple. Although negative findings are difficult to interpret, it may be that the bargaining and conflict over the level of emotional and sexual intimacy may have been resolved by this level of dating. The average couple, by this dating stage, has engaged in a variety of sexual behaviors that are orgasmic in nature. Sexual intercourse has become an integral part of the relationship and no longer achieves the focus that it did in the earlier stages of the relationship. Hence, the relationship dimensions do not predict its occurrence.

When the cluster analysis was performed on the sexual intimacy

scores of the couples, four sexual pathway types resulted, Rapid-involvement individuals, Gradual-involvement individuals, Couple-involvement individuals, and Low-involvement individuals. Rapid-involvement couples became highly sexually involved quite early in the relationship with some of them engaging in sexual intercourse on the first date. Moreover, Rapid-involvement couples continued to be significantly higher in their level of sexual intimacy when compared to Couple-involvement couples and Low-involvement couples during "casually dating," and at the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating. Rapid-involvement couples not only begin with a high level of sexual intimacy, but they also possess a significantly higher level of conflict on the first date and when casually dating when compared to Couple-involvement couples and Low-involvement couples. The pattern of their conflict over their dating history is also unique. For all of the other couple types there are significant increases in conflict as they move from first date to the couple stage of dating. This is not true of Rapid-involvement couples. Although they begin higher, their level of conflict maintains a fairly high consistent level throughout their dating history. These findings further support the linkage of conflict and sexual involvement.

Rapid-involvement individuals also differ significantly on several background measures. They are more liberal in their sexual attitudes than Couple-involvement individuals and Low-involvement individuals. When they engaged in their first act of sexual intercourse with their current relationship partner they were less influenced by positive feelings and communication and more influenced by circumstances than

were Low-involvement individuals and Couple-involvement individuals. Furthermore, when compared to Low-involvement individuals they were more sexually experienced in their lifetime sexual behavior and began dating at an earlier age.

Gradual-involvement couples begin their sexual intimacy on their first date at a fairly low level. However, during the casual stage of dating and the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating they are significantly higher in their level of sexual intimacy than are the Couple-involvement couples and the Low-involvement couples. The actual pattern of the Gradual-involvement couple's mean sexual intimacy scores would indicate that at the casual stage of dating they have not yet reached orgasmic levels of sexual intimacy. Orgasmic levels of intimacy are reached at the "considering becoming a couple" stage of dating and the level of sexual behavior continues to rise in the "couple" stage of dating.

Conflict for the Gradual-involvement individuals rises significantly for the last two stages of dating when compared to the conflict on the first date. This same trend is evidenced for Couple-involvement individuals but differs from Low-involvement individuals in that they do not have a significant rise in conflict from their first date until the couple stage of dating. Given the significantly higher level of sexual intimacy for Gradual-involvement individuals during the last two stages of dating this again supports the relationship between conflict and increasing the level of sexual intimacy.

As with Rapid-involvement individuals, Gradual-involvement individuals differ from the other sexual pathway types on a number of back-

ground variables. They are significantly more liberal in their pre-marital sexual attitudes than Couple-involvement individuals and Low-involvement individuals. They tend to come from homes where the head of the household is employed in a professional position. When they engage in their first act of sexual intercourse with their relationship partner, they are more influenced by the positive affect and communication in the relationship, and less influenced by circumstance than Rapid-involvement individuals. Furthermore, when compared to Low-involvement individuals, they see themselves as significantly more attractive.

While the pattern of sexual intimacy for the Gradual-involvement couples showed a fairly steady increase in sexual intimacy, the pattern for the Couple-involvement couples differ in that it maintains a fairly low level of sexual intimacy until the "couple" stage of dating. At that time, there is a dramatic rise to the higher levels of sexual intimacy with an average sexual intimacy score that would indicate an experimentation with different orgasmic levels of sexual behavior. This would indicate that for this group the actual commitment to being a couple was an important precursor to engaging in orgasmic levels of sexual behaviors.

The conflict levels for Couple-involvement individuals also show a unique pattern. As with the Gradual-involvement and the Low-involvement individuals, conflict is significantly lower at the time of the first date when compared to "considering becoming a couple" and the "couple" stages of dating. However, the Couple-involvement individuals also experience a significantly lower level of conflict at the casual stage of dating when compared to the "couple" stage of dating. Correspondingly,

at the "casual" stage of dating these individuals were at a much lower level of sexual activity when compared to the "couple" stage of dating. Again, this points to a parallel rise in conflict and sexual intimacy.

The significant differences for Couple-involvement individuals in the background variables tend to be the reverse findings for the previously reported differences from the first two sexual pathway types. Couple-involvement individuals are more conservative in their premarital sexual attitudes than are Rapid-involvement individuals and Gradual-involvement individuals. They tend to come from households of semi-professional workers. Furthermore, the positive affect and communication in the relationship played a significantly more important role to engage in sexual intercourse, with a correspondingly significantly lower importance of circumstance, when compared to Rapid-involvement individuals.

The final sexual pathway type is the Low-involvement couple. As a group, the mean sexual intimacy scores would indicate that few of these individuals reach the orgasmic level of sexual behavior. Although there is a rise in sexual involvement across the four dating stages, the mean sexual intimacy score for the "couple" stage of dating would indicate that most of these couples are engaging in various acts of fondling, a level of sexual involvement that is significantly lower than the other three couple types.

As with the Couple-involvement individuals, the findings of the differences in the background variables for the Low-involvement individuals tend to be the reverse of the findings already reported. Low-involvement individuals are more conservative in their premarital sexual attitudes than Gradual-involvement individuals and Rapid-involvement

individuals. They tend to come from homes where the head of the household is a skilled worker. Furthermore, they have significantly lower levels of lifetime sexual behavior in comparison to Rapid-involvement individuals and Gradual-involvement individuals. Finally, Low-involvement individuals perceive themselves to be significantly lower in physical attraction than Gradual-involvement individuals.

## IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have implications for the interrelationship of premarital sexual intimacy and relationship development. It is speculated that individuals judge what is an acceptable level of premarital sexual involvement by examining the developmental progress of their relationships, although the reverse direction of causality is plausible. Furthermore, this study has implications for future research. Future investigators may want to explore in more depth the areas of sexual conflict, dyadic trust, and the relationship between socioeconomic status and sexual pathway type. In addition, future researchers may want to attempt to replicate the findings of this study with certain methodological changes in the design of the study.

### Premarital Sexual Intimacy and Relationship Development

In order to more fully understand the relationship between premarital sexual intimacy and premarital relationship development it is first necessary to acknowledge certain research findings. First, today's premarital couples have a high level of sexual activity. Eighty-four percent of the couples in this study had engaged in orgasmic levels of sexual behavior, a rate comparable to the findings of previous research (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; King et al., 1976). It is important to view this sexual activity beyond simply comparing those who have engaged in premarital coitus to those who have not engaged in premarital coitus. It should be realized that (a) there is a progression of sexual behaviors; and (b) that differences exist between individuals in the



timing of their sexual behavior relative to the stage of relationship development. As found in this study, some individuals choose to be highly sexually involved quite early in a relationship while others choose to limit the overall level of sexual involvement at a preorgasmic level.

Second, differences exist in how premarital relationships develop and are experienced (Bolton, 1960; Cate, 1979; Huston et al., 1981). Some individuals experience greater degrees of conflict depending on the nature of their premarital relationship (Cate, 1979). Others may vary in their maintenance behaviors or in the amount of love they feel at various stages of their premarital relationships (Cate, 1979; Huston et al., 1981). Moreover, Przybyla and Byrne (1981) have suggested that premarital relationships are experienced differently when the potential for a prolonged relationship exists. It is Przybyla and Byrne's (1981) contention that individuals will evaluate their interactions with a dating partner differently when they foresee that a prolonged relationship may develop. Interactional outcomes and investments are viewed in the context of a potential future involvement.

