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Comparing Relationships: Same-Sex Friendships, Cross-Sex Friendships, and Romantic Love

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COMPARING RELATIONSHIPS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Arts

by

Kathryn G. Bilbro

1992

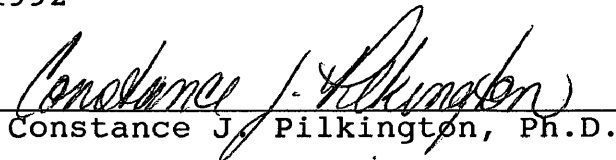
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the differences between same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships by comparing qualitative and quantitative measures of social interactions in each of these three relationships. Ninety undergraduates, all of whom were currently involved in all three types of relationships, completed the experiment. Participants maintained a week-long diary of their social interactions and completed several questionnaires, including a measure of sex-role orientation. Results showed that romantic partners were of highest priority in terms of time spent and emotional investment. Same-sex best friends were second in priority, eliciting more disclosure and occupying more time than opposite-sex best friends. Sex of participant did not have a significant influence on social interaction patterns, but sex-role orientation did. High levels of instrumentality, expressiveness, or both (androgyny) were generally associated with greater enjoyment and intimacy in interactions within all three relationships. These results were interpreted in relation to previous research on self-disclosure and intimacy within friendships and romantic relationships.

Comparing Relationships: Same-sex Friendships, Cross-sex
Friendships, and Romantic Love

INTRODUCTION

There are many different types of relationships that evolve from social interactions. Both same- and opposite-sex friendships may develop, as well as romantic relationships. There seem to be distinct differences in the way these three relationships are defined and in the types of interactions that occur within them; however, the differences in how people define certain relationships may not necessarily influence the kinds of interactions that they have within those relationships. That is, people may define certain friendships or romantic relationships differently depending on their gender, for example, though their interactions in those relationships may be quite similar.

Previous research has focused on gender differences in same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships. Other research has investigated relationship differences due to sex-role orientation. There seems to be an ongoing controversy about whether close relationships are experienced differently by males and females, traditionally sex-typed or not. Some claim that friendships and romantic relationships are functionally similar regardless of sex or sex-role. The purpose of this study was to investigate these different relationships and to examine more closely how sex and sex-role orientation may or may not affect naturally-occurring social interactions within them. In order to study similarities and differences in love and

friendship, a review of the relevant literature concerning these relationships is necessary.

Friendship

Friendship has been defined as a primary relationship between two individuals unrelated by kinship (Booth & Hess, 1974). The word "primary" implies a predisposition to engage in activities with the other person, as well as positive affect between the two people. Usually, a close friend is someone who lives nearby, is seen frequently, and belongs to the same age group, social class, and religion (Aries & Johnson, 1983). In other words, friendships tend to be homogenous with respect to age and education (Booth & Hess, 1974).

In his investigation of the differences between close and casual friends, Hays (1989) concluded that close friends interact more frequently and across a wider range of settings than casual friends. Close friends describe their interactions as being more exclusive and providing more benefits such as emotional support than interactions with casual friends. In general, Hays suggested that current conceptualizations of friendship interpret close friends as perceiving each other to be more personally unique and irreplaceable than casual acquaintances with whom interactions tend to be more role-bound.

Bell (1981) and others (Davidson & Duberman, 1982) proposed that women and men view friendships differently. Women tend to develop more personal and emotionally based

friendships, revealing anxieties and insecurities to each other. Men, on the other hand, tend to define friendship in terms of doing things together. This gender difference is manifested in conversational content. Aries and Johnson (1983) reported that women talk about more intimate topics such as family and personal matters, while men talk more about sports and other activities. More evidence from Aries (1976) revealed that women share more about themselves, their feelings, homes, and close relationships; men share more about sports and amusements, competition and aggression, and things they have seen, read, or heard. Thus, evidence seems to indicate that the friendships of men and women differ in several ways, including shared activities and topics of conversation.

Despite these differences, Caldwell and Peplau (1982) claimed that there are no gender differences in number of friends, the amount of time spent with friends, or the preference for having intimate friends rather than good or casual friends. Thus, the differences between men and women regarding friendships appear to involve typical interactions. Women seem to enjoy just talking and sharing their feelings, while men prefer engaging in an activity such as a sport or hobby with their friends.

Research on gender differences in friendship carries with it a potential confound in interpretation. Wright (1988) has cautioned researchers to avoid dichotomous thinking and overgeneralizing when interpreting results on

gender differences. From his point of view, there has been a tendency to overinterpret the extent of differences in male and female friendships. The resultant overgeneralizations have been detrimental to the discovery of broader and more consequential similarities between males and females. The findings of Jones (1990) supported Wright's argument, demonstrating greater similarities than differences in the qualities that enhance friendship satisfaction for males and females. For instance, even though males disclosed less information to friends than did females in her study, self-disclosure was still a significant contributor to their friendship satisfaction just as it was for females. Likewise, even though females reported more trust and enjoyment, these two aspects of companionship enhanced friendship satisfaction for both genders. Jones (1990) concluded that although magnitude measures revealed sex differences in several behavioral characteristics of friendship, the bulk of evidence demonstrated functional similarities in the qualities that promote satisfactory relationships.

It may be that though the functional aspects of friendship are similar for males and females, certain structural differences exist which merit further study. Because these patterns of magnitude differences seem to be robust, psychologists continue to explore how men and women's friendships are distinct. Many studies have reported remarkably similar findings concerning the types of

interactions and communications typical of males and females. Sapadin (1988) summarized these findings, distinguishing female friendships by their intimate, dyadic interactions and male friendships by more group-oriented and aggressive interactions. Caldwell and Peplau (1982) found that though the sexes defined an intimate friend in similar ways, in actual experience, males' interactions with best friends were less personal, less intimate, and displayed less self-disclosure. Based on the plethora of studies reporting gender differences in friendships, the continued investigation of these differences seems justified.

A possible explanation for gender differences in friendships incorporates sex-role expectations. The concept of sex-role entails cultural influences on personality traits associated with gender. Individuals are typically classified into four groups based on their self-concepts and behaviors: masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated (Lubinski, Tellegen, and Butcher, 1983). These four groups are derived from combinations of instrumental (masculine) and expressive (feminine) personality traits which are viewed as two distinct dimensions. Because masculinity and femininity are associated with trait clusters not necessarily related to gender, researchers have begun to refer to them as instrumentality and expressiveness (Spence, 1983). Instrumentality is associated with higher levels of subjective well-being, social potency, and achievement.

Expressiveness, on the other hand, is related to nurturance and accommodating warmth (Lubinski et al., 1983).

Androgynous individuals are described as having relatively high levels of both instrumental and expressive traits; undifferentiated individuals have low levels of both. Bem (1974) described androgyny and undifferentiation as exemplified by persons who do not manifest predominantly sex-typed characteristics.

Davidson and Duberman's (1982) explanation for gender differences in friendship follows from this concept of sex-role. They suggested that barriers such as pressure to compete, homophobia, aversion to vulnerability, and lack of adequate role models prevent males from being intimate with their same-sex friends. Accordingly, Caldwell and Peplau (1982) believed that because the male sex-role restricts men's self-disclosure to other men, small degrees of personal revelation to a male friend may be taken as a sign of considerable intimacy. Perhaps because males tend to interact less than females on personal and relational levels and are therefore less vulnerable, men experience themselves as more spontaneous in their communications and more trusting in their friendships. It may be that men and women apply different standards of closeness to their friendships (Buhrke & Fuqua, 1987; Mazur, 1989). Men may have more frequent contact of shorter duration with their friends, yet consider themselves just as close as women who have fewer but longer, more in-depth interactions with their friends.

Cross-sex Friendship

Related to these differences between male and female friendships is the issue of cross-sex friendships. O'Meara (1989) defined cross-sex friendship as a nonromantic, nonfamilial, personal relationship between a man and a woman. He discussed five types of relationships that men and women can experience: friendship, platonic love, friendship love, physical love, and romantic love. Cross-sex friendships can be of the first three types. That is, a cross-sex friendship may be defined as a voluntary, mutual, personal and affectionate relationship without expressed sexuality (friendship). It also may be defined as an emotional commitment without sex (platonic love). Finally, cross-sex friendships may involve the interplay of emotional and sexual expressions of affection (friendship love). Cross-sex friendships typically do not involve physical or romantic love, incorporating sexual behavior with or without emotional commitment. O'Meara (1989) concluded that "cross-sex friendship is an ambiguous relationship in American culture in the sense that it has a deviant status reflected in a lack of instructive role models and appropriate terminology and a lack of coherent cultural scripts for guiding interactions" (p.530). Consequently, the author claimed that cross-sex friends must continuously negotiate their behaviors in a context that treats their existence as deviant and even threatening. In other words, [in a cross-sex friendship, it is unclear what types of behaviors are

socially acceptable between males and females who claim to be "just friends."]