In light of these research findings, it could be suggested that individuals possess evaluative thresholds by which they judge when to engage in specific sexual behaviors given the anticipated developmental progress of their premarital relationships. These thresholds are points in the relationship where the affective, behavioral, and attitudinal states of the individual, and the dating partner, are examined. If the relationship has progressed to an acceptable level, the individuals judge it permissible to engage in a particular set of sexual behaviors. For instance, if a dating couple has progressed to the stage of involve-

ment where they are disclosing to one another, are beginning to feel like they are in love with each other, but ambivalence is still high, it may be acceptable to engage in kissing and fondling, but not sexual intercourse. In other words, these thresholds represent certain necessary conditions, or a set of conditions, that must occur within a relationship before various sexual behaviors are allowed. The criterion used in judging the acceptability of certain sexual behaviors may be highly individualistic, with each person deciding what sexual behaviors are acceptable given the developmental process in the dating relationship at that time.

For some individuals these thresholds reflect fairly liberal orientations. Seventy-five percent of the Rapid-involvement couples engaged in intercourse on the first date. These individuals may possess a threshold where a simple affectional involvement is the only prerequisite for sexual intercourse. In comparison, Couple-involvement individuals may allow only fondling at the early stages of the relationship where generally there exists some love, but a high rate of ambivalence. However, at the time when love increases, ambivalence decreases, and a degree of commitment to the relationship is achieved, a set of conditions may exist where Couple-involvement individuals judge it acceptable to engage in orgasmic levels of sexual involvement.

Conflict may arise between dating partners when their evaluative thresholds do not coincide. The findings of this study on the relationship between conflict and sexual intimacy, as well as the findings of previous research (Knox and Wilson, 1981), would suggest that it is fairly common that the evaluative thresholds of dating partners do not

match. It may be that at times of sexual conflict couples enter into a stage of bargaining, with tradeoffs occurring between the members of the dyad. For instance, the male member of the dyad might offer a monogamous commitment to the relationship, a condition that the female felt was necessary before she could engage in premarital coitus. The actual sexual behaviors that a couple engages in, then, may be a product of the bargaining that goes on between the couple.

#### Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study suggest new directions for future research. This study used retrospective data. A logical extension would be a similar study that would use a longitudinal design. A longitudinal study may insure more accurate reportings of behaviors and feelings in comparison to a retrospective approach and therefore, overcome the problem of faulty recall. There would be problems, however, with a longitudinal approach. First, quite early in the study participants would become sensitized to the research instruments from repeated exposure. Such a sensitization would increase the chances of changes in the participant's feelings and behaviors, thus endangering validity. Second, with a longitudinal design it is difficult to retain the entire original sample. Participants may withdraw from the study for a variety of reasons (illness, moving, etc.). Such participant mortality would again endanger validity and also limit the generalizability of the study's results.

Future researchers may also want to collect data from individuals as well as intact couples. As it has been previously stated, the find-

ings of this study are limited in their generalizability to couples that have progressed to the stage of dating where they perceive themselves as a couple. Dating couples who had not progressed to this stage were not included in this study. Hence, there exists a lack of knowledge about these individual's sexual behavior and its tie to relationship development. Future studies may want to include individuals who are not in a relationship at the time of the study, as well as dyads who have not reached the "couple" stage of dating. It may be that one group of individuals not represented in this study are people who become highly sexually involved quite early in their relationship while placing little emphasis on developing a relationship past a casual acquaintance. In fact, they may avoid contact with dating partners that are searching for a prolonged relationship. Concurrently, there may exist another group of individuals who date infrequently and are sexually inexperienced. These individuals may not have the opportunity to date, or they may choose not to interact in a dating situation with members of the opposite sex. Finally, there may exist a third group of individuals who proceed to the "couple" stage of dating and then decide to dissolve their relationship. Individuals from this final group may, or may not vary in the progression of their sexual activity when compared to the couple types found in this study. It may be that couples from this last group experience conflict over what level of sexual involvement they should achieve. If a compromise on the level of sexual involvement cannot be reached, the couples may choose to dissolve their relationship rather than stay together and continue to experience sexual conflict.

The findings of this study have suggested a linkage between con-

flict and sexual involvement in the early stages of the relationship. It has been postulated that the conflict is a result of: (a) the members of the dyad possessing different premarital sexual expectations, and (b) the differing social-sexual roles males and females are expected to act out in their dating relationships. Future researchers may wish to address this issue. It may be that very early in the relationship a decision is made to either stay together, or part ways, based partly on how well a couple matches on their premarital sexual expectations. For the couples in the present study it might have been that the males pressed for sexual intimacy while the females limited the degree of sexual interaction for the couple. This in turn may have led to a discussion, or a set of discussions, about each other's sexual and relationship expectations. Each member of the dyad may have then modified their behaviors and re-evaluated their feelings to more closely comply with their partner's expectations. Following this, each of the dyad's members may have bargained with their dating partner to reexamine their relationship and sexual expectations in light of the changes they had made. Future researchers may want to investigate this process in further depth. They may want to examine not only the content of the conflict messages, but they may also want to examine the interactional sequence of verbal and nonverbal behaviors that the dyad displays as the sexual conflict is resolved.

Future researchers may want to use instrumentation that is more sensitive to differences between the couple types. For example, a significant main effect was found for sexual pathway type on the scores from the Braiker and Kelley (1979) love subscale, but post-hoc analyses

failed to show where the differences existed. Perhaps the use of a single scale designed to measure love, such as Rubin's (1974) love scale, would better tease out the differences between couple types. In a similar vein, future researchers may want to explore differences between individuals from the four sexual pathway types in their cognitive structures related to premarital sexuality. The Repertory Grid Technique (REP) (Fransella and Bannister, 1975) is specifically designed to examine the cognitive structure of individuals. Responses on the REP from individuals from each of the sexual pathway types could be compared to see if differences exist in how they structure their cognitions concerning premarital sexuality.

This study has contributed surprising findings on the developmental change in individual's levels of dyadic trust as relationships progress from the first date to the "couple" stage of dating. Future researchers may want to attempt to replicate the findings of this study. It has been postulated within this study that women may be more wary of their premarital choice of a possible marriage partner. Moreover, it has also been postulated that the lack of a formal commitment is the basis for the decrease of dyadic trust as couples' relationships progress. Future researchers may want to examine these issues in greater depth than was allowed within the context of this research. For instance, future researchers may want to track premarital couples longitudinally and at appropriate intervals ask open ended questions dealing with specific issues of dyadic trust while at the same time administering the dyadic trust scale (Larzelere and Huston, 1981).

This study revealed a relationship between sexual pathway type and

level of socio-economic status. It was found that the higher the socio-economic status, the more liberal the sexual expression of the individuals. However, the sample from the present study overrepresented the higher and middle levels of socio-economic status. Future researchers may want to use a more representative sample to further investigate this relationship. If the findings of this study are replicated, then future investigators may want to examine two areas. First, future researchers may want to examine the linkages between an individual's socialization process and the sexual pathway type that the individual follows. It may be that certain aspects of the parent-child relationship contributes to an individual following a particular sexual pathway. Second, within this study it has been suggested that college students of one socio-economic level may have been emulating the sexual behaviors of individuals at the next higher socio-economic level. Future researchers may want to address this issue in more depth than the context of this study allowed.

Finally, it should be recognized that the present investigation was conducted on a very basic level. Since it is an initial attempt at uncovering the relationship between premarital sexual behavior and the process of relationship development, its implications for the intervention areas are tenuous at best. However, this study does possess implications for future studies that may have a stronger impact on the intervention fields. Future researchers may want to examine the birth control practices, and the concurrent premarital pregnancy rates, of individuals from each of the sexual pathway types. It may be that couples who prolong the time of engaging in premarital coitus are more

likely to use effective birth control when compared to those couples who engage in premarital coitus early in the relationship. Future investigators may also want to explore how couples from each sexual pathway type adjust to marriage. Such an investigation should not be limited to exploring simply general marital adjustment, but should also examine differences between couple types in the areas of sexual adjustment, conflict resolution, and marital satisfaction. Finally, future researchers may also want to investigate the premarital relationship stability of couples from the four sexual pathway types. In other words, it may be advantageous to see if individuals from one of the four couple types are more likely to dissolve their premarital relationship, become married, or have more or less satisfying marriages.

This study has added to the available knowledge on premarital sexuality and relationship development. It more fully describes differences in the progression of sexual behaviors of premarital couples. It shows how individuals who follow different sexual pathways also differ on selected social psychological relationship dimensions, and on selected background variables. Furthermore, it provides an important base from which additional research may be conducted.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Altman, I., and Taylor, D. Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships. New York: Holt, 1973.
- Anderberg, M. R. Cluster analysis for applications. New York: Academic Press, 1973.
- Austin, W. G. Studies in equity with the world: A new application of theory. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974.
- Bell, R. R., and Chaskes, J. B. Premarital sexual experience among coeds, 1958 and 1968. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1970, 32, 81-84.
- Bell, R. R., and Coughy, K. Premarital sexual experience among college females, 1958, 1968, and 1978. Family Relations, 1980, 29, 353-357.
- Bentler, P. M. Heterosexual behavior assessment-I, males. Behavior Research and Therapy, 1968, 6, 21-25.
- Bentler, P. M. Heterosexual behavior assessment-II, females. Behavior Research and Therapy, 1968, 6, 27-30.
- Bolton, D. C. Mate selection as the development of a relationship. Marriage and Family Living, 1961, 23, 234-240.
- Bowman, H., and Spanier, G. Modern Marriage. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.
- Brady, J. P., and Levitt, E. E. The scalability of sexual experiences. The Psychological Record, 1965, 15, 275-279.
- Braiker, H. B., and Kelley, H. H. Conflict in the development of close relationships. In R. L. Burgess and T. L. Huston (Eds.), Social

- exchange in developing relationships. New York: Academic, 1979.
- Burgess, E. W., and Wallin, P. Engagement and marriage. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1953.
- Cate, R. M. Pathways to marriage: Towards a typology of premarital relationships. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University, 1979.
- Christopher, F. S., and Cate, R. M. Factors in sexual decision making. Unpublished manuscript, 1982.
- Clayton, R. Religious orthodoxy and premarital sex. Social Forces, 1969, 47, 469-474.
- Clayton, R. Premarital sexual intercourse: A substantive test of the contingent consistency model. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1972, 34, 273-279.
- Clayton, R. R., and Bokemeier, J. L. Premarital sex in the seventies. The Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1980, 42, 759-776.
- Curran, J. P., Neff, S., and Lippold, S. Correlates of sexual experience among university students, The Journal of Sex Research, 1973, 9, 124-134.
- D'Augelli, J. F., and Cross, H. L. Relationship of sex guilt and moral reasoning to premarital sex in college women and in couples. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1975, 43, 40-47.
- D'Augelli, J. F., and D'Augelli, A. R. Moral reasoning and premarital sexual behavior: Toward reasoning about relationships. Journal of Social Issues, 1977, 33, 46-66.
- Davidson, J. K., and Leslie, G. R. Premarital sexual intercourse: An application of axiomatic theory construction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1977, 39, 15-28.

- DeLamater, J. D. Methodological issues in the study of premarital sexuality. Sociological Methods and Research, 1974, 3, 30-61.
- DeLamater, J., and MacCorquodale, P. The effects of interview schedule variations on reported sexual behavior. Sociological Methods and Research, 1975, 4, 215-236.
- DeLamater, J. D., and MacCorquodale, P. Premarital Sexuality: Attitudes, Relationships, Behavior. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1979.
- Ehrmann, W. Premarital Dating Behavior. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1959 (a).
- Ehrmann, W. Premarital sexual behavior and sex codes of conduct with acquaintances, friends, and lovers. Social Forces, 1959 (b), 38, 158-164.
- Engelman, L. Cluster analysis of cases. In W. J. Dixon and M. E. Brown (Eds.), BMDP-79, Biomedical computer programs, P-series. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979.
- Forgas, J. P., and Dobosz, B. Dimensions of romantic involvement: Towards a taxonomy of heterosexual relationships. Social Psychology Quarterly, 1980, 43, 290-300.
- Herold, E. S., and Goodwin, M. S. Adament virgins, potential non-virgins, and nonvirgins. The Journal of Sex Research, 1981, 17, 97-113.
- Huston, T. L., and Levinger, G. Interpersonal attraction and relationships. In M. R. Rosenzweig and L. W. Porter (Eds.), Annual review of psychology (Vol. 29). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews, 1978.

- Huston, T., Surra, C., Fitzgerald, N., and Cate, R. From courtship to marriage: Mate selection as an interpersonal process. In S. Duck and R. Gilmore (Eds.) Personal relationships 2: Developing personal relationships. San Francisco: Academic Press, 1981.
- Jackson, E. D., and Potkay, C. R. Precollege influences on sexual experiences of coeds. Journal of Sex Research, 1973, 9, 143-149.
- Jessor, S. L., and Jessor, R. Transition from virginity to nonvirginity among youth: A social-psychological study over time. Developmental Psychology, 1975, 11, 473-484.
- Johnson, W. T., and DeLamater, J. D. Response effects in sex surveys. Public Opinion Quarterly, 1976, 40, 165-181.
- Kelley, J. Sexual permissiveness: Evidence for a theory. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1978, 40, 455-468.
- Kerckhoff, A. C., and Davis, K. E. Value consensus and need complementarity in mate selection. American Sociological Review, 1962, 27, 295-303.
- Kerlinger, F. N. Foundations of Behavioral Research. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973.
- King, K., Abernathy, T. J., Robinson, I. E., and Balsick, J. O. Religiosity and sexual attitudes and behavior among college students. Adolescence, 1976, 11, 535-539.
- King, K., Balswick, J. O., and Robinson, I. E. The continuing premarital sexual revolution among college females. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1977, 39, 455-459.
- Kirkendall, L. A. Premarital intercourse and interpersonal relationships. New York: Gramercy Publishing Company, 1961.

- Kirkendall, L. A., and Libby, R. W. Interpersonal relationships:  
Crux of sexual renaissance. Journal of Social Issues, 1966, 22,  
45-59.
- Kirkendall, L. A. Characteristics of sexual decision making. The  
Journal of Sex Research, 1967, 3, 201-211.
- Knox, D. and Wilson, K. Dating behaviors of university students.  
Family Relations, 1981, 30, 255-258.
- Kutner, S. J. Sex guilt and the sexual behavior sequence. The Journal  
of Sex Research, 1971, 7, 107-115.
- Langston, R. D. Sex guilt and sex behavior in college students.  
Journal of Personality Assessment, 1973, 37, 467-472.
- Langston, R. A. Stereotyped sex role behavior and sex guilt. Journal  
of Personality Assessment, 1975, 39, 77-81.
- Larzelere, R., and Huston, T. L. The dyadic trust scale: Toward  
understanding interpersonal trust in close relationships.  
Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1980, 42, 595-604.
- Levinger, G., Senn, D. J., and Jorgensen, B. W. Progress toward  
permanence in courtship: A test of the Kerckhoff-David hypothesis.  
Sociometry, 1970, 33, 427-443.
- Lewis, R. A. A developmental framework for the analysis of premarital  
dyadic formation. Family Process, 1972, 11, 17-48.
- Lewis, R. A. Parents and peers: Socialization agents in the coital  
behavior of young adults. The Journal of Sex Research, 1973 (a),  
9, 156-170.
- Lewis, R. A. A longitudinal test of a developmental framework for  
premarital dyadic formation. Journal of Marriage and the Family,  
1973 (b), 35, 16-25.

- Lewis, R. A., and Burr, W. R. Premarital coitus and commitment among college students. Archives of Sexual Behavior, 1975, 4, 73-79.
- Mahoney, E. R. Religiosity and sexual behavior among heterosexual college students. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1980, 16, 97-113.
- Mirande, A. M. Reference group theory and adolescent sexual behavior. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1968, 30, 572-577.
- Morrison, E., Starks, K., Hyndman, C., and Ronzio, N. Growing up Sexual. New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1980.
- Mosher, D. L. The development and multitrait-multimethod matrix analysis of three measures of three aspects of guilt. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1966, 30, 25-29.
- Mosher, D. L. Measurement of guilt in females by self-report inventories. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1968, 32, 690-695.
- Mosher, D. L., and Cross, H. J. Sex guilt and premarital sexual experiences of college students. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1971, 36, 27-32.
- Mosher, D. L. Sex differences, sex experiences, sex guilt, and explicitly sexual films. Journal of Social Issues, 1973, 29, 95-112.
- Mosher, D. L. The meaning and measurement of guilt. In C. E. Izard (Ed.), Emotions in personality and psychopathology. Plenum Publishing Corporation, 1979.
- Murstein, B. I. Stimulus-value-role: A theory of marital choice. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1970, 32, 465-481.