Booth and Hess (1974) found that men report cross-sex friends more often than women. Their explanation for this phenomenon was that normative constraints on cross-sex friendship affect men and women differently. That is, factors associated with sex roles, such as affiliation with professional organizations, influence opportunities for meeting members of the opposite sex. Because men are more likely to have professional affiliations, it is easier for men than for women to meet members of the opposite sex. Rose (1985) suggested that men (more so than women) have different standards for cross- versus same-sex friendships. [Women seem to have one standard which they apply to both types of friendship, involving expectations of acceptance, loyalty, and companionship. These expectations are often less fulfilled by men friends than by women friends. In Rose's research, both men and women adhered to the homosocial norm, defined as the seeking, enjoyment, and/or preference for the company of the same sex. This finding seems to contradict the assertion by Booth and Hess (1974) that men have more cross-sex friends than women. In essence, it appears that there is some disagreement in the literature about who prefers what in terms of friendship.

To help clarify the confusion concerning cross-sex friendships, Buhrke and Fuqua (1987) found that both the women and the men in their study were more likely to seek

out contact with a woman when under stress. The finding by Wheeler, Reis, and Nezlek (1983) that the more a person interacts with females, the less lonely he or she is fits with this pattern. Based on their results, Buhrke and Fuqua concluded that men's cross-sex relationships are closer than their same-sex relationships because they expect a more nurturant response from their female friends than from their male friends. This expectation may be valid either because women have learned to be better supporters or because women and men have learned to expect women to be more supportive than men.

Romantic Relationships

[Romantic relationships can be distinguished from friendships by their behavioral interdependence, emotional intensity, and need fulfillment (Perlman & Fehr, 1987). Generally, a romantic relationship involves some type of love, whether companionate or passionate (Hatfield, 1988).] Dion and Dion (1979) suggested that there may be differences in the way love affects behavior for men and women. Gender differences in romantic relationships seem to indicate that love is more important to women than to men because of socialization practices, economic concerns, or both (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989). It may be, however, that the differences between the sexes are exaggerated because of a difference in what men and women are willing to report about their beliefs and experiences in romantic relationships.

Researchers have investigated differences between

cross-sex friendships and romantic relationships. Davis and Todd (1982) found that close opposite-sex friendships differed from love in the degree of passion, support, mutual love, and intimacy in the relationship. (Lovers consistently expressed more fascination, exclusiveness, and enjoyment of each other's company than did friends.) Davis and Todd (1982) suggested that the major conceptual contrast between friendships and love relationships lies in the contrast between the passionate aspects of love, including fascination and exclusivity, and the milder passions of friendship, such as understanding and respect, as well as the quality of support distinctive of the two relationships. In romantic love, the quality of support is characterized by "giving the utmost," whereas in friendship such support only exists for best or closest friends. Morse (1983) discriminated between love and friendship on the basis of emotional involvement and dependency. He felt that love involves more of these two elements, though respect and reciprocal communication are central to both love and friendship.

Self-Disclosure

Much of the research on gender differences in relationships has focused on self-disclosure. Self-disclosure has been defined by Alloy, Schuldt, and Bonge (1985) as "the process of making the self known to other persons" (p.10). Other researchers have described self-disclosure as the verbal communication of information about

oneself to another (Chelune, Skiffington, & Williams, 1981). Parameters frequently used to measure self-disclosure include the amount of information disclosed, the intimacy level of the information disclosed, and the time spent describing each item of information.

According to Cozby's (1973) review, an equal number of studies report either greater disclosure by women than men or no gender differences in self-disclosure. For example, Hacker (1981) found that females have a greater capacity for intimacy and self-disclosure, while Morgan (1976) claimed that females and males disclose similarly, at least in nonintimate areas.

These general statements about self-disclosure are still in question, and contradictory research exists. For example, Hansen and Schuldt (1982) found that both male and female subjects talked more to female experimenters, indicating that at least for males, self-disclosure is not always greatest in same-sex dyads. Reisman (1990) supported their hypotheses with his finding that women rate their same-sex friendships as more disclosing than do men. Reisman (1990) also found that the majority of men look to their cross-sex friendships for intimacy and are not specifically concerned by its absence in their same-sex relationships. In other words, in his study, both sexes found it easier to relate to women. This finding is consistent with those of Buhrke and Fuqua (1987) and Wheeler et al. (1983), indicating that people tend to seek out women

when under stress or lonely.

Sollie and Fischer (1985) proposed that factors other than the discloser's gender influence willingness to self-disclose. These factors include the sex of the target person (i.e., same- vs. cross-sex), the intimacy level of the disclosed topic, and the sex-role orientation of the individual. In general, the authors found that self-disclosure is greater in same-sex dyads, and willingness to disclose decreases as intimacy level increases. Furthermore, an androgynous sex-role orientation appears to be an important factor in promoting intimacy and increasing satisfaction in interpersonal relationships for both men and women. Sollie and Fischer's (1985) results indicated that androgynous individuals are more willing to disclose on intimate topics regardless of the sex of the target person. Coleman and Ganong (1985) supported these results, stating that neither instrumental nor expressive sex roles are as conducive to experiencing and expressing love as an androgynous sex-role orientation. In their view, sex-role has a greater effect on feelings and self-reported behaviors of love than does biological sex.

Other studies have contradicted the proposal that androgyny is related to self-disclosure. Winstead, Derlega, and Wong (1984) found that androgyny was unrelated to self-disclosure. Consistent with Grigsby and Weatherley's (1983) conclusion that instrumentality limits self-disclosure, Winstead et al. demonstrated that when men were paired with

men, instrumentality was inversely related to intimacy of self-disclosure while expressiveness was positively related. Instrumentality and expressiveness had no effect on disclosure intimacy, however, when men were paired with women or when women were paired with either men or women. Based on these results, it was suggested that men with high expressiveness scores may be perceived as being more interested in emotional expressiveness and intimacy and are therefore more likely than other men to receive intimate disclosures.

Lewis and McCarthy (1988) made a similar proposal. They suggested that individuals are expected to disclose information that is congruent with their gender; because of their lower social status, though, it may be less common for women to disclose instrumental behaviors and attitudes than for men to disclose expressive behaviors. This followed from Johnson's (1978) assertion that high-status individuals are liked better than low-status individuals when they engage in the same behaviors.

Narus and Fischer (1982) suggested that instrumentality (masculinity) and expressiveness (femininity) may have different meanings for men and women; femininity in men may not index expressivity as it appears to in women. This was based on their finding that even though the feminine sex-role reflects an expressive dimension, femininity in males was not associated with expressivity. They added that androgyny is more likely to be related to greater

expressivity in same-sex relationships than in cross-sex relationships because expressivity is more closely associated with sex-roles in same-sex relationships. All of these theoretical positions follow from Hatch and Leighton's (1986) and Derlega and Chaikin's (1976) hypothesis that "patterns of openness between men and women are produced and maintained through culturally administered rewards and punishments and that deviation from established sex-roles is an expression of mental illness" (Hatch and Leighton, 1986, p.175). In other words, society prescribes different patterns of openness for men and women.

Research has demonstrated that people are more willing to self-disclose to same-sex friends than to cross-sex friends (Sollie & Fischer, 1985). However, disclosure to same-sex friends is not necessarily greater than disclosure to romantic partners. Among dating couples, Rubin, Hill, Peplau, and Dunkel-Schetter (1980) reported that there is a substantial amount of matching in the degree to which partners disclose themselves to one another. They attributed this to a shifting ethic of openness which overrides the traditional sex-role expectation of greater female expressiveness. This matching of self-disclosure has also been found in married couples, as research by Morton (1978) and Hendrick (1981) reveals. However, some distinctions were made between romantic partners' disclosures to each other. Men tended to reveal their strengths, while women revealed their fears (Rubin et al.,

1980). Morton (1978) showed similar differences, with women disclosing more personal feelings and opinions than men, whether interacting with a spouse or a stranger.

Another important issue concerning self-disclosure is that high levels are not always correlated with strong feelings of closeness (Hacker, 1981). Thus, just because people respond more intimately to high levels of disclosure as compared to low levels of disclosure does not mean that they feel closer to the highly disclosing target. This distinction between closeness and disclosure may be related to the use of strangers rather than actual friends as targets in research. That is, because most research on self-disclosure uses strangers as targets, a person's feelings of closeness for the target may be limited because he or she does not consider that person a friend. However, a study by Reisman (1990) refuted such a hypothesis. In his research, subjects who rated their friendships low in disclosure also tended to rate them low in closeness and satisfaction. As Gerdes, Gehling, and Rapp (1981) pointed out, disclosers may vary their output in accordance with social norms, especially if they are androgynous in their sex-role orientation. Shaffer and Ogden (1986) suggested that men model their self-disclosure more than women on the content of their partner's self-disclosure; that is, men use it as a guideline to structure their own self-presentation.

Purpose and Hypotheses

The purpose of the present study was to investigate

differences in same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships. Of particular interest were differences due to gender and sex-role orientation.

Frequency and length of contact were measured as well as amount and intimacy level of self-disclosure in these three types of relationships. This study examined only those people who are involved in all three types of relationships; other research may be necessary to discover if there are any distinctions between such people and those who are involved in only one or two of the three types of relationships. It also was not the focus of the present study to examine how these relationships evolve over time. For present purposes, the relationships under investigation were considered to be of relatively equal developmental status.

It was hypothesized that gender differences would exist such that relative to each other, females would have more same-sex friendships while males would have more cross-sex friendships. This hypothesis was based on previous findings of Booth and Hess (1974) and Buhrke and Fuqua (1987) who emphasized the importance of same-sex friends to females and cross-sex friends to males. It also was expected that females would disclose more intimately than males in all three types of relationships, but especially with their same-sex friends. The justification for this hypothesis came from Aries and Johnson (1983) and Bell (1981) who found similar gender and relationship differences in self-disclosure. As for sex-role differences, it was

hypothesized that instrumentality would inhibit self-disclosure, and androgyny would facilitate disclosure in all three types of relationships, but especially in same-sex friendships. Hypotheses concerning sex-role differences were derived from the conclusions of Sollie and Fischer (1985) and Rose (1985) that self-disclosure is greatest for androgynous people and in same-sex dyads and from Davidson and Duberman (1982) who found that instrumentality restricts self-disclosure.

This study also explored the relative importance of these relationships in terms of time spent and emotional investment. It was expected that for males, romantic relationships would be considered of higher priority than same- or cross-sex friendships, while for females, more emphasis would be put on same-sex friendships. These hypotheses were more speculative, but they were drawn from research suggesting more intimate interactions with females by both males and females. Furthermore, these hypothesized gender differences in the priority assigned to different relationships evolved from the assumption that socialization plays a role in the expectations that males and females have from each other in terms of intimacy and support. More specifically, it was assumed that both males and females expect more intimacy and support from females than from males because females are socialized to express such a nurturant response while males are socialized to suppress it. Thus, to summarize the hypotheses concerning the

priority of each of the three relationships, it was expected that for males, romantic partners would be most important, followed by opposite-sex best friends, and finally same-sex best friends. For females, best same-sex friends were expected to be most important, with romantic partners and opposite-sex best friends competing for second place in terms of emotional investment and time spent.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 30 male and 60 female undergraduates recruited from upper-level psychology classes on a volunteer basis (one participant was dropped from the analyses because she did not follow instructions properly). Participants were selected based on a preliminary questionnaire concerning their relationships and willingness to maintain a diary (See Appendix A). Only those who were involved in at least one same-sex friendship, one cross-sex friendship, and only one romantic relationship were asked to participate. Unfortunately, the existence of these three relationships did not guarantee their presence in recorded social interactions by the participants. Sixteen of the participants did not interact with their best same-sex friend, 44 did not interact with their best opposite-sex friend, and 4 did not interact with their romantic partner during the week that the diary was maintained.

Measures

Participants were given the Bem Sex-Role Inventory

(Bem, 1974) to measure sex-role orientation (See Appendix B). The scale has 60 items which represent personality characteristics. Participants use a 7-point scale to rate each characteristic in terms of the extent to which it describes them. Scale scores were computed as the averages of instrumental and expressive items. Thus, each participant had a score ranging from 1.0 to 7.0 for instrumentality and for expressiveness.

Social interaction was measured using a variant of the Rochester Interaction Record (RIR; Wheeler & Nezlek, 1977), (See Appendix C). Participants used the RIR to record every social interaction they had that lasted ten minutes or longer. Similar to most studies using the RIR, the version of the RIR used in the current study asked participants to indicate who their co-interactants were (using unique initials for each co-interactant) and the sex of each co-interactant. In particular, subjects were asked to use the letters "SSF" to represent their closest same-sex friend, "OSF" to represent their closest opposite-sex friend, and "ROM" to represent their romantic partner. The time, length, and nature of each interaction also were reported, as well as the topic of conversation.

Participants then rated each interaction on six qualitative dimensions: (a) intimacy, (b) depth of self-disclosure, (c) breadth of self-disclosure, (d) enjoyment, (e) influence, and (f) others' responsiveness. Except for depth and breadth, all of these dimensions were similar to

those used in previous RIR studies. Intimacy was defined as how interpersonally close an individual felt an interaction was. Depth was defined as how deep or intimate an individual felt his or her self-disclosure was in an interaction. Breadth was defined as "how diverse the topics that you disclosed were." Disclosure for both depth and breadth referred to information that was revealed concerning personal thoughts and feelings. These two qualities were chosen to describe self-disclosure on the basis of Altman and Taylor's (1973) social penetration theory. Enjoyment was defined as how pleasurable or satisfying an interaction was; influence was defined in terms of the extent to which an individual controlled the interaction (e.g., initiation, determining what was to be done, where to go, etc.). Responsiveness was defined as "how responsive to your needs and feelings you felt the people in the interaction were...the extent to which other people changed their behavior to accommodate your particular needs and feelings."

Qualitative ratings were obtained via 9-point scales, with the following labels: 1 = not, 3 = slightly, 5 = somewhat, 7 = quite, and 9 = very. According to research conducted by Cliff (1959) on the relative strength of modifiers, these scale point labels represented roughly equal intervals.

Procedure

During an introductory meeting, the importance of understanding social interaction was explained, and the

participants' role as collaborators in this naturalistic research was emphasized. The instructions given to participants were modeled closely after those employed by Wheeler & Nezlek (1977). Participants were instructed to use the RIR to record every social interaction they had that lasted ten minutes or longer. An interaction was defined as any encounter with another person (or people) in which the participants attended to one another and adjusted their behavior in response to one another. Examples were provided in order to clarify what was an interaction (e.g., a conversation, dancing) and what was not an interaction (e.g., simply sitting next to someone in a lecture). As part of this orientation, the various response categories on the RIR were discussed until participants understood their definitions and felt comfortable with the forms and the procedure.

To facilitate accurate recording, participants were encouraged to complete the records at least once a day at a uniform time, such as before going to bed. Days that were forgotten or missed were to be skipped. Participants were given a supply of interaction forms sufficient for the duration of the study. The diaries were kept for a week-long period in accordance with research by Larson and Csikszentmihalyi (1983) indicating that a typical behavioral cycle lasts for approximately seven days. After five days, the researcher contacted participants to see if they were having any problems maintaining the diary; none were

reported. Throughout the study, a collaborative, nondeceptive atmosphere was maintained, and the confidentiality of the records was emphasized and closely guarded.

At the conclusion of the record-keeping period, participants were interviewed individually about the difficulties, ambiguities, and potential sources of inaccuracy in their data. Participants were encouraged to be straightforward when describing how they maintained the diary. The 90 participants maintained their diaries a maximum of 8 days; they reported updating their diaries an average of 1.71 times per day and spending an average of 15.59 minutes per day doing this. The difficulty of maintaining the diary, the interference caused by keeping the diary, and the accuracy of the diary were rated on 9-point scales (where 1 = not, 5 = somewhat, and 9 = very). The mean difficulty reported was 3.88, average interference was 2.04, and average accuracy was 6.89. On average, participants reported missing less than 11% of their interactions. These responses suggest that participants followed the instructions for maintaining the diary and that their diaries were accurate representations of their social lives during the diary-keeping period.

Following the interviews, participants completed additional questionnaires, including the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). Upon completion of these questionnaires, any further questions participants had about

the study were answered. (For a detailed description of the methods used in RIR studies, see Nezlek & Wheeler, 1984).

RESULTS

Measures of Social Interaction

Participants' social interactions were quantified by calculating summary measures that described the quantity and quality of each participant's social interactions during the period of the study. The level of analysis used to summarize interaction diaries was the individual participant. Therefore, although there was considerable variability among participants in how socially active they were, participants contributed equally to the final analyses. Summary measures were calculated using a version of RIRAP, a set of programs written specifically to summarize data generated by the RIR; a discussion of this analytic framework can be found in Wheeler and Nezlek (1977) and in Nezlek and Wheeler (1984).

Interaction quality was measured by computing averages for the six qualitative ratings: intimacy, depth, breadth, enjoyment, influence, and responsiveness. Interaction quantity was measured in the following ways: by calculating (a) the total number of same- and opposite-sex co-interactants for each individual, (b) the mean number of interactions each participant had per day, (c) the average length of interactions (in minutes), (d) the average amount of time spent per day interacting with others (again, in minutes), and (e) the percent of interactions that were of

specific types.

Participants' social interactions were described by calculating three sets of averages for each participant. The first set described averages on all qualitative and quantitative variables for a participant's designated best same-sex friend (SSF). The second set represented averages on all variables for a participant's designated best opposite-sex friend (OSF). The third set of averages were for the romantic partner (ROM) designated by the subject.

Percent was measured in two ways. First, the percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving best same-sex friends and the percents of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions involving romantic partners and best opposite-sex friends were calculated separately. Second, the percents of interactions involving best same-sex friends, romantic partners, and best opposite-sex friends that were dyadic were computed.

Overview of Analyses

Given the hypotheses of interest, the original analytic plan was to compute 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 3 (relationship type) analyses of variance (ANOVAs) for the quantitative and qualitative variables from the diary. However, because of a number of problems outlined below, these analyses were not feasible. Instead, the following series of analyses were done.