- Murstein, B. I. Who will marry whom? New York: Springer, 1976.
- Neter, J., and Wasserman, W. Applied Linear Statistical Models. Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1974.
- Nie, N., Hull, C. H., Jenkins, J., Steinbrenner, K., and Bent, D. Statistical package for the social sciences. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975.
- Parsons, T., and Bales, R. F. Family, socialization and interaction process. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1955.
- Peplau, L. A., Rubin, Z., and Hill, C. T. Sexual intimacy in dating relationships. Journal of Social Issues, 1977, 33, 86-109.
- Podell, L., and Perkins, J. C. A Guttman scale for sexual experience: A methodological note. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology. 1975, 54, 420-422.
- Przybyla, D. P. J., and Byrne, D. Sexual Relationships. In S. Duck and R. Gilmore (Eds.), Personal relationships 1: Studying personal relationships. London: Academic Press, 1981.
- Reiss, I. L. Premarital sexual standards in America. Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1960.
- Reiss, I. L. The scaling of premarital sexual permissiveness. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1964, 26, 188-198.
- Reiss, I. L. The social context of premarital sexual permissiveness. New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, Inc., 1967.
- Robinson, I. E., King, K., Dudley, C. J., and Clune, F. J. Changes in sexual behavior and attitudes of college students. Family Coordinator, 1968, 17, 119-123.

- Rubin, Z., and Levinger, G. Theory and data badly mated: A critique of Murstein's SVR and Lewis's PDF models of mate selection. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1974, 35, 226-231.
- Schofield, M. The sexual behavior of young people. London: Longmans Green, 1965.
- Schultz, B., Bbohrnstedt, G. W., Borgatta, E. F., and Evans, R. R. Explaining premarital sexual intercourse among college students: A casual model. Social Forces, 1977, 56, 148-165.
- Snedecor, G., and Cochran, W. Statistical methods. Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1967.
- Sorensen, R. Adolescent sexuality in contemporary America. New York: World Publishing Company, 1972.
- Spanier, G. Perceived sex knowledge, exposure to eroticism, and premarital sexual behavior: The impact of dating. The Sociological Quarterly, 1976 (a), 17, 247-261.
- Spanier, G. Formal and informal sex education as determinants of premarital sexual behavior. Archives of Sexual Behavior, 1976 (b), 5, 39-67.
- Spanier, G. B. Use of recall data in survey research on human sexual behavior. Social Biology, 1976 (c), 23, 244-253.
- Spanier, G. B. Sources of sex information and premarital sexual behavior. The Journal of Sex Research, 1977, 13, 73-88.
- Teevan, J. Reference groups and premarital sexual behavior. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1972, 34, 283-291.
- Thomas, D. R. Conservatism and premarital sexual experience. British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 1975, 14, 195-196.



- Urdy, J. R., and Morris, N. M. A method of validation of reported sexual data. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1967, 29, 442-446.
- Walsh, R. H., Ferrell, M. Z., and Tolone, W. L. Selection of reference group, perceived reference group permissiveness, and personal permissiveness attitudes and behavior: A study of two consecutive panels (1967-1971; 1970-1974). Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1976, 38, 495-508.
- Weis, D. L. Toward a theory of social scripting: The measurement of extramarital sexual scripts. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Purdue University, 1979.

**APPENDIX**

## TELEPHONE SOLICITATION PROCEDURE

1. (Begin the phone conversation by introducing yourself.) "Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (your name) \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a research assistant working on a research project being conducted in the Family Life Department. This project is examining how premarital relationships develop over time. Your name was drawn from a list of Oregon State students received from the Registrar's office. We are asking students whose names are on the list if they would be willing to participate in the study. It is important that we can get as many students to participate as possible. Since the names come from a random list, the more students that agree to participate, the more representative the results of this study will be.
2. In order to increase the incentive to participate, each person who becomes a participant in the study will be given one chance for a drawing at a \$40.00 gift certificate at the Class Reunion Restaurant here in Corvallis.
3. Participation in the study takes about 90 minutes. You would be asked to answer some questions about your dating relationships and to fill out some questionnaires. Your name would not be used in connection with your responses, complete confidentiality is guaranteed. When would it be convenient for you to be interviewed? (The individual might have some questions, answer them as best you can.)
4. I need some background information before we interview you.
  - A. Are you presently in a dating relationship? (If the individual says no, thank them for their time and explain that only those people in a serious relationship may participate.)

- B. Could you say that your dating relationship is such that both you and your partner are seriously dating? That is, you are dating each other exclusively and that you have a commitment to the relationship at the present time. (It is not necessary that they have a commitment to the future; if the individual says no, thank them for their time and explain that only those people in a serious relationship may participate in the study.)
- C. Would your partner be willing to participate in the study? If so, your partner would also be given a chance at the \$40.00 gift certificate. In this way each couple receives two chances for the gift certificate. (If the individual indicates that they must talk to the partner, offer to call the partner yourself. If the individual prefers to call, exchange names and telephone numbers and set up a time to call them back.)
- D. Have either you or your partner ever been married? (If the answer is yes, apologize to the individual and tell them that only those persons who have never been married can participate in the study.)
- E. What are your and your partner's ages? (If 30 or over tell them that only those who are under 30 may participate in the study.)
- F. (If the conditions set out in A through E are met, set up a time and place to conduct the interview.)

## PHASE I

Getting Acquainted and Obtaining Informed Consent

1. (Thank the interviewee for taking time to participate in the interview. Tell the interviewee who you are and what you are doing here, but only in demographic terms. For example, "I'm a student at Oregon State University working on my BA. I've lived in Corvallis for three years, but came from Portland originally." You might ask the interviewee: "How long have you lived here?" "Do you like the school?, etc." Take no more than a couple of minutes for this procedure, as it will become obvious that you are disclosing no information of any importance.)
2. (Present interviewee with informed consent form.) Before we begin, I want to get your permission to conduct this interview. Take a minute or two to read this. If you have any questions I will be glad to answer them. If not, just read the form and sign it.
3. (Present interviewee with index card.) As you know, everyone who participates in this study has a chance at winning a \$40 gift certificate from the Class Reunion Restaurant. If you will fill in your name, your address, and a telephone number where you can be reached on this card it will serve as your entry for the drawing.

The Relationship Event Sheet

1. We are interested in finding out how relationships grow or develop over time.
  - A. We realize that there is great variability in how relationships develop over time and that there is no typical relationship.
  - B. Each relationship is also unique in the experiences that characterize it over time.
  - C. We are not interested, primarily, in how your relationship is similar to others, but in the ways in which it might be different and unique.
2. Tell me how long you have been dating your partner, i.e, when was your first date? (Mark this as the first entry on the Relationship Event Sheet. If the participant tells you that he/she knew the person earlier in their lives, but only on a casual basis, as in childhood, say the following.) Let me rephrase the question. When would you say that the relationship started such that it eventually ended in the two of you seriously dating?
3. If you had to give me a one or two minute description of your relationship, from the time you both met until now, what would you say? (Give the interviewee time to respond, but do not allow the description to go on too long.)
4. Now we'd like to get a better idea of exactly how your relationship developed since you first met. We'd like to create a list

of the major events of your relationship, in the order in which they happened, from your first date to the present.

5. By major events we mean something that happened that had an impact, either positive or negative, on your relationship. In other words, it made your relationship better or worse.
6. So, what was the first major event in your relationship after your first date? (Write down the event on the Relationship Event Sheet.) When did it occur? (Write down the date of the event on the Relationship Event Sheet.)
7. (Repeat the above procedure (#6) until the interviewee has given all of the major events of the relationship from first date until the present.)
8. Now take a minute or two to look over the list of events. If you see any addition or deletions that should be made to make it more accurate we can do it now. (Give the interviewee time to decide if any changes need to be made.)
9. Now we would like to try and divide your relationship with your partner into specific periods.
  - A. The first period is the first date, which is already on this sheet.
  - B. There may have been a time in your relationship when you were seeing each other on a personal or social basis, but you didn't yet think of yourselves as a couple. Can you show me on the sheet what period of time this was? (Mark the time period along the side of the sheet; if the period does not exist go on to the next question.)