To examine sex differences in measures of social

interaction, three one-way ANOVAs were performed for each type of relationship (SSF, OSF, and ROM). Similarly, to examine the effects of sex-role on all quantitative and qualitative measures of social participation, 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) ANOVAs were done separately for each of the three relationships of interest. A median split was performed to separate high and low scores for each of the two traits (i.e., expressiveness and instrumentality). The justification for this strategy was twofold. First, the use of median splits is a common and acceptable method for investigating sex-role differences according to Spence (1983); secondly, median splits offer ease of interpretation when looking at interactions between sex-role and type of relationship. The median for expressiveness was 5.0, and the median for instrumentality was 4.65. These medians were similar to those suggested by Bem (1977) of 4.76 for expressiveness and 4.89 for instrumentality. The number of participants in each of the four groups were as follows: 12 females and 4 males were androgynous (high levels of both expressiveness and instrumentality); 10 females and 19 males were instrumental; 27 females and 1 male were expressive; finally, 11 females and 6 males were undifferentiated (low levels of both instrumentality and expressiveness). Thus, a 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) ANOVA could not be performed because the number of participants in many of the cells would have been too small

to achieve meaningful results.

To examine how the type of relationship (SSF, OSF, or ROM) influenced social interactions, a repeated measures ANOVA with the three types of relationship treated as a repeated factor was planned. However, this intended repeated measures ANOVA was not performed because not all participants mentioned all three relationships in their diaries. As previously reported, 16 participants did not record an interaction with their best same-sex friend, 44 participants did not record an interaction with their best opposite-sex friend, and 4 participants did not record an interaction with their romantic partner in their diaries.

Consequently, three separate analyses concerning the quantitative and qualitative differences between types of relationships were done. One set of analyses compared interactions with best same-sex friends to those involving romantic partners. A second set of analyses compared interactions with best same-sex friends to those with best opposite-sex friends. A third set of analyses compared interactions that involved best opposite-sex friends to those that involved romantic partners. Each of these three analyses were done using participant sex as a between-subjects factor, and again using expressiveness and instrumentality as between-subjects variables.

Sex Differences

To determine if sex of participant was related to the total number of same- and opposite-sex co-interactants, a 2

(sex of participant) by 2 (sex of co-interactant) ANOVA was computed. It yielded no significant sex main effect, but a main effect for sex of co-interactant was found, $F(1,88) = 60.99$, $p < .01$. Both males and females interacted with more same- than opposite-sex co-interactants ($M_{\text{same-sex}} = 1.35$ and $M_{\text{opposite-sex}} = .80$).

The reason for not examining sex-role differences separately for each gender was based on the claim by Spence (1983) that instrumentality and expressiveness are personality traits that "have at best weak relations with gender-related phenomena" (p.442). The three one-way ANOVAs investigating sex differences in social interaction found few significant main effects. For the analysis of interactions with best same-sex friends, there was a sex main effect in the analysis of enjoyment, $F(1,73) = 5.37$, $p < .05$. Females ($M = 6.69$) enjoyed interactions with their best same-sex friends more than males did ($M = 5.97$). For the analysis of interactions with best opposite-sex friends, there were marginal sex main effects in the analysis of depth of self-disclosure, $F(1,45) = 3.59$, $p < .06$, and in the analysis of breadth of self-disclosure, $F(1,45) = 3.21$, $p < .08$. Males' disclosures to best opposite-sex friends were deeper ($M = 5.95$) and broader ($M = 6.08$) than females' disclosures ($M_{\text{depth}} = 4.96$ and $M_{\text{breadth}} = 5.02$). Sex produced no significant main effects in the analysis of interactions with romantic partners.

Sex-Role Differences

Best Same-Sex Friends. A 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 2 (sex of co-interactant) ANOVA produced a significant sex of co-interactant by expressiveness interaction, $F(1,86) = 6.09, p < .05$. The number of same-sex co-interactants did not differ much based on level of expressivity ($M_{\text{high}} = 1.39$ and $M_{\text{low}} = 1.31$), but highly expressive people ($M = .71$) interacted with fewer opposite-sex others than people low in expressiveness ($M = .89$).

Several sex-role main effects and interactions were found in the 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) ANOVAs for measures describing interactions with best same-sex friends. The analysis of intimacy yielded a marginal interaction between expressiveness and instrumentality, $F(1,73) = 3.26, p < .08$. Androgynous individuals ($M = 6.29$) rated their interactions with best same-sex friends as more intimate than did all other sex-role orientations ($M_{\text{undiff}} = 5.18, M_{\text{exp}} = 4.94, \text{ and } M_{\text{inst}} = 5.04$).

An expressiveness by instrumentality interaction also was found in the analysis of depth of self-disclosure, $F(1,73) = 4.52, p < .05$. This was due to the fact that among those high in expressiveness, those also high in instrumentality ($M = 5.99$) disclosed more deeply to best same-sex friends than those low in instrumentality (i.e., traditionally expressive individuals) ($M = 4.83$). Instrumentality had little effect on depth of self-

disclosure for individuals low in expressiveness ($M_{\text{low inst}} = 5.31$ and $M_{\text{high inst}} = 5.19$). An instrumentality main effect was found for breadth of self-disclosure, $F(1,73) = 4.50$, $p < .05$. Individuals high in instrumentality had broader self-disclosures than those low in instrumentality. (See Table 1 for these and other means used in the analysis of sex-role differences in interactions with best same-sex friends.)

 Insert Table 1 about here.

The analysis of enjoyment yielded significant main effects for both expressiveness, $F(1,73) = 13.92$, $p < .01$, and instrumentality, $F(1,73) = 5.60$, $p < .05$. High levels of expressiveness and instrumentality were associated with greater enjoyment of interactions with best same-sex friends than were low levels.

Main effects for expressiveness, $F(1,73) = 6.84$, $p < .01$, and instrumentality, $F(1,73) = 4.89$, $p < .05$, also were found in the analysis of responsiveness. High levels of both were associated with greater perceived responsiveness in interactions involving best same-sex friends than were low levels.

In the analysis of sex-role differences in measures of interactions involving best same-sex friends, one other main effect approached significance. For the average number of interactions per day involving best same-sex friends, a

marginal main effect for instrumentality was found, $F(1,89) = 3.47$, $p < .07$. Individuals low in instrumentality had more interactions per day with best same-sex friends than did individuals high in instrumentality.

Best Opposite-Sex Friends. The 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) ANOVAs for interactions involving best opposite-sex friends yielded a main effect for instrumentality on average intimacy of interactions, $F(1,45) = 4.74$, $p < .05$. Highly instrumental individuals had more intimate interactions with best opposite-sex friends than did individuals low in instrumentality. (See Table 2 for these and other means used in the analysis of sex-role differences in interactions with best opposite-sex friends.)

 Insert Table 2 about here.

A main effect of instrumentality also was found in the analysis of breadth of self-disclosure, $F(1,45) = 6.08$, $p < .05$. Individuals high in instrumentality disclosed more broadly to best opposite-sex friends than individuals low in instrumentality.

The analysis of perceived responsiveness also yielded a significant main effect for instrumentality, $F(1,45) = 11.45$, $p < .01$. Highly instrumental individuals perceived more responsiveness in interactions involving best opposite-sex friends than did individuals low in instrumentality. The analysis of responsiveness also yielded a marginally

significant expressiveness by instrumentality interaction, $F(1,45) = 3.45, p < .07$. Among those high in expressiveness, instrumentality did not have a significant effect on perceived responsiveness ($M_{\text{high inst}} = 7.15$ and $M_{\text{low inst}} = 6.54$). However, instrumentality did make a difference in perceived responsiveness for individuals low in expressiveness ($M_{\text{high inst}} = 7.30$ and $M_{\text{low inst}} = 5.20$). Generally, those individuals low in both instrumentality and expressiveness (i.e., undifferentiated persons) perceived best opposite-sex friends as less responsive than did all other sex-role orientations.

The last significant main effect for the analysis of measures of interactions with best opposite-sex friends was an instrumentality main effect in the analysis of percent of interactions involving best opposite-sex friends that were dyadic, $F(1,45) = 10.12, p < .01$. Individuals high in instrumentality had more dyadic interactions with best opposite-sex friends than individuals low in instrumentality.

Romantic Partners. The 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) ANOVAs for measures describing interactions with romantic partners yielded a significant expressiveness main effect in the analysis of average intimacy, $F(1,85) = 7.80, p < .01$. Highly expressive individuals had more intimate interactions with romantic partners than did individuals low in expressiveness. (See Table 3 for these and other means used in the analysis of

sex-role differences in interactions with romantic partners.)

Insert Table 3 about here.

Expressiveness also produced a main effect for enjoyment of interactions involving romantic partners, $F(1,85) = 15.98$, $p < .01$. Highly expressive individuals enjoyed romantic interactions more than individuals low in expressiveness. Similarly, instrumentality yielded a main effect for enjoyment of romantic interactions, such that high levels were associated with greater enjoyment than were low levels.