9. C. There may have been a time in your relationship when you and your partner began to feel like you might want to be a couple, that is when you first became affectionately involved. Can you show me on the sheet what period of time this was? (Mark the time period on the side of the sheet; if the interviewee has difficulty indicating the time period, inform them that this is a transition stage between casually dating (9.B.) and seriously dating (9.D.); if the period does not exist go on to the next question.)
- D. Now, there was probably a time when you began to see yourselves as a couple, with a commitment to date just each other. This does not necessarily mean that you had a plan to spend your future together, but just to date one another. Can you show me on the sheet what period of time this was? (Mark the period of time down on the sheet.)

### PHASE III

#### Measuring the Relationship Dimensions

1. Now I want to get a more detailed idea of what was happening in your relationship as it developed.
2. In order to do this, I am going to ask you to fill out some questionnaires that will give me an idea about some of your feelings toward your partner and the relationship as it progressed over time.
  - A. I would like for you to fill out this questionnaire for the time period of your first date. There are instructions



at the beginning illustrating how to fill it out. (Administer the questionnaires in the order received in your interview packet, A through D may be reversed.)

- B. Now, I would like for you to fill out this questionnaire for the time period in your relationship when you were seeing each other on a personal or social basis, but did not identify as a couple. There are instructions at the beginning illustrating how to fill it out. (Administer the next questionnaire.)
- C. Now, I would like for you to fill out this questionnaire for the time period in your relationship when you and your partner began to feel like you might want to be a couple, that is, when you first became affectionately involved. (Administer the next questionnaire.)
- D. Now, I would like for you to fill out this questionnaire for the time period in your relationship when you began to see yourselves as a couple, with a commitment to date just each other. There are instructions at the beginning illustrating how to fill it out. (Administer the questionnaire.)
3. Now, we would like to have an idea of how sexually intimate you and your partner were for each of the four time periods. These questionnaires will allow us to do that. I would like to remind you that your answers on this questionnaire, and all the other parts of this interview, are kept strictly confidential. The questionnaires will be put into this envelope and the envelope will be sealed at the completion of the interview. There are instructions at the beginning of the questionnaires that indicate

for what time period the questionnaire is for. (Administer the questionnaires and place into the envelope as the interviewee finishes them.)

#### PHASE IV

##### Background Questionnaire

1. As a final part of the interview, I would like for you to give us some information about yourself and your background. (Give the interviewee the background questionnaire.)

#### PHASE V

##### Conclusion

1. I would like to give you a clearer picture of what this study is about. The purpose of this study is to examine the variation in sexual expression between premarital couples and how couples of similar levels of sexual expression differ in their relationships. It is also an attempt to see what background variables predispose individuals to achieve a given level of sexual expression.
2. (Ask the interviewee if they have any questions. Answer them as you can.)
3. I'd like to thank you for participating in this study. Your contribution is very important. If you would like a summary of the results of this study we would be glad to provide one. (If the interviewee wants a summary, put a "Yes" on the back of the index card used for the drawing.)



Please indicate which of the following behaviors you and your partner engaged in on your first date.

Engaged in	Did not engage in	
_____	_____	1. One minute continuous lip kissing.
_____	_____	2. Manual manipulation of female breasts, over clothes.
_____	_____	3. Manual manipulation of female breasts, under clothes.
_____	_____	4. Manual manipulation of female genitals, over clothes.
_____	_____	5. Kissing nipples of female breasts.
_____	_____	6. Manual manipulation of female genitals, under clothes.
_____	_____	7. Manual manipulation of male genitals, over clothes, by female.
_____	_____	8. Mutual manual manipulation of genitals.
_____	_____	9. Manual manipulation of male genitals, under clothes, by female.
_____	_____	10. Manual manipulation of female genitals to massive secretions.
_____	_____	11. Sexual intercourse, ventral-ventral (face-to-face).
_____	_____	12. Manual manipulation of male genitals to ejaculation, by female (orgasm).
_____	_____	13. Oral contact with female genitals.
_____	_____	14. Oral contact with male genitals, by female.
_____	_____	15. Mutual manipulation of genitals to mutual orgasm.
_____	_____	16. Oral manipulation of male genitals, by female.
_____	_____	17. Oral manipulation of female genitals.
_____	_____	18. Mutual oral-genital manipulation.
_____	_____	19. Sexual intercourse, ventral-dorsal (face-to-back).
_____	_____	20. Oral manipulation of male genitals to ejaculation, by female.
_____	_____	21. Mutual oral manipulation of genitals to mutual orgasm.

Please indicate which of the following behaviors you and your partner engaged in on your first date.

<u>Engaged in</u>	<u>Did not engage in</u>	
_____	_____	1. One minute continuous lip kissing.
_____	_____	2. Manual manipulation of female breasts, over clothes, by male.
_____	_____	3. Manual manipulation of female breasts, under clothes, by male.
_____	_____	4. Manual manipulation of female genitals, over clothes, by male.
_____	_____	5. Kissing nipples of female breasts, by male.
_____	_____	6. Manual manipulation of female genitals, under clothes, by male.
_____	_____	7. Manual manipulation of male genitals, over clothes.
_____	_____	8. Mutual manipulation of genitals.
_____	_____	9. Manual manipulation of male genitals, under clothes.
_____	_____	10. Manual manipulation of female genitals to massive secretions, by male.
_____	_____	11. Manual manipulation of male genitals to ejaculation.
_____	_____	12. Oral contact with female genitals, by male.
_____	_____	13. Oral contact with male genitals.
_____	_____	14. Sexual intercourse, ventral-ventral, (face-to-face).
_____	_____	15. Oral manipulation of female genitals, by male.
_____	_____	16. Oral manipulation of male genitals.
_____	_____	17. Mutual oral-genital manipulations.
_____	_____	18. Mutual manual manipulation of genitals to mutual orgasm.
_____	_____	19. Sexual intercourse, ventral-dorsal (face-to-back).
_____	_____	20. Oral manipulation of male genitals to ejaculation.
_____	_____	21. Mutual oral manipulation of genitals to mutual orgasm.

1. To what extent did you have a sense of "belonging" with (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

2. How much do you feel you "gave" to the relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very little							Very much	

3. To what extent did you love (partner's name) at this stage?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

4. To what extent did you feel that the things that happened to (partner's name) also affected or were important to you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

5. To what extent did you feel that your relationship was somewhat unique compared to others you'd been in?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

6. How committed did you feel toward (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Extremely	

7. How close did you feel to (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not close at all						Extremely close		

8. How much did you need (partner's name) at this stage?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

9. How sexually intimate were you with (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Extremely	

10. How attached did you feel to (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

#### CONFLICT/NEGATIVITY

11. How often did you and (partner's name) argue with one another?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very infrequently					Very frequently			

12. To what extent did you try to change things about (partner's name) that bothered you (e.g., behaviors, attitudes, etc.)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

13. How often did you feel angry or resentful toward (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Never							Very often	

14. When you and (partner's name) argued, how serious were the problems or arguments?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all serious						Very serious		

15. To what extent did you communicate negative feelings toward (partner's name) -- e.g., anger, dissatisfaction, frustration, etc.?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

## AMBIVALENCE

16. How confused were you about your feelings toward (partner's name)?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
Not at all							Very much	

17. How much did you think about or worry about losing some of your independence by getting involved with (partner's name)?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
Not at all							Very much	

18. How ambivalent or unsure were you about continuing in the relationship with (partner's name)?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
Not unsure at all						Extremely unsure		

19. To what extent did you feel that (partner's name) demanded or required too much of your time and attention?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
Not at all							Very much	

20. To what extent did you feel "trapped" or pressured to continue in this relationship?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
Not at all							Very much	

## MAINTENANCE BEHAVIORS

21. To what extent did you reveal or disclose very intimate facts about yourself to (partner's name)?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
Not at all							Very much	

22. How much time did you and (partner's name) spend discussing and trying to work out problems between you?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
No time at all						A great deal of time		



23. How much did you and (partner's name) talk about the quality of your relationship -- e.g., how "good" it was; how satisfying, how to improve it, etc.?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Never							Very often	

24. To what extent did you try to change your own behavior to help solve certain problems between you and (partner's name)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all							Very much	

25. How much did you tell (partner's name) what you wanted or needed from the relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very little							Very much	

Please rate the degree of your agreement on the following items with a "1" indicating no agreement and a "7" indicating strong agreement. Answer for the stage of your dating relationship when you were on your first date.