In the analysis of perceived influence in romantic interactions, a significant expressiveness main effect was found, $F(1,85) = 4.24$, $p < .05$. Highly expressive individuals perceived greater influence in their interactions with romantic partners than did those low in expressiveness. In addition, significant main effects for expressiveness, $F(1,85) = 26.34$, $p < .01$, and instrumentality, $F(1,85) = 9.59$, $p < .01$, were revealed in the analysis of perceived responsiveness in romantic interactions. High levels of both indicated greater perceived responsiveness than low levels.

The only other significant main effect in the analysis of interactions with romantic partners was an expressiveness main effect in the analysis of the percent of interactions

involving romantic partners that were dyadic, $F(1,85) = 4.58, p < .05$. Highly expressive individuals were involved in more dyadic interactions with romantic partners than were individuals low in expressiveness.

Relationship Differences

Best Same-Sex Friend vs. Romantic Partner. For the comparisons of best same-sex friend and romantic partner, four sets of analyses were conducted. Quantitative and qualitative variables were examined separately, and sex and sex-role differences were isolated. However, because sex and sex-role differences were reported previously for each type of relationship, only those effects and interactions involving the type of relationship will be discussed.

To investigate sex differences on quantitative measures of social interaction, 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were performed, with the last variable treated as a within-subjects factor. Analysis of the average number of interactions per day yielded a relationship main effect, $F(1,88) = 48.94, p < .01$. Participants interacted more frequently with romantic partners than with same-sex best friends. (See Table 4 for these and other relationship means used in these analyses.)

 Insert Table 4 about here.

Quantity of social participation as measured by the average time per day spent in social interaction also

reflected a significant relationship main effect, $F(1,88) = 49.11$, $p < .01$. Participants spent more time per day with romantic partners than with best same-sex friends.

Similarly, quantity of social participation as measured by length of interaction varied as a function of relationship. Romantic partners were involved in longer interactions than best same-sex friends, $F(1,88) = 8.05$, $p < .01$.

A significant effect was found in the analysis of the percent of interactions involving the target that were with others of the same sex as the target, $F(1,69) = 92.88$, $p < .01$. The percent of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions with romantic partners was higher than the percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving best same-sex friends. The analysis of the second measure of percent, indicating the percent of interactions involving the target (best same-sex friend or romantic partner) that were dyadic also yielded a significant relationship effect, $F(1,69) = 24.41$, $p < .01$. Interactions involving romantic partners were more often dyadic than were interactions with best same-sex friends.

To reveal sex differences in qualitative measures of social participation, separate 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs with the last variable treated as a within-subjects factor were performed on the qualitative variables of the diary. Analysis of the average intimacy of social interactions yielded a significant relationship effect, $F(1,69) = 25.17$, $p < .01$. Interactions including

romantic partners were significantly more intimate than interactions including best same-sex friends. A significant relationship effect was found in the analysis of enjoyment of social interactions, $F(1,69) = 8.25, p < .01$. Interactions with romantic partners were more enjoyable than interactions with best same-sex friends. The analyses of the remaining four qualitative measures of social participation, influence, responsiveness, and depth and breadth of self-disclosure, yielded no significant main effects or interactions.

To examine sex-role differences in quantitative measures of social interactions with romantic partners and with best same-sex friends, a 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 2 (relationship) ANOVA with the last variable treated as a within-subjects factor was performed for each of the dependent variables. Relationship main effects are the same as those previously reported; therefore, they will not be repeated. No interaction effects were significant.

The last set of analyses comparing interactions best same-sex friends and romantic partners explored sex-role differences in qualitative measures of social interaction. Separate 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were performed, with relationship treated as a within-subjects variable, for each qualitative dependent variable. Again, relationship effects are the same as those previously reported, and no interaction

effects were significant.

Best Same-Sex Friend vs. Best Opposite-Sex Friend. For the comparisons of best same-sex friend and best opposite-sex friend, the same four sets of analyses were conducted. Quantitative and qualitative variables were examined separately, and sex and sex-role differences were isolated. Four quantitative variables and six qualitative variables were included as previously described. Again, because sex and sex-role differences were reported previously for each type of relationship (SSF, OSF, and ROM), only those effects and interactions involving the relationships will be discussed.

To investigate sex differences on quantitative measures of social interaction, 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were performed with the last variable treated as a within-subjects factor. Analysis of the average number of interactions per day yielded a relationship main effect, $F(1,88) = 30.49, p < .01$. Best same-sex friends were involved in more frequent interactions per day than were best opposite-sex friends. No significant interactions were found. (See Table 4 for means used in these analyses.)

Quantity of social participation as measured by the average time per day spent in social interaction also reflected a significant relationship main effect, $F(1, 88) = 20.79, p < .01$. Participants spent more time per day with best same-sex friends than with best opposite-sex friends.

As in the analysis of the number of interactions per day, no significant interactions were found for the amount of time spent per day in social interactions.

Similarly, quantity of social participation as measured by length of interaction varied as a function of relationship. Best same-sex friends were involved in longer interactions than best opposite-sex friends, $F(1, 88) = 13.04$, $p < .01$. Again, no significant interactions were found.

A significant relationship effect was found in the analysis of the percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving best same-sex friends and the percent of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions involving best opposite-sex friends, $F(1, 37) = 18.80$, $p < .01$. The percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving best same-sex friends was higher than the percent of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions involving best opposite-sex friends. No interactions were significant. Analysis of the second measure of percent, indicating the percent of interactions involving the targets (SSF or OSF) that were dyadic, yielded no significant effects or interactions.

To reveal sex differences in qualitative measures of social participation, separate 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs with relationship treated as a within-subjects variable were performed on the data. Analysis of the average intimacy of social interactions, as well as the analyses of depth and breadth of self-disclosure, yielded no

significant main effects or interactions.

In the analysis of enjoyment, a significant relationship effect was found, $F(1,37) = 7.91, p < .01$. Interactions with best opposite-sex friends were more enjoyable than interactions with best same-sex friends. (See Table 4 for these means.) However, a significant interaction also was found between relationship type and sex of participant, $F(1,37) = 7.13, p < .05$, in the analysis of enjoyment. Males enjoyed interactions with best opposite-sex friends ($M = 7.45$) more than they enjoyed interactions with best same-sex friends ($M = 6.32$) and more than females enjoyed interactions with either same- or opposite-sex best friends ($M = 6.70$ and 6.73 , respectively). Analyses of the last two qualitative measures of social participation, influence and responsiveness, yielded no significant main effects or interactions.

To examine sex-role differences in quantitative measures of social interaction with best same- and opposite-sex friends, 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were done, treating relationship as a within-subjects factor. Relationship effects are the same as those reported above, and sex-role main effects are discussed previously in the separate analyses for each relationship.

Analyses of the average number of interactions per day, average time spent per day in interaction, average length of interaction, and percent of same-sex-as-target interactions

did not reflect any significant differences other than relationship main effects. Analysis of the percent of interactions involving best same- or opposite-sex friends that were dyadic revealed a significant interaction between relationship type and instrumentality, $F(1,35) = 8.81, p < .01$. For same-sex interactions, the percent of interactions that were dyadic did not differ as a function of level of instrumentality ($M_{\text{high}} = .62$ and $M_{\text{low}} = .71$), but for opposite-sex interactions, participants high in instrumentality ($M = .81$) had more interactions involving best opposite-sex friends that were dyadic than did participants low in instrumentality ($M = .54$).

The last set of analyses comparing the interactions of best same-sex friends and best opposite-sex friends explored sex-role differences in qualitative measures of social interaction. A series of 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were performed, treating relationship as a within-subjects factor. Analysis of average intimacy revealed a significant interaction between relationship and instrumentality, $F(1,35) = 7.16, p < .05$. For same-sex interactions, instrumentality had little effect ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.23$ and $M_{\text{low}} = 5.42$), but for opposite-sex interactions, highly instrumental individuals ($M = 6.18$) had more intimate interactions than did individuals low in instrumentality ($M = 4.75$).

No significant main effects or interactions were found in the analyses of depth or breadth of self-disclosure. In

the analysis of average enjoyment of social interactions, a significant three-way interaction was found between relationship, expressiveness, and instrumentality, $F(1,35) = 5.47, p < .05$. As can be seen in Table 5, for same-sex interactions, androgynous individuals enjoyed interactions more than all other sex-role orientations. For opposite-sex interactions, individuals low in expressiveness and high in instrumentality enjoyed interactions more than those low in expressiveness and low in instrumentality; instrumentality was not associated with differences in enjoyment of interactions with best opposite-sex friends among individuals high in expressiveness.

Insert Table 5 about here.

No significant effects were found in the analyses of influence or responsiveness.

Best Opposite-Sex Friend vs. Romantic Partner. For the comparisons of best opposite-sex friend and romantic partner, the four sets of analyses were conducted once more. Again, quantitative and qualitative variables were examined separately, and sex and sex-role differences were isolated. The same four quantitative variables and six qualitative variables were included. Because sex and sex-role differences were reported previously for each type of relationship (SSF, OSF, and ROM), only those effects and interactions involving the type of relationship will be

discussed.