1. My partner is primarily interested in his (her) own welfare.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

2. There are times when my partner cannot be trusted.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

3. My partner is perfectly honest and truthful with me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

4. I feel that I can trust my partner completely.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

5. My partner is truly sincere in his (her) promises.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

6. I feel that my partner does not show me enough consideration.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

7. My partner treats me fairly and justly.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

8. I feel that my partner can be counted on to help me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do not agree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	

Please answer the following questions for the stage in your relationship when you were on your first date.

When you think of your relationship -- what you put into it and what you get out of it -- and what your partner puts into it, and what s/he gets out of it -- how does that make you feel?

1. How content does that make you feel?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very much

2. How happy does that make you feel?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very much

3. How angry does that make you feel?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very much

4. How guilty does that make you feel?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very much

First decide whether you agree or disagree with the view expressed. Then circle the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the views expressed in each question. We are not interested in your tolerance of other people's beliefs. Please answer these questions on the basis of how YOU feel toward the views expressed. Your name will never be connected with these answers. Please be as honest as you can. Thank you.

We use the words below to mean just what they do to most people, but some may need definition:

Love means the emotional state which is more intense than strong affection and which you would define as love.

Strong Affection means affection which is stronger than physical attraction, average fondness, or "liking" -- but less strong than love.

Petting means sexually stimulating behavior more intimate than kissing and simple hugging but not including full sexual relations.

1. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the male before marriage when he is engaged to be married.

Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree
	Slight	Medium
		Slight

2. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the male when he is in love.

Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree
	Slight	Medium
		Slight

3. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the male before marriage when he feels strong affection for his partner.

Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree
	Slight	Medium
		Slight

4. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the male before marriage even if he does not feel particularly affectionate toward his partner.

Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree
	Slight	Medium
		Slight

5. I believe that petting is acceptable for the male before marriage when he is engaged to be married.

Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree
	Slight	Medium
		Slight

6. I believe that petting is acceptable for the male before marriage when he is in love.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |
7. I believe that petting is acceptable for the male before marriage when he feels strong affection for his partner.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |
8. I believe that petting is acceptable for the male before marriage even if he does not feel particularly affectionate towards his partner.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |
9. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the male before marriage when he is engaged to be married.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |
10. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the male before marriage when he is in love.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |
11. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the male before marriage when he feels strong affection for his partner.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |
12. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the male before marriage even if he does not feel particularly affectionate towards his partner.
- |       |        |          |        |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Agree | Strong | Disagree | Strong |
|       | Medium |          | Medium |
|       | Slight |          | Slight |

First decide whether you agree or disagree with the view expressed. Then circle the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the views expressed in each question. We are not interested in your tolerance of other people's beliefs. Please answer these questions on the basis of how YOU feel toward the views expressed. Your name will never be connected with these answers. Please be as honest as you can. Thank you.

We use the words below to mean just what they do to most people, but some may need definition:

Love means the emotional state which is more intense than strong affection and which you would define as love.

Strong Affection means affection which is stronger than physical attraction, average fondness, or "liking" -- but less strong than love.

Petting means sexually stimulating behavior more intimate than kissing and simple hugging but not including full sexual relations.

1. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the female before marriage when she is engaged to be married.
 

	Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree	Medium
	Slight		Slight
  
2. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the female when she is in love.
 

	Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree	Medium
	Slight		Slight
  
3. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the female before marriage when she feels strong affection for her partner.
 

	Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree	Medium
	Slight		Slight
  
4. I believe that kissing is acceptable for the female before marriage even if she does not feel particularly affectionate toward her partner.
 

	Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree	Medium
	Slight		Slight
  
5. I believe that petting is acceptable for the female before marriage when she is engaged to be married.
 

	Strong		Strong
Agree	Medium	Disagree	Medium
	Slight		Slight

6. I believe that petting is acceptable for the female before marriage when she is in love.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

7. I believe that petting is acceptable for the female before marriage when she feels strong affection for her partner.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

8. I believe that petting is acceptable for the female before marriage even if she does not feel particularly affectionate towards her partner.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

9. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the female before marriage when she is engaged to be married.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

10. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the female before marriage when she is in love.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

11. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the female before marriage when she feels strong affection for her partner.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

12. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the female before marriage even if she does not feel particularly affectionate towards her partner.

Agree	Strong	Disagree	Strong
	Medium		Medium
	Slight		Slight

Think of your best, same-sex friend. Please indicate which of the following behaviors that you believe your best friend has engaged in.

<u>Has engaged in</u>	<u>Has not engaged in</u>	
_____	_____	1. One minute continuous lip kissing.
_____	_____	2. Manual manipulation of female breasts, under clothes.
_____	_____	3. Kissing nipples of female breasts.
_____	_____	4. Mutual manual manipulation of genitals.
_____	_____	5. Manual manipulation of male genitals, under clothes, by female.
_____	_____	6. Sexual intercourse, ventral-ventral (face-to-face).
_____	_____	7. Oral manipulation of male genitals, by female.
_____	_____	8. Mutual oral genital manipulation.
_____	_____	9. Sexual intercourse, ventral-dorsal (face-to-back).
_____	_____	10. Mutual oral manipulation of genitals to mutual orgasm.



Think of your best same-sex friend. Please indicate which of the following behaviors that you believe your best friend has engaged in.

<u>Has</u> <u>engaged in</u>	<u>Has not</u> <u>engaged in</u>	
_____	_____	1. One minute continuous lip kissing.
_____	_____	2. Manual manipulation of female breasts, over clothes, by male.
_____	_____	3. Kissing nipples of female breasts, by male.
_____	_____	4. Mutual manual manipulation of genitals.
_____	_____	5. Manual manipulation of male genitals, under clothes.
_____	_____	6. Sexual intercourse, ventral-ventral (face-to-face).
_____	_____	7. Oral manipulation of male genitals.
_____	_____	8. Mutual oral-genital manipulation.
_____	_____	9. Sexual intercourse, ventral-dorsal (face-to-back).
_____	_____	10. Mutual oral manipulation of genitals to mutual orgasm.

You are to read the stem and the pair of completions and decide which you most agree with or which is most characteristic of you. Your choice, in each instance, should be in terms of what you believe, how you feel, or how you would react, and not in terms of how you should believe, feel or respond. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Your choices should be a description of your own personal beliefs, feelings or reactions.

In some instances you may discover that you believe both completions or neither completion to be characteristic of you. In such cases select the one you more strongly believe to be the case as far as you are concerned. Be sure to find an answer for every choice. Do not omit an item even though it is very difficult for you to decide, just select the more characteristic member of the pair.

1. If in the future I committed adultery . . .
  - I won't feel bad about it.
  - it would be sinful.
2. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .
  - are common in our town.
  - should be avoided.
3. As a child, sex play . . .
  - never entered my mind.
  - is quite widespread.
4. Sex relations before marriage . . .
  - ruin many a happy couple.
  - are good in my opinion.
5. If in the future I committed adultery . . .
  - I wouldn't tell anyone.
  - I probably would feel bad about it.
6. When I have sexual desires . . .
  - I usually try to curb them.
  - I usually try to satisfy them.
7. Unusual sex practices . . .
  - might be interesting.
  - don't interest me.
8. Prostitution . . .
  - is a must.
  - breeds only evil.

9. As a child, sex play . . .  
\_\_\_ is not good for mental and emotional well being.  
\_\_\_ is natural and innocent.
10. As a child, sex play . . .  
\_\_\_ was a big taboo and I was deathly afraid of it.  
\_\_\_ was common without guilt feelings.
11. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .  
\_\_\_ are not proper.  
\_\_\_ are exciting and amusing.
12. When I have sex dreams . . .  
\_\_\_ I cannot remember them in the morning.  
\_\_\_ I wake up happy.
13. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .  
\_\_\_ are lots of fun.  
\_\_\_ are coarse to say the least.
14. Petting . . .  
\_\_\_ is something that should be controlled.  
\_\_\_ is a form of education.
15. Unusual sex practices . . .  
\_\_\_ are O.K. as long as they're heterosexual.  
\_\_\_ usually aren't pleasurable because you have preconceived feelings about their being wrong.
16. Sex relations before marriage . . .  
\_\_\_ are practiced too much to be wrong.  
\_\_\_ in my opinion, should not be practiced.
17. As a child, sex play . . .  
\_\_\_ is dangerous.  
\_\_\_ is not harmful, but does create sexual pleasure.
18. When I have sexual desires . . .  
\_\_\_ they are quite strong.  
\_\_\_ I attempt to repress them.
19. As a child, sex play . . .  
\_\_\_ was indulged in.  
\_\_\_ is immature and ridiculous.

20. Sex relations before marriage . . .  
\_\_\_ help people to adjust.  
\_\_\_ should not be recommended.
21. Maturbation . . .  
\_\_\_ is a habit that should be controlled.  
\_\_\_ is very common.
22. If I committed a homosexual act . . .  
\_\_\_ it would be my business.  
\_\_\_ it would show weakness in me.
23. Prostitution . . .  
\_\_\_ is a sign of moral decay in society.  
\_\_\_ is acceptable and needed by some people.
24. Sex relations before marriage . . .  
\_\_\_ are O.K. if both partners are in agreement.  
\_\_\_ are dangerous.
25. Masturbation . . .  
\_\_\_ is all right.  
\_\_\_ should not be practiced.
26. Sex . . .  
\_\_\_ is a beautiful gift of God not to be cheapened.  
\_\_\_ is good and enjoyable.
27. Prostitution . . .  
\_\_\_ should be legalized.  
\_\_\_ cannot really afford enjoyment.

You are to read the stem and the pair of completions and decide which you most agree with or which is most characteristic of you. Your choice, in each instance, should be in terms of what you believe, how you feel, or how you would react, and not in terms of how you think you should believe, feel or respond. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Your choices should be a description of your own personal beliefs, feelings or reactions.

In some instances you may discover that you believe both completions or neither completion to be characteristic of you. In such cases select one you more strongly believe to be the case as far as you are concerned. Be sure to find an answer for every choice. Do not omit an item even though it is very difficult for you to decide, just select the more characteristic member of the pair.

1. If in the future I committed adultery . . .
  - I hope I would be punished very deeply.
  - I hope I enjoy it.
2. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .
  - do not bother me.
  - are something that make me very uncomfortable.
3. Masturbation . . .
  - helps one feel eased and relaxed.
  - is wrong and will ruin you.
4. Sex relations before marriage . . .
  - should be permitted.
  - are wrong and immoral.
5. If in the future I committed adultery . . .
  - I would be unworthy of my husband.
  - I would have a good reason.
6. If I committed a homosexual act . . .
  - it would be my business.
  - it would show weakness in me.
7. When I was a child, sex . . .
  - was not talked about and was a feared word.
  - was fun to think about.
8. When I have sexual dreams . . .
  - I sometimes wake up feeling excited.
  - I try to forget them.

9. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .  
\_\_\_ can be funny depending on the company.  
\_\_\_ are in bad taste.
10. Petting . . .  
\_\_\_ is an expression of affection which is satisfying.  
\_\_\_ I am sorry to say is becoming an accepted practice.
11. Unusual sex practices . . .  
\_\_\_ are not so unusual.  
\_\_\_ don't interest me.
12. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .  
\_\_\_ disgust me.  
\_\_\_ do not bother me as long as they are just in fun.
13. If I had sex relations, I would feel . . .  
\_\_\_ very dirty.  
\_\_\_ happy and satisfied.
14. Sex . . .  
\_\_\_ is good and enjoyable.  
\_\_\_ should be saved for wedlock and childbearing.
15. When I have sexual desires . . .  
\_\_\_ I enjoy it like all healthy human beings.  
\_\_\_ I fight them for I must have complete control of my body.
16. Prostitution . . .  
\_\_\_ makes me sick when I think about it.  
\_\_\_ needs to be understood.
17. Unusual sex practices . . .  
\_\_\_ might be interesting.  
\_\_\_ are disgusting and revolting.
18. Sex relations before marriage . . .  
\_\_\_ are disgusting and unnecessary.  
\_\_\_ are O.K. if both partners are in agreement.
19. Masturbation . . .  
\_\_\_ is sickening.  
\_\_\_ is understandable in many cases.
20. If in the future I committed adultery . . .  
\_\_\_ I would resolve not to commit the mistake again.  
\_\_\_ I would hope there would be no consequences.

21. Unusual sex practices . . .  
\_\_\_ are all in how you look at it.  
\_\_\_ are unwise and lead only to trouble.
22. Petting . . .  
\_\_\_ is just asking for trouble.  
\_\_\_ can lead to bigger and better things.
23. When I have sexual desires . . .  
\_\_\_ I know it's only human, but I feel terrible.  
\_\_\_ I usually express them.
24. If I had sex relations, I would feel . . .  
\_\_\_ guilty, sinful and bad.  
\_\_\_ happy if I loved the boy and he loved me.
25. Masturbation . . .  
\_\_\_ is stupid.  
\_\_\_ is a common thing in childhood.
26. Unusual sex practices . . .  
\_\_\_ are the business of those who carry them out and no one else's.  
\_\_\_ are dangerous to one's health and mental condition.
27. Petting . . .  
\_\_\_ is justified with love.  
\_\_\_ is not a good practice until after marriage.
28. When I have sexual desires . . .  
\_\_\_ I try to go to sleep and forget them.  
\_\_\_ I become easily aroused.
29. If I had sex relations, I would feel . . .  
\_\_\_ cheap and unfit for marriage.  
\_\_\_ warm and very good.
30. Sex relations before marriage . . .  
\_\_\_ ruin many a happy couple.  
\_\_\_ might help a couple to understand each other and themselves.
31. Masturbation . . .  
\_\_\_ is a normal outlet for sexual desire.  
\_\_\_ is wrong and a sin.
32. Petting . . .  
\_\_\_ depends on whom I'm with.  
\_\_\_ is against my better judgment but hard to resist for some.

33. Masturbation . . .  
\_\_\_ is all right.  
\_\_\_ is a form of self destruction.
34. Unusual sex practices . . .  
\_\_\_ are alright if both partners agree.  
\_\_\_ are awful and unthinkable.
35. If I committed a homosexual act . . .  
\_\_\_ I would want to be punished.  
\_\_\_ I would be discreet.
36. When I have sexual desires . . .  
\_\_\_ I attempt to repress them.  
\_\_\_ I sometimes think of past experiences.
37. If I had sex relations, I would feel . . .  
\_\_\_ all right, I think.  
\_\_\_ I was being used not loved.
38. Sex relations before marriage . . .  
\_\_\_ are not good for anyone.  
\_\_\_ with the person I hope to marry are O.K.
39. Dirty jokes in mixed company . . .  
\_\_\_ should be avoided.  
\_\_\_ are acceptable up to a point.



## INVENTORY OF SEXUAL DECISION-MAKING FACTORS

This questionnaire is designed to investigate what factors are important when a person decides to have sexual intercourse with a person of the opposite sex. More specifically, we would like to examine what factors were important to you in your decision to have sexual intercourse with your relationship partner, the first time it occurred. This will be accomplished by having you rate the amount of influence specific factors had on your decision. Please respond to all of the scales and answer all of the questions. Your responses are completely confidential.