To investigate sex differences in quantitative measures of social interaction, 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were performed, with relationship treated as a within-subjects factor. Analysis of the average number of interactions per day yielded a relationship main effect, $F(1,88) = 106.99, p < .01$. Romantic partners were involved in more interactions per day than were opposite-sex best friends. (See Table 4 for these means.) No significant interactions were found.

The analysis of quantity of social participation as measured by the average time per day spent in social interaction also yielded a significant relationship main effect, $F(1,88) = 90.66, p < .01$. Participants spent more time per day with romantic partners than with best opposite-sex friends. As in the analysis of the number of interactions per day, no significant interactions were found in the analysis of the amount of time spent per day in social interactions.

Similarly, the analysis of the length of interactions varied as a function of relationship. Romantic partners were involved in longer interactions than best opposite-sex friends, $F(1,88) = 41.65, p < .01$. Again, no significant interactions were found.

A significant effect was found in the analysis of the percent of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions involving best opposite-sex friends and romantic partners, $F(1,42) =$

91.69, $p < .01$. The percent of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions with romantic partners was higher than the percent of such interactions involving best opposite-sex friends. No interactions were significant.

Analysis of the second measure of percent, indicating the percent of interactions involving the target (OSF or ROM) that were dyadic, also yielded a significant relationship effect, $F(1,42) = 7.61$, $p < .01$. Interactions involving romantic partners were more often dyadic than were interactions with best opposite-sex friends. No significant interactions were found.

To reveal sex differences in qualitative measures of social participation, separate 2 (sex of participant) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs were done, treating relationship as a within-subjects factor. No significant main effects or interactions other than relationship main effects were found in the analyses of intimacy, depth and breadth of self-disclosure, influence, or responsiveness. However, a significant relationship by sex interaction was found in the analysis of enjoyment of social interactions, $F(1,42) = 6.32$, $p < .05$. The type of relationship had little effect on enjoyment for females ($M_{rom} = 6.95$ and $M_{osf} = 6.70$), but for males, interactions with best opposite-sex friends were more enjoyable than interactions with romantic partners ($M_{osf} = 7.35$ and $M_{rom} = 6.48$).

To examine sex-role differences in quantitative measures of social interaction, 2 (expressiveness) by 2

(instrumentality) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs with relationship treated as a within-subjects factor were done. Only interactions involving the type of relationship and sex-role will be discussed because relationship and sex-role main effects are the same as those previously reported.

Analyses of the number of interactions per day, average time spent per day in interaction, average length of interaction, and percent of opposite-sex interactions involving romantic partners or best opposite-sex friends yielded no significant interactions. Analysis of the percent of interactions involving best opposite-sex friends and romantic partners that were dyadic produced a significant interaction between relationship and instrumentality, $F(1,40) = 9.99, p < .01$. Results are similar to the corresponding interaction in the analysis comparing best same- and opposite-sex friends; that is, for romantic interactions, instrumentality had little effect ($M_{low} = .82$ and $M_{high} = .88$), while for opposite-sex interactions, highly instrumental individuals ($M = .89$) had more dyadic interactions than did individuals low in instrumentality ($M = .46$).

The last set of analyses comparing best opposite-sex friends and romantic partners explored sex-role differences in qualitative measures of social interaction. A series of 2 (expressiveness) by 2 (instrumentality) by 2 (relationship) ANOVAs was performed, with relationship treated as a within-subjects factor. No main effects or

interactions reached significance.

DISCUSSION

The results of the present study revealed that the primary differences in social interaction patterns were due to the type of relationship (SSF, OSF, or ROM) and to the sex-role orientation of the individual. Very few sex differences were found. The hypotheses of the study concerning differences between males and females in regard to the number of same- and opposite-sex friends were not supported. Everyone interacted with more same-sex others than opposite-sex others. Furthermore, no sex differences were found in the amount of self-disclosure to best same-sex friends and romantic partners, but males disclosed more than females to best opposite-sex friends. Several sex-role differences demonstrated that high levels of instrumentality, expressiveness, or both (androgyny) enhanced social interactions in all three types of relationships in quantitative and qualitative ways. Overall, interactions with romantic partners were longer, more frequent, and more intimate than interactions with same-sex best friends, and interactions with same-sex best friends were quantitatively more important than interactions with opposite-sex best friends. These findings gave some support to the hypotheses concerning the priority given to romantic partners, best same-sex friends, and best opposite-sex friends by males but did not conform to expectations about females' prioritization of relationships.

The results showed a fairly stable pattern of no sex differences in either quantitative or qualitative measures of social interaction. Two exceptions were that males' disclosures were deeper and broader to best opposite-sex friends than were the disclosures of females, and that females enjoyed interactions with their best same-sex friends more than males did. Additionally, for females, enjoyment did not differ depending on the type of relationship, but for males, interactions with best opposite-sex friends were significantly more enjoyable than interactions with romantic partners or best same-sex friends.

Because these were the only significant sex differences that were found, the first hypothesis of the study must be rejected. The data demonstrated no evidence that females have more same-sex acquaintances than males, nor did they reveal that males have more opposite-sex acquaintances than females. This lack of a significant difference may have been confounded by the fact that the number of participants used in some of the analyses was reduced; nearly half of the participants (48.9%) recorded no interactions with OSF, their best opposite-sex friend. The reasons for OSF not showing up in the diary were varied, as assessed by the post-diary interviews. For the majority of participants, a best opposite-sex friend was mentioned during interviews but simply was not seen during the week that the diary was maintained.

Relative to other research, the results were consistent with the finding by Caldwell and Peplau (1982) of no sex differences in number of friends or time spent with friends but contradicted the conclusions of Booth and Hess (1974), Buhrke and Fuqua (1987), and others who found that males report more cross-sex friends and spend more time in cross-sex relationships. It is possible that because all of the participants in the study were involved in romantic relationships, the number of same- and opposite-sex friends they interacted with was unusually low regardless of their gender.

The second hypothesis of the study, that females disclose more intimately than males in all three types of relationships, must also be rejected based on the available evidence. The rejection of this hypothesis challenges previous research by Aries and Johnson (1983) and Bell (1981) who claimed that women have more intimate conversations than men. In fact, with best opposite-sex friends, males disclosed more deeply and broadly than females. It may be that males disclose more than females to opposite-sex friends because they want advice on how to handle their romantic relationships, and they feel that female friends are the best source for such information. Perhaps females choose instead to go to their same-sex friends for such advice because they expect these friends to be more responsive than opposite-sex friends. However, the data do not really support this contention because perceived

responsiveness by best same-sex friends was not greater for females than for males. It may be that females expect other females to be more responsive only with regard to a few specific topics, including advice concerning romantic relationships.

The results consistently contradicted the third hypothesis, that instrumentality inhibits self-disclosure. For two of the three relationships, just the reverse effect occurred. Participants high in instrumentality disclosed on a broader number of topics to best same- and opposite-sex friends. High instrumentality also was associated with greater enjoyment and perceived influence for interactions involving romantic partners and best same-sex friends. Finally, participants high in instrumentality perceived greater responsiveness on the part of the other in all three types of relationships.

The significant relationship by instrumentality interactions followed a similar pattern. People high in instrumentality had relatively more dyadic interactions with their best opposite-sex friends than those low in instrumentality. However, instrumentality was not associated with variations in the percent of interactions with best same-sex friends or romantic partners that were dyadic. Similarly, intimacy with best same-sex friends was not significantly affected by level of instrumentality, but intimacy with best opposite-sex friends was greater for participants high in instrumentality. Thus, instrumentality

seemed to have an effect on opposite-sex interactions, such that these interactions were more likely to be dyadic and intimate for highly instrumental individuals.

These findings challenge those of Grigsby and Weatherley (1983) and Caldwell and Peplau (1982), who suggested that an instrumental sex-role restricts self-disclosure. Not only are these findings inconsistent with previous research on self-disclosure, they contradict research on cross-sex friendships as well. Davidson and Duberman (1982), for example, noted that instrumentality prevents males from being intimate with their same-sex friends because openness does not fit with the traditional male sex-role of instrumentality. The implications of these findings concerning instrumentality will be discussed more fully after other sex-role differences are reviewed.

Although no specific hypotheses were made concerning the effects of expressiveness on social interactions, a pattern emerged similar to that for instrumentality. Highly expressive people enjoyed their interactions with best same-sex friends and romantic partners more than less expressive people. They also were more likely to perceive greater responsiveness on the part of these close others. The average intimacy and perceived influence in interactions involving romantic partners, as well as the average percent of interactions involving romantic partners that were dyadic, were greater for participants high in expressiveness than for those low in expressiveness. In general,

expressiveness was more important in romantic relationships and same-sex friendships than in opposite-sex friendships.

The fourth hypothesis, that androgyny increases self-disclosure for males and females, was confirmed by the significant interactions between expressiveness and instrumentality in the analysis of interactions with best same-sex friends. Androgyny was associated with more intimate interactions and deeper self-disclosures than all the other sex-role orientations. In addition, androgynous participants enjoyed interactions with best same-sex friends more than all other participants did. Conversely, undifferentiated participants perceived best opposite-sex friends as less responsive than did participants of all other sex-role orientations.

In sum, highly instrumental people had broader self-disclosures, enjoyed interactions more, perceived greater responsiveness, and had more interactions per day with best same-sex friends than people low in instrumentality. With best opposite-sex friends, highly instrumental people had greater intimacy, broader self-disclosure, greater perceived responsiveness, and more dyadic interactions than people low in instrumentality. Finally, interactions involving romantic partners were rated by highly instrumental people as more enjoyable and involving greater responsiveness. Highly expressive people enjoyed and perceived more responsiveness in interactions with best same-sex friends. Romantic interactions involved greater intimacy, enjoyment,

influence, and responsiveness for highly expressive people; interactions with romantic partners also were more frequently dyadic for highly expressive people. Androgynous people had more intimate interactions with and deeper self-disclosures to best same-sex friends than instrumental, expressive, or undifferentiated people. Finally, undifferentiated people perceived best opposite-sex friends as less responsive than all other sex-role orientations did.

These sex-role differences indicate that high levels of instrumentality, expressiveness, or both (androgyny) generally facilitated social interactions, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Thus, the presence of strong sex-role characteristics seemed to enhance the intimacy in and enjoyment of, as well as the frequency of, social interactions with friends of both sexes and with romantic partners. Furthermore, high levels of expressiveness and instrumentality seemed to contribute to more self-disclosure and more perceived responsiveness in these interactions.

A potential explanation for the findings of greater disclosure by highly instrumental, expressive, and androgynous individuals incorporates the different motives for disclosure by these three types of people. Highly instrumental people may disclose information about themselves in order to control the relationship. This interpretation follows from the work of Shaffer and Ogden (1986) who suggested that more competitive, agentic people

(i.e., those high in instrumentality) may be instrumentally motivated to self-disclose because they feel the need to convince others that they are cooperative, can respond appropriately to social overtures, and are worthy of trust. Highly expressive people may self-disclose in an effort to establish closeness and intimacy in their relationships. Androgynous people could be self-disclosing for either or both of these reasons. For undifferentiated people, there seems to be less of a desire for self-disclosure; furthermore, undifferentiated people may not have the normative guides for self-disclosure available to people of other sex-role orientations.

Looking at the results from a different perspective, it appears that instrumentality had the strongest effect in opposite-sex interactions. In same-sex interactions, both instrumentality and expressiveness played a role. Finally, in romantic interactions, expressiveness seemed to be most important, though instrumentality had some effect.

It is interesting to note that sex-role effects differed somewhat depending on the type of relationship. Instrumentality was especially influential in interactions with best opposite-sex friends. One reason for this might be due to the fact that these relationships are typically not well-defined in terms of normative behaviors (O'Meara, 1989). Consequently, an instrumental sex-role, including traits such as dominance, assertiveness, and leadership, might be helpful in shaping interactions within an opposite-

sex friendship.

The most interesting and consistent findings of the study concerned differences in social interactions involving best same- and opposite-sex friends and romantic partners. The type of relationship had an effect on all of the five quantitative variables and two of the qualitative variables assessing social participation.

The average number of interactions per day was greater for romantic partners than for best same-sex friends, and greater for best same-sex friends than for best opposite-sex friends. This indicated a distinct pattern for the number of interactions with these three individuals, such that participants interacted most with romantic partners and least with best opposite-sex friends. The average time spent per day as well as the average length of interactions followed an identical pattern, with interactions with romantic partners involving more time than interactions with best same-sex friends, and interactions with best same-sex friends involving more time than interactions with best opposite-sex friends. Also similar to this pattern, romantic interactions represented the highest average percent of opposite- or mixed-sex interactions, and interactions involving best same-sex friends represented the highest average percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions.

The pattern was altered somewhat by the lack of a significant difference between the average percent of one-on-one interactions with best same- and opposite-sex

friends. However, dyadic interactions with romantic partners were still significantly more frequent than dyadic interactions with friends of either sex.

Qualitative differences among interactions with romantic partners, best same-sex friends, and best opposite-sex friends were less consistent. Romantic interactions were significantly more intimate than interactions with either best same- or opposite-sex friends, and overall, enjoyment was greater in romantic interactions than in interactions with best same-sex friends. However, female participants' level of enjoyment did not differ significantly for interactions with friends of either sex; in other words, females enjoyed interactions with best same-sex friends just as much as they enjoyed interactions with best opposite-sex friends. Males, however, enjoyed interactions with their best opposite-sex friends more than interactions with their best same-sex friends. A possible reason for this finding of greater enjoyment by males in interactions involving best opposite-sex friends is that cross-sex interactions allow more freedom than either same-sex or romantic interactions because there are fewer expectations and rules for appropriate behavior with friends of the opposite sex (O'Meara, 1989). Consequently, males may feel more in control of their interactions with best opposite-sex friends, thereby increasing their enjoyment. Unfortunately, perceived influence was not found to be significantly greater for males in interactions with best

opposite-sex friends, a finding which would have reinforced this explanation of greater control. Another possibility is that males enjoy interactions with best opposite-sex friends because those interactions make them appear or feel popular with women.

These results involving relationship differences address the fifth and sixth hypotheses of the study concerning the relative priority of the three relationships to the individual in terms of time spent and emotional investment. It appears that for both males and females, romantic relationships were of highest priority, sustaining interactions of greater frequency, duration, and intimacy. Best same-sex friendships seemed to be more important than opposite-sex friendships based on quantitative measures, though they did not differ much from opposite-sex friendships in a qualitative sense. This may have been due to the fact that many participants presumably lived with their designated best same-sex friend, leading to longer and more frequent but not necessarily more meaningful interactions with best same-sex friends. Twelve of the participants specifically mentioned living with their best same-sex friends in the post-diary interviews, even though the question was never asked directly.

The results lend some support to the hypotheses concerning prioritization by males but not by females. That is, males' opposite-sex relationships, both friendly and romantic, were more important both quantitatively and

qualitatively than same-sex relationships. However, because interactions with best opposite-sex friends were relatively rare, and some never interacted with their best opposite-sex friends at all during the week of the study, it is difficult to say that those relationships were of a higher priority. When they did see their best opposite-sex friends though, males had affectively richer interactions with them than did females.

Potential confounds that may have influenced the interaction patterns found in the present study involve demographic characteristics of the sample. The participants were recruited from a relatively small institution where undergraduates involved in serious romantic relationships were somewhat difficult to find; consequently, because their romantic relationships were most likely well-established in social networks, the participants may have spent more than an average amount of time with their romantic partners. That is, since most people were aware that the participants were involved in romantic relationships, their potential for developing other intimate relationships with friends of either sex may have been diminished. Furthermore, the presence of a romantic partner probably limited the amount of time available for interactions with same- and especially opposite-sex friends.

For the purposes of this study, participation was restricted to undergraduates who were involved in all three relationships (SSF, OSF, and ROM) on campus. Future

research is needed to determine whether the presence of a romantic partner has a significant influence on social participation with friends. For example, it might be that without a romantic partner, same-sex friendships would be given highest priority and differ significantly from opposite-sex friendships. Furthermore, opposite-sex friends might become more important, especially for males, if no romantic partner were present. Results more supportive of the original hypotheses might also be obtained if a more diverse sample were used, perhaps including participants from several different universities or even from non-academic populations.

In addition, more reliable results might be more likely if the diary was maintained for more than one behavioral cycle. That is, multiple behavioral cycles (e.g. 2 weeks) might incorporate a more representative sample of social interactions for each participant and therefore provide more reliable data. For example, best opposite-sex friends might be included in the diaries to a greater extent, and any odd demands on participants' time would have a reduced impact on the data.

The implications of this study are of practical importance to gaining a fuller understanding of social interactions. Generally, the results indicated that sex was not a mediating variable in terms of the time or emotions invested in friendships and romantic relationships. Thus the data reinforce the belief of Wright (1988) and Jones

(1990) that sex differences in social interactions are overemphasized. One possibility suggested by Wright (1988) is that sex-role orientation is a better predictor of interaction differences than gender.

In fact, in the present study, sex-role orientation did seem to affect social participation positively. High levels of instrumentality were generally associated with greater intimacy, enjoyment, self-disclosure, and perceived responsiveness in social interactions. Likewise, high levels of expressiveness were generally associated with greater intimacy, enjoyment, perceived influence, and perceived responsiveness in social interactions. Androgynous individuals differed from instrumental and expressive individuals in terms of the intimacy of their social interactions and the depth of their self-disclosures. It seems that these three sex-role orientations differed significantly from undifferentiation (low levels of expressiveness and instrumentality), such that having any sex-role was more socially beneficial than having none at all. These sex-role effects add some explanatory power to individual differences in social interactions, but much remains to be understood.