The following statements are possible factors that may, or may not have been important influences on your decision to have sexual intercourse. Please consider each statement and rate it on how important it was in your decision. In rating each statement you are to pick a number from "1" to "7." A "1" indicates that this was not at all an influence on your decision to have sexual intercourse. A "7" indicates that this was a very important influence on your decision to have intercourse. The following is an example of how a statement might be rated.

A. How attractive your date was.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

If your date's attractiveness was not at all an influence on your decision to have intercourse, you would circle the number "1."

If your date's attractiveness was a moderate influence on your decision to have intercourse, you would circle the number "4."

If your date's attractiveness was a very important influence on your decision to have intercourse, you would circle the number "7."

If your date's attractiveness was between not at all important and moderately important in its influence on your decision to have intercourse, you would circle either number "2" or "3" depending on the extent of your feelings.

If your date's attractiveness was between moderately important and very important in its influence on your decision to have intercourse, you would circle either number "5" or "6" depending on the extent of your feelings.

PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS JUST GIVEN. KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS IS FOR THE FIRST TIME YOU ENGAGED IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIP PARTNER.

## POSITIVE AFFECT/COMMUNICATION

1. How much you like your partner.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

2. How much your partner liked you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

3. How much you loved your partner.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

4. How much your partner loved you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

5. How much you discussed the meaning of sexual intercourse with your partner.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

6. How much your partner discussed the meaning of sexual intercourse with you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

7. How many times you had dates with this partner prior to intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

8. The amount of alcohol and/or other drugs you had consumed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

9. The amount of alcohol and/or other drugs your partner had consumed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

10. How religious you were.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

11. How aware you were of your partner's feelings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

12. How aware your partner was of your feelings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

13. The possibility that you and your partner may eventually get married.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

14. How important of a factor was your degree of commitment between you and your partner at the time of first sexual intercourse?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

#### AROUSAL/RECEPTIVITY

15. Amount of physical arousal you felt immediately prior to intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

16. Amount of physical arousal your partner felt immediately prior to intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

17. Amount of physical arousal you felt during the date.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

18. Amount of physical arousal your partner felt during the date.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

19. How receptive you were to your partner's sexual advances during the date.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

20. How receptive your partner was to your sexual advances during the date.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

21. How aroused you were prior to the date, that is how "horny" you were.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

22. How aroused your partner was prior to the date, that is how "horny" your partner was.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

23. How attractive your partner was.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important			Moderately important			Very important

## OBLIGATION/PRESSURE

24. How obligated you felt to have intercourse with your partner.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

25. How obligated your partner felt to have intercourse with you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

26. How much you pressured your partner for intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

27. How much you felt pressured by your partner for intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

28. How many of your friends are engaging in sexual intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

29. How many of your partner's friends are engaging in sexual intercourse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

## CIRCUMSTANTIAL

30. The amount of preplanning you engaged in prior to the date such that it increased the chance of sexual intercourse occurring (i.e., special setting, availability of liquor, etc.).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately	Very		
important			important	important		

31. The amount of preplanning your partner engaged in prior to the date such that it increased the chance of sexual intercourse occurring.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

32. The amount of alcohol and/or other drugs you had consumed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

33. The amount of alcohol and/or other drugs your partner had consumed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Moderately			Very
important			important			important

Table L-1  
Analysis of Variance on  
Sexual Intimacy Scores for First Date

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	291.141	67.06*
Error	104	4.34	

\* $p < .001$

Table L-2  
Analysis of Variance on  
Sexual Intimacy Scores for Casually Dating

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	606.59	42.75*
Error	104	14.19	

\*p <.001



Table L-3

Analysis of Variance on  
Sexual Intimacy Scores for "Considering Becoming A Couple"

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	865.04	52.02*
Error	104	16.63	

\* $p < .001$

Table L-4  
Analysis of Variance on  
Sexual Intimacy Scores for "Couple" Dating Stage

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	457.96	38.66*
Error	104	11.85	

\*p <.001

Table L-5  
Analysis of Variance on  
Length of "Casually Dating" Stage of Dating

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	19.79	.304
Error	104	65.17	

Table L-6

Analysis of Variance on  
Length of "Considering Becoming a Couple" Stage of Dating

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	221.45	.82
Error	104	269.56	

Table L-7  
Analysis of Variance on  
Length of "Couple" Stage of Dating

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type	3	8254.21	4.38*
Error	104	1883.86	

\* $p < .006$

Table L-8  
 Repeated Measure Analysis of Variance on  
 Love Dimension

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	830.56	3.09*
Sex (B)	1	770.45	2.87
A x B	3	41.38	.15
Error	100	268.85	
Repeated Measure (C)	3	17992.26	265.29**
A x C	9	69.98	1.03
B x C	3	146.86	2.17
A x B x C	9	24.23	.36
Error	300	67.82	

\* $p < .03$

\*\* $p < .001$

Table L-9

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on  
Conflict Dimension

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	160.45	1.51
Sex (B)	1	3.39	.03
A x B	3	24.75	.23
Error	100	106.17	
Repeated Measures (C)	3	399.04	17.32*
A x C	9	63.42	2.75**
B x C	3	16.38	.71
A x B x C	9	16.37	.71
Error	300	23.04	

\* $p < .001$

\*\* $p < .004$

Table L-10  
 Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on  
 Ambivalence Dimension

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	51.53	.39
Sex (B)	1	158.10	1.21
A x B	3	111.11	.85
Error	100	130.54	
Repeated Measures (C)	3	669.44	21.31*
A x C	9	46.40	1.48
B x C	3	30.12	.96
A x B x C	9	22.54	.72
Error	300	31.41	

\* $p < .001$



Table L-11

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on  
Maintenance Behaviors Dimension

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	152.46	1.01
Sex (B)	1	131.24	.82
A x B	3	2.41	.02
Error		151.61	
Repeated Measures (C)	3	3270.25	116.10*
A x C	9	35.93	1.28
B x C	3	50.21	1.78
A x B x C	9	25.49	.90
Error	297	28.17	

\* $p < .001$

Table L-12

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on  
Relationship Satisfaction Dimension

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	4.39	.67
Sex (B)	1	7.20	1.10
A x B	3	6.87	1.05
Error	100	6.57	
Repeated Measures (C)	3	60.44	29.44*
A x C	9	3.02	1.47
B x C	3	2.74	1.34
A x B x C	9	1.18	.58
Error	300	2.05	

\* $p < .001$

Table L-13  
 Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on  
 Dyadic Trust Dimension

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	58.39	.54
Sex (B)	1	977.65	9.02*
A x B	3	160.60	1.48
Error	100	108.33	
Repeated Measures (C)	3	966.21	31.43**
A x C	9	30.92	1.01
B x C	3	58.86	1.91
A x B x C	9	39.11	1.27
Error	300	30.74	

\* $p < .003$

\*\* $p < .001$

Table L-14  
Analysis of Variance on  
Age on First Date

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	6.71	3.53*
Sex (B)	1	7.35	3.97**
A x B	3	1.58	.86
Error	98	1.85	

\* $p < .02$

\*\* $p < .049$

Table L-15  
Analysis of Variance on  
Self-rated Physical Attractiveness

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	2.81	3.85*
Sex (B)	1	.38	.53
A x B	3	.75	1.02
Error	98	.73	

\* $p < .01$

Table L-16  
Analysis of Variance on  
Lifetime Sexual Behavior

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	194.39	5.24*
Sex (B)	1	143.09	3.86**
A x B	3	13.04	.35
Error	97	37.07	

\* $p < .002$

\*\* $p < .05$

Table L-17  
Analysis of Variance on  
Premarital Sexual Attitudes

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	45.52	15.51*
Sex (B)	1	3.00	1.02
A x B	3	.78	.27
Error	100	2.94	

\*p <.001

Table L-18  
 Analysis of Variance on  
 Positive Affect/Communication

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	1908.78	12.21*
Sex (B)	1	624.05	4.00**
A x B	3	110.10	.71
Error	68	156.22	

\* $p < .001$

\*\* $p < .05$



Table L-19  
Analysis of Variance on  
Circumstances

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Type (A)	3	165.54	5.76*
Sex (B)	1	1.55	.05
A x B	3	91.06	3.17**
Error	68	28.76	

\* $p < .001$

\*\* $p < .03$