It is unclear, as Sollie and Fischer (1986) asserted, what factors other than sex-role orientation may influence self-disclosure. It may be that general characteristics such as sex cannot predict specific behaviors such as disclosure in various social interactions. Other individual

differences that are more oriented toward interpersonal interactions such as attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), perceptions of risk (Pilkington & Richardson, 1988), and assertiveness, may help explain relationship differences more fully. Previous studies of these variables have contributed to a better understanding of differences in self-disclosure and other interpersonal phenomena. For example, Mikulincer and Nachshon (1991) found that a secure attachment style was associated with greater disclosure to same-sex friends and romantic partners but not related to disclosure to opposite-sex friends. In addition, Pilkington and Richardson (1988) found that persons who perceived high levels of risk in intimate relationships had fewer close relationships and were more hesitant and less trusting in those relationships. It also seems likely that factors such as assertiveness, shyness, and sociability would affect willingness to self-disclose as well as perceived influence in social interactions.

Perhaps the most important finding of the present study was that romantic relationships were of highest priority in terms of time spent and emotional investment relative to same- or opposite-sex friendships. The prominence of romantic relationships for undergraduates involved in them applied to males and females alike. One explanation for why romantic relationships were so important comes from the investment model of Rusbult (1983) which assumes that the relationships that require the most time and energy are

consequently stronger. Romantic relationships may be especially important, therefore, because people spend most of their time in romantic interactions.

Based on the findings of the present study, it seems that a shift in research is needed. Rather than its present focus on how males and females differ in the way they relate to other people, research needs to become more integrated, examining variables other than gender which influence social interactions in different kinds of relationships. Beyond personality variables, it appears that the type of relationship is the most important factor influencing social interaction differences.

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APPENDIX A

Preliminary Questionnaire

Name: _____

Gender: M F

Social Security No.: _ _ _ _ _

Phone: _ _ _ - _ _ _ _

1. How many close same-sex friends do you have? _____ (please specify a number)

2. Do you have a close same-sex friend at W & M? Yes No

3. How many close opposite-sex friends do you have? _____ (please specify a number)

4. Do you have a close opposite-sex friend at W & M? Yes No

5. Do you have a steady dating partner? Yes No (skip Q.6 if no)

6. Is this person a student at W & M? Yes No

When did you start dating? _____

Are you dating anyone else? Yes No

The following questions are being asked to find out who is interested in participating in a study on social interaction. Participants will maintain a social interaction record with which they will describe the social contacts they have each day. Maintaining the record is fairly simple, does not take much time (10-15 minutes per day), and most participants have found it to be enjoyable and informative.

7. Would you be willing to participate in a 1 week study of the type described above for no payment or compensation of any kind?

definitely not no yes definitely yes

8. Have you ever maintained a personal diary? No Yes

APPENDIX B

Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Bem, 1974)

BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY

Please rate the extent to which each of the following characteristics describes you personally using the following scale.

- 1 = Never or almost never true
 2 = Usually not true
 3 = Sometimes but infrequently true
 4 = Occasionally true
 5 = Often true
 6 = Usually true
 7 = Always true or almost always true

-
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. self-reliant | _____ 31. makes decisions easily |
| _____ 2. yielding | _____ 32. compassionate |
| _____ 3. helpful | _____ 33. sincere |
| _____ 4. defends own beliefs | _____ 34. self-sufficient |
| _____ 5. cheerful | _____ 35. eager to soothe
hurt feelings |
| _____ 6. moody | _____ 36. conceited |
| _____ 7. independent | _____ 37. dominant |
| _____ 8. shy | _____ 38. soft-spoken |
| _____ 9. conscientious | _____ 39. likable |
| _____ 10. athletic | _____ 40. masculine |
| _____ 11. affectionate | _____ 41. warm |
| _____ 12. theatrical | _____ 42. solemn |
| _____ 13. assertive | _____ 43. willing to take a stand |
| _____ 14. flatterable | _____ 44. tender |
| _____ 15. happy | _____ 45. friendly |
| _____ 16. strong personality | _____ 46. aggressive |
| _____ 17. loyal | _____ 47. gullible |
| _____ 18. unpredictable | _____ 48. inefficient |
| _____ 19. forceful | _____ 49. acts as a leader |
| _____ 20. feminine | _____ 50. childlike |
| _____ 21. reliable | _____ 51. adaptable |
| _____ 22. analytical | _____ 52. individualistic |
| _____ 23. sympathetic | _____ 53. does not use harsh
language |
| _____ 24. jealous | _____ 54. unsystematic |
| _____ 25. has leadership qualities | _____ 55. competitive |
| _____ 26. sensitive to need of others | _____ 56. loves children |
| _____ 27. truthful | _____ 57. tactful |
| _____ 28. willing to take risks | _____ 58. ambitious |
| _____ 29. understanding | _____ 59. gentle |
| _____ 30. secretive | _____ 60. conventional |

Note: To score this scale, begin by labeling the first item as instrumental, the second as expressive, and the third as filler. This pattern continues for all 60 items, so that items 1, 4, 7, 10, etc. are instrumental and items 2, 5, 8, 11, etc. are expressive.

APPENDIX C

Rochester Interaction Record (Wheeler & Nezlek, 1977)

Table 1

Mean Ratings of Interactions with Best Same-Sex Friends as a
Function of Expressivity and as a Function of
Instrumentality

	<u>Expressivity</u>		<u>Instrumentality</u>	
	High	Low	High	Low
<u>Qualitative</u>				
Intimacy	5.40	5.10	5.50	5.03
Depth	5.23	5.24	5.49	5.00
Breadth	5.17	4.76	5.34	4.64
Enjoyment	6.88	6.03	6.67	6.29
Influence	6.25	5.95	6.24	5.98
Responsiveness [*]	6.84	6.19	6.78	6.30
<u>Quantitative</u>				
Number per day	.71	.61	.53	.78
Time per day	41.23	32.99	30.35	43.68
Length	52.18	44.56	43.91	52.65
Adjusted Percent ^{*a}	.32	.35	.31	.36
Dyadic Percent ^{*b}	.72	.64	.67	.69

*a = Percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving the target

*b = Percent of interactions involving only one other person

Table 2

Mean Ratings of Interactions with Best Same-Sex Friends as a Function of Expressivity and as a Function of Instrumentality

	<u>Expressivity</u>		<u>Instrumentality</u>	
	High	Low	High	Low
<u>Qualitative</u>				
Intimacy	5.05	5.61	6.09	4.72
Depth	4.89	5.60	5.85	4.77
Breadth	4.75	5.89	6.23	4.60
Enjoyment	6.77	6.94	7.17	6.59
Influence	5.90	6.06	6.36	5.67
Responsiveness	6.71	6.52	7.26	6.06
<u>Quantitative</u>				
Number per day	.19	.20	.17	.22
Time per day	10.17	12.24	10.73	11.73
Length	23.00	28.28	25.86	25.54
Adjusted Percent ^{*a}	.17	.16	.16	.17
Dyadic Percent ^{*b}	.70	.64	.84	.52

*a = Percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving the target

*b = Percent of interactions involving only one other person

Table 3

Mean Ratings of Interactions with Best Same-Sex Friends as a Function of Expressivity and as a Function of Instrumentality

	<u>Expressivity</u>		<u>Instrumentality</u>	
	High	Low	High	Low
<u>Qualitative</u>				
Intimacy	6.63	5.87	6.35	6.17
Depth	5.33	5.27	5.29	5.31
Breadth	5.39	5.29	5.47	5.21
Enjoyment	7.25	6.43	7.04	6.67
Influence	6.31	5.89	6.23	5.99
Responsiveness	7.23	6.15	6.91	6.49
<u>Quantitative</u>				
Number per day	1.70	1.55	1.53	1.72
Time per day	124.37	109.57	109.72	123.89
Length	75.42	60.79	61.50	74.40
Adjusted Percent ^{*a}	.69	.67	.71	.66
Dyadic Percent ^{*b}	.88	.82	.85	.85

*a = Percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving the target

*b = Percent of interactions involving only one other person

Table 4Ratings of Interactions as a Function of Relationship

	ROM	SSF	OSF
<u>Quantitative</u>			
Number per day	1.62	.66	.20
Time per day (in minutes)	116.81	37.02	11.23
Length (in minutes)	67.95	48.28	25.70
Adjusted Percent ^{*a}	.68	.33	.17
Dyadic Percent ^{*b}	.85	.68	.67
<u>Qualitative</u>			
Intimacy	6.26	5.25	5.34
Depth	5.30	5.23	5.26
Breadth	5.34	4.97	5.34
Enjoyment	6.85	6.47	6.86
Influence	6.36	6.01	5.98
Responsiveness	6.70	6.53	6.61

*a = Percent of same- or mixed-sex interactions involving the target

*b = Percent of interactions involving only one other person

Note: ROM = romantic partner
 SSF = best same-sex friend
 OSF = best opposite-sex friend

Table 5

Expressiveness X Instrumentality X Relationship Interaction
for Enjoyment in Interactions with Best Same- and Opposite-
Sex Friends

	<u>Relationship</u>			
	<u>Best Same-Sex</u>		<u>Best Opposite-Sex</u>	
	<u>Friend</u>		<u>Friend</u>	
	<u>Expressiveness</u>			
	High	Low	High	Low
High Instrumentality	7.46	6.21	7.04	7.38
Low Instrumentality	6.69	6.41	6.88	6.24

VITA

